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Art and Access –
Creating Participatory and
Happy Communities

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Cover image of performers from the Sodai Pantomkomol Centre for Dramatic Arts, Korea was provided by Pokpong Khamprasert.

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Editorial

The Unfinished

Agenda –

Turning the Tide in Asian Urban Development

Kjell Skyllstad* Editor in Chief

In May 19 - 21, 2014 the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific called a meeting in Bangkok of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development to discuss how ASEAN should prepare for meeting the goals of the UN post 2015 Development Agenda. The Thai representative listed the social sectors where joint action will be urgently needed:

- Poverty Reduction
- Addressing Social Inequality
- Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness
- Access to Universal Healthcare

In a recent joint publication by UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre and United Nations Human Settlement Program UN-Habitat Bangkok “Addressing Urban Poverty, Inequality, and Vulnerability in a Warming World” the same issues were presented. The unanimity of goals is as striking as it is challenging. Will Thailand and its ASEAN neighbors be able to take the lead in introducing legislation and follow up in daily practice on implementing necessary measures that will turn the tide in Asian urban development?

The publication mentioned above (Asia-Pacific Issue Brief Series on Urbanization and Climate Change No.1) presents a holistic and interactive picture of the present situation:

The proportion of the poor living in urban areas has been seen to increase in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region with urbanization leading to increased poverty and deprivation most visibly evidenced by growing slum and

* Dr. Kjell Skyllstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway

squatter settlements. UN-Habitat estimates that there are 850 million urban dwellers living in slums and slum-like conditions globally with 500 million living in the Asia-Pacific region, comprising about one third of the total population.

While cities all over the world are seen as engines for growth and development, this growth has not according to the brief, trickled down to the poor. In spite of the fact that urbanization in countries like China has created a large new middle class the number of people living in poverty has continued to increase throughout the region. And there is the risk that the new consumerist lifestyle will create an environment for cultural and social poverty.

Natural disasters as the results of climate change have worsened the situation for the vulnerable urban poor who mostly live in high-risk, low-lying coastal areas or along river banks susceptible to flooding. It is a sad fact that in this the last year of the UN Decade for Sustainable Development unplanned and unsustainable city growth has increased the vulnerability of large parts of our city populations.

There is an emerging understanding that we will not be able to solve the challenges of rapid urbanization on a global scale without correspondingly large scale cooperation. Four days before the meeting in Thailand of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development on May 14 -15, I had the privilege of attending the 4th Partnership for Change's Oslo conference with the theme "Turning the Tide – Methods for Lasting Social Impact."

The Partnership for Change organization was established in Oslo in 2011 as a meeting place for concerned individuals and organizations working collectively toward creating social innovation and change toward a sustainable future. At the May 2014 Oslo conference, the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate Leymah Gbowee, Liberian peace activist, women's rights advocate and social worker joined, Kjell Magne Bondevik, former Prime Minister of Norway, now Founder and President of the Oslo Center for Peace and Human Rights, and other international activists, intellectuals, artists, and social entrepreneurs in seeking common ground for joint action.

A special session was set aside to discuss the Shared Societies project initiated by the prestigious Club de Madrid, exploring new ways toward co-existence and developing shared social responsibility. Other sessions included Action for the Planet-Now – Promoting Intergenerational Dialogues and sessions dealing with support for democratic change in Myanmar.

A special cooperative program for Myanmar set up by Partnership for Change and supported by its Social Innovation Fund included projects for community development in the Inlet region of Shan State, a program of vocational training, and environmental and human rights programs. In this project a culture and arts program involving support for the performing arts and the establishment of a House of Literature and the Arts in Yangon has been designed for Partnership for Change by our Editorial Board member Geir Johnson.

For more than a decade the Urban Research Plaza has been honoring an agenda for change that has given decisive impulses for turning the tide in urban development not least in the Asia-Pacific region. This agenda is born of a shared vision and shared belief in the necessity of a creative agency propelling sustainable city development. We should now be reaching toward fulfilling the UN post 2015 goals with special attention to urban cultural and social needs.

Time has come to explore new avenues of initiating partnerships for entering into a new phase of community building and urban change through a process of recognizing opportunities, mobilizing people and resources, and seeking involvement from diverse and non-traditional partners.

Our JUCR agenda has been born from a belief in partnership and participation in research and urban activism just as our annual URP March Forum will continue to function as a meeting place of researchers, artists, art educators, city planners and administrators alike.

It has already made it possible to seek, communicate, and implement creative solutions to the issues listed above. We invite all contributors and readers to join our agenda.

Guest Author

Urban Dignity– Global Dignity

What Is It? How Do We Achieve It? (Part 1)

Evelin Lindner⁺

Abstract

Unity in diversity is at the centre of dignity. It means that people of all classes and colors intermingle in a spirit of mutual care and respect. Traditionally, throughout the past millennia, *uniformity in division* has been practised almost everywhere on the planet: to strengthen their competitive advantage over enemy out-groups, in-groups maintained a strictly unequal domination of *higher* beings over *lesser* beings. Unity in diversity is a more complex concept as it requires the readiness and ability to consider everyone else as equal in dignity, and it calls for the skills to enter into dialogue with equals. As long as such a culture is not yet established, unity in diversity has the potential to trigger uneasiness, including feelings of humiliation, and can lead to attempts to cleanse and exclude diversity so as to return to the more familiar and less complex experience of uniformity in division. Urban contexts are prime experimental laboratories for this transition. For urban dignity to flourish and social and ecological sustainability to emerge, interdisciplinary dialogue is needed to overcome the traditional practise of domination over people and over nature. Urban dignity flourishes when the city is regarded in terms of a family that collaborates in mutual communal sharing and stewardship of their environment, while urban dignity collapses when priority is given to clambering for power and status, be it through overt oppression or cloaked as economic necessity. Artists can play a central role in creating conditions for social interactions of dignity instead of humiliation. Music, for instance, has the power to unite. One example was given by Oslo citizens when they reacted to the 22 July 2011 terror attacks in Norway by gathering in front of the courthouse singing ‘The Rainbow People.’

Keywords: Globalization, Dignity, Care, Diversity, Economy, Humiliation, Exploitation

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This article summarizes two presentations and is published in two parts across volume 8 and 9 of JUCR:

‘Urban Dignity: What Is It? How Do We Achieve It?’

This talk was presented at the 12th Urban Culture Forum, ‘Arts and Social Outreach - Designs for Urban Dignity’ organized by the Urban Research Plaza, Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, 3rd - 4th March 2014. Evelin Lindner gave a brief overview over her work on dignity on 4th March 2014. The video was recorded by Deeyah Khan. Please note that due to technical issues, this presentation was shorter than its full length and that the video is unedited. See [youtube/Vh0ZSRzzfDY](https://youtube.com/Vh0ZSRzzfDY) and www.urp.faa.chula.ac.th/urp/Forum.html.

‘Global Dignity’

This talk was given at the 23rd Annual Conference of Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies, ‘Returning Dignity,’ that took place at Chiang Mai University, Northern Thailand, 8-12th March 2014, inspired by Kjell Skjellstad and convened by Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, Professor and Founding Director of the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RSCD) and Director of the Center of Ethnic Studies and Development (CESD) at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University. Evelin Lindner gave a brief overview over her work on dignity on 12th March 2014. The video was recorded by Donna Fujimoto. Please note that this video is unedited. See [youtube/4H-wB9f0jO8](https://youtube.com/4H-wB9f0jO8) and www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/annualmeeting/23.php.

A Dual Call for Papers had been issued for The Urban Research Plaza’s 12th Urban Culture Forum, and for the Journal of Urban Culture Research. Presentations were invited spanning the wide and diverse field of urban culture. The questions below were offered as evocative guidelines:

- How can we open the world of art for all (children, youth, elderly, disabled, disadvantaged)? How can we promote artistic expressions of minority groups?
- What are the means of enlarging participation in artistic activities among urban populations?
- How can art stimulate and promote citizens interaction in urban planning and design?
- How can art activism confront urban patterns of gender inequality and humiliating practices?
- How can the artist community contribute to solving urban conflicts and restoring human dignity?
- What allows traditional cultures and values to survive?
- How can artists contribute to the preservation of national art treasures? What measures can be taken to promote cultural continuity in urban environments?
- What is the place of arts education in promoting social and environmental awareness?
- In short: How can we promote art for social dignity?

Introduction

At the 12th Urban Culture Forum at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, a group of doctoral students presented a fascinating project titled ‘The Resonance of Reasons from the Streets of Bangkok.’ This presentation documented the high sense of responsibility among protesters in Bangkok, responsibility not just for oneself and one’s family, but for Thailand as a whole.

When I gave my talk the next day, I began by asking the audience: ‘How many of you feel a responsibility for your family and for Thailand?’ And then I asked: ‘How many of you feel a responsibility for our planet with all its people and animals?’ Almost everyone raised their hands.

With these questions I placed a value choice at the outset of my lecture. I did this to counter the trend in contemporary academia to obscure value choices by bypassing them. I agree with Kjell Skjellstad, the convener of this conference, that present-day social sciences need to revive their responsibility, which is to think critically (Habermas, 1973).

What is at stake? At stake is the *scope of justice*, or the reach of morals: ‘Individuals or groups within our moral boundaries are seen as deserving of the same fair, moral treatment as we deserve. Individuals or groups outside these boundaries are seen as undeserving of this same treatment’ (Coleman, 2000:118). I highly appreciate the students’ care about society at large, not just about their own career. I admire that they make their research relevant to society. Likewise, I admire the courage of another group of doctoral students who problematized the role of sexuality in society. Their presentation was titled ‘Wall of Sex.’ The choice of this topic was so extraordinary that the following note was attached to the programme: ‘this important presentation deals with & displays mature subject matter that may be offensive to some; viewer discretion is advised.’ In our conference in Chiang Mai, it was researcher Patchanee Malikhao who spoke on a related theme, on ‘Culture, Religion, and HIV/Aids in Thailand.’ See also her book *Sex in the Village: Culture, Religion and HIV/AIDS in Thailand*, Malikhao, 2011.

With my question about global responsibility I intended to convey two messages, first, that it is possible to widen the scope of justice from the personal to the national and to the global level, and, second, that the shouldering of global responsibility is what is needed most when the local is captive to global pressures.

The call for global responsibility comes from all continents. Another way to name it is *transformation by enlargement*. Catherine Odora Hoppers holds the South African Research Chair in Development Education at the University of South Africa in Pretoria. She is originally from Uganda, where she supported Milton Obote and his vision for Africa. She calls for the ‘enlargement from Africa to humanity.’ Transformation by enlargement, in her view, means that ‘all key concepts and ideas driving or anchoring policy and the academy are revisited with a view to expanding their understanding to include ways of seeing that had been preciously excluded. These include the information society/ knowledge economy, and innovation, two central themes that underpin policy discourses in higher education, science, research and innovation from the perspective of human development, and especially the marginalized’ (*Report of the 4th Retreat Development Education and Systems Transformation: Transformation by Enlargement: From Africa to Humanity!*, 2011:4).

We hear a similar call from South America. Here it has yet another name, namely, *organizational level of awareness*. Clodomir de Morais was less known than his colleague Paulo Freire, however, perhaps his contribution is even more important:

De Morais, in contradistinction to Freire, sets forward not two but three levels of awareness. He adds to Freire's two, which are: the naive level and the critical level. The third is the organizational level of awareness. At the naive level a person is aware of problems but is unable to understand their cause (and so may blame God or the Fates). The critically conscious person is able to identify the factors responsible for problems, and their inter-relationship. Organizational awareness is reached when the person has the ability to act together with others to address a problem or attain particular results. Organizational awareness manifests what de Morais calls a 'methodological rationality.' This distinction between Freire's 'critical consciousness' and de Morais's 'organizational consciousness' has already been discussed above in Chapter Three (Andersson, 2013, chapter IV:15).

Why is it so important for us, the human family on planet Earth, to enlarge our awareness to global levels, to take responsibility for our global affairs, in addition to our local affairs? Catherine Odora Hoppers shared the image (figure 1) when we worked together in Pretoria in South Africa in May 2013. It shows the mouth of a crocodile, waiting to eat all, both the winners and the losers in local struggles. The picture invites viewers to lift their eyes from the local to the global level, since the crocodile operates at the global level. Odora Hopper's message is that it is unwise to concentrate on local matters while overlooking that the crocodile is ready to eat us all.



Figure 1. Illustration by Catherine Odora Hoppers.

Odora Hoppers would agree with French wartime resistance hero Stéphane Frédéric Hessel, who cried out *Indignez vous!* (Hessel, 2010). He called on people to ‘cry out against the complicity between politicians and economic and financial powers’ and to ‘defend our democratic rights.’

Future generations may call our era ‘the dark era of absurdities.’ ‘Business as usual’ is utopian in our times. What many belittle as idealism – noble but irrelevant – increasingly emerges to be the only realism. Ever more people believe that a ‘great transition’ is needed, more than mere business as usual limping along with the help of some reforms (Raskin, 2012; Lindner, 2012a). Political economist Gar Alperovitz has worked for better regulations for decades; now his verdict is that deeper change is needed. After decades of experimenting with reform, his verdict is that instability and inequality is not a short-term aberration but the long-term consequence of the essence of our current economic arrangements (Alperovitz, 2009).

The notion of sustainability entails two core aspects, a social and an ecological aspect. The social aspect pertains to what we do to each other, whether we create peace or war, while the ecological aspect stands for what we do with our natural environment.

There is veritable progress with respect to social sustainability. New and important human rights conventions have been adopted. Many human rights defenders work extremely hard and have grown to become a real challenge to power. Predictably, however, power fights back. ‘The space for human rights defenders to act and participate openly and actively in the society is reduced (Dahle, 2008:2). ‘As civil society groups have become more sophisticated and effective in their advocacy efforts, many governments have also become more sophisticated in responding to their critics’ (Dahle, 2011:2). Even worse, as the Human Rights House Foundation in Oslo reports, throughout the past years, it has become increasingly difficult and even dangerous to be a human rights defender. And if we posit that peace means disarmament, then the balance is even more negative: The volume of international sales of conventional weapons has risen by 17 per cent in the period 2008–2012 as compared to the period 2003–2007 (SIPRI, 2013, www.sipri.org).

As to ecological sustainability, or what we do to our habitat, plundering the resources of our planet looks like a clever strategy to be proud of only as long as these resources are not yet depleted. Easter Island comes to mind. Short-term progress is not long-term progress. Successes such as improved health and life expectancy are built on sand if we do not reverse this.

Let me share two examples that illustrate present-day approaches to ecological sustainability. Kosheek Sewchurran, Associate Professor in Innovation Management and Information Systems, and director for the Executive MBA program at the Graduate School of Business in Cape Town, invited me on 5th July 2013 to present my book *A Dignity Economy* (Lindner, 2012a). He just was back from

the First Innovation for Sustainability Conference convened by the Academy of Business in Society in Copenhagen, Denmark, 12-15th June 2013. He reported the following: ‘At the conference, the marketing directors of Unilever excitedly pointed to the huge opportunities to sell products to a growing population of consumers in India, Brazil, Africa, and China. While this utopian view of profitability is a reality, the CEO also pointed out that this will imply that we need six to nine extra planets, as well as growth levels with an environmental impact that goes far beyond the current planetary boundaries’ (Kosheek Sewchurran, *Reflections on the First Innovation for Sustainability Conference run by the Academy of Business in Society*, 29th July 2013).

As we see, in the case of Unilever, a multinational corporation has in fact understood that, as more consumers strive for the basic luxuries of so-called developed nations in the developing world, planetary boundaries will be surpassed. Yet, as Sewchurran pointed out, ‘the business imperative seems still to be to do it [reach the boundaries] before somebody else does it.’ Sewchurran urges for a move from *compliance* to *responsibility* as both a societal and a business rationale.

So far, voices like Sewchurran’s may be heard at certain local levels. Sadly, however, they are not heard at relevant global levels. Hitting planetary boundaries as quickly as possible appears to be the predominant strategy. What currently unfolds is a kind of global hostile takeover, largely proceeding unnoticed by those who will be affected by it, namely, all of us. What I refer to, for instance, is the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP): ‘A new treaty being negotiated in secret between the US and the EU has been specifically engineered to give companies what they want – the dismantling of all social, consumer and environmental protection, and compensation for any infringement of their assumed rights’, writes Lori M. Wallach, director of Public Citizen’s Global Trade Watch, in her article ‘The Corporation Invasion’ in *Le Monde Diplomatique* on 2nd December 2013 (mondediplo.com/2013/12/02tafta).

In balance, we, the human family on planet Earth, are triumphantly marching into a dead end, faster than alternative directions can be established. A meta-transition is needed, away from rigid paradigms, away also from rigid strategies for change, away from finger-pointing and blame-games, toward co-creating a new kind of continuous reflexive process, a globally collaborative dignifying process (Lindner, 2012b).

Global Plundering

Certain kinds of global awareness and global citizenship make things worse. The Trans Pacific Partnership is a prime example. We do not even have to speak of global crime or terrorism. If we want to believe journalist David Rothkopf, a small number (circa 6,000) of largely unelected powerful people (largely male) around the globe, what he calls the ‘super class’, shape the world (Rothkopf, 2008). One can meet them at gatherings such as the annual meeting in Davos in Switzerland. Also the average *frequent traveller* may do considerable damage. He (it is often a

man) dashes from one international hotel to the other, uses the planet as a leisure park for the few chosen ones, served by the unlucky rest. Otherwise he targets the commons of our world as unexploited market opportunities. And many in the Global North, wealthy Thais included, prefer to imitate the superclass, rather than wake up and invest in a radical turnaround. Many yearn to live in a 'shopping-mall Kindergarten bubble', which includes a selection of holiday resort beaches, and as soon as they have achieved this, they mistake this bubble for the 'normal' reality of our world. And all around the globe many academics, rather than resisting this trend, currently turn themselves into its lackeys.

I come out of both conferences both more hopeful and more concerned than I was before. As mentioned earlier, the courage of Chulalongkorn students in Bangkok to take up sensitive social issues impressed me. I can't repeat often enough how much I appreciate how the organizers brought together such a fascinating conference and that they edit such an influential journal. Likewise, Chayan Vaddhanaphuti, at Chiang Mai University, is a beacon of dignity. Both conferences brought together the spoken word with visual images and personal experiences in masterly ways. At the Chiang Mai conference, we also had the privilege of being invited to two excursions into rural Northern Thailand. First, on 10th–11th March 2014, the third and fourth day of our conference, we visited Suan Lahu, a Lahu village. Then, after the conference, on 13th and 14th March, we paid a visit to the Karen (Ngak' Nyau) village of Ban Nong Thao. These visits deepened the understanding that Victoria Vorreiter and Jeffrey Warner had already brought to us through their excellent exhibitions that were part of the Chiang Mai conference.

In Suan Lahu, Carina zur Strassen was our host. She has a background from Peru, Germany, and Asia. In her house, a famous poster was on display, a poster that depicts Native American leader Sitting Bull and quotes the legendary Cree prophecy: 'When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money.' Carina zur Strassen gave me hope. I immensely admire her for her courageous commitment to heeding the wise Cree warning.

Likewise, the dedication of Joni Odochaw and his family in the Karen village of Ban Nong Thao gave me hope. They eloquently explained to us how traditional community learning works – everybody in a traditional Karen village had skills to be student and teacher – and we were introduced to their 'Lazy School' concept. See the videos that we made to document the important hours of learning at www.humiliationstudies.org/whoweare/videos.php#thailand.

Joni Odochaw is a wisdom teacher in the field of natural resources and environmental management. In 8-10th August 2012, he participated in the 'Inaugural International Symposium on Local Wisdom and Improving Quality of Life,' in Chiang Mai and he is described on one of the conference's posters as follows:

Born and raised in a Karen village of Northern Thailand, Kru Joni Odochaw witnessed major changes in the highlands and became concerned about the erosion of Karen culture and the rapid degradation of the environment. Elected as headman of his village, Kru Joni led 13 other hill tribe groups in a campaign to protect forests and wild animals and map out collective action for watershed management in harmony with nature. Together they promoted ecological farming and consecrated 50 million trees. He also led an effort to form the northern farmers' alliance, to set up the Mae Wang River Basin conservation network, and to open a rice bank. As a Karen elder, he strongly believes in Karen wisdom and stresses relationship with the environment. Kru Joni was instrumental in developing local curricula for hill tribe people's education emphasizing their own culture. He is also actively involved in knowledge sharing and has served as an advisor and resource person for several NGOs and government agencies.

Sadly, I come out of both conferences also more concerned than before. Thailand is a country that never was colonized. It is immensely saddening for me to see this lovely country be sucked empty now by global economic pressures just in the same ugly way as everywhere else. It shocked me to witness the brutality of the onslaught of unsustainable so-called 'modern' market forces on sustainable traditional life styles. Even the Karen wisdom might not survive for much longer. Thailand is in decay. After living in Thailand in 1981, I believe I have the authority to say that. From my time in Thailand in 1981, I remember the sweet sides of traditional Thai culture. I see it survive only in small niches now, as it faces the onslaught from a Western dominator culture. The *dominator model of society* is a term coined by social scientist Riane Eisler, 1987. This dominator culture represents an extreme form of psychological, social, and cultural impoverishment compared with the complexity of social cohesion in many traditional societies, not just in Thailand. Unfortunately, it is inherent in domination that it trumps partnership if left unchecked by collective resistance. Todd Saurman works with minorities in Chiang Mai and he presented his work in both conferences. He reported that egalitarian indigenous communities are being pushed out by hierarchical majority groups. In present times, it is Western dominator culture that colonizes the world more than ever before, and I observe this on all continents. Only the justification is new, no longer to 'civilize savages', but cloaked in the language of 'business' and 'development.'

Agribusiness can serve as an illustration. Black tarps cover the rural landscape, as we witnessed during our visit to Suan Lahu. Underneath these tarps is commercial flower agribusiness, pesticides poison the farmers, and they are all in debt. The price for 'development' is too high if it is paid for with the plundering of social and ecological resources and the poisoning of what is left.

Tourism is another example. As Chayan Vaddhanaphuti formulated it poignantly when we first met on 7th March 2014: commercial tourism is worse than prostitution. It looks for 'unspoiled' spots on the globe, spoils them, and then moves on.

Advertisement boards litter the highway to Pattaya, where big corporate developers promise a 'glamorous lifestyle' to young couples, the imagined glamorous lifestyle of Western individualism. The country hopes that this promise will attract enough 'believers' and that this will help generate 'healthy economic growth and development', as well as 'poverty reduction.' Yet, reality is brutal. It is the brutal destruction of quality of life for the sake of quantity of profit, the destruction of quality at all levels: psychological, social, cultural, and environmental. Whatever growth is achieved in this way, to my view, is poisonous. It may seem 'healthy' for a few investors, in the short term, and if poverty is calculated in terms of participation in a profit-driven system, some may be 'lifted out of poverty' just for a while, before everything is polluted. Development and poverty reduction through these methods reveal themselves to be cover-ups that draw unsuspecting people into toxic bargains, bargains where short-term, short-sighted gains that enrich a few are achieved through practices that poison the lives of many for generations – a price too high for all involved. There are better ways to dignify the world, less costly ways.

A beach paradise like the coast of Southern Thailand is idyllic and therefore attractive. However, it is attractive only as long as it is pristine and unpolluted. Yet, there is no profit for investors to be made from romantic indigenous fishing villages and beaches left untouched. If at all, only the villagers themselves may earn a little extra money by integrating a few backpackers into their village, as happened on the island of Ko Samui when I was there in 1981. By now, the villagers have lost their island to big money. Because at this point, 'developers' have stepped in. Their role is to make the impossible possible, to square the circle so to speak, namely, to gloss over the destruction of a paradise for profit by replacing the attraction from pristine nature by the attraction from so-called luxurious and glamorous life-style. The huge bill boards reads: 'The ultimate beachfront High-rise.'

I would translate this into: 'The ultimate beachfront High-destruction.' Because in reality, the promised luxurious life is a nightmare. Not only are these beachfront high-rise buildings an eyesore, their ugliness thrown into particularly stark contrast by the sad left-overs of the former paradise surrounding them. They also consume energy and water resources at highly irresponsible levels, and they would require an immense amount of maintenance to even faintly resemble their glossy bill boards. In reality, these constructions look shabby and dilapidated even before they are finished, even if one were blind for the ugliness of their design.

In short, here, investors invest in real-estate, believing this to be a shrewd move to protect their wealth, and they justify this as their contribution to job creation and poverty reduction. Yet, they undermine their own aims by their narrow focus on short-term profit from spoiling, and then glossing over the spoilage, and at the end, everybody will lose out, including the investors. As mentioned before, the brutality of this new form of colonization, clearly, is rampant everywhere on our planet; it is only more visible in places such as Pattaya. In 2012, I happened to personally witness a similar situation at the sea front of Recife, Brazil.

Antalya in Turkey is an interesting lesson to study for all countries with idyllic paradises that attract investor interest: first there is the paradise, then come a few backpackers, then tourists who walk in the streets, eat out and shop, thus bringing some income to the local population. Finally, before everything collapses, comes 'all-inclusive.' This happens now in Antalya. Small local hotels can no longer compete with the huge hotel machines which offer 'all-inclusive' packages to tourists. These big operators have the power, due to the masses of tourists they attract, to press local personnel into quasi-slavery. And since the tourists stay inside their hotels all day, the shops and restaurants in town have to close. Watch the documentary 'Schnäppchen-Urlaub Türkei - Sonne, Strand und Billiglohn' (www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4dsYI-7Gok).

My message to countries with paradises that attract investor interest is as follows: Beware, you will be sucked empty! Stop worshipping investor-driven development! Stop selling out your country's quality of life! Work for alternative constitutive rules for the global economic affairs of our human family! (See also my book *A Dignity Economy*, Lindner, 2012a.)

My message to tourists is as follows: Stop being complicit in social and ecological destruction! Stop 'relaxing' for the price of destruction! Travel on your own, meet with people respectfully, and turn tourism into a tool that manifests the fact that we are one human family who has to become the steward of our planet, rather than its destructor.

Agribusiness and tourism are just two examples of what happens also in other segments of society, both in rural and urban settings. Plunder is being introduced, justified, and made possible in myriad ways, leading to the decay of the social and ecological fabric. From the educational system to media, every segment of society is involved.

Indeed, education and media provide another illustration. I have become more aware than ever how education contributes to the race to the bottom toward self-inflicted quasi-slavery of whole societies and communities. Traditionally, children in the Karen village learn by being part of daily village life. Now, as they go to school, they fail to learn what is needed in a comprehensive sustainable self-sufficient village. Instead, they train to stiffen their bodies and become obedient cog-wheels feeding a larger unsustainable system. When we visited Joni Odochaw, he had just returned from a community meeting on the rise of domestic violence in Thai communities. Starting from school-age, education is geared to make people believe that it is 'natural' to obediently compete for dominance, that is it great to enthusiastically run in the rat race, glorifying it as the 'success of the brightest', but ending in rising drug-abuse and domestic violence at micro and meso levels and the collapse of entire ecosystems at macro levels.

Television in the evenings underpins this trend: we were dismayed to see how everybody in the village now is passively glued to images of advertisement creating new 'needs', interrupted by violent films that capitalise on people's

fascination with demons and glorifying fighting. There is no space anymore for listening to elders and integrated mutual community learning. This is the destruction of humanity's social resources, and it prepares the ground for the destruction of our ecological resources.

What we learn is that the building of schools has nothing to do with education. Rather, our aim must be to go from traditional community learning to modern community learning. This means leaving behind, as fast as possible, the present-day dead-end approach that destroys community learning through education being fashioned in ways that introduce the uniformity and obedience of military camps and Fordian factories. The dominator model of society is built on values of male competition; it needs to give way to the *partnership model* of the traditionally female role script of relationship building in cooperation.

This means also giving priority to what anthropologist Alan Page Fiske calls *communal sharing*. Fiske found that people, most of the time and in all cultures, use just four elementary and universal *relational models* for organizing most aspects of sociality (Fiske, 1991). These models are: (1) *communal sharing*, CS, (2) *authority ranking*, AR, (3) *equality matching*, EM, and (4) *market pricing*, MP. Family life is often informed by communal sharing. Trust, love, care, and intimacy can prosper in this context. In a good family, everybody gives according to ability, as a gift, and receives according to need. Authority ranking involves asymmetry among people who are ordered along vertical hierarchical social dimensions. This can express itself as good parenting or as brutal dictatorship. Good parenting can go together with communal sharing, while brutal dictatorship destroys communal sharing. Equality matching implies a model of balance such as taking turns, for instance, in car pools or babysitting cooperatives. The understanding of promise as a depersonalized contract occurs here. Market pricing builds on a model of proportionality with respect to ratios and rates.

Nurturing the partnership model means taking communal sharing as primary guidance, defining authority ranking as respect for the wisdom of elders and the innovative spirit of youngsters, and relegating equality matching and market pricing to the necessary minimum rather than allowing it to impoverish society and destroy communities.

To nurture the partnership model has never been as important as in our modern era. When the world was not yet as interconnected as it is today, competition for domination led to 'victory' in some cases. Now, in an interconnected world, it leads to collective short-sightedness, which, in turn, may lead all of humankind into collective suicide. What is neglected in the rush for elusive victory, are the advantages of prevention over damage-control and the benefits from slow thinking (see, among others, the book *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, by Daniel Kahneman, 2011). I am very glad to have met the 'Lazy Man' and having learned about the Lazy School at the Karen village Ban Nong Thao. How gratifying that these villagers were hesitant ('lazy') to jump on the bandwagon of collective destruction, cloaked as 'modern ways.'

While I write these lines, I receive an email from activist Charles Eisenstein that shows that the Lazy Man is not alone. Eisenstein writes on 3rd April 2014:

I just got back from a trip to India that was both heartening and alarming. Many of the things I write about are rooted in ancient tradition and living practice there; meanwhile, the pace of ecocide and culture stripping is appalling. Billboards everywhere display a North American style nuclear family Pepsi-drinking brand-worshipping car-dependent high-tech lifestyle, as if its desirability were beyond dispute. I spoke a lot about how we in the West are beginning to disbelieve in that kind of development. I said that the days of the guy from America coming to tell you what to do are almost over. 'I don't know what you should do,' I said, 'but let me tell you where "development" has taken my society and the planet.' Of course I also described how the global financial system pushes India and everyone else toward the standard development model, which usually corresponds to making the social and natural commons maximally available to global capital.

After the conferences, I spent a few days in Cambodia. Poi Pet and Siem Reap which resembled Thailand as I loved it 30 years ago. I got the feel of community – each little building I saw had its very own particular individual touch. Only seldom did I see 'developers' at work with their anonymous multiplied prototype approach which empties communities of their diversity and soul and turns community members into the consumers of prefabricated space for outside investors to profit.

Not just in Asia, not just on its beaches, world-wide, wealthy investors look for ways to protect and augment their wealth, and they look for projects that would give them a return on their investment. This inspires developers to search for places where outsiders can extract profit from local communities. So, developers create projects for investors that destroy local communities to extract profit. They do this in Thailand and have almost destroyed the country's traditional social fabric by now. Sadly, Cambodian slave-like labour contributes to this destruction, and draws Cambodian society into this weakening of the social fabric itself in the process. I was told that the same process of sucking out profit for outsiders from local neighborhoods has begun in Phnom Penh now, too. Investors want to bulldoze communities with small houses to build larger buildings.

Global awareness and solidarity is needed more than ever. The citizens of the world are called to follow Stéphane Hessel and to stand up. Yet, sadly, there is more bad news. Certain aspects of globalization intensify local navel-gazing and hinder the emergence of global responsibility. The reason is that humans share a tendency to split into in- and out-groups. Unfortunately, even the most innocent 'we', if it means 'we, as opposed to them', may end in the desperate question of 'why do they hate us?' This trend is intensified in a world that becomes ever more confusing and fear-inducing for people who were accustomed to secure cultural roots when they feel that the ground beneath them is falling away through globalization. Globalization makes the world frightfully *liquid* (Bauman, 2010). Displaced people, refugees and many indigenous peoples have always tasted insecurity, the very insecurity that globalization now brings to the rest.

The *contact hypothesis*, or the hope that mere contact can foster friendship, is not necessarily true (Allport, 1954, Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). On the contrary, where there is no contact, there is no humiliation. Contact can unsettle, it can motivate people to rigidify their in-group identifications rather than to open up, and the more people know about each other, out-groups will feel insulted and respond in kind. The Danish cartoons brought this new reality to the world most vividly (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, Lindner, 2006 and Lindner, 2009a). A vicious cycle can be set off, starting with insecurity and escalating to hostility and humiliation. The world can turn into a powerhouse of hostility, a hotbed for terrorism, when contact creates new dynamics of humiliation.

Humiliation becomes particularly painful when human rights are preached with noble words that create high hopes, only to turn out as empty rhetoric: 'To recognise humanity hypocritically and betray the promise humiliates in the most devastating way by denying the humanity professed' (Stephan Feuchtwang, November 14, 2002, in a personal communication; see also Hartling & Luchetta, 1999, Lindner, 2006 and Lindner, 2009a).

Must we therefore forget about global citizenship of care and responsibility?
This question will be furthered explored in part 2 in JUCR volume 9.

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Indigenous Music Mediation with Urban Khmer:

Tampuan Adaptation and Survival

Todd Saurman* (U.S.A.)

Abstract

This paper describes some lowland/highland Khmer points of interconnection for indigenous Tampuan communities from the highland Northeast, Cambodia. Tampuan community musicians respond constructively to a Siem Reap tourist cultural show that depicts their indigenous ethnolinguistic group. Tampuan musicians make trips to the urban center of Phnom Penh to represent themselves in a CD recording, a concert, and a TV program. I contend that some community members are expressing strong cultural values as they mediate with the national and urban culture in spite of a history of Khmerization efforts by lowland Khmer. A strong value of mediation reinforces highland desires to communicate with outsiders perceived as having great effect on highland everyday life. Meanwhile some urban Khmer who may mourn the loss of Khmer traditional culture and support its revival have demonstrated interest in the traditional cultures of Khmer highland communities as they possibly empathize with others perceived to be experiencing levels of alienation and marginalization similar to their own.

Keywords: *Cambodia, Indigenous, Music, Revitalization, Cultural Change, Mediation*

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Introduction

The Cambodian highland indigenous people are quite possibly the least likely group to come to mind when considering urban issues. Even though migration to Cambodia's largest city, Phnom Penh, is rare, they do connect in some surprising ways. As Anna Tsing demonstrates in "In the Realm of the Diamond Queen", so called marginalized indigenous groups, their marginalized subgroups (women in Tsing's study), and apparent marginalized individuals (a "crazy" woman/shaman) can be keenly aware of issues related to the national and international worlds of urbanites (Tsing, 1993). Such keen awareness in the opposite direction is much less likely. No doubt there are misconceptions on both sides, but perhaps the misconceptions as well as the unexpected connections can highlight some of the boundaries of urban life and give insights into perceptions of urban life for those thought to be most outside of the urban world. Tampuan value of mediation is demonstrated through connections that reinforce highland desires to communicate with outsiders that are perceived as having great effect on highland everyday life. Exploration of these connections contributes to an analytic space for viewing "both constraint and creativity," which may result from marginality (Tsing, 1993:18).

Phnom Penh along with the third largest city and tourist destination, Siem Reap, emerge as priority points of engagement. For indigenous people, the mediums for connection or having a voice with government, universities, NGOs, cultural organizations or with other interested national and international audiences may ironically and perhaps accurately be most often perceived to exist within the urban environment. In contrast, various people from urban settings may express a range of views about indigenous highland communities from condescension to romanticization, but some may find themselves empathizing with highland others, perceiving them as experiencing levels of alienation and/or marginalization similar to their own.

Lowland/Highland Relations

Tampuan indigenous communities are located in the highlands of Northeast Cambodia in Ratanakiri Province on the border of Southern Laos and the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Historically the highland indigenous people have been looked down upon by the lowland Khmer as "uncivilized" (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; White & Bourdier, 1996; Baird, 2008a) and as "minorities" in a more derogatory sense. Over the last quarter century of nation-state development there has been a dramatic shift in the everyday lives of the highland communities.

While very few Tampuan have migrated out of the Cambodian highlands, Khmerization has had devastating effects on Tampuan society through the migration of lowland Khmer to the highland area, formal education in a Khmer school system, government interventions, and the influence of modern Khmer media; most Tampuan live with the threat of being increasingly marginalized within a growing Khmer society. Intergenerational contact and transmission of cultural knowledge and values have decreased dramatically in the last two decades.

For the Tampuan, music creativity may be involved in the contestation of nation-state power, but it may also allow community members to mediate tensions between nationalization and cultural preservation through the continuing creation of culture. Instead of viewing the indigenous group as a homogenous force taking purposeful action through music to resist or contest pressure from the nation-state, it seems more likely that certain individuals are also contesting even their own internal pressures to “preserve culture” (as something homogenous and static) through creating culturally resonant innovations in music that invite active community engagement and intergenerational connection, thus reviving the processes of creating and constructing culture.

Tampuan and Lowland Khmer Contrasts

How can community members reconcile a desire to maintain the value of their roots with a need to survive under the influence of Khmerization? There is at least token support from the Khmer government for cultural preservation among the highland groups. Since at least the early 1990s the government communicated that the highland groups were allowed to maintain their culture, songs, and dances (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; White, 1996). Many Tampuan struggle with increasing outside influences such as Khmerization and desire to somehow maintain their culture and ethnic identity. As one younger Tampuan musician, Wain Churk, said, “It’s good to try and think about old songs. [Our people] are throwing it away, and forgetting about their roots... We look at the leaves, the flowers... but like a flowering tree – we forget the root” (Churk, 2001: personal communication).

Generally, the highland ethnic groups have been distinguished from the lowland Khmer in several ways: Highland agriculture has traditionally been based on the practice of swidden cultivation and the cultivation of highland rice. Their religion is traditionally animistic, having sacred land and burial grounds (Baird, 2008a; Ovesen & Trankell 2004; White, 1996). These aspects of their culture are threatened because much of their land has been taken or bought in the last two decades by the government, businesses, and individual local lowland Khmer. Socially, the highland groups tend to be egalitarian with an emphasis on consensus and nonauthoritarian leadership whereas the lowland Khmer tend to be more hierarchical with authoritarian style leadership (Gregerson, 2009; Baird, 2008a; Jonsson, 1997). Highland indigenous groups can also still be distinguished by the sound of their music (instruments, tunings, styles, music system)¹, which contrasts with lowland Khmer folk music, Khmer classical music, and Khmer Western-influenced pop music.

While younger Tampuan people often play amplified prerecorded Khmer rock at community gatherings, there may only be a few Tampuan who can play chords on a guitar, and so the main music that Tampuan communities engage with is still played on gongs, locally made flutes, and string instruments. Most young people have not learned to play or create songs on any instruments as they have little opportunity to access Khmer or modern Western instruments and the transmission of Tampuan music has almost completely stopped for well over a

decade. Most young people are like cultural orphans with limited options available for any type of music creativity.

The Tampuan at the center of this study are an exception as some have begun researching various genres of Tampuan music and dance and also have begun creating songs in a more modern highland style of music that still use gongs and other Tampuan traditional instruments. This style is called *sinlipa* style (art song). Most of the performances are intended to communicate within Tampuan and/or highland communities both through Tampuan song texts and symbolically through the use of highland and Tampuan music instruments, but some revitalizing activities have also been directed toward Phnom Penh and Siem Reap

A brief historical review of indigenous and nation-state relations and especially how the state has attempted to develop indigenous people demonstrates attitudes and misconceptions toward indigenous people that have caused more harm than benefits. Music plays a role in that history and yet its role from an outside view stands in stark contrast to the Tampuan activities at the center of my ethnography where the Tampuan are seen to use music to mediate development and to revitalize their communities. It is easy for the outsider to impose their own views on the selective preservation of music culture. Such treatment of music may symbolize treatment of the indigenous highland people of Cambodia in general.

History of Nation-State Relations and Development

The highland groups may have lived in their present area for thousands of years, and while there was increased contact with others during the French colonial period, there was little of what could be called “development” among the rather remote indigenous groups of what is now Northeast Cambodia. There is a long history of the indigenous people being used as slaves or conscripted for labor or fighting. The French tried to bring in roads and education along with promoting a less nomadic existence, but the highland groups did not see any need for these changes and so the moves were unsuccessful.

For the most part, lowland Khmers in Cambodia equate being Cambodian with being Khmer, as they are the majority. In other words, there is little recognition of other ethnic groups living within Cambodia’s borders (White, 1996). Other ethnic minority groups mostly in other parts of Cambodia would include, Lao, Chinese, Vietnamese, Cham, and Kuy. Ethnic differences are seen as racial differences and yet there is evidence that one could convert to being a Khmer by adapting their language and customs (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; White, 1996). Development for many is really about nationalization and creating unity and strength of the nation-state as protection from other nation-states. “Although largely unstated, many government officials and developers view indigenous culture as inferior to that of the dominant society” (McCaskill, 1997:42). Historically, Khmer government officials and elites have demonstrated an attitude of ethnic superiority in relation to the “minority” groups.²

During the Sangkum period under Prince Sihanouk (1953-1970), lowland Khmers attempted to “civilize” the highlanders. They were seen as ignorant and superstitious (White & Bourdier, 1996). The goal was to replace the clan spirit with national consciousness (White, 1996). Prince Sihanouk promoted education and health care services as a way of helping the highlanders to become Khmer as quickly as possible and insisted on the use of education as a means for rapid Khmerization of the local population, along with the regular presence of health care services. By June 1957, education was seen as key to the government’s Khmerization efforts. The idea was to “Gather the Phnongs³ – make them feel the need to learn how to speak, read and write Khmer – teach them how to get dressed – teach them how to work” (Baird, 2008a:224 citing Meyers, 1979:685-6). Making the highlanders modern was to help them to lose their cultural identities. “The government wanted the highlanders to exchange their traditional dwellings for Khmer ones, their traditional clothing for Khmer attire, and their languages for Khmer. They expected them to convert from Animism to Buddhism” (Baird, 2008a:222). The Vietnamese in Vietnam had been encouraging lowland people to migrate to the highland areas to nationalize the highland groups there and so in 1958 the Khmers began to do likewise.

It would appear that some of the biggest changes in highland traditions began during the Sangkum period. Customs, dress, and houses began to change. Older Tampuan who remember that period say that they had lost many of their traditions since that time. There has continued to be a willingness on the part of the highland groups to accommodate aspects of Khmer culture (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004). Throughout the Pol Pot Khmer Rouge period (1975-1979) the highland groups lost many of their elders and with their passing they also lost a sense of their oral history (White, 1996).

Under Pol Pot, highlanders were viewed as more Khmer than urban Khmers because they had not been as influenced by Vietnamese and Chinese foreigners. That did not stop the Khmer Rouge from suppressing their religious and social practices, but still they were portrayed as supporters of the revolution (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; White, 1996). While it is not clear how much the highland groups supported the Khmer Rouge, it does seem likely that some communities cooperated early on in reaction to how they had been treated by the Khmer government previously (White, 1996). There is a wide range of personal testimonies from the Khmer Rouge period. Some became soldiers for Pol Pot as they felt that they had no choice. Others who came to understand the radical nature of the Khmer Rouge policies escaped into Vietnam, only to return later with the liberating Vietnamese forces (White, 1996).

Under the Vietnamese-guided Constitution of The People’s Republic of Kampuchea (1979-1989), the state made plans to develop the economy, education, culture, social affairs, health, and communications throughout the highland and other remote areas (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004). After this transition the Khmers returned to the same basic approach of the Sangkum period. However, policies were modeled after those developed by the Vietnamese toward their own ethnic

minorities (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; Baird, 2008a). While gaining literacy in Khmer was a major goal, “minority languages were respected and each tribe was given the right to write, speak, and teach in its own language” (Baird, 2008a:247).

Even though the highlanders were historically included as “Khmer,” they had not been officially given rights as citizens at least as late as 1996 (White & Boudier 1996). According to White (1996), the highlanders thought of themselves as Khmer citizens. According to Ovesen & Trankell (2004), as of 1954 people could become citizens by becoming fluent in Khmer language, customs, and traditions. As of 2002, less than half of highlanders could speak the Khmer language (Mallow, 2002).

Khmer language education is particularly relevant when examining how Tampuan language and music have become major points of negotiation for establishing ethnic identity. The Khmer government has communicated that the highland groups were allowed to maintain their culture, songs, and dances (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004; Baird, 2008a; White, 1996). The social disruption caused by Khmerization, however, continues to be a major challenge. Education as initiated by Khmers to fulfill the nation-states plan to make the highlanders into Khmerized citizens has disrupted the traditional authority that village leaders held in the past as the holders of traditional knowledge.

Shifting Land Rights

Within the last decade the international aid community has given vast amounts of monetary aid and influenced how development has been implemented throughout Cambodia. The United Nations and various NGOs have been working in northeastern Cambodia with the purpose of helping and alleviating poverty, all in the name of “development” (Baird, 2008a:317). Cambodia has adopted a multi-party “democratic” system and initiated neoliberal market reforms, and with the support of the UN, has made massive development efforts in Ratanakiri province by providing health and education development support. The Khmer government has encouraged expansion of road networks, commercial logging, the rapid expansion of cashew plantations, land alienation, the development of Virachey National Park and Yeak Loam Commune Protected Area (sometimes spelled Yeak Laom or Yak Loam), and hydroelectric power development (Baird, 2008a; Riebe, 1999).

For the lowland Khmers, farming has traditionally been defined as the growing of lowland rice. For the highlanders, swidden cultivation of highland rice and other crops along with hunting and gathering has traditionally been the main sources of sustenance. Until recently, swidden cultivation had been completely sustainable (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004). The Khmer introduced cash crops of palm oil, coffee, and cashews to the highlands, and have forced highlanders to reduce times between crops in the same areas thus depleting the fertility of the soil. Previously, the French and Khmer had exploited the Northeast with rubber, pine, and coffee plantations (White, 1996). Even under the strong influence of Khmer education, migration, and marketing some highland groups have maintained dual agricultural systems, growing both lowland and highland rice.

The social solidarity of village communities has primarily depended on cooperation over subsistence farming. Lowland Khmers view swidden cultivation as inefficient and as the cause of deforestation, even though the yields of highland cultivation of rice are very high and forests are allowed to grow back between cultivation periods (White & Bourdier, 1996). During good years there is usually a surplus of rice (White, 1996). Rather, it is the increase in lowland Khmer and other populations in Ratanakiri that contribute most to the poverty and to deforestation.

After 1989 major exploitation of Ratanakiri province's forests began. This had a huge impact on the ecology and the social life of the indigenous communities (Ovesen & Trankell, 2004). Illegal logging continues to devastate remaining forests. Cutting of the forests without permission from spirits clearly goes against the customary laws of the highland groups (White, 1996). "The most pressing change facing the highlanders today is the commercial exploitation of the upland areas" (White, 1996). New laws say that land must be farmed continuously (based on lowland rice practices) or property rights are forfeited. In the past the highlanders continually moved to cultivate areas that had remained fallow for fifteen to twenty years, thus allowing time for reforestation. Now they are expected to own the one piece of land permanently, but as of 1996 villagers were mostly unaware of this (White, 1996). Private companies are being given land without addressing the rights of the highland people. Legal clarification of land rights was needed (White, 1996). Just like in the Sangkum period, the Khmer government is still deciding what parts of highland culture should be kept and what should be done away with (White, 1996). For the highlanders there is no separation between their ancestral lands, the forests, and their traditions. Traditions are being defined by the government as "playing gongs, singing, and dancing" (White, 1996:23) thus exemplifying the modern practice of selectively segmenting traditional cultures with little regard for the holistic nature of local communities.

Land Laws and Music Transmission

In 2001 a land law was established that states, "no authority outside the community may acquire any rights to immovable properties belonging to an indigenous community" (Rith, 2008). However, there have been no sub-decrees drafted or implemented and so the law cannot be enforced in detail and land can be taken as "economic land concessions." So paradoxically one of the most disruptive and intrusive changes of the last decade has been the taking of highland land by the lowland Khmer, often legally by having highlanders sign over deeds that they could not read. Illiteracy still remains high and so the highlanders are left vulnerable; experience has taught them not to sign documents. As avoidance of an integrated life with Khmer lowlanders is no longer possible, the future of economic and land development among the highland groups requires successful programs of education and increasing Khmer literacy. Music has increasingly played a role in Tampuan literacy and bilingual education with Tampuan songs promoting and aiding Tampuan literacy efforts both at local and national levels. The desire to create, teach, and learn new Tampuan songs has provided motivation for some Tampuan to read and write in Tampuan language

especially among those who would otherwise be less motivated or confident to learn a writing system seen as having little relevance beyond Tampuan identities, relationships, and everyday life. For those who depend exclusively on oral communication, one community used songs to communicate commune land regulations that would help protect their land.

For younger people there has been a dramatic shift toward vernacular literacy during the last ten years, through formal and nonformal education not only among the Tampuan (Crowley, 2007) but among other highland groups as well. Baird notes the use of vernacular language in education as implemented by certain NGOs in contrast to the standard Khmer-only education system using government curriculum. Non-Timber Forest Products Project (NTFP) and International Cooperation for Cambodia (ICC) have adapted to the highland cultures by initiating spatially flexible nonformal education programs, whereas CARE (Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere), while being less spatially flexible, offers instruction in both vernacular and Khmer languages in a bilingual curriculum that is sensitive to local livelihoods and traditions (Baird, 2008a). Along with nonformal health education, ICC has also focused on bilingual or multilingual (highland and Khmer languages) education programs. Baird points out that the Ministry of Education is increasingly acknowledging that the students who have learned to read first in their mother tongue actually have greater success later learning the Khmer language while also being able to contribute to their own linguistic traditions (Baird, 2008b).

Following its historical precedence, the Cambodian government still appears to support indigenous music and dance as they have legally linked them to new indigenous land rights. The land laws established in 2001 describe three phases for official recognition. Recognition must be requested from the Ministry of Rural Development, applied for with the Ministry of Interior, and then finally the communities must apply for a community land title with the Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction. The first phase requires communities to prove they share a common language, customary law, and culture. They must also exhibit their art, dance, and ceremonial events for government approval. This raises serious questions about who determines what is cultural. If their music and dances adapt to modern forms and old ones are forgotten, will they no longer be eligible for land titles? How much does this legal process influence highland group's efforts to "preserve culture" for government approval out of desperation for protecting their land? As of February 2011, thirty-one highland communities had been recognized for the first phase with the Ministry of Rural Development. Seventeen communities plus three pilot groups sponsored by an NGO had reached phase two with legal recognition by the Ministry of Interior. No indigenous communities had yet reached the third phase of receiving communal land titles (Walker and Nimol, 2011). The first two phases took seven to eight years. As of 2012, 153 indigenous communities had entered into the process of land titling with the help of several groups, including the International Labor Organization. Out of those 153, thirty have registered as legal entities, which is the last stage of the procedure (Galvin, 2012). Again, such selective attempts at

influencing highland cultural preservation, no matter how well-intentioned, treats highland music and dance as static and essentialized in contrast to a holistic internally motivated use of music to bring life to their language, music and communities.

Revitalization of Tampuan Music as Mediation

In spite of the attitudes and actions of many influential lowland Khmer, my key Tampuan contacts for over the last twelve years have demonstrated strong Tampuan values and skills of mediation as they negotiate their identities and the desires of their communities to survive and adapt under the pressures of Khmerization (Saurman, 2012). Three of these Tampuan contacts are Bech Yek or Yeck, who at the time of this writing is the program provincial coordinator of IBCDE (Identity Based Community Development and Education) for ICC in Ratanakiri; Thieng Savoeun, ICC staff member and gifted Tampuan composer in multiple music systems (Tampuan, highland, Khmer folk, and Western); and Wain Churk or Ven Che, who worked many years for CARE Cambodia and is the leader of the Yeak Loam Arts Group. All three are now in their mid-thirties and are married with children.

My ethnography has focused primarily on how some Tampuan are revitalizing the making of music in their communities and thus have contributed to an ongoing revitalization of those communities. The activities they have engaged in meet three basic conditions that I propose are necessary for the revitalization of music within primarily oral cultures. First, people that are fully integrated in Tampuan communities are taking ownership of processes needed to revitalize their music without depending on outsiders to sustain those processes. Second, they are adapting methods to reignite the intergenerational transmission of music, language, and cultural knowledge. Third, and often most ignored by cultural preservationists, some Tampuan are creating new songs that actively communicate within multiple generations (Saurman, 2012). Not only are there attempts at communicating within Tampuan communities through song texts and genre selections, but mediation efforts are also being directed at communicating with others outside their communities who they perceive to be most effecting Tampuan everyday lives.

Sound Recording Projects

While consulting with ICC and other local NGOs on how to support local music periodically since 2001, I started more in-depth field research with the Tampuan in March 2010. The following vignettes are examples of holistic and internally motivated music use which demonstrate specific urban connections and contrasts personally observed from Tampuan everyday life.

Within the first weeks of my 2010 fieldwork I met with Churk and the Yeak Loam Arts Group for a Sunday afternoon rehearsal at the Yeak Loam Cultural Center. They were preparing for a rare trip to Phnom Penh to make a professional recording in a music studio with Cambodia Living Arts. I met the arts group ten days later in Phnom Penh and attended the first day of their recording sessions.

They needed to make many adjustments to being in an urban environment. Several times older members inadvertently walked into glass doors, usually hand rolled cigarette first, accompanied by much laughter among themselves. At the time Ban Lung had plenty of shops and guest houses with glass doors, but the doors were rarely closed since the shops and lobbies were rarely air conditioned. It is unlikely that older Tampuan ever enter those modern shops or even go into town much at all.

At one point during the first recording session it became apparent that lowland urban Khmer shared some commonalities with the belief system of the Tampuan that at first baffled the few Western observers. Unexplained noises were heard by the lowland Khmer sound engineers during the morning recordings and it was therefore mutually decided that the Tampuan performers needed to perform a ceremony with rice wine and a chicken after lunch to appease these disrupting spirits. Playing of gongs was part of the short ceremony.

A Western reporter and videographer from the Phnom Penh Post were also present at the recording. They interviewed Churk and a Yeak Loam village elder, one of Churk's main mentors in Tampuan culture and music. Also while in Phnom Penh, a private meeting was arranged for Churk and two expert string players, Yok and Sep, to exchange performances with an expert Khmer arak singer/musician who accompanied himself on a three-string Khmer lute (*chapei dornng vang*).



Figure 1. Spirit ceremony for disrupting spirits in the recording studio.

Seven months later I accompanied the Yeak Loam Arts Group on their trip to Phnom Penh for a concert and promotion of the CD release. During this trip I anticipated hearing Tampuan travel impressions of modern national and urban experiences, but most of the comments were observations about plant life either

along the road or transported on trucks. The group requested a long rest stop closer to Phnom Penh to look at green rice fields that extended to the horizon and they declined the opportunity to go to a modern shopping mall while in Phnom Penh. The Tampuan arts group rehearsed at a place arranged by Cambodia Living Arts for the evening concert of songs from the CD, and then performed for a room packed with a very appreciative seemingly middle-class lowland Khmer audience.



Figure 2. Yeak Loam Arts Group singers in Phnom Penh record “Songs From The Lake.”



Figure 3. Yok, Sep, and Churk traveling in Phnom Penh. ICC in Ratanakiri has also made several CDs, but primarily for communication

within Tampuan communities . One CD promotes literacy and the RIDE (Ratanakiri Integrated Development and Education) project (ICC RIDE 2009). Yeck, Savouen, other ICC staff, and an Arts Group from La'eun village worked on this recording project for at least three years. It consists of twenty-three songs accompanied by gongs and other Tampuan music instruments in sinlipa style (considered a more modern highland style) that teach about and promote literacy, health issues, care for the environment, values of working hard and getting along. One song composed by Savoeun encourages Tampuan to welcome important officials to villages and special occasions. That song is also intended to encourage young people to respect elders in the village. As part of my field research I discovered that some of the literacy songs from that CD were the most popular new songs among young and old Tampuan living around the Ban Lung, Yeak Loam area. It is possible that the songs are popular due to the ease with which the songs can be learned and sung by most Tampuan and due to the significance of the widespread interest in Tampuan literacy over the last decade.

Video and Television Recording Projects

In March 2010 a group from the Ratanakiri ICC center traveled to Phnom Penh to make the first-ever television program controlled primarily by highland people and how they wanted to be represented. There have been other television shows where lowland Khmers had gone to Ratanakiri to film staged traditional songs. ICC's performance was for the royal-sponsored Bayon TV station and they wanted to communicate about highland bilingual education. They taped shows for broadcasting one half hour each Wednesday evening for one month. The show featured ICC staff dressed in traditional Tampuan clothes but singing lowland Khmer-style songs composed by Savoeun using highland languages. The songs were accompanied by Khmer traditional music instruments such as the tro or double-string bowed fiddle and the kloy or flute. The show was intended for lowland Khmer as there would be few, if any, Tampuan watching television. Throughout the show lowland Khmer hosts explained the importance of the multilingual education programs among the highland groups in Ratanakiri.



Figure 4. Savoeun sings on national television.

In 2006 people from several highland groups took part in a video project of high quality where they again represented themselves. I received a video CD copy of this Forest Mountain Voice project from the unlikely source of a lowland Khmer friend living in Phnom Penh. One of the main Tampuan producers of the project, Sovann Hien told me of his plans to increase the use of Tampuan culture for tourism.⁴

In the last few years an internet site, “Big Stories Small Towns,” has posted short videos made by film makers and local community members from various language groups around the world that highlight aspects of their lives. There are a quite a few well-made videos on the Tampuan people of Ratanakiri and the segments represent a variety of Tampuan people’s views.

Song Competitions and Cultural Shows

Art groups from several Tampuan villages have traveled to Phnom Penh and won awards at national competitions for indigenous performers. The group from Savoeun’s village won first prize for dance at one of those competitions. Such awards certainly raise the status of Tampuan music and dance. The preparations require training, community cooperation, and some degree of creativity for creating a pleasing spectacle that people from around the country can observe and judge. However, music and dance competitions provide little motivation for Tampuan to actively use their songs for communication within their primarily oral communities. That is not to say that competitions cannot be used as a mediation opportunity for both communicating with other Tampuan through songs texts and somehow educating and accurately representing themselves with a wider audience.

Highland groups of Southeast Asia are often represented in cultural shows by the national population. Siem Reap is not only the location of Ankor Wat but it is also filled with a thriving tourism industry. Of the many places to see performances of traditional Cambodian music and dance in Phnom Penh or Siem Reap, some also represent or misrepresent specific highland groups. One of the last things lowland Khmer performers expect is that highland Khmer may be attending one of those performances. One coworker living among the Bunong in Mondulkiri province reported to me how he attended one of these performances in Phnom Penh with some Bunong friends. At the close of the performance they spoke with the performers and told them that they were Bunong. The performers refused to believe it. Some lowland Khmer believe that the highland Khmer have tails and a hole in their chest so on another occasion one of the Bunong had to open his shirt to show a disbelieving lowland Khmer that he indeed did not have a hole in his chest. The lowland Khmer may have been too embarrassed to ask if he had a tail.

Tampuan music performances for the purpose of tourism are not likely to promote active use of music for communication among the Tampuan, however, tourism plays a less visible role for allowing mediation by Tampuan individuals between Tampuan communities and those outside their local communities. First

of all I would not have been able to do this research if my main contacts had not learned English through experience as tour guides in their younger years.

Secondly, links between the Tampuan value of mediation and tourism were very apparent to me as I attended an ICC Tampuan music composition workshop led by Savoeun. For the workshop, some of the best musicians and young people interested in creating new Tampuan songs were called together from Tampuan communes throughout the Ban Lung - Yeak Loam area. In one activity participants watched a video recorded at a Siem Reap cultural show with Khmer “representing” a Tampuan wedding ceremony. The recording was made by some ICC personnel while in Siem Reap to attend a conference. Surprisingly none of the Tampuan present displayed any visible adverse reaction and the younger participants even laughed at the parts where any lowland Khmer audience might laugh. Savoeun had the group discuss what elements the cultural show performers got right, what they got wrong, and graciously, what they could learn from the representation about making shows for tourists. The participants quickly came up with a list of things they could learn, presumably for their own future cultural shows. Paradoxically, my research describes a current absence of Tampuan cultural shows for tourists. In the past local restaurants and resorts would occasionally pay art groups to perform. In Siem Reap the Tampuan ICC staff (Yeck, Savoeun, and others) had the opportunity to give feedback to the performance directors and graciously offered to help them be more accurate in their representation.

Mediation Versus Cultural Preservation

The use of electronic media (video, television, CDs, radio) all illustrate how various Tampuan people are mediating with national and global forces. For the highland groups the internet has probably contributed little to connecting people from within language groups or even between highland groups because up to the time of my research only those located in the Ban Lung area had internet access and there are few if any other Tampuan scattered around the country, much less the globe. Internet does, however, offer global connections both as an influence on Tampuan and offering possibilities for influencing others (national, regional, and global), such as through some of the videos of Tampuan representing themselves on the internet.

The new songs that younger Tampuan create lose some of the cultural aspects that would be typically identified by outsiders in goals for cultural preservation. The new songs avoid the old language that is not easily understood by a younger audience. The styles of songs that are the oldest and most likely to be lost are often not used in new songs except on the CD made by the Yeak Loam Arts Group. Improvisation, which is the basis of one particular genre of Tampuan singing is not appropriate for most of the newer contexts where performances are planned, songs are learned from written texts, and newer songs are sung in unison by a group. On the other hand, those newer songs may be exhibiting deeper aspects of culture (unity, helpfulness, respect, effective communication, mediation, and community) arrived at through deeper cultural reflexivity than having to perform

for government approval. Such aspects may only be apparent to an outsider through ethnographic study. These cultural values begin to address the deeper question of why any process of music revitalization might be occurring in the first place. By consistently creating new songs with a mediation role based on relationships (at interhighland, national, regional, and global levels) Tampuan individuals are contesting what they have often experienced with lowland Khmer or nation-state interactions.

Researcher as Mediator

Churk often explained to me his visionary plans for revitalizing Tampuan culture, or rather, helping all Tampuan adapt and survive. One day when I paraphrased what he seemed to be expressing about how meaningful creativity and innovation were essential for Tampuan to stop the loss of their culture, values, and environment; he stopped and asked, “Could you send an email out about that?” When I asked him whom he wanted me to send an email to, he said, “The whole world!” as he broke into laughter. He eventually clarified that he meant all of the outside stakeholders that get involved with Tampuan people – government officials, NGO workers, development representatives, tourists, missionaries, educators, researchers, project funders, etc. It is obvious that he feels that I have some ability to access and influence some outsiders in ways that he does not or at least that I could affirm the ideals that he strives to communicate to other outsiders with whom he has contact. Either way he has given me a mandate to communicate a view that he feels affects Tampuan everyday life. Churk has specifically requested that I help his community by representing him, his ideas, and his community. I believe the request was to communicate with many outside stakeholders and not just the academic community.

Conclusion

The Tampuan will continue to need much creativity in adapting to the constraints of marginality as they work to influence urban policy makers about highland needs. The opportunity to appear on national television was one important way to educate others on the multilingual and multimusical possibilities of the highland groups along with promoting acceptance of their adaptations to a national education system in multilingual education. The personnel at Cambodia Living Arts and the appreciative urban audiences for the Yeak Loam Lake Arts Group concert may indeed empathize with the alienation and marginalization of highland groups and the prospect of them losing their language, music, and culture. While such empathy helps raising awareness and concern for cultural preservation of highland groups among some, it has rarely been accompanied by opportunities for obtaining a more holistic view of the highland everyday life and the dynamics of change that are occurring there. Going beyond views of cultural preservation or contestation of national dominance, Tampuan individuals are also contesting even their own internal pressures to “preserve culture” (as something homogenous and static) through creating culturally resonant innovations in music that invite active community engagement and intergenerational connection while mediating the processes of creating and constructing culture and communicating with external communities. A more holistic view along with increased awareness

of lowland/highland relations and identities could be helpful not only for the treatment of indigenous people, but also for greater urban reflexivity.

Endnotes

1. A music system consists of a unique inventory of pitches or pitch intervals, emic rules for which pitches can follow which pitches, rhythmic structures, overall forms and structures, etc.; all interconnected with significance of connotative meaning for those familiar with that particular system (similar to a language as a system).
2. Of course one cannot generalize about the positions of all Khmer or government officials. It is difficult to conceive, for example, that the lowland Khmers who see highland groups as destroyers of the forest are the same people who would seek to pay them to clear the forests to make way for cash crops. On the other hand, many who have lived closer to the highland groups have had good relations with them (White 1996).
3. Phnongs is a name commonly used by lowland Khmer to refer to all highland groups but also refers to the Bunong language group living primarily in Mondulkiri Province.
4. While tourism is often promoted as a means of cultural preservation, on its own it would do little if anything to promote the creation of new songs for actively communicating within Tampuan communities. For the most part, I have not seen the Tampuan find sustainable ways to convert their practices of communicating through song into profitable spectacle for outsiders.

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Occupy Action! Collective Actions & Emotions in Public Places

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Abstract

In recent times there is an accelerated movement in the privatization of public land. Some representative cases are the names of subway stops and central squares being associated with the brands of large corporations. Consequently the city centers are becoming an ambiguous territory making it unclear what is public and private. Additionally these newly established social practices have consequences and poses questions as where private ground begins (and ends) and how the freedom to use such spaces are affected? The privatization of public land appears to be an encroaching process and standard as similar patterns were found in other European cities. In our research, we have observed that a chronotope has been generated and repeated in this process. Similarities in London and Madrid were found during our ethnographic work allowing us to assert that any change or social transformation happens as a product of its historical context. The purpose of this paper is to present the Occupy Movement as a collective action and to create an archive that supports collective actions and emotions. The results of this analysis will show how to recognize if a square is private, public or *almost-public*.

Keywords: Social Movements, Occupy Movement, Emotions, Public/Private Space, Online/Offline Space

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Introduction

In this paper, I will present some occupied places, either real and physical or virtual and online. It is important to consider the Occupy Movement not only as an occupation of a square or building, but also as a re-appropriation of something that we believe to be ours, even though, in a specific way, it has now been altered. Moreover, it is possible to occupy with just an individual action, a social action, or a performance.

Michel Foucault, in 1983, gave six lectures at the University of California in Berkeley expounding on the concept of *Parrhesia* as a mode of discourse in which one speaks openly and truthfully about one's opinions and ideas without the use of rhetoric, manipulation, or generalizations. In other words, stating everything frankly.

Foucault said “[my] intention was not to deal with the problem of truth, but with the problem of the truth-teller or truth-telling as an activity. By this I mean that, for me, it was not a question of analyzing the internal or external criteria that would enable the Greeks and Romans, or anyone else, to recognize whether a statement or proposition is true or not. At issue for me was rather the attempt to consider truth-telling as a specific activity, or as a role.” (Michel Foucault, 2001:15)

So the *parrhesiastes* is someone who takes a risk. For example as Foucault explains, “you see a friend doing something wrong and you tell him what you think despite the risk of him being angry at you, you are acting as a *parrhesiastes*. In such a case, you do not risk your life, but you may hurt him by your remarks, and your friendship may consequently suffer from it. If, in a political debate, an orator risks losing his popularity because his opinions are contrary to the majority's opinion, or his opinions may usher in a political scandal, he uses *parrhesia*. *Parrhesia*, then, is linked to courage in the face of danger: it demands the courage to speak the truth in spite of some danger. And in its extreme form, telling the truth takes place in the “game” of life or death.” (Michel Foucault, 2001:16)

For the Occupy Movement (OM) this means to say everything frankly. Also in the OM statements may be said in a brutal way many times, because it is an affirmation of the truth. Some say it is comparable to symbolic violence in society. (René Girard, 1987)

The OM is a movement focused on discourse – discourse as action, as a performative act according to John Austin (1975). “I occupy” means “I am doing something” – “I am here and I live” – producing an action, a movement.

The OM is an everyday practice. It is a continuous performance in our daily lives. How? Why? These are the questions that we will examine in this paper.

What is an Innovative and Collective Action?

The OM is spontaneous and exceptional:

- It is spontaneous as it is formed in a few days, without political or organiza-

tional barriers, and involves many citizens who until prior to that moment had remained outside any social movement.

- It is exceptional because of the time and space where/when the movement appears. For example in Puerta de Sol or Zuccotti Park one finds the display of technological devices everywhere. These locations (through both the offline and online worlds) have gained importance and intensity through communication. The uniqueness of the OM results in a collective subjectivity – “others” in the same position towards the subject. They share their social unrest, generating innovative speech/dialog and claiming the public space. A subject can create a new space, a habitat (and inhabit it) in a temporary situation.

It makes ones emotions – what they have inside visible. Not only are discursive practices are visible, but they are also in a public space. Through the use of posters and banners, the invisible is made visible. The emotions that stay inside the individual – feeling isolated, being unemployed, poor, living in precarious conditions at home, can rise up outside, in the street, and on social media such as Twitter etc. And finally they are manifested as real, strong, “with colors,” sharing with thousands of individuals this unrest, because this unrest is not only individual, it is a social unrest.

Collective Action in Public Spaces

The exceptionality of the OM gives rise to a collective subjectivity, a sharing of social unrest and generates innovative speech and can re-appropriate public spaces. It creates a body capable of making visible what is contained inside – its emotions.

This body exists also in the virtual space of the internet by using social networks to mobilize people. With a physical presence of bodies (at the Puerta del Sol, Zuccotti park, etc.), voices (ideas, posters, banners, tweets, meetings) and emotions (invisible, yet tangible) constitute this mixture that can be understood as a machine: technologies being fused with the bodies.

Many of the bodies present in the square are involved: shouting, approving, arguing, composing banners, as well tweets, text messages, capturing images/video to share on social networks. For Deleuze (1983), the first category of his movement-image concept is the perception of the image as the first material moment of subjectivity. It's the moment in which the subject emerges. It is a set of images which provide the information for thought, action, and emotion. The second moment of subjectivity is the action, which conveys the visual enactment of inner volition through materially embodied social acts (Deleuze, 1983:67). The last moment is the affection-image that occupies the gap between perception and action.

In the OM real space and virtual space intersect and combine, enriching the linguistic chaos and expressing the social unrest via different vehicles, such as plastic chairs and mobile phones. Common objects for the common people give voice to the thousands of bodies in a system that does not usually allow these voices to easily express themselves. A camping-like place, the offline world, and an internet accessible mobile phone, the online world, both have a power capable of fighting

against formal institutions. This ability to put forth the body with wider repertoire than just language is a feature of a mutant-figure, a body that can beat the state with improved lungs so to speak – thanks to a fuller set of voices, emotions, and new technologies. This mutant is a figure evolving from Donna Haraway’s cyborg (1990). Through mainly new technologies, the OM body is a blend of the digital and analog, the virtual and real world, as powered through both online and offline experiences.

Thomas Hirschhorn says about his “Crystal of Resistance” exhibition in the Venezia Biennale 2011: “resistance is a conflict between creativity and destruction. I want my work to stand in the conflict zone, I want my work to stand erect in the conflict and be resistant within it.”

Rebuilding the metropolitan jungle – the precarious transformation and reorganization of the public space as a new city is an extreme example of disorder and chaos. The plastic chairs and mobile phones for the online and offline body with voices and emotions between the OM and the plaza.

Paolo Virno, in his book *A Grammar of the Multitude*, says that the multitude moves between innovation and negation (Virno, 2004). His question is: How can this fragile multiplicity form a just social order?

To answer this question, Virno turns to language and ritual. From Wittgenstein, Virno borrows the distinction between rules and regularities. Here is where we can see his contribution to the past decade’s heightened attention to the issues of sovereignty, the state, and the “state of exception.”

Rather than merely finding in the “state of exception” an expansion of domination, Virno finds ambivalence in the fact that this type of political decision is rooted not in formal rules, but in their suspension. The political decision belongs not to rules but to regularities, and regularities are not stable constants. As emotional performances, they constitute openness to the world, fraught with uncertainty and danger, as well as being the source of innovation. These regularities ensure uncertainty, oscillation, and disturbance, thus providing the conditions not just for enhanced sovereignty but for exodus as well.

With this argument, Virno seeks to establish a source for the “right to resistance.” He defines innovative action and creativity as “forms of verbal thought that consent to varying their own behavior in an emergency situation.” (Virno, 2004:71). He finds in the structure of jokes the ultimate diagram of innovative action, insofar as they are an unexpected deviation from routine.

Also, the vision of the intellectual proletariat proposed by Negri (2005) is characterized by being precarious and digitally dangerous. It is a group that deftly knows how to use the powerful tools of innovative social discourse, new technologies, and related practices. The OM has created a very dangerous precedent for the political class as it has generated a *before* and an *after* in social movements.

In 2011, however, a series of social struggles shattered the prior common sense and began to construct a new one. The Occupy Wall Street movement was the most visible, but it was only one moment in a cycle of struggles that shifted the ground underneath political debates and opened new possibilities for political action over the year.

Movements of revolt and rebellion provide us with the means not only to refuse the repressive regimes under which the subjective figures suffer, but also to invert these subjectivities in relationship to power. They discover, in other words, new forms of independence and security on economic as well as social and communicational grounds, which together create the potential to derail systems of political representation and assert their own powers of democratic action. These are some of the accomplishments that these movements have already carried out and can be developed further.

For instance, what happened in the Lavapiés district of Madrid just a couple of months after the 15M Movement is a clear example of citizen empowerment in a public space that led to the creation of discourse supporting the legitimization of citizenship itself. (15M was a large pro-democracy movement in 60 Spanish towns that began on the 15th of May 2011). The assembly of people in the square of Lavapiés began in response to police trying to stop a young man who did not have the required documentation at a police checkpoint in a subway station. The crowd reacted spontaneously and directly confronted the police in a peacefully way. Acts like these are a clear sign that the 15M has created a precedent.¹

To consolidate and strengthen the powers of such subjectivities, though, another step is needed. The movements, in fact, already provide us with a series of constitutional principles that can be the basis for a constituent process. One of the most radical and far-reaching elements of this cycle of movements, for example, has been the rejection of representation and the construction instead of schemas of democratic participation. As Tomas Ibañez says: “It’s not enough that something is possible to happen” (Ibañez, 2006).

Between the Square and the Screen

The border between the virtual and non-virtual is nebulous, uncertain, and difficult to define. According to Bakhtin (1981), the transformation of a date, a time and space, a chronotope in a collective, such as in 15M, is a redefinition of meaning.

It is difficult to define where a hashtag first appears, for example. Did it appear first in twitter, or on banners from Zuccotti Park? This is one of the questions we ask when trying to study how the virtual and non-virtual intersect, how they combined at the square as a set of speeches, emotions, and new technologies.

While researching, it was possible to observe that there were more people on the street than people tweeting. One of the slogans chanted in the square was one of outraged saying just that: “No Twitter, no Facebook – We are on the street.” But, for the first time, thanks (largely) to the new technology coming fully into our private

lives, this data can be analyzed by comparing the interplay between the virtual and the non-virtual. The Occupy Movement is a mixture of digital and analog, virtual and non-virtual, the online and offline world. Many people in the squares, while shouting, agreeing, arguing, and carrying banners, would in real time post messages or tweets on social networks and share images. Moreover they were also organized thanks to the presence of virtual town squares aligned with virtual social identities.

Participants took photos in the square, and later used a hashtag, to disseminate what was the current situation or what was “trendy” or simply what could, at that point in time, have been more effective. It is therefore difficult to understand from where one label originated. Was it first on the screen or heard at the square or on a placard? Many signs and banners were proposed and reproduced. Did the banner lead to the hashtag or was it vice versa? Regardless, the environment of the square itself was an incubator for the creation of hashtags. For example the hashtag of the feminist movement in the square was changed from #todosen-laplaza to #todasenlaplaza.

The hashtag #Acampadasol also had to fight face to face with #spanishrevolution, a label that did not seem right to many people at the square, but it generated in the online world much more powerful effects and impact than its rival. Additionally it was revealed that using an English hashtag had more impact on Twitter than using a Spanish one. Deleuze (1985) argues that a visual presentation of ‘living present’ is a contraction of instance, like these tweets with text and images. His time-image concept is a combination of past and future in the present moment.

This is the chaos of linguistic landscapes. As Shohamy explains, the linguistic landscape is symbolically constructed in social and public spaces (Shohamy, 2008). It is a material and immaterial construction like the pictures in Puerta del Sol and Zuccotti Park. The history of the city is also articulated by social movements, and the appropriation of public space. This re-appropriation as described from 2011 has been articulated as follows in many cities worldwide: a square, its people, buildings, camps, have been exported to other places in other cities. They utilize the same manner of organization, the same structure and the same posters. For example on Twitter the hashtags *camping* or *occupy* have expanded in the same way as those incurred during the 15M movement and are making requests for the same intellectual tools and materials. The OM has generated digital files and a collective memory supported by the tools of humanity and technology. In these other venues each person has become a journalist in the square through documenting, photographing, sharing, and online posting. For the first time the traditional real media are directly and deeply concerned. The public can now have first-hand information, thereby making the old news sources obsolete.

Between Public and Private Places

In the recent past there has been a debate in London regarding Granary Square. It is the public square near the large King’s Cross railway station. This is an open and public space, like so many in the UK, which is gradually being privatized. A

similar debate is being generated in cities such as Madrid and Barcelona. In recent times the privatization of public places has been gaining prominence. Some representative cases are the corporate brand names of subway stops or central squares. The centers of cities are becoming ambiguous territory, between what is public and private. To address the ambiguous consequences of the existing social practices citizens are formulating questions such as: Where does the privatized square begin and where does it end? How is my freedom being affected in using this space?

Institutions are making it difficult to know which public spaces have been purchased by private entities. In some countries it is not permitted for the general public to know which public spaces have been privatized. It is a tortuous process to gain access to this information, depending on the council responsible. In some cases it is necessary to formally ask the competent authorities, traversing bureaucratic processes, and paying fees in order to obtain such knowledge. There are also many other tactics that hinder the public from obtaining this information.



Figure 1. Photographic elaboration of Granary Square (London). Photograph: King's Cross Central.

In the United Kingdom this information may be obtained first hand. Thanks to the initiative of The Guardian newspaper, a collaborative map is being charted of the territories identified as “private” via a digital platform or through the hashtag #keeppublic. Users can map the territory, through photos, and documents. It is creating a collaborative map to identify streets, parks, beaches or other privatized areas. The organizers of this initiative report that this mapping is not meant to alarm the population, but simply to identify and report privatized spaces and thus sensitize the citizens about “public” land. Once again, it is now possible to see how an online platform plays an open massive role in mobilizing and empowering people. It is one way to reappropriate something that once belonged to citizens, and now no longer seems to be in their hands, and nor especially their feet.

According to Naomi Colvin, an activist from #occupy, “It is a vision of society in which you work and you shop. At times when you are not working or shopping, you may go to restaurants.” With this critical and ironic perspective it can be understood that places are becoming more like entertainment venues, rather than a

space to meet, discuss, and protest. We can imagine, and sometimes see with our own eyes that these quasi-public spaces are quite similar to quasi-squares or multiplex theaters in the suburbs of cities. These are sites where consumers are between films, queuing for popcorn and waiting for people who have not yet arrived. Privatized spaces can be converted into a large container of junk food restaurants, replicated terraces, green plants without fragrance, artificial cleaning and trash. A vivid, busy square footprint becomes an archaeological landscape.

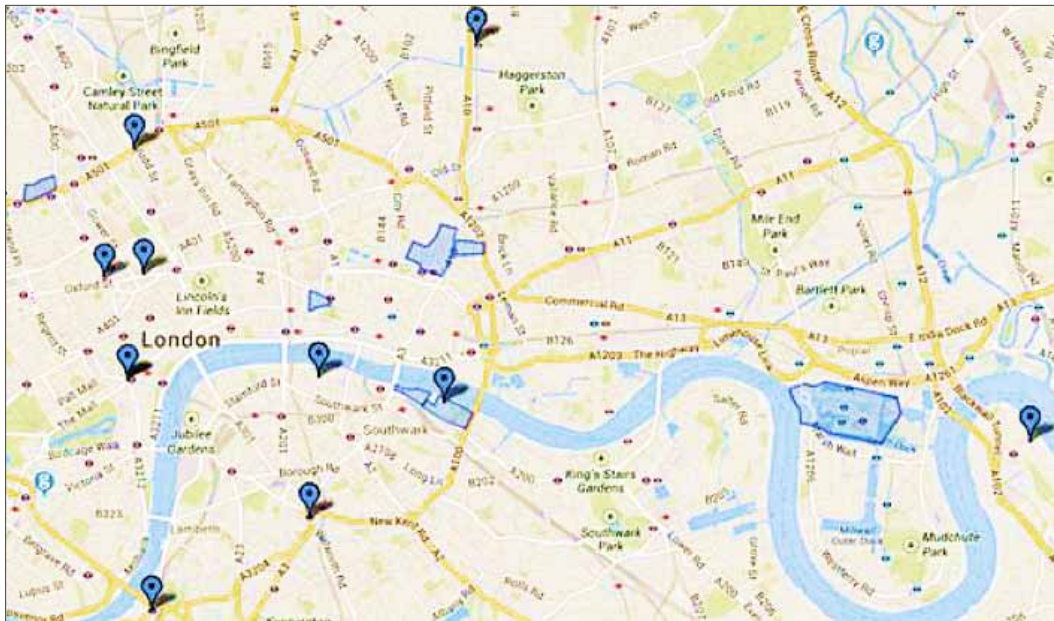


Figure 2. Example of privatized public spaces map in the city of London. For a complete map of the UK, open the following link: https://www.google.com/fusiontables/DataSource?docid=1lrNKscwda7NNc9r rq_Si9dhBqZAbv1Cv2Bx-o7s.

Thanks to the Occupy Movement, we have witnessed several public reappropriations of several iconic urban places. Places have been open to dialogue in the Polis of Ancient Greece and the congregation centers and hangouts of the main activities of today’s civic spaces. The OM, for example, was instrumental in illustrating to the public what it means to reappropriate public land. It also exposed spaces that were posed as public spaces, but were in reality no longer publicly owned. A common space is open to everybody, according to general opinion. By the time you gather on this ground, that’s when you get kicked, stopped and eventually you are denied this space, and then the concept of public ownership starts to gain a new meaning:

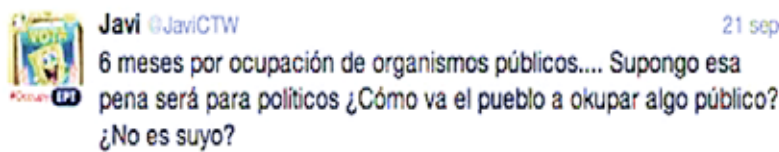


Figure 3. Screenshot. Rough translation: 6 months (penalty) for the occupation of a public space... what is the penalty for politicians... the space is not theirs. How can people be guilty of squatting in a place that is already public?

The question we asked ourselves after the eviction of many places in the world is the same question posed by the tweet of @JaviCTW: Why are we evicted from a public space that is precisely designed for these types of gatherings and public discourse (discussions – protesting – meetings – etc.)? If a space is defined as public it means by definition it is open to the public. Then why is something that is public suddenly renamed and privatized without first receiving consent from the general public? The OM's reappropriation of public space is a social tool to expose broadly what is *endangered* and what is to be protected.

The square in the social imagination is a space that can be lived in, walked through, stepped on, and in general publicly utilized, but never sold. We have never heard of these places being purchased or acquired; these actions occur to buildings, houses, shops, galleries or private roads. But not squares.

Furthermore we cannot leave traces of our presence as citizens in a public space like this; it's a feature that does not belong to a privatized square. The following is an example of what happened in the hours after the eviction of 15M in Madrid: The cleaning staff of the City of Madrid came in to sweep, flush the place with water, and disinfect it in order to remove all traces of camping residues from its bricks. They were trying to erase everything that happened there during the previous day, thinking that it would scrub it away from the offline world. They did not want to leave any signs, or a physical memory at the square. But what one would notice is that although the physical world of the square was well cleaned, there is still a square preserved with the memories of those days and nights of claiming and reappropriation of this public space online. Just to walk around the square virtually, you can still feel, hear and see the hundreds of voices, banners and infrastructures that were still present in our lives during that time. There is no monument or plaque for that. The antecedent is in our minds and in the world's digital memory; we know that if it worked once, we can repeat it. And others throughout the world can improve their lives through the practice of public reappropriation that OM offers.

For this reason, there is a political class that is looking for another solution for future demonstrations or protests. A strategy to prevent or modify some of the possible dynamics that OM has generated towards the privatization of public spaces. The streets, parks, squares and any open spaces are being redefined as a private space after a transformation, or a restructuring and are architecturally *clean*. It is a standardization phase that happens both in Madrid and in London. It is characterized by similar patterns consisting of a chronotope repeating the same guidelines for privatizing public squares. This chronotope is the time and space of every experience, according to Mikhail Bakhtin. It helps explain the fact that any change or social transformation happens as a product of a particular historical context.

After the OM begins to establish practices of privatization of a public space with almost identical characteristics to each other, it becomes possible to understand the concept of authorship in the chronotope. Thanks to the chronotope we can recognize, for example, the author of a text, simply from a few pages of his work,

or the artist of a painting, simply by an individual piece of work. And we can recognize a process of privatization of public space, simply because of some practices that are replicated in a given time interval in a specific space. Below is a list of some guidelines to try to answer the question of how do you recognize if a square is private or public?:

- Terraces of private businesses appear where there weren't any before
- The same goes for advertising posters or special offers from shops around the square
- The square begins to slowly lose identity, it is changing some of its infrastructure (benches, fountains, etc.)
- It changes its name or a new one is added. Or people begin to call it by a trade or brand name that has stolen the identity of the square
- Structural or procedural difficulties are established to impede the public desiring to host an assembly or a demonstration
- It becomes a cultural graveyard, where memory recalls something has happened, or used to happen there, but the fast food signs serve to hide this memory etc.



Figure 4. Construction in Granary Square (October 2013).

The time range for the transformation of a public space is not slow nor fast. Every city has time, dynamics, contexts and different actors, and for this reason it is impossible to compare Madrid with London. But it is possible to design this path and see how standards and patterns are repeated in the same manner and in the same way. Thanks to chronotope, we can see how our streets have been transformed, are changing and will lose their identity.

The Future of the Occupy Movement

The next step would be to try to imagine how the future will engage with the Occupy Movement in new urban scenarios. How will the private citizens use their new spaces? One could reach a quite legitimate conclusion where at some point the new owner of a formerly public square refuses the right of entry to the public or implements some set of encroaching restrictions. There is a closing down at the fringes of the city that used to allow entry to these places. Is this the strategy of the political class to solve the future occupations of these places? The political class appears unable to counter collective actions through their powerful ability to call on online world organizations while it is trying to raise new barriers in the offline world as well as the online world.

The privatization of public spaces can be viewed as a policy to prevent future use of public reappropriations as a weapon. The result is an increase of quasi-public spaces where their owners do not have to offer any explanation for requesting protesters or people who they just “do not want” in their territory, to vacate. They are excellent excuses to stop, or to punish future generations or to force undesirables to leave who would otherwise want to make public their right to demonstrate in city squares.

Probably in the not too distant future the OM will conduct a focused trial on UK's Paternoster Square before notifying its owner Mitsubishi with Vodafone to open their doors and leave us their space for a few hours on a Saturday afternoon. The selling and buying of public spaces has never been as profitable and rewarding as it is today. For this reason it is accelerating and is clearly taking place these days in the UK. Consequently it is understandably a good strategy to sensitize the public to these current dynamics. The UK's mapping and monitoring of this privatization of public land by its citizenship is a good exercise in urban ecology and making visible what others are trying to hide. In the process of privatization of public space, it is essential to understand the standards that constitute this chronotope and try to outline the next steps of this movement to outmaneuver privatization so that it will be possible to reappropriate public squares after they have been sold, bought, and modified. The privatization of public land, although occurring at different times and spaces, follows the same patterns and agendas despite their contextual differences. A fuller study of these patterns is needed to compare and contrast these different situations leading to the development of a common strategy of resistance.



Figure 5. A window advertisement.

Endnotes

- 1 See video: Crith36 (2011) "Vecinos de Lavapiés se enfrentan a la policía Por las Redadas a Extranjeros no comunitarios." Youtube.com www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=oZV2pNs-7c0. (accessed April 16, 2013).

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Creating Dance in the Hatha Yoga Concept

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Abstract

This article explores the integration between yoga concepts and the art of dance. It aims to discuss the genesis of a dance performance inspired by Hatha Yoga and specifically its concept of balancing hot and cold power. The terms Hatha Yoga and the art of creative dance and other terms related to Hatha Yoga concepts are accordingly discussed. Six areas of inquiry were considered in this research project. They were: a survey of source documents, expert interviews, the standard criteria of Thai national artists, audience evaluations, student dance workshops, along with other media and online information.

The resulting dance creation consists of four acts centered on the concept of balance between the hot and the cold power of Hatha Yoga. Its stylistics are an intercultural combination of Thai and Western contemporary dances and yoga with symbolic white and black costumes relating to coolness and warmth, which together reflect the main theme – the power of harmony. The outdoor venue and time of day was selected for its natural ambience, lighting and sounds conducive to relaxation and congruent with the aims of Hatha Yoga.

Keywords: *Dance, Creative Dance, Contemporary Dance, Performing Art, Yoga, Hatha Yoga*

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Introduction

This was a creative research project with the objective to create a dance inspired by concepts from Hatha Yoga. The foundations incorporated into the design of this dance was collected using various methods: A literature review including various multimedia sources, interviews with experts both in dance and Hatha Yoga. This also involved Thai national artists familiar with the standards and evaluation criteria used by the government as well as utilizing an evaluation/feedback form from preview audiences. All data was collected to develop and support a foundation of a dance performance congruent to the precepts and objectives of Hatha Yoga. Yoga by definition refers to “the joining, the uniting or the endeavor thereof as given by Pat Anjali (the founder of the Hatha Yoga school), “Yoga is the endeavor to achieve the completion by controlling ones body, senses, and mental focus.” (Sharma, 1964:169). Hatha Yoga is one branch of the discipline of yoga. The principle of Hatha yoga is to focus on the proper respiration which leads to Asana – the posture for human body exercise for completeness (Kanjanajaree, 1997:114).

Hatha Yoga is primarily concerned with the two types of vital power, that is, hot and cold. Then secondly, the process to balance these two types of power, and lastly, the ability of humans to control them both (Kanjanajaree, 1997:114). The author has studied the science and philosophy of yoga as it is reflected in movement with a resulting significance for the creation of beauty of body and mind. The idea of dance with yoga centralizes an importance on the body, mind, and balance. Ancient Greeks posited that dance is the harmonious and balanced expression of body and mind (Steeh, 1982:8); while the science of yoga is considered to be the art of movement combining the body with the mind, which leads to a balanced condition (Desikachar, 2003:14).

Objectives

This research project aimed to determine a method to create a dance performance utilizing Hatha yoga concepts. The objectives were as follows:

- Search for a method to create a dance performance following the concepts of Hatha Yoga
- Create a dance performance inspired by Hatha Yoga

Conceptual Framework

The researcher has employed: (1) the concepts of Hatha Yoga which is important to the body’s vital power – balancing the force of hot power (Sun) and the cold power (Moon); (2) the study of aesthetics; (3) theories of creative ideation and (4) the importance of balance as an art theory. In addition, the researcher has examined the *Site Specific* dance technique of *Tableau Vivant* by Dr. Narapong Charassri, the *Motionless Theory* by Doris Humphrey, the *Law of Gravity* by Martha Graham, and the importance of respiration which is considered to be a foundation in all kinds of dance. The *Bolero* performance with a table as centerpiece designed by Maurice Bejart or the *Green Table* by Kurt Loose, were studied as examples of how to enhance the art of dance focused on movement. These led the researcher to the main theme of creating a performance utilizing the concepts of Hatha Yoga.

The topics studied and analyzed to prepare for the creation of a Hatha Yoga derived dance performance were the origin and precepts of yoga, Parana power, and the facets related to the importance of hot and cold power together with the inclusion of balance.

Interviews, Observation, and Participation

The researcher observed and interviewed experts in the practice of yoga and the field of dance movement along with receiving formal training in yoga.



Figure 1. Both the researcher and dancers participated in yoga classes for a fuller understanding of yoga concepts via first-hand experience.

After the researcher's investigation, she then synthesized all of her analysis in order to determine the best method for its creation. The resulting ideas and dance elements are described below.

The researcher decided to present the founder of yoga, Pathanjali Yogi, (Rachiefchandra, 2006:1) in the first act following the concept of hot (Sun) and cold (Moon) powers, which are harmoniously combined in balance in what is to be considered the core of the performance. This same theme is divided into four acts.

Additionally the choreography has to also be consistent with the concepts. The researcher adapted the similarity of yoga and both Thai and Western dance and explores them through the eyes of contemporary dance. The movements portrayed should express the balance of the body while the composition of the performers should be compatible – meaning not too forced during the movements expressing cold power and powerful, yet stable during the movements depicting hot power.



Figure 2. Yoga poses depicting from left to right: hot power, cold power, and balance.

As both Yoga and Thai traditional dance were influenced by the 108 dances of Siva, (Sittivet, 2011: Interview), this connection allowed the researcher to design and

develop various poses and achieve multi-cultural diversity. Moreover, the belief and respect for the gods or the founder of an art form conforms to those of Thai dance traditions as well. This concept is shown in the first Act: The Origination of Yoga, where Patanjali, yoga’s founder, displays the Parana power hidden inside a yoga practitioner.



Figure 3. Creative Dance depicting from left to right: hot power, cold power, and balance.



Figure 4. Western Contemporary dance – left and creative dance movement on the right.



Figure 5. Thai dance on the left and creative dance on the right.

The Tableau Vivant technique, which places importance on the poses, and the ideas pioneered by Prof. Dr. Narapong Charassri, the creator of the Kon Dee Sri Ayudhaya Performing Art (1993), which is considered to be a site-specific art form, were adopted to be a part of the body movement choreography used to create the perception of balance that reflects Hatha Yoga.

When considering the costumes, the researcher concurred with the idea proposed by the experts that colors should correlate to a representation of balance. Using

the concept of Yin and Yang, black and white was selected to symbolize the hot and cold power in Hatha Yoga. Natural cotton is the main fiber of the fabric selected as Yoga is regarded as a natural science, and since the dance will be performed outdoors, cotton's breathability is important. The fabric should also be lightweight and be able to flow with movement. Elasticity for both male and female performers costumes is also necessary since they have to move their bodies fully in a variety of poses and extensions, such as spreading their arms and legs. The costumes must be flexible and do nothing to impede the full range of motion.



Figure 6. Yoga practitioners on the left, Yin-Yang symbol and dancer performers on the right.

From the opinions of music experts in Thai dance, experienced yoga practitioners, and the opinions from the participants, the researcher created sounds and music compatible with conveying a natural and relaxing setting with moderate beat and volume. The music was chosen to supportively convey the different feelings of hot and cold power and the movement towards their balanced expressions.

With regards to portraying yoga's meaning and objective as meditation, the researcher paid attention to *control*, which manifests one's ability to control one's body and mind together with the practice of balance that leads to a form of meditation.



Figure 7. Yoga and nature on the left. Site-specific art-performances center and right.

Bringing together the aforementioned concepts, an outdoor set of polished stone tables (in front of the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University) was selected as a foundation for the performance as relating to the concept of a throne of meditation. This arrangement matches with the conventions of *site-specific art* which is performed in a particular area and the performer must relate and incorporate theatrical elements with the environment. The design and creation of

this art piece must also correlate to a performance in a natural setting. The stage is outdoors and surrounded by numerous trees and other natural features. The yoga practice is done on the stone table as a seat (Asana). The members of the audience can be seated around the table and adjacent area chosen to be the stage as several stone benches and tables are nearby. The stage level (of the table) was elevated to be higher than the eye-level to bestow the feeling of watching yoga with admiration (i.e. one is looking up to view when the audience is seated).

To resolve the problem of the visually cluttered and distracting “stage floor,” the researcher brought in sections of large white fabric to cover the different heights of the stone tables that could later support various poses, serve as a hidden off-stage area for waiting performers and work in conjunction with a smoke machine to enhance the audience’s visual focus on the main performers. Moreover, the waves of the fabric in the wind and the white smoke from the smoke machine made the performance area appear more natural and smooth. The limitations of the marble tables were corrected or greatly improved.



Figure 8. Original stone tables left. Fabric covers center and the addition of fog – smoke machine, right.

Natural outdoor lighting was used and no artificial lights were added. However, there were considerations made for the most suitable time for the performers, the audience and the representation of this project’s blend of Hath Yoga together with Thai and Western dance. The choice of between 4 - 6 pm was made in order to have the natural soft light conditions supportive of Hatha Yoga practice and cooler comfort for the performers and audience. It is also a convenient time for those departing work to join the audience. From the research on the creation of dance performance for children with hearing loss (Wanwichai, 2011:66), it was found that a visual show could improve their level of happiness.

Motion, positions, and posture were given primary attention in this performance rather than the utilization of props or other theatrical equipment to create the illusion of authentic movements. This was done to convey the idea that dance and yoga focus is the body, the mind, and balance without the need for anything else. In this regard, the creation of a dance utilizing Hatha yoga concepts is similar to the art of dance that focuses on the motion, not the story or other props (Charassri, 2005:10).

Fourteen performers were involved and suitable to this outdoor venue of marble tables described above. The group was closely monitored by the researcher to maintain the quality of the dance. All performers both men and women were

selected for their ability to perform Thai and Western dance creatively. Two of them, one man and one woman, possess a high level of Hatha Yoga ability and offered their talent to support and create a new show with an unique and blended combination of culture.

The Results

The dance created following Hatha Yoga concepts has four acts as follows:



Figure 9. Act 1: The Origination of Yoga.

The Origination of Yoga – via its founder, the hermit Pat Anjali is sitting quietly showing his powerful breath inside ones body. This is then followed by male and female dancers appearing behind him dancing with slow, deliberate movements depicting Parana power.



Figure 10. Act 2: Hot power.

Hot power is shown by male dancers in a variety of yoga positions: bending, flexing, standing on their heads and kneeling up ,which are the yoga positions to increase blood circulation and thereby heat the body per the practice of Hatha Yoga.



Figure 11. Act 3: Cold power.

Cold power is portrayed by female performers. They convey relaxation by breathing in and exhaling out showing their muscle’s loosening through an expansive and wide open performance.



Figure 12. Act 4: Balance.

Balance – A Coupling dance between male and female dancers, as well as a group dance to express various types of styles and methods of combining hot and cold power that leads to a balance between body and mind. The balance is the key concept of Hatha Yoga.

Conclusion

Dance is one of the performing arts using movement of the body and graceful postures to express feelings and emotions. Nowadays, the methods of art creation needs also to be considered. This article on the creation of a dance following Hatha Yoga concepts shows the integration of the practice of yoga and the art of dance. The researcher sees the importance of dance which can be extended and utilized to create and develop together with other disciplines to create new knowledge and methods in three key aspects.

Historical: Two main issues are presented: The founding of yoga by the hermit Patanjali and the Hatha Yoga concept of human power through balancing the combination of hot power (sun) and cold power (moon). The historical story of Hatha Yoga is portrayed via dance and thereby expresses the concept transmitting a written history via a creative performance in the present.

Creative: It is the integration between the art of dance and yoga which was obtained by research, interviews with experts and collecting audience feedback data with analysis and synthesis that lead to this blended art form. The elements of dance are adapted and integrated creatively to result in a performance containing the following eight elements: 1) script 2) body movements 3) costumes 4) music 5) stage 6) lighting 7) equipment 8) performers. Together these eight facets formed a show with distinct artistic value.

Aesthetics: An appreciation for the gracefulness of yoga poses is reflected in the foundation of Hatha Yoga. The researcher brought together the experience and aesthetics of yoga to create a dance performance after analyzing the summarized information on Yoga's philosophy, substance, patterns, and processes to develop an unique artistically derived dance performance reflecting the main theme – the power of balance.

Additionally, this project is an example of a new pathway to develop an authentic aesthetic performance through the blend of the what one might originally have perceived as *functional* (the practice of the health supportive Hatha Yoga) applied through the lens of a dance professional.

This article conceptualizes the integration between yoga and the art of dance to establish a derivative method for the creation of new unique performance that furthers the understanding of how creative dance may be brought forth and revealed. A generalized approach utilizing this method may lead to the creation of a greater variety of dances in the future.

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New Visual Dialogues and New Art Projects

with a Social and Meliorist Goal in the Urban Space and at Sea

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“A work of art which did not begin in emotion is not art.” – Cézanne

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to focus on the relationship between Richard Shusterman's pragmatist aesthetics and several art projects by Rirkrit Tiravanija, Marit Benthe Norheim and SUPERFLEX. A core element in Shusterman's aesthetics is that the bodily and mental dimensions of human beings are inseparable. He has also changed philosophy in such a way as to make it better serve human life. These three visualize basic elements of Shusterman's aesthetics, particularly with regard to embodied creation and perception, the interactive dialogue with the viewer and the surroundings, the unification of art and experience as well as the hope of being able to benefit life.

Keywords: *Pragmatist Aesthetics, Art and Experience, Community, Holism, Meliorism, Pluralism*

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Introduction

The prominent American philosopher and aesthete Richard Shusterman has interpreted the currently very influential pragmatist aesthetics in an original and inspired way. He later developed this interpretation into a new interdisciplinary field of studies called “somaesthetics,” in which the central concept is that it is “the living body - a sentient soma” he is referring to and not “a mere mechanical corpse.”¹ The word “soma” comes from the Greek - meaning “body.”

The notion of holism is central to his somaesthetics and his aesthetics. It is “an orientation toward seeing things in terms of continuities rather than dualisms. We have already noted continuities between body and mind, nature and culture, theory and practice. But the continuities of common sense and scientific inquiry, science and art, thought and feeling, ethics and aesthetics are also salient in pragmatism.”²

Shusterman’s aesthetics are – as he often remarks himself – also inspired by the philosophy and religion of the East – including the Zen Buddhist notions of the union of the body and the mind, mindfulness and the body-mind awareness. Zen Buddhism contains elements that appear in an entirely new arena in his own aesthetics. He expresses this view as follows:

“Zen Buddhist-style notions of art and religious practice offer a religion of immanence with no transcendental, personal God existing outside the world of creation; no eternal, personal, immaterial soul existing apart from its embodied manifestations; and no sacred world (an art world or heaven) existing beyond the world of experienced flux.”³

He has always focused on social practice and political experimentation, emphasizing that truth must be relative to specific social contexts and practices. He is also convinced that philosophy can and must solve practical and social problems. Realizing this goal has always been a leitmotif in the development of his pragmatist aesthetics.⁴

“Pluralism” is another keyword in his pragmatism because it points to openness and the sense that our world is in a continuous process of change, which ensures that unilateral approaches are always sidelined in favour of a multiplicity of “access routes.”⁵

A very central concept in Shusterman’s philosophy and aesthetics is art interpreted as experience.⁶ Shusterman has a vital focus on lived experience and its influence on self-knowledge. The aesthetic experience is never passive, thus an artwork is never complete until the viewer has experienced and interpreted its particular qualities. This is why there is always an intense interplay between the artwork and the viewer and the viewing experience.⁷ Shusterman is convinced that experience is always closely connected to experimentation and also builds on the interaction between tradition and innovation.⁸

Shusterman highlights “the immediate non-discursive,” non-linguistic experience as a very valuable source of experience and an epistemological foundation.⁹

Thus, when he interprets “art as experience,” it means that both the artist and the person experiencing the works operate in an open space with a great deal of visibility and freedom. Last, but not least, an important “key and distinctive pragmatist orientation is the meliorist goal of making things better, deconstructing or circumventing various obstacles and opening thought and life to new and promising options.”¹⁰

This is why he always focuses on what he calls “the critical, ameliorative study of one’s experience and use of one’s body as a locus of sensory-aesthetic appreciation and creative self-fashioning.”¹¹

In both philosophy and art, Shusterman always aims for the realization of “the aesthetic experience of collaborative creation, and even the cognitive gains from exploring new practices that provoke new sensations, spur new energies and attitudes, and thus probe one’s current limits and perhaps transcend them to transform the self.”¹²

Shusterman’s somaesthetics, which contains three keywords: Soma, Self and Society, are - as he has remarked - “a natural extension of my work in pragmatist aesthetics. Bringing aesthetics closer to the realm of life and practice, I realized, entails bringing the body more centrally into aesthetic focus, since all life and practice - all perception, cognition and action - is crucially performed through the body.”¹³

His own concise definition of this discipline is as follows:

“Somaesthetics offers a way of integrating the discursive and nondiscursive, the reflective and the immediate, thought and feeling, in the quest of providing greater range, harmony, and clarity to the soma – the body-mind whose union is an ontological given but whose most satisfying unities of performance are both a personal and cultural achievement.”¹⁴

Somaesthetics is thus both “a specific field of studies and methodic physical exercises,” which Shusterman - with his novel approach - has made a “sub-discipline of philosophy.” Its scope is clear in Shusterman’s definition of its three primary areas - where theory and practice are closely integrated:

1. Analytic somaesthetics “describes the basic nature of our bodily perceptions and practices and their function in our knowledge and construction of reality.”
2. Pragmatic somaesthetics has a “distinctly normative, prescriptive character - by proposing specific methods of somatic improvement and engaging in their comparative critique.”¹⁵
3. Practical somaesthetics - “which gets philosophers to get up from their arm-chairs and actually perform the somatic techniques they write about (...) they should not limit themselves to “textualizing the body” but engage in “concrete body work” too.”¹⁶

Shusterman points out that somaesthetics can also illuminate artistic expressions of rupture, abjection and disgust, which form a significant part of contemporary visual art.”¹⁷ He thus draws a whole range of important artistic expressions into aesthetics, which also have a very important place in the art of our era.

Shusterman blames contemporary aesthetics for being too intellectual, “emphasizing art as a symbol system or an object of mere cognitive interpretation, rather than an object of deeply felt experience.” Art has become remote and esoteric for the great mass of people. He is convinced that “this stress on the power and value of aesthetic experience is (...) very important for the contemporary art world which seems to be losing its appeal for the general public because of its failure to create powerful aesthetic experience.”¹⁸

It is obvious that Shusterman has succeeded in given somaesthetics an activist role in rethinking and reshaping art.

The Relation Between Somaesthetics and Visual Art

I will focus on a series of projects created by four artists whose works, in different ways, contain visualizations of the basic themes in Shusterman’s somaesthetics. Their projects are based on various artistic strategies and forms of technology, which seek, from a series of perspectives, to improve the quality of life of the individual or society’s aesthetic values whilst also addressing environmental objectives. It is also about works that draw us out of the fixed framework of everyday life and provide space for new experiences and insights and thus have a liberating function. It is especially work that have a strong power of expression what Richard Shusterman calls “a powerful appeal.” Finally, I will highlight works, which in a series of surprising and unexpected ways, establish new connections between art and architecture and are thus able to create new orientations and new perspectives in our daily life. But these artworks also visualize major elements of Richard Shusterman’s somaesthetics, in much the same way as his aesthetics can clarify important aspects in the artworks and place them in a new and promising context.

The prominent Thai artist, *Rirkrit Tiravanija*, has presented surprising installations in Thailand, Europe and particularly in his country of residence, the U.S.A. His installations often take the form of stages or rooms for sharing meals, cooking, reading and playing music. The architecture or other structures he uses always form the framework for a variety of social events. Such as in, for example, the installation *Untitled (Free)* which Tiravanija first created in 1992 in the 303 Gallery in New York (figure 1) and was later shown in other versions in a variety of galleries and museums like MoMA. He has described this installation in the following inspiring way:

“So when you first walk in, what you see is a kind of haphazard storage space. But as you approached this you could start to smell the jasmine rice. That kind of draws you through to the office space. And in this place I made two pots of curries, green curries. One was made how Thai restaurants in New York were making it. To counter that, on the other pot was an authen-

tically made Thai curry. I was working on the idea of food, but in a kind of anthropological and archaeological way. It was a lot about the layers of taste and, otherness.”¹⁹



Figure 1. An untitled installation by Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija known as “Free” 1992, New York. Provided by the Tiravanija Studio.



Figure 2. Discussions in the Schindler House featuring a mirrored floor installation by Thai artist Rirkrit Tiravanija. Provided by the Tiravanija Studio.

Tiravanija’s work is fundamentally about bringing people together, thereby creating a better world. His exhibitions are often created through surprising interactions and exchanges amongst participants. He has emphasized repeatedly that “it is not what you see that is important but what takes place between people.”²⁰

In his installations he successfully attempts to bridge a mind-body gap that often exists in Western art. This is precisely what Shusterman has been doing in his somaesthetic theory and practice. Tiravanija also realised this artistic aim in a very impressive way in the project he developed for the Secession in Vienna (2002) where he took Rudolf Schindler's Kings Road House in Los Angeles as his conceptual starting point. (figure 2) His project is based both on this House and the visions behind it. Those visions are significant not only for architecture, but also for art and the breaking down of the false barrier between art and action that often, in the words of Richard Shusterman, "trivializes art and robs its power of positive praxis. For art's highest aim is not to make a few admirable objects in a world filled with misery, but to create a better world through the work such objects can generate."²¹ Rirkrit Tiravanija created a reconstruction of the studio tract of the so-called Schindler House in the main room of the Secession and used this as the venue for various activities that provided the exhibition guests with new inspiration and revealed new layers of meaning in our daily life. Therefore "Tiravanija's interest focuses less on a faithful architectural facsimile than on 'animating' Rudolf Schindler's world of ideas, his concept of inside and outside in relation to the conditions of private and public spaces. To this Tiravanija adds his own ideas on relationships and communities, his characteristic conception of art as an investigation and implementation of "living well." Throughout the duration of the exhibition, the installation will be used as a venue for a multimedia program offered by Tiravanija and various guests, with features such as film screenings, concerts, presentations and lectures."²² Time to eat wonderful Thai meals is also part of the activities in the reconstructed Schindler House.

Tiravanija is very fond of Schindler's House in Los Angeles, which was built in 1922. In this house Schindler did not use the static "traditional architectonic patterns." Instead he preferred to work with flowing spatial structures, which allow many new forms of spontaneous social life. In the house there are also interactions between the inside and outside which make new forms of communication possible. And it is precisely these social aspects that Tiravanija intensifies and "animates" through his various activities, which are able to create new relationships between people and to break down barriers between societal groups and conventional ways of thinking. It is precisely this liberating process that is one of the main themes in Shusterman's somaesthetics and which Tiravanija interprets in many surprising and artistic ways in his installations.

Marit Benthe Norheim, who is a Danish and Norwegian artist, is first and foremost a sculptor. She has, in an exemplary and contemporary manner, created an array of sculptures in public spaces in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, England, Iceland and Greenland. She has managed to create unique sculptures, which establish unexpected visual dialogues with their surroundings. They lend the locations where they are situated a new identity and establish new patterns of meaning. The dialogues with the surroundings, which are created by her sculptures are so nuanced and intense that meaning, form and materials are always closely aligned in relation to their locations. She has succeeded in activating the public space. Like Shusterman, she is focusing on how art "can serve individual, social and political

reconstruction” and support “the pursuit of perfectionist self-cultivation in the art of living.”²³ In a number of site-specific projects she has attempted to improve both the environment and the living quality of the people who live there. She has had what Shusterman calls “a meliorist goal of making things better (...) (by) opening thought and life to new and promising options.”²⁴

Marit Benthe Norheim’s art works show how she uses the female body both in small and large scale to express fundamental human attitudes, experiences, feelings and dreams. She is in agreement with Mark Rothko, when he wrote in connection with the decoration of a chapel in Houston that he was interested only in expressing” basic human emotions.”²⁵

The *Lady of the Sea* (2001) in Sæby and the *Rat Maiden* (2006) in Skien demonstrate this with all desirable clarity. They both visualize - on a very large scale - two of the most mysterious and ambiguous figures in Henrik Ibsen’s drama. She has modelled both of these monumental works and the majority of her other pieces by hand in cement. She manages to reshape and transform the cement in an unusual way so that it can express the humanity, the life-giving processes and the protection against destructive forces, which she has been concerned with interpreting. Through her female figures she visualizes her conception of the body which is the core in somaesthetics because she, as Shusterman expresses it, “treats the body not only as an object of aesthetic value and creation, but also as a crucial sensory medium for enhancing our dealings with all other aesthetic objects and also with matters not standardly aesthetic”²⁶ particularly the basic existential questions.

These concepts are interpreted in sculptural project in the Sports and Cultural Center in Skien, Norway, she installed a male and a female figure who stand easily and elegantly on their heads. They are both covered in medals. Through this work, Marit Benthe Norheim wanted to emphasise the positive aspects of our life. Or as she expresses it:

“The artwork must be positive, just like the building, which includes both sports and health, both the traditional and the new.”²⁷

An important element in somaesthetics is what Shusterman calls “to break the hold of object fetishism in contemporary art, aesthetics and culture.” He calls this characteristic the “exaggerated sense of art’s demarcation from the rest of life and its autonomy from wider social and political forces that in fact penetrate even into the very forms of artistic expression.”²⁸

To intensify the dialogue between art, the surroundings and people, Marit Benthe Norheim has created five moveable sculptures. With her eagle eyes she has found five shabby caravans. With a sure and sensitive hand she has transformed them into mobile sculptures of great strength and originality. The caravans are shaped externally like monumental female figures modelled in bright white concrete. They are titled *Five Camping Women* (figure 3) and are called *The Refugee, Maria Pro-*

tector/*Virgin Mary, The Bride, The Siren and Camping Mama*. Inside the caravans there are sculptures, reliefs and photographs and music, which is partly edited, partly created by the renowned composer Geir Johnson. The music intensifies and makes immediate the themes represented by the Camping women. Thus, they appeal to sight, hearing, thought and fantasy and are vibrantly embodied art.



Figure 3. Marit Benthe Norheim's five camping women. Photograph by Niels Fabaek.



Figure 4. From left to right, the Bride, the Refugee, and the Camping Mama. Photograph courtesy of Marit Benthe Norheim, Claus Ørntoft.

The first *Camping Woman* is representing *Maria the Protector*. Marit Benthe Norheim has formed her as a symbol of modern humanity's need for mercy, love and protection, because it exists in a one-dimensional and individualistic world. Geir Johnson has interpreted the tension between the human and the divine aspect in *Maria the Protector* in his personal adaptation of Gregorio Allegri's work of the 1630's, *Miserere Mei, Deus*. In the interiors of the *Camping Woman* there are also sculptures such as the *dead Jesus*, who visualizes God's love for humanity. The vocal interpretation presented is by the famous Trio Mediaeval.

Another example is the *Camping Woman* representing *The Refugee*, which functions as a symbol of the fate of our immigrants. (figure 4) She bends forward lithely and gazes - with both bravery and fear - into the foreign world that she has been forced to flee to. Inside the caravan, 400 children and refugee women from Stavanger created porcelain mosaics with motifs expressing longing and loss. Geir Johnson has composed music for voice and electronic sounds that fills the interior of the caravan, the words chosen from the poetry of the famous Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish who, in his poem, *State of Siege* (2002), expressed both the pain and fear that are a part of daily life for the refugee. However, Darwish also points out the "the malady of hope is incurable." Moreover, even though the refugees must live an uncertain existence, they are "eternity's guests." The text is presented in both English and Norwegian, read by actress Tora Augestad.

The third *Camping Women*, *The Bride* radiates eroticism, but all the wedding pictures inside the caravan show the multiplicity of views of marriage and point in many places indirectly at the often difficult circumstances that a bride has to live under. The fourth *Camping Woman*, *The Siren* is a contemporary interpretation of the seductive siren from Greek mythology, who lures seaman towards shipwreck. This is also how seduction often happens today.

The inner space of the caravan is covered with handprints - without a doubt impressions left from the many people she has met, loved, kept or left. Geir Johnson has composed the music - which is sung by the famous Norwegian soprano Siri Torjesen - but it is constantly interrupted by her banal, often scolding remarks such as "Why aren't you coming, the coffee is getting cold." The seductive enchantment is broken and dissipated by the trivialities of the everyday. The *Camping Mama* is large and caring, but also symbolizes the parochial, almost suffocating atmosphere that the bourgeois life can hold.

With the *Camping Women*, a different artistic experience has flooded into the cityscape and into nature. They appeal not only to sight, hearing, feelings and imagination - but also sharpen political awareness and ethical thinking. Added to this is the fact that the *Camping Women* do not remain in one fixed place, but include a journey, a flow and a change. They can be moved to new town spaces in different combinations and create new visual dialogues with their surroundings and stimulate viewers in different and unexpected ways. The *Camping Women* show that Marit Benthe Norheim works with forms, which are deeply anchored in the condition, that human understanding of the world occurs through the body

and the senses. Her sculptures encompass an invitation to enter into a direct and sensory relationship with them.

The *Camping Women* frame the places where they are situated and give them new meaning. They invite the viewer to experience something new and unexpected, emphasize directions of movement in the environment and create new points of view. With her five *Camping Women*, Marit Benthe Norheim shows that art contains an unusual sensory experience by communicating aspects of our inner and outer reality that we often overlook and may not even be aware of.

The inclusion of the music in the five caravans creates a more intense experiential whole, because the various compositions are carefully matched to the spaces that the *Camping Women* have conquered. In the *Camping Women* Norheim has succeeded in realizing her artistic endeavours, which she has expressed as follows: "I have always been fascinated by art which has a will to communicate and in one way or another functions as a kind of door opener"

The *Life-boats* is her next very unexpected and interactive project. It will be integrated into a European framework in a very impressive way. She is working on creating three sculptures in cement, which will become functioning boats, shaped as monumental female figures. They will be 12m in length. The project is called *My ship is loaded with;* 1. *Longing*- the young one, entering into the world. 2. *Life* - in the middle of life and fertilized. 3. *Memories* - the ageing or the dead. The first piece has already been completed in a very convincing way. Marit Benthe Norheim wants the sailing sculptures to become "floating cultural houses" and be able to "sail on the European canals, which naturally lead the ships through the heart of the European cities that are built up around the old waterways."

The three Danish visual artists Bjørnstjerne Christiansen, Jakob Fenger and Rasmus Nielsen formed a project group in 1993 that they called SUPERFLEX. And they have already gained international recognition for their projects, which are based on new technology but also function on a conceptual level and use social processes and networking as their working material. Their solo exhibitions include Basel Kunsthalle, Mori Museum in Tokyo and in Los Angeles, London, Porto Alegre, Brazil and Bangkok. Their projects are represented in MoMA, New York, Queensland Art Gallery, Jumex collection, Mexico as well as other museums and art collections. They were all educated at the Royal Danish Academy of Art. They describe their most important aim with their often site-specific projects as follows:

"We are three members of SUPERFLEX and are joined by various international collaborators on individual projects. Since 1993, we have worked on a series of initiatives involving issues such as energy production in developing countries, Internet television studios for specific neighborhoods and communities and brand name copy production in South East Asia. Though very different, all these projects relate closely to questions of power relations and democracy. We are interested in using our position as artists to explore the contribution that the field of art can make to social, political and economic change. At a time of extreme disillusion with the current representa-

tive system and hysteria around immigration and security, it is our suggestion that some possible new ways of thinking and acting can be found through the activity of art and artists.” There are some clear parallels between the aims of SUPERFLEX and one of the keywords in Shusterman’s original development of pragmatism. This deals with what he calls “community” which he characterizes as “an indispensable medium for the pursuit of better beliefs, knowledge, and even for the realization of meaning through language and the arts.” He is convinced that “community is not only a cognitive theme in pragmatism but an aesthetic, ethical, and political one, and it contributes to pragmatism’s fundamentally democratic orientation. Pragmatists have offered cognitive, ethical, and aesthetic arguments for democracy.”²⁹

SUPERFLEX describe their projects as tools that invite people to take part in the creation of their experimental models which often are aimed at changing the economic and cultural conditions in various societies, both in the East and in the West. Shusterman also emphasizes the active, creative elements in the experience of art. It is never a passive purposeless affair of disembodied contemplation. It always involves what he call an “active somatic engagement.”

Researchers like Troels Degn Johansen and Åsa Nacking have included SUPERFLEX projects under the heading of relational art.³⁰ This art form was discussed by Nicola Bourriaud in 1998 in his book *Esthétique Relationnelle (Relational Aesthetics, 2002)*. His definition of relational art is a description of what is precisely the core element of SUPERFLEX’s projects. He describes this art form as “a set of artistic practices which take as their theoretical and practical point of departure the whole human relations and their social context, rather than an independent and private space. This type of art is, according to Åsa Nacking, also called “socializing art” because it comprises elements of interactivity and because “its most noticeable characteristic is its socializing effect. This is a type of art that wants to bring people together and to increase understanding for each other and for our own situation.” Bourriaud indicates that artists like Rirkrit Tiravanija and Carsten Höller are prominent examples of artists who work with relational art.³¹ It is precisely these artists that Shusterman highlights in his writings. According to him it is “obvious that art is an essentially relational enterprise, especially due to its fundamentally communicative dimension.” In an interview by Aude Launay on Biological Aesthetics he tells us, that he admires “some European artists of such “relational orientation” e.g. Rirkrit Tiravanija, and Philippe Parreno. He met them at an Art and Experience event in Venice (2004) organized by the Italian art critic Maurizio Bartolotti. But even if Shusterman has clear sympathies with their artistic and social aims, his “aesthetic theory does not regard them as essentially superior to other ways of art making.” His “theoretical position is more pluralistic. There are many ways that art can express its inescapably relational condition and our essentially social existence.”³¹ Höller had a great “interest in Pragmatist Aesthetics’ themes of full bodied, participatory aesthetic experience and the blurring of the established oppositions between life and art, the aesthetic and the ethical, knowledge and amusement.” That is why he asked Shusterman in 1996 to write the text for the provocative *House of Pigs and People* he created together with Rosemarie Trockel for Documenta X in 1997.³²

SUPERFLEX say that they have, “since 1996 (...), collaborated with European and African engineers to construct a simple biogas unit that can produce sufficient gas for the cooking and lighting needs for a family living in rural areas in the Global South. In August 1997, SUPERFLEX installed and tested the first Supergas biogas system running on organic materials, such as human and animal feces. The experiment was carried out at a small farm in central Tanzania, in cooperation with the African organization SURUDE (Sustainable Rural Development). The biogas plant produces approx. 3-4 cubic metres of gas per day from the dung from 2-3 cattle – enough for a family of 8-10 members for cooking purposes and to run one gas lamp in the evening. A new version of the Supergas system, using hard water containers, was installed in 2002 at The Land in Chiang Mai. (figure 5) The Land was founded in 1998 by Rirkrit Tiravanija and Kamin Lerdchaiprasert. It is a collaborative educational-ecological project known also as The Land Foundation, located in the northern part of Thailand, near the village of Sampathong, not far from Chiang Mai. The project combines contemporary art interventions and traditional agricultural values; the six-hectares of land are intended to be cultivated as an open space or community free from ownership, and residents and artists are welcomed to use a plot of land as a laboratory for development, cultivating rice, building sustainable houses, or channeling solar power. Tiravanija is also part of a collective alternative space located in Bangkok, where he maintains his primary residence and studio.”³³



Figure 5. The SUPERFLEX's Supergas Biogas System. Photograph provided by the artists of the The Land Foundation.

Conclusion

Rirkrit Tiravanija's, Marit Benthe Norheim's and SUPERFLEX's works visualize – as we have seen – some of the more important elements in Shusterman's somaesthetics, particularly with regard to embodied creation and perception, the interactive dialogue with the viewer and the surroundings and the close connection between art and experience. Their works also demonstrate that art can promote somatic consciousness and awareness, have a social or cultural goal or meet limit-experiences.

But it is precisely Shusterman's somaesthetics, which has also revealed new aspects of the works of the artists discussed here. This aesthetics has thus shown that it can provide artists, in a precise and intense way, with a new and stimulating understanding of the body's role in the arts as a resource for working on the problems of creating and interpreting art and improving the quality of our life and society.

The renowned Chinese artist Pan Gongkai knows that body consciousness plays an important role in contemporary Chinese painting and should have a more central place in Western art and aesthetics.

Shusterman also emphasizes that in the projects created by Pan Gongkai “West and East coexist in active harmony and moving beauty, without an isolating separation, but also without coercive fusion.”³⁴ This viewpoint has also been a core element of Shusterman's somaesthetics because art and aesthetics are able to create reconciliation in a society where religious and political opinions create division. He has described this perception as follows:

“If it were indeed possible, aesthetics could really be a wonderful bridge between cultures, even warring ones. But if aesthetics cannot be ultimately separated from a culture's underlying religious attitudes, then it may not be feasible to realize this possibility in our imperfect world until we also work not only through but beyond aesthetics to transform our cultures and religious attitudes in the direction of deeper, more open-minded understanding.”³⁵

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Case Study

- Reach Back, Reach Deep, Reach Out: A Case History of the Songs of Memory Project in the Community

Victoria Vorreiter (U.S.A.)

Reach Back Reach Deep Reach Out:

A Case History of the Songs of Memory Project in the Community

Victoria Vorreiter* (U.S.A.)

Abstract

The Songs of Memory project documents the traditional music and ceremonies of the highland peoples of Southeast Asia, with the aim of preserving this rapidly vanishing musical legacy, and educating and inspiring others with the beauty, integrity, and wisdom of the peoples who create it.

The field research and materials, gathered over many years, have been integrated, creating a variety of media: a series of educational films; photo exhibitions; presentations; the Songs of Memory book and compact disc; and a multi-media museum exhibition, which presents comprehensive collections of musical instruments, clothing, films, and photographs of the six major groups living in the Golden Triangle – the Hmong, Mien, Lahu, Akha, Lisu, and Karen.

To enhance the Songs of Memory exhibition, held at the Chiang Mai Arts and Cultural Center in 2010, a symposium, featuring conferences, demonstrations, curator walks, and concerts, was organized to further engage students, researchers, and the general public.

Keywords: *Tribal Music, Ceremonies, Preservation, Cultural Understanding, Multi-media Exhibition*

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*The question is not what you look at, but what you see”
Henry David Thoreau*

*One blacksmith alone cannot forge ten irons
One speaker himself cannot recite ten lines at the same time
Ten blacksmiths forging one iron
Ten Pima reciting together at one time
Working to keep the people’s culture never to be lost
Even if the Dragon dies, the footprint will never disappear
– An Akha Saying*

Introduction

The Songs of Memory project originally grew from a desire to preserve, through film, the ancestral music of the traditional highland peoples of Southeast Asia. By capturing age-old ceremonies that trace the arc of life, from birth to death, a documentary film would demonstrate the primal importance of vocal and instrumental music, as it shapes and supports those communities that continue to practice oral tradition, live close to the earth, and believe in animism.

As music plays such a vital role in marking the daily, seasonal, life, and generational cycles of a society, it is impossible to isolate it from other aspects of people’s lives. With this in mind, I resolved to expand my original undertaking, in order to place the soundscapes of these communities into a larger context. So what began in 2005 as a one-hour film transformed into the creation of distinct, independent media that, when woven together, form an interdisciplinary whole. In this way, it is hoped that the Songs of Memory archival project provides a deeper, truer, more meaningful experience than any single medium could offer.

Origins of the Songs of Memory Archival Project

During my many travels trekking to remote mountain enclaves in Myanmar, Laos, China, and Thailand, I invariably found myself the only visitor in the villages. This compelled me to document all that I witnessed, in as many forms as possible. So it came to pass that, after four non-stop years, I had amassed a wealth of film footage, images, recordings, journals, musical instruments, and textiles.

The years following this fieldwork were spent assimilating and integrating these materials. It was rewarding to watch a complementary range of media emerge – photo exhibitions; a series of educational films; illustrated presentations; and the Songs of Memory book and compact disc.

With time, the project culminated in the Songs of Memory museum exhibition, a multi-media display which presents comprehensive collections of musical instruments, clothing and jewelry, films, and photographs of the six major tribal groups living in the Golden Triangle – the Hmong, Mien, Lahu, Akha, Lisu, and Karen, Visitors to the exhibit are able to gaze upon sacred Hmong percussion instruments, while an educational film demonstrates their timbre and use, as a shaman, performing a healing ceremony in trance, travels to the spirit world. Guests can

contemplate the intricate, multicolored patterns that a young Karen woman has lovingly woven into her “singing shawl,” in order to catch the eye of a suitor; this is just one of the marvels found in the exhibit’s extensive textile collection. Large structural components – an Akha spirit gate with sacred totems and a soaring courtship swing – bring village life to the city. Numerous maps, text panels, descriptive labels, and photos further highlight each culture’s customs and identity.

It is hoped that those who attend the Songs of Memory exhibition, and the accompanying presentations, demonstrations, and concerts, not only feel the music and ceremonies come alive, but also tap into the integrity and sophistication of the peoples who live them. Truly, the Golden Triangle is one of the most culturally – and sonically – dynamic places on the planet.



Figure 1. Surrounded by traditional Mien musical instruments, visitors watch a Mien wedding ceremony.

Purpose and Significance

A critical role of the humanities is to illuminate and interpret the function that aesthetic experience plays in human development and, ultimately, in defining civilization. Among the arts, music is unquestionably the most powerful because of the unique nature of the aural experience. Here is an intangible, abstract medium that unfolds over time, and is able to transform human consciousness in multi-sensory ways. Music affects us physically, as vibrational frequencies alter our very cells, organs, and bones; intellectually, as musical patterns entrain perception, memory, and thought; and emotionally, as music’s expressive qualities nourish our inner world of awareness, imagination, and spirituality. Music expressly fulfills a critical function in all cultures by virtue of its ability to influence our bodies, minds, and hearts.

When the aural experience also serves as a means to transmit everything a people knows about its world to future generations, music's significance grows exponentially. For indigenous, pre-literate societies, the oral arts have functioned throughout the millennia as the primary channel for sustaining history, myths, customs, laws, knowledge, and beliefs, thereby linking the first ancestor with all who follow.

However, with the encroachment of advanced technology and global homogeny, how long these age-old traditions continue, or, indeed, are remembered, is questionable. The Songs of Memory archives has as its principal aim to help record and preserve the musical legacy of the highland peoples of Southeast Asia, before it disappears.

Secondly, informing and engaging viewers through a variety of portals – visual, auditory, and tactile – is meant to bear witness to the sheer creativity and skill, the majesty and triumph of the traditional peoples of Southeast Asia. The multiplicity of the world's cultures is what makes our human species so extraordinary. Lose any of these and we lose a part of our humanity.

Finally, this documentary project hopes to give voice to smaller cultures, which may be left marginalized in favor of mainstream standards. It must be acknowledged that these communities have developed knowledge and ingenuity, based on a life in nature and honed over centuries, which can contribute to the greater good of our world. An appreciation of our reliance on others, who share our planet, encourages in us a sense of responsibility to human dignity that transcends borders and prejudices.

Audience

By creating a comparative collection of artifacts and media, showcasing music, rituals, and traditions that are little known and minimally documented, if at all, it is hoped that the Songs of Memory archives can make a valuable contribution to scholarship. Specifically, the work is intended to be relevant to ethnomusicologists, anthropologists, and Southeast Asian scholars. Additionally, educators in such diverse fields as sociology, religion, folk arts and folklore, cultural geography, and ethnic studies may use the exhibition, book, recordings, and educational films to inform students, from grade school to the university level, about the diversity of humankind.

For descendants of the ethnic groups portrayed, whether they continue to live in their ancestral villages or have relocated, possibly to another country as immigrants or refugees, the materials will serve as a touchstone to their identity, a reminder of the physical, communal, and spiritual source of their forebears.

The project has been specifically designed around integrated disciplines, to enlighten a wide audience with varied interests. Visitors can enter into the world of these six ethnic groups aurally through the filmed rituals or visually through the instruments, clothing, and photographs. Taken together, the overall vitality and exoticism of the highland peoples and their customs will captivate world travelers and virtual explorers alike.



Figure 2. Karen S'gaw Women watch a documentary film on the Karen Harvest Ritual.

A Case in Point

After a successful launch at the renowned Jim Thompson Art Centre in Bangkok, in 2009, the Songs of Memory exhibition traveled a year later to the Chiang Mai Arts and Cultural Center, located in the heart of the Old City. Chiang Mai is the largest and a culturally significant city in northern Thailand, the gateway to the foothills of the Himalayas. These highlands have become home to a variety of ethnic groups, who, over millennia, have migrated in a southerly trajectory from their source in Siberia, Mongolia, and the Tibetan Plateau, through China. Hence, there could be no more fitting venue than the CMACC to host these collections of the Hmong, Mien, Lahu, Akha, Lisu, and Karen, the six major ethnic groups found in the region.

In an international museum setting, a collection of ancestral artifacts from faraway cultures is viewed, in all likelihood, with a universal eye, which contemplates the uniqueness of their traditions with an open mind. When, however, these are displayed in situ where the people themselves reside, history and a possible stigma enter into the equation. As smaller, so-called 'minority' populations, these indigenous peoples have come to their 'home country,' in some cases before the majority or, indeed, before national boundaries were created, for a variety of reasons – migrating for better land and opportunities, joining family members, or fleeing persecution from repressive situations in bordering countries. This may give rise to a sense of otherness or alienation, which is often compounded by a number of factors – living in isolated, seasonally inaccessible mountainous areas; having less access to educational, work, and medical opportunities; and, in many cases, being 'un-settled' in refugee camps, without identity papers.

The intent of the Songs of Memory exhibition, then, goes beyond preserving culture and captivating the imagination of visitors. Of equal importance is revealing the extraordinary sophistication, integrity, wisdom, and abilities that the Hmong, Mien, Lahu, Akha, Lisu, and Karen embody. Their culture is deep and rich, and they possess a wealth of knowledge that must not be overlooked. A major purpose in showcasing tribal culture is to build a connection for mutual understanding among all peoples.

With this in mind, the vision for the Songs of Memory exhibit at the CMACC was to establish a dynamic outreach program to engage, educate, and instill an appreciation for the highland groups in this region – as fellow neighbors, classmates, and citizens – and to serve as a platform for sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas. The Songs of Memory project remains grateful to the CMACC for hosting these events, and honored to have collaborated with the Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at the Faculty of Social Science of Chiang Mai University, which helped sponsor and support the activities.

During its run from 12 February – 29 April 2010, the Songs of Memory exhibition was accompanied by the “Tribal Wisdom School: Sharing and Preserving Traditional Knowledge,” a symposium of the culture, history, and beliefs of the indigenous peoples, featuring conferences, demonstrations, curator walks, and concerts.



Figure 3. Meeju, an Akha Pawmee member of IMPECT, discusses the art of Akha garments in the seminar “From the Hands of the Hills: The Richness of Traditional Craftsmanship.”

The CMACC was humming for two and a half months, from the opening launch party in its lovely courtyard, where 160 guests were serenaded by Karen, Akha,

and Hmong musicians, to the final food fair, “Specialties from the Mountains,” held in the grand Three Kings Monument Square. Five conferences, free and open to students, researchers, and the general public, were presented by learned tribal members, academics from Chiang Mai and Payap Universities, leaders of cultural, social, and non-governmental organizations, and experts in a variety of fields. These seminars included: “Traditional Tribal Music;” “From the Hands of the Hills: The Richness of Traditional Craftsmanship;” “Living History of the Traditional Peoples;” and “May the Chain be Unbroken: What is the Future of Traditional Culture?” Hundreds of people, of all ages and many nationalities, were touched by the ideas shared by such respected presenters.



Figure 4. High school students attend the seminar “Living History of the Traditional Peoples.”

One weekend was devoted to artisan demonstrations, set in six traditional tribal huts constructed on the museum grounds, where tribal craftsmen and -women from each group demonstrated the masterful artistry of their forebears: Lisu weaving and needlecraft, Hmong batik printing, Akha embroidery and instrument-making, Mien embroidery and basket-weaving, and Karen and Lahu back-strap weaving.

As curator and exhibition designer, it was my pleasure to offer frequent curator walks for museum guests, including a special showing of my film, “Threads of Memory,” for the Chiang Mai Textile Society. Fourteen additional tours were given to school children, university students, and teachers from the following institutions: Chiang Daow, Ban Mae Angkang, and Prawe Wittayokom Schools, Rajapat Chiang Mai University, and Sacred Heart College. Perhaps most moving of all was a tour for a class of at-risk tribal girls, who had left their families to attend the New

Life Center Foundation boarding school. They expressed how the exhibit “helped them learn about their own culture.”



Figure 5 & 6. Artisan Demonstrations: left, a Mien woman displays fine embroidery skills and right, a Lisu woman demonstrates the art of weaving.



Figure 7. A curator walk given by the author for visitors to the Songs of Memory exhibition.

Without doubt, one of the highlights of the symposium was a public concert extravaganza, held on stage in the Three Kings Monument Square. Eighty skilled musicians, representing all six groups, sang, played instruments, and danced for hours into the night, sharing their extraordinary melodies and rhythms, and clothing and customs. Held during Chiang Mai's Sunday Market, a large, appreciative audience listened, entranced.



Figure 8. Akha Ulo musicians perform at the outdoor Songs of Memory concert at the Three King Monument Square in Chiang Mai.

The Songs of Memory collections, presented in context with the Tribal Wisdom School symposium and events, created a bridge, allowing visitors an opportunity to know and appreciate the ancestral cultures of the Golden Triangle area in Southeast Asia. But a bridge has two entryways, and it is believed that this experience also gave the traditional peoples themselves a means to be heard and understood and valued.

During one event, television, radio, and print journalists surrounded Aju Jupoh, an Akha colleague and musician, as he spoke about Akha culture during a live national broadcast. As he told me personally afterwards, "If I had come alone to this venue in Bangkok, I would not have been allowed to enter. I am so grateful to have had the chance to speak about my people."

On the Road

The Songs of Memory exhibition has had the great good fortune to continue its journey, traveling, in 2012, for a four-month run at its first international show at the University of Hawaii's East-West Center, well-known as an institution for mul-

ticultural dialogue. With an outreach blueprint in place, I brought with me a Karen and an Akha musician, to offer a variety of concerts, presentations, and curator walks to Hawaiian school children, university students and faculty, senior citizens, and the public.



Figure 9. Chi, a Karen S'gaw musician, performs his harp for an audience at the East-West Center in Honolulu, Hawaii.

It is hoped that, wherever the Songs of Memory collections and activities may be presented, they strike a chord in others, demonstrating the extraordinary ways our fellow man lives and creates, in all the varied splendor of humanity.

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Review

- **Book Review**
Very Thai: Everyday Popular Culture
Kjell Skylstad Editor in Chief

Book Review

Very Thai: Everyday Popular Culture

Kjell Skylstad⁺ Editor in Chief

No need to wait any longer. Here it is the Second edition of the most informative magnifying glass observation of one of the most fascinating cultures on this globe -Thailand in an urban perspective. After five annual reprints of the original 2010 edition Philip Cornwel-Smith, the eminent British author who has observed Thai life closely as an expat since arriving in 1994 and his artist cum photographer John C. Goss traveling between Asia and Palm Beach and most other places in between decided that the rapid cultural and social changes occurring all over Asia could no longer wait to be documented. The result: 209 new photos, 64 more pages and 4 extra chapters all presented with an acute sense of observation seldom if at all encountered in any work of this kind.

Alex Kerr in his opening chapter describes it as “Looking deeply into simple things of life” meaning the inner structure of what has been called the Thai way of life, the internal logic of an informal culture hidden from the view of even the most discerning visitor and totally escaping the filters of TOT together with the whole armada of guidebooks of all sizes and even the attempts at explanations from anthropologists as the author so correctly observes.

Yes, it keeps his promise of being a report on the day to day life of the average Thai citizen outside the dictates of tastes and accepted social rules of behavior. As such it falls miles away from the scope of any guidebook on Thailand ever published and even further away from the Truly Asia TV advertisements intended to sell a neighboring ASEAN country with no effects barred.

⁺ Dr. Kjell Skylstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway.

Oh yes, popular culture in Asia is rapidly becoming first and foremost an urban or suburban phenomenon. but with deep historical roots in the spiritual and religious heritage of a country with its richly diversified population. And the central place of the arts in all its genres, forms and functions is reflected in a way that breaks the barriers to true understanding and the imprisonment imposed by a western autonomous art view.

So here it is all for you to read, see, and enjoy - the masterly urban forms and genres of truck and bus art, the neon fairylands of dazzling living displays, the world of tattoos, the TV Likay performances, and the festivals uniting all art expressions into one overarching concept - Sanook.

Philip Cornwel-Smith and John Goss: Very Thai: Everyday Popular Culture
Bangkok, River Books Ltd., 2nd edition 2013, 320pp.
ISBN 078-616-7339-37-3

Journal Policy

About JUCR

The Journal of Urban Culture Research is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published biannually in June & December by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Japan. JUCR offers its readers two categories of content. One is a window into the latest international conferences and reviews on published books, websites, and other media. Secondly its main core is a range of articles from researchers in the international community.

The Aims of JUCR

This journal on urban culture aims at establishing a broad interdisciplinary platform for studies of cultural creativity and the arts that brings together researchers and cultural practitioners to identify and share innovative and creative experiences in establishing sustainable and vibrant, livable communities while fostering cultural continuity. The journal embraces broad cultural discussions regarding communities of any size as it recognizes the urban community's rural roots. JUCR encourages researchers and the full range of artists in visual arts, creative arts, music, dance, theater together with those in urban studies and planning to seek cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural practices.

JUCR has the objective of stimulating research on both the theory and practice of fine and applied arts in response to social challenges and environmental issues as well as calling for solutions across the creative realms. Moreover, JUCR supports advocacy processes, improvements in practices, and encourages supportive public policy-making related to cultural resources. JUCR intends to offer readers relevant theoretical discussions and act as a catalyst for expanding the knowledge-base of creative expression related to urban culture.

Review Process

1. JUCR promotes and encourages the exchange of knowledge in the field of fine and applied arts among scholars worldwide. Contributions may be research articles, reports of empirical studies, reviews of films, concerts, dances, and art exhibitions. Academic papers and book reviews are also acceptable. Articles are typically only considered for publication in JUCR with the mutual understanding that they have not been published in English elsewhere and are not currently under consideration by any other English language journal(s). Occasionally, noteworthy articles worthy of a broader audience that JUCR provides, will be reprinted. Main articles are assessed and peer reviewed by specialists in their relevant fields. Furthermore to be accepted for publication, they must also receive the approval of the editorial board.

2. To further encourage and be supportive of the large diverse pool of authors whose English is their second language, JUCR employs a 3-stage review process. The first is a double-blind review comprised of 2-3 international reviewers experi-

enced with non-native English writers. This is then followed by a non-blind review. Thirdly, a participative peer review will, if needed, be conducted to support the selection process.

3. All articles published in the journal will have been fully peer-reviewed by two, and in some cases, three reviewers. Submissions that are out of the scope of the journal or are of an unacceptably low standard of presentation will not be re-viewed. Submitted articles will generally be reviewed by two experts with the aim of reaching an initial decision within a two-month time frame.

4. The reviewers are identified by their solid record of publication as recommended by members of the editorial board. This is to assure the contributors of fair treatment. Nominations of potential reviewers will also be considered. Reviewers determine the quality, coherence, and relevancy of the submissions for the Editorial Board who makes a decision based on its merits. High relevancy submissions may be given greater prominence in the journal. The submissions will be categorized as follows:

- Accepted for publication as is.
- Accepted for publication with minor changes, no additional reviews necessary.
- Potentially acceptable for publication after substantial revision and additional reviews.
- Article is rejected.
- A notice of acceptance will be sent to submitting authors in a timely manner.

5. In cases where there is disagreement between the authors and reviewers, advice will be sought from the Editorial Board. It is the policy of the JUCR to allow a maximum of three revisions of any one manuscript. In all cases, the ultimate decision lies with the Editor-in-Chief after a full board consultation.

6. JUCR's referee policy treats the contents of articles under review as privileged information and will not be disclosed to others before publication. It is expected that no one with access to articles under review will make any inappropriate use of its contents.

7. The comments of the anonymous reviewers will be forwarded to authors upon request and automatically for articles needing revision so that it can serve as a guide. Note that revisions must be completed and resubmitted within the time frame specified. Late revised works may be rejected.

8. In general, material, which has been previously copyrighted, published, or accepted for publication elsewhere will not be considered for publication in the main section of JUCR.

9. The review process shall ensure that all authors have an equal opportunity for publication. The acceptance and scheduling of submissions for publication in the journal shall not be impeded by additional criteria or amendments to the procedures beyond those listed above.

10. The views expressed in articles published are the sole responsibility of the authors and not necessarily shared by the JUCR editors or Chulalongkorn University.

Submission Requirements

- Worthy contributions in the urban culture arena are welcome from researchers and practitioners at all stages in their careers. A suggested theme is announced prior to each issue.
- Manuscripts should generally not exceed 7,000 words including the abstract and references. Tables, figures, and illustrative material are accepted only when necessary for support.
- Manuscripts need to use our template for submission. Please download from our website's submission guidelines page. Details are described in the top half of the first page with sample text following. Documents not using the template will be returned for reformatting.
- All manuscripts are required to include a title, abstract, keywords, author's byline information, an introduction and conclusion section along with a Chicago formatted reference list. Manuscripts with existing footnotes and in-text references may retain them as a resource for readers, but are not required. Footnotes are to be relocated as non-standardized endnotes listed before references.
- Manuscripts should have all images, figures, and tables numbered consecutively. Reference lists need to conform to The Chicago Manual of Style (www.chicagomanualofstyle.org) as detailed in our template. We recommend the free online formatter for standardizing ones references. See www.bibme.org.
- Each author should send with their manuscript an abstract of 150 words or less together with a submission form providing their biographical data along with a maximum of six keywords.
- All manuscripts submitted for consideration need to be accompanied by a completed and signed Manuscript Submission form found on our website.
- Authors authorize the JUCR to publish their materials both in print and online while retaining their full individual copyright. The copyright of JUCR volumes is retained by Chulalongkorn University.
- Authors should strive for maximum clarity of expression. This point cannot be overstated. Additionally, authors need to bear in mind that the purpose of publication is the disclosure and discussion of artistic knowledge and innovations that expands the realm of human creativity and experience.

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Criteria and Responsibilities for Editorial Board Membership

Overview

The Editorial Board is comprised of members who have significant expertise and experience in their respective fields. Editorial Board Members are appointed by the Executive Director with the approval of at least 60% of the Editors and Editorial Board.

Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility criteria for appointment shall include:

- Demonstrated scholarly expertise and ethical leadership in an area not over represented on the existing Editorial Board.
- Published three or more papers in scholarly publications.
- Demonstrated excellence in the review process, based on independent evaluations of the Editors and Associates.
- Stated commitment to contribute to issues affecting the management of JUCR.

Responsibilities

Members of the Editorial Board are directly accountable to the Managing Editor.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Provide input on editorial needs and review manuscripts as requested.
- Complete assigned reviews in a timely fashion. Offer mutually respectful and constructive review of manuscripts to assist in providing the highest quality of papers.
- Maintain confidentiality and objectivity with regard to manuscripts and the JUCR review process.
- Participate in the evaluation of the quality and effectiveness of JUCR so as to help sustain the highest level of excellence.
- Once appointed to the Editorial Board, members are encouraged to submit at least one paper during their tenure.

Nomination Process

Nominations are submitted in writing (via email or post) and addressed to the Editor in Chief or any member of the Editorial staff. Candidates/applicants must submit a CV including a statement addressing her/his interests and suitability for Board membership. JUCR assumes the general readership would be able to identify the candidate by her/his reputation for scholarship in an established line of inquiry.

When a candidate is approved by majority vote of the current JUCR board members, she/he will be invited to serve by the Editor in Chief for a specified term of three years. The Dean of Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts in turn will finalize the appointment. Continued membership of the Editorial Board will be reviewed every three years by a member of the Editorial Board with a decision about candidates submitted annually. The number of Editorial Board members will not exceed 20 unless otherwise agreed upon.



Journal of Urban Culture Research

The Journal of Urban Culture Research (JUCR) is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published biannually by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Osaka, Japan.

JUCR aims at establishing a broad interdisciplinary platform for studies of cultural creativity and the arts that brings together researchers and cultural practitioners to identify and share innovative and creative experiences in establishing sustainable and vibrant, livable communities while fostering cultural continuity. The journal embraces broad cultural discussions regarding communities of any size as it recognizes the urban community's rural roots.

JUCR encourages researchers and the full range of artists in visual arts, creative arts, music, dance, theater together with those in urban studies and planning to seek cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural practices.

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