CHAPTER 3

Choreography as Meshwork: The Production of Motion and the Vernacular

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Introduction

The definition of choreography has sparked lively arguments both in practice and within recent dance scholarship, as the landmark exhibition *MOVE. Choreographing You: Art and Dance since the 1960s* exemplified, with its extensive investigation into the diversity of works of choreography ranging from historical New York avant-gardes to current participatory installations.[1] According to Susan Foster, the idea of choreography in the West has had a trajectory of significant changes since its appearance in the seventeenth century.[2] The present status of the word is highly fluid. In contrast to the notion of choreography which signified nothing but a creation *ex nihilo* by an individual in, for example, the time of Martha Graham, it now refers to the facilitation of a project in which multiple members gathered from different contexts take part. In the context of the performing arts, however, the role of choreographer still appears to denote a responsibility and privilege to conduct the entirety of relations and chemistry between the components of a project. We are not so radically detached from the modern legacy of ideas like author and her/his work, as shown in the case of Jérôme Bel's *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*.[3]

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T.F. DeFrantz, P. Rothfield (eds.), *Choreography and Corporeality*,
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-54653-1_3

As I discuss later in this chapter, despite its endeavour to weave two different contexts of dance culture into a single shared moment, the title of the piece indicates a solid structure within which Bel and Klunchun play their respective roles: one is the author and the other his subject. Thus the idea of choreographer as facilitator, as Foster formulates it, is still problematic when seen in the context of multiculturalism in the globalised contemporary dance arena. This is because it betrays its own agenda by preserving the power of the modern subject as author who desires the other and 'all movement as varieties of signifying cultural and individual identity' as material for her/his product.[4]

This chapter examines the possibility of practising choreography across plural contexts while avoiding a politics of cultural assimilation of the other, with the assistance of Tim Ingold's concept of 'meshwork'.[5] It begins with a genealogical account of the way in which choreography has been conceived, followed by a discussion of Western ethnocentric ethics of assimilation in relation to Jêrome Bel's work. This is followed by an outline of an alternative conception of choreography, to be developed from the work of Tim Ingold. Ingold's work will be used to develop an alternative characterisation of choreography as meshwork. The notion of choreography as meshwork will be explored in relation to a number of Japanese choreographic practices, centred upon Kobe and across Japan more generally. These exemplars allow me to evaluate the difference between authorial notions of the choreographic and the notion of choreography as meshwork. Ultimately, the question will be posed: if we reconceive of choreography in these terms, what is left behind within the globally prevailing notion of dance as Art, which is rooted in modern Western history?

Choreography and Multiculturalism

Choreography's Genealogical Origins

According to Susan Foster, choreography was coined in 1700 by combining Greek χορεία (dance) and γραφή (writing) to denote the recording of dance on paper with notational signs.[6] The technology was conceived mainly for pedagogic purposes, and brought tremendous ease for memory, reproduction, and the transmission of dance. But writing also gave a new dimension to the art of dance. While a dance form is only conveyed from the teacher's body to those of learners, a dance cannot exist separately from the specific bodies who dance it. So, as Foster argues, 'the

acts of composing a dance, learning a dance, and learning to dance were conceptualised as overlapping, if not identical projects'.[7] But the notational system, along with its systematic codification of bodily movements, also enabled analysis of a sequence into parts and syntheses of them into another. Foster detects here the birth of authorship in dance, as follows:

> Not only were movements broken down into their most basic units, but each movement was located within a specified sequence, one that could be altered in the same way that the individual moves could be varied and embellished. The arrangement and rearrangement of movement thus emerged as a practice through which an individual achieved recognition as the author of those arrangements.[8]

This invention repeated the process already seen in Western music history; where writing empowered the identity of a 'work' and the copyright of its maker prior to its performance.

The term 'choreography' as making rather than recording, however, did not emerge in general vocabulary until the twentieth century. Foster explains it arose when critics referred to Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* which displayed bold combinations of traditional *pas* with unfamiliar elements, and spread rapidly in the 1920s. '[The] contributions of an arranger of movement' was paid attention to in the context of Broadway musicals, while in modern dance terminology, 'choreography began to specify the unique process through which an artist not only arranged and invented movement, but also melded motion and emotion to produce a danced statement of universal significance'.[9] This process almost completed the acknowledgement of choreography as art in a modernist sense. For Foster:

> The choreography, as the outcome of the creative process, was seen as the property of an individual artist, not as an arrangement of steps that were shared amongst a community of practitioners, as in Feuillet's time, but rather, as a creation of both the movement and its development through time.[10]

Regarded as having its own autonomous existence independent of specific execution, choreography represented an absolute demand on the part of the dancer. Choreographers in the 1960s who encountered a regime of hierarchy in modern dance looked for different approaches. Merce Cunningham and John Cage developed a new methodology to dismantle self-expressionism and authorship by way of collaboration which radically

explored aleatoric decision-making; Anna Halprin placed an emphasis on skills of improvisation and preferred to call herself 'director' instead of 'choreographer'; dancers who gathered around the Judson Memorial Church adopted daily or 'found' movements such as walking and executed 'a decentering of the artist-as-genius model of authorship'.[11] Methods and strategies of collaboration between different genres led them to prefer conception, direction, or composition rather than choreography. Foster writes:

> The choreographer, no longer the visionary originator of a dance, or even its maker or director, became a person who assembled and presided over a collaboration … the choreographer was identified as the facilitator of the work being made.[12]

The choreographer as facilitator asks performers to invent movements and suggests ways to show them, design costumes, tending to work with practitioners equipped with different skills and abilities such as jugglers, gymnasts, break dancers, or untrained people, children and elders, the physically challenged, and other marginalised bodies in society.

Choreography and the Other

The emergence of the choreographer-as-facilitator, with a particular interest in multiculturalism, is also found in recent European work. Pina Bausch, a typical choreographer-as-facilitator, has been known since the late 1970s for her method of asking her nationally diverse dancers extensive questions concerning their personality and memory to compose scenes and sequences. It is telling that Bausch recreated her seminal work *Kontakthof*[13] with dancers aged over 65 in 2000, and after its huge success, again with teenage dancers aged over 14 in 2008. These new versions are a symbol of contemporary European society which appreciates theatre works that pay special attention to issues of social inclusion. The UK distinguished dance group, Candoco, formed as early as in 1991, with dancers with different physical disabilities, is now historically contextualised as forerunners of an array of contemporary dance projects engaging with disabilities.

On the other hand, it was in the mid-1990s that a generation of choreographers started to present experimental works, mainly in France, largely inspired by American avant-gardes like Rainer, Paxton, or Halprin. One of

the prominent figures of those who took part in the movement was, Xavier Le Roy, whose groundbreaking *Self Unfinished*[14] can also be interpreted within the same framework of a transformative politics of the body (as mentioned above). Although the work is a solo by Le Roy himself, during the performance, he carefully and seamlessly keeps changing the shape and articulation of his body to unsettle the audience's perception of the 'normal' human body. Alluding to absence, adhesion, or deformation of different body parts, Le Roy's incessant transformation stealthily refers to diversified bodies, either naturally or artificially, and brings the audience into reflection, not only on humanity, but also on their community and its members, against a backdrop of the advancement of medical technology or of the increasingly visible presence of marginalised components of society.[15]

Jérôme Bel is arguably the most influential French successor of American avant-garde choreography and typifies the choreographer-as-facilitator in a unique way. The cast for his *The Show Must Go On*[16] was selected from those who submitted to the general audition, whether trained or untrained, to satirise the *spectacle*, or ideological institutionalisation of the interdependence of performers and the audience. The piece was followed by *Véronique Doisneau*,[17] in which a former member of the corps de ballet of the Paris Opéra shows up on stage alone. Standing in the centre, facing the audience, she talks about her own experience as marginal, inserting a humorous demonstration of how she has been dancing and mostly waiting for more important events to happen and pass her by. Since *Véronique Doisneau*, a series of similar performances with different protagonists followed.[18] In 2005, Bel created *Isabel Torres*,[19] with a ballerina of the Teatro Municipal of Rio de Janeiro, and *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, a duet with a classical Thai dancer and choreographer, and in 2009, *Luts Förster*,[20] with a dancer from the company of Pina Bausch, and *Cédric Andrieux*,[21] with a ballet dancer from Lyon Ballet.

In the series since *Doisneau*, Jérôme Bel is clearly identifying himself as a choreographer-as-facilitator, in that he doesn't create movements to be executed by the dancer but rather presides over encounters between the dancer-protagonist and the audience, revealing an intense 'interest in all movement as varieties of signifying cultural and individual identity'.[22] In short, he is not 'the visionary originator of a dance' but the facilitator of the event.[23]

Amongst these, however, one notices that *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* differs, insofar as it takes the form of a duet with Bel. According to Bel, the

piece was initially envisaged as a solo like *Doisneau*,[24] but resulted in a two-part performance consisting of the former half in which Bel asked questions to Klunchun and the latter in which Klunchun interviewed Bel. This dialogical structure furnishes it with an element which the other pieces lacked. Pieces like *Doisneau* only show the dancer's personality, but *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* enables the audience to see a difference between two personalities. Klunchun answers Bel's questions about what Khon is, and explains its vocabulary, pedagogy, habits and morals in Thailand, weaving demonstrations into the conversation, and meanwhile, Klunchun asks Bel to explain the history of ballet and modern dance so as to contextualise his own controversial works. The dialogue suggests they are mutually Other to each other, and attempts to relativise the two cultures in a performative way. The political character of the piece is far more evident compared to others in the series.

This political agenda, however, seems unavoidably betrayed by an inherent asymmetry between Bel's role and Klunchun's. For Bel, the piece is a part of his career as an artist, succeeding his earlier works like *The Show Must Go On* or *Véronique Doisneau*, and he knows that he is consciously dealing with a modernist critique of the history of dance in the West. But for Klunchun, who has been trained in Khon with his master Chaiyot Khummanee since the age of 16, and is now devoting himself to contemporary dance works dealing with this legacy, the form of *Pichet Klunchun and Myself* is alien. Even though the dialogue is conducted on equal terms, the stage upon which they stand is conditioned and contextualised within a history of Western theatre. The use of sporty outfits instead of decorative stage costume, a bare stage with no theatrical lighting, and a prosaic mode of behaviour and speech powerfully contribute towards fabricating a natural look for the conversation, and tacitly require the viewer to receive it as an ironical performance within a highly loaded cultural setting.[25] As Bel explains, the idea of contemporary arts in the West including its incorporation of spectacle, his conception strongly belongs to a specific context in which Klunchun or Khon do not necessarily take part.[26] Therefore Klunchun seems to be merely an option among many for Bel. He could search for other versions with equivalent casts, in principle, and at will, like 'Akram Khan and Myself', or 'Bandô Tamasaburô and Myself'.

So it is rather significant that the piece takes the form of a duet rather than Klunchun's solo. Unlike dancers Doisneau, Torres, Förster and Andrieux who could undertake a task to embody a medium of self-reflection of Western institutions, Klunchun is specifically given the role of

the other *for* the West.[27] Integrated into the dominant context, Klunchun becomes objectified as the title of the work announces, even though he appears to be afforded the same position as Bel onstage. The choreographer's attempt to equate cultural contexts expunging their difference of paradigms may not be free from what James Clifford calls 'hegemonic Western assumptions'.[28]

The asymmetry between subject and object, as seen above, is more or less inevitable in any project by the choreographer-as-facilitator because the performance cannot be achieved without representations of, and control over, the Other, from disabled bodies to non-Western bodies, animal bodies, and so on. In other words, the modern subjectivity of the choreographer and her/his transcendental power as the author is still at work, or even indispensable, in multi- or transculturalist projects which weave together different subjects and contexts.

Meshwork and Choreography

The following discussion offers a concept of choreography which aims to avoid the problematic of authorial conceptions. Despite her or his best efforts, the choreographer-as-facilitator is liable to reproduce relations between the mobile subject and its immobile object. Anthropologist Tim Ingold terms this objectification inversion: 'I use the term *inversion* to refer to the operation that wraps lines of flight into bounded points.'[29] According to Ingold, every organism has its own duration of living. To grasp it alive as it is, always open to the world and for its own potentiality, each should be depicted in the form of a line which is never finished but always in a process. The tendency is to reduce this process to a point, which lacks duration and openness, especially when making a connection (network) between plural beings:

> [T]he establishment of relations *between* these elements—whether they be organisms, persons or things of any other kind—necessarily requires that each is turned in upon itself prior to its integration into the network. And this presupposes an operation of inversion.[30]

Ingold suggests that the concept of network be replaced by that of meshwork. The network, which consists of a structure of relations between points, is an entirely spatial construct, while meshwork is a living, durational entanglement of lines. Ingold's notion of meshwork is indebted to

Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, haecceity and rhizome.[31] It enables a unique view on the dynamic complexity of the world. This is because it allows us to focus on, not only the motion of beings, it also highlights their fundamental interrelations. Rather than identifying each single organism as a being enclosed within a singular contour and separate from the outer world, Ingold suggests that they be seen as a part of a mobile, becoming world. According to this worldview, every being is released into its own lived duration or 'a trail of movement or growth',[32] which is nothing but an incessantly renewed relation between things in the world. Thus it is restored to its original status as a trail 'in a tissue of trails that together comprise the texture of the lifeworld'.[33] Furthermore, an organism is itself comprised of not a single but multiple lines, each of which is in a process of development.[34] Therefore an organism has only a temporary identity, consisting of an entanglement of multiple streams, which may move into another provisional cohesion:

> Organisms and persons, then, are not so much nodes in a network as knots in a tissue of knots, whose constituent strands, as they become tied up with other strands, in other knots, comprise the meshwork.[35]

To illustrate how meshwork differs from network, Ingold contrasts the activity of ants, who build an organisation through networking a number of individuals, and the spider, who relates to the world via its web. According to the spider:

> It is as though my body were formed through knotting together threads of life that run out through my many legs into the web and thence to the wider environment. The world, for me, is not an assemblage of bits and pieces but a tangle of threads and pathways. Let us call it a *meshwork* …[36]

The spider's relationship with its world is not that of subject and object. Moreover, there is no definitive distinction between the self and the outer world. The spider lives in the middle of entangled lines of movements, as a temporal bundle of lines or 'relational field'.[37]

In principle, the choreographer-as-facilitator in Foster's formulation also aims to collaborate with diverse bodies, taking care of their particular capabilities, properties, and dignity. Driven by an 'interest in all movement as varieties of signifying cultural and individual identity',[38] she or he would seek for ways to relate different bodies rather than impose movements conceived by the author to be repeated by the dancers. However, Ingold's

notion of meshwork suggests another way of thinking choreography for practitioners who hope to bypass the inevitable use of power by the subject; who want to equitably connect with the other, yet risk objectification rather than collaboration. The notion of meshwork rejects the idea that choreography is the expression of some transcendental power. Meshwork may be discerned in an event which crosses multiple lines of lives. As the following discussion will suggest, it is not only the choreographer who lives a line, but multiple lines of lives weave a mesh in which the choreographer participates, bringing about events which have not been expected by anyone involved, not even by the choreographer. The choreographer no longer moulds her/his own work, but rather functions within a relational field. The choreographer is thus no longer transcendent but immanent within this world of relational becoming.

Being Woven into a Meshwork

In contrast to the Asian contemporary dance scene, which is increasingly developing through strengthening ties with the West, a number of Japanese contemporary dance-makers and organisations have recently been making connections with vernacular dance cultures. I refer to the work of Dance Box, a non-profit organisation located in the heart of downtown Kobe city. Dance Box was originally founded in Osaka in 1996. It organised shows, events and workshops at its own theatre which was seen as a centre of contemporary dance in the Western part of Japan. In 2008, however, the subsidising Osaka city government determined to cut its budget, and staff were consequently obliged to leave the building. They discovered a place in the Shin-Nagata area in Kobe city the following year. Although they settled there, they didn't have a ready-made audience around them. The area was set apart from the contemporary dance communities around Kyoto or Osaka. To solve this problem, they started communicating with local residents, communities, and especially existing dance circles of different genres. This strategy was an alternative to scattering complementary tickets to opinion leaders, or organising dance workshops for beginners who would ultimately perform in a showcase, with a cast of ordinary people headed by a contemporary dance, 'expert' choreographer.

Their ethnographic research resulted in the discovery that the town of Shin-Nagata was full of small communities practising diverse forms of dance. These communities included: hip-hop groups, Hula teachers, a Korean traditional performance troupe, immigrants from southern

Amami islands near Okinawa practising local folk dance, old masters of Japanese traditional dance teaching at their own studio, teams of a new folk dance called Yosakoi, a Burmese restaurant owner's wife showing a popular dance that she learned before she left home, and the high school modern dance club.

The programme director of Dance Box, Yokobori Fumi, began visiting these dance circles together with Miyamoto Hiroshi, a video artist and ethnographer, as part of a project entitled *Dances in Shin-Nagata*. They interviewed practitioners and exchanged workshops between these practitioners and contemporary dancers. Eventually, some of the practitioners became friendly, and began to visit Dance Box to attend its shows. The *Dances in Shin-Nagata* project is characterised by its unique approach towards building relationships. The conversation it initiated is mutual and interactive, and differs from an asymmetrical exploitation of native informants by surveyors, or a one-way form of enlightenment ensuing from an institutionally defined contemporary dance. Consider the case of Nishioka Juri, a young contemporary dancer, and Fujita Sachiko, traditional Amami dance teacher. Soon after graduating from college in Kobe in 2011, Nishioka Juri came in close contact with Dance Box as a dancer, an audience member, and a part-time staff member at the theatre. Her basic background is ballet, jazz, and Graham technique. Fujita Sachiko was born in Tokunoshima, one of the Amami islands near Okinawa. She moved to Kobe to become a mentor of traditional Amami dance and Japanese dance amongst Amami immigrants. When Dance Box suggested to Nishioka that she find a partner to collaborate with, Nishioka thought of Fujita. Nishioka thus began learning *Shin-buyô* (a 'new dance' style blending traditional Japanese dance and contemporary popular songs), and even joined their class presentations. For their part, Fujita and her students appeared in events at Dance Box. It is interesting to observe how the lines of these two cross, rather than assimilate one into the other, enabling multiple events to simultaneously emerge on each side.[39]

Nishioka describes what motivated her to join the project:

> At first, I just wanted to dance with sensei. But I gradually realised it was more reasonable for me to consider dance as something to be born rather than something to create. I thought a dance would be born among people's daily life. For those who like to take lessons regularly, dance is a part of their daily routine, and the dance they learn is somehow rooted in their local environment, that is what I feel. My interest is to attend and experience the

> very origin of dance, rather than to 'make' a choreography. […] when the offer came to me, I was not sure whether I could do this … but I thought, it might lead me towards that kind of experience.[40]

According to Nishioka, Fujita was rather ambivalent at first. Nonetheless, Fujita accepted Nishioka, an outsider, and moreover, bore those expenses that Nishioka had to pay in order to join their showing. Although Fujita never reveals her own interest in plain words, she seems to have a specific reason to support her. Nishioka speculates:

> Perhaps because I have shown curiosity not only in their *shin-buyô* but also Tokunoshima, they have given me a position in their dance at events related to the islands. It seems as if they feel able to teach me because I'm not a beginner, and they want me to join their activities. They are not so serious in training me but they do say the atmosphere in the class improves thanks to the presence of a younger person like me. 'Just don't leave, please,' they say. I'd like to please sensei in return for accepting me.[41]

In September 2013, I attended an event of the project which was to 'tour' the sites of local dance practices in Shin-Nagata. We were invited into Fujita's studio in a building in Kobe, Amami Hall, and had a chat over tea. After demonstrating some repertoires of their dancing, they suggested Nishioka dance a piece that she was learning with Fujita in preparation for their next showing. Naturally she hesitated at first, for the style was foreign to her and she knew most of us had never seen her dance in that way. She danced in *kimono*, with an umbrella, to *enka*, or Japanese popular song. Though looking slightly awkward, struggling to remember the dance, she traced the choreography together with her sensei. I was impressed, most of all, by the cheers which were uttered by the students. Their voices were pitched as if they were sharing comments amongst friends but they obviously reached the dancer. I felt they were quietly excited to see a young dancer, with no link to their roots, undertaking their culture. Since traditional dance is not popular among youngsters nowadays, perhaps they wanted to encourage her to become a serious devotee of their form. More surprisingly, Fujita even attempted to integrate Nishioka's own contemporary dance piece into their showing, although the *iemoto*, the head of the Takemura school to which Fujita belonged, did not ultimately allow that.

Fig. 3.1 Dance in Shin-Nagata Project. Photographer Unknown

Through this encounter, many tiny events seemed to occur and leave traces, ranging from the microscopic to the major, in the bodies of Nishioka, Fujita, her students, Dance Box, and numerous other related actors. Unlike any sort of forced hybrid, the newly woven meshwork results in extension, amplification, even complication of the texture of the lifeworld, but such a texture remains, as Mary Louise Pratt puts it, 'heterogeneous on the reception end as well as the production end: it will read very differently to people in different positions in the contact zone'.[42]

Even more interestingly, this case of meshwork shows how that learning—or being choreographed—brings about an event beyond teaching or choreographing. In other words, a learner, in her/his own right, may choreograph the teacher and the relationships among the actors belonging to distinct contexts. The choreography in this sense is fundamentally different from that associated with production of a work by a transcendent author who networks multiple actors grasped as discrete points. Instead, this is a choreographic event which crosses lines of movement or growth. It is in short a meshwork, able to bring about social change.

Paralleling Dance Box's practice is another project called *We're Gonna Go Learning! To Tohoku!!* by Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN), a non-profit organisation. JCDN is known for its immense contribution towards building today's contemporary dance scene in Japan. Since 1998, it has diffused the genre nationwide through its pivotal yearly project called *We're Gonna Go Dancing! Dancing*, which has over the years established a cycle of production—auditioning local dance-makers, composing programmes, and touring regional cities to cultivate local audiences and stimulate new creators to raise their hands—and which has had an enormous impact on the growth of the scene. In *Learning*, however, they reversed their intentions. The *Learning* project was conceived and initiated in response to the earthquake and tsunami in 2011 in Tohoku (the north-eastern part of Japan) to retrieve local folk dance traditions, which were devastated, as well as all other aspects of the region's daily artistic and cultural life. People in the area lost fellows, masters, rehearsal rooms, costumes, props, instruments, and those physical and psychical ties necessary to practise rituals and continue training. In the middle of the social rearticulation in the region, many recognised that rituals play a considerable role in maintaining relations among people and invigorating their communities. Through launching the *Learning* project in partnership with the Japan Folk Performing Arts Association, JCDN began organising dancers to visit the region in order to learn local folk dances.

The project rapidly developed into the Sanriku International Art Festival, first held in the seashore of Ofunato-city, Iwate in August 2014. The festival collected major *Tora-mai* (tiger dance) troupes from towns, *Shishi-odori* (deer dance) groups, joined by other folk performance like *nongaku* (farmer's music) invited from South Korea, and Balinese dance with a gamelan orchestra—which consisted of specialists invited both from Bali and Japan[43]—and contemporary dance artists. On the final day of a week full of workshops and performance programmes, welcomed by a large audience, this huge festival promoted experimentation with some traditional folk forms which were experiencing a crisis in relation to their own conventionality. In a small slot after showcasing all Tora-mai troupes, JCDN suggested that participant troupes dance simultaneously. It was obvious that it didn't make sense for the various participants to mingle, for each troupe was accompanied by their own percussionists playing specific rhythm patterns, but some among them dared to make an uncommon tumultuous moment in a festive atmosphere. This sort of simple 'meddle' by JCDN added a special tone to the festival finale, leading to an

enormous mixture of *Shishi-odori*, Balinese dance, gamelan, and *nongaku*. These performers played simultaneously without a conductor and generated an extraordinary chaos, which was realised as a meshwork of JCDN, local residents, and guests. These practices are a form of meshwork, not network, in that this event produced multiple meanings from a variety of actors' points of view. Each actor discovers reasons to be involved, living their own lines, without being subject to someone else's overarching framework.

The last example is related to *bon-odori* (a traditional folk dance which forms a part of a Buddhist festival), which is gathering increasing attention from contemporary artists. Ohtomo Yoshihide, composer and musician, has been leading the *bon-odori* project within *Project FUKUSHIMA!!*, an art project initiated soon after the nuclear power plant disaster in Fukushima in 2011. Choreographer and dancer, Kondo Ryohei, also leader of his contemporary dance company Condors, has been organising a new *bon-odori* every year since 2008, in association with a public theatre in Tokyo. Yamanaka Camera, originally a sound artist, works as a resident

Fig. 3.2 Sanriku International Art Festival. Photographer Unknown

artist to compose and choreograph a new *bon-odori* for whichever town invites him. Considered a traditional practice, it is also flexible enough to receive elements derived from popular culture or occasionally, individual invention. Its simplest form as circle or line dancing is known to anyone, even those who haven't participated in the form.[44] Taking advantage of this familiarity of *bon-odori*, Yamanaka composes a verse from topics or subjects that he learnt from conversations with residents, and extensive study of the town or the region's history, adding some tiny elements, which is unusual for *bon-odori* music, such as a blue note or complex rhythm. This insertion creates a slight alienation, which is perceivable but does not disturb the flow. Then he calls for core dancers, musicians, food stands, in cooperation with local partners. His *bon-odori* is held at shopping arcades, in the schoolyard, or other kinds of everyday space, which is common for *bon-odori*. Then the dance is handed over to the residents who have helped him to finish it and take over the dance. This is another form of meshwork elegantly woven by lines of the artist and different resident agencies in the local area.

Conclusion

As demonstrated, meshwork choreography could be conceptualised as a radically different approach from work by the choreographer-as-facilitator. The latter inevitably presupposes a relationship of a powerful subject—either as an ordinary dictator, a kind paternal leader, or a curious multiculturalist artist—and the object or material for a work of Art. In contrast, meshwork choreography is realised in the middle of diverse dance practices embedded in an ecosystem and vernacular society where dance might be framed as dance, but not necessarily as Art which is considered as a part of the modern public sphere and armed with ideas like work, author or ownership. Although the choreographer's approach might be thought of as a kind of interference, imposed upon the community from the outside, it differs from any kind of exploitation of vernacular culture, insofar as the newly woven meshwork is not the realisation of individual intent or vision. In short, meshwork choreography allows for the generation of new contexts for negotiation between people—including the choreographer—to bring about motions and changes in a collaborative way, but without the need to move in unison. Instead, people are able to follow respective lines of life, facing new situations, rather than needing to share part of a larger whole designed by one individual. In that sense, the ethico-political impli-

cations of meshwork extend beyond attempts towards the inclusion of otherness discussed earlier. To be woven into meshwork, however, much attention is required on the part of the choreographer to avoid inversion which is, as Ingold explains, the *reduction* of lines into points:

> [T]he establishment of relations *between* these elements—whether they be organisms, persons or things of any other kind—necessarily requires that each is turned in upon itself prior to its integration into the network. And this presupposes an operation of inversion.[45]

Inversion represents a return to previous notions of choreography, which are embedded in relations between discrete entities. By contrast, moving as a line or a bundle of lines along with other lines, the choreographer is able to experience relations of subject and object in uncertain and fluid terms, moment by moment, varying according to particular points of view. This event would be multifaceted and open to interpretation. Where multiple actors are alive together, their lines emerge as 'lines of becoming'.[46] Such is the dynamic potential of meshwork choreography.

Notes

1. *MOVE*, curated by Rosenthal.
2. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 15.
3. *Pichet Klunchun and Myself*, choreographed by Bel.
4. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy,* 66.
5. Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archeology, Art and Architecture.*
6. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 42–3.
7. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 38.
8. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 38.
9. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 44.
10. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 52.
11. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 61.
12. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 66.
13. *Kontakthof,* choreographed by Bausch, 1978.
14. *Self Unfinished*, choreographed by Le Roy, 1998.
15. The ephemeral character of Le Roy's body in *Self Unfinished*, which baffles the eyes of the viewer seeking to grasp its definitive shape moment by moment but in vain, would compare to that of nineteenth-century Romantic tutu which titillated the male gaze by inviting and refusing the ability of viewers to capture the dancer's real body. In Héla Fattoumi and Eric Lamoureux's *Manta,* 2009, a solo dance with an Islamic scarf per-

formed by Fattoumi, we find an alternate rendition of a Western modern repertoire, scarf dancing, descending from Romantic ballet to Loïe Fuller's huge skirt, St. Denis's music visualisation, and Graham's *Lamentation*, as they use the familiar device as a signifier of otherness, manifesting a cultural turn in contemporary Western dance.

16. *The Show Must Go On*, choreographed by Bel.
17. *Véronique Doisneau*, choreographed by Bel.
18. Bel, 'Cédric Andrieux.'
19. *Isabel Torres*, choreographed by Bel.
20. *Luts Förster*, choreographed by Bel.
21. *Cédric Andrieux,* choreographed by Bel.
22. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 66.
23. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 66.
24. Bel, interview with Ritsema.
25. Compared to Judson Church experimentalists, the natural look of Bel's performances is well fabricated in a rather theatrical and playful manner, so that the audience would never be really confused nor bored. American choreographers appear more 'seriously' focused on an almost scientific experimentation, aimed to radically challenge the value system. In contrast, Bel overtly utilises dramaturgical technique in time structure, stylised acting, and even theatre equipment to defamiliarise the theatre conventions and to share a self-reflexive gaze at the performance with the viewers.
26. Bel, interview with Ritsema.
27. In 2008, the European Cultural Foundation gave the Princess Margaret Award for Culture to Jérôme Bel and Pichet Klunchun, along with Stuart Hall. It is 'an annual award given to *European* artists and thinkers whose work shows the potential for culture to create an *inclusive Europe*' [emphases mine], European Cultural Foundation.
28. Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture,* 197.
29. Ingold, *Making: Anthropology, Archeology, Art and Architecture*, 63.
30. Ingold, *Making,* 70.
31. Ingold's theory resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of haecceity. They write: 'There is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance. We reserve the name *haecceity* for it. A season, a winter, a summer, an hour, a date have a perfect individuality lacking nothing, even though this individuality is different from that of a thing or a subject. They are haecceities in the sense that they consist entirely of relations of movement and rest between molecules or particles, capacities to affect and to be affected' (Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 261). The notion of rhizome was also developed in *A Thousand Plateaus*, to signify a non-hierarchical sense of connection and development, open to an imminent analysis and resistant towards

transcendentalist thinking. See Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, especially Chapter 1.

32. Ingold, *Making*, 69.
33. Ingold, *Making*, 70.
34. Ingold, *Making*, 70.
35. Ingold, *Making*, 70.
36. Ingold, *Making*, 91–92.
37. Ingold, *Making*, 70.
38. Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*, 66.
39. This crossing differs from the inclusion of otherness discussed earlier in relation to European dance, and specifically, the work of Bel.
40. Nishioka, interview with Muto.
41. Nishioka, interview with Muto.
42. Pratt, 'Arts of the Contact Zone,' 36–37.
43. The residents in this area have over the years been familiar with people from Indonesia traveling as crew of cargo ships around harbours. So some part of the audience could have connected with the Balinese performers, forming another potential meshwork of sorts.
44. The tradition of *bon-odori* traces back to at least the medieval period. From its original form of Buddhist ritual, it gradually turned into folk entertainment through the early modern period. It was in the 1930s that *bon-odori* became a national craze and partly homogenised through recording media, see Hosokawa, 'Odoru nashonarizumu' and Kodera, *Kindai buyoshi-ron*.
45. Ingold, *Making*, 70.
46. Ingold, *Making*, 132.

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