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EMBODYING A SITE

Choreographing Prambanan

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Abstract

The article re-engages with the 9th century CE temple complex of Prambanan, in Central Java, as a performance locus, discussing the different phases of a bodily interaction with the site from the reconstitution of its dance units, retrievable from the dance reliefs of the main temple, to an exploration of the temple-dance-site connection. The author proposes that archaeology can be conceived and experienced as an embodied and performative practice: the Prambanan site has been incorporated in the archaeological process of dance movement reconstitution and its re-embodiment. This in turn has enabled a choreography of the site through an exploration of the architecture/dance relationship, mutually inscribed as a corporeality.

Key Words ◆ archaeology ◆ architecture ◆ choreography ◆ dance-unit ◆ embodiment ◆ performative ◆ reconstitution

Il va falloir de la même manière réveiller l'expérience du monde tel qu'il nous apparaît en tant nous sommes au monde par notre corps, en tant que nous percevons le monde avec notre corps.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la Perception*

INTRODUCTION

Prambanan is a temple complex in central Java (Figure 1), built around the 9th century CE (Miksic et al., 1996). It belongs to the 'classical period' of Javanese history, otherwise known as the Hindu/Buddhist or Indo-Javanese period (Fontein, 1990; Klokke, 1993). Around the outer balustrade of the main temple, there are 62 reliefs showing groups of



FIGURE 1 View of Prambanan complex.

Photo: the author

three male dancers in action (Figure 2). These reliefs alternate with others portraying three female and male figures, in different groupings, showing them in standing postures. The dance reliefs have been the object of research over a period spanning several decades (Oudheidkundige Dienst, 1948; Sivaramamurti, 1974; Vatsyayan, 1977a; Sedyawati, 1981, 1982).

Throughout the 1990s, I engaged in research at Prambanan, through a series of interrelated projects: from analysis and reconstitution of the dance movements shown in the reliefs (Iyer, 1996, 1998) to attempts at recording the reconstituted and re-embodied movement vocabulary using the LifeForms software (Lopez y Royo, 2001) to an exploration of the site with a team of archaeologists, architectural historians, animators, dancers and art historians (Lopez y Royo et al., 2002)¹ to map its diverse contextual meanings. The work done at Prambanan in the last decade and in collaboration with several others has seen the use of innovative technologies, such as the recording of real live motion as digital data (motion capture) to preserve the reconstituted and re-embodied movements, and a multi media exploration of the site aimed at a diversity of users. The 'Prambanan experience' has thus been articulated through multiple, multivocal and intersecting narratives.

Even though the different projects varied in their focus, the point of departure for the overall research effort has been the use of the body for apprehending the site. The work at Prambanan instantiates a phenomenological approach to archaeology through the dance experience and a way of producing knowledge through the body. The site has been incorporated in the archaeological process of dance movement reconstitution and its re-embodiment, and this has also enabled the experiencing of architecture as dance and conversely, dance as architecture, exploring spatio-temporal relationships through the moving body.

Thus I propose, in this article, that archaeology can be conceived and experienced as an embodied and performative practice. I will re-engage with Prambanan as a performance locus, discussing the different phases of corporeal interaction with the site from the reconstitution of its dance units to the exploration of the body-dance-temple-site connection. In so doing, I shall raise questions on the reconstitutive process of the dance units, ideas of embodiment, body intelligence and body knowledge, the visual dance record and the dance past. Through this discussion, I intend to challenge more established knowledges and paradigms, arguing that the body produces knowledge, acknowledging the role of interpretation and creativity in research and engaging in a performed/danced archaeology. This is a form of sensory and bodily experience comparable to the walking and visual experience of the phenomenological approaches of the past decade to the choreography of monuments in past landscapes (Richards, 1993; Tilley, 1994, 1999).

The archaeological process is normally lived as excavation and reconstitution of an outer reality - the site. But here the archaeological process has been internalized, etched in the body, inscribed in corporeality, and translated into 'bodily writing' (Leigh Foster, 1995: 15). The reconstitution of a dance body - the 'Prambanan dance body', an abstract, incorporeal body of fragmented and segmented movements² - has been refreshed in the physicality of the archaeologist/dancer's body: it is in this

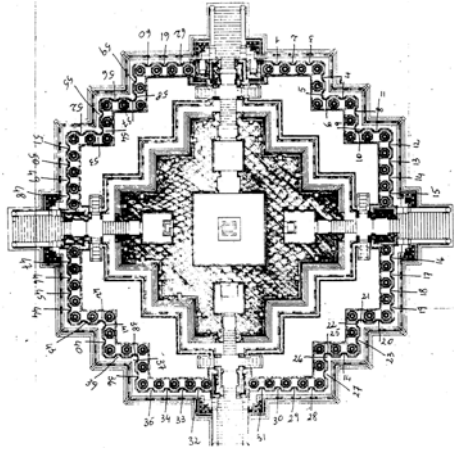


FIGURE 2 Plan of *candi* Siva, showing the position of the 62 dance reliefs around the outer balustrade.

Courtesy Indonesian Archaeological Service, Prambanan

sense that the term embodiment is being used throughout this article. This has mirrored the reconstitution of the site, activated by the disembodied architectural or 'monumental' choreography of the buildings at the site, in a homological process through which the archaeologist/dancer's body coincides with the site, embodies it and turns it into bodily writing – the latter, unlike the re-embodiment of the segments of dance movement, stretches to a choreographic interpretation, the choreography stemming from the 'site re-embodiment'.

Rather than being a passive object of inscription, the body discussed in this article writes, as well as being written about. Thus the 'bodily writing' is a choreography of knowledge, produced by the body as subject (Leigh Foster, 1995: 15–16). Embodiment of movement and embodiment of knowledge are interconnected. But – and this is a caveat – not only is embodied movement a knowledge intertwined with other cultural knowledge, embodied movement is also an immediate corporeal experience and the cultural knowledge that is embodied through movement can thus be known through movement alone (Sklar, 2001: 30–2). Therefore the site embodiment which will be discussed, being a movement knowledge, can only be fully grasped through the experience of a moving body: writing about the experience can powerfully evoke it, but cannot be a substitute for it.

THE RECONSTITUTION OF DANCE MOVEMENTS FROM THEIR VISUAL RECORD

Having encountered the reliefs during a short visit to the Prambanan site back in 1988, the impetus to the research was given by a desire to make sense, kinetically, of the movements frozen in sculpture as dance poses. While retracing the postures in each relief with my own body, I sensed that there was a movement logic: the postures were not random. In each, self-contained, relief there are three figures which stand in a clear relationship with each other: if one executes all their postures in succession, a short movement sequence/dance phrase is obtained, though there will be gaps in between which will have to be filled in going from one movement segment to the other. I felt compelled to find out whether these movement segments could be rejoined, eliminating the hiatus between them, in the best possible approximation of the movements which inspired the sculptors of the reliefs.

I realized that the figures could be analysed in terms of the smallest portions of movement of each body segment, looking at their posture as a deviation from a central axis – the erect spine of a standing human body. The deviation determined the overall height of the body and the position of the lower limbs. I drew for this analysis on the theories of Kapila Vatsyayan, author of numerous works dealing with Indian dance

and sculpture and with the relationship of ancient Indian and Southeast Asian dance with temple iconography. Her writings referred to codifications of body movements found in the Indian Sanskritic textual tradition on dance and dramaturgy (Vatsyayan, 1968, 1977a, 1977b, 1983a, 1983b), from which she reconstructed a tool for investigating corporeality based on the notion of conceptual units of dance – short units of movements of the whole body which could be identified as the ‘organisational principle of a dance technique’ (O’Shea, 2000: 82).

Thus I set about reconstituting the short dance phrases depicted in the Prambanan reliefs, drawing on the concept of dance movement unit retrieved by Vatsyayan (and other scholars influenced by her paradigm for dance analysis) through her reading of the Indian codifications (Lopez y Royo, 1990, 2005). A dance unit can be subdivided into smaller segments such as movement of the ‘lower limbs’ (legs and feet), movement of the ‘upper limbs’ (arms and hands), stance and even tinier segments, such as the movements of the different parts of the upper and lower body, including shoulders, chest, sides of the torso, waist and so on. It is important to be aware that the dance phrases retrievable from Prambanan may not have been regarded as ‘dance units’ in 9th-century Java: we do not know how the dance technique was conceived of at that time and where its caesurae were. But as the ‘frozen’ movements are reconstituted into short dance phrases, these reconstituted dance phrases can be categorized as dance units, thus recreating an ‘alphabet’ of the Prambanan movement vocabulary: short recombinable sequences which can be taken as dance units for choreographic purposes.

I deem it necessary to point out, at this juncture, that I distance myself from the lure of those views, to which I earlier succumbed, of Prambanan and Indian dance as historically intertwined, with the dance reliefs assumed to be faithful representations of the dance units of an obsolete Indian or Indo-Javanese dance technique (Lopez y Royo, 1990; Iyer, 1998). By drawing on Vatsyayan’s work, I am emphasizing the importance of the Indian codifications as an analytical tool in a cross-cultural context (O’Shea, 2000: 84), regardless of the question of whether Indian dance was known in Indonesia and how knowledge of it was diffused or to what extent Indian dance influenced the growth of Javanese dance (Sedyawati, 1981, 1982). A search for origin is not viable; what is important, in this context, is the concept of dance unit and how this can be adapted to the analysis of the dance of the Prambanan reliefs, rather than seeing the Prambanan dance units as an obsolete, Indian or Indian-derived body movement technique.

In brief, to re-embody the Prambanan dance movements, the fragments of an abstract dance body are reconstituted in one’s own – and in this reconstitution the dance body is gendered by the interpreter: gender here can be viewed as ‘a corporeal style, an “act”, as it were, which is

both intentional and performative' where 'performative' suggests 'a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning' (Butler, 1999: 177). This is an important observation, as the dancers in the reliefs are male – this may engender false expectations of reconstituting a 'male' dance, whereas the dance is either 'male' or 'female' – masculine or feminine – depending on the interpretation given by the performer.³

The dance movements, in other words, are ungendered until embodied and once embodied they can be given a gender quality by the interpreter, irrespective of the interpreter's own gender, yet overlaid by the way the interpreter's body has already been scripted upon by a variety of markers, for bodies are not neutral. Similarly, stylistic interpretations relating to the movement register – for example, 'hard and staccato' or 'fluid and soft' – are also a way of doing (i.e. of performing) and are not encoded in the dance units. They are qualitative choices to be supplied by the interpreter.

A common misconception is that the Prambanan reliefs represent static poses. This is because of their medium, which is stone. In fact, the Prambanan dance reliefs show three different phases or 'cadences of movement' – as Vatsyayan calls them – and their plane. In the context of each relief one can put together the three cadences of movement supplying missing segments which link them on the principle of the shortest route from one point to another, following the overall dynamic pattern of the cadence, which one can easily guess by looking at the plane of the movement (high, middle or low). The classifications of dance units devised by Vatsyayan (1983a) are helpful for an identification of the movement path of each Prambanan unit. Iconometric measurements are also very useful to establish the exact proportions and relationship of the limbs with each other and to work out their relationship with the central median and the consequent disposition of the weight; this ensures greater precision in working out the movement path of the missing segments. Occasionally, when more than one choice is possible, alternative interpretations of the movement cadences can be given.

Thus the reconstitution of the dance units involves the archaeologist/dancer as subject, engaged in exploring her own physicality and materiality, journeying through her own body, experiencing herself and her movements as an artefact and re-embodiment of her own individuality through the movement reconstitution – her own peculiarities as a living, moving body. She experiences the partitioning and 'dismembering' of her own body and its immediate reconstitution. The segmentation of a dance body cannot be separated from its re-embodiment – the two occur simultaneously. The fragmentation transmutes into a reassemblage, an archaeological process inscribed in corporeality, a co-ordinated performance of every segment, now rejoined into a whole, yet able to move, to a greater or lesser extent, separately, at will – head, neck, torso, sides,

hands, waist, thighs, shanks, feet and even smaller movements of fingers, toes, and parts of the face.

EMBODYING THE SITE THROUGH ISOMORPHIC ANALOGY

But re-embodiment of the reconstituted Prambanan dance units is itself a 'site embodiment'.⁴ The embodiment is homological. In reconstituting the units a new incorporeal dance body is created from segments and fragments of movement, an incorporeal body which is re-embodied, coinciding with a living human body. For convenience, I have called this incorporeal dance body the 'Prambanan dance body'. This is analogous, in dynamic terms, with the architectural structure of the complex; it coincides with the 'body' of the main temple.

Prambanan, and its main temple in particular, dedicated to the god Shiva, follows a classic Hindu temple model (Hardy, 1995; Nanda, 2001; Indorf, 2002 online; Indorf et al., 2002 online). The reference to a temple 'body' is common in the Indian indigenous architectural literature,⁵ where the temple is perceived as a replica of a human body and its parts are named after bodily parts (Chakrabarti, 1999). In the Indian architectural literature it is indicated that before a temple is built a cosmic diagram should be traced on the ground. This diagram corresponds to the body of a primeval giant who is sacrificed to ensure prosperity and auspiciousness – in Hindu belief this symbolizes the unity of macrocosm and microcosm, the human body corresponding to the universe. In this scheme of things, the temple is identified with the body of the deity and is simultaneously perceived as the deity's abode. The names of the different parts of a Hindu temple correspond to body parts – thus there is a neck of the temple, shoulders and so on. The correspondence of body and temple is meticulously charted down to identifying the power centres of the human body (in Hindu belief a body is conceived as a body-mind continuum with an outer, gross body and an inner, subtle body), known as *chakras* in yogic meditative practice (Zarrilli, 1998: 123–53), with physical centre points along the vertical axis of the temple body, which are specially marked on the temple exterior.

This could provide a fitting conceptual background to construct an analogy of body and site. However, tempting though it might be to fall back on Hindu metaphysics to sustain, conceptually, the body/site correspondence, this is not the route I will be taking, limiting myself to indicating it as a possible interpretive choice. In this context, I am pursuing a phenomenological exploration of the site, through the body, inscribing the spatio-temporal structures of dance into architecture, and conversely, of architecture into dance. Constructing an analogy based on the exact

equivalence of temple, body parts and dance units, searching for hidden meanings, with reference to imagined temple activities and religious ideas, would be wholly arbitrary and would not serve my purpose. Contrary to false notions of movement signification, of wide currency, applied to Asian dance forms in particular, there are no intrinsic meanings in dance movements; the meanings are contextual and heavily dependent on interpretation. The analogy I am proposing is built entirely on dynamic architectural principles. It is in the patterns of movement expressed by the temple architecture that the correspondence of the temple site with the dance body is found and thus experienced, written-through-the-body.

The idea of movement in architecture is not new nor is it particularly Indian (or Javanese). Yudell writes, for example, that 'all architecture functions as a potential stimulus for movement, real or imagined. A building is an incitement to action, a stage for movement and interaction. It is one partner in a dialogue with the body' (Yudell, 1977: 59). At Prambanan we need to work with the peculiarities of its form, which are articulated in a specific architectural idiom. Prambanan, as said earlier, adheres to a classic Hindu temple model. Two cardinal axes (longitudinal and transverse) crossing at right angles orientate the ground plan, and are intersected by diagonal axes through the corners of the sanctum and through the exterior corners, throughout the height of the temple body. At the centre there is a vertical axis which links the sanctum with the finial at the top. The superstructure – the body of the temple – conveys a centrifugal, downward movement, which starts from the finial and emerges and expands outwards in the cardinal directions (Hardy and Lopez y Royo, 2002 online).

The axiality of a dance body is immediately recognized as being vertical, for in practice dance cannot exist without being *in a body*: its primary axiality thus depends on the axiality of the human body, subject to the laws of gravity. A dance body can be visualized as being surrounded by a space bubble, a *kinesphere*,

the sphere around the body whose periphery can be reached by easily extended limbs without stepping away from that place which is the point of support when standing on one foot, which we shall call the stance. (Von Laban, 1966: 10)

or, as Vatsyayan explains – transferring to dance two important concepts which underlie the architectural geometry of the Hindu temple – the dance body is surrounded by a circle circumscribed within a square (Vatsyayan, 1983a: 52–3, 114).⁶ Boner has attempted to explain these dynamics translating their geometry into the vivid image of an indissoluble connection to a polarity from which nothing can escape:

the movements from the centre are collected by the circumference and reversed towards the centre, or an unending movement may arise and flow around the circumference, held together by the centre. (Boner, quoted in Nanda, 2001: 55)

What underlies the square, a motif constantly repeated in the architectural patterns, is the circle; thus every square manifests the circle in the cardinal directions, with the circle representing, symbolically, the entire cosmos (Nanda, 2001: 56).

In parallel, the dance body can be divided into planes around its longitudinal and transverse axes (the head; the torso; the hip; the knees, the feet or the upper right, lower right and so on); broken up into smaller parts, along its axes, the movements are isolated and individually articulated. In architectural terms this corresponds to the segmenting of the aedicular structure: the aedicule is a self-contained shrine-image, made up of base, wall, and a superstructure with a finial, possessed of axially and bilateral symmetry, which through a process of proliferation, emergence and expansion, makes up the superstructure. Conceptually, an aedicule is equivalent to a dance unit: the structure of an aedicule is matched by the dance unit which is made up of stance, a movement of the lower body and a movement of the upper body: embodiment is presupposed, which gives it axially, and movement segmentation and co-ordination is involved. Both aedicule and dance unit combine with other aedicules or other dance units to create a larger whole: a section of a building and then a building in the case of aedicules; dance phrases which make up a choreography in the case of dance units. At Prambanan, the aedicules of the main temple are thus analogous with the dance units of its dance reliefs.

In both aedicule and dance unit the movement originates at a single point in relation to a vertical axis. In the dance body the point of origin is the navel, the mid-point of a circular diagram positioned frontally and vertically, and divided into four quarters by vertical and horizontal axes passing through the navel (Figure 3). In the temple the axially is similar, but articulated differently: the circular diagram is horizontal, aligned with the four cardinal directions, and three-dimensional, with a vertical axis which rises from the intersection of the cardinal axes, at the level of the sanctum, up to the top of the temple body (Hardy and Lopez y Royo, 2002 online).

On the basis of these analogies and correlations, the embodiment of the site occurs therefore through the embodiment of the dance units, at the level of abstract dynamic patterns. These when expressed through bodily means become visibly dynamic and unfold in a spatio-temporal continuum. The dynamism in architecture is conceptual; through dance it becomes physically embodied and it is physically articulated.

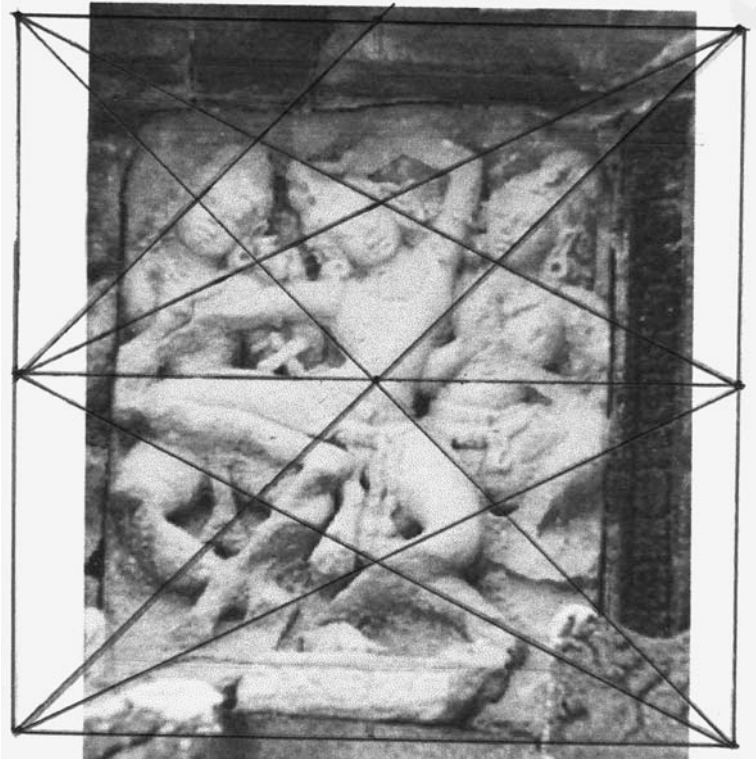


FIGURE 3 Dance relief no. 11. The lines articulate the unit in terms of diagonals, indicating horizontal and vertical projections from these, from significant intersection points, the main one being the navel of the central figure.

After original drawing by Upali Nanda for the Getty Prambanan Project, 2000–2002. Photo: Upali Nanda

Taking the aedicule as his module, Hardy identifies the dynamic attributes of a Hindu temple as 'projection, staggering (multiple projection), splitting, bursting of boundaries, progressive multiplication and expanding repetition' (Hardy, 1995: 21). In dance terms, if we take the standing posture, with the weight equally spread on both feet, as the basic mode – this is seen on the main temple in the reliefs showing three figures in a standing posture – we see that from this position

the dancer projects her limbs, thereupon she staggers the body parts in order to connote movement, this can be seen in terms of the splitting of the whole body and bursting its static boundaries. *While this is in terms of actual physical movement in dance, it is in terms of interpretation of the visible attributes in architecture.* (Nanda, 2001: 61; emphasis mine)

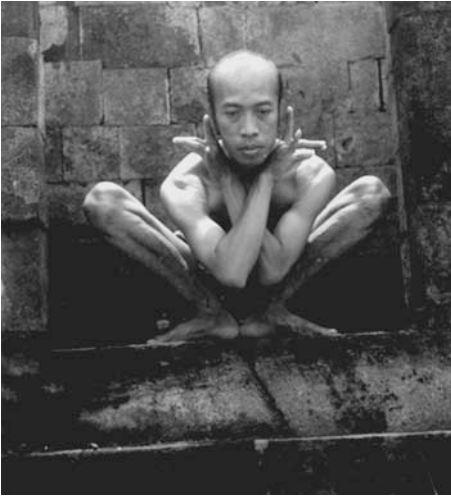


FIGURE 4 Mugiyono Kasido in *Mencari Mata Candi*.

Photo: Yanuaricus Hari Sinthu

The dancer's actions can happen in any of the body planes indicated earlier. To visualize these planes we have to see the body as surrounded by its space bubble, in which we can draw the intersecting axes; these axes correspond with the longitudinal, transverse and diagonal axes of the aedicule, the entire superstructure being made up of emerging and expanding aedicules. The archaeologist/dancer therefore embodies the site through an 'isomorphic analogy' of dance and architecture, seen in the parallelism of the dance units with the aedicular units of the superstructure.

The concept of 'isomorphic analogy' is used in the cognitive sciences: in analogy making, first an analogous situation (the source) is 'retrieved', then a correspondence between elements is found and the elements are mapped onto one another and finally the analogy is applied, for instance to understand a surrounding reality. The analogy is said to be isomorphic if the mapping is structurally consistent (Holyoak and Thagard, 1995; Eliasmith and Thagard, 2001 online; Nanda, 2001: 7). Analogic isomorphism allows us to study structure in different contexts through a process of translation: thus through isomorphism we can understand the larger, dynamic architectural structure of the Prambanan site by focusing on the dynamic structure of the dance reliefs, which we can embody. At Prambanan dance is contained, architecturally, in the inherent dynamism of the temple structure and is projected on the surface of the main temple structure through the dance reliefs, themselves an architectural device (Nanda, 2001: 39). Re-embodiment of the dance units is thus equivalent to re-embodiment of the architectural dynamics of the site and the temple complex itself. The site is thus 'embodied' and from this moment, it is choreographed⁷ (Figure 4).

Or, to put it another way, through my bodily engagement with the Prambanan site, I am able to reposition myself and subvert a discourse which consistently elides the physicality and the intelligence of the body in disciplinary domains – such as archaeology – which are not immediately identifiable as 'bodily' – such as dance. I am arguing against the

persistent notion of a mind/body split through what in my terms I describe as an embodied and performative archaeology – I am aware here that the performative is, according to Pearson ‘an in between space of contestation and change’ (Pearson and Shanks, 2001: 14–15) but I am comfortable with this ambiguity and embrace it in my practice, for my intervention at Prambanan is itself an encounter at the edge, ‘in the space between performer and spectator’ (Pearson and Shanks, 2001: 15). Through a dance, whose movement cadences I am reconstituting, re-embodiment the movement segments and somatizing them, I am embodying a site by homology, simultaneously engaging in the act of choreographing the archaeological process – in other words, choreographing archaeology by translating it into bodily writing.

The dance past, in the form of reconstituted, re-embodied movements, is dynamically projected – danced – in the present, in a trajectory of change: in this process my own body, through the architectural homology, becomes the site, and the site in turn coincides with my own body. Throughout this process my body is an artefact, but it never loses its lived identity, its ‘embodied experience’ – for I cannot disembodiment myself. In this further sense, engaging through dance with the archaeological site means that the site itself has life breathed into it and is activated by the act of dancing.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Throughout this article, I have discussed an approach to a site involving the body and a lived experience of the site as dance, as choreography. I inscribe my bodily engagement with Prambanan within the transdisciplinary theoretical debates surrounding the body and corporeality. Bourdieu (1993), Butler (1993), Grosz (1994, 1995) and Leigh Foster (1995) are just a few outstanding contributors to this discourse, with a literature that is being constantly augmented with interventions from a variety of disciplinary positionalities. Archaeologists through their writings of the past decade dealing with accounts of the body experience and embodiment have been active participants in this dialogue, often adopting contrasting positions (J. Thomas, 1991, 1993; Yates, 1993; Tilley, 1994, 1999; Conkey et al., 1997; Rautnam, 2000; Meskell, 2000; Hamilakis et al., 2002; Sweeney and Hodder, 2002).

The debates surrounding embodiment and subjectivity and the embodiment of space (Grosz, 2000; Briginshaw, 2001); body knowledge and knowing through the body (Fraleigh and Hanstein, 1999; Mertz, 2002); the archaeology and performance interface (Lopez y Royo, 2002; Shanks, 2002, 2003) and the disciplinary blurring of archaeology and theatre in relation to archaeological praxis (Pearson and Shanks, 2001; Pearson, 2002) are also equally relevant.

An engagement with the Prambanan dance reliefs is significant in terms of dance performance, here to be seen as an embodied practice inscribed in a broader discourse of dance reconstruction (H. Thomas, 2004), and thus involving issues of 'authenticity', of dance heritage, definitions of 'technique' and issues of classification. However, such a discussion, though important, here would constitute a digression and thus it has been left out, to be taken up in a different context. For the same reason, I have eschewed a discussion of ritual practices involving dance, even though, and very arguably so, some would regard it as obligatory in view of the fact that the site in question is an ancient Hindu temple and as such it must have been the stage for some kind of ritual dancing. I am not disputing this may have been the case, but my concern is not to reimagine a ritual dance of the past.

What I have instead attempted to address is how, through an interaction with the site, lived as an embodied experience of its spatio-temporal structure, reflected in the spatio-temporal structure of its dance reliefs, the site can be apprehended, its spatiality and its memory interpreted, through the fluidity of body movements. I see the 'monumental choreography' of Neolithic archaeologists, despite those criticisms of it as not having 'any reference to corporeal, lived or individual identity' (Meskell, 2000: 16) converging with my bodily interpretation of the monumentality of Prambanan. The dancer/archaeologist's and the walking archaeologist's body – the archaeologist/flâneur – has a lived identity: the architecture, in both instances, is seen in relation to the living, moving body, activated by it, as the living body interacts with the choreographic memory of the site.

Prambanan is situated within a 'sacred landscape', aligned with other temple sites in the Central Javanese region, their architectures in a discursive interaction, the sites pullulating with bodies of the present, in semiosis with the traces of bodies of the past, in their landscape memory. Far from proposing a choreography of disembodiment, I am suggesting an exploration in which the choreography of the site – of the sites – is a lived experience of the body as subject, present in the phenomenon, and in describing this lived experience, the structure of consciousness is brought out. In other words, I am proposing a phenomenological approach to archaeology and the study of material culture which draws on 'body-centred endeavours' – such as dance making – 'as practices . . . with their own capacity to reflect critically on themselves . . . a form of theorizing, one that informs and is informed by instantiations of bodily significance' (Leigh Foster, 1995: 15–16).

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Committee for Southeast Asian Studies, the Arts and Humanities Research Board and the Getty Research Program over the period 1999–2002. I should also like to thank all my collaborators, in Britain, Indonesia and Singapore.

Notes

1. This was done in the course of three separate projects. The first was my own independent study of the site and of its dance reliefs from 1992 to 1994. The second project was at the University of Surrey, Guildford from 1999 to 2000, directed by Professor Janet Lansdale, and involving myself, Jean Johnson Jones, Vesna Milanovic and dancer Didik Bambang Wahyudi. The third project was a collaboration of the Institute of Archaeology, University of Oxford, where I was based at the time, the Architecture Department and Southeast Asian Studies Program at the National University of Singapore (NUS), and the Research Center for Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Indonesia, Jakarta from 2000 to 2002, with the participation of Dr Pinna Indorf, Dr John Miksic, Professor Dr Edi Sedyawati, computer and animation expert Terry Braun of Braunarts, animator Eduardo Carrillo, NUS architectural students Upali Nanda and Swati Reddy and dancer Mugiyo Kasido. A website for a virtual exploration of Prambanan was set up in 2002 at <http://www.arch.nus.edu.sg/danceweb>
2. Throughout this article I use the term 'dance body' as distinct from living body: the dance body is an incorporeal model, fluidly constructed around the actions of dance technique, which isolates tiny movements of each body part and requires their synchronized execution. In practice, in order to become a real moving body, the dance body needs to be *embodied*, changing from disembodied abstraction to embodied corporeality through repetition of actions, which change and reshape the living body – posture, rotation angle in the joints, flexibility, mass etc.
3. Gender categories in performance are very fluid – one needs to look beyond western theatre dance which is extremely rigid in the way it conceives of gender to the point of having different training for female and male dancers – ballet is a case in point. In many Asian dance traditions one finds male dancers taking on the role of females and vice versa and this is not necessarily dependent on external elements and props such as costume and make up, but it relies exclusively on movement quality and movement interpretation. Javanese dancing for example has an androgynous quality: its most important movement classification is along the refined/unrefined axis rather than as female/male, and the refined male and refined female modes are overlapping; whereas in Bali there is a *bebancihan* – cross-gender – genre of highly virtuoso dances, with female dancers performing the role of young men, as in the *Tarunajaya (kebyar)* dance of North Bali (Bandem and deBoer, 1995: 74–5).
4. I have worked with Professor Adam Hardy, Director of PRASADA, an architectural research unit of De Montfort University, Leicester, on this dance/architecture relationship, complementing the dance/rhythm/architecture investigation carried out by Upali Nanda, a NUS student of architecture employed by the Getty Prambanan project as researcher, under the supervision of Dr Pinna Indorf. The portion of the project which I developed with Hardy later became an independent project on dance and the architecture of the Hindu temple, with a focus on the temples of India, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board at Roehampton and De

Montfort in 2002–2003 with a Small Grant in the Creative and Performing Arts. Additional contributions to this project were given by bharatanatyam dancer Vena Ramphal and musician M. Balachander. This entire section of the article draws on the joint work done with Hardy and his students, especially Jhilmil Kishore and Pranali Parekh and on the work done by Nanda and Indorf. See <http://www.dancetemple.org.uk>

5. As Hindu beliefs were adopted in ancient Java such concepts were also known to the Javanese and put into practice in their temple building activities.
6. I am aware that von Laban is a historically controversial figure because of his ambiguous links with Nazism. His notion of 'dance as a living space' was inspired by Haushofer's *Lebensraum*, 'life space', which the Nazis used to justify their politics of occupation (Kant, 2002: 56–61). I feel obliged to clarify that my reference to Laban's conceptualizations of the dance space does not constitute an endorsement of Nazi policies.
7. Dancer and choreographer Mugiyono Kasido, a participant in the Getty funded Prambanan project, has mapped this process of choreographing the site in his work *Mencari Mata Candi*, 2003 (Looking for the temple eyes), presented in Brussels at the Kunsten Festival des Arts, May 2003. See <http://www.kunstenfestivaldesarts.be/archief/en/2003/stc/stc21.html>.

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