**THE ART OF BECOMING: FILMMAKING AND PERFORMANCE ON
CAMBODIAN POSTCOLONIALITY AND DIASPORA**

by

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**Abstract**

Focusing on visual culture and artistic practice/performance, this study examines how individuals of Cambodian heritage living in Canada, Japan, and Cambodia sustain networks beyond borders through the application of technology, and what forms of expression using digital and non-digital media are actively practiced on a daily basis. Drawing on the concept of "heterotopia" by Michel Foucault (2002) and Trinh T. Minh-ha (1994)'s version of the notion of "hybridization", I aim to attain the following three conceptual objectives: (1) to uncover the research participants' (re)actions to the dominant meaning and representation of Cambodia, the people, and culture created by the media (i.e., TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.); (2) to show various forms of artistic practice and performance by the participants (e.g., photographing, filming, performing, painting, blogging, writing books, and teaching art); and (3) to propose a novel approach for education and research, which brings a critical lens in dealing with the issues of immigration and taking into account the significance of the arts for the daily lives of people living in the digital age.

This study employs interviews and video recordings conducted in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh—the cities where the study participants reside. I apply a "speaking nearby" position as practiced by Trinh (1982) and incorporate film production and performance within the film. From the attempt to interweave these research methods and merge the boundary between the text and the image emerge not only diverse perspectives and forms of expression of the research participants in regards to his/her-story, home, food, language, education, time, space, and dwelling, but also intricate and heterogeneous modes of being and becoming of people in the globalizing times.

# Preface

Ethics approval for this study was issued by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board at the University of British Columbia. The certificate number is H09-02961.

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# Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the twenty-one participants who shared their precious stories and supported my dissertation project. This study would not have been possible without their active contributions. Meeting and talking with these noble people deepened my understanding of what benevolence, tolerance, open-mindedness, and creativity mean, and I learned the importance of acquiring and enhancing them.

Warm thanks are due to my good friends living in Seattle and Phnom Penh for always standing by me in difficult times, lending a helping hand to me, and giving me courage to accomplish this research project. Finally, I wish to thank my parents who have brought me up with ungrudging love and assisted me in pursuing my doctoral studies.

To my parents who encourage me to see more beyond borders

and to each one of the travellers hewing her/his way in the journey called life

**Figure 1. At Sunrise/Prelude**
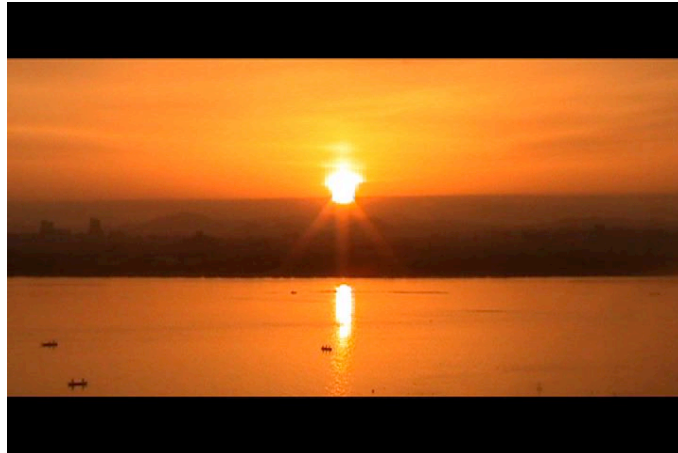


*Figure 1*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Having been born on earth, each person starts on her/his own journey called life with steady steps. The fire to confront heavy seas and cut a path never ceases and it keeps lighting each journey. Each one of the voyages keeps on, sometimes facing an adverse wind and sometimes catching a following wind, in order to reach her/his own Way. The water keeps running and never stays the same. Sometimes each voyager lets oneself float and swims with the stream. High up in the sky, a pink petal of the lotus flower is fluttering in the wind, as if it is showing each traveller the Way to attain her/his goal.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

Scholars, educators, and writers have long presented the diverse notions of belonging through the description of the border-crossing subjects such as the migrant, the exile, the refugee, the nomad, and hyphenated people (e.g., Ahmed, 2000; Anzaldúa, 1987; Brand, 2001; Kincaid, 1988; Martin & Mohanty, 1986; Said, 2000; and Trinh, 1994). Focusing on Asian women in diaspora, Hyaeweol Choi (2006) investigates "… the dynamic, fluid, and heterogeneous nature of diaspora identities and examines the complex interplay between 'home' and 'host' cultures in (re)fashioning self-perceived identities" (p. 68). Choi delineates how the movement from the homeland to the host country affects the ways in which her research participants identify themselves. Are diasporic identities simply constructed by the subjects moving between countries? Does the interaction with people and communities have an impact on the construction of the identities at all? How about those who stay in their "home"? Encountering people and making use of commodities from other countries, how are their identities constructed? Based on the accounts of those who participated in this research project, I seek to explore the everyday practices and forms of expression of the individuals using digital and/or non-digital media. How does the media (i.e., TV programs, newspapers, magazines, etc.) represent Cambodian people and culture? How does that influence the ways in which these people express themselves? What reactions to the representation created by the dominant discourse can be found?

Focusing on visual culture and artistic practice/performance, I examine how individuals of Cambodian heritage living in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh sustain networks beyond borders through the application of technology, and what forms of expression using digital and non-digital media (e.g., photographing, filming, painting,

performing, blogging, writing books, and teaching art) are actively practiced on a daily basis. Drawing on the concept of heterotopia presented by Foucault and Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization, this study employs interviews and visual materials (i.e., film, still photography, and performance within a produced film). Through the combination of writing, filmmaking, and performance, this dissertation seeks not only to blur the borders between the text and the film as well as social science and art, but also to explore what "heterotopic" spaces and the process of performing "hybridization" look like and how the research participants and I carry out self-expression through various artistic practices/performances, thereby suggesting what we might *become* beyond the existing binaries and boundaries.

## 1.1    Rationale for the Study

Cambodian people have gone through colonization as well as politically chaotic times. Cambodia had almost ninety years of the French rule (see Welaratna, 1993). As portrayed by David Chandler (1991), the country also has a long history of conflict. During the civil war between 1970 and 91, there was genocide by the Khmer Rouge. Due to the chaos inside the country, a large number of Cambodian citizens fled to refugee camps in Thailand and Vietnam, and many of them resettled in North America (Haines, 1989). Many of the studies on refugees and immigrants relocated from Southeast Asia to North America have concentrated on the living conditions in their "homelands", symptoms of mental disorders such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and diseases including tuberculosis (Beiser & Wickrama, 2004; Boehnlein, Kinzie, Sekiya, Riley, Pou, & Rosborough, 2004). In this way, people from Southeast Asian countries are victimized, pathologized, and treated as the objects of research.

In response to the clinical research tradition as such, ethnographic studies have been done to reveal the life conditions of "newcomers" living in North America (Dorais, 1991; McLellan, 2004; Ong, 2003; Smith-Hefner, 1990). By contrast, research on those who reside in Asian countries, in this case Japan, is mostly incidental. What are the differences and similarities in life between Cambodian residents in Canada and those living in Japan? In examining the (re)construction of the identities of these individuals, should we just reduce it to the bilateral relationship between the "homeland" and the newly inhabited place? How does this relationship transform itself when we hear and see the stories of those who live in not only Canada and Japan but also Cambodia?

## 1.2 Research Question

Based on interviews and filming conducted in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh, this research project focuses on the following twofold questions: How do the individuals of Cambodian heritage express their selves and stories by using digital and non-digital media such as photographing, filming, performing, painting, blogging, writing books, and teaching art? And what do the everyday practice(s) and performance(s) with digital and non-digital media carried out by the research participants demonstrate about their modes of being and becoming in an era when digital technology and immigration are prominent phenomena? Drawing on the concept of "heterotopia" by Michel Foucault (2002) and Trinh T. Minh-ha (1994)'s version of the notion of "hybridization", I aim to attain three conceptual objectives: (1) to uncover the research participants' (re)actions to the dominant meaning and representation of Cambodia, the people, and culture created by the media (i.e., TV, newspapers, magazines, etc.); (2) to show various forms of artistic practice and performance by the participants (e.g., photographing, filming, performing, painting, blogging, writing

books, and teaching art); and (3) to propose a novel approach for education and research, which brings a critical lens in dealing with the issues of immigration and taking into account the significance of the arts for the daily lives of people living in the digital age.

In addition, borrowing the concept of "blurred genres" presented by Clifford Geertz (1983), I intend to merge the boundary between art and social science by incorporating the written text, image, and sound in this dissertation (i.e., writing, film production, and performance within the created film). Hence, challenging existing dichotomies and avoiding creating new ones, this research project seeks to illustrate networks maintained beyond binaries and borders, and to examine what the research participants capture, preserve, and express through certain forms of expression using digital and non-digital media (e.g., photographing, filming, performing, painting, blogging, writing books, and teaching art). In my dissertation, practice-based research plays an important role in exploring the research objectives. Through the production and presentation of a film entitled *The Art of Becoming*, I strive to show a new form emerging beyond boundaries and dichotomies (both interdisciplinary and cultural). Such an attempt proposes an approach of applying multifarious angles to the issues of immigration and at the same time, informs conceptualization and implementation towards the better practice of education and research, taking account of the significance of art, bringing criticality, and acknowledging the complex and diverse modes of being and becoming of people living in the globalizing times.

## 1.3   Personal Context

> *Graduation from school may be compared to the launching of a ship that starts out to meet the test of wind and wave. … Each life voyage has its own difficulties and problems which must be faced alone. … Yet for the successful happy voyage which we wish for you, there are beacon lights and danger signals which will surely guide you safely even among the dangerous reefs and the narrow passages of your course.*
> (Umeko Tsuda, 2000)

Umeko Tsuda, the well-known founder of higher education for women in Japan, delivered a congratulatory address in 1913 at a graduation ceremony at Tsuda College in Tokyo, Japan. Ninety years later, I was at a commencement at Tsuda, with my dream to be an educator with a global perspective like that of Umeko Tsuda. Umeko was the first Japanese woman who studied abroad. In the Japanese Meiji era, when there was a wide gender gap between men and women, Umeko was sent to the United States by the government. Upon her return to Japan, she was shocked to see Japanese women being treated as second-class citizens. In 1900, to improve women's status in Japanese society, she established a higher educational institution for women so that they could be independent and educated critical thinkers. As a Tsuda College student, I was engaged in various volunteer works including the one for the reconstruction of post-conflict Cambodia.

After completing a one-year exchange program in the United States and graduating from Tsuda College, I started my master's studies in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada. In this way, I have been putting myself in global settings and actively practicing global citizenship. Through encounters with insightful pedagogues at UBC, I became familiar with a wide range of theories (i.e., postmodern, poststructural, postcolonial, and feminist) transgressing the disciplinary boundaries, and such learning enabled me to acknowledge diverse perspectives beyond the dichotomies of West/East, North/South, and First/Third Worlds. In addition, intensive training at the Gulf Islands Film and Television School let me realize the profundity and possibility of film production and developed my potential as a filmmaker.

My doctoral research is deeply influenced by my volunteer experiences and my education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. I worked as a volunteer for a children's hospital in Siem Reap, Cambodia, and translated the hospital's monthly reports

(published as newsletters) from English to Japanese for two years, during which I learned the situation in post-conflict Cambodia. My M.A. thesis, completed in 2006, examined the concept of citizenship and transnationalism based on the experiences of Cambodian people relocated to Japan, and analyzed the impact of education on the sense of belonging held by the research participants.

One of the memorable moments in this research was when, in a gathering to which I was invited, a mother of a Cambodian family I knew grasped my hand without saying a word. It is in this silence that we learn what it means to live as global citizens. The silent exchange between us suggests the possibility that a space for mutual understanding can be created, beyond national, cultural, ethnic, and language boundaries. This incident crystallized my career goal, which is to become an educator actively practicing global citizenship and working for the creation and evolution of an alternative space—not a space where I speak for the sake of other global citizens but a transformative space where I can work collaboratively with a great variety of global citizens towards human rights and social justice, focusing on gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, ability, and so forth.

## 1.4    Terminology

This section elucidates my interpretation of the following terms and concepts: postcoloniality; diaspora; heterotopia/heterotopology; hybridity/hybridization; "blurred genres"; and performance/the performative. First, the use of the term "postcolonial" in this dissertation suggests that coloniality has not come to an end; instead, it endures as "postcoloniality" by taking various forms in the lives of the research participants. The people of Cambodia underwent the French colonial era from 1864 to 1953 (Welaratna, 1993). The influence of French rule can be found in Cambodian culture(s) in the present day (to be

discussed in the dissertation later). In addition, Cambodian residents in Canada and Japan carry her/his stories and memories of living in the country that went through colonization and shifted to the phase of postcoloniality. Even the case of Japan is no exception. Looking at the inside of Japan, it is obvious that the country embraces postcoloniality in relation to the indigenous societies such as the Ainu and the Ryūkyūan. Considering the history of Okinawa, for instance, the military colonial context must be recalled. By using the term "postcolonial", I argue that the traces of colonization are embedded in "postcoloniality", and that it is inseparable from the lives of the research participants as well as mine, no matter where we are located at this moment.

When referring to Cambodian people situated outside the "homeland", the term "diaspora" is often used. Janet McLellan (2004), for example, applies the term to the discussion of "… three hundred thousand Cambodians [who] eventually resettled in several Western countries" (p. 103) such as the United States, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom. Besides this case, scholars of diaspora studies look at various forms of diaspora (see Chapter 2). For instance, James Clifford (1994) pronounces that "[w]e should be able to recognize the strong entailment of Jewish history on the language of diaspora without making that history a definitive model" (p. 306). My dissertation focuses on Cambodian diaspora based on the stories of the study participants residing in Canada and Japan. I regard the term "diaspora" as a notion embodying dynamism, which suggests that the location of those who live in the diaspora is not static; it actually shifts in interaction with the communities here and there.

What is underlying the concept of heterotopia/heterotopology is the strong will to question and challenge hegemony (the norm). The application of the concept assists people to take notice of the complexity and interrelationship embraced in their everyday lives. I

consider heterotopia to be a space with fluid qualities beyond conventional notions of time and space, and it takes multifarious forms. Heterotopia comes into being due to the actions of those who are resisting, seeking to bring change, and transgressing the binary system (e.g., Zembylas & Ferreira, 2009; Ioannidou, 2011; MacRae, 2011).

The concept of hybridity/hybridization points out the significance of the process itself. In other words, it lays emphasis on the moment (being) and the transition (becoming). Therefore, this concept is useful for studies exploring what people undergo through various migratory movements such as immigration and displacement, whether voluntary or involuntary. Performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two components in a dichotomous relation. It connotes heterogeneous elements beyond the binaries (e.g., Ibrahim, 2008; Mootoo, 1999; Yon, 2000).

I argue that studies employing the concept of "blurred genres", invented by Clifford Geertz (1983), hold great potential and can create alternative views that challenge the conventional way of perceiving gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. In my dissertation, practicing this concept means blurring the borders between social science and art as well as text and the visual. This research project makes full use of interviews and visual materials (i.e., film, still photography, and performance within the produced video). The utilization of the concept makes it possible to reflect a layer of stories, images, sounds, and voices in the text and the film beyond the dichotomy.

By using the term "performance/the performative" in this dissertation, I do not simply refer to theatrical performance. It includes diverse modes of performance and performative acts such as taking part in or holding special events (e.g., wedding ceremonies, festivals, etc.) and daily routines (e.g., art appreciation, art creation, commuting, food preparation, etc.). These are closely related to people's lives in many ways. I consider various movements

initiated by body, mind, and soul—whether seen or unseen—to be forms of performance/the performative (e.g., Pavis, 2003; Pelias, 1999; Taylor, 2002).

## 1.5    Reflecting Five Elements in Text and Film

A philosophical framework proposed by Musashi Miyamoto underlies this dissertation project. Miyamoto led a life as a samurai, went through training diligently, and as a result, he formulated his own school of swordplay. To pass on his philosophy of swordsmanship to future generations, Miyamoto started to write *The Book of Five Rings* in 1643 and completed it before he passed away in 1645 (Wilson, 2001). It is composed of the five scrolls: Earth; Water; Fire; Wind; and Emptiness (translated by Thomas Cleary and published in 1994). Miyamoto elucidates the reason he named each scroll as such. The first scroll "Earth" is the base which explains prerequisites for living as a samurai and mastering swordsmanship. Miyamoto introduces his own school of swordplay and the basics, and illustrates how to put them to practical use in the scroll of "Water". The third scroll "Fire" elaborates on how to gain victory in all types of battles by applying the technique of his school of swordplay. In the scroll of "Wind", Miyamoto analyzes critically other schools of swordplay and their methods of fighting. In the last scroll called "Emptiness", Miyamoto likens the awakening he reached after having mastered the essence of swordsmanship to emptiness. Miyamoto suggests that it is important to continue to train oneself physically, spiritually, and intellectually by "… taking emptiness as the Way …" (p. 143).

Why did Miyamoto entitle the scrolls as such? William Wilson (2001) points out the influence of Buddhism: "The Five Rings, which is both the title and forms the structure of the book, refers to the Buddhist theory of the Five Elements …" (p. 31). The world view of Zen Buddhism, in particular, has an impact on Miyamoto's writing, as Wilson remarks: "It is

clear in *The Book of Five Rings* that the Zen Buddhist insistence on absolute personal experience and transcendence of the interfering self is one of the touchstones of Musashi's thought" (2001, p. 31). As Miyamoto named the final scroll, *kū* is the essential concept in Buddhism. In English, there is more than one way to translate the term *kū*. For example, Cleary (1994) and Wilson (2001) interpret it as "emptiness", while Kenji Tokitsu (2004) uses the term "heaven or space". According to Daisetz Suzuki (1996), *śūnyatā* is the original term meaning *kū* and he explains that "… *śūnyatā* is not a negative term, as might be suggested, when it is translated as 'emptiness' or 'void'" (p. 313). Suzuki suggests that awakening to this concept means rising above the binary system: "*Śūnyatā* is experienced only when it is both subject and object" (p. 315). Hence, in this research project, I refer to "void" as the term embracing the positive meaning and function, which can show a way to transgress binarism.

While applying the five elements to describe his philosophy, it is noteworthy that Miyamoto never neglected broadening his horizons. Tokitsu indicates that Miyamoto devoted all his energies to "… express[ing] himself in painting, calligraphy, and various handcrafts, as well as in the art of combat" (2004, p. 5). Thus, it is clear that Miyamoto attached importance to not only martial arts but also other types of art. The way I placed the five elements in order in the text and the film is slightly different from Miyamoto's, and this dissertation project makes no reference to martial arts. However, Miyamoto's philosophy derived from practicing the diverse forms of art is useful for this study integrating various research methods.

Before moving on to the next section illustrating how I named the chapters according to his philosophical framework, I present a model of visualizing the five elements. A series of images and poems in the following are excerpts from a film *The Art of Becoming* I created for this dissertation project. Applying Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" and Trinh's

version of the notion of "hybridization", the film I produced seeks to demonstrate not only the intricate ways in which the identities of the research participants and mine are constructed and transforming continuously, but also the fluidity of such identities constantly shifting beyond boundaries and across spaces and intersecting with gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and religion.

**Figure 2. Earth**



*Figure 2*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Earth:

Standing in front of a sheet of plain paper and taking a deep breath

Calligraphy is not simply about writing words with a brush

It is storytelling, telling you not one but many stories

Colourful stories are being told between a calligrapher, a brush, and paper

Can you hear and see the stories born from there?

**Figure 3. Fire**



*Figure 3*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Fire:

Drawing a stroke by brush

It is a stroke of passion to express oneself, of spirit like a burning fire

In the handwriting, the line here and the line there link together

If my brush is taken away, I will scrape up materials and make a new one

Then I will start writing once again

**Figure 4. Wind**



*Figure 4*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Wind:

An icy, nipping wind is blowing and trying to freeze up my body, mind, and soul

I blow on my hands to warm them and grab a brush with my numb fingers

Then I resume writing to expose what it is that is very cold

Listen carefully to what is hidden by the strong wind

Many voices, many stories

**Figure 5. Water**



*Figure 5*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Water:

At night after the sun goes down, the seawater begins sparkling with many lights

There can you see a green light reflecting on the water?

A man named Gatsby compared it to his dream and tried to grasp it in his hand

Here I grasp an ink-laden brush in my hand

Then a drop of ink drips on paper like raindrops pouring into the ocean

**Figure 6. Void**



*Figure 6*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Void:

Now standing at a point where the past, present, and future meet

Voices of benevolence are calling: "Dare to see in darkness, dare to hear in silence"

Take a look at the handwriting on paper

Can you see what is in-between the stroke here and the stroke there?

The real transforms itself everlastingly

These pictures and poems frame this dissertation. Further, I discuss how they are interwoven in the film in Chapter 7.

## 1.6    Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of eight chapters: Introduction; Literature Review; Methodology (Earth); Fire; Wind; Water; Void; and Conclusion. I named the five chapters which follow the Literature Review by applying the philosophical framework proposed by Miyamoto. In the Literature Review, I start by reviewing three bodies of literature. The first one is on art and pedagogy, which interrogates how art is treated in opposition to science in the field of education and society on the whole. It portrays some possibilities when various forms of art are successfully incorporated into the teaching and learning scenes as well as educational inquiry. The second body of literature centers on the writings of postcolonial scholars critically examining the impact of imperialism and colonialism. Their works disclose Western hegemony and an unbalanced dichotomy placing those in the so-called "non-West" as subordinate. They also point out what is needed for the researcher to cease reproducing and reinforcing this hegemonic view. The third area of literature clarifies how diaspora studies developed and continues to evolve, taking account of the diversity among people in diasporic situations. Some scholars illustrate the potentialities of studies giving consideration to various facets of the lives of those who are in diaspora. After the discussion of the three bodies of literature, I explain how these works are useful to my dissertation project. I also discuss my conceptual framework, that is, how I utilize the concept of "heterotopia" proposed by Michel Foucault and Trinh T. Minh-ha's version of the notion of "hybridization" in this study.

Inspired by Miyamoto's writing, I entitled Chapter 3 "Earth" since it serves as the foundation of the dissertation. This chapter illustrates methodology and consists of six sections to provide an overview of how the study employed data from interviews and video recordings and incorporated it into the film. The first section describes how I utilize the

concept of "blurred genres" presented by Clifford Geertz (1983) in my attempt to merge the text and the film. Since filmmaking plays an important role in this dissertation, the second section concentrates on visual methods such as still photography and film. By referring to the development of visual ethnography, it deals with some issues (e.g., the authoritative position of a researcher) in using visual materials as evidence to represent study subjects. It also portrays potentialities of research employing visual methods. In the third section, drawing on performance studies, I explore various aspects of performance, which are traditionally overlooked by researchers. In addition, I argue the possibility of attaching importance to performance in research and its implication to this study. The fourth section clarifies how I carried out interviews and filming, and discusses some issues such as the (re)production of binary constructions, in relation to conducting qualitative research. In the fifth section, I explain how I transcribed audiotapes and videotapes, completed coding, and developed themes in findings. I also articulate some of the points that stuck me as important to keep in mind during data collection and analysis. The last section elucidates the notion of reflexivity in relation to Trinh's film *Reassemblage* (1982) and shows how a "speaking nearby" position practiced by Trinh is useful to my dissertation project.

Chapter 4 is titled "Fire" and starts with the discussion of the history of Cambodian diaspora. It then moves to the articulation of multiple stories behind it based on the narratives of the research participants. In addition, I examine the impact of visual culture and technology on the study participants' daily lives, paying attention to both the productive side and the problematic side beyond the national borders of Cambodia, Canada, and Japan. Moreover, drawing on the research participants taking part in visual culture and utilizing technology, I explore what it means to look and think critically about images and stories created and disseminated by mass media. Then the chapter concludes by showing how some

participants are engaged in conveying messages as producers and challenging the dominant system generating a biased view of gender, race, and ethnicity.

Chapter 5 called "Wind" focuses on nine distinctive forms of expression of the participants, including performing and instructing Cambodian dance, painting, filmmaking, performing contemporary dance, creating and maintaining websites and blogs, teaching music, playing classical Cambodian musical instruments, creating installation works, writing books and delivering lectures, teaching fine arts, creating mixed media art, producing and broadcasting radio and television programs, and so forth. Drawing heavily on the narratives of the research participants, this chapter explores which Way each participant is seeking and which mode of expression she/he selects in order to attain her/his own Way.

Taking into account the fluidity and flexibility of water, Chapter 6—named "Water"— consists of the following three sections: art appreciation, art practice, and performance. First, referring to the comments of the research participants describing their likes and dislikes in the arts such as fine art, music, and film, I look at the situation of art appreciation in Cambodia and link it to the discussion of some issues of art creation. The second section draws on the concept of heterotopia by Foucault and investigates what types of heterotopia emerge from the art practices of the study participants. It also presents the unique traits of their heterotopia by focusing on the participants' artistic expressions. In the third section, I apply Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization and examine what hybridization means in the context of self-expression of the research participants. In doing so, the final part attempts to illustrate some cases and moments of performing hybridization, which the participants undergo in their everyday lives.

Chapter 7 "Void" concentrates on *The Art of Becoming*, the video I created for this dissertation project. It is available for viewing on my YouTube channel (see

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfCqv33F-f0&feature=youtu.be). It seeks to visualize what heterotopia and hybridization look like in the context of the reciprocal relationship between the research participants and me as a researcher/filmmaker. I take part in the film as a calligrapher, performer of *mudrās* (Buddhist hand gestures) as well as a musical instrument called *sanshin*, and voice-over. The video is made up of five sections: Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, and Void. Each segment includes an image capturing my handwriting with a brush and voice-over reading poetry composed of five lines aloud. The space between the segments contains a portion of various images and voice-overs of the research participants. Through a layer of images, sounds, and voices, the film lays emphasis on complexity and multiplicity, which function as a driving force to hinder essentialization, categorization, and dichotomization.

Lastly, the concluding chapter provides a summary of findings, discussion and implications of my research. It returns to the concept of "heterotopia" and shows how it was used in this study focusing on the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity embodied in the lives of the research participants and myself constantly shifting across spaces, sometimes *becoming* at the centre, and sometimes *becoming* at the margin. Then I elucidate how Trinh's notion of hybridization enabled this research project to demonstrate not only the intricate ways in which the identities of the research participants and mine are constructed, performed, and transforming continuously, but also the fluidity of such identities constantly shifting beyond boundaries and across spaces and intersecting with gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and religion. In addition, I discuss the implications of this study—attaching importance to what is in-between writing, filmmaking, and performance—for education and research. Finally, I conclude by pointing out some future research directions.

# Chapter 2: Literature Review

In this chapter, I start with reviewing three bodies of literature. The first one is on art and pedagogy, which interrogates how art is treated in opposition to science in the field of education and society on the whole. It portrays some possibilities when various forms of art are successfully incorporated into the teaching and learning scenes as well as educational inquiry. The second body of literature centers on the writings of postcolonial scholars examining the impact of imperialism and colonialism critically. Their works disclose the Western hegemony and the unbalanced dichotomy placing those in the so-called "non-West" as subordinate. They also indicate what is needed for the researcher to cease reproducing and reinforcing the hegemonic view. The third area of literature clarifies how diaspora studies developed and continues to evolve, taking account of the diversity among people in diasporic situations. Some scholars illustrate the potentialities of studies giving consideration to various facets of the lives of those who are in diaspora. In the subsequent section, I explain how these three bodies of literature are useful to my dissertation project. The last section is on my conceptual framework and discusses how I utilize the concept of "heterotopia" proposed by Michel Foucault and Trinh T. Minh-ha's version of the notion of "hybridization" in this study.

## 2.1 Art and Pedagogy

Studies have been done to examine the meaning and position of art in education and educational inquiry. John Dewey (1934) notes the predominance of "… natural science and its application in industry and commerce through machinery and the use of non-human modes of energy" (p. 337). While science forges ahead in society, Dewey urges people to

take notice of the significance of art distinct from science: "Art is a mode of prediction not found in charts and statistics, and it insinuates possibilities of human relations not to be found in rule and precept, admonition and administration" (1934, p. 349). Lawrence Frank (1966) also regards art as important in science-driven society: "As we face a world increasingly ordered and technologically managed, with ever increasing requirements for disciplined thinking and performance, we require more aesthetic experience …" (p. 459). Frank argues that "[t]he arts still wait for full acceptance in educational programs in which they are indispensable and urgently needed" (p. 459). In this way, Frank asserts the need to incorporate the arts into the school curriculum sufficiently.

For the arts to be accepted in education completely, Herbert Read (1966) indicates what should be done is "… the development of a balanced aesthetic awareness which is expressed in all media—not only in painting, but also in sculpture, weaving, embroidery, music, dancing, poetry and drama" (p. 265). As discussed by Dewey and Frank, Read also recognizes that science established superiority over art: "We might then have to confess that in our exclusive preoccupation with knowledge and science, we had omitted to educate those human faculties which are connected with the emotional and integrative aspects of human life …" (p. 266). Hence, Read suggests that the arts adopted in educational settings play a valuable role for which science cannot substitute. Exploring a role of the arts in education, John Goodlad and Jack Morrison (1980) describe its advantage: "The pedagogical beauty of the arts, properly conceived and taught, is that they offer unlimited self-involvement on the part of the learner. … [E]xperiences leading to new ones and the evolving interpretation of these experiences provide ends and means simultaneously" (p. 11). Goodlad and Morrison thus point out that applying the arts to the realm of education produces a good effect on the learner.

Advocating the importance of integrating the arts in education, scholars have long investigated the root of the problem that the arts are overlooked in not only school but also society as a whole. Dewey offers a useful analysis in which he directs his attention to dichotomization:

> The opposition that now exists between the spiritual and ideal elements of our historic heritage and the structure of physical nature that is disclosed by science, is the ultimate source of the dualisms formulated by philosophy since Descartes and Locke. (1934, p. 338)

Dewey thus indicates the impact of Cartesian thought on the maintenance of the binary system dividing science and art. In relation to the binary described by Dewey, Elliot Eisner (1972) illustrates another type of binarism affected by Greek philosophy: "Ever since Plato distinguished between the work of the head and the work of the hand, assigning the former to the higher levels of goodness than the latter, there has been little question about which realm the arts occupied" (p. 262). In addition, paying attention to the situation of schooling where art is considered as the secondary, "[t]he *work* of art", argues Eisner, "remakes the maker. When society neglects or assigns a peripheral place to such work the abilities that give it life tend to wither or abort" (p. 282; original emphasis). Eisner's claim to bring art to the centre is reflected on the work of Hilda Lewis (1976) articulating her hope to "… see the arts become central rather than peripheral in the curriculum" (p. 167). Lewis provides a detailed explanation of what she means by that:

> What I am suggesting is that we view the arts, the humanities, and the sciences as complementary manifestations of how people deal with the natural and social environment, that we dismantle the wall separating the affective from the cognitive, that we reform the curriculum by unifying the teaching of the arts around the basic processes that bring together the arts and other disciplines. (1976, p. 168)

Here Lewis denotes the connection between the disciplinary boundaries and the dichotomy such as "affect/cognition", and indicates the need to import a new framework into the curriculum, which attaches importance to all the subjects evenly.

The efforts to remove the clear division between science and art take the form of

qualitative research. Maxine Greene (1995), for instance, focuses on the key role that the arts

play in cultivating imagination and thereby enriching the qualitative aspects of human life.

Greene portrays the possibility of the arts as follows:

> As I view and feel them, informed encounters with works of art often lead to a
> startling defamiliarization of the ordinary. What I have habitually taken for
> granted—about human potential, for example, or gender differences or ecology or
> what is now called 'ethnic identity' or the core curriculum—frequently reveals itself
> in unexpected ways because of a play I have seen, a painting I have looked at, a
> woodwind quintet I have heard. (1995, p. 4)

Hence, Greene suggests that the arts make it possible to destabilize the norm influencing the

perceptions of gender, ethnicity as well as schooling. Acknowledging the impact of Greene's

work on the latter-day qualitative research, Nicholas Paley (1995) presents a model of arts-

based research by integrating four concepts. The first one is "nonobjective artistic practice"

which means "an inquiry that resisted analytic objectification by merging educational

thinking with … an artistic practice" (p. 8). Regarding the second concept "bricolage," Paley

goes into the details of it:

> Through the address of bricolage, images can be constructed to serve allusive rather
> than argumentative purposes. … Images can be 'read' as text. Text can figure as
> image. Visually, bricolage provides the potential to repoliticize analytic shapes,
> opening criticality to less partitioned space. (p. 9)

In addition to these concepts, Paley uses "polyphonous voice" and states that "… this form of

address displays an elasticity, layeredness, and reversibility in vocal status …, thereby

exploring a range of associations generally excluded (repressed?) from conventional analytic

discourse" (p. 10). The last one is "the rhizomatic" originally introduced by Gilles Deleuze

and Félix Guattari (1986). According to Paley, this concept implies "… bringing into

discursive play the idea of a work of art as a rhizomatic assembly of densely entangled

crossroads, passages, galleries, and heterogeneities, complemented by the method of multiple

analytic stances … (p. 12). He describes the potential of interweaving these four concepts in his qualitative research as follows:

> Linking these modes of address … generates a forum for a series of enunciations that are normally not found in official educational discourses. In their non-sequential improvisations, indirections, and visual reference, these enunciations denote a particular kind of inquiry—one that shifts attention to a criticality funded by multiple representations of educationally configured realities …. (p. 13)

Here Paley suggests that bringing the arts to the core of educational research allows the emergence of an alternative inquiry upholding criticality instead of generating normativity. Moreover, qualitative research utilizing the arts has a feature dissimilar to that of quantitative inquiry, as Eisner (2002) remarks:

> There is, in the arts, more than one interpretation to a musical score, more than one way to describe a painting or a sculpture, more than one appropriate form for a dance performance, more than one meaning for a poetic rendering of a person or a situation. In the arts diversity and variability are made central. This is one lesson that education can learn from the arts. (p. 197)

Eisner thus promotes the use of the arts in the realm of education and asserts that multifarious perspectives arise from it. In this way, the scholarly works employed in this section advocate the necessity of incorporating the various forms of art into the teaching and learning settings as well as educational research. They attest that such an attempt embraces multiple possibilities.

## 2.2    Postcoloniality

Scholars of postcolonial studies have long observed the negative effects of imperialism and colonialism on the lives and minds of the peoples in what the authoritative power calls the "non-West". They problematized the system and the grand narrative lurking under academic writing, which (re)produce the Western hegemony and the unequal, dichotomous relationship between the "Western" researcher and the "non-Western" researched. Aimé Césaire (1972),

for example, depicts the brutality of the colonial power exercised in the so-called "Third World." He also discloses the authoritative power of the West in producing ethnographic research, which positions the peoples in the "non-Western" areas as the "Other", the object to be integrated into Western knowledge: "It is the West that studies the ethnography of the others, not the others who study the ethnography of the West" (p. 71). Reflecting on "the existence of 'native' towns and European towns, of schools for 'natives' and schools for Europeans", Frantz Fanon (1963) declares that "[t]he colonized world is a world divided into two" (p. 3). Albert Memmi (1965) delves in this dichotomizing phenomenon caused by colonization as follows:

> … [I]t is this relationship which is lucrative, which creates privilege. He [the colonizer] finds himself on one side of a scale, the other side of which bears the colonized man. If his living standards are high, it is because those of the colonized are low …. (p. 8)

Using the metaphor of a scale, Memmi thus refers to the division between the two as inseparable from each other, and suggests that those who are on one side are entitled to possess privilege. In the book *Orientalism*, Edward Said (1978) examines critically how privilege is embraced in the Western civilization. He points out that the discursive discourse of the Orient is derived from "… the hegemony of European ideas about the Orient, themselves reiterating European superiority over Oriental backwardness …" (p. 7). In addition, Said questions the position of an author as the authoritative figure producing a text about the "Other", and addresses the need to investigate "the author's position in a text" and "the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass, density, and referential power among themselves and thereafter in the culture at large" (1978, p. 20).

The asymmetric, dichotomous structure discussed above even exists within the West itself. It is evident in the relationships between settler society and indigenous peoples as well

as dominant society and marginalized peoples (e.g., Smyth, 2000; Jackson, 2004). Some postcolonial feminist scholars pay attention to the issue of representation and problematize the motives for essentialization seen in academic writing, which lead to categorization and erasure of heterogeneity among people and cultures in the globe. For example, Gayatri Spivak (1988) affirms that studies on "subaltern" hardly recognize woman as the subaltern subject with agency but rather essentialize woman as subordinate and maintain "… the repeated emptying of her meaning as instrument" (p. 31). In *Decolonizing Methodologies*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) explains the close ties between imperialism and the scientifically driven research tradition:

> Imperialism provided the means through which concepts of what counts as human could be applied systematically as forms of classification, for example through hierarchies of race and typologies of different societies. In conjunction with imperial power and with 'science', these classification systems came to shape relations between imperial powers and indigenous societies. (p. 25)

Here Smith suggests that with the expansion of the colonial state, scientific research gained power to construct knowledge of what it categorizes as the "non-West" and to keep reminding the audience in the West which side of the scale they are on. Uma Narayan (2000) interrogates the impact of essentialism on the construction of gender difference and cultural difference:

> While gender essentialism often proceeds to assume and construct sharp binaries about the qualities, abilities, or locations of 'men' and 'women,' cultural essentialism assumes and constructs sharp binaries between 'Western culture' and 'Non-western cultures' or between 'Western culture' and particular 'Other' cultures. (p. 82)

What is noticeable here is that representation resulted from essentialism contributes to the (re)production of the binarism in terms of gender and culture. Such a representation produced by the researcher, who omits to take account of the complexity and multiplicity that do not fit the scope of his/her research, (re)produces the narrative essentializing the research subjects.

Focusing on studies on women located in the so-called "non-West", Chandra Mohanty (2003) states that "… the application of the notion of women as a homogenous category to women in the Third World colonizes and appropriates the pluralities of the simultaneous location of different groups of women in social class and ethnic frameworks …" (p. 39). Here Mohanty argues that there is a danger of essentialization to be recognized and that the action of the researcher can engender another type of colonization, if the heterogeneity of the lives of research subjects is ignored.

Besides the investigation of the problematic representations, gaze is one more crucial issue examined critically by postcolonial scholars. Fanon (1967), for instance, turns his attention to the power of the imperial gaze and pronounces that "… already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am *fixed*. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality" (p. 116; original emphasis). Fanon thus asserts that colonization created hierarchy and those in the superior position possess the power to sustain the system transforming those who do not belong to that position into the object to be watched and deprived of autonomy. Similarly, bell hooks (1992), supporting Fanon's view, contends that those who are labeled as the "Other" need to "look back", in other words, to have "a critical gaze" (p. 116) thrusting aside essentialization and categorization operated by those who are in the authority. The necessity of gaining agency to "look back", as hooks proposes here, has relevance to postcolonial writers' claim to have agency to write back. Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986), for example, attaches importance to the application of the languages originated in the lives of the peoples inhabiting the place excluded from the imperial state. Illustrating the tendency that African writers use languages in Africa to "… transcend colonial alienation" (1986, p. 28), Ngũgĩ suggests that such an attempt prompts those who have been relegated to the verge to bring the original languages back to the centre

once again. Indeed, as Homi Bhabha (1990) points out "… the peoples of the periphery return to write the history and fiction of the metropolis" (p. 6), the hegemony maintained though the long history of imperialism and colonialism is now being challenged and destabilized by the endeavours of those who regained autonomy in producing diverse narratives. Regarding this phenomenon, Abdul R. JanMohamed and David Lloyd (1990) give postcolonial writers a caution for looking back and writing back, indicating that scholarship driven by the intention as such "… should not merely fall back on the oppositional affirmation of an essential ethnic or gender identity" (p. 16). In this way, through the critical interrogation of the issues of representation and gaze, the thinkers of postcolonial studies uncover what are neglected by the scheme validating and perpetuating the hegemonic view. They also warn the researcher to not get caught in the pitfall, that is, to evade re-creating the absolute, truthful narrative leading to the preservation of essentialism and binarism.

## 2.3 Diaspora

Due to a variety of reasons including the outbreak of conflicts (e.g., national, ethnic, religious, etc.) around the globe, we now see many forms of immigration—both voluntary and forced. In examining these diverse migratory movements, the term "diaspora" is often used and studies on diaspora have been done to correspond to the accelerated activities of immigrants and the increasing number of dispersed communities beyond national borders. According to James Clifford (1994), diaspora means "… dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home …" (p. 308). Moreover, Nicholas Van Hear (1998) proposes a framework useful in investigating various forms of diaspora as follows:

> … [D]iaspora are populations which satisfy three minimal criteria …. First, the population is dispersed from a homeland to two or more other territories. Second, the presence abroad is enduring …, but may include movement between homeland and new host. And third, there is some kind of exchange—social, economic,

political or cultural—between or among the spatially separated populations comprising the diaspora. (p. 6)

Hence, research conducted in the field of diaspora studies regards the border-crossing flows and interaction of people as the principal points and expands its scope bringing migratory movements and forms of dwelling of immigrants into focus.

The scope of diaspora studies continues to transform itself, reflecting critical comments of the scholars. Howard Duncan (2006), for example, suggests that traditional diaspora studies attached importance to the examination of the political and economic levels of people in diasporic situations. Regarding this tradition, feminist critiques on diaspora studies demonstrate that the emphasis is placed on the exploration of the macro-structure underpinning the migratory activities. At the same time, they claim the importance of paying attention to micro-elements composing the lives of people in diaspora. For instance, applying a critical framework, Sarah Mahler and Patricia Pessar (2001) analyze the transnational movements of merchandise and people:

> Material objects, including commodities and remittances, are additional elements that flow into and across transnational spaces. The people initiating and receiving these flows are not situated equally within the gendered geography of power, and the flows both illustrate and reproduce these disparities. While sending remittances can be interpreted as a mechanism through which migrants actually level economic disparities—lowering their resources and bolstering recipients'—the flows are not only of material significance. Rather, they also communicate important matters of obligation, prestige, and power that favor migrants while impacting gender ideologies and relations. (p. 450)

Focusing on the effects of gender, Mahler and Pessar thus contend that power is maintained within the flows of materials and people beyond national borders, and indicate how power operates differently on women and men going through immigration. The inclusion of the gender aspect in the examination of immigration was advocated on an earlier occasion. Clifford explains how the gender perspective is unvoiced in diaspora studies: "Diasporic experiences are always gendered. But there is a tendency for theoretical accounts of

diasporas and diaspora cultures to hide this fact, to talk of travel and displacement in unmarked ways, thus normalizing male experiences" (1994, p. 313).

Based on the critiques above, scholars of diaspora studies attempted to shed new light on what was hidden behind the traditional theorization of diaspora. Jana Braziel and Anita Mannur (2003) portray the efforts being made in the field:

> … [R]ecent theorizations of diaspora … seek to represent (and problematize) the lived experiences (in all their ambivalences, contradictions, migrations, and multiple traversals) of people whose lives have unfolded in myriad diasporic communities across the globe. Diasporic subjects are marked by hybridity and heterogeneity—cultural, linguistic, ethnic, national—and these subjects are defined by a traversal of the boundaries demarcating nation and diaspora. (p. 5)

In this way, Braziel and Mannur suggest that diaspora studies now take into account the complexity and diversity in investigating the border-crossing movements and the formation of communities of people in diaspora. On the other hand, however, Eleonore Kofman (2004) points out that more endeavours still need to be made by researchers. Applying a feminist framework, Kofman reveals the existence of the norm fostering polarization in theorizing immigration:

> Dichotomies based upon a constellation of the economic, male and workplace in opposition to the socio-cultural, female and family, frame the way migration is traditionally explained. The dominant form of explanation of migratory phenomena is economic, usually associated with the masculine, and is demarcated from the social, considered to apply to the female. (p. 647)

Here Kofman discloses that the normative discourse in traditional diaspora studies generates the prevailing narrative and knowledge dividing the complex migratory actions into the two poles continuously. Moreover, Kofman proceeds with her critique and argues that scholars of diaspora studies "… leave unexamined the diversity of circuits, through which women and men migrate, and a more complex stratification or articulation between class, gender and race, that migration produces and reproduces" (2004, p. 650). Thus, Kofman proclaims the

need to incorporate the intersectionality of gender, class, race, and ethnicity into the examination of the process of immigration and the lives of immigrants.

The critical views of the scholars above had much effect on the latter-day theorization of immigration. In consequence, studies have been conducted in an attempt to eradicate the binary system and look at what is traditionally missing in the dominant discourse and knowledge produced in diaspora studies. Steven Vertovec (2006) reminds us what is crucial for developing the emergent framework in diaspora studies:

> … [I]t is overly simplistic to think of diasporas as a monolithic type of social formation, to see transnational ties as of one kind, and to believe that diasporic identifications imprint specific values and kinds of behaviour. The history, composition and activities of diasporas are highly complex and diverse. Within any diaspora—whether based on ethnic, national, religious or local origin—its members do not feel or act as one. (p. 8)

It is clear here that regarding the traditional theorization of diaspora, Vertovec problematizes the tendency to repose on categorization and simplification. As a way to understand and conceptualize a variety of border-crossing practices initiated by people in diaspora, Vertovec emphasizes the importance of adopting multifarious angles in looking at various forms of diaspora and lifestyles of individuals constituting diasporic communities.

Studies taking account of the issues illustrated by the critical scholars are now striving to reflect the complexity and heterogeneity seen in the lives of people originating various migratory movements. Myria Georgiou (2006), for instance, denotes the significance of the act of traversing borders practiced by people in diaspora:

> In being more informed about the politics and the culture of the country of origin or of other sections of the diaspora, individuals and groups can construct their attitude of a *critical proximity*: they become aware that … they are not just reflections of the country of origin, but they have various positions—sometimes of proximity and sometimes of distance—within transnational networks. (p. 147; original emphasis)

Georgiou thus argues that people forming diasporic communities shape an alternative space that resists dichotomization and categorization. Moreover, Choi (2006) articulates the

possibility of the new space resulted from the border-crossing movements of people in diaspora:

> This creative and critical space can exude tensions and challenges to the assumptions and perspectives of the majority, and this space characterizes part of the dynamic and contingent identity formation through transcultural experiences. (p. 90)

In this way, applying the polyhedral perspective, recently conducted research projects describe the potentialities held by diasporic subjects. Both Georgiou and Choi demonstrate that giving consideration to various facets of the lives of people in diaspora enables us to discern mode(s) of dwelling, which challenge and possibly destabilize the norm sustaining essentialization and dichotomization. Along with the increasing flows of people beyond borders, diasporic communities continue to expand and in consequence, lead to the emergence and merger of boundaries. The space arising from the border-crossing movements of people in diaspora continues to change its shape and to exert an influence on theorization of diaspora.

## 2.4    Application

The field of education cannot avoid the current trend of artistic activities including video recording and sharing on websites (e.g., YouTube and social networking sites). The scholars who revealed the unbalanced relationship between art and science advocated recognizing the significance of art and integrating various forms of art into the teaching and learning environment as well as educational research. Their analyses show that art holds a variety of possibilities such as the emergence of alternative inquiry negating the discursive view. These research works on art and pedagogy are useful for my dissertation project employing a combination of interview, filmmaking, and performance within the film, and seeking to present a novel model of art creation, which can be applied to the realm of education and

educational inquiry. The critical perspectives of the postcolonial thinkers exposed the hegemonic narrative (re)producing the unequal, dichotomous relationship between the researcher in the West and the researched in the non-West. Their investigation into the issues of representation and gaze in particular is crucial to this study using visual methods. In the next chapter, I discuss further the utilization of visual methods in this research project. As indicated earlier, diaspora studies is in the new phase since its focus shifted from centering on the examination of the macro-structure of diaspora to giving consideration to the diversity among people in diasporic situations and acknowledging diaspora as an ever-changing site where nation, gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and religion are intersecting with one another in the complicated way.

Applying criticality and the multi-angled view proposed by the scholars of postcolonial studies and diaspora studies is essential for me as a researcher/filmmaker aiming to reflect various modes of being and becoming of the research participants as well as myself onto both writing and film. The following chapter describes methodology underlying my writing and filmmaking, and explains why both filmmaking and performance are important to this study. Will Higbee (2007) calls films produced by postcolonial and diasporic filmmakers the "cinema of transvergence". By this, Higbee suggests that they transform themselves into subjects, who are able to "… negotiate a position that is both centre and margin—and once again one that denies the totality of a binary epistemology such as that proposed by neo-colonial master narratives" (2007, p. 86). Taking account of the colonial elements in the historical context of Canada, Japan, and Cambodia, the film created as part of the dissertation illustrates the journeys of the study participants and me, who are in the various levels of postcoloniality and diaspora. It serves as an example showing the emergence of an alternative space resisting and challenging essentialization and dichotomization. I hope that this research

project makes a contribution to promoting the further discussion of the complex notions of postcoloniality and diaspora in parallel with diverse experiences and stories of people living in the twenty-first century.

## 2.5   Conceptual Framework

Based on the discussion of the three bodies of literature on art and pedagogy, postcoloniality, and diaspora, I draw on the concept of "heterotopia" proposed by Michel Foucault and Trinh T. Minh-ha's version of the notion of "hybridization" in this dissertation project. As indicated earlier, the rise of Cartesian knowledge and its emphasis on science as a rigid, reliable method depicting "reality" and thereby constructing knowledge and the absolute truth have a significant impact on the development of the academic disciplines such as education and anthropology. Regarding the construction of scientific knowledge, Foucault (1988) presents a critical analysis:

> … [H]umans develop knowledge about themselves: economics, biology, psychiatry, medicine, and penology. The main point is not to accept this knowledge at face value but to analyze these so-called sciences as very specific 'truth games' related to specific techniques that human beings use to understand themselves. (p. 17-18)

Foucault thus asserts the necessity of deconstructing the "regimes of knowledge", which generate and sustain the hegemonic discourse in Western society. As shown already, in addition to the predominance of the scientific way of understanding the world, binarism is another important issue pointed out by the scholars of educational studies, postcolonial studies, and diaspora studies. Foucault (2002) explains how deeply the binary system is rooted in the Western civilization:

> … [O]ur life is still governed by a certain number of oppositions that remain inviolable, that our institutions and practices have not yet dared to break down. These are oppositions that we regard as simple givens: for example between private space and public space, between family space and social space, between cultural space and useful space, between the space of leisure and that of work. (p. 230)

Here Foucault articulates how various types of spaces are simply divided into the two poles with no room left for doubt. Moreover, he suggests that the hierarchy is inscribed in the very system creating and maintaining the opposition and this leads to the preservation of "the space of emplacement" (2002, p. 230).

Problematizing this scheme retaining the hierarchy, Foucault offers a view deconstructing such a conventional way of thinking about spaces, and pronounces that "… we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another" (2002, p. 231). What Foucault means here is that it is crucial to "dare to" deconstruct the norm and acknowledge the world(s) we live in as heterogeneous sites, which he calls, "heterotopia". For developing this new vision, Foucault formulates "heterotopology", the alternative approach to look at the interplay of spaces. His "heterotopology" is based on the following six principles: 1) all societies form heterotopias; 2) heterotopia's functions can shift; 3) heterotopia maps a unique site to numerous conflicting sites; 4) heterotopias have unconventional relationships with time; 5) heterotopias have conditions for entry and exit; and 6) heterotopias relate functionally to all other sites. As an example of "heterotopia", Foucault directs his attention to colonialism and refers to colonies as sites embracing the complexity that is unable to be placed in the dichotomy of colonizer/colonized.

Demonstrating his theory of "heterotopology", Foucault defies the hegemonic view regulating the way in which people perceive the world and points out the need to recognize the intricacies excluded from the binary production and cultivate the view appreciating the existence of the diversified worlds transgressing the binaries. His notion highlighting the interconnectedness of spaces is relevant to the concept of the "Third Space" presented by Homi Bhabha. Bhabha (1994) gives an account of the "Third Space" as follows:

> It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew. (p. 55)

Bhabha thus proposes the "Third Space" as an alternative site—resisting being essentialized by the norm—where various translations and interpretations are possible. In addition, Bhabha illustrates its potential that: "… by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves" (1994, p. 56). In this way, Bhabha contends that applying the perspective of the "Third Space" enables us to recognize and observe the power of the normative discourse legitimatizing "History" and the "Truth" and sustaining the system re-producing the opposition. In this research project, I consider that Foucault's concept of "heterotopia" holds the potential similar to what Bhabha mentioned above.

Moreover, the theory of "heterotopology" seeking to deconstruct the norm has a potential for assisting us to take notice of the complexity and interrelationship embraced in people's lifestyles. Here the concept of "heterotopia" has relevance to Judith Butler (1993) arguing the intricate interaction between subject and abject, which is occurring incessantly in the lives of people. Butler suggests that "… the subject is constituted through the force of exclusion and abjection, one which produces a constitutive outside to the subject, an abjected outside, which is, after all, "inside" the subject as its own founding repudiation" (1993, p. 3). Unlike the norm placing the two in the hierarchy, Butler asserts that the relationship between subject and object is not necessarily binary. In this way, the intricacy and interconnectedness are inseparable from the formation of multifarious spaces as well as the lives of people inhabiting these spaces.

In terms of space, the section dealing with literature on postcolonial studies touched on the binary between centre and periphery. In this research project, I do not see the relationship between centre and margin as a dichotomy. Drawing on Foucault's "heterotopology"

described above, this study explores the diversity of spaces inhabited by the research participants and myself, and how these spaces intersect one another and mutate through the interaction. I apply the concept of "heterotopia" to the discussion of not only the formation and existence of various spaces but also the diverse stories told by the study participants. In doing so, this research attempts to show the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity embodied in the lives of the participants constantly shifting across spaces, sometimes *becoming* at the centre, and sometimes *becoming* at the margin.

In addition to Foucault's "heterotopology", I draw on the concept of "hybridization" discussed by Trinh T. Minh-ha. Trinh (1991) exercises a critical perspective towards the powerful system of knowledge dividing a variety of constituents of the worlds into two poles and sounds the alarm:

> … [A]s long as the complexity and difficulty of engaging with the diversely hybrid experiences of heterogeneous contemporary societies are denied and not dealt with, binary thinking continues to mark time while the creative interval is dangerously reduced to non-existence. (p. 229)

Trinh thus indicates the importance of giving consideration to the significance of the complexity and multiplicity, which function as a driving force to hinder essentialization, categorization, and dichotomization. Focusing on those who go through various migratory movements such as immigration and displacement, whether voluntary or involuntary, Trinh (1994) suggests that what these people practice in their everyday lives *are* hybridization:

> Despite the seemingly repetitive character of its theme and variations, the tale of hyphenated reality continues its hybridizing process. It mutates in the repercussive course of its reproduction as it multiplies and displaces itself from one context to another. It is, in other words, always transient. But transience is precisely what gives the tale its poignancy. Having grown despite heavy odds in places where it was not meant to survive, this poetry of marginalized people not only thrives on, but also persists in holding its ground (no matter how fragile this ground proves to be) and sometimes even succeeds in blooming wildly, remarkable in its strange beauty and fabulous irregularity. (p. 17)

Here Trinh points out that hybridization is a process—not fixed but ongoing—and it is also a mode of transgressing the binaries and boundaries established and maintained by the hegemonic discourse. Trinh employs the terms such as "interval" and "intermezzo" as interchangeable with hybridization.

The concept of hybridity has long been argued and developed in studies on postcoloniality, diaspora, and migratory movements initiated by people including the hyphenated, the refugee, the exile, and the nomad (Bhabha, 1994; Hall, 1990; Trinh, 1991, 1994, 2011). Annie Coombes and Avtar Brah (2000) assert that the concept of hybridity is indispensable for the consideration of phenomena occurring in the present days:

> In an increasingly globalized world, the term 'hybridity' has become the means for reflecting upon the relationship between 'the local' and 'the global' and the multiple ways in which globality, region and locality feature in economic, political, and cultural forms and practices. (p. 12)

Here Coombes and Brah indicate that applying the concept of hybridity is useful for investigating the economic, political, and cultural globalization trends. Besides what Coombes and Brah mentioned above, scholars portray the variability embraced in the concept of hybridity. Stuart Hall (1990), for instance, directs his attention to the close relationship between diaspora and hybridity. Giving an example of "Third Cinema", the new wave of filmmakers in diaspora, Hall states that the concept of hybridity is inseparable from the discussion of the identity construction of those who undergo diaspora:

> The diaspora experience … is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (p. 235; original emphasis)

Hall thus contends that diaspora identities are hybrid in that they resist being reduced to singularity and stillness.

In addition to diaspora identities, Bhabha (1994) shows that the concept of hybridity can be applied to the examination of identities of those who embody the multiplicity in their lifestyles. Bhabha explicates the concept as follows:

> Hybrid hyphenations emphasize the incommensurable elements … as the basis of cultural identifications. What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities: the regulation and negotiation of those spaces that are continually, *contingently*, 'opening out', remaking the boundaries, exposing the limits of any claim to a singular or autonomous sign of difference—be it class, gender or race. Such assignations of social differences—where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides*, *in-between*—find their agency in a form of the 'future' where the past is not originary, where the present is not simply transitory. It is … an interstitial future, that emerges *in-between* the claims of the past and the needs of the present. (p. 313; original emphasis)

What Bhabha means here is that hybridity or in-betweenness is a site transgressing the binary structure of First/Third and Us/Them. Moreover, Bhabha suggests that adopting the concept of hybridity assists people to become aware of what exists in the in-between space and this leads to envisaging how intricately identities are constructed, performed, and changing. In this way, Bhabha reveals that identities embrace hybridity since they are created and re-created, while intersecting with gender, class, and race.

I argue that Trinh's version of the concept of "hybridization" is unique in that it connotes artistic quality. She likens the concept of hybridization to the grey colour and illustrates its significance:

> The new hue is a distinct colour of its own, neither black nor white, but somewhere in between—*in the middle* where possibilities are boundless. *Intermezzo*. A midway-between-colour, grey is composed of multiplicities, or to borrow Deleuze and Guattari's terms, of 'directions in motions.' (1996, p. 99-100; original emphasis)

Using a metaphor of the colour in-between black and white, Trinh thus implies that a great deal of possibilities arise from the process of hybridization. One notable possibility brought about by hybridization is the emergence of an alternative space beyond the binary system. This space is, what Trinh calls, the "Third" and she explains its feature as follows:

… Third is not merely derivative of First and Second. It is a space of its own. Such a space allows for the emergence of new subjectivities that resist letting themselves be settled in the movement across First and Second. Third is thus formed by the process of hybridization which, rather than simply adding a here to a there, gives rise to an elsewhere-within-here/-there that appears both too recognizable and impossible to contain. (1994, p. 18-19)

In this way, according to Trinh, the concept of hybridization placing emphasis on the process itself brings a new lens to the examination of spaces and the identities of those who inhabit the in-between space. It also discloses the traditional dualistic views such as West/East, Europe/Asia, and Art/non-Art, and has the possibility of destabilizing previously established dichotomies.

Drawing on Trinh, my dissertation project deals with the following two in particular: media hybridization and cultural hybridization. The former denotes the diversified applications of various media technologies (e.g., visual, digital, social, mobile, etc.) involved in art appreciation, practice, and performance. The latter centers on the significance of artistic practice/performance initiated by the subjects located in-between, including those who are in the state of postcoloniality and diaspora, and its relevance for the (trans)formation of their identities. I consider that the concept of hybridization attaches importance to the process of being and becoming. Becoming itself is an ongoing process, as Trinh remarks, "The becoming is not a becoming something; it remains active and intransitive" (1991, p. 161). Hence, applying Trinh's version of the concept of hybridization, this study seeks to demonstrate not only the intricate ways in which the identities of the research participants and mine are constructed, performed, and transforming continuously, but also the fluidity of such identities constantly shifting beyond boundaries and across spaces, and intersecting with gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and religion.

# Chapter 3: Methodology (Earth)

This chapter is comprised of six sections to offer an overview of how the study employed data from interviews and video recordings and incorporated it into the film. The first section clarifies how I utilize the concept of "blurred genres" proposed by Clifford Geertz (1983) in my attempt to merge the text and the film. Filmmaking plays an important role in this dissertation, so the second section focuses on visual methods including still photography and film, and deals with some issues involved in using visual materials as evidence to represent study subjects by referring to the development of visual ethnography. In addition, it portrays potentialities of research employing visual methods. In the third section, drawing on performance studies, I explore various aspects of performance, which are traditionally overlooked by researchers. I also argue the possibility of attaching importance to performance in research and its implication to this study. The fourth section provides an account of how I carried out interviews and filming, and discusses some issues accompanied by conducting qualitative research. In the fifth section, I explain how I transcribed audiotapes and videotapes, completed coding, and developed themes in findings. In addition, I articulate some of the points that stuck me as important to keep in mind during data collection and analysis. The last section elucidates the notion of reflexivity in relation to Trinh's film *Reassemblage* (1982) and shows how a "speaking nearby" position practiced by Trinh is useful to my dissertation project.

## 3.1 Practicing "Blurred Genres"

Drawing on the concept of heterotopia presented by Foucault and Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization, this dissertation project makes full use of interviews and visual

materials (i.e., film, photography, and performance within the produced film). I discuss further how interviews and video recording were carried out later. In this study, I attach importance to both the text and the visual. Utilizing critical ethnographic and visual methods, I seek to visualize a fluid and open trajectory reflecting his/her-story, space, time, being, and becoming of the research participants as well as myself. This attempt to combine the research methods is based on the concept of "blurred genres" proposed by Clifford Geertz (1983). Looking at scholarly works blurring the borders between the social sciences and the humanities, Geertz argues that "… what we are seeing is not just another redrawing of the cultural map … but an alteration of the principles of mapping. Something is happening to the way we think about the way we think" (1983, p. 20). As an example of "blurred genres", Geertz refers to studies on theatre performance: "At a time when social scientists are chattering about actors, scenes, plots, performances, and personae, and humanists are mumbling about motives, authority, persuasion, exchange, and hierarchy, the line between the two … seems uncertain indeed" (1983, p. 30). Geertz thus suggests that such an attempt gives rise to the alternative scope, which helps the researchers think beyond the conventional disciplinary boundaries.

I practice Geertz's "blurred genres" in my dissertation and seek to create an alternative view negating the conventional way of perceiving gender, race, ethnicity, and nationality. Studies employing the concept of "blurred genres" hold a great potential. Referring to "mixed genres" as equivalent to Geertz's concept, Laurel Richardson (2000) calls it an "evocative form" of qualitative research. Richardson indicates that research with "mixed genres" put into practice upholds "crystallization" instead of "triangulation", and explains what she means by that:

> Crystals are prisms that reflect externalities *and* refract within themselves, creating different colors, patterns, and arrays, casting off in different directions. What we see

depends upon our angle of repose. Not triangulation, crystallization. In postmodernist mixed-genre texts, we have moved from plane geometry to light theory, where light can be *both* waves *and* particles. (2000, p. 934; original emphasis)

Here Richardson shows that studies embodying "mixed genres" abolish the traditional way of generating single, absolute knowledge and acknowledge a variety of perspectives and interpretations.

In my research project, practicing "mixed genres" means blurring the borders between social science and art as well as the text and the visual. Richardson portrays the possibility of research practice applying the concept of "mixed genres":

Crystallization … deconstructs the traditional idea of 'validity' (we feel how there is no single truth, we see how texts validate themselves), and crystallization provides us with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic. Paradoxically, we know more and doubt what we know. Ingeniously, we know there is always more to know. (2000, p. 934)

Through the combination of writing and filmmaking, I attempt to bring forth this "crystallization" discussed by Richardson. In this way, the method of blurring the borders is particularly useful for this research project in exploring what "heterotopia" and performing "hybridization" look like and how the research participants and I carry out self-expression through various artistic practices/performances, thereby suggesting what we might *become* beyond existing binaries and boundaries.

## 3.2   Visual Methods

In this study, I employ a combination of critical ethnographic and visual methods. The data from video recordings is incorporated into *The Art of Becoming*, a short video I created in order to visualize "heterotopic" spaces and the stages of performing "hybridization" in the context of the everyday lives of the study participants. A series of photographs inserted in the dissertation are still images extracted from *The Art of Becoming* and serve as a bridge

connecting the text and the film. Since filmmaking plays a significant role in this dissertation, I look at some issues involved in using visual materials as evidence to represent research subjects by referring to the development of visual ethnography. I then move on to discuss the possibility of research utilizing visual methods.

The invention of still photography and film in the nineteenth century had a great impact on studies conducted by scholars in such academic disciplines as anthropology and archaeology (Guindi, 2004). Anthropologists in the early years including Franz Boas took a camera to the field and presented what they photographed as evidence (Poole, 2005; Ruby, 2000). Edward Curtis was enthusiastic about preserving the lives of Native Americans as photographs. Between 1899 and 1927, Curtis travelled inside America and pointed his camera at various Native American tribes. Regarding a photograph of the Navaho tribe that he took, Curtis suggests that it delivers the thought that "… the Indians as a race, already shorn of their tribal strength and stripped of their primitive dress, are passing into the darkness of an unknown future" (1972, p. xiii). Is it a déjà vu to come across what the postcolonial thinkers warned the researcher in terms of the way of describing the research subjects as "uncivilized" and placing them in the dark, "unknown" side in opposition to the light, familiar side?

Visual ethnography continued to modify the method of recording and presenting evidence, in accordance with the shift of the interest from still photography to film in the late 1950s and 60s. In consequence of studies conducted by Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, who recorded the Balinese and the New Guinean people and their cultures in film, the visual aspect of ethnography attracted considerable attention and the sub-category of visual ethnography was established within American anthropology (Grimshaw, 2001). One of the major ethnographic films by Mead and Bateson is *Bathing Babies in Three Cultures*

(1954), which examined the cultural characteristics seen in the ways of bathing babies in Bali, New Guinea, and America. In addition, Robert Flaherty's film, *Nanook of the North* (1922), which captured the lives of indigenous peoples in the Canadian arctic, is worth discussing. The film fulfilled its function similar to that of early travel writing, which gave the audience the opportunity to see the "unknown" subjects inhabiting the "unfamiliar" parts of Canada. Ethnographic research relying on the use of camera to present evidence expanded after these attempts. Thus, the utilization of visual materials (both still photography and film) was regarded as a principal method of illustrating what the researcher saw in the field and providing "genuine" data.

Borrowing a critical lens of postcolonial thinkers is useful in considering how and for what purpose visual ethnography is produced. They suggest not only the persistence of the déjà vu but also some serious issues accompanied by conducting visual ethnography. These include the power of the visual in constructing knowledge and the authoritative position of the researcher practicing visual ethnography, which are both related to the discussion of representation and gaze in Literature Review. First of all, it is important to understand what type of power is inscribed in visual materials presented as evidence in visual ethnography. Still photography, for example, was used by the early ethnographers for the purpose of generating "authentic" knowledge of racial differences after the model of scientific research. As Deborah Poole (2005) indicates, still photography has "… the privileged role … in the crafting of a racial common sense which, as in the Gramscian understanding of the term, unites 'popular' and 'scientific' understandings of embodied difference" (p. 162). Films produced by anthropologists in the early twentieth century are no exception. Mead, for example, filmed the people and their culture(s) in New Guinea, with the intention of presenting her film as scientifically proven evidence, that is, "… to legitimate ethnographic

film as a respectable form of scientific endeavour" (Grimshaw, 2001, p. 88). Hence, similar to the case of early ethnography, those who propelled the practice of visually-driven ethnography held the objective to situate their studies in the science stream.

In addition to the power of the visual in constructing knowledge, it is crucial to give consideration to the authoritative position of the researcher practicing visual ethnography since it is him/her who produces representation by employing visual methods. Similar to ethnographic studies in the early days discussed earlier, the researcher of visual ethnography has power to gather data and choose what to be recorded or not with his/her camera. Focusing on the works by Mead and Malinowski, Clifford (1988) argues how anthropologists carefully and purposefully selected whom and what culture(s) to observe, and calls the way in which they exhibited the collected data "… a system of authenticity" (p. 231). In the same way, Poole points out the authority of the researcher in accumulating data and deciding whom and what to include/exclude and how to represent the "observed" in his/her visual ethnography: "By specifying uniform focal lengths, poses, and backdrops, anthropologists sought to edit out the distracting "noise" of context, culture, and the human countenance" (2005, p. 163).

The discussed issues—representation, gaze, the power of the visual in constructing knowledge, and the authoritative position of the researcher—invariably follow those who are applying visual methods in their works. Then what prevents scholars in the present day from re-creating the absolute, truthful narrative leading to the continuation of essentialism and binarism? For this, Smith suggests that researchers should become aware of what are missing in the scientific endeavours that have long contributed to validating the hegemonic view: "Two important ways not always addressed by scientific research are to do with 'reporting back' to the people and 'sharing knowledge'. Both ways assume a principle of reciprocity

and feedback" (1999, p. 15). As Smith indicates here, to avoid this pitfall, it is necessary to build a two-way relationship between the researcher and the research subjects, and have a high regard for the study subjects not as objects but as participants in creating alternative knowledge cooperatively. I consider the reciprocal relationship between the research participants and me as crucial for the formation of this study. Therefore, I contacted the participants, shared both the interview transcript and the created film, and incorporated feedback from them.

Indeed, some scholars conducted research influenced by the critical perspectives of the postcolonial thinkers including Smith (e.g., Kindon, 2003; Flores, 2004). The application of visual research methods is the core of both works. In addition to carrying out interviews in the field, Sara Kindon employs a visual method in her feminist geography research, which involves filming and editing in partnership with the Maaori research participants. According to Kindon, if the endeavour to collaborate with research participants is successfully integrated into research using visual methods, it is possible to contribute to "… the destabilization of power relations between researcher/research subjects or observer/observed, as well as to the exploration of transformation and research that makes a difference …" (2003, p. 144). Similarly, in producing film in cooperation with the members of the indigenous communities in Guatemala, Carlos Flores argues that the practice of filmmaking grounded in the mutual relationship enables the researcher to "… conceive of different forms of interaction with subjects in the field and more experimental ways of doing ethnography" (2004, p. 40). These relatively new attempts thus proclaim the possibility of studies utilizing visual methods. Similarly, acknowledging the issues to be dealt with, I consider that applying visual methods in research has a potential as a novel approach challenging what is taken for granted in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity.

## 3.3 Performance

Besides filmmaking, this study attaches importance to performance. In the same way as art is treated in opposition to science, performance is regarded as subordinate. In the book *Homo Ludens* published in 1950, Johan Huizinga applies the term "play" as equivalent to "performance" and explains how play is placed in the lower position in the Western civilization: "… civilization gradually brings about a certain division between two modes of mental life which we distinguish as play and seriousness respectively …" (p. 111). Confronting this dichotomizing movement, Huizinga argues how closely play is connected to people's lives:

> ... [Play] becomes the accompaniment, the complement, in fact an integral part of life in general. It adorns life, amplifies it and is to that extent a necessity both for the individual—as a life function—and for society by reason of the meaning it contains, its significance, its expressive value, its spiritual and social associations, in short, as a culture function. (1950, p. 9)

Moreover, he suggests that play is significant in that it connotes the quality that cannot be produced by scientific inquiry attaching importance to quantitative elements. He also points out the limit of the view derived from Greek philosophy in contrast to the potential of play: "Logical thinking does not go far enough. Surveying all the treasures of the mind and all the splendours of its achievements we shall still find, at the bottom of every serious judgment, something problematical left" (1950, p. 212).

Following Huizinga's work, studies looking at various aspects of performance have been actively conducted. Marvin Carlson (2004) states that research practices on performance are multidisciplinary and against exclusiveness. According to Carlson, the reason is that "[p]erformance by its nature resists conclusions, just as it resists the sort of definitions, boundaries, and limits so useful to traditional academic writing and academic

structures" (2004, p. 206). Taking into account the fluid, non-exclusive disciplinary border described as such, Richard Schechner (1985) illustrates two major streams in performance studies:

> There are two main realms of performance theory: (1) looking at human behavior—individual and social—as a genre of performance; (2) looking at performances—of theater, dance, and other 'art forms'—as a kind of personal or social interaction. These two realms, or spheres, can be metaphorically figured as interfacing at a double two-way mirror. (1985, p. 296)

Here Schechner shows that these two clusters intersect with one another. This interdependency can be found in the practice of performance ethnography (to be discussed later). Similarly, Diana Taylor (2002) provides a framework elucidating the two streams. One focuses on "… the many practices and events—dace, theater, ritual, political rallies, funerals—that involve theatrical, rehearsed, or conventional or event-appropriate behaviors" (p. 45). The other looks at "[c]ivic obedience, resistance, citizenship, gender, ethnic identity, and sexual identity … rehearsed and performed daily …" (p. 45). In this way, these scholars suggest that the flexible concept of performance not only covers theatre performance but also includes various everyday practices. As an illustration of dynamics embraced in the concept, Ronald Pelias (1999) presents a total of twenty-five definitions of performance. One is, for example, "[p]erformance is an act of becoming, a strategy for discovering oneself by trying on scripts to test their fit, a means of clothing oneself in various languages until one believes what one says" (1999, p. 109). Pelias entitles his book *Writing Performance* and explains the reason is that:

> ... it is interested in both writing about performance, from the everyday performative routines we enact to the texts we stage, as well as writing performatively, creating texts that vanish as they appear, that live in a complex undecidability, and that reside in the poetic. (1999, p. xiv)

Here Pelias implies that writing a book is performative and the same thing can be said to what arises from the writing.

This performative aspect in the everyday life attracted a great deal of attention of scholars in anthropology. Victor Turner (1982) asserts the need to "… examine the relationship between the two modes of acting—in 'real life' and 'on stage'—as components of a dynamic system of interdependence between social dramas and cultural performances" (p. 107). As an example of putting this interdependence into practice, Turner proposes the idea of "performing ethnography", and portrays the three phases involved in the performance of ethnography:

> For each of its three stages (ethnography into playscript, script into performance, performance into meta-ethnography) reveals many of the frailties of anthropology, that essentially Western traditional discipline. And the process forces us to look beyond purely anthropological accounts—to literature, history, biography, incidents of travel—for data that may contribute to convincing playscripts. (1982, p. 90)

Turner thus suggests that performing ethnography not only merges the disciplinary boundaries between theatre and anthropology but also connects the anthropological scope to various academic realms. Schechner discusses further the reciprocity embodied in Turner's performance ethnography:

> The convergence of anthropology and theater is part of a larger intellectual movement where the understanding of human behavior is changing from quantifiable differences between cause and effect, past and present, form and content, et cetera (and the linear modes of analyses that explicate such a world view) to an emphasis on the deconstruction/reconstruction of actualities: the processes of framing, editing, and rehearsing; the making and manipulating of strips of behavior …. (1985, p. 33)

In his book *The Anthropology of Performance* published in 1986, Turner states that his attempt in "… experimenting with the performance of ethnography" is "to aid students' understanding of how people in other cultures experience the richness of their social existence …" (p. 140). In addition, Turner gives a caution to those who intend to carry out such an experiment: "If we attempt to perform ethnography, let us not begin with such apparently 'exotic' and 'bizarre' cultural phenomena as rituals and myths. Such an emphasis

may only encourage prejudice, since it stresses the 'otherness of the other'" (1986, p. 152).

Turner thus indicates the need to avoid reproducing the narrative exoticizing and othering the

research subjects through performance. Denzin (1997) refers to the performed ethnographic

accounts as "texts-as-performances" and points out that the possibility is that:

> [t]hey can undo the voyeuristic, gazing eye of the ethnographer, bring audiences and
> performers into a jointly felt and shared field of experience. These works also
> unsettle the writer's place in the text, freeing the text and the writer to become
> interactional productions. The performance text is the single, most powerful way for
> ethnography to recover yet interrogate the meanings of lived experience. (p. 94-95)

Here Denzin suggests that the "texts-as-performances" play a crucial role in destabilizing the

authoritative position of the writer/ethnographer who has power to turn his/her gaze on the

research subjects and generate a text based on observation, and also inviting the audience to

participate in the performance mentally, emotionally, and furthermore, reflexively.

While the disciplinary boundary between theatre and anthropology becomes blurred,

scholarship on performance pays particular attention to the significance of body and space.

Lesley Soule (1998), for example, discusses what role the body plays in performance:

> The body … is of course more than material, corporeal, moving and sounding flesh,
> and more than object image. By body is also meant a processual complex of internal
> and external action, enacted, perceived and responded to. Perhaps the more
> appropriate term is 'presence', since it primarily denotes identified energy. (p. 41)

Hence, Soule points out that the body that is present in performance initiates a movement

linking the inner and the external sides of the performer and also creates a connection with

the audience. Moreover, Joanne Tompkins (2006) gives an account of the interdependence

between the body that performs and the space where the performance takes place:

> The performing body should be read in terms of place, just as place ought to be read
> in terms of the bodies that inhabit it. In other words, the performer and setting
> intersect, enlivening that landscape and invigorating the body, but the role of space
> and place needs to be understood in its various forms, not merely made to stand in
> for stability. (p. 15)

In this way, Tompkins argues that "the performing body" and the space in which the performance is offered to the audience are interconnecting and this space transforms itself in accordance with the movement of the body.

In addition to the significance of body and space, Patrice Pavis (2003) directs his attention to the non-verbal and opaque elements of performance, and indicates that "[i]ntonations, looks, gestures, restrained rather than explicit, constitute so many fleeting moments where meaning is suggested but scarcely externalized and difficult to read" (p. 24). Pavis calls these forms "energy" and "the nonrepresentable", and contends that they carry meanings that should not be overlooked:

> The nonrepresentable is essentially, but not exclusively, the invisible; and, in reaction to a hegemonic visual culture of the self-evident, one should try to identify the nonrepresentable as it exists in the areas of the auditory, of rhythm, of kinesthetic perceptions: in other words, over and above those all too obvious visual signs and units that are largely visible. (2003, p. 25)

Pavis thus explains where these non-verbal and latent forms of "energy" can be found in performance and states that they are recognizable in the way dissimilar to the notion of visibility taken for granted by the hegemonic view.

Scholars in the realm of education also attach importance to various aspects of performance, as Turner contends that "[t]here must be a dialectic between performing and learning. One learns through performing, then performs the understandings so gained" (1982, p. 94). Seymour Sarason (1999), for example, argues that teacher is performer and elucidates the concept:

> … [T]he teacher as performing artist is faced with a terribly complex and difficult task that all those in the conventional performing arts confront: How do you put yourself into a role and then enact it in ways that instruct and move an audience, fulfilling the expectation of the audience that they have in some way learned something about themselves and their world? (p. 54)

Sarason thus depicts the point of likeness between teaching and performing arts. Similarly, Barrie Barrell (2003) holds a view equating the act of teaching with art and illustrates its potential as follows:

> Conceptualizing teaching as an art shifts the context to a more appropriate arena, affects the language used to explain phenomena, moves away from subject knowledge to a greater understanding of the whole and its context, and is more tolerant of the ambiguities and paradoxes found in practice. … It perceives that there is no single, right way to proceed. (p. 118-119)

In this way, Barrell suggests that integrating into education the conception that a teacher is a performer and teaching is an artistic expression leads to the realization and coexistence of heterogeneity within educational practice.

Some scholars carry out pedagogy based on the concept described by Barrell. Elyse Pineau (2002), for instance, gives an account of teaching, what she calls, "critical performative pedagogy" and discusses how "body" is conceptualized in this particular pedagogy:

> Theorizing *the ideological body* provides a generative conceptual metaphor for critiquing how schools reproduce gender, ethnic, and economic injustice by schooling bodies. It follows that detailed analysis of *the ethnographic body* offers a systematic, microanalytic method for identifying and theorizing the conventions through which students' and teachers' roles are constructed and contested. Finally, research that focuses on *the performing body* yields a repertoire of strategies for curriculum design and classroom instruction that can encourage students' active and critical participation within and beyond the classroom. (p. 42; original emphasis)

Here Pineau shows that considering both teaching and learning as performance and examining the significance of body initiating performance from multifarious angles not only uncover the issues embraced in the traditional system but also enhance the quality of teaching and learning towards the promotion of criticality. Joni Jones (2002) refers to the classroom where his students actually do performance as a "… space of resistance" (p. 175). "Through such teaching", remarks Jones, "the classroom becomes a borderland, a liminal space capable of disrupting the social order. The borderlands are porous, shifting, and contestable; they are

*sin fronteras*" (2002, p. 175). According to Jones, the classroom embodying "a borderland" entails "… complex discussions of archetypes and stereotypes, construction of identity, and our mutual complicity in the continuation of oppression" (2002, p. 176). Jones denotes the impact of performance on learners:

> Performance forces these issues to become more than intellectual challenges, because the students must literally put the issues inside of themselves as they embody the characters. In doing so, they are challenged to respond specifically to a vital and vibrant world. They enter a borderland in which they must challenge the construction of the self along with the construction of the other. (2002, p. 176)

It is clear from Jones' claim here that performing certain role involves undergoing challenging moments and this experience actually helps learners unlock the door to a space called "a borderland". With regard to performing a role in the educational setting, Pineau presents a view similar to Jones': "… [P]erformance enables an imaginative leap into other kinds of bodies, other ways of being in the world, and in doing so, it opens up concrete and embodied possibilities for resistance, reform, and renewal" (2002, p. 51).

Performance as a means of "resistance, reform, and renewal" discussed by Pineau is relevant to the conception of performance in the postcolonial context. Ngũgĩ (1993) shows that colonialism led to "… destroying people's languages, history, dances, education, religions, naming systems, and other social institutions that were the basis of their self-conception as a people" (p. 42). As an example of movements against the colonial power, Ngũgĩ refers to "patriotic resistance arts" in African cultures:

> Under colonialism there was a culture which through songs, dances, poetry, drama, spoke of and reflected people's real needs as they struggled against appalling working conditions … or which sang of their hopes as they took up arms against colonial exploitation and political oppression. Whether in sculpture, poetry, songs, or dances, the patriotic arts looked to the past for progressive elements in form but always injected them with a new content born of the urgent present that raised them to a higher level. At the same time, the patriotic resistance arts were not afraid of incorporating new forms. (1993, p. 44)

In this way, Ngũgĩ suggests that the arts can be used as a method of defying the controlling power and such artistic movements can bring forth innovation by utilizing artworks made in the past to correspond to the present situation. Based on a case study of a "videotext" on the African diaspora, Elaine Aston (1995) states that there is a risk that certain performance may re-create the colonial discourse. Aston discloses some colonial components contained in the performance:

> Colonial landscaping in the performance text is realized through a variety of techniques. The African landscape is imagined in the figures of tribal figures and gods; is evoked in the poetry, dance, music, song, and the rhythms of the African drums which haunt the diaspora. (1995, p. 136)

In addition to the elements described here, Aston declares that "body" plays a significant role in functioning as a metaphor of colonization: "The geography of colonization is most importantly and centrally landscaped or mapped on to the bodies of the performers" (1995, p. 137). Moreover, Aston points out that the dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized is "… encoded in the vestimentary colour sign-system of the costuming" (p. 137).

Focusing on a performance group of diasporic artists in London, Dorothy Rowe (2003) illustrates what they attempt to show through their performance:

> As race, sexuality and gender are the categories of identity formation that the company seeks to explore and transgress, the gender of the performer/participants is not pre-determined and the racial mix is always multicultural. Black, white or Asian, male, female, hetero, homo- or trans-, the issue of identity construction escapes the potentially ghettoizing categories of 'black art' or 'women's art' to confront instances of 'difference and excess' within the post-colonial, the hybrid and the diasporic spaces of cultural production within the global city. (p. 458)

Rowe also articulates what emerges from their performance: "The hegemonic signifying circuit of stereotypical behaviour patterns and identity formations is interrupted as performers encourage their participants to explore, affirm, confront or deny the fragility of their own gendered, racial and sexualized assumptions" (2003, p. 466). Rowe thus shows that the performance challenges not only the hegemonic discourse on gender, race, and sexuality but

also the fixed view that the audience holds. As another example of performance carried out by "… immigrants, refugees, economic migrants" (p. 16), May Joseph (1999) focuses on the notion of "performing citizenship". Drawing on studies conceptualizing "… citizenship as a performing sphere that transforms the abstraction 'the people' into individuated political subjects and participating citizens …" (p. 15), Joseph asserts that these people "… perform citizenship across as well as *within* national boundaries, a practice referred to here as nomadic citizenship" (p. 17; original emphasis). "Nomadic citizenship", remarks Joseph, "fractures coherent categories of belonging, offering instead the incomplete, ambivalent, and uneasy spaces of everyday life through which migrant communities must forge affiliations with majority constituencies" (p. 17). In this way, Joseph suggests that "nomadic citizenship" is performed in relation to the dominant group and at the same time, this type of citizenship practiced by a marginalized individual destabilizes the taken-for-granted notions.

As indicated earlier, in this study, I apply visual methods and intend to merge the text and the film. It can be said that such an attempt is under the influence of the scholarly works on performance discussed in this section. My project declines to be placed in a single category—"educational", "postcolonial", "feminist" or "performance" studies. It shifts its position by putting into practice Geertz's "blurred genres". Attaching importance to writing, filmmaking, and performing, this dissertation embraces the essence of performance studies portrayed by Dwight Conquergood (2002):

> The performance studies project makes its most radical intervention, I believe, by embracing *both* written scholarship *and* creative work, papers and performances. We challenge the hegemony of the text best by reconfiguring texts and performances in horizontal, metonymic tension, not by replacing one hierarchy with another …. … Performance studies brings this rare hybridity into the academy, a commingling of analytical and artistic ways of knowing that unsettles the institutional organization of knowledge and disciplines. (p. 151; original emphasis)

Similar to what Conquergood indicates above, my research project seeks to fuse the border between the written text and the image in exploring "hybrid" being(s) and becoming(s) of the research participants and myself as well as "heterotopic" spaces inhabited by these individuals. For this purpose, *The Art of Becoming* was produced and performance was carried out in it. Both video and performance are integral parts of the dissertation. "Like performance", Nick Kaye (2007) argues, "video art has provided a means of challenging the ground and location of conventional forms of work, while operating in relation to multiple fields and points of reference" (p. 25). Thus, in the same way as performance holds the possibility illustrated above, artistic expression through video makes it possible to give rise to an alternative view destabilizing the boundaries established and maintained by the normative discourse.

## 3.4    Data Collection

This section describes how I carried out interviews and filming, and also discusses some issues accompanied by conducting qualitative research. A total of twenty-one individuals (five women and sixteen men) participated in this study. I conducted interviews in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh at such locations as school, gallery, workplace, café, and park, preferred by the study participants between April and August 2010. There are three criteria for the selection of the participants. First, all the participants are Cambodian adults who are over the legal age in each country. Second, they now reside in Canada, Japan or Cambodia. And lastly, they utilize digital and/or non-digital media on a daily basis such as photographing, filming, performing, blogging, painting, writing, and teaching. In the recruitment stage, I laid stress on the yardsticks above. I did not intend to limit my scope to

the Cambodian communities in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh; the participants in this study happened to live in these cities.

In terms of the recruiting method, I identified prospective study participants, who made their contact information available on the Internet. I contacted them by sending a letter of initial contact by email. When they indicated that they were willing to participate in the study, I contacted them by email or telephone to arrange an interview. For those whose contact information was not available on the Internet, I used a personal referral method. I sent an initial letter of contact to Cambodian families in the United States and Cambodia with whom I am acquainted through friendship. These thoughtful families referred other adults interested in participating in the study to me. An initial contact letter was then sent to the individuals who indicated that they were interested in participating in the study. After that, I contacted them by email or telephone to arrange an interview. During interviews, I answered questions the participants asked me about the study and secured their formal consent to participate in the study. I asked these study participants to refer other individuals to me as further potential study participants. In this way, I recruited twenty-one participants for the study.

Interviews were audiotaped and videotaped only after obtaining permission from each person. All the participants dedicated approximately 60-120 minutes to this project. The duration of the interviews varied depending on the schedule of each participant. The detailed information—the aims of the study, the nature of interview questions, and the potential use of data from the study as well as the future use of video recordings—was included in both the consent form and the video release form sent to each individual. A list of the interview questions was provided ahead of actual interviews when requested by participants. All the

participants were assured of their right to not participate in the study, and to withdraw from the study at any time without explanation or consequence.

**Table 1. List of Participants**

| Research Participants | | |
|---|---|---|
| Aria | Cambodian dance performer/instructor | Living in Ottawa |
| Bav | Artist | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Chan | Graduate student specializing in Accounting | Living in Tokyo |
| Diamond | Security guard | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Jadon | Cambodian dance performer/instructor | Living in Ottawa |
| Mr. K.D | Educator at RUFA/Classical Cambodian musical instrument player | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Kleng | Artist | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Mean | Graduate student specializing in Electronic Engineering | Living in Tokyo |
| The Venerable Nanda | Buddhist monk | Living in Ottawa |
| Mr. Naor | Salesperson selling cellular cards to the public | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Ms. P | Writer | Living in Hiratsuka |
| Mr. Pheak | University student majoring in IT | Living in Phnom Penh |

| Pit | Manager of a food supplier | Living in Phnom Penh |
|---|---|---|
| Rath | University student majoring in IT | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Mr. S C | Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, RUFA Artist/Designer | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Sophat | Graduate student specializing in Economics | Living in Tokyo |
| Sovann | Graduate student specializing in IT | Living in Tokyo |
| Ms. T S | Director of the Women's Media Centre of Cambodia | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Theara | Graduate student specializing in Economics | Living in Tokyo |
| Mr. Thy | University student majoring in Law | Living in Phnom Penh |
| Tino | Graduate student specializing in Financial Mathematics | Living in Tokyo |

*Table 1*. Names of participants in alphabetical order. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

In addition to interviews, I carried out filming for this study. The reason for filming is that the research project seeks to visualize the types of artistic expression practiced on a daily basis and propose a model of art creation by incorporating the data from the video recordings into a film *The Art of Becoming*. After securing the research participant's formal consent, I proceeded to filming. Besides capturing all the interviews (21 hours in total), I completed 10 hours of video recordings. These include places where the interviews took place (e.g., school, gallery, workplace, park, café, etc.), artworks the participants showed to me, and the journeys I took to get to the interview locations. I also filmed both special events (e.g., wedding

ceremony, night market in Phnom Penh, music performance on the Buddhist Day, etc.) and daily routines (e.g., dance practice happening at a square in front of the Tonlé Sap river, people commuting, traffic at rush hours, etc.) to explore various aspects of performance.

To bring out various stories of the research participants on the daily activities using both digital and non-digital media (e.g., photographing, filming, performing, blogging, painting, writing books, and teaching art, etc.) and experiences living in the three countries, I developed interview questions based on the following themes: 1) History of Cambodian Migration; 2) Home/Food; 3) Language/Education; and 4) Time/Space and Travelling/Dwelling. Questions related to artistic practice and media representation were included as well. Although the interview questions were divided into four, they were woven together beyond categories in the writing and the produced video. For conducting proper interview, Steiner Kvale (1996) articulates the need to listen to the interviewee carefully: "Active listening—the interviewer's ability to listen actively to what the interviewee says— can be more important than the specific mastery of questioning techniques" (p. 132). Therefore, during interview, I listened to the participant attentively and developed questions based on her/his interest and response rather than sticking to the list of the questions prepared beforehand.

During the data collection and analysis phase (to be discussed later), I took a stance detached from the conventional style of observing study subjects seen in travel writing and traditional ethnography. Travellers from the West started to produce ethnographic writing in the form of travelogue before the academic discipline of anthropology was established firmly. Mary Louise Pratt (1986) pays attention to a persistent impact of travelogue on the development of ethnography in the modern times. The well-known travellers who wrote travelogues include Christopher Columbus, Marco Polo, and Amerigo Vespucci—the so-

called explorers who "discovered the New World" and recorded what they saw. In her book *Imperial Eyes*, Pratt (2008) steps into the examination of the meaning embodied in travel writing, and points out its close relationship with the expansion of imperialism: "Travel books, I argue, gave European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement and familiarity with respect to the distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in, and colonized" (p. 3). The readers in the West praised these adventurers as authoritative figures disseminating "new" knowledge of the "unknowns" through their writings.

Since then, the explorers' eyes captured the peoples and cultures "strange" to the Western civilization, and documented peculiarity filtered through their lens as "Oriental-ness." Japan is one of the countries that roused travellers' and ethnographers' interest. Even the times when Japan shut down the connection to the outside world, there were explorers inside the country, who put their experience on record. Both the Netherlands and China were the countries allowed to stop their vessels at certain ports of Japan in those days. Some Dutch civilians living in Nagasaki including a medical doctor Philipp Franz von Siebold noted Japan's "Oriental" features in the book *Manners and Customs of the Japanese in the Nineteenth Century*. For example, they give an account of the Japanese public entertainment: "Their dancing is in the Oriental style, in which the arms and body are much more concerned than the feet, which remain nearly immovable …" (Siebold, 1973, p. 135). As indicated by Terence Barrow in the introduction of the book, Dr. von Siebold had "… his mission to bring Western knowledge to the Japanese" (p. 1) in addition to the purpose of providing information for the reader in Europe. Moreover, comparing their experience back "in home" and that in Japan, the Dutch residents link gender difference with cultural difference: "So much of the difference between Asiatic and European civilization, however, appears to be

intimately connected with … the different treatment and appreciation of woman in the two continents …" (p. 122). Ruth Benedict (1946) values such a comparative mode seen in ethnographic writing: "Anthropologists had shown over and over in their studies of primitive people how valuable such cultural comparisons can be" (p. 9). In analyzing the Japanese people and the culture, Benedict often delineates the contrast with the "Occidental" through the use of the terms such as Japanese/American and East/West. Her writing thus captured and underscored the "Oriental" aspects of Japan, though almost eighty years had passed since the end of the Tokugawa shogunate era. On modern Japan, Alison R. Lanier (1981) mentions: "Buddhism and Confucianism prevail in Oriental minds, which means that men take precedence over women …" (p. 81-82). In this way, comparative inquiry based on the "Occidental" view gazing at the "Orient" delineates gender difference and cultural difference.

Cambodia is another country whose Oriental-ness is proclaimed continuously by explorers from the West. For example, a French explorer Henri Mouhot launched himself on an expedition to Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia in 1858. According to Michael Smithies (1989), Mouhot was "… the first person … to attempt to fill in the blanks on all the maps, for cartography had made no progress in this region since the seventeenth century" (p. xii). Mouhot's writing engraved the term "savagery" on the peoples inhabiting the areas "unknown" to the Western world: "Ever since I had been in Cambodia my servants had been in a state of alarm, and it reached its height when I informed them that we were about to set out on an expedition to the savage tribes" (p. 218). Such enthusiasm to disclose the unknowns was inherited by the latter-day travellers and anthropologists, who observed the "Oriental" world based on the "Western" view. Ruth Tooze (1962), for instance, presents a

clear distinction between Cambodia as a country in need of salvation and the Western civilization as an agency capable of giving a helping hand:

> Tensions and pressures are few in Cambodia. So are instances of nervous disorders and of many of the so-called 'civilization diseases' such as cancer, arthritis, and heart ailments. Cambodia needs help from the West in obtaining pure water, better hospitals, better homes, and better schools, but it also has much to give to the people of the Western world. (p. 89)

Similarly, reflecting on his stay in Cambodia, Maslyn Williams (1969) writes:

> Asian and other 'backward' nations may wish to follow in the materially progressive footsteps of the West but they have reservations; can clearly see the dangers of too much technology, too much education, too much comfortable affluence, too much leisure, too much of everything …. (p. 250)

Here Williams draws a sharp line between the West and the non-West in terms of material wealth. In this way, it is clear that the unbalanced power structure placing the West as superior and the non-West as subordinate is reinforced in these travelogues and ethnographic writings.

To avoid reproducing the structure as such, I argue that it is crucial for the researcher to take account of the notion of reflexivity. Robert Emerson, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw (1995) discuss two types of reflexivity: one is "… applied to the understanding of members' worlds …" (p. 216) and the other is "… self-consciously applied to ourselves as researchers …" (p. 216). They articulate the need to give consideration to reflexivity since it is "… central both to how we understand the worlds of others as well as how we understand the research enterprise" (1995, p. 216). Wanda Pillow (2003) focuses on reflexive practice by the researcher:

> Self-reflexivity acknowledges the researcher's role(s) in the construction of the research problem, the research setting, and research findings, and highlights the importance of researcher becoming consciously aware of these factors and thinking through the implications of these factors for her/his research. (p. 179)

Pillow thus suggests that the reflexivity of the researcher should not be overlooked in qualitative research. Hence, I consider the notion of reflexivity as essential for my dissertation and discuss it in Section 3.6.

## 3.5    Data Analysis

In this section, I explain how I transcribed audiotapes and videotapes, completed coding, and developed themes in findings. I also discuss some of the points that stuck me as important to heed during data collection and analysis. First of all, in terms of transcribing, gratitude to the participants never left me. Everyone dedicated her/his precious time to this dissertation project voluntarily. When I was transcribing and logging tapes, I saw thoughtfulness and benevolence in the words of the participants, and felt that these filled the spaces where the interviews took place. Therefore, I transcribed the interviews having deep respect for all the participants. The attempt to not miss any single word in transcribing was the responsibility for me as a researcher. Upon the completion of transcription, I sent interview transcripts to the participants in order to "… confirm that their views are adequately rendered in the interview and possibly also as an invitation to expand upon what they have said …" (Kvale, 1996, p. 170).

After having completed transcribing all the audiotapes, I started to transcribe (log) videotapes. I watched the video from the beginning until the end without taking notes first. Then using a log sheet I created for this project, I kept records of time code so that I could find the beginning of the dialogue on a new topic. I integrated the interview transcript in the log sheet. In terms of logging videotapes, I paid attention to what was not covered by audio recording such as facial expressions and gestures of the research participants. While logging, I added shot descriptions including camera angles and types of shots (e.g., close-up, medium,

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and wide, etc.) for the visuals that were unseen in the interview transcripts. Acknowledging the issues such as the gaze of the researcher and representation generated by the researcher's act of video recording (to be discussed in detail in the next section), I consider video as an indispensable aid for this research project. Christian Heath and Jon Hindmarsh (2002) illustrate the advantages of conducting video recording in research:

> … [Video recordings] provide access to the fine details of conduct, both talk and bodily comportment. They allow us for example to track the emergence of gesture, to determine where people are looking and what they are looking at, and to recover the ways in which they orient to and handle objects and artefacts. (p. 103)

In this way, it is clear from here that the use of video recording makes it possible to show the subjectivity of the research participant in making actions such as talking and looking. In addition, Heath and Hindmarsh suggest that utterance and non-utterance can be equally treated as important elements in video recordings. Hence, valuing the utilization of video in research and inspired by Foucault's heterotopia and Trinh's hybridization, I went through the process of transcribing audiotapes as well as logging videotapes.

After transcribing audiotapes and logging videotapes, I started coding and developing topics. Lawrence Sipe and Maria Ghiso (2004) state that the act of analyzing data is comprised of the following two: "preliminary coding" and "categorizing" (p. 476). They point out that "[t]he analysis involved not only breaking apart but also putting together—synthesizing and grouping similar codes. The creation of conceptual categories seems a matter of balance …" (p. 478). The method of coding I selected is somewhat similar to the practice of Sipe and Ghiso, for I attached importance to the maintenance of "balance" rather than the creation of rigid categories. According to Frederick Erickson (2004), the coding method applied by Sipe and Ghiso is regarded as the "bottom-up approach" (p. 491) in contrast to the "top-down approach" (p. 492). While portraying advantages and

disadvantages of both approaches, Erickson refers to the case of Sipe and Ghiso and appeals to the reader:

> … [D]on't treat it as an imitable model. Try to learn from it to build your own version. And try constructing your analysis both ways, from top down and bottom up, until you find an analytic framework that fits your data and you find data that are consonant with your framework. (p. 492-493)

In this way, Erickson advocates the necessity of inventing a coding method that is compatible with the scope of each research.

Similar to Sipe and Ghiso's, the coding method of mine is considered as the "bottom-up approach" seen from the view presented by Erickson. In my case, having read through the transcript and the log sheet over and over and line by line, I generated various codes. The codes that emerged from my data analysis include: the influence of visual culture and technology; the representation of race, ethnicity, and gender by Cambodian, Canadian, and Japanese media; the passion to convey her/his message through various ways of expression; maintaining cultural roots; the impact of other cultures on art appreciation and creation (e.g., fine art, music, and film); hardships and gaps experienced in living in a place that is not one's birthplace; mixing various components in artwork; being flexible; and the hope for the future. After coding, in the phase of categorizing, I used five pens of different colours to classify the codes into five—green for Earth; orange for Fire; yellow for Wind; pink for Water; and blue for Void. When some words of the participants were relevant to more than one category, I underlined those using plural colours. As already discussed in Chapter 1, it is believed in Zen Buddhism that the five elements—Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, and Void—compose the universe, while interacting with one another and keeping the balance. Based on the philosophy as such, I consider that these five categories are as interconnected as the five elements. In this way, I used the five coloured pens for developing topics from the interview transcript as well as the log sheet.

It is clear that coding is similar to transcribing in that each researcher has her/his own mode of approaching the data. As Cathy Angelillo, Barbara Rogoff, and Pablo Chavajay (2007) argue that "… coding schemes require interpretation on the part of coders" (p. 190), the act of coding is inseparable from how the researcher makes sense of the data based on her/his conceptual framework. "Interpretation is", remarks Denzin (2004), "a productive process that sets forth the multiple meanings of an event, object, experience, or text. Interpretation is transformative. It illuminates, throws light on experience" (p. 453). Denzin thus affirms the researcher's act of interpretation under the condition that she/he recognizes that "… all texts are biased, reflecting the play of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and culture, suggesting that so-called objective interpretations are impossible" (p. 458). Here it becomes apparent that the researcher should take account of "reflexivity" in not only collecting data but also analyzing it and generating his/her own version of interpretation. I discuss further the notion of reflexivity in the next section.

With regard to research employing visual methods, Nick Lynn and Susan Lea (2005) state that "[t]he subjectivity of the researcher(s) must be acknowledged within the research process" (p. 221). Lynn and Lea consider the examination and articulation of the positionality of the researcher adopting visual methods as an advantage rather than a problem: "The beauty and value of visual methodology is that it makes explicit the direct influence of the researcher in the data collection (and construction) process in a way that more orthodox and lexically bound research does not" (2005, p. 221). Hence, in my research project, I keep in mind these scholars expressing that the subjectivity of the researcher based on certain theoretical framework influences the way of collecting and analyzing data, and that the text resulted from analysis is no exception. At the same time, it is important to take notice of representation derived from the text (in my case, the text as well as the film). Focusing on

how the researcher produces representation of research subjects, Patti Lather (2001) indicates the need to "… mediate representational violence without falling into static claims of 'authenticity'" (p. 484). Lather suggests that such efforts can lead to "… break the hegemonies of meaning and presence that recuperate and appropriate the lives of others into consumption, a too-easy, too-familiar eating of the other" (2001, p. 484). In this study, I place credence to the possibility of qualitative research practice driven by criticality, as described by Lather. My version of criticality is embodied in attaching importance to filmmaking and performance, and attempting to bring forth a novel approach challenging the hegemonic view.

## 3.6    Reflexivity

As already shown, it is crucial to pay attention to the positionality of the researcher since it has a great impact on the whole research process: the initiation, data collection, analysis, and writing up the results. In addition to the positionality statement in Chapter 1, here I explain where I am positioned in this research project. Acknowledging that I play an influential role as a researcher in asking questions in interviews, transcribing, analyzing the collected data, writing this text, and editing the film, I intend to be in a "speaking nearby" position practiced by Trinh T. Minh-ha. The postcolonial, feminist thinker and filmmaker problematizes the representation essentializing women of colour and people living in the so-called "Third World" and the powerful gaze (i.e., the imperial/colonial gaze and the male gaze). In *Reassemblage* (1982) filmed in Senegal, the filmmaker holds a unique position and this raises a question of positionality. Unlike traditional ethnographic films in which the filmmaker and the narrator as authority tell the "Truth" to the audience, the narrator of

Trinh's film is not entitled to authority; the storyteller refuses to re-create the grand narrative objectifying the observed and to construct knowledge as the absolute truth:

> I do not intend to speak about
> Just speak near by. (1992, p. 96)

The narrator also mentions the act of meaning-making:

> The habit of imposing a meaning to every single sign. (1992, p. 96)

In withstanding this habit, various techniques—close-ups, blackout, silence, out-of-sync image and sound—are used in her film and function as a block preventing the audience from making a perfect meaning of the image on screen. Hence, through the application of the critical storytelling manner and the unconventional techniques, Trinh "… restructures the colonial gaze that traditionally establishes an objectifying relationship between viewer and viewed" (Foster, 2005, p. 188).

The narrator/storyteller suggests the importance of giving consideration to reflexivity: "The eager observer collects samples and has no time to reflect upon the media used" (1992, p. 105). This implies that some researchers focus on gathering data and simply observe the people and their cultures through a camera lens without examining why they decide to film certain subjects and what role a video camera plays in their projects. In addition, the narrator points out the dominant view generalizing Africa and people living in the continent:

> Filming in Africa means for many of us
> Colorful images, naked breast women, exotic dances and fearful rites.
> The unusual. (1992, p. 98)

Trinh's film thus discloses the successive reproduction of the normative view and advocates the need to reflect the filmmakers themselves in the process of filming and constructing representation. Being reflexive leads to the realization and thereafter the deconstruction of the binary system such as West/non-West, researcher/researched, observer/observed, usual/unusual, and normal/abnormal. "Reflexivity", remarks Narendra Pachkhede (2006),

"seeks to overcome these dualisms [i.e., 'object/subject, theory/practice, action/structure, etc.'] by asserting that the research act and its product are constitutive of, and not separable from, the everyday world" (p. 141).

Furthermore, Trinh's film shows the alternative knowledge(s) of not only race and ethnicity but also gender. The filmmaker/narrator declines to give the audience a clear picture essentializing Senegalese women as exotic and repressed. Through the use of a shot of a woman gazing back at the camera and fragmentary shots of femininity performed by Senegalese women themselves, her film challenges "… the gender politics of representation …" (hooks, 1992, p. 128). Gwendolyn Foster (2005) points out a unique feature of Trinh's work: "The film's self-reflexive, performative gestures continually reposition the female body and female subjectivity for the viewer" (p. 190). Hence, challenging what is taken for granted in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity, Trinh's film urges the audience to look and think critically about what is represented in film and also encourages filmmakers to create works beyond the binary system.

Positioning herself "nearby" the subjects, the narrator/storyteller in *Reassemblage* refuses to re-create the grand narrative objectifying the observed and to construct the absolute truth. Authority, power, positionality, reflexivity, gaze, and representation are all questioned and considered carefully in her film. The film based on such a position and critical lens is useful to me as a researcher incessantly moving across borders between West and East. Applying the "speaking nearby" position and incorporating the data from interviews and video recordings into writing and film, I seek to bring forth a space where multiple stories are woven together and West and non-West merge, thereby demonstrating the complexity and heterogeneity of being(s) and becoming(s) of the research participants and myself continuously shifting across boundaries and intersecting with various elements including

gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, and religion. For this purpose, I experiment with arranging the five stories behind the history of Cambodian diaspora (see Chapter 4) as well as Chapter 5 introducing various styles of artistic expression practiced by the research participants. Unlike the analytic narrative seen in Chapter 4 (except Sections 4.1.1-4.1.5) and Chapter 6, these sections set great store by the comments of the study participants. In doing so, I attempt to transfer the role of the narrator/storyteller to the research participants and destabilize the fixed relationship between the participants and me as a researcher. My dissertation puts existing boundaries and dichotomies in question. As a researcher/filmmaker, I resist identifying myself along traditional cultural, ethnic, and national lines. In the same way, I avoid imposing a one-sided identity on the study participants. This is a part of the destabilization that I am accentuating as part of my work.

## 3.7    Prelude to Fire

In this way, practicing Geertz's "blurred genres" and applying Trinh's "speaking nearby" position, this dissertation project makes full use of interviews and visual materials (i.e., film, still photography, and performance within the produced film). Grounded on the methodology elucidated in this chapter, I reflect a layer of stories, images, sounds, and voices in the text and the film. In the first "Earth" scroll, Miyamoto argues, "In any case, as human beings, it is essential for each of us to cultivate and polish our individual path" (1994, p. 26). Through their stories, the participants in this research project denote that the path is not only one. Having been born on earth, each person starts on her/his own journey called life with steady steps. Each one of the research participants stands on earth in a dignified manner and proceeds with her/his journey to achieve her/his aim. It is time to move on to find out fires propelling their respective journeys.

# Chapter 4: Fire

> When you cross a sea, there are places called straits. Also, places where you cross a sea even twelve or fifteen miles wide are called fords. In going through the human world as well, in the course of a lifetime there will be many points that could be called crossing a ford. (Miyamoto, 1994, p. 86)

Musashi Miyamoto likens a sea voyage to human life and addresses to the readers that there are occasions when we find ourselves in difficult situations. Miyamoto asserts the need to think critically and conduct oneself serenely with the strong will to overcome various difficulties. Each one of the research participants launched out into the sea of life. Every voyage is accompanied by ups and downs; a ship's course is not always placid. Indeed, some participants were confronted with raging waves.

This chapter starts with the discussion of the history of Cambodian diaspora. It then moves to the articulation of multiple stories showing multifarious aspects of diaspora based on the narratives of Ms. P, Chan, Mean, Sophat, Sovann, Theara, Tino, Aria, Jadon, the Venerable Nanda, and Ms. T S. In addition, I examine the impact of visual culture and technology on the study participants' daily lives, paying attention to both the productive side and the problematic side beyond the national borders of Cambodia, Canada, and Japan. Moreover, drawing on the research participants taking part in visual culture and utilizing technology, I explore what it means to look and think critically about images and stories created and disseminated by mass media. Then the chapter concludes by showing how some participants are engaged in conveying messages as producers and challenging the dominant system generating a biased view of gender, race, and ethnicity.

**4.1    History of Cambodian Diaspora and Stories behind It**

First of all, it is important to note Khatharya Um's statement describing some key terms inseparable from the discussion of Cambodia's history:

> War, revolution, genocide and exile have marked the political history of Cambodia over the past 30 years. … During this period of turmoil, over 1 million Cambodians perished under the Khmer Rouge and another half a million sought refuge in third-country resettlement in the aftermath of the regime's collapse. (2007, p. 253)

Atrocities committed by the Khmer Rouge as well as the control of Pol Pot were documented based on the survivors' accounts (e.g., Chandler, 1991; Kiernan, 1996; Welaratna, 1993). In April 1975 when the Khmer Rouge took control of Phnom Penh, the capital city, they ordered the residents to move out to rural areas to work as peasants. People were deprived of their liberty and forced into labour with little rations. Those who were considered as dangerous elements such as the former regime's officials and intellectuals including doctors, teachers, and Buddhist monks were executed (Welaratna, 1993). The Khmer Rouge accelerated revolution by abolishing the monetary system and prohibiting religious beliefs such as Buddhism, which were both rooted in the lives of the people of Cambodia (Kiernan, 1996). David Chandler (1991) indicates that under the absolute control of Pol Pot, "Cambodia soon became a gigantic prison farm" (p. 239). While the hierarchy between the poor and the wealthy was gone, Chandler suggests that another type of hierarchy came into existence between the people under control and those who were in power and "… had access to three commodities that most of the population lacked: food, weapons, and information" (p. 241).

During such chaotic times described above, a large number of Cambodian people had to leave the homeland to be safe from terror, suffering, and foremost death. Haines (1989) states that both the United States and Canada played a key role in granting resettlement to those who arrived from Indochinese countries including Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos. He

shows that a total of 141,031 Cambodian people as refugees relocated to North America (128,800 to the U.S. and 12,231 to Canada respectively) between 1975 and 1985. In terms of Japan, the Refugee Assistance Headquarters (2008) indicates that a total of 1,357 Cambodian people as refugees resettled in the country. In this way, Cambodian citizens who managed to arrive in refugee camps in Thailand and Vietnam left for their destinations such as North America, Europe, and other Asian countries.

Regarding the relationship between departure and arrival in the case of Cambodian diaspora, Um (2007) suggests that it is neither simply one-way nor static: "References to 'home' are necessarily punctuated with notions of temporality, with constantly shifting power relations and with the multiplicity and simultaneity of identities that diasporas deploy" (p. 257). The five interviews below reflect diversity in terms of location and viewpoint, which cannot be labeled simply as "Cambodians". In the interviews, I as a researcher (specified as "R" in the dialogue) asked the following questions in common: "Can you give me five keywords when you think of Cambodia?" and "Can you give me five keywords when you think of the country of your residence?" As a result, the responses of the research participants expand into not one-way but multifarious directions, which challenge the binary structure of departure and arrival. There are multiple stories behind the history of Cambodian diaspora. The narratives of Ms. P, Chan, Mean, Sophat, Sovann, Theara, Tino, Aria, Jadon, the Venerable Nanda, and Ms. T S show diverse aspects of diaspora. The representation of the following five stories is an attempt creating a space where the three actors meet—a research participant presents her/his view of Cambodia (and the country of residence); I introduce her/him; and the reader corresponds with the research participant and me. Each person has her/his own story to tell.

## 4.1.1   The First Story

Ms. P in her 40s was born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. She was 10 years old when the Khmer Rouge seized power. She lost her parents and siblings under the control of the Khmer Rouge and arrived at a Khao-I-Dang refugee camp with her brothers and relatives. She resettled in Japan in 1980. She is engaged in writing her experience in Cambodia and Japan, and her latest book *The Rainbow-Coloured Sky: Beyond the Genocide in Cambodia 1975-2009* (*Nijiiro no Sora: Cambodia Gyakusatsu wo Koete 1975-2009*) written in Japanese was released in 2009. The Khmer version of the book came out in 2008 and also the English version was published in 2009. Ms. P offers a detailed explanation of the five keywords concerning Cambodia:

> Keyword Number One
> First of all, it is '*Johm riab sua*' meaning hello. … The reason I chose this word is that the Cambodian language does not have a phrase meaning 'How do you do?', so people get acquainted with each other by saying just '*Johm riab sua*', even if it is the first meeting. Hence, the word is associated with closeness. In the case of Japan, people start with 'How do you do?', do self-introduction, and then get to know each other gradually, as they have more meetings.
>
> Keyword Number Two
> The second key term is a combination of four *kanji*—birth, aging, illness, and death—an idiom representing the Buddhist teachings. My mother used to use it often in my childhood. It means that no one can avoid any of these. It describes a natural transition that a human comes into being, grows old, gets ill, and passes away. When I came across this word in Japan, I thought, 'This was the word my mother used to say'. I think it is a good word because it helps me suppress my fear for these and keeps me calm. Every human being grows older. And it is no surprise that people cannot escape from these, no matter how distinguished and influential they are. So what can we do while we are alive? It is fine to accomplish life by sleeping, eating, working, and child rearing but some people want to make certain contribution. Depending on each person's value, some expand their business and some feel happy to have a lot of children. Speaking of myself, based on the hard experience in my childhood, what I want to have is a happy home—upon marriage, a couple live healthy and happily together and have children. Having obtained these finally gives me latitude. In addition, when I thought what I could do for the first time, I felt the need to document the harsh past I had gone through and leave it to society. I chose book writing as a means to do it. This will be a fortune left in my heart. Also, if the readers give their approval to me, I would be very glad. Moreover, I hope that the Cambodian people who are in the same circumstances as mine would

join together on the basis of the common characteristics and leave our stories as precept in this world. And I also hope that people could share the value of the stories with each other. Although it does not benefit oneself, it will be an everlasting fortune in one's heart. It may be just self-satisfaction but it means to me that there is something I could leave. In brief, humans do not necessarily just come into being, grow older, get ill, and wait for death. Birth, aging, illness, and death are just criteria. In these criteria, we try our best to lead one time life, and work very hard for the general good as well as for other people.

Keyword Number Three
The third keyword is having faith. It appears to be difficult but if humans do not have religious faith, the mind will be unstable. … When we have certain faith, we can keep self-control. Even just closing our eyes makes us calm, when we suffer or we are desolate. Even believing that we are under the protection of our ancestors is to have faith. It is not about turning to God only in trouble; it is to believe that we are always protected. It is like concentrating and praying, 'Please help anyway', when we are in trouble. When a person who does not pray regularly says a prayer in events such as taking an exam, I do not think it is effective. It is important to have faith in the everyday life and focus our mind when it is necessary. Hence, I pray every day without fail.

Keyword Number Four
The fourth key term is a proverb 'Being given by a crow and sharing it with an old man Mr. Wau'. The Cambodian people are the citizens with the spirit of sharing. When a person receives something, he/she takes it to a neighbor right away. It is neither that the person can afford money nor that it gets old and no longer needed. For example, when someone receives two sponge cakes, he/she takes one to a family in his/her neighborhood before eating the other. I think it is amazing to give it to other people before actually eating it. This is apparent in the countryside in particular. … For instance, when a husband catches a big fish during his work, he thinks it is too good (*mottainai*) to eat it in his home and gives the half of it to his neighbor. Or he cooks it and after that, he takes it to some family. I think this is very good—the spirit of sharing joy with each other such as sharing tasty food together. Moreover, to put it concretely, if I go to see my relatives in the provinces and hand a present worth $10 to each one of them, I would think that they might have wanted something different because there is not much cash income in those areas. If that were the case, I would give $10 in cash. Then the person can buy what he/she needs. This is not an impolite thing. Before the person starts to think what to buy, he/she takes the half of the money to a temple to donate. After that, with the rest of the money, he/she buys things such as sandals, pencils, and notebooks for his/her children. In this way, in Cambodia, communities as well as temples exist on the basis of this kind of spirit. Temples serve a role as welfare facilities and the villagers make a donation there and the elderly assemble there, so they turn to be a place where everyone can have a chat. In addition, the young monks at the temple, who went into religion, are descended from families in the village. Therefore, everyone in the village tries to take care of them as much as possible without compensation. Those young monks try to repay an obligation by studying very hard. The youth who have an excellent record go to cities in order to proceed to the next stage of

education. After they go on to university and graduate school for the higher level of educational qualifications and knowledge, they will return to the village in the future and change it for the better. Even if they do not return, they will never fail to repay the villagers' kindness. The community functions like this. Thinking about this carefully, it is obvious that everything and everyone are connected.

Keyword Number Five
The last keyword is a proverb that I hesitated about choosing. It is 'Encountering a crocodile in the water and a tiger in the land' meaning being forsaken by everybody. Nothing can be better than having no experience as such. But there are times when humans are forced into a tight corner and cannot escape from danger. This can be applied to the Pol Pot times in the case of Cambodia. It is an apt remark for us, the Cambodian people who went through that era. It means that there are occasions when humans do not have much strength to escape danger. In short, it suggests that there is no way out. It also implies a wish to run away like 'I wish I could have wings'. Thinking about these words carefully, I am amazed by the fact that they contain wisdom and exist as precept. It is not that humans resign themselves but that we cannot escape an impending danger in our lives. Therefore, this particular proverb might have a meaning that it is important to deal with this day with care.

Before advancing to the discussion of the keywords related to the country of her residence Japan, Ms. P talks about keeping balance:

In the same way as I do when writing a book, I always hope to stay equal without a gap between Cambodia and Japan. It is not very good to express likes and dislikes such as praising only one side—either Cambodia or Japan. I feel that I have to deal with the two on equal terms. I am not forced to do so. Both Cambodia and Japan are the countries that I am very fond of, so I attempt to speak out. It is just like that. And I noticed that I selected keywords in the well-balanced way.

Then she starts to express the five key terms, when she thinks of Japan:

Keyword Number One
The first one is '*Konnichiwa*'. Suppose that I went to Cambodia and local people asked me about how to say greetings in Japanese, I would come up with '*Konnichiwa*' first. Of course, it is not just saying '*Konnichiwa*' but accompanying it with a smile. In the case of Cambodia, saying '*Johm riab sua*' with hands joined leads to eye contact and a smile pops out automatically. Similarly, when eyes meet in saying '*Konnichiwa*', people smile naturally, so I like this word.

Keyword Number Two
The second term is a combination of four *kanji* meaning to express the four feelings—rejoicing, anger, sorrow, and enjoyment. In Cambodia, approximately four years since April 1975 was under the control of Pol Pot. Because of that, the cheerful people including me were not allowed to express the feelings freely. The point that makes human beings different from other animals is that we can express our feelings and communicate with each other in that way. Being unable to be

expressive means that there is no joy in living as a human. Recalling those days, I feel that it is very dark and desolate. Everyone was doing their works in silence with knitted brows. When I wonder what it means to be alive, it would be that we rejoice when we are happy and get angry when we are in anger. In the Buddhist teachings, it is said that it is better not to have anger. However, it is one of the emotions that humans have by nature. If we are asked to remove any one of the four feelings, the balance will collapse. Of course, it is better when we have a lot of rejoicing and enjoyment. Conversely, it is better when we have less sorrow and anger in our lives. But we grieve over a family member's death. If a beloved family member got killed, everyone would be filled with rage. Speaking of my current situation, I am very happy with my life in which I can express these four feelings freely.

Keyword Number Three
The third keyword is having a sense of duty and humanity. It is as if a samurai was speaking. I feel that this is common to the spirit of sharing. I think it is good that people are warm-hearted and help each other when needing help. For example, when people receive some gift, in return they send a present in exact timing with a family celebration or send something worth half of the price of the received gift. This is a very interesting custom. There is no such thing in Cambodia. By valuing duty, communication goes smoothly. In addition, what our family is practicing is to send a gift to those whom we are indebted to twice a year—the midyear and the end of the year. Likewise, when gifts are sent to our family, I am glad about it. When I call people who sent gifts and express my gratitude, we can hear each other and I feel at ease to know they are doing well. I think that this is a very good cultural practice. It offers an opportunity for initiating communications. This is important and I think that it would be better to have a practice as such. Because the cultural practices and customs that have been long maintained are good, the local people support them.

Keyword Number Four
… The other two words are proverbs. One is 'Taking pleasure in the misfortune of others'. I think it is a bit frightening that this exists as a proverb in Japanese. I think that it implies our desires in living in the current competitive society—such desires as to go to a better school, work in a better company, and ultimately, lead a wealthier life than other people.

Keyword Number Five
The other proverb is 'Giving no credence to strangers'. It indicates that the security of a place is not good enough. It also tells us not to trust people. In earlier times, as an upbringing, parents send children to school, telling them to greet people properly. On the contrary, this word suggests that it is not good to greet strangers. I think that this kind of proverb might show a yardstick in society. … Certain words reflect cultural aspects of a nation, national traits, and security in society. These proverbs are common to the ones I talked about before. Having senses of duty and humanity is common to the spirit of sharing. It is just that the ways of expressing are different; they are common beyond the nations.

**4.1.2   The Second Story**

Sophat, Sovann, Chan, Theara, Tino, and Mean are pursuing their graduate studies in universities located in Tokyo, Japan. While conducting research as international students, they served the year of 2010 as the committee members of the Cambodian Students Association in Japan (CSAJ). The six executives provide the following keywords, when they think of Cambodia:

> Sophat: To me, the first image when I think about Cambodia is a green countryside.
>
> Sovann: One keyword for me is a motorbike because I like driving motorbike. After I came to Japan, I really miss it because I always use train.
>
> Chan: For me, I think the heritage comes to mind first. The most famous is Angkor Wat. When talking about Angkor Wat, I think anyone in the world who didn't know maybe won't exist.
>
> Theara: For me, tropical land because when I came to Japan, I feel missing the tropical land, the sun, and rain.
>
> Tino: For me, it's family because family is so important in Cambodia.
>
> Mean: I think of my parents.
>
> Theara: Home sweet home.

Then the committee members present the key terms below, when they think of Japan, the country of their residence:

> Sophat: Well, I think crowdedness, especially when we take train in a peak hour. Sometimes it's not movable.
>
> Mean: Mount Fuji. It's the symbol of Japan.
>
> Sovann: For me, I think Japan has a very nice service. People are very nice. If you go to restaurant or somewhere, the reception is very nice. I think it is the best in the world.
>
> Chan: I have not had a good image of Japan but I just want to express that Japan is the busiest country in the world. They won't enjoy their lives so much. They spend all the time working. Looking at other countries like France, they enjoy so much their lives. Life is so short, so it's better to spend the half of your life with work and the half with something else. But Japanese people spend so much with the work, so

I'm a bit feeling, not disappointed but speaking in Japanese, *iwakan* (a feeling that something is wrong).

Theara: For me, I think Japan is very safe. You can travel anywhere and anytime even at night.

Tino: I'd say rules because there are rules everywhere and everyone has to obey rules. You cannot do something different from rules. If you do something different, people will hate you. I don't really like it.

Theara: You have to walk on the line, on the track.

Tino: I mean, like everybody is doing the same thing. You talk with different people but you feel like you talk with the same person.

### 4.1.3    The Third Story

Aria and Jadon teach Khmer dance to students at a non-profit organization Soma Selepak located in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada. The two instructors with Cambodian heritage are Canadian-born and in their 20s. They come up with the following five keywords when they think of Cambodia:

1) Traditional
Jadon: I find that Cambodian dance itself is very traditional. You can find a lot of other Asian countries, uh, they all look very similar but I think there is something very unique about Cambodian traditional and classical dance.

Aria: I think it's something most Cambodians are very proud of. Many take a lot of interests in it. It's something that I personally would like to see passed on from one generation to another. I wouldn't wanna see it go away. But tradition in another sense, if not talking about dance in specific, I see Cambodians as very traditional as family wise, is number one. They are not as modernized as it is here basically. They are still back in the old days, where you know women are still in the home doing a cleaning housewife type of thing, and men are out farming or making the money, so that's also what I see, when I think traditional, not just the aspect of dance.

2) Mysterious
Jadon: When I say the word 'mysterious', I think of the culture itself. I mean Cambodia has been broken apart, rebuilt, uh, then torn apart again, and rebuilt. So it's really hard to know exactly the history of Cambodia. There's so much question that needs to be answered and so much thing you're still learning about it. So that's mysterious.

Aria: I guess mysterious for me just because I was born here in Canada. So there're a lot of things about Cambodia that I don't know myself. As a child I did do some reading up. But as I grew up, it kind of became part of just my past, so there's a lot of Cambodian dance very unknown to me, uh, and I haven't been there myself. So it is, in a sense, a mysterious country to me. That's the way I see it.

3) Historical
Jadon: If anyone has ever been to Cambodia, I think that no matter where you are, you always find something very historical about just what has happened in the past, and I think you'll find a great story with everything you see. That's my thing with historical facts about it.

Aria: I think there's very great history with Cambodia but also very tragic history that goes along with it. The Khmer Empire dates way back before BC. I don't know the whole bunch about it. But I know that there's deep ancient history from what I've seen in videos and heard from family members and friends, who have been there. You see the past everywhere you go. And places like Angkor Wat and I know there are many other places but that's usually the only one I can really remember and relate to. It's a history that we are very proud of, even though there are also a lot of tragedies surrounding it. But great history in there, something I think we should all definitely look into more myself as well.

4) Artistic
Jadon: Artistic. That's a very good word. I find that everywhere you go, like architectural everything is very artistic. It's not quite the way that, you know, we build buildings now. It's not how the Egyptians did their Pyramids. They have a unique artistic structure and land of how they make Cambodia. So I just find that everyone there is very artistic whether it is making baskets, making their own homes or creating history. Everyone is just extremely artistic.

Aria: I'd agree. I find from what I've seen in a lot of Cambodians expressing the selves artistically—in the form of dance, in the form of music—there seems like a song for any and everything that we can do in life. It could be a completely random act but they alter it into songs and there're dances for it. I think they are very good at expressing themselves more than words.

5) Creative
Jadon: I think it also falls back with the 'artistic'. I mean even though in Cambodia they don't have anything and if they do, they'll find a way to create a bed, to create a lifestyle, and also create a hairdo. I mean they have nothing, so for them to be able to live and survive and make a life out of it, they are extremely creative. There are a lot of other Third World countries out there and I find that Cambodia is one that can manage, most of them can manage for themselves by being creative.

Aria: I also agree. I see creativity more in the artistic form as well. But I do think that Cambodia may not be creative innovatively. They are very lacking compared to our modern world here. They are catching up but since the Pol Pot regime, it's been over twenty years now, we are still playing catch-up. That's where I see they are

lacking creativity. But on the artistic side, it falls under, you know, creativity; they are very creative in that sense. But I guess technology wise, modernization not so much.

When thinking of the country of their residence Canada, Aria and Jadon provide these keywords:

1) Multicultural
Aria: Multicultural, I think it's very given. When you look around, you see pretty much every race, every colour—anything you can think of this Canada represents it all. When you go to other countries, it's very unique cultural or at least the majority is very unique cultural, whereas here in Canada you see it all. You know we have someone from everywhere. Just Ottawa itself, it's not the biggest city but I think it has a very vast multicultural, social type of thing going on.

Jadon: I agree with you. (laugh) It's very multicultural here. I find that everyone, whoever may be, we are all very open with each other; we are all accepted of each other and also we accept, approve the cultural differences. We are just very open-minded, when it comes to multiculturalism because we all realize that it's one world and that world is all in Canada.

Aria: I think one another thing that makes Canada so unique is that it encourages, when you come here, it's not something like 'Ok you're in Canada, you better be a Canadian, you gotta follow our ways'. They respect your religion, your culture, your society, and they very much promote your community to prosper and grow in the ways your parents have them back home. It's basically sweet.

2) Political
Jadon: I love that word. I think political, what I think of Canada, you automatically think of the government. You also think of the political aspect of how to run our country. Especially, living in Ottawa, you find everyone has a government job. Everyone has a political life.

Aria: It's a very democratic country. Unlike that of Cambodia, which seems to be very much a monarchy, we have our rights here; it encourages everybody to vote and make sure they speak out for what they believe in. It's a politically driven country.

Jadon: Very organized, politically organized as well.

3) Very Open
Aria: I think that also relates to multiculturalism. Obviously, when you look around, you see so many different cultures, so many different faces, and we are very open-minded to that. We are very welcoming. We encourage everyone to be who we are. We are very accepting our differences and our similarities.

Jadon: Especially, Canada is … where you can have same sex marriage. I think that in Canada that's the place where again, you can be who you want to be without being fully judged or discriminated against. Canada is a very free country, a very free, open-minded country.

4) Lots of Opportunities
Jadon: There are a lot of opportunities here in Canada. I'm sure that if you are coming from any other country or any other city or somewhere else, I find that in Ottawa there is so much more opportunity whether to be a teacher, whether that for education. Also, just for a lifestyle, there are a lot of places to live. There's a lot of networking that happens. So that also leads to a lot of opportunities.

Aria: Well, opportunities start from when we are born, where there's daycare and education. As you grow up, it's mandatory for school up to a certain point. Because of that, you know, it really gives everybody the opportunity to really gain skills, learn, gain knowledge, gain experience in life, and that really opens up doors for a bright future. Everyone has the opportunity for the greatest life they can have as long as they grab it and take it. It's something you don't find in every country. Here is basically you're open to be whomever you can be and there is the opportunity to go further, further, and further.

5) Historical
Aria: Well, Canada isn't as old as many other countries, like 1867. It's not the oldest country but definitely, just I think again, it ties in multiculturalism because there are so many people from so many different places. They bring in the whole bunch of different histories and all those different histories make Canada what it is. There is story from everyone; there is story everywhere you go. So full of culture and full of history.

Jadon: Yeah. I find that we have a lot of history here. It's a lot of recorded history, which is always great because we can go back from when we first started until now and not really miss anything in-between …. Everywhere in Ottawa has some sort of a historical monument or a flag or something, so it's really great to see that here.

### 4.1.4   The Fourth Story

The Venerable Nanda is engaged in providing the community with Buddhist services at a

temple situated in Ottawa. He was born in Banteay Meanchey, Cambodia and is in his 30s.

His application for permanent residency in Canada is being processed. The Venerable Nanda

offers these five key terms, when he thinks of Cambodia:

1) History
Ven. Nanda: In Cambodia, everything about the former times was glorious. It was a glorious country, an empire country, and had a high civilization in Cambodia in the

former times. And the King of the former times loved his heritage such as an ancient temple Angkor Wat, which people can enjoy until now.

2) Buddhism
Ven. Nanda: Ninety-six percent of the people in Cambodia are Buddhists. So Cambodia is a Buddhist country. And I was born as a Buddhist and have lived as a Buddhist. So when I think about Cambodia, I think about Buddhism also. Buddhism is the main part, the majority part of my life.

R: Can you talk about the percentage breakdown of religions in Cambodia?

Ven. Nanda: According to the recent media, it says about two percent of the people are Muslim, and about one percent are Christian, and the other one percent are other religions.

3) Culture
Ven. Nanda: Cambodia has its own culture. Our culture includes Buddhism, too. We call it culture. And it also includes the way of life that people live and rituals. An example is how to respect each other, like children knowing how to respect their parents. We have many other rules in our culture that suggest respecting each other. And we have many ceremonies and festivals that we celebrate. So it's a part of thing that I remember about Cambodia. I remember the culture because culture is playing an important role in Cambodia, too.

4) Nature
Ven. Nanda: In Cambodia, now nature seems like it's in poorer condition. But in the former times until now, there are some places where nature can help people to live easily such as finding food in forests and getting something like fish in water. And also, the weather in Cambodia is now so hot.

5) People
Ven. Nanda: Cambodian people are friendly and related to each other in the daily life. We live in the community of a village. People in a village know each other, know the name of each other. That's one part of people friendly to each other and they know how to help each other when anyone needs help. They just call them and go to help each other. In some villages, we stayed at each person's house. But in Cambodia, especially in the countryside, one community has two thousand people. They know almost all of everyone. They are friendly to each other and also friendly to foreigners visiting Cambodia.

Regarding the country of his residence, the Venerable Nanda enumerates the following

keywords:

1) History
Ven. Nanda: I don't know much about the history of Canada but I am just interested in Canada because for just a few hundred years they can develop the country.

2) Education
Ven. Nanda: Education in Canada has good quality and is fair to students. Schools in Canada encourage not only the teenage students but also everyone to study regardless of age. Everyone can study. Education is important.

3) Economy
Ven. Nanda: Economy in Canada is, I think, good. It's a developed country. Everyone can live easily. There is no starving and almost everyone has a job. Even those who don't have a job to do, the government developed welfare. They don't let the people stay without anything. At least, they send them to school.

4) Democracy
Ven. Nanda: I don't know much about democracy in other countries because I have never been to other countries. But Canada's democracy is very different from Cambodia.

R: Can you explain how different it is?

Ven. Nanda: Democracy in Cambodia is especially just talking and talking about democracy but when putting it into practice, it seems no one goes into practice in a democratic way. So it's different from Canada. In Canada, they respect each other and they follow democracy. And the leader respects people's voices, populism.

R: So you think Canadian people have liberty/freedom compared to the situation of Cambodia?

Ven. Nanda: Yes. I think the general public in Canada has freedom compared to Cambodia.

5) People
Ven. Nanda: In Canada, people come from many countries, many nations, many religions, and cultures but they can live along with each other peacefully without the chaotic. There is no discrimination, no racism. It has some but it's just little. (laugh)


### 4.1.5    The Fifth Story

Ms. T S in her 50s was born in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and underwent regime changes including the rule of the Khmer Rouge. She talks about the dramatic transition of her life at that time:

> When talking about Cambodia, as you know, Cambodia faced almost two decades of war and I have been passing many regimes. … [D]uring the Pol Pot times, the Khmer Rouge times, I mean in 1975, I was sent to a province in the rural area to work as a farmer, which was absolutely different from the works I had done before because before the Khmer Rouge times, I was a student and then I worked for an

international NGO. I worked as a private teacher, you know, very different from the life during the Khmer Rouge times, which was a farmer.

Being in charge as a co-founder of a non-governmental, non-profit organization Women's Media Centre of Cambodia (WMC) in Phnom Penh, Ms. T S provides the five key terms about Cambodia as follows:

1) Media and Freedom of Expression
Freedom of expression is very important for journalists and people working in the media. It relates to empowering women.

2) Women and Empowerment
As you know, women in Cambodia are living in traditional condition. The tradition of Cambodia is very narrow and I guess it may be very similar to Japan. Women have been living under this tradition for many years, so I think that empowering women is very important.

3) Gender Equality
Empowering women is relevant to gender equality because when women are empowered, gender equality will be existed.

4) Development
And talking about development, … Cambodia is considered as a developing country, I mean, a poor country. WMC is working to upgrade the status of Cambodian women because in Cambodia the number of women is 52% of the whole population and both women and men are equally needed for developing the country. If women's status is equal to men, it is easy and faster to develop the country, you know.

5) Health
About health, I classify health as number one in our life. If you are rich, you have a lot of money but if your health is not good, it's no meaning; your life is nonsense. If you are poor but your health is good, you can go to work; you can do everything to get money. That's why I say health is number one. So far I learnt that Cambodian women are not interested much in their health. Usually, they don't do medical check-up regularly … because of their low education and because of the lack of the educational information on health importance. If women's health is not good, it would cause poverty.

In this way, the participants—Ms. P, Sophat, Sovann, Chan, Theara, Tino, Mean, Aria, Jadon, the Venerable Nanda, and Ms. T S—portray Cambodia as well as Canada and Japan, the countries of the residence based on a variety of positions and views. Indeed, the five stories in this section reveal the striking features of Cambodia and Cambodian culture(s), and

challenge the grand narrative confining them to "History", which is neatly hemmed with Angkor Wat, armed conflict, the genocide by the Khmer Rouge, and the exodus.

## 4.2    Impact of Visual Culture and Technology

With the technological advancement, digital video cameras replaced the earlier cameras such as 8mm and 16mm, and the new types of image storage (e.g., DVDs, miniDV cassettes and memory sticks, etc.) are substituted for reel films. These technological inventions became the mass products. More people now own digital video cameras, make movies, and upload their works onto information-sharing websites. Nicholas Mirzoeff (1998) calls this current phenomenon "visual culture" and suggests that it is inseparable from the development of "visual technology". By "visual technology", Mirzoeff means "… any form of apparatus designed either to be looked at or to enhance natural vision, from oil painting to television and the Internet" (1998, p. 3). The degree of experiencing visual culture and using visual technology differs depending on each research participant. The stories told by the participants below illustrate some advantages and issues regarding the expansion of visual culture and technology. Before advancing to the point, there is a need to take into account what Mirzoeff articulates: "[T]he success or failure of visual culture may well depend on its ability to think transculturally, oriented to the future …" (1998, p. 10). Hence, I seek to examine the impact of visual culture and technology on the daily lives of the participants and portray various elements of them—both the productive side and the problematic side. Taking account of networks maintained beyond borders, this section draws on the study participants living in Phnom Penh, Ottawa, Tokyo, and Hiratsuka, and shifts back and forth among the locations.

In addition to the case of Ms. T S (see Section 4.1.5), the accounts of Rath, Mr. Thy, Mr. Pheak, Diamond, Pit, Mr. Naor, Kleng, Mr. S C, Mr. K.D, and Bav show that visual

culture and technology are deeply rooted in their everyday lives, and overthrow the dominant image such as Cambodia as a "post-conflict, Third World country lacking technological development". Among technological inventions, cellphone is the most popular tool employed by the participants. The following comments of students and workers demonstrate that it is used mainly for making phone calls, sending text messages, and photographing. Rath in his 20s is a university student living in Phnom Penh, and visual culture and technology are very close to his daily life. He asserts why he decided to major in Information Technology (IT): "Because I like computer, technology." He utilizes a cellphone as a tool for sharing information such as sending pictures he took to his friends and also receiving pictures from them. Mr. Thy in his 20s is a Law major at a university in Phnom Penh. He uses a cellphone for both calling and text messaging. He explains the convenience brought by his cellphone: "I use it because I can call my father, my mother and all people I want to call." Mr. Pheak in his 20s is a university student living in Phnom Penh and majoring in IT. He has a cellphone without camera and uses it for calling and sending text messages. He likes text messaging and expresses the reason: "Because it cuts down money. It costs less money than calling; it's cheaper." In addition, he indicates that he sends text messages to his friends using English. I asked him: "Can you show me how you create a text message?" and then he started writing a short message by typing the alphabet and sent it. He remarks that the display of his cellphone is available only in English, so he is accustomed to compose a message in English.

Diamond in his 20s works as a security guard for a factory in Phnom Penh. The active utilization of his cellphone is connected to his interest in photographing. He uses his cellphone the most frequently for calling his friends and family. He prefers calling friends to text messaging and explains the reason: "Because by calling, we can talk to each other and speak a lot." Pit in his 20s resides in Phnom Penh and owns business dealing in food. He

comments on the close link between his work and the phone usage: "I don't want to text message for my business, so I just want to make phone calls only." In terms of a cellphone camera, he applies it for personal use: "I like taking pictures of nature such as the sky … because I can make a good feeling." He thus suggests that photographing helps him feel relieved. Mr. Naor in his 30s is a salesperson living in Phnom Penh and selling cellular cards to the public. He makes full use of a cellphone for his business and personal life as a way of contacting a lot of people. Each one of Mr. Naor's family members and relatives living far has a cellphone and they contact each other. He talks about how important the cellphone is in relation to his work in particular:

> The important part of how cellphone works and related to my work is that I use it, the phone, basically to shoot the pin number for the cards, pre-paid cards. Some people just call me and ask: 'Hey, give me five dollar worth of card', and then I scratch the card and get the number off the card and just text the number. I text them and also refill within the same carrier. That's why it's really important.

In this way, cellphone is a very popular technological tool used for calling, text messaging, and taking pictures. However, it does not necessarily mean that all of the research participants have a cellphone with a built-in camera. The photographing feature is not always considered to be essential. Similar to the case of a phone camera, not everyone hopes to own a digital camera. For example, Kleng, an artist in her 20s living in Phnom Penh remarks: "I don't have a digital camera. Sometimes I borrow it from my boyfriend, sometimes from my mom and my brother but it does not belong to me. I have never had an interest in even buying it." For Kleng, portraying/drawing rather than photographing by camera gives her an inspiration to create artwork.

Besides the utilization of cellphone, computer is another technological invention popular among the research participants living in Phnom Penh. Computer is used for various

purposes such as emailing, doing some search, chatting, listening to music, and watching movies. Kleng whose sister is now studying abroad discusses the computer usage:

> When my sister was here, I always said, 'I want to go home'. I just did some chatting and checked my email, and then my sister did chatting with her friends, and I said, 'Please! Let's go home!' many times. When she was here, we had one laptop …. So I waited for her to finish using computer. And now it's ok; I can spend time for Skype, Yahoo!, Facebook, and email.

Mr. Thy talks about for what purpose(s) he uses computer at home: "I use it for listening to music and watching stories." Here he means movies by the term "stories" and explains the source of movies: "[It's] VCD because my home [does] not have Internet." Since Mr. Thy's computer has no Internet access, he goes to an Internet shop to send emails and do chatting. He spends one hour a day to chat with his friends living in Phnom Penh, and uses a web camera. The reason for that is, according to Mr. Thy, "I can see [friends]." He does not necessarily chat everyday but it weighs much in his computer usage. Rath has his own computer at home and it is connected to the Internet. In addition to sending emails, he uses the Yahoo! Messenger to chat everyday and spends one hour a day for it. He also talks about other usage:

> Rath: I just check Internet and then download songs from Internet. I download songs into the phone and carry the phone with me.
>
> R: What kind of music is it?
>
> Rath: Khmer hip-hop.

In this way, Kleng, Mr. Thy, and Rath use computer for a variety of purposes as illustrated above.

Moreover, the everyday practices of some study participants demonstrate how closely cellphone and computer are linked. As indicated above, Rath syncs songs saved on computer to his cellphone and carries it everyday. In addition, Mr. Naor downloads pictures from the Internet and transfers them to his cellphone: "I have used the Internet before. Basically, I use

it for pictures and to sync it into the phone." Rath does the same thing but in the opposite direction: "Sometimes I take pictures by phone and include [transfer photos] into the computer. And sometimes I take photo data to a shop." Here he means that he goes to a photo shop to print out pictures. Similarly, Mr. Thy takes a photograph with his cellphone camera and syncs it to his computer: "I like taking pictures of nature and people—my friends and my family. … When I take it [a picture], I connect [it] to my computer." Mr. Thy suggests the connectivity of cellphone and computer in the everyday life by responding to my question as follows:

> R: Which is more important, computer or cellphone?

> Mr. Thy: The same. Both computer and phone are important.

Thus, the everyday practices of some research participants living in Phnom Penh show the close ties with visual culture and technology. These are almost indistinguishable from how the youth located in North America employ cellphone and computer in their daily lives. Subsequently to what the five stories exposed previously, the accounts of the study participants in this section negate the grand narrative relegating those who reside in Cambodia to a position opposite to those in the First World, privileged to relish the technological inventions.

### 4.2.1   The Productive Side (Advantage Number One)

In discussing the ways of participating in visual culture and utilizing visual technology, the study participants point out five advantages of visual culture and technology. The first one is the accessibility to information through various sources including books, newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet. The Venerable Nanda, for example, explains how he obtains information: "Mostly I check the Internet. I watch TV sometimes, maybe

once a week. I sometimes get newspapers at a bus stop. And I read magazines sometimes, not regularly, once a month or twice a month." Regarding the Internet, he remarks: "I often use Google. Google is easy to do search on." Similarly, other research participants suggest that visual technology is indispensable for accessing information they hope to gain. For instance, the CSAJ members talk about from which sources they got information of Japan, the people, and culture(s) before starting their studies there:

> Tino: Watching TV, reading *manga* (comics), watching *anime* (animation), and talking to people.

> Sophat: He mentioned most of the stuff I wanted to say.

Besides these sources, the committee members refer to the influence of TV programs broadcasted in Cambodia:

> Mean: Before I came to Japan, the important media was maybe Cambodia's television.

> Chan: TVK.

> Sophat: Yeah, TVK.

> Mean: It has a lot of broadcasting about Japanese culture and technology.

> Sophat: The weekend programs.

> Mean: So many Cambodian people know about Japan through that.

> Tino: No. They only know about science, not culture or how Japanese people think. It's just about science and technology.

> Sophat: I think culture as well.

> Tino: I don't think people watch it.

> Sophat: I watch it. Come on!

> Mean: I watched a program showing how to create *donabe* (earthenware pot) through TVK.

According to Chan and Sophat, TV programs produced in Japan are translated into the Cambodian language and offered to the Cambodian TV station through the Japanese Embassy located in Phnom Penh.

Among the sources described above, the Internet plays a crucial part in obtaining information easily and promptly. The CSAJ members discuss the Internet usage:

> Sophat: I watch some dramas in Cambodian through YouTube.
>
> Chan: There are some free, copyright-free streaming programs of TVK in Cambodian on the Internet also.
>
> Tino: I listen to radio, just like Radio Free Asia online but not live.

Accessing the news of Japan and Cambodia through various sources, Ms. P indicates the speed of information spreading out on the Internet:

> I take a newspaper everyday and read it through in the morning. I often watch newscasts of NHK—Japan Broadcasting Corporation (*Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai*)—on television. It seems that news is conveyed through the Internet faster than newspapers. Immediately after the dissemination on the Internet, the same news is likely to be reported in the newspaper the next day. When certain news on the Internet attracts my interest, I inevitably look into it in the newspaper delivered on the following day. In addition, when there is news related to Cambodia and it engages my interest, I always clip an article from a newspaper.

Jadon and Aria explain from which sources they get information of Canada, society, and culture(s) as follows:

> Jadon: School, so a lot of books and stuff. ... It would be the TV, of course and books.
>
> Aria: For the majority of our lives, it's definitely to schools, to books. That's how we learn most of everything we know but as the world became more digitized, more technology driven, Internet has come into play. Maybe it's the majority form now for everything we know of.
>
> Jadon: It's an electronic version of books.
>
> Aria: And it's always available. We can always find again years from now, if you wanna look into something up to remember, five, ten years ago it'll still be there. You'll always find it.

Jadon: It's a great library.

Here Jadon and Aria refer to the Internet as the alternative way of acquiring knowledge.


### 4.2.2 The Productive Side (Advantage Number Two)

The second advantage of visual culture and technology is that they enhance communication within the community as well as across the national borders. Some research participants in Cambodia state that a cellphone is an ideal tool for contacting family members, relatives, and friends. In addition, the Venerable Nanda suggests that the technological inventions help him maintain the network not only in the community but also across the provinces: "I contact other Khmer Buddhist temples in Canada mostly by phone and email sometimes." Moreover, visual technology makes it easy to communicate overseas. For instance, some of the CSAJ executives explain how they contact family living in Cambodia:

> Sophat: I use Yahoo! Messenger.

> Sovann: I use Skype and email. Usually, I email my brothers and sisters but with my mom I use Skype to talk and see her face.

Similarly, Kleng makes use of Yahoo! Messenger as a means to contact her sister studying in Shanghai. In terms of another popular communication tool Facebook, Sovann describes a merit of using it: "Recently, my brother uses Facebook, so it's easier to see what is happening in my family."

In addition to these online communication tools, the Venerable Nanda talks about a combination of a digital camera and the Internet used as a way of communicating with people overseas. He first touches on the change in the type of camera he uses:

> When I was in Cambodia, I just took pictures when I went to visit some places, some tourist places like, uh, Sihanoukville. (laugh) For taking pictures in Cambodia, when I was there, I used not a digital camera but a film camera, so I could not have an instant picture. (laugh)

He also illustrates the usage of the digital camera in his daily life in Canada: "Mostly I like to take pictures of nature like the scenery, the forest, the riverside, and the green nature." He then starts explaining how the two kinds of visual technology are integrated in communication across the borders:

> I send pictures to my friends in Cambodia sometimes. Especially in winter time when it snows, I take pictures of it and send and email them to my friends in Cambodia to tell them that here in Canada it's like this. (laugh)

In the similar way, the technological inventions play an important role in stimulating communication in the context of diaspora. For example, Pit and his family have relatives living in the United States. He indicates that calling through the Internet is the best medium for making contact: "Calling U.S.A. is very expensive and we can go to call by the Internet. It is cheaper." Ms. P considers placing a telephone call as convenient for communicating with her relative overseas:

> I sometimes talk with my uncle living in the United States on the telephone. He is a cousin of my father. I got to a refugee camp together with him, and his family relocated to the States. Though there are many convenient functions in the Internet, sometimes my children are already using it, so by making a telephone call, I can contact him sooner.

### 4.2.3    The Productive Side (Advantage Number Three)

The third advantage of visual culture and technology is the preservation of memory made possible by the utilization of technological tools. The stories of the research participants below show that travelling is commonly associated with recording events by a camera and/or a camcorder:

> Ven. Nanda: I use my camera when I travel. In Niagara Falls, I took pictures of the waterfall, the rainbow, and the people. (laugh)

> Mr. Naor: For instance, if I go and visit Siem Reap, that's where the Angkor city is located, I would just take pictures of scenery and the statue, *Apsara* statue, and all the fancy stuff with that. And I take pictures of events and also relatives doing the events.

Jadon: When I travel, I love to bring my video camera with me and record everything I do because whether I'm alone or with a hundred other people, people don't see where you go through everyday or the certain thoughts that just pop up in your mind and you need to tell somebody.

Mr. Thy also likes to bring his cellphone camera, when he travels:

Mr. Thy: When I have free time, I look for something near Phnom Penh, near Siem Reap, [and] near Kampong Thom.

R: How do you get to those places?

Mr. Thy: By car and sometimes by bus. … When I'm on a bus, I take pictures of scenery seen from the window.

After Tino left and Chan and Theara went out to get lunch for us, the rest of the CSAJ members discussed what they usually photograph with a camera, when travelling to places in Japan. Their remarks are as follows:

Sophat: I like scenery more than people because the places have good memories, at least I know, 'Oh, I have been to this place'. So I'm interested in places and cultures like the sign of Japanese. Like the New Year, they put some decorations in front of doors, so I take pictures of those kinds. It's better than taking pictures of people.

Sovann: For me, I capture everything I find interesting, so it does not matter whether scenery or people, it can be anything.

Mean: For me as well. I take pictures of many things, not just scenery but people including me, my friends, and other people. For example, when there is a festival, Japanese people wear *kimono* and dance something like a traditional way, so I take pictures of that. Also, I ask them to be on a photo together. Scenery is also interesting because there are many places. For one place, maybe I go there only once, so if I do not take a photo, that scenery may be only once; there may be no chance to see that again.

Ms. P talks about the role of camera and camcorder in relation to a trip of facing her bitter remembrances. In 2005, she visited a place in Kampong Thom where her family members lost their lives during the Khmer Rouge era. Through the mediation of Buddhist monks, she held a memorial service for the victims of the genocide with the villagers. She describes the outcome of photographing and video recording of the trip:

… Mainly, I took pictures with a camera. In addition, my kid accompanied me and videotaped my trip such as the joint memorial service for the victims of the genocide. But I watched the videotape only a few times. Speaking of what is the most relieved, I think it would be turning the pages of a photo album. Pictures are placed in the album in the order of being taken, so I can see the changes in my feelings along with them. At first, my face was set in a sulky look. In the photographs taken in the latter half of the trip, I was smiling. It is interesting to leaf through an album.

Thus, it is clear that visual technology provides the research participants with the chance to put the occurrences on record. In addition, as illustrated above, the utilization of visual technology enables the participants to preserve memory. Jadon and Aria also keep their dance performances on DVDs and pictures on the organization's website. They do not intend to post performance videos online. Instead, the two lay emphasis on memory preservation:

> Jadon: I have them (dance performances) on my video, my camera and stuff. It's just one of those things, like we're proud of it but we don't need it to be posted all over the place. Just as long as we have something that we memorize it with, we are fine to that.
>
> Aria: It's for memory.
>
> Jadon: Right.

### 4.2.4 The Productive Side (Advantage Number Four)

The fourth advantage of visual culture and technology is related to the enhancement of teaching and learning. A designer/artist Mr. S C works as the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) in Phnom Penh. He states that both handwork and production using technology such as computer software programs are essential for teaching and learning in the field of Fine Arts:

> Students often use computers to create their works. We have sixteen computers. So for design, we provide them with a lot of time to study using design programs like, uh, Adobe Photoshop, AutoCAD or something like that for sketching in 3D on computer. And for painting and making sculpture, we also teach them how to create painting, using an IT program. But for the assignment that the teacher gives them, they cannot do that by using computers because we need them to gain skills by hand. But for the assignment on a computer program, they can do so. But like

painting, students cannot work on an assignment at a workshop, using computers because we need them to have the skills to be able to draw by hand.

Mr. K.D teaches ethnomusicology and traditional Khmer musical instruments at the Faculty of Music, RUFA. He indicates that both books and computer play a significant role in cultivating students' knowledge and skills in the discipline of music: "Students majoring in composition use computers for composing now. For theory they do research in the library and use books." He points out that students are competent for expression by both musical instrument(s) and computer: "Students use computers and compose using the keyboard on computer. … They use piano and computer."

In addition, the following research participants talk about experience in learning with technology from a student's perspective. Mr. Pheak majoring in IT responds to my questions as follows:

R: What classes do you take at university?

Mr. Pheak: I study computer skills such as typing.

R: Do you use software applications like Word or Excel frequently?

Mr. Pheak: I learn all of them as well as typing.

He continues to say, "When I do homework, I use computer", and suggests that he makes the most of computer in his studies. Kleng also discusses the utilization of computer software programs, having recalled her university days majoring in Interior Design. As a graduate of the Faculty of Fine Arts, RUFA, she mentions popularization of technology among the youth in Cambodia and also asserts the need to enhance skills in handling certain software programs in order to create artwork:

These communication tools and technology are now getting popular among young people in Cambodia. Like me, like my skill, I do interior design and I used to study 3D Studio (renamed 3ds Max), AutoCAD, and Adobe Photoshop a little bit. But before that, I have never practiced this kind of skill. We need to practice more and then we get it. But I didn't have any equipment, either. … I need to spend some time

using these software programs. I say to myself, 'You're getting old now; you need to do this'.

### 4.2.5    The Productive Side (Advantage Number Five)

The last advantage of visual culture and technology is that they make various forms of expression possible. The utilization of visual technology encourages creative power and works resulting from it invite the audience to take part in visual culture. Jadon and Aria refer to blogs and video logs (vlogs) as an example:

> Jadon: I love them and I love hearing what other people are doing. There are a lot of, you know, make-up blogs like vlogs out there. There are a lot of dance blogs and just celebrity blogs. You love that stuff. It's gossip. You find out who people really are. I guess you will be more part of people's lives whether you are there physically or not.

> Aria: I probably enjoy watching more than being on it myself. I mean there are a plenty of pictures but there are not many videos you'll find me in. I'm more shy. Still opening up but I'm shy.

Here Jadon states that expression using blogs and vlogs is appealing to the viewers, and feels the writers/creators familiar to him. Aria indicates that she prefers being a viewer rather than a producer in terms of self-expression through blogs and vlogs. Jadon also points out that expressing the self in the form of blogs and vlogs involves not only the active application of visual technology but also the efforts of the writer/creator:

> Jadon: When it comes to blogs or vlogs or any sort of expressing yourself, I find that it's great job to those who do it. It takes a lot of energy, a lot of creativeness, and also you're showing yourself to the world, and that's not always easy, so good job. I love them.

Moreover, using visual technology can lead to an inspiration for artists in creating works. For instance, Mr. S C suggests that photographs he takes with a digital camera are useful in obtaining ideas for his artworks:

> Mr. S C: I carry a camera with me, when I travel. The artists: Every time we have a camera. (laugh)

R: What pictures do you like to take with your camera?

Mr. S C: Uh, it's up to the situation. Sometimes I like to take pictures of landscapes. If in a city, I like to capture some of the landscapes. Some of the pictures I take, I take some of the, what to say, the abstract thing in a city—something like not known because this is the image that we don't think before.

R: When you create painting, do you use those pictures as a base?

Mr. S C: Yes. I use the pictures I took as a base for painting. This is my collection. If needed, I can search something from it.

In addition to inspiring artists as Mr. S C describes above, the application of visual technology holds another possibility. Bav in his 20s resides in Phnom Penh and works as an artist. Visual technology, film in particular, enables him to pursue a style of artistic expression distinct from painting and contemporary dance. At an art workshop offered at Bophana, the Audiovisual Resource Center, he learned filming for the first time and his group made a documentary about Khmer dance. He now belongs to a group for making film and talks about a unique film project he participated in. The film entitled *The Twin Diamonds* released in 2009 comprises of twelve sequences. While it was based on one script and one well-known director was in charge, each sequence was produced by a different group of young filmmakers. Bav illustrates the unique process:

It was not one guy but a lot of people for making the film …. It's a forty-five minute film. It's like one script and one title and continues to another. It's like first I make a little bit and you come next, make a little bit more, and other people continue it. … It was like me making one sequence, you for one sequence, another person for one sequence, and combining them together to be twelve sequences in total.

He also states that the collaboration as such employing visual technology offers the opportunity for networking to the filmmakers: "People didn't know each other at first but they came in one after another and they made a lot of friends." In addition, he talks about the very first screening of the film in Phnom Penh: "A theatre for showing this film had seven hundred chairs. But when the film was shown, there were one thousand people there. Yeah,

one thoudand people." His comment implies that a lot of people in the city are interested in artistic expression with visual technology, in other words, joining in visual culture.

### 4.2.6    The Problematic Side (Focusing on the Physical Aspect)

The comments of the research participants in the previous section showed the various models of utilizing technology in the everyday life and participating in visual culture. For better understanding, it is crucial to look at the problematic side of visual culture and technology. This section attempts to explore issues regarding both the physical and the emotional aspects of experiencing visual culture and applying visual technology. It also examines problems in the context of diaspora. First of all, we should note that competition for making a profit is aggravated by the rapid diffusion of visual culture. Mr. Naor discusses the harsh conditions concerning his business:

> In the past, the past is not many carriers in Cambodia; there were only three. So it was easy for me to sell phone cards. I sold more and made more money. But now there are a lot of carriers that are competing with each other and also have free promotion for certain carriers, so it's really hard for me to make money. And I think that in the future, I'll probably have to look for a job.

Thus, referring to the increasing number of dealers, Mr. Naor suggests that popularization of visual culture and technology causes severe competition in the phone card trade.

In addition, there is a need to pay attention to the issues of access to technology and the cost involved. Mr. Thy, for example, mentions the accessibility to the Internet: "I have computer but it's not connected to Internet at home. So my computer can check only disks." In terms of the Internet connection, the Venerable Nanda also describes the situation of his relatives and friends:

> R: You indicated you have friends and relatives living in Cambodia. How do you contact them?

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> Ven. Nanda: I contact them mostly through the phone because they don't have an Internet access and they might not feel like using the Internet maybe. I send an email to them and maybe it takes a few days to get a response. But if I call them, I can get an instant response.

Similar to the case of the Venerable Nanda, Mean explains the way of contacting his family:

> For me, I just use an Internet telephone and it is very cheap. In my house in Cambodia, there is no Internet, so they cannot use Skype or Messenger. So the only way is to use telephone. The cheapest and easiest way is to use an Internet telephone.

Here Mean shows that he accesses the Internet from Japan and phones his home by the Internet phone. He points out the Internet access condition of his home as well as the cost accompanying an overseas call. In relation to the phone usage as such, Mr. Naor talks about the expenses of using a cellphone: "I prefer text messaging because it costs less money compared to talking. By phone card, calling here it's pretty expensive. We have certain amount, number of text that is allowed for free." Thus, he argues the cost attendant on communication even within the country.

Moreover, the computer usage is no exception to the problem of expenditure. Diamond's following comment demonstrates that having computer is a considerable expense: "If I can find money, I will buy computer in the future." Diamond has used computer before and indicates that he takes an interest in owing it in time to come. Furthermore, focusing on the university teaching and learning environment, Ms. S C suggests that not only having fully equipped computer facilities but also maintaining the Internet connection cost a great deal:

> Students use the Internet. But this is also a problem; the Internet line is very expensive, so we provide them with the Internet only at the library. I think there are around six Internet connections for them. That's for the whole students in this school.

In this way, the research participants portrayed the issues involved in taking part in visual culture and utilizing technology.

**4.2.7    The Problematic Side (Focusing on the Emotional Aspect)**

Besides these problems concerning the physical aspect of visual culture and technology, there exist issues related to the emotional aspect. Some research participants express unfamiliarity with the application of visual technology and discomfort accompanied by it. For instance, Mr. Naor states that computer is difficult for him to deal with: "I use cellphone often because I am not very knowledgeable when it comes to the Internet." Mr. Naor's comment showing unfamiliarity with the Internet is relevant to the following story of Kleng. With regard to Facebook, Kleng talks about the lack of experience:

> I've been using Facebook for one year already. But it was just one time that I created my profile. My friends text to me photos and now I want to post [pictures] in the same way but still I ask him [her colleague] to do it.

She also describes her attitude toward employing technology on the whole:

> I say that I'm too lazy with technology. For me, many times I use my feeling. If I really want to do and am excited, I will do it quickly; I don't want to wait until tomorrow or this time.

In addition, Kleng mentions the way of contacting people by email in her daily life:

> … [N]ow I try to say to myself you are not young anymore, so you need to learn, especially to email people. Sometimes I just look at it and I don't know how to type properly. After that, I just keep it. Then to friends of mine I say, 'Please don't mind if I don't reply to you'. I always tell them that but now I'm working on it. If I still do that, it's not good. … Even if I have just one word as reply, it's good. I still reply back. With the question of 'Ok?' I'm like even 'Ok, understand'.

Here Kleng refers to the change of her manner in sending a reply and the efforts she is making in order to facilitate communication applying visual technology. Moreover, in the discussion of discomfort associated with using visual technology as a communication tool, Ms. P points out that a disturbance of privacy may possibly occur:

> The computer in my house is equipped with a web camera. I feel it is a little bit unpleasant, when my family in pajamas accidentally appear in front of the camera. I tried it once, but my kids checked whether the web camera was on or not, whenever they passed by the computer, so I removed it.

### 4.2.8    The Problematic Side (Focusing on Diaspora)

In the context of diaspora, the following comments of the research participants suggest that there are obstacles to joining in visual culture and utilizing technology smoothly. For example, Pit expresses his concern over the cost involved in contacting his relatives in the diaspora: "Telephone, we use everyday to call each other in Cambodia, and other provinces are also cheap [for call]. But calling U.S.A. and other countries is very expensive." Thus, Pit shows that the expense of using certain technological invention, telephone in this case, restricts free communication with people beyond the seas. In addition, Aria and Jadon delineate a problem of visual technology as a means to contact overseas:

> Aria: And the medium isn't really the greatest, either. If I would want to talk to my family members, most likely it will be through the phone and it's hard to hear because generally, there's a delay and yelling at each other. And just speaking it for me, I'm sure Jadon, too, we can barely speak it. So just talking itself is hard and I'm not sure if there's Internet and video talk.

> Jadon: Camera chats, yeah.

What Aria and Jadon suggest here is that in taking part in visual culture and employing technology in the context of diaspora, it is impossible to overlook not only the issue of the accessibility to equipment such as the Internet and a web camera but also the occurrence of technical difficulties.

Moreover, there is another notable issue related to communication in the diasporic situation:

> Aria: I think another thing would be just communicating with them. It's a super challenge because I lost the language.

> Jadon: It's hard. They are authentic. They speak it authentically, religiously every single day of their lives. We don't. So being able to communicate with them and relate with them is hard. That's very hard.

In this way, Aria and Jadon point out that some of the younger generation with Cambodian heritage might undergo a certain language difficulty in communicating with those who were

born and grew up in Cambodia. It becomes clear from the comments of Aria and Jadon above that it is important to take into account a generation gap in looking at the degree of participating in visual culture and applying visual technology in the context of diaspora.

## 4.3    Critical Lens on Media Representation

Drawing on Ms. P, Aria, the Venerable Nanda, Jadon, Theara, and Mean, this section explores what it means to look and think critically about what is conveyed by mass media. A mass of information is created and circulated by newspaper, radio, television, cinema, and the Internet. Regarding the mass media, television in particular, Stuart Hall (1980) points out some notable issues in his work "Encoding/decoding". First, Hall states that codes with certain message inscribed are given priority for broadcasting by producers/encoders: "… [W]e must recognize that the discursive form of the message has a privileged position in the communicative exchange …" (p. 129). In addition, according to Hall, the viewer's interpretation is not necessarily consistent with the producer's original intention: "The codes of encoding and decoding may not be perfectly symmetrical" (p. 131). He elaborates on this mismatch as follows:

> The lack of fit between the codes has a great deal to do with the structural differences of relation and position between broadcasters and audiences, but it also has something to do with the asymmetry between the codes of 'source' and 'receiver' at the moment of transformation into and out of the discursive form. (p. 131)

Then, what messages regarding Cambodia, the people, society, and culture(s) are encoded and distributed in the mass media? And how do the research participants as viewers interpret, in other words, decode such messages? The following comments of the participants reveal some codes portraying typical images of Cambodia and the people. These include a World Heritage site Angkor Wat and the country's abundance of nature:

Ms. P: When it comes to Cambodia, a picture of Angkor Wat, the World Heritage site is projected on the screen in the first place. It is shown as if it were the gateway to Cambodia.

Aria: When I see in the media, Angkor Wat is a very big thing and that's one of the proud things.

Ven. Nanda: Speaking of the images of Cambodia through TV, the first thing to be used is Angkor Wat, the ancient temple and some resort areas. And another thing is a rice field in Cambodia. These are mostly the images that people like to take pictures of and like to spread through the media.

Ms. P: Another image of Cambodia I often see is that children are smiling without precaution. … In addition, the abundance in nature is often depicted. Cambodia is a country where growing two or three crops a year is common. Therefore, people do not suffer from lack of rice, the staple food; the country has fertile land.

Indeed, Angkor Wat serves as one of the major icons representing Cambodia; the image is

created and reproduced not only on television but also in painting:

Aria: … [I]mages through, I guess, a lot of our paintings or the dances or Angkor Wat or the countryside, there are some very beautiful pictures that just make you feel proud of the country, even though there is a darker side of history. But through those images you see our happy times.

Jadon: You see what you are mostly proud of. I mean when you see a painting of Angkor Wat or the dancers or village people, you feel as if you are there with them or you actually have the memory of it. I mean no matter how many videos we can watch, certain things in my mind make me feel like I'm with them or I've physically been there.

It is clear from the comments above that each person performs decoding differently and

certain images appeal to the viewers emotionally.

In addition to the codes as such, the research participants who are "… operating with

what we must call an *oppositional code*" (Hall, 1980, p. 138; original emphasis) point out

some "negative" images of Cambodia and the people produced in the mass media:

Aria: … [U]sually when I see images, it's poverty, children, not just children but families suffering, just struggling to live. I see that I don't want. It's a country that is still trying to recover from the Pol Pot regime. When I see a lot of videos on YouTube or TV, when there are documentaries, I get a very sad feeling. There's a lot of history there but that's more probably something you don't experience in your

life versus through media. Media, I find, shows Cambodia as a Third World country, a poor country, poverty-stricken.

Ms. P: Another image I see is that the scars left by the civil war are still clearly visible. Places such as the so-called Killing Fields are included in sightseeing tours. This is not a very fine image. So I hope to get rid of the images as such little by little.

Theara: In the media, on TV, everything is about all bad images of Cambodia—about poverty, landmines, and something. Most of Japanese people just think about landmines. When they step out of the airport, they think there are landmines over there.

Mean: Sometimes the Japanese media broadcasts too much about the danger of Cambodia. In fact, it is not too dangerous.

Theara: … Because of all the media in Japan, people know about Cambodia's poverty, landmines, the Killing Fields, and something. They know nothing about the investment chance, no, they don't know. So not many Japanese people go to Cambodia.

In this way, the code input in the images—"Cambodia as a Third World country", "the Killing Fields", "war", and "landmines"—"… serves to reproduce the dominant definitions …" (Hall, 1980, p. 136). The research participants demonstrate that rather positive images of Cambodia illustrated earlier as well as the negative ones generate stereotypes, which lead the audience to have a limited view. To put it another way, there is a risk that people with different personalities might be classified simply as a single, unitary group of "Cambodians". Richard Dyer (1993) offers a critical analysis of stereotype and writes its operation clearly: "This is the most important function of the stereotype: to maintain sharp boundary definitions, to define clearly where the pale ends and thus who is clearly within and who clearly beyond it" (p. 16). Here Dyer suggests that stereotypes make people have perception based on binarism. Ms. P talks about her uneasy experience encountering the stereotypical view as portrayed by Dyer:

Looking at the media, they cover various news reports of illegal immigrants and foreign workers. In consequence, there are times when some people stare at me, as if they were wondering which case this person fits. There is a sense of inferiority concerning that.

Here Ms. P refers to the way of broadcasting news about non-Japanese residents and the gaze of the Japanese citizens toward herself. The incident that happened to Ms. P implies that certain images and stories broadcasted by the media cause stereotypes of race and ethnicity, which lead some viewers to act on an unbalanced principle drawing a line between those who fit the norm and those who do not. David Sholle and Stan Denski (1993) point out the power of the media in producing and renewing the hegemonic discourse, namely, "creat[ing] systems of normalization and subjectification" (p. 307). In connection with this powerful discourse, stereotypes are generated by various types of mass media. Stephanie Larson (2006) remarks about it:

> News story selection, visuals, and terminology convey racial stereotypes similar to those found in television entertainment and film. System-supportive themes in the news include those celebrating assimilation and those that emphasize the need to control or monitor racial minorities. (p. 82)

As Larson argues, some messages about race and ethnicity are created and passed down to the viewers for the purpose of maintaining the dominant system.

## 4.4  Decoding Critically

Through decoding messages critically, Chan, Mean, Sophat, Theara, Mr. Naor, Jadon, Aria, and Ms. T S uncover the latent qualities of the mass media. For example, Chan states that:

> Japanese society is really influenced by the media. When they broadcast one story, they talk about bad points, every bad point. If it's a good story, they talk about good points only. They don't mention both. If they mention both, the balance, the content of the story will be blurred. So if they want to phrase some footballer, they talk about something good like 'He's good' and they don't talk about bad points. So it's kind of being caught in the thinking of the media.

He also indicates that the way of broadcasting in Japan is one-sided: "… If they talk about a bad point, everything is about the bad point." Other CSAJ committee members support his argument:

Mean: They try to make it very bad and for a good point, they try to make it really good.

Chan: They don't show both.

Sophat: I think maybe it is also the problem related to the recent resignation of the previous Prime Minister. When his popularity went down, they just started talking bad mouth and then he just became worse and worse, and then finally, he stepped down.

Theara: So the problem of the Japanese media is like that.

Sophat: Actually, everyone has good and bad points but when something happens, they just blame those bad points, so to me it's not very valid in conveying a message.

In addition, the CSAJ committee members provide the comparison between Cambodian media and Japanese media:

R: What do you think about the media in Cambodia? Do they have a balanced view?

Sophat: They are under the control of a political party. Most of them.

Chan: Actually, Japan also works in the control of a political party like the *Yomiuri* (a newspaper). You see Watanabe *Kaichō*, the president used to connect with the *Jimintō* (the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan). But mostly, the Japanese media tries to be out of the political parties. Many people in Cambodia, from civil officers to even teachers, are concerned with political thinking, so it's hard to omit and eliminate all the kinds of thinking. Maybe in twenty years, everything will be changed. We don't know that right now. But right now the Cambodian media is absolutely connected with a political party.

Sophat: So it is hard to trust information because sometimes, for example, the media supports an A Party, so what has been done bad by the A Party is not broadcasted— only the good side is.

Regarding the influence of politics on the mass media in Cambodia, Mr. Naor observes it in the similar way: "As far as the media, how they depict people in Cambodia, they are more related to politics." He then focuses on television programs and expresses: "As far as TV, they don't really show the oldies or the old movies as much as before anymore but they seem to have seized on politics, you know." Moreover, Sophat describes unique characteristics of broadcasting in Cambodia and Japan:

… The Cambodian media tries to conceal their bad point, the country's bad situation. But the Japanese media tries to seek the bad point and broadcasts only those bad images, so this is kind of contradictory. I hope in the future, there might be change.

The critical observations above suggest that the study participants are practicing what Larson indicates as follows:

Even though mainstream media are encoded with messages that support the dominant ideology, those do not have to be the messages you decode. … Meaning is not just found in texts; it is negotiated by the readers and viewers, who can oppose intended messages with 'resistant readings.' (2006, p. 278)

Indeed, applying a critical perspective to decoding messages produced by the mass media makes it possible to see what is hidden, in other words, what story is untold. Based on experience instructing Khmer dance, Jadon and Aria discuss some aspects of dance and dancers, which the viewers hardly see in the media:

Jadon: There is a lot of stuff that is not shown, which is more of the abuse side of teaching dance, right? You know back in the country, I don't know if they do it anymore or I don't know how extended it is but there is a bit of physical abuse as well as emotional. I mean it's really bad. We never do that.

Aria: I think especially for the classical dances, the way your body is supposed to be shaped is very curvy and in order to get it in that way, you have to start very young. And it's a painful position pushing you and making sure you do it right. You definitely compare the dancers here to the dancers there; you can tell the difference because our fingers are not bended in the way as theirs and our backs and our feet are not bended as theirs. So you know there's a lot more hard work and it starts from very young age.

Jadon: It's a huge commitment. You need to be hugely committed to dance. I mean when you're enrolling in the school, you gonna do it all the way through. So I find that you have to do your best and constantly do your best. And you know sometimes you'll never be right but you just have to live with the consequences and hopefully, you'll learn from your mistakes and grow. That's what I see that I don't normally see on TV. That's a little bit of abuse for the dancers.

Aria: Then again, you don't see a lot of background. When you see Khmer dance or any kind of performance, you generally don't see the background. I mean, I'm sure for ballet dancers, they can break their toes and you know all that kind of stuff. You don't see that. You see their beautiful performances.

Here Jadon and Aria refer to the hardship and discipline involved in training of classical dancers in Cambodia as the message that is not shown in the media.

Besides the hidden and untold stories, there are messages generated and distributed repeatedly and persistently. Similar to the distribution of codes leading to stereotypes of race and ethnicity, a problematic view of gender is encoded, produced, and distributed. Ms. T S, who specializes in mass media production, comments on the representation of women in the Cambodian media:

> … I would like to tell you that ten years ago, women were portrayed in the media in a negative way. I have done a survey you might see on the WMC website. It's a national survey conducted in 2005 …. We found that the images of women in the media were negative rather than positive.

She then mentions a project established to tackle this problem:

> We have a project called 'Improving the Portrayal of Women in the Media'. We worked very closely with all the media people and lobbied them to mainstream gender in the production. And we have organized a lot of forums and discussions among journalists to find a way to improve the portrayal of women in the media because some journalists face a problem. They have a misunderstanding that the portrait or the presence of women as actors, singers, and showing up at fashion shows is more attractive than portraying women in good careers. If you present women in the media as doctors or members of the parliament, etc., it doesn't attract the viewers. But if we talk about women as actors, famous singers, movie stars, participating in fashion shows or something like that, people like to watch and read it. That is what they believed.

In dealing with the problem as such, Ms. T S explains the contribution of the project:

> … WMC works very hard to change the behaviour and it is successful because some media, especially print media, change from the portrait of women in obscenity to a positive way, educating and talking about women playing an important role in the family and things like that.

Thus, she recognizes the improvements since 1998 when the project was launched. However, she indicates that there is still some work that needs to be done:

> … [I]t's still not 100 percent because in 2005 when I conducted a survey, I found that there were still some negative portraits of women. If you read newspapers, especially magazines, you see they talk about women as victims of trafficking, domestic violence, and things like that. But when you talk with journalists, they say

that media is talking about what is happening. Actually in reality, this problem happens. There are many women cheated or exploited. There are many women in the rural areas, who are hit by their husbands. There are women fighting. If a husband has an affair outside of the home, women fight each other or something like that. … [A]s journalists, we should write what happened but we should mainstream gender perspective in our article—why she becomes like that; what action should be taken; what the status of old time women was; and whether it should be changed. We have to mainstream gender perspective in those articles. Instead of blaming women, we have to learn how to talk in a gender perspective way.

In this way, from a perspective of a media producer, Ms. T S asserts that it is crucial for those who are in the encoding position to put a gender perspective into practice in order to abolish the reproduction of the dominant meaning assigned to women.


## 4.5    Encoding Critically

Feminist scholars have long problematized and critiqued the representation of women in the mass media (e.g., Doane, 1982; hooks, 1992; Mulvey, 1975; Pollock, 1988; Trinh, 1991). Paying attention to the construction and representation of femininity in cinema, Mary Ann Doane (1982), for instance, demonstrates how femininity is "othered" and serves as the pleasurable object of the male gaze. Doane calls patriarchy the "dominant system" and points out that "… an essential attribute of that dominant system is the matching of male subjectivity with the agency of the look" (p. 77). Doane thus suggests that the patriarchal system constructs the binary between the male with the power to gaze and the female as the gazed object. Against the male gaze and to deconstruct the dominant system forcing women to perform ideal femininity as depicted in cinema, Doane proposes the concept of "female spectatorship", which allows women to have the agency to see. Doane's concept as such is relevant to the project described by Ms. T S. It is reasonable to suppose that Ms. T S practices "female spectatorship" and the project "Improving the Portrayal of Women in the

Media" urges journalists as producers to have the agency to think critically and encode messages, taking a gender perspective into account.

In addition, here is another research participant, who chose writing books and giving lectures as a means to encode and convey a message. Ms. P talks about what she hopes to address to the audience through her activities:

> The scenes depicting the scars of the civil war are often shown on television. On the other hand, as a matter of fact, I find a mild disposition, kindness, and benevolence that the Cambodian people have by nature, when I look at each one of my fellow companions living in Japan, including myself. Moreover, these people are the devout. A large majority of the people have faith in Buddhism and do not care for conflict essentially. So in what ways can we retrieve our honor? … It is the fact that the civil war was a fault. And there is a need to learn something from it so that it will not be repeated again. I would like everyone around the globe to know this. So how should we, the Cambodian people eradicate the negative point? This is a serious task, an important assignment set for us.

Her words above reflects a firm sense of mission, and her writing and lecture provide the audience with the opportunity to acknowledge unique features of Cambodia and each individual with Cambodian heritage, which are not shown in the mass media. Ms. P's conviction has relevance to Fanon's argument that the people of Algeria in the colonial times took advantage of print media in order to distribute a counter narrative in opposition to the radio system used by the colonial power. Frantz Fanon (1965) refers to the Algerian people's action as an attempt confronting "[t]he power of the colonialist message, the systems used to impose it and present it as *the truth* …" (p. 76; original emphasis) and remarks: "It was in this sector of news distribution that the Algerian found balance-restoring elements" (p. 76). Similarly, Ms. P's writing and lecture contribute to not only illustrating what is missing in the representation created by the media but also offering "balance-restoring elements", as described by Fanon, to both sides—Ms. P herself as the producer of the message and the viewers/readers. In addition, her comment above demonstrates that Ms. P inspires the

audience to transform themselves to become producers sending messages of her/his own accord.

In this way, it became obvious that the research participants are critically engaged in decoding messages produced by the mass media. Their critical observations exposed which stories are told repeatedly on the one hand and excluded from encoding on the other. Moreover, the research participants pointed out some problematic views leading the viewers to have stereotypes regarding gender, race, and ethnicity. Ms. T S and Ms. P also discussed the experience as both the decoder (viewer) and the encoder (producer). The research participants are by no means passive receivers of messages encoded by the mass media. These insightful and critical individuals present a variety of modes of being "… the 'creative citizen' who is source as well as destination, producer as well as consumer, writer as well as reader, teacher as well as learner" (p. 143), as John Hartley (2007) indicates in the article "'There are other ways of being in the truth': The uses of multimedia literacy".

## 4.6 Prelude to Wind

What became clear in this chapter is that the colourful stories, resulted from the discussion of the five keywords of Cambodia (and the country of residence), and the accounts of the study participants on the daily connection with visual culture and technology challenge the ways in which the grand narrative frames Cambodia, Cambodian history, and the people. In addition, the research participants' critical decoding uncovered the dominant system underlying the images and stories created and disseminated by the media. Some participants even take the initiative in conveying messages by producing radio and television programs, writing books, and delivering lectures in order to show what is excluded from the problematic views of gender, race, and ethnicity. The research participants never leave the strong will to overcome

all sorts of difficulties. The fire to confront heavy seas and cut a path never ceases and it keeps lighting each journey. The next "Wind" chapter focuses on stories of the research participants as producers who are passionate to create and distribute messages by practicing various forms of expression. What is it that the participants showing up in the following chapter aim to convey to us? The wind is now blowing and starts filling the sails. It is time to put this voyage forward.

# Chapter 5: Wind

> The performance of an expert seems relaxed but does not leave any gaps. The actions of trained people do not seem rushed. The principle of the Way can be known from these illustrations. (Miyamoto, 1994, p. 135)

Miyamoto suggests that being diligent in training and striving to elevate one's knowledge and skills from day to day leads a person to become an expert in certain field. This chapter concentrates on nine instances of those who cut a path during their journeys through the hard training and untiring efforts. Each research participant is actively engaged in practicing the original style of expression, whether using digital media or not, which functions as the best for conveying her/his own message. The distinctive forms of artistic expression of the participants include performing and instructing Cambodian dance, painting, filmmaking, performing contemporary dance, creating and maintaining websites and blogs, teaching music, playing classical Cambodian musical instruments, creating installation works, writing books and delivering lectures, teaching fine arts, creating mixed media art, producing and broadcasting radio and television programs, and so forth. Drawing heavily on the narratives of Aria, Jadon, Bav, Chan, Mean, Sophat, Sovann, Theara, Tino, Mr. K.D, Kleng, the Venerable Nanda, Ms. P, Mr. S C, and Ms. T S, this chapter explores which Way each participant is seeking and which mode of artistic expression she/he selects in order to attain her/his own Way.

## 5.1 Style Number One: Teaching and Performing Cambodian Dance

> … I think one of the things that I'm very proud of is teaching it. I'm gonna pass it down to someone. It'll keep going. We are here.
> —Aria

Performing is one of the harder things to do but I find that for us it's the easiest way to send our message.

—Jadon

Aria and Jadon living in Ottawa are taking an active part in teaching and performing Cambodian dance. Their activities include giving performances in events such as a large-scale festival of the Khmer New Year held annually in the Ottawa community and instructing students of the younger generation at the organization Soma Selepak. The two talk about how they came across Cambodian dance in their teens:

> Jadon: We both started around 2000. My sister danced for Soma Selepak when she was ten or eleven, which was like fifteen years ago, a long time ago. She's been doing it and I always had an interest in it and dancing made me want to instruct, which made me want to learn even more.

> Aria: Before I was in it, when I was a child, I used to see older generations do dances at Cambodian parties, and I always had an interest in it. When it came the opportunity, I learned about it and I joined myself. Something I always wanted to. And it felt good. After all, you know, the practices and the nerve-racking performances, after all of it I feel proud of it. It's probably the only part of me that really represents Cambodia, as I am very much a Canadian girl. (laugh)

Aria and Jadon then elucidate what made them determine to be instructors as follows:

> Aria: … We started teaching because people who used to teach us basically became too busy and retired themselves, so we didn't want it to end. So we took it in our hands. Jadon stepped at first and took care of it, and I came in and helped out.

> Jadon: It was very hard jumping into the instruction side because what had happened is people from Cambodia had immigrated here; they came here and then, you know, it's a perfect way to learn traditional stuff from those who were there.

> Aria: They are professional Cambodian dancers. They went to school of dance there. So we're getting it directly from professional dancers, which was a great opportunity first, so it was good but now we are at the point where we are not learning anything new; we have to refer to videos off of YouTube basically.

> Jadon: Which is hard because again, every video comes with a slight alteration or slight editing.

> Aria: Each performance is different in little ways.

Jadon: Which is great but it'd be also amazing for us to teach something that is authentic, something that has been passed down from family to family or from teachers to students. For us, we are more free-lancing it. Again, we were learning it in our own home and did the best as possibly as we could do with it, so it was definitely a huge challenge to step up and become an instructor.

In addition to the hard task involved in dance instruction as described above, Aria indicates some difficulties associated with acting as a teacher:

And it's definitely different as dancers because normally, when you are a dancer, your only real concern is just yourself making sure that you have your part done right and you trust that all your other counterparts are doing their parts as well. But as an instructor, we have to take care of everybody now. And it's definitely a really big challenge dealing with the people's abilities. Some are more skilled, others aren't, and learning to deal and work with everybody's differences is definitely a challenge. The time and effort is a very big challenge. Nonetheless, it's something, you know, we want to keep it going. That's why we took it and set it up. We went from just dancers to instructors.

Under the resolution to do their utmost as instructors, Aria and Jadon provide students with the opportunity to learn, practice, and perform various types of Cambodian dance:

R: How many dance styles do students learn every year?

Aria: There's classical.

Jadon: It's a ballet basically. It's a Cambodian ballet.

Aria: It's a very technical dance, slow motion. Every movement has a meaning. So that's more the classical side. And the clothing itself is just beautiful, lots of colour, shine.

Jadon: It's very expensive and heavy. And it's very tedious to get on. It is about an hour process.

Aria: It's a long process to get dressed for performance of a classical dance. Then there's the folk dance, which usually represents, you know, different regions almost; there're like the mountainous people, there're the countryside people. There is a whole bunch of folk dance; it's more fast beat, higher tempos.

Jadon: They're more of fun, life-related types of dance. I find that there are two categories that we have—the classical dance that is performed more for royalties within the temples, within the Kingdom, and then you have the folk, which is more on the townspeople, people outside of that. So you have a great outlook of very high classical, traditional dance and you have the fun, laid-back lifestyle things.

Aria: I guess also the classical has more of a storytelling, historical type of meaning to it, whereas the folk dance is usually displaying things people just do, their lifestyle like the harvest thing showing how they harvest.

Jadon: With the folk dances, there is a lot of regular harvest type of dance but also there are a lot of flirting dances as well, whereas the guys are trying to get the girls, and the girls don't want them but the guys persuade the girls. So those are all little fun stuff that happens with it. … I mean folk dance I find that it's basically taking anything that you have and turning it into a dance.

While teaching the diverse kinds of Cambodian dance with zeal, Jadon and Aria express a concern:

R: How many students are in one class?

Jadon: It ranges from year to year. It has been decreasing. People have been growing up, being busy with everything. So we are basically trying to focus on the younger generations, so we are talking about, you know, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen like early teens.

Aria: Early teens and we are trying to get the even younger generations in because like I said before, it's something I don't wanna see go away. I definitely want my kids to be a part of it, when I have kids. So in order to keep it going, we have to continue it because obviously, if you let it go, it's easily lost.

Jadon: Yeah, you destroy a part of yourself as well as where you come from.

Aria: … I would say about five to six years ago, there were up to twenty to thirty, so it's like I said, the generations are getting older. They are away from early teens to teens to adults and they are losing interests. It's something that we don't want but it can't be helped all the times. It's not something we can force on anyone, either.

Nonetheless, the difficulties that have become apparent in the conversation do not daunt them. The strength of will and passion spur the two instructors on to an effort:

R: What messages do you want to convey through teaching Cambodian dance?

Jadon: For me, my main message is no matter the age remembering where you come from and remembering what you represent and your back history. I find that that's the best thing to do because you'll get respect from anyone, if you know where you came from. And I just want any generation and all generations to respect each other because they have at least one thing in common, which is, uh, traditional culture.

Aria: For me, basically the same thing. We are basically on the other side of the world from Cambodia where these dances are originated from, and being able to dance, being able to teach, showing we are your descendants, we are still very

proud, I am very proud of our country still. I mean there are things that are sad about it but I think one of the things that I'm very proud of is teaching it. I'm gonna pass it down to someone. It'll keep going. We are here.

R: Is there any particular population or to whom are you addressing the message?

Jadon: It's mainly to everyone but the most important people we are trying to send our messages to will be ourselves and our family. I think that's more important for me. Do you agree?

Aria: Yeah, to our family and to our community. Not just Cambodian community but Ottawa community as well.

Jadon: Yes. It's true. I mean our families are our communities basically. We just want our community to grow stronger, to unite everyone together.

Aria: Basically, it's our contribution because I don't know much about other Cambodian dancers that we really know of that they can pass onto anyone else, so this is our form.

Jadon: I agree.

Jadon and Aria then elaborate on the significance of teaching and performing dance as a

means to send the message illustrated above:

R: Why do you think the medium you chose, which is teaching and performing dance, is the best way to convey the message?

Jadon: Very good question. I think for us it's our best way to prevail the message because it's from a performer side of view, I think that people can talk about it, people can show you, people can also draw you in message. For myself and I'm sure Aria agrees, we wanna do all of that but also we wanna perform it. Performing is one of the harder things to do but I find that for us it's the easiest way to send our message.

Aria: In the form of dance, like he said, you don't need words to express your feelings and to express the message you want to get out, you can see it in the motions and in the facial expressions.

Jadon: It's just for us a great creative way to express how we feel and also to tell the story as well.

Aria: Also, a really good way to challenge ourselves, you know, physically, mentally, and also building on our courage because definitely, I would say everyone individually is very shy but as a group, we perform together and we are different personality.

Jadon: I mean everybody can perform on stage. People can do jazz, people can do hip-hop, people can do whatever it is, acting. When doing Cambodian dancing, you don't need to be able to do any of that. It's just you on stage and expressing your feelings. So that's why it gets very nerve-racking on stage for us but when you throw us out there, we are fine. Most of us. Some of us. A couple of us. Just me. (laugh)

## 5.2 Style Number Two: Starting from Painting to Covering Various Forms of Art

I want people to know about modern Khmer culture. The modern, I mean, is like my painting on canvas.
—Bav

Bav has been concentrating his efforts on exploring the essence of art by practicing various forms of artistic expression including painting, filmmaking, contemporary dance, and creating works such as portraits, posters, and mixed media works. He first talks about what made him decide to be an artist:

R: When did you start painting in your life?

Bav: For the first time I saw some people making their works using pen on the street and thought 'Oh, I want to study painting'. And my coach saw me and brought me to the school. And I started learning to draw by pencil and after that, I learned how to use colours ….

Bav was thus recruited for his talent and started gaining the skills of painting at the Reyum Institute of Arts and Culture located in Phnom Penh. According to him, learning at Reyum involves the following steps:

R: For how many years do students usually study at Reyum?

Bav: Students at Reyum study for four years. We have four levels and after that, students graduate from the school.

R: Can you describe the process of learning skills at Reyum?

Bav: From Monday through Friday students develop their works day by day. At Level One students learn to use colours. At Level Two students work on canvas, like a small canvas to draw two or three people, and the Level Three students paint many, many people like that painting there.

R: What assignments do students have?

Bav: We make paintings as assignments. When we go to study, the teacher asks us to draw a table or a chair. For Level Four students to graduate, they have four paintings to do for one year, like this one (still life), traditional painting, portrait, and modern art painting.

R: During that year, do students consult with the teacher?

Bav: Yes. In working on their graduation projects, students talk with the teacher.

Showing the pictures of his works saved on his computer, Bav explains his activities and painting style:

R: How many paintings have you already made?

Bav: I made two or three hundred paintings—a lot. But for exhibitions, I made like twenty paintings. … And I made my work for an exhibition about the Khmer Rouge. Now my painting will be carried to France for the exhibition.

R: Do you use any picture as the base for your painting?

Bav: I create my work from the image I have. The colours I use in my painting come from my image. But for traditional painting, sometimes we need to copy. For example, the Level Three students working on traditional painting go to the Royal Palace for copying. … Painting on a small canvas maybe takes one week and a big canvas maybe takes one month because making traditional painting needs so much detail.

R: You have your own image when creating painting. Do you have any sound when painting?

Bav: When I paint, I put music on. … I play many types of music like romantic songs but no pop and no hip-hop. I put music on all the time when I do painting. With those kinds of music played on, I can paint smoothly.

R: Which do you prefer: creating traditional painting or modern painting?

Bav: I like the modern one. I don't like traditional painting. When making traditional painting, it takes a very long time. Now my teacher is making a very big, traditional painting at his home.

R: In your modern painting, what do you paint?

Bav: My modern paintings are about happiness. My paintings use colours. When people see the works, they become very happy.

While pursuing his own art style, Bav expresses his admiration for Svay Ken, a painter whose works were displayed in the exhibitions such as the Asian Art Triennial in Fukuoka (Japan) in 1999 and the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art in Queensland (Australia) in 2009. Turning over the leaves of a book on Ken's art pieces, Bav remarks:

> Bav: I love one guy named Svay Ken. He made portraits. Maybe we can find his works in here. His portraits of people are very good. His paintings are popular. … He made very good paintings but he did not study at art school.
>
> R: He passed away in 2008.
>
> Bav: Yes. Cambodia was very sad because he was a good painter. … These works are about the Khmer Rouge. He produced many, many paintings.
>
> R: So his paintings are mostly about the daily lives of the people in Cambodia.
>
> Bav: He survived from the Khmer Rouge. And he thought about it and after that, he painted. See this; it's Phnom Penh. And this is Wat Phnom.
>
> R: So he painted what he experienced.
>
> Bav: Yes. He painted his experience and stories of the Khmer Rouge times and after the Khmer Rouge times also.

Under the influence of Ken's art creation, Bav is throwing all his energies into covering various types of art, ranging from traditional painting, portrait, and contemporary painting to mixed media works:

> Not all of my works are paintings. Some are contemporary ones like sculptures. And also, I make some modern paintings and some portraits. I can do all. … I made a traditional painting for my graduation but my painting was sold already. It's not here. This one is a copy I made. My friend had the picture and gave it to me. I copied the same. I painted that on a big canvas. And this is for an exhibition in 2009 here at Reyum. People bought it already. I made these two. You know a bag to put rice in. I cut it for making this work. … This is the design for creating a stained glass window. I make a design for my new painting. I don't have old paintings but I keep the designs.

Among these works that have become popular, Bav refers to his very first mixed media piece entitled "Mother's Milk", which appears in the book *In Transition: Contemporary Cambodian Artists* (Reyum, 2008):

Bav: You know this. This was the first time I made this kind of work.

R: So you put liquid of different colours in a large number of small glasses and placed them to make a shape.

Bav: Yes.

R: Are these watercolours?

Bav: For these colours, I used the paints used on the wall. What do you see? There are two people. This is a mother and this one is a baby. It's like the mother feeding the baby.

R: Did this work come from your own image?

Bav: Yes. I used like five hundred cups—many small cups. And for an exhibition, I put that. A lot of people came out to the exhibition and they were looking for the two people.

In consequence, his achievements illustrated above assigned the role of an instructor to him:

I worked as a teacher for a workshop. When students at Reyum prepare for graduation, they go to a workshop and make new artworks to graduate from the school. I worked with Ly Daravuth, the co-director of Reyum and some instructors from America and Australia.

In this way, Bav is active in enriching his experience in art. He gives an account of his encounter with diverse art forms chronologically:

R: First you became interested in painting. Which came next: filming or dance?

Bav: Next was dance. After I started learning painting techniques at Reyum, I was interested in dance. And after that, like in 2007, I had people from France, who taught me video art. Then I studied stained glass art and after that, people from Japan taught me Woodcut, and in 2009, I studied filming with my friends.

Thus, in addition to the film project discussed in the previous chapter, Bav is seeking artistic expression through contemporary dance. He recalls the group performing in a dance work entitled "Cambodian Stories":

And I did some performances, too. I went to perform dance in the United States in 2006 and in Taiwan in 2009. I went to visit ten states like Chicago, Illinois; New York; Washington D.C.; Maryland; Tallahassee, Florida; and San Francisco, California—many places.

Moreover, regarding the future project of his film group, Bav states that he himself playing guitar will make an appearance as one of the characters. He finally elaborates on what inspires him to engage in the many-sided activities described above:

> Bav: I play the musical instrument, perform contemporary dance, and make painting and film because I want to know about arts. When teacher like a dance teacher comes, I'm the first one to go to study. And I go to study this one and that one.

> R: What message do you want to tell the audience?

> Bav: I want people to know about modern Khmer culture. The modern, I mean, is like my painting on canvas. Looking at the traditional decorations on the wall in Siem Reap, I copied them on shirts.

> R: You mean the mixed media works in which you copied traditional Khmer illustrations on modern clothing.

> Bav: Yeah.

> R: So the modern and the traditional are mixed in your artwork.

> Bav: Yeah. I want to show my works like modern paintings because Cambodia now doesn't have many people who make modern paintings. I want to make all the countries know Cambodia makes paintings. And for film, maybe I want to show Khmer films in all the countries and Cambodia. The script, the title, and the poster will be in Khmer, and I hope it will show Khmer originality.

## 5.3    Style Number Three: Making Full Use of Cyberspace Connecting Cambodia and Japan

> I feel like I wanted to do something for Cambodia.
> —Mean

> … I really liked Japan when I was in Cambodia, so I really wanted to come to Japan.
> —Tino

> So like us Cambodians, we have an association. … It's a place to meet friends and just talk besides working.
> —Theara

> We are trying to expand our networks to make sure that all the students in Japan are included so that they won't feel isolated or lonely.
> —Sophat

We use our website created by the founders; it's a kind of heritage.
—Chan

We use the Internet. By using it, we can reach a lot of people. Because it eliminates the border/boundary, you just have connections.
—Sovann

The six graduate students who are from Cambodia and pursuing their studies in universities in Japan—Chan (specializing in Accounting), Mean (specializing in Electronic Engineering), Sophat (specializing in Economics), Sovann (specializing in IT), Theara (specializing in Economics), and Tino (specializing in Financial Mathematics)—acted as the executives of the Cambodian Students Association in Japan (CSAJ) during the year of 2010. They indicate the reason behind the decision to carry out research in Japanese universities:

> Sophat: Among Cambodian students, especially when they finish high school, what comes up to their minds is studying in Japan because they have a lot of *senpai* (their seniors) who got scholarship to study in Japan and got influence from them. In my case, when I finished high school, I tried twice for the scholarship and failed. Then still my dream was to come to Japan, so after I finished a bachelor's degree, I'm pursuing my master's degree here. I finally got the scholarship. So it's just like I got influence from *senpai*. You come to Japan; you can study and you can get better education. And you can get a different language, which is Japanese and I'm struggling with it. I don't even know if this is a good idea or not but sometimes it's good to know another language different from English.

> Sovann: In my case, my major is IT. Japan is very good at technology. If you go to Cambodia and you ask people, they like Japanese products very much. They are very famous in Cambodia. That's why I came to Japan.

> Mean: For me, my major is electronics. I just came to a new school. In my last school I majored in electricity and in a new school I changed my major to electronics. In both fields Japan is very famous, maybe the top in the world, I think. It's the best to come here. Before I came here, I tried twice. I failed for the first time. And for the second time I passed and I came here in 2006. I studied Japanese for one year and studied at college for three years. And now is my fifth year.

> Theara: I major in economics. As you know, Japan is scarce in natural resource. Even though being scarce in natural resource, Japan built its economy to become the world's big economy—the second after America. But now China comes to the second. We can read books about why Japan has become so strong. But I really wanted to know the facts behind that. So coming to Japan was a chance to know

that. When I came to Japan, I found that team working is really nice. It makes Japan become so strong. A Cambodian weakness is maybe that we don't have teamwork. We do things separately; people have different ideas and do things separately. They don't come together to do one thing. When we have team, we do something better.

Sophat: Collectivism.

Theara: Yeah, Japan has very good teamwork. That's the core reason that makes Japan strong.

Tino: I came to Japan because I just wanted to study at a better university than university in my country. When I was in Cambodia, I really liked Japan. I don't really like it right now. But I really liked Japan when I was in Cambodia, so I really wanted to come to Japan.

Chan: Actually, I'm really tired of this question because I'm doing job hunting. Many times with this question. One reason is that when I was in Cambodia, I studied hotel management. The hospitality service in Japan has been admired the most. Not in Asia but in Europe, the hospitality service in Japan is admired. At that time I don't know why I was really impressed by the Japanese hospitality service. But at that time in my university, there was the *Monbushō* scholarship exam for students who study hospitality, so I saw the content of that and I was impressed. And I just tested myself for the exam and I didn't think that I would be able to pass the exam but I passed. Maybe I passed in accident or something. Someone corrected my paper wrong or I don't know. That's one of the reasons. When I came to Japan, after studying hotel management, something was under my expectation; it made me feel like I have to change my course. It's not so different to change to management. Management is basically accounting. I used to do internship in a hotel, working for a financial office but it made me feel that I'm not good at accounting or bookkeeping, so I changed my course to accounting.

Pursuing their graduate studies, Sophat, Sovann, Chan, Theara, Tino, and Mean have been playing an active part in the association. They elucidate what made them serve as the committee members of CSAJ:

R: What motivates you to be engaged in the activities of the association?

Sophat: To me, I wanted to work in this association. First, by joining the association, I can make more friends like to overcome my loneliness. And then, I can contribute some to other people as well as my country. For example, now we conduct three projects. To help the country, we have our essay contest, community project, and school fund project. All these projects aim to push or inspire the people to think about their country, express their minds, and also help the vulnerable people to have access to education. I think it's very good, so I joined it.

Sovann: Well, because when I came here away from the family, it's better to stay together with people from other countries and also connect with local students like Japanese. If we stand together, we will not feel alone.

Chan: For me, I have my goal that maybe I want to open my business. Besides doing that, if I become rich, that's just one different goal. But it's just one of my feelings that I want to open, create a foundation. Actually, I talked with one of my friends in the committee that if we were rich, we want to create a foundation, maybe scholarship for students. As we came here as scholarship students, sometimes we feel like giving something back to our country. That's one of our feelings. Actually, I saw pictures in our committee. Someone took a picture of a girl, maybe taken by our committee member or from a website. Looking at the picture, I got a feeling that she has a dream or a goal but maybe something makes me feel that she cannot achieve because of the hard situation. But for myself right now, the goal of creating a foundation never stops. Maybe in the next ten or twenty years. Until right now you see in Cambodia, there are a lot of people that are rich but they don't spend money even on education. Even though they spend money on education, they don't give something back. They are not creating foundations but they like to invest. So that is my point that encourages myself to do this job.

Theara: For me, I joined this association because I wanted to get experience working in a team. When I came to Japan, I was really inspired by Japanese society. Like at school, at university there are a lot of student groups and they work cooperatively. So like us Cambodians, we have an association. When I joined, I wanted to work cooperatively with other people. Also, it's very fun. It's a place to meet friends and just talk besides working.

Tino: I joined because it's fun and to make more friends and to work with my friends.

Mean: I'm in charge of an editor. I feel like I wanted to do something for Cambodia.

Chan: Short answer but full meaning.

Sophat and Chan also point out what message and to whom CSAJ seeks to pass on:

R: The website of your association describes the mission. What messages does your organization aim to convey through the activities?

Sophat: Actually, it was written in the first initiation of this association. What we are trying to convey to the reader is what we have done to the students in Japan as well as in our country. It is to send out a message to call for participation for all Cambodian students studying in Japan as well as for donors because we also do some charity events to support poor people in Cambodia. We do charity events every year to call some fund to help those vulnerable people, so this message may be conveyed to our donors as well. I think maybe this is the main purpose of the written message. It's from our seniors.

Chan: First, our message is that we want all of us to communicate together, combine as a group because at that time when the association was founded, it was just only ten people or so. Maybe they separate in the range of ten and twenty years. But first, they wanted to send a message like being a group together. After that, we will be in charge of sharing our community by having each other. If you have any problem, just come to our committee, talk, and share. For that, it may be the charity or something that we have to create next.

The committee members then move on to discuss the changes since CSAJ was founded in 1994 in addition to the merits of participating in the association as follows:

Tino: We have more members and more events.

Sophat: What was written here is just the initiation mission. But actually, what we are doing now is in a broader view and has more goals than what is written here because in fact, for every mandate the presidents have their own manifestos. So they try to complete what is written in their manifestos, which is sometimes more than that. I can say that. We are trying to expand our networks to make sure that all the students in Japan are included so that they won't feel isolated or lonely. Our main goal is to support each other in this foreign land.

Sovann: Also, the first time when I came here, I came here from *Monbushō* but people from JDS (the Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship) had a committee to welcome students including me at the airport. I came with a *senpai*, so I totally depended on her. I didn't write a school address or phone number. I just forgot everything. Then I came and she was on another flight and at another terminal. I think the association is very nice to have the students as such.

Chan: Actually, when we created the association, we didn't think about sharing together with Japanese companies or donors. As of now, we put their brand's names on our website by getting some money to support our work. We use the money for the charity, not for us. Other companies try to share with us, which generally means to develop Cambodia. Maybe at first the founder who founded CSAJ didn't think about that. But our future committee will try to invent something new. Maybe in twenty years, something will be different. We don't know it at all but I think at that time the founder never thought about that maybe.

Finally, the CSAJ committee members elaborate on the mediums applied for disseminating the message and how effective they are:

R: Your association organizes various events such as fundraising, charity events, and also managing the official website. Why do you think using these methods is the best way to convey the message?

Sovann: We use the Internet. By using it, we can reach a lot of people. Because it eliminates the border/boundary, you just have connections. So you can stay connected together and it's very easy to communicate together. Every time we organize events, we use also Facebook—social networking. And the messages are on the website also.

Sophat: According to communication among Cambodian students and our close Japanese friends, we use the mailing list. So about every event we inform the students on the mailing list, and we post it on our website in case for the Japanese who want to know more about Cambodian student activities—so that they can go through our webpage and see some of our activities. We have a Facebook account as well. And also, for every event we publish our pamphlet and distribute it to our friends through the networks or to some association that might be interested in our activity. For example, when we did the charity event, we distributed our pamphlet to other associations and communities.

Theara: Maybe having our own website is very important because any person can access it. If you want to know about us, you can go to the website, search, and read the information over there. Some people post their questions there and we try to answer all of them. So website is very important. Just post what you want to convey and what you want to announce. Just post it there and some people may access it and they know.

Chan: I think the most important is being a reliable source. Even though we have some documents, they may think that our committee may use their contributions besides charity. They may think like that. So we try to use the media to make them realize that we are a reliable group, reliable association. We list donors for the charity because we want to let people know the money that we get from the donors has been used for the real purpose.

Sophat: So what he means is that we are trying to build trust—to build trust among students as well as donors, especially in our project, we try to use the money correctly and also we try our best to seek transparency and efficiency. We try to make sure that the money that we get from them is properly put into practice; we don't use money extravagantly. That is what we try to convey to our donors.

Chan: This is something left by our founders. If we don't use this website, maybe everything that was left by our founders will be forgotten.

Sophat: Yeah, we keep our history.

Chan: We use our website created by the founders; it's a kind of heritage.


## 5.4   Style Number Four: Teaching and Playing Musical Instruments

Music is no for the politics; music is for music.
                                        —Mr. K.D

Mr. K.D teaches ethnomusicology and classical Cambodian musical instruments at the Faculty of Music, the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA). He mentions the number of students majoring in Music: "We have nineteen students in the foundation year, nine second-year students, fourteen third-year students, and five students in their final year. They are aiming for the Bachelor of Music degree." The subjects offered at the Faculty include musicology, ethnomusicology, composition, theory, voice, and musical instruments. The division of musical instruments consists of the following two: traditional Cambodian musical instruments such as *roneat* (xylophones), *khloy* (flutes), and *kong* (gongs), and Western musical instruments (e.g., piano and guitar). Mr. K.D gives an account of how teaching proceeds in the Faculty of Music:

> Mr. K.D: On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, we have class. Students practice with their teacher and learn from the teacher. And today [on Tuesdays] and on Fridays, all students and the teacher gather together for the rehearsal for a new piece and an old piece. For example, speaking of violin, three violins are from students and two violins are from teachers because they practice with their teacher. There is no class for these two days but students practice for the rehearsal.
>
> R: Can you please talk about assignments for students specializing in musical instruments?
>
> Mr. K.D: For assignments students must compose and after that they bring their own pieces to the rehearsal. For example, we have one month for you to spend and you must compose a small, small part. After that you bring your piece. It is a very small piece, not a lot.
>
> R: How is a practical examination conducted?
>
> Mr. K.D: The practical examination is held by one student and one professor. It is the same everywhere in the world but sometimes, uh, we have ensembles and sometimes we have soloists to be examined by a teacher. It takes one hour or half an hour for the final exam for the year. And for theory and ethnomusicology, students need to write a thesis and give it to a teacher. It must be like this. But for instruments and singer (voice), they play or sing. They practice a lot.

Mr. K.D then starts to describe the close ties with music from his childhood:

First I learned how to play the traditional musical instruments from my father and my grandfather in my home, and after that I started my training at a school of music in 1980. In 1980 I started from here. First I learned from my father because my father is a musician, uh, my family is musician. My father was a very popular traditional musical instrument player in Cambodia. He played music for the King at the Royal Palace before but he passed away two years ago. My brothers and sisters are musicians, too. For example, the first-born sister is a musician, the second sister is a musician, my brother is a musician; he is a composer of traditional music, and me a musician. My younger brother is a musician and my youngest brother is a musician, too. In the Faculty of Music, we have four; my sister and my brothers are teaching here. … So in Cambodia, people call us a music family. … I studied here (at this university) and now I teach here. My friends and my family also started from here and came back to teaching here. (laugh)

While teaching at RUFA, he has gained an insight into all sorts of musical instruments by studying abroad: "I went to Japan, Korea, and Thailand also. And in 1985, I studied in Laos. In 1994, I went to study in Thailand for six months for culture exchange."

As an expert in traditional Cambodian musical instruments, he is actively engaged in giving performances in not only Cambodia but also many countries. At the national level, he performs for important national events:

I play traditional musical instruments for the public and for the King's celebration. For example, for the Buddhist Day, I will play in front of the Royal Palace. Tomorrow [April the 21st] is the Buddhist Day, you know. My family will play over there tomorrow morning, from early morning until midnight. We have two performing groups—one group for the morning and another for the evening. On the Buddhist Day many people will go to pray there.

Mr. K.D is putting his energies into performance at the international level, too:

And then I did performances everywhere in the world, for ten Asian countries such as China, Korea, and Japan, and in Europe: France, England, Spain, and Germany. And the last time for me to give a performance was in the United States. I stayed in Massachusetts, near Canada. In 2007, I was in Massachusetts for the performance of a Cambodian-American opera in Lowell. It was the first opera played in Cambodian. … I just came back from Hanoi and Jakarta for participating in a music festival called 'Cracking Bamboo'. And next month I will go to Seoul again for the 'ASEAN-Korea Traditional Music Orchestra'. I have been to Seoul four times; the next visit is my fifth time.

Moreover, in the interview, Mr. K.D suggests that music is inseparable from his profession as well as personal life:

R: Is there any place inspiring you to play music?

Mr. K.D: For me, I get an inspiration for music from everywhere I go. When I record with my camera, sometimes I put music for the film. When we see Sihanoukville, for example, we think how we can put music and what music to put, like for the beach and for the sea. We take music to this movie, this feature. We think and compose by ourselves. … When I travel, I think what music is good for the view.

Mr. K.D thus manifests zeal for teaching classical Cambodian musical instruments, playing them, and giving performances. He expresses what spurs him on to fill the role of a university educator:

R: So you learned how to play musical instruments when you were young and now you teach at university. Why is the medium, which is teaching traditional musical instruments, the best way for you?

Mr. K.D: The main reason for teaching traditional Cambodian music is about those whom I teach. They will follow me and find a way for creating and playing music pieces, and after that they will write the notations for documenting the tradition.

In addition, he elucidates a message he hopes to convey as a musical instrument player:

R: What do you want to tell the listeners through your music?

Mr. K.D: Different cultural music is ok for us. When we have a picture, it can be seen as a different culture but for music, it is ok; there is no difference in there, I think. When we have music, everything can be understood. For example, you make a film but with no music, they (the viewers) don't understand. And music is for everything, for the people. We call music language. Music is for music, music knows everything, and music is for everything because, uh, when we have music like language, by language sometimes they (people) don't understand but by music it is very easy for understanding. Language is different from music. Music is different from language because music is very easy for people and language is very difficult for us. When I hear music, I understand, 'Oh, it is this culture, that culture, this music is from where, and that one is from where.

R: I agree. I think music is powerful.

Mr. K.D: Yes. The purpose of music is very easy for people. For example, in church, we have music everybody can get, everybody can listen to. For example, in Cambodia, there is music in pagoda people can listen to with no problem because music is for music. Music is no for the politics; music is for music. (laugh)

**5.5    Style Number Five: Creating Installation Works**

> Art is not just for Khmer people. But art is for everybody.
> —Kleng

Kleng works as an artist whose specialty is creating installations, namely, three-dimensional productions. After graduation from RUFA with a degree in Interior Design, she has been devoted to show her works at various exhibitions held in the places promoting art creation including *le Centre Culturel Français du Cambodge* (CCF; the French Cultural Center of Cambodia) renamed *l'Institut Français du Cambodge*, Meta House (German Cambodian Cultural Center), and Java Café & Gallery. She cooperates with artists inside and outside Cambodia occasionally and in April 2010 when I conducted interview with her, there was an exhibition entitled "Pleased to Meet You" taking place at CCF. This was a presentation of experimental art resulting from the collaboration of young Cambodian artists and French artists, who explored the essence of intercultural human relations. For this show, Kleng made a sculpture using metal. She describes the encounter of the audience with her artwork:

> The idea of the exhibition is 'work in process', so we did not finish out artworks. …
> My work is in the corner because sometimes people don't know where my work is.
> Especially, my work is experimental, so people don't know what my work looks
> like. So I just explain a little bit about the work, add something like wire, and you
> will see this is my work. I didn't say anything directly about the work in writing an
> explanation. When the show is open, I just take notes on what it is that people get
> from my work and what they are interested in. I just want to get more experience.

Kleng has been active in enriching her experience since her university days. She talks about Selepak Neari, an artist group she belongs to and the first work she presented for the exhibition named "*Mean Rup Mean Tuk*":

> Kleng: This is a women's artist group. They do art here in Cambodia. They are
> Khmer women. This is the first time to join them and work together. It's quite new,
> just started in 2007.
>
> R: When did you start creating an installation?

Kleng: I made the first one in 2007. It was for this Selapak group that I joined. I did an installation about what they call 'Half Body, Half Suffering', the title of the show curated by Linda Saphan. I installed chairs, not modern chairs. But for Khmer people, we have three different chairs. One is really square. And one is square but it's like a stand chair. And also, the other one is a small one, very low. And we speak about, uh, to represent how the people suffer themselves, when they have body and when they have life and body. When we have body, we have suffering. It means that sometimes when you say you are suffering, people fight you and make you suffer. But sometimes you do it by yourself, like a man, when he goes to find a prostitute girl, gets HIV. And after, they get suffering by themselves. Nobody does it for him. And girls, when the national beauties think 'Oh, I want to have a high nose, big eyes', then they do it and they suffer by themselves.

R: You mean plastic surgery.

Kleng: Yes. And the youth at that time, many people played football and after they lost, sometimes they killed themselves. They did something bad. And also, at that time if they won, they got a lot of money. They didn't care; they were just 'Ok, I have fun' and took drugs. This is the way they suffer by themselves. This is from the first installation I did.

Thus, Kleng creates installation works dealing with a variety of themes including social issues. She articulates the characteristics of her installations as follows:

R: For your installation, what kinds of material do you use?

Kleng: It's mixed. But normally, I never forget metal, string, and spray to make colours. Because my background is interior design, I still use colours for the foundation of my work.

R: In terms of your installation, is it abstract?

Kleng: Yes. It's more abstract. I don't know why but I always like it. For my feeling, when I do work, especially I choose to do installation. I feel that it's more experience that you can see quickly. When you want to do [installation], you set up something. Then you can see how it looks like and how the feeling shows up, shows to you. That's why I choose to do this. You can practice with a real piece. This is my feeling that I like to do installation. It's more practical for me. It's not just to draw. I know that I still do drawing. For me, I like that because I feel that I'm still like a teenager. That's why I say when I do something, I want to see quickly; I don't want to wait. (laugh) And also, installation makes me have a different feeling. When you set up something just to change a little bit, then you will see other things come up. This is what I like. (laugh)

She then gives a detailed account of how she forms and develops her work:

R: Can you describe the process of creating an installation piece?

Kleng: I start from drawing. Mostly, I do drawing to think, to see the image. … I draw and get the ideas like what the image looks like, so sometimes it's like copying. You get the ideas, then you draw on paper, and you copy it. But after that, what you do is different from what you are drawing. You catch and feel something and keep doing it. And then it makes you think more, like how to change the form into something different, not to go in the same way. And also, I like to get the new idea from other people—not just friends, not just artists but from the people. They give me something that is of interest to my work. And when I do it, I feel that of course, it's good for you to listen to the people but not just to do what they say. It's like you understand and show how much you understand what they say, not just to copy. Then I try my best to do about how I can understand what they say. This is what I experienced from this. Before, my work was a repeat. First, I have wire and I make it in curve. And after that, I make a sculpture to do something, make a shape, and then step by step from the first idea, I always shave it off. And after, in the end, finis. I like to do this. I say that more experiences get me something that makes me do more experiment for my idea. (laugh)

R: From where do you get inspiration to create an installation work?

Kleng: In this case, I can say my eyes show me every time. When I was young, I just saw a shadow like that. When you go all the way and watch it, you always count one, two, three. I liked to do this when I was young. When the shadow came to the ground or on the way, I always saw something, you know, like getting the feeling: 'This looks like men speaking together'. I asked my friends, my mom, and my brother at that time. I remember they said, 'What? I cannot look what you see'. This is what I got.

While focusing on the creation of installation works, Kleng takes part in filmmaking. Not only she took charge of casting and costuming for a film production but also she gained the skills of filming and editing. Between the two forms of artistic expression, Kleng gives weight to creating installations:

Kleng: … I say that I like to do my installation because I can go touch the real thing and create something. Even if you make use of visual arts and arrange it, I say more installation for me.

R: Why do you think the medium, which is creating installation art, is the most effective way to address the audience?

Kleng: For me, I think, uh, the form is more effective because in installation we need to do something to make something happen. This stimulates the form—sometimes not really a good form—and also the meaning of the material that you use. Sometimes it's like simple, simple material but you can choose [to use it] here. If you don't know, you just go pass. If you know, you can take it and then you make

something happen for the meaning of the material that you want to use or the feeling you want to show. It depends but mostly it is the form.

R: So you aim to transform the original material into a new form through your work.

Kleng: Yes.

Her installation works are often called the "contemporary" and she expresses her thoughts on art in general in relation to contemporary art and Khmer art:

R: A professor of the Faculty of Fine Arts at RUFA mentioned combining Khmer art and Western art to create something new, something alternative.

Kleng: This is what they call, uh, contemporary. It's good.

R: What do you think about that?

Kleng: I like it, too. I agree that it's good that you get history; you get to know how history is going on with your history. Also, you need to share with the Western—not only Westerners but to share with people from abroad. And then your making and combining is more helpful for art. Art is not just for Khmer people. But art is for everybody. This is what I like. Art is in all the world. And it's not just for rich people or not just for poor people but it's combined. It depends on whether people can be connected or not. Yes, I like it because it's like a new system.

R: So Khmer art is more realistic.

Kleng: Yes, realistic and decorative, you know, from the Angkor temple. There are many things. But I don't really do that. I used to study in high school and I spent two years studying classical art, so I know some of them. The classical like the *Ramayana*, you know, and also parts of decorations from the temple like lotus. I drew some of them. I really like it but it's like for me, my original thinking is natural. I say I don't like something the same as everybody. Of course, I like to do something very detailed. That's why I chose to get seven skills when I was in a high school of classical art. I chose classical painting because I liked the detail and they had colours. But after that, I say why we still do the same, the same, why we don't go out. I can do this. It's different but still Khmer, so this is what I'm thinking.

During the process of creating artwork, Kleng values the moment of reaching an impasse. She elaborates on this point, referring to her experience in making the art piece for the exhibition at CCF:

R: Is there any time you have difficulty in creating your work?

Kleng: Sure. Yes. … [N]ormally, I say that I want to do this and then I follow my idea. I don't want to lose the objective of my work so that it can show me something. It's like I need this form, so I want to create this form; I don't want to go anywhere different from this form. This is the idea from Sopheap Pich. He is a Khmer artist. He is a sculptor, too. He says that sometimes you just focus on your idea, what you want but sometimes you meet your work to see what it wants to show you. And these two feelings are so different. What you want is like what you said already. But when you meet your artwork to tell you, you get more feeling, get more interest in how it would like, and you follow them. This time it was very hard because as my habit when I do my artwork, I am alone. I need to be quiet. This time I did workshop because sometimes friends worked together. Like me having critical ideas, I like this idea to find a way of how I can do; how much I understand; and how much I can show what I understand, what I get from them. Sometimes I am stuck and also show my bad feelings because you know everybody is like that. But for me, I want to express everything true for me and show what my way of thinking is. And also, this is my hard time. Sometimes I am stuck because I have a plan and also time is a limit for me. We did the workshop, so we needed to think how we can make the process or think what we want to show the audience and how the show can be done. Sometimes I get, 'Ok, when I put the feeling, how can I show the audience?' because I always think about other people. That's why I get stuck sometimes. Many times it makes me stuck. Then after, I always get the feeling. I try to find my feeling. When I keep doing well in my work, I try to find how the feeling is and I say, 'Ok, let it in freedom'. When I do art, I like to be in freedom. I don't want anybody to block myself. And after, I say, 'Ok, let it be' and feel free to do something. Then the feeling comes and an idea also comes. So this is my experience I have.

R: So you think being stuck helps you to get new ideas.

Kleng: Yes.

R: Your experience overlaps with mine in filmmaking.

Kleng: Yes. We don't know what we are gonna do because sometimes we think too much and we put the hard feeling too much. I need to have success. I need to have a process. That's why there will never be success for you, if you think like that. It'll never, never come to you. The winner will not come because you're like, 'Ok, I want to do this' but you don't know how you can get your ability. Even you have a very good person who comes to tell you, 'Oh, you need to do this and that', but art is not like to listen to someone and do what they say but it comes from your feeling and shows out from your heart. How the way you are thinking and the feeling are— this is what I'm interested in. (laugh) … And this time you need to develop. When you have a bad thing, then you will come up with a new thing, with a very good thing. But before you get the best, you need to get many problems [and] to do something bad.

## 5.6　Style Number Six: Disseminating the Buddhist Teachings across both Physical Space and Cyberspace

> So if people understand and follow the Buddha's teachings, everything bad will not happen.
>
> > —The Venerable Nanda

The Venerable Nanda is engaged in offering Buddhist services to the Ottawa community. Daily services at the temple cover seven days a week and yearly services based on the lunar calendar include the Khmer New Year (a celebration held in April), *Bonn Phchum Ben* (a festival venerating the deceased such as the ancestors), *Bonn Visakha Puja* (a celebration worshiping Buddha and reminding oneself of the precepts), and so on. These events take place at the temple as well as an arena so that a large number of participants can be accommodated. The Venerable Nanda shows untiring zeal in the pursuit of his work:

> I think what motivates us to provide Buddhist services for the Khmer community and also people who want to learn about Buddhism is that through our study of the Buddha's teachings, I think the Buddha's teachings has enough teaching, enough way to practice for peace and happiness in daily life. So if people understand and follow the Buddha's teachings, everything bad will not happen. The community will be peaceful, if people follow only the five precepts in Buddhism: no killing nor hurting each other; no stealing; no sexual misconduct; no telling a lie; and no drinking alcohol. These five precepts are enough to make the community to be a peaceful one, if people practice them. And these five rules are not impossible, if people learn to do them.

Grounded on the sense of mission illustrated above, the Venerable Nanda considers the diffusion of the Buddhist teachings in diverse spaces including "cyberspace" as important. Hence, he takes the initiative in making full use of visual technology on behalf of the missionary work:

R: Who creates the website of the temple?

Ven. Nanda: It's me. I created and manage the website of the temple.

R: Why did you decide to open the website of the temple?

Ven. Nanda: The reason is because I think the website is a great way to convey, to spread the message of Buddhism and the activity of our organization to the world. Everywhere you can check, know it, and learn about it. I just updated the site last night.

R: Is the website bilingual—in English and Khmer?

Ven. Nanda: English and Khmer are mixed each other. Some sections are in English and some in Khmer.

R: You have added the Buddha's words and Khmer literature to the site.

Ven. Nanda: Yes. I have included the Buddha's words and Khmer literature on the website. And also, I have uploaded pictures and videos. Over here I placed links from other websites, useful websites so that people checking the site can access information easily.

R: How often do you update the website?

Ven. Nanda: I do not update the website often. Sometimes I leave it for about a few months. I update it every two or three months. But sometimes I do it every week just to check which link is broken and which is not.

In addition to the website created specifically for the temple, the Venerable Nanda currently takes charge of a Facebook page, a Twitter page, and his own blog supplying information of Buddhism as well as Cambodian culture(s) and also introducing poems by monks. Moreover, he produces videos capturing the events and makes them available on a YouTube channel he maintains.

He describes the experience in filming and editing as follows:

R: Do you yourself do video recording or who does recording?

Ven. Nanda: When we celebrate ceremonies, we have someone who does video recording for us.

R: And who does editing?

Ven. Nanda: Most of them I edit. But one thing I cannot do is taking a picture because when the ceremony is in process, I have to sit. But sometimes when we have a chance, we take pictures. But when the ceremony is proceeding, we sit in front of all the people, so we cannot. (laugh)

R: Which editing software do you use?

Ven. Nanda: For editing, I use AVS Video Editor. But with Ustream, we can play it with Windows Media Video and QuickTime.

R: Do you enjoy editing films?

Ven. Nanda: Yes. I like editing films but it takes much time.

R: How many videos did you already edit and upload?

Ven. Nanda: I have just a few videos about ceremonies. And I uploaded some videos onto YouTube. But most videos on YouTube are available only in Khmer. It takes a lot of time to manage the website. The thing about the website is that it is only me maintaining and updating it. And there are some difficulties with the server. Sometimes it develops links in my website. I have to update them again and again.

While locating himself in Ottawa, his activity with visual technology is limitless. Making the best use of technological tools, social networking services in particular, the Venerable Nanda expresses his hope as follows:

R: So you intend to distribute the Buddhist teachings to not only Khmer people but also other people.

Ven. Nanda: We have to distribute the Buddha's teachings to people and we want to share our Khmer culture with the community and the Khmer generation who were born in Canada. When they want to know about the Khmer, they will know what Khmer has to do and what Khmer culture is.

In consequence of the devoted activities portrayed above, the broad and strong network is formed and it renders services to the expansion of the temple, as the Venerable Nanda remarks:

R: How do you see the past, present and future in relation to the activities of your temple?

Ven. Nanda: We created this organization, the temple in 2006, so it's been just four years. It's quite new. We see the development of our organization. It's getting better and better. I think in the past it was good and now it's better. And I think it will be much better in the future. Our work has got support from people in the Cambodian communities—Cambodian people not only in Ottawa but some from Vancouver, too. Supports also come from Montréal, Toronto, Hamilton, and Sherbrooke—so many communities of Cambodia from everywhere. When they know we are new and want to build a temple, they support us.

## 5.7 Style Number Seven: Writing Books and Delivering Lectures

> Conveying the importance of peace and life to people is the way I have found so as not to spoil the lives of the people who passed away. In short, the most valuable in this world are life, peace, freedom, and rights.
>
> —Ms. P

In the previous chapter, Ms. P revealed the hardship she suffered in her childhood. Under a resolution not to turn her eyes away from the bitter experience, she is devoting herself to publicizing an important message through her writings and lectures. She explains what she hopes to tell as a writer in the Cambodian diaspora:

R: What message in particular do you want to convey through your works?

Ms. P: Broadly speaking, the theme is that the most precious in this world are life and peace. In addition, it is not until securing life and peace that we obtain freedom and rights. There is no meaning in living when we have our lives with no peace, no freedom, and no rights. Because there exist peace, freedom, and rights, we feel that it is magnificent to be alive as human beings. Let me give you an example of what peace is like. We always take good care of ourselves; we wash our faces when we get up in the morning and sometimes form a splendid smile in a mirror. This is for ourselves but at the same time, it is tied to coming in contact with other people and showing consideration and compassion. To put it briefly, it is essential to value the lives of other people in the same way as we cherish ours, for war and peace are all concerned in our lives. The purpose of going to war is to take people's lives and winning a victory means to take more lives. When he/she wants to stay alive, his/her opponent also wants to be alive. If conflicts taking people's lives were gone, the world(s) would be peaceful ultimately. From respecting each other will emerge peace and then it will be the foundation of freedom and rights. It is simple to express this in words but I can say it because I survived the war. The Pol Pot era impaired the value of human life, the dignity, and the prestige severely, and I thought that this was wrong. I cannot help feeling rage and sorrow for those who died. But even if I keep fretting myself about that, the deceased will not come back. It has been thirty-five years since then, so I know it well. Conveying the importance of peace and life to people is the way I have found so as not to spoil the lives of the people who passed away. In short, the most valuable in this world are life, peace, freedom, and rights. When these exist, the world(s) will be splendid. It is important to have consideration for others as each individual cares for him/herself.

Ms. P also articulates to whom she wants to convey the message shown above:

R: Is there any particular audience you want to tell your message through your works?

Ms. P: I wrote the book *The Sky of No Colour* (*Irononai Sora*) published in 2001 in Japanese, so I was sending a message from Japan at the beginning. The reason was that I wanted to tell why I, the person who was born and grew up in the completely different environment, had to escape from my country and come to Japan, in other words, the cause of having put a label of the so-called 'Indochinese refugee' on me. I feel that there is something wrong when I am told: 'You came here because there was war in the country of your birth. That's pitiful'. It is not like that. What I wanted to convey as a message is that war is dreadful; it is brutality that takes people's lives, disperses families, and stops us from living in our own country. Nevertheless, some of the readers say, 'While you have such a sunny disposition, it is pitiful that you went through such a painful experience. It is lucky that you were able to come to Japan, met a kind-hearted Japanese man here, and had cute babies. I wish you good fortune'. In this way, there is often a difference between what I intend to convey and what the readers grasp. However, the contents of *The Sky of No Colour* do not function as a message toward Cambodian people. The reason is that in the same way I did, the local people lived through the Pol Pot era, which was like the inferno, and each one of us has gone through hardships. Yet I am a person who fled from the homeland, while the people have been making efforts to live inside the country. I have a sense of inferiority about that at all times. I am caught in a dilemma. Those who are driven into a corner with no room for choice are the children and the people in the vulnerable position. I wanted to make this known, so I did my best in writing a book by recalling my bitter memories. Relatively speaking, this book [published in 2001] is intended for adults. And then in 2008, using my first language, I wrote the book *The Rainbow-Coloured Sky: Beyond the Genocide in Cambodia 1975-2009* headed for the Cambodian readers. Currently, in addition to the Khmer version, there are the English version, the Japanese version, and the French version available. And also the Chinese version will be delivered from Cambodia in June 2011. Moreover, I hope to translate it into as many languages as possible and publish it. The audience I want to tell my message is all the people in the globe because the lives of the people in this world are all equal. This is a really crucial matter, so I would like everyone in the globe to know it. I want people to realize that 'war absolutely must not be made and human life is precious" by reading the book by me who experienced war. It is important to have thoughts like 'It is sad this much that the lives of the precious family members were taken. If the same happened to me, I would feel odious'. The readers never fail to find important messages such as 'I cannot forget that particular scene' or 'I wonder why this scene should be like this way'. Hence, the target for my books is a wide public.

Ms. P then goes into details to describe the significance of writing:

R: Why do you think writing books is the best medium for conveying your message?

Ms. P: I am currently engaged in delivering lectures but the contents of the talk are limited. For example, when a lecture is for junior high school students, the time allowed for me is about one hour and a half even in a two-hour class. In this case, it would be impossible to talk fully. I would think that I should have said this and that. Sometimes I am told that the audience wanted to hear more about some portion of

the talk. There is certain part I cannot tell personally. In terms of writing, a person usually writes in parallel with the passage of time. In my case, I have no diary or anything else. Since there was nothing—no pen, pencil or paper in that era, everything was all my memory—a memory of the ten-year old. I wanted to verify it; I wanted to confirm that even a ten-year old child could judge whether the conduct of adults at that time was good or bad. Because it was the undoubted memory of mine, I wrote it down in the first published book. It seems that some of the readers doubt whether the memory of the kid is really authentic. There are many books written by people who go to Cambodia and collect data by conducting interview and research. But I never read those related books when I write. I wrote the book based on my own memory. While I am sleeping at night, I keep a pen and a notebook beside a pillow. Even if it is one or two o'clock in the morning, no matter what time it is, I suddenly wake up and start to write. Even if my body is sleeping, my brain is active, trying hard to recollect. It is a strange experience. Usually, we try to sleep well and have a good dream after all the tiring works in the daytime. So I was amazed by the function of the human brain. I itemized my remembrance to some extent. But during that, I recalled the past in fragments. The bedside light was too small to see what I wrote down clearly but immediately I recalled something, I scribbled it down. My head is now empty of these recollections since I have used up all of them. That is the first printed book *The Sky of No Colour*. In addition, the second published book portrays the trip in which I took my daughter to Cambodia and held a joint memorial service for the victims of the genocide. At the time, I was keeping a diary, so it was not hard to write at all. The only thing to do was to add my feelings to each scene. In this case, there was no need to bring the past to mind. All I had to do was to describe what I felt and thought in detail. As a result, what I was able to illustrate was that before going to Cambodia, I could not think of them (those who did harm in the Pol Pot era) as human beings but after I returned from the trip, I had an intention of forgiving them. The readers can also realize: 'A human being sets her/his feelings free gradually like this' by following my writing in print. That is the merit of a work put into print. Regarding the second published book, the first half of it includes a good deal of description of my experience documented in the first printed book. The reason is that I am convinced that the contents of the previous writing based thoroughly on my memory are correct. This is a proof resulted from having actually gone to Cambodia to ascertain the accuracy of the memory in my childhood. Therefore, I have not revised any part of the previous writing. I thought this was really good in many ways. And also, I was amazed by the memory of a child over again. Ultimately, what I wanted to tell the most is that even a child of about ten years of age can understand and distinguish right from wrong. I thought that this case would be very useful in the educational settings. As a matter of fact, it is pleasant to hear sentiments of the readers who have no experience as mine. I can hear interesting opinions unexpectedly and they provide me with very useful information. Everyone has her/his own view and it is not like who is right and who is wrong. Conversely, that is the good part. When I receive feedback and advice during my lecture, I make the best use of them for the next talk at another place and do my utmost in conveying the message within the given time frame.

While writing books, Ms. P is occupied in delivering lectures. She already visited places including Fukuoka, Kobe, Kyoto, Nagoya, Osaka, Tokushima, and Yamanashi as a lecturer. Moreover, as invited to a symposium on the third country resettlement program for the people from Myanmar, launched in September 2010, her insight as a person living in the diaspora is indispensable for the further development of the Japan's immigration policy. Carrying out these activities, inevitably reminding her of the past, involves sufferings. With regard to the very first lecture of hers, Ms. P points out the mental conflict she underwent and the transition in her feelings afterwards:

> When I was invited to speak at the Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC) as a lecturer for the very first time, I felt that something was wrong. I thought why I had to talk about such a painful matter in front of people. I wanted to confine it in the same manner as other people, that is, I thought that I could reset my life to zero when I set foot on Japan as a human being. I thought I would start from there. When I was invited to give a lecture, I had to recollect the past. I felt there was something wrong with that. If I turned it down, I would be asked the reason—why I mind lecturing. At that point in time, I had neither confidence nor composure for keeping my pride as a Cambodian. I just wanted people to leave me alone; this was my real intention in those days. But after all, this was the beginning as a lecturer. As the number of lectures I delivered increased, my family, my children started to think: 'Mother is a little bit different from other mothers'. I hoped that the kids would think spontaneously: 'Mother is interested in Cambodia and speaks the Cambodian language. Then take us to Cambodia'. In consequence, my feelings started to change with the thought that it is no good to pass it over in silence. I felt the need to tell my family fully in the first place rather than for decency's sake. I realized that I had not let even my family know it properly before showing to the public that I am like this and came to Japan because of that. There is no need to hide it. In this way, with these occurrences as a start, the present one (the latest book) began to connect me with the future at last. Right now, after thirty years since I came to Japan, I can finally stand on the same start line as other people.

## 5.8    Style Number Eight: Acting as a Scholar of Fine Arts and Creating Artworks

> I mean that we are open to all the kinds of art for students to do research on. If you like abstract painting, ok, you do it. We have the policy that we should be an open-minded school.
>                                   —Mr. S C

Mr. S C is devoting his energies to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning fine arts as the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, RUFA. He also provides the audience with the opportunity to direct their attention to social issues through the works he creates as an artist/designer. Mr. S C first gives an account of the history of RUFA:

> This school was founded by the King in 1918. The school was like a fine art workshop for the King. But in the period after 1918, the school was moved to here. Before the school was built in this place, the workshop of the King was in the Royal Palace. The King moved the workshop to here and got teachers and artists to teach students. But in those days, it was like a primary school of arts. In 1965, the school of fine arts was upgraded to the higher, the university level awarding degrees like BFA. At that time, the university offered areas of study like drama, music, architecture, and anthropology. Between 1975 and 1979, I think that maybe you know, the school had been closed during the Pol Pot times. After that, in 1980, we opened the school again but it was only a primary school of arts. In 1988, the school was open again as a higher educational institution. We have five faculties and the Faculty of Fine Arts awards BFA degrees to students. We hope to open MFA or PhD programs but we need to secure teachers for it because a lot of professors and lecturers were killed in the Pol Pot times. So this is the start of the Royal University of Fine Arts.

Mr. S C then moves on to describe the structure of the Faculty of Fine Arts:

> Mr. S C: The Faculty of Fine Arts has four subject areas to offer. We have two subjects for design. For design, we have interior design and visual communication design. For fine arts, we have painting and sculpture. Within the Faculty of Fine Arts, we have these two departments (design and fine arts).
>
> R: How many professors are in your faculty?
>
> Mr. S C: Now we have thirty-two lecturers. Some of them have MFAs that were granted from European universities but some instructors in the younger generation have BFAs that were granted in Cambodia.

He also indicates the number of students studying in the Faculty and the characteristic qualities of the curriculum and the instruction policy put into practice:

> The total of one hundred and sixteen students study in our faculty. They have four years to study for BFA degrees, so in the curriculum, I'd like to say that, uh, we have the policy that we should provide them with how to find creativity in artwork about the Khmer, modernized civilization. It means that for the half of the academic year, we provide them with courses in traditional Khmer art and for the other half of the academic year, we guide them to learn modern art. That means we mix both Khmer art and Western art. … Sometimes we give them a topic and they have time

to do research and create a work of art for the topic. For the academic year, in the curriculum, we put some assignments like realist, surrealist, and modern art styles. I mean that we are open to all the kinds of art for students to do research on. If you like abstract painting, ok, you do it. We have the policy that we should be an open-minded school.

Based on the principle illustrated above, the Faculty of Fine Arts, RUFA offers courses on art of diverse countries and various ages. Besides Khmer art and Western art, Mr. S C shows that the subjects covering the art of other Asian countries are also available to students: "We choose what is necessary for students to learn and bring it together. It includes very early art like Indian and Chinese, and also some in Southeast Asia."

Moreover, Mr. S C explains how students are admitted to the Faculty of Fine Arts and improve their skills through their studies:

R: What are the criteria for admission to the school?

Mr. S C: We have an entrance examination for students. When they apply for the university, they have to write their background information like CV. We also have one time to test all of the students. But this is a problem because we need a lot of time to test all of the students. We give them a test in drawing or sketching with colours or pencil.

R: How do students in your faculty decide what to major in?

Mr. S C: When applying for the school, they have to specify what they plan to study from the options of interior design, visual communication design, painting, and sculpture. Then newly enrolled students belong to the specified major. But we have one year for students of different majors to study together. All of the students in the freshman year learn a lot of theory, a lot of science, and some of the professional skills. After that, they join the major they applied for and gain professional skills.

R: Can you describe how students advance their studies?

Mr. S C: Before enrolling in the university, students learn general subjects such as mathematics at the high school level. After enrolling here, students start to study according to their major. In the final year, students have to prepare for the final project. They can choose a topic that they like. And we have a committee of professors that explain to them and guide them about the subject matter, so they have freedom to choose a subject for their final projects.

Mr. S C then refers to the paintings displayed in his office as examples showing how graduating students compile the knowledge and skills obtained during the four years of study into artworks:

> R: Could you talk about some works created by students as their graduation projects?
>
> Mr. S C: … The topic that some students during their fourth year chose for their final projects was traditional Khmer painting. You see this is a Khmer style. So they have freedom to choose a topic such as modern, traditional, and mixing like this—mixing traditional Khmer painting and modern one. Some of them can do like this. This one has a dense characteristic. It means students are free to choose a topic during the fourth year.

In acting as the Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Mr. S C sets his sights on achieving the following goals:

> Mr. S C: I'm now looking at the future in two ways, being in a position as the Dean. In one way, I think again and again that we have to develop all of the academic curricula and, uh, develop, deepen learning materials. And another thing for the future, in my perspective, is that we have to update the school and find partners, like cooperation because presently, we have a lot of cooperation with Korea, Japan, France, and Thailand. So this is the second point in my policy that we have to establish collaboration with developed institutions in the world.
>
> R: Do you have a plan to implement a film program in the curriculum?
>
> Mr. S C: If possible, it would be nice to have a film program in the faculty. Funding is needed for that. (laugh)

While playing an important role as an academic professional, Mr. S C is engaged in creating works as an artist/designer. He mentions his stay in Europe and travels in many countries, which made him acquainted with diverse modes of art:

> Mr. S C: I'm a designer. In the background, I'm also a painter. I studied abroad; I studied interior design in Europe.
>
> R: Do you travel a lot?
>
> Mr. S C: I used to travel a lot. But two years ago, I spent all the pages in three or four passports of mine. So now I don't travel. (laugh) You know, in Asia like Korea, Japan, China, and Southeast Asia, I travelled to … ten countries. This was a

program for arts, so I was very crazy about conferences, seminars, and workshops. So just now I stay here. (laugh)

R: Regarding the countries you travelled to, which country was the most impressive to you in terms of art creation?

Mr. S C: I liked a lot of things in Asia. This was not abstract but the traditional styles of art in China and Japan were impressive because traditional paintings in China and Japan were also very, how to say, very fine. But in terms of abstract art that I saw in Southeast Asia and was impressive to me, I think that would be the one in the Philippines. They have a lot of modern artists. But I don't say that for European or Western countries because they are at the high level for creating modern, contemporary art.

Mr. S C then talks about the distinctive features of his expression in the form of painting, using mixed media:

Mr. S C: Personally, I like abstract art. Around 1985, a lot of my works were abstract art. … For painting, I do not use computer. I use a pen on canvas. But sometimes I use computer for design works, like I do interior design or logo design.

R: Do you paint people or scenery?

Mr. S C: I like creating painting of the political side—to critique something. (laugh)

R: Could you explain why?

Mr. S C: Because in these days, there are a lot of problems in Khmer society. So I like critical painting.

R: Can you talk about your painting style?

Mr. S C: Yes. I like creating mixed media works. Sometimes I mix a lot of materials on canvas such as paper, metal, and some materials that we can find easily—cheaper materials. (laugh)

R: Is there any particular audience for your artworks? To whom are you addressing?

Mr. S C: I don't critique the government or society but I critique the problem, the social problem. I mean that, uh, I bring the problem in society into my artworks so that I can present a critique of the social problem. This is to open the way … for the problem to go away. I like this. But I don't like criticizing personality or the government.

Based on his expertise in art, Mr. S C points out which forms of expression hold good on the whole, when artists seek to appeal to the audience:

Mr. S C: I think that there are two effective ways. Painting and the media arts are effective ways.

R: In North America, YouTube is now popular. People record with their cameras and upload videos. And people watch those and share their works with other people. Do you think this medium is effective in art creation?

Mr. S C: I think that it can be effective in some way because in Cambodia, some film can interest people but some film cannot. It's the same as anywhere else. This is up to the people's knowledge. If the people have higher knowledge, I think it's so good, effective. … I think painting is now a little bit better medium than filming in Cambodia in sending out a message.

## 5.9 Style Number Nine: Producing and Broadcasting Radio and Television Programs

> Without media people know nothing about domestic violence, trafficking of women, no behaviour change and no law or policy against those problems.
> —Ms. T S

Ms. T S acts as the co-founder and executive director of the Women's Media Centre of Cambodia (WMC). WMC is comprised of several units such as producing and broadcasting radio and television programs, conducting research, providing mobile broadcasting across the provinces, extending the cooperation nationally and internationally, and so forth. As an expert in mass media, Ms. T S is well acquainted with both its strength and its weakness. In the previous chapter, she pointed out the problematic side of the media generating the negative portrayal of women. At the same time, she acknowledges the significant contribution of mass media to uncovering and grappling with serious problems that are presently taking place in Cambodian society:

R: What motivates you to operate the organization as the executive director?

Ms. T S: Well, as I told you, before the Khmer Rouge times, I did not work for the media; I started my new life with media works after the Khmer Rouge times, as a journalist but for the print media—newspaper. I worked there for ten years. Then during the UNTAC times, there was an election in Cambodia sponsored by UN in 1993. At that time freedom of expression was more open, so I decided to move from the newspaper to work for the Women's Media Centre because I was interested in the women's status. Why? Because after the Khmer Rouge times there are a lot of

problems that women faced and most of them are low educated and I think that media plays a very important role in providing and disseminating informative and educational programs to women, you know.

Poverty is also one of the challenges in Cambodia. Women face poverty because she doesn't have access to education (parents prioritize son to go to school rather than daughter); she doesn't go to school, so when she is low educated, she cannot get good job. You know it's a crosscutting issue, so that's why women are facing a lot of problems.

I believe that media plays an important role in providing information and educating them to upgrade the status of their living. For instance, let me tell you in 1993, there were very few media in Cambodia, so people knew nothing about HIV and AIDS, and most of the men, of the people did not believe that HIV killed people and could not be cured. They believed that HIV was a kind of Khmer disease that could be cured, but in next five or ten years, many Cambodian people died of HIV. Then later on, after media provided a lot of information and educational programs to the people, … they were aware of that [and] the number of HIV affected people decreased from year to year.

So this is how important the media is. Without media people know nothing about domestic violence, trafficking of women, no behaviour change and no law or policy against those problems. This the reason why I decided to move to the Women's Media Centre and I am one of the five founders of the Women's Media Centre established in 1995.

R: Your organization creates films.

Ms. T S: Yes. Women's Media Centre produces radio and television programs. We have our own radio station but we don't have a TV station. We produce TV weekly programs and purchase the airtime from the other TV station to broadcast. It's different from other countries that the stations buy productions from the producers.

The employees at WMC are taking the initiative in producing radio and television programs with critical thinking put into practice and a gender perspective incorporated. Ms. T S suggests that WMC is devoted to cover a wide range of subject areas:

R: What messages does your organization aim to convey through your activities?

Ms. T S: All the productions focus on many issues. As you know, media must focus on hot issues. You can see in our report that we focus on women's rights, human rights, health, reproductive health, domestic violence, gender, democracy, election, legal framework, good governance, poverty, education, you know, all the issues related to women's issues and social issues, which benefit women.

R: To whom are you addressing the message? Is there any particular audience in mind?

Ms. T S: We have many programs and for some programs, we have a different target group. Some programs are for the general public as disseminating knowledge, raising awareness. Some topics or some programs focus on women and some focus on the youth, the young generation. Among generations, sometimes we go in depth to the theme of gay … and things like that. But no matter what it is, we try to concentrate on women because our aim is gender equality.

R: Why do you think the medium, which is TV and radio broadcasting is the best way to convey your message?

Ms. T S: In Cambodia, electronic media is much improved, influential and accessible to the low educated people. And it's easy to reach them.

In addition to these activities, WMC aims to train young women graduating from university and graduate school to be the professionals who are capable of examining the current media critically and performing the role as the alternative media source inspiring Cambodian society to be more just, female-oriented. Hence, WMC attaches importance to enriching internship programs, as Ms. T S remarks:

R: In addition to creating TV and radio programs, it seems that your organization hopes to train young women to work in this organization.

Ms. T S: Another activity that I would like to let you know is that I give an opportunity to students who graduated to come and work as interns. It's an internship program. While working as an intern here, if she is fast learning or she is interested in that or she improves, and if WMC has fund from donors, we employ her. There are many women now, who have become managers, key persons here in WMC, after having started from the internship program. This is the best way for WMC to employ staff as well. If we employ staff through CV, sometimes it's not a good way because if you read the application form and CV, you see they have a lot of certificates but in practice it is not like that. The internship program is very good because she works with us everyday and she practices in the field, so you can monitor and follow how she is doing. If she works hard and has a commitment to work, then it's time for us to pay her.

R: Where do women working in this Center gain the skills of making films and broadcasting?

Ms. T S: You can see the situation up here in the booklet.[1] You can see the table classified by education in 2008. We had PhDs and Masters, who made up fifteen percent of the staff, and fifty-one percent were with Bachelor's degrees. And actually, we have different styles of building capacity of the staff. We assign them to go outside of the office and attend training of an organization. For instance, there is TVK; they organize training on filming and on being a presenter, and we assign staff to join the training. So training inside the country is one of the staff capacity buildings.

Ms. T S then explains the impact of the activities that WMC has been carrying out enthusiastically since its foundation:

R: You started as a journalist and now you work as the executive director of the organization. How do you see the past, present, and future in relation to the works of your organization?

Ms. T S: Well, I can say that my organization is the primary media organization in Cambodia. In 1995, the only productions produced by WMC were available on TV. They were produced by WMC and broadcasted on a TV channel. But later on, year after year, the other media organizations following us were set up, and now there are big competitions among the media organizations in Cambodia. But still WMC is the primary media organization because we are run, led by women with media skills. The majority of the workers here are women and we focus on women's issues. Other media organizations talk in general; they do not focus on women—mix it together. We, WMC mix it together as well but we try to analyze it to be of benefit to women. Let me raise an example; for social issues like smoking, there is a program educating people not to smoke. WMC, yes, we explain not to smoke but if you smoke, who is the victim? It's the woman in the family. If the man, husband smokes, how much money does he spend for cigarettes? So the budget of family is reduced, you know. If the husband is affected with the cigarette smoke and gets sick, who is the victim? It's wife. If the husband dies, the breadwinner is the wife. We try to analyze every social issue and show that the victim is woman, so for everything, everywhere, and every issue, women are linked together. For example, in 1995 we produced a program on landmines, which is very successful, very popular. Landmines in Cambodia kill a lot of men and husbands, and the victim is woman because when the husband is wounded or disabled, woman goes outside to work harder than before to get money and support the family. So you see all the media organizations' programs are different from WMC's.

Drawing heavily on the accounts of the research participants, this chapter demonstrated the multifarious ways of expression applied for conveying the diverse messages. Aria and Jadon perform and teach Cambodian dance to students of the younger generation. Bav seeks

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[1] Women's Media Centre of Cambodia. (2008). *Annual report 2008*. Retrieved January 26, 2011, from http://www.wmc.org.kh/images/Files/pdf/WMC%20Annual%20Report-2008.pdf

potentialities of various forms of artistic expression by actually putting them into practice. The committee members of CSAJ—Chan, Mean, Sophat, Sovann, Theara, and Tino—not only broaden the network of Cambodian students studying in Japan but also play a significant role as a bridge between Cambodia and Japan. Mr. K.D teaches music and also gives performances as a classical Cambodian musical instrument player. Kleng is active in transforming her ideas into an installation work, a three-dimensional shape. Making full use of visual technology, the Venerable Nanda disseminates the teachings of Buddha across both physical space and cyberspace. Ms. P writes books and delivers lectures without turning her eyes away from her bitter remembrances. Mr. S C acts as a scholar working towards the enhancement of teaching and learning in Fine Arts and artist/designer putting his energies into production at the same time. Ms. T S works as the executive director of WMC producing and broadcasting radio and television programs that offer educational information to the public. It became apparent from these nine styles of artistic expression that each research participant employs the best medium to achieve her/his goal based on the insight derived from intensive training and exertions in the everyday life.

## 5.10  Prelude to Water

The narratives of the research participants in this chapter showed that the Way is not necessarily homogeneous. The application of digital media is crucial for filmmaking, creating and maintaining websites and blogs, teaching fine arts, creating mixed media art, teaching music, and producing and broadcasting radio and television programs. On the other hand, the use of digital media is minimal in the forms of expression such as performing and instructing Cambodian dance, painting, performing contemporary dance, playing classical Cambodian musical instruments, creating installation works, writing books, and giving lectures. Whether

using digital media or not, the research participants make the most of the medium they choose and from the combination of it with creativity emerge the messages appealing to the audience. Each one of the voyages keeps on, sometimes facing an adverse wind and sometimes catching a following wind, in order to reach her/his own Way. The water in the sea is fluid; its flow never stops with the waves coming and going at all times. It looks as if the water is simply deep blue, yet it sparkles with the colourful light illuminating each voyage. It is time to move on to look at the surface of the water reflecting the lights of considerable colours, which spring from the research participants' unique styles of art appreciation, artistic practice, and performance.

# Chapter 6: Water

Fixation is the way to death, fluidity is the way to life. (Miyamoto, 1994, p. 43)

In the scroll of Water, Miyamoto suggests that being bound by rules is undesirable for accomplishing one's own Way and there is a need to acquire flexibility and take measures suited to the occasion. He thus likens the state of being flexible to water with a fluid character. Taking account of the fluidity and flexibility of water, this chapter named "Water" consists of the following three sections—art appreciation, art practice, and performance. First, referring to the comments of the research participants describing their likes and dislikes in the arts such as fine art, music, and film, I look at the situation of art appreciation in Cambodia and link it to the discussion of some issues of art creation. The second section draws on the concept of heterotopia by Foucault and investigates what types of heterotopia emerge from the art practices of the study participants. It also elucidates its unique traits of their heterotopia by concentrating on the participants' artistic expression. In the third section, I apply Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization and examine what hybridization means in the context of self-expression of the research participants. In doing so, the final part seeks to illustrate some cases and moments of performing hybridization, which the participants undergo in their everyday lives.

## 6.1 Art Appreciation

In delving to the research participants' styles of art appreciation regarding fine art, music, and film, what is noticeable is a strong influence of various cultures. A good illustration of this is the case of the Royal University of Fine Arts (RUFA) discussed in the previous chapter. By incorporating the courses specializing in traditional Western art as well as

contemporary art in the curriculum, the school encourages the students to create works without restraint, based on a broad view cultivated through their learning. Indeed, Western art has an effect on how artists living in Cambodia produce their works. This is evident in the following remarks that Bav makes about some Western artists:

> R: When you create abstract painting, do you have a concept?

> Bav: Yes. When I make abstract painting, I have a concept in mind. But sometimes I see many paintings. When I don't work, I go on the Internet and do search for paintings by Picasso, Van Gogh, and other artists. And I see those paintings and I want to make my ideas into painting.

Bav thus expresses his appreciation of the artists such as Picasso and Van Gogh. Taking *Weeping Woman* (*Femme en Pleurs*) made in 1937 as an example, he indicates the impact of Picasso on his art production:

> R: Which painting gives you more ideas: abstract or traditional one?

> Bav: Abstract paintings give me more ideas. I think of one painting by Picasso, the famous one, and I want to think like Picasso did. I want to make a painting like that.

Bav then moves on to talk about his visit to the United States for performing contemporary dance and the artworks he actually saw there:

> I went to many museums, when I was in the United States. … I went to a museum like a contemporary art museum in New York. There I saw paintings by Picasso—abstract art. And also, I liked a painting of one woman. Do you know it? When you see the painting from the centre, she is not smiling. But when you see it from the side, she smiles. I liked that. When I go to museums, I get some new ideas for my own works.

Here Bav refers to Picasso's and the trompe l'oeil (*trompe-l'œil*) piece creating an optical illusion, which he saw at first hand, as his favourite works. It becomes clear that appreciating Western art stimulates him to transform his own ideas into painting.

The same can be applied to the case of music popular among the research participants. A close look at the following comments on music appreciation reveals the influence of certain cultures, America and the Republic of Korea in particular. Popular music from South

Korea (K-pop) advances into the Cambodian music industry and at the same time, hip-hop music is now achieving popularity among the youth in Cambodia. Some research participants, especially in their twenties state a great fondness for K-pop as well as hip-hop songs in Korean and English:

R: What kind of music do you like?

Mr. Pheak: I like hip-hop, Korean hip-hop.

R: Can you give me some examples of singers you like?

Mr. Pheak: I like SHINee. I like BIGBANG, too.

R: Do you listen to English hip-hop as well?

Mr. Pheak: Yeah. I like it, too. I like Pitbull, speaking of English one.

R: How about Khmer hip-hop?

Mr. Pheak: I like Dj Kdep.

R: Where do you get those songs?

Mr. Pheak: I buy CDs.

In the same way as Mr. Pheak, Rath indicates that hip-hop music is his favorite:

R: You told me you use the Internet to listen to hip-hop songs. Are they in English?

Rath: English and Korean songs. I just like them but cannot understand.

Thus, he suggests that the lyrics in English and Korean are difficult for him to comprehend but he finds the components of the songs such as the rhythm and beats appealing. In addition, Rath pronounces that hip-hop music won popularity among the Cambodian youth:

R: What kinds of TV programs do you watch?

Rath: Korean hip-hop. Young people of Cambodia like hip-hop music.

Similar to the cases of the two university students above, Mr. Thy talks about his appreciation of various types of music including hip-hop:

R: What kind of music do you like to listen to?

Mr. Thy: I like Khmer songs, Korean songs, and English songs.

R: What kind of music do you dislike?

Mr. Thy: No dislike. Usually, I like all genres of music.

In addition to listening to music as such, he states that he enjoys dancing to the rhythm of hip-hop music:

Mr. Thy: I like dancing also.

R: What kind of dance do you like?

Mr. Thy: Hip-hop.

The comments of the three university students show that hip-hop has great appeal in Cambodia at present. However, this is not to say that everyone has a liking for it. Pit, for instance, expresses his distaste for rap as follows:

R: Which music do you dislike?

Pit: I don't like music that has rap. I like hip-hop; I like the sound of it but not the one that has rap in it.

He then explains what kind of music he likes to listen to:

Pit: I like romantic songs in Khmer.

R: Can you give me an example of romantic Khmer music you like?

Pit: I like a male singer San Panith. He's maybe thirty-six years old. He's a singer for a long time.

R: Where do you get those Khmer songs?

Pit: I buy CDs and VCDs. VCDs show all the actions.

Here Pit suggests that he purchases Video CDs (VCDs) featuring the singer himself and displaying the lyrics in the Cambodian language on screen.

Diamond takes a stand on Khmer music, which is different from Pit's. He shows his interest in listening to various genres of music in the English language rather than songs produced in Cambodia:

> R: Can you talk about music you like?
>
> Diamond: Hip-hop. I like English hip-hop.
>
> R: Is there any singer you like in particular?
>
> Diamond: I like Britney Spears and Beyoncé, too.
>
> R: How about male singers?
>
> Diamond: I like a band that sing romantic songs, Michael Learns to Rock. I like their song called *Take Me To Your Heart*.
>
> R: How about Khmer music?
>
> Diamond: I don't like modern music stealing from other countries.

What Diamond mentions above is relevant to the following words of Mr. Naor. Focusing on music and film circulated in Cambodia, Mr. Naor indicates that Khmer originality is missing in these two fields:

> Mr. Naor: I like the oldies basically even in the movies; I like the ones created in the 70s or 60s. And music, I like the oldies also because of its romantic meaning.
>
> R: Is there any Khmer movie and music you dislike?
>
> Mr. Naor: I don't like the music and movie that are new and modern.
>
> R: In terms of 'modern' music, do you mean the one like hip-hop?
>
> Mr. Naor: They didn't compose their own music: only the lyrics but not the music. Basically, they took from different national stuff.
>
> R: I watched that on TV.
>
> Mr. Naor: I don't like that. I want Cambodia to have its own independence in composing its own music.
>
> R: So you like to see Khmer originality.

Mr. Naor: Not copy. They can make new hip-hop but not copy. The same thing is with movie.

Contrary to the case of Mr. Naor, Mr. Pheak has a preference for watching modern Khmer film:

R: What movies do you enjoy watching?

Mr. Pheak: I like modern Khmer movies.

R: Can you talk about one Khmer movie you like?

Mr. Pheak: I have so many, just can't choose one.

R: What is your favourite film genre?

Mr. Pheak: I like action and comedy.

While modern Khmer film is the Mr. Pheak's favourite, other research participants express a liking for Hollywood and Chinese movies. For instance, Pit remarks that he is keen on watching Hollywood cinema:

Pit: I like Hollywood movies.

R: What kind of Hollywood movies do you like?

Pit: I like action and the one like Jacky Chan, many actions involved.

R: How often do you watch Hollywood film?

Pit: I watch it three times a week.

R: Where do you get the movies?

Pit: Sometimes I buy VCDs and at home I watch television and cinema.

Diamond talks about his appreciation of Chinese cinema as follows:

R: What movies do you like?

Diamond: I like modern Chinese film. I like watching action like *kung fu* stuff.

R: In watching Chinese movies, do you comprehend the Chinese language or read the subtitles?

Diamond: I don't understand the Chinese language but movies are dubbed into Khmer.

In terms of modern Khmer cinema, Diamond holds a view similar to Mr. Naor's:

R: Is there any movie you dislike?

Diamond: I don't like Khmer movies that copy from other countries.

R: You mean the modern ones.

Diamond: Yes.

Moreover, Rath supports the opinions of Mr. Naor and Diamond above:

R: You stated you like hip-hop music. How about movie? What movies do you like?

Rath: I like old movies.

R: Do you mean the ones created in the 1960s and 70s?

Rath: Yes. New movies, now people in Cambodia don't like.

R: Why do you dislike the new ones?

Rath: I don't like them because all the writers, they always take from other countries. It's not original.

In this way, what becomes obvious from the comments of the research participants is the strong influence of the various cultures on the appreciation of the arts in their daily lives. In addition, it is clear that the inflow of music and film from other countries actually causes the issue of lacking Khmer originality in art creation in Cambodia.

### 6.1.1 Reasons behind the Lack of Originality in Art Creation

Khmer originality missing in the fields of the arts discussed above has a close relation to the lost of the talent and the disconnection of the wisdom in wartime. Both Mr. K.D and Mr. S C point out that a shortage of Cambodian-born educators is a serious problem:

Mr. K.D: … [F]or modern music we have not had a teacher, yet. Modern music can be played everywhere in Cambodia but there is no teacher and in our faculty we

have a teacher composing from Western classical and Cambodian classical, traditional music.

Mr. S C: This is a problem happening at the university. We have three subjects to offer. One of them is Khmer history of art because this is our background students have to know. We also have Asian art history and Western art history. But for the, uh, areas of Western art history and Asian art history, now we have the only lecturers that come from abroad. We have a lecturer that comes from France in the present academic year. Lecturers are usually here for one or two months to teach Western art history because we have no professional for teaching that subject area in Cambodia.

Thus, the two teachers suggest that the university is short of experts capable of instructing the modern subjects. In addition, the financial condition of the nation affects the school administration. At the same time, the norms of society have an impact on students in choosing their majors and entering employment after graduation. Mr. S C and Mr. K.D elaborate on these two points:

Mr. S C: Our institution is a public educational institution, so every year we have a lot of problems like the budget to develop the school. As you know, in Cambodia, we are so poor and need the budget to develop the school. Everyday it is very hard to teach students fine art skills because we lack teachers and we lack study equipment and materials.

R: Which subject area is now popular among students here?

Mr. S C: Most of them want to study interior design. This shows the present situation in Cambodia. Having finished high school, students enter the Faculty of Fine Arts here. They apply only for learning design skills like interior design. So seventy percent of the students are interested in interior design.

R: What makes them select interior design?

Mr. S C: I think that this is a problem. After they graduate with a degree in interior design, they can find a good job in society.

R: After students graduate from the Faculty of Fine Arts, do they work as artists?

Mr. S C: I think that, uh, art marketing is closed now in Cambodia. This is my personal view that it is a little bit difficult for artists that graduated from the school because they create artworks based on their personal skills to earn money. It's hard for them to develop skills in company but some of them can be a teacher in a primary school because the Ministry of Education needs a lot of teachers that have the skills of art.

R: Which major is the most popular among students right now?

Mr. K.D: I would say it is musical instruments because theory and ethnomusicology are difficult and have no popularity in consideration of finding a job. (laugh) And speaking of music players, it is very easy to make money. Many students like to learn about it. But for ethnomusicology and theory, we have some students, not many because when they finish their studies, they cannot do everything. But for the music players it is ok. They can play with a band and play with an ensemble. They can get money.

R: So about your students, after graduation do they become professional players?

Mr. K.D: Yes. After earning degree, they leave here for organizations and teach over there or they join ensembles in pagoda or school everywhere. Some students come to teach here also. But some students move from here to another province or become professional musicians to play at nightclub or salon.

Moreover, Mr. S C elucidates another problem based on his analysis of art appreciation among people at large:

Mr. S C: Speaking of fine arts, though this is my image of Cambodian people, I think that, uh, there is a tendency that Cambodian people like only the realist style of painting. So for the academic study here, we teach students all the styles of paintings. But the students also like to paint realist or surrealist paintings only. They do not like abstract, modern, and contemporary paintings. So we, the teachers guide them to learn those art styles but they have no interest.

R: Do you know why?

Mr. S C: I think that maybe this is a problem. Abstract and modern art has to do with concepts. But they like only to show some image in their paintings, like a good image or something like that because abstract art is one of the concept arts. They have to put a concept in their works, so it is very difficult.

Mr. S C's observation above is relevant to what the two artists living in Cambodia indicate below. Bav gives an account of the situation of art creation in Cambodia in comparison with that of the United States where he stayed for performing contemporary dance:

R: When you went to visit the United States, did you find anything different from Khmer culture?

> Bav: Yes. I found some differences. In Cambodia, life is slow, like people and culture. In America, it's fast. But when I go to America, I don't see young people on the street much because young people go to study and they are not seen there. But in Cambodia, I see young people on the street a lot. But people in America study hard and are very busy. For Cambodia, it's not like that. Some people stay at home. American culture is very different because Cambodia is like it died before and now Cambodia comes up a little bit.

Here Bav touches on the scars of the war seen in the people's daily lives at the present time, and points out that despite the situation as such, Cambodia is rising in terms of art creation. Moreover, from a perspective of a graduate of an art university, Kleng describes some difficulties that students majoring in art encounter. According to her, one is the limited opportunity and funding:

> R: Are you thinking to study abroad?

> Kleng: Yes. I'm sure because art is like if you can go, you see. When you stay in this nation, it is different. When you go out, it is different. There is more meaning in that you can go out and see how the arts in developed countries look like because now I cite from the Internet but it's not really powerful compared to seeing for your own eyes. When you go to museum, you see, 'Wow, this is real'. I always hear people like artists say, 'Ok, you need to travel' and many times say, 'When you go to travel, you need to go to museum to see'. Of course, but now I have no ability. But I'm sure I want to because I'm still looking for an artist-in-residence program.

> R: Where do you want to go? Is there a particular place in mind?

> Kleng: I don't mind, if I can go. For Cambodians, it is not easy to go abroad, especially to Europe because we need to have interview and get visa, and we need someone to sponsor us. It's too complicated. Unless I get this art residency program, I cannot go because I need to spend money. I don't have much money.

In relation to Mr. S C's analysis of how art is generally conceived in Cambodian society, Kleng explains how difficult it is for art school students to pursue the career as an artist:

> Now students, people here, the young kids, who get the idea to go to study at art school, are not so many. You know like painting in my sister's generation including him [a colleague] over there, it's like 'Ok, at the age of nearly twenty, it's quite good'. But they leave and get more interest in interior design. It's quite a concern for this. Otherwise painting class will be closed because nobody comes to study. And they don't know what the meaning to be an artist is. The important thing is that

Cambodian people, the young like my generation, study painting to be an artist. After that, they stop because they don't know how to continue to do work and also they go like 'How can I show my work?' And also, their work is not really good because they just do what they are thinking. They don't see or look at people around them, so how can they develop? That's why there are few [young artists] who still keep doing art. … Sometimes especially family don't really understand much about art, so they say, 'Why are you drawing? You think you can earn money by drawing?' This is the reason that it's hard for them. Here they always live with their parents, so everything is connecting to parents.

Kleng thus points out the strong influence of parents on the students' decisions. Taking her own case as an example, she goes into details about it:

R: So parents have power over their children.

Kleng: Yes. They always think how you can survive, how you can support yourself, if you are doing art. And also, I get blessing from God because I'm Christian. I have one brother and one sister. In my family, my sister is in the middle. She came to know how to do drawing. She is the first person in my family. My mom says, 'Why are you drawing? Are you crazy? You study and study but you take time drawing and then your study will be bad'. And after that, it's me, the first one to go to art school. Before finishing high school, I studied classical painting for two years. After that, I finished my high school and then I went directly to university. Sometimes they complain but not too much. Before, I also used to get some money from my mom. There was more open opportunity for me among friends because some were in a sad situation because of their parents. Also, I want to help them (friends who wish to be artists) but how can I help? I just help my own self and I'm sometimes busy. When I have time, I always talk and we speak about art—how we can develop art. But mostly, they think money is coming first. And we cannot complain to them because they need to have some money to survive. If they do, if they have benefit, it's ok. This is what I don't know. Also, they are very good, like the technique is very good but they never go out to see. I know that people want money first. But if they have a chance to go abroad, they will see, then push them to wake up and say, 'Hey, I'll do this'. They may be excited to do but we don't have much for this here for Khmer artists.

In addition, she suggests that earning a living as an artist after graduation is not easy:

… [M]y women's artist group is, after the workshop is finished, becoming less and less, then they stop doing art. And some of them are still doing art but they are in province, so when doing art, it is mostly shown in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Battambang—not so many places for art shows. So it is a question of money, always a question of money. (laugh) Yeah, funding. Sometimes I say why I'm so worried about finding funding. But of course, we cannot say 'no' for this. But it's like, ok, if you want to add something for money, you need to have your process—what you want to show and how you get them interested. This is what I'm thinking.

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In spite of the difficult situation as such, Kleng upholds hope and a strong will:

> Kleng: We want to show the next generation. If I have time to go back to my school, then I will convince the younger generation because they also say they have no hope, you know.

> R: So you hope that the younger generation will promote art creation.

> Kleng: Yes. We need to have this. … If you have a proposal, you can try some residency programs to select you. But you haven't done anything and say, 'I'm bored with this situation'. Of course, we have feelings sometimes. We were already born here and live here. You cannot say you don't want to live here. We are here already. You cannot go out, even if you want to go out, but still in Cambodia. Or even you go out but after, you are not like people from abroad, right? You still come back just to do what the possibility allows you to do. Accept what it is now and start from there.

In this way, the research participants presented the diverse styles of art appreciation and illustrated the perceptions of the general public of Cambodia toward fine art, music, and film. It became clear from the narratives of the participants that some serious issues are standing in the way of elevating the level of art creation in Cambodia. These include the shortage of Cambodian-born professionals who teach and pass on the artistic knowledge and skills to the next generation and the difficulty in making a livelihood by artistic activities. None the less, even in the difficult circumstances, as Kleng articulated her passion as an artist above, the study participants take the initiative in art practice.

## 6.2 Art Practice

Drawing on the concept of heterotopia presented by Foucault, this section looks closely at the art practices in which the research participants are actively engaged. As indicated in Chapter 2, through the discussion of the concept "heterotopia", Foucault asserts the necessity of cultivating criticality to deconstruct the normative view and acknowledging the world(s) in which people live as heterogeneous spaces. The narratives of the study participants below describe various cases of heterotopia emerging from their artistic activities; heterotopia exists

taking various forms in their daily lives. I argue that heterotopia coming into being in the art practices of the research participants questions the hegemonic view regulating the way of perceiving time and space. In other words, the models of heterotopia in this section negate not only the clear division of time into past, present, and future but also the unquestioning classification based on nationality. For example, considering the activities of the Venerable Nanda using the social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, it is reasonable to suppose that cyberspace where the viewers located all over the globe have access to the latest news in addition to the videos and the pictures of the past events posted by the Venerable is a type of heterotopia existing as a space beyond the national borders and with the past, present, and future intermingled. Besides this case, I inquire into four more instances of heterotopia coming into existence between: 1) the artist and the audience; 2) the producer/disseminator and the audience/participant; 3) the writer and the reader; and 4) the performer/teacher and the audience/learner.

### 6.2.1 Heterotopia between Artist and Audience

The observations of Mr. S C, Mr. K.D, Bav, and Kleng on art appreciation in the previous section point out the importance of paying attention to the relationship between the artist and the audience. Their remarks make it clear that a piece of artwork creates heterotopia, a space where the artist with power to embody her/his concept and the audience with power to interpret it at will meet and sometimes collide. As previously indicated, certain types of arts are accepted by people at large but at the same time, some art styles are treated as minor. In other words, there exists the binary between good, beautiful art offering full meaning and difficult, odd art lacking explanation. As Kleng expresses, abstract art is the latter:

> I mean there are not so many abstract works that they [Khmer artists] do because friends who understand the meaning of art say, 'Ok, you just put the colour and then

you went something wrong'. And I say, 'No. You think it's totally wrong'. If you don't really get the feeling, then you cannot show abstract work. It's not easy for you to do that.

Thus, abstract art faces rejection and disregard of the general public, and it is thrust into the verge. Nevertheless, for some artists, heterotopia is a space where they strive to show alternative views without flinching from the standard fixed for appreciating the arts. For instance, Mr. S C suggests that the trend in the arts does shift and it is essential for artists to dare to express their ideas and concepts to the audience through artworks:

Mr. S C: We have some artists popular among the students, who impress them with abstract art and contemporary art. But these arts are only seen at galleries. Some students who graduated from this school now have a gallery and they create modern artworks. I think that in Cambodia, people know about modern art; step by step they know. … There are some changes I found from last year to this year (2011). More and more people in Cambodia started to know more about art and design. And also, more students now apply for both art and design. The first popularity is in interior design or visual communication design, and the second popular is painting or sculpture.

R: I make films, especially experimental ones. But when I show an experimental film at a conference, some people do not understand or even dislike it.

Mr. S C: Sure. The same can be said about working on the canvas. People may not understand abstract art. But for painting or drawing, if you put a topic and explain it, they read and look, and they can see; they can understand something. But if your picture does not have a topic or some explanation, they do not know because this is abstract; it is very difficult. Film also, I see. (laugh) This is art. The media used for creating artworks are like this. So we are the artists who have to explain concepts to them. There are lots of concepts that we cannot see.

R: You indicated the school tries to combine the two concepts—Khmer art and Western art. What do you think about artists who create works showing the view of transnationality, living beyond borders?

Mr. S C: I think that our perspective is also like that. We will do the high level of art like what you see in Asia and in the world. For me, I think that abstract art is not difficult in terms of skills but it is difficult conceptually. So if you have ideas and you have a concept for your work, then it is very easy to make art. But it is difficult to make a concept itself. I try to guide students here how to make a concept and how to do research so that they can bring themselves to the upper level in making abstract art or something like that.

Kleng also asserts the importance of strengthening one's belief in art creation and explains it by drawing a picture:
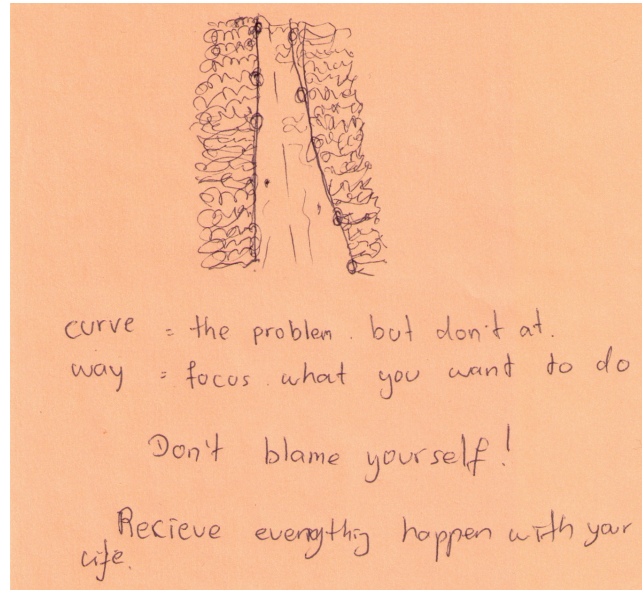
**Illustration 1. Kleng's Handwriting**



*Illustration 1*. Picture of handwriting by Kleng. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

R: Can you explain your drawing?

Kleng: For this, it's like the future. It's like you have a very long way and you need to walk. You just see something like a machine or a car to sharpen the road; it's not good for you because normally people never go, walk through what they want. They always look at the right hand and the left hand, and then sometimes they are stuck. For example, going this way takes one hour but sometimes takes one year. You don't know. You look at people and they judge you. You need to know, focus on what you want to do. This is you. There are more things that you need to do. In the way that you go, don't blame yourself. Like 'Oh, I didn't look at these people, though they gave me good ideas', you don't blame yourself. Just believe in you. Pay attention to what they tell you but do not get stuck. This is an experience I got just now. So it's good that you let me draw this.

Similarly, Bav holds a spirit as an artist seeking to bring some changes through his artistic activities. In the following conversation on film, he explicates the reason for filmmaking:

Bav: I like Khmer movies, especially traditional movies like *Puthisen Neang Kong Rey,* the famous films shown in countries like Thailand and China. … I made this [a

poster] for an exhibition about film. I made an old poster because films in 1970s came with posters. But now films use no painted poster; they use printed posters. But for this film, the director wanted me to make this only by pen, you know. This one is a copy, a small version of the poster. Now I don't have the original. But I made a new one for a show about films of 1970s in Cambodia. Movie stars and directors were there. I made seven posters for a gallery.

R: Why did you decide to start filming?

Bav: I started to do filming because Cambodia doesn't have people who make Khmer films. People bring Korean films, Japanese films, and Chinese films for the shows but they don't have Khmer films—only a little bit. But my group wants to make a Khmer film and keep a part of traditional films, like the posters I showed you. When my group makes a film like that, I will paint a poster for it. I believe the film and the poster will show Khmer originality.

In this way, Bav manages both filmmaking and poster making, and aims to create a new space inviting the audience to come in touch with the essence of the tradition through the movies and the posters embodying Khmer originality, which is now absent from the arts popular among the general public in Cambodia. Thus, in this type of heterotopia, artists produce works without being bound by the scale grounded on the binarism.

### 6.2.2    Heterotopia between Producer/Disseminator and Audience/Participant

The following case of Ms. T S shows that heterotopia emerges as a space between the producer/disseminator of radio and television programs and the audience. In this type of heterotopia, the WMC's attempt to convey information with a gender perspective included challenges the norm sustaining the male-dominated society. In doing so, Ms. T S asserts the need to keep balance:

> Speaking of all the WMC radio and video productions, we insert the perspective—the gender perspective in our productions. We are not biased. For every production we interview, do a survey on both men and women, otherwise it is not accepted by men. As you know, changing behaviour or educating women alone is not successful because woman understands that she is a victim; she faces a problem. If you educate her without educating men, it's useless. In my experience, if we educate men, when men understand, it is very helpful because in Cambodia, men dominate women. And

> if he understands the perspective—the gender equality perspective, he changes and it is very good. So it should be both sides—men and women.

Here it is clear that the disseminated information promotes changes in the viewers' perception and action. With well-balanced encoding practiced, radio and television can create heterotopia with the positive attribute, which gives the audience the opportunity to obtain information useful to their daily lives. Heterotopia of this kind is a kinetic space; it actually shifts its position as seen in the implementation of a "mobile broadcasting" program, one of the principal activities of WMC. Ms. T S describes the effectiveness of the program in detail:

> … WMC has a new approach as we set up a mobile broadcasting unit. We have a set of videos, a small generator, and a loud speaker, and then we carry these from village to village, broadcasting the radio and television programs that WMC produced to educate the people in the remote area so that people can watch and listen. … [W]hen I broadcast and air the program from village to village, I have a quiz show activity to make sure that the viewer understands the message clearly. If they answer the question correctly, we give them soap and T-shirt to encourage them because in the rural areas, people are shy and not familiar with answering the question, discussing or talking. So we encourage them, 'If you give a right answer, you understand the message correctly, so you get soap'. And now people are like 'Let me answer. Let me answer'. We want to encourage especially women to talk, to voice themselves. In the remote areas, low educated women are scared to talk, so we break the silence. That's what we are seeing as the impact.

Thus, Ms. T S suggests that the program creates a space that spurs the audience to join and the active participation makes the space lively and kinetic. The mobility of the program produces a sort of heterotopia in motion and what takes place in this heterotopia is very dynamic.

The emergence of a similar type of heterotopia is evident in what Ms. T S remarks on another project of WMC promoting active discussion among the participants:

> R: So many people living in the villages come to watch and listen to it.

> Ms. T S: Yes. And lately we just succeed in our new project called 'Citizen Engagement Campaign'. We tried to engage people with media because we understand that people are facing the problem because they are missing information or educational program. So we organize, set up listeners' and viewers' clubs and then we have one facilitator whose house has radio, television, and recorder, and we

provide our program for the facilitator. And the facilitator asks the neighbors or their parents or their relatives to come to watch and listen to the program, and then discuss it among them—exchange ideas. We understand that because of missing information on the laws, people do not know that there is a trafficking law; there is a domestic violence law, and people face the problem. So if such information is provided, they will know that there is a trickery that can cheat women in the countryside to come to work in the city but actually, they are sold to prostitution. We educate them that marrying the foreigner is not really a good one. Sometimes it can be trafficking of women. They marry and then exploit women to be prostitutes or to work as slaves in their houses. This is a problem happened lately in Cambodia, between Cambodian women and some Korean and Taiwanese men. So we invite the victim to share the experience with the listener of the radio program, and then the listener calls in and asks questions. Sometimes we invite the expert in related field to answer the question of the caller. For example, a lawyer related to inheritance or related to land issues acts as speaker on the air, and callers call in and ask questions that they like to know. This is very interesting and very effective.

It is clear from the account of Ms. T S on the new project and the radio program that these projects generate heterotopia where people play certain roles such as the facilitator, the viewers, the speaker, and the listeners, and the participants utilize the programs produced by WMC as a vehicle for communicating and discussing ideas to settle the issues. In this way, this type of heterotopia confronting the dominant ideology of gender in particular transfers from place to place, and involves people as participants in building and sharing alternative knowledge unaffected by the norm.

### 6.2.3    Heterotopia between Writer and Reader

The case of Ms. P proposes another type of heterotopia, a space existing between the writer and the readers. Ms. P's observation below is helpful in inquiring what heterotopia looks like in the context of diaspora:

> It was 1980 when I came to Japan and in 1992 I went back to Cambodia in the first place. I was alone on that occasion. I experienced the summer in Japan eleven or twelve times already but when I went down to the airport [in Phnom Penh], I felt the heat characteristic of my hometown. It is completely different from the summer in Japan. My feelings were like 'This is it', 'At last', and 'I am home'. Since then, I went back there several times but the very first time was accompanied by deep emotion. It was like 'I am back as promised'. What I realized during my first return

was that this is my home and I am not a stranger. In Japan, I am still a stranger in Narita rather than feeling I am home. I wonder what the difference is. It is very strange. At the Narita Airport, the immigration entry for foreign nationality and the one for Japanese nationality are separated. And the one for Japanese citizens is less crowded, so I just feel, 'It is lucky for me that it is not crowded'. Without taking it too seriously, I feel that even though I am a stranger, I have this (a Japanese passport), so I can go to the less crowded one. When I head for the less crowded entry, some people turn their eyes on me, as if they are wondering, 'That person may be in the wrong entry, though she is a foreigner'. Contrary to the time when I muttered to myself frankly, 'I am home' in going down to the airport in Cambodia, I did not mutter that 'I am home', when I came back to Japan. But after I arrived at my home, I felt that this is my home, thinking 'I can calm myself at last'. I feel that I am home only when I get home, rather than feeling that this is my country soon after I set foot on Narita. It is as if a box happens to be put in Japanese territory. What I am looking for is not like the interior of Japanese territory or Cambodian territory. Rather, a space where my mind is at peace is placed inside Japan by chance. And my beloved children and family are there. Suppose that I go to Cambodia and prepare a box for myself in my old age, my children would not be there. I think that at that moment, I will see clearly where my 'home' is located for the first time. This is a story of somewhat the distant future, so it is indefinable at present. All I can say at the moment is that my home located in Japan is the place where I can have peace of mind the most.

In this way, the account of Ms. P above suggests that in considering heterotopia in the context of diaspora, there is a need to apply a broad view without limiting the discussion to nationality. In other words, heterotopia exists as a space transgressing the dichotomy of Cambodia/Japan, Cambodian/Japanese, and inside/outsider.

Ms. P delineates the process of self-expression in heterotopia, a space where Cambodian and Japanese elements meet:

And also it was startling that I was able to write a book by myself, for I was in the middle of having the fourth grade education at primary school in the Pol Pot era. At that time I acquired the base of the language, so what I went through remains in my memory distinctly. Of course, I referred to a dictionary and had the young folks living there correct my grammar. If I could not write this book, I would not have been able to face my homeland. I realized the importance of basic education once again. Therefore, when I came to Japan at the age of sixteen, I decided to resume my schooling at primary school and started studying at Grade Four at sixteen years old. Because of that, I was able to write the book in both Japanese and Khmer. Considering this, we cannot make light of basic education. By writing as a way to report my memory at ten years of age, I was able to prove it. In addition, I was able to show the public that to be able to report accurately starts from about this age. Until then, I underwent all sorts of emotional conflict (in many ways). But I realized

that all I could do is to believe in my memory. And then all I need to do is making the best use of education I had in both Cambodia and Japan. There are many messages I want to convey. One is that giving children education is the most important thing. The other thing is that I write a book, caring for both cultures equally and putting both merits and demerits altogether, as if to wrap these in my book.

Thus, Ms. P indicates the importance of keeping balance between the knowledge and skills gained in Cambodia and those gained in Japan, and of having a good command of both languages in order to write what she underwent in Cambodia and release her works to the readers located in Japan. In this type of heterotopia, Ms. P writes books and delivers lectures with the intention of conveying the message overlooked by a biased view of Cambodia and the people and the labelling of refugees.

### 6.2.4    Heterotopia between Performer/Teacher and Audience/Learner

The case of Aria and Jadon is similar to Ms. P's in that heterotopia for the two is a space where Cambodia/Canada and Cambodian/Canadian are interfused complicatedly beyond the dichotomy. By performing dance on stage, Aria and Jadon intend to create an interactive space between them as performers and the audience in order to show that Cambodian and Canadian elements are interwoven. Their articulation of how they change the ways of performing dance is useful here:

R: Which dance style do you feel the most comfortable with?

Jadon: I don't wanna use the word 'comfortable' because in reality, I'm comfortable in all types of creative, artistic dance styles. Cambodian dancing, I find that it's either my past life or something just always there, which I always had an interest in. Definitely, it's a challenge but it's something I always love doing. Hip-hop dancing, I love doing it as well. That is hard to do but I find that I'm comfortable with both of them because they're two different styles of dance. With hip-hop you can be overly energetic; you have a huge high over it all. And yet the Cambodian dancing is more of your own roots, something you're more proud of. So I'm comfortable with both.

Aria: For me, I guess it's whom I am dancing in front of. Generally, if my audience is Cambodian, I would definitely feel more comfortable dancing Cambodian styles.

Not necessarily performing dance, like just at Cambodian parties, I would be dancing Cambodian styles. It wouldn't be hip-hop or anything that the way you would be dancing in a club. And in a club, I wouldn't be dancing the way I would at a Cambodian party. Sometimes I do. (laugh)

Jadon: Yeah, she does—in a car, walking down the streets.

Aria: If there's anything, I would probably be more comfortable with Cambodian. I'd be pulling a lot of Cambodian dances at a club versus pulling out club dances at a Cambodian party.

Jadon: I would agree half and half with you. I find that with Cambodian dance you kind of do whatever you wanna do with it. Even at the clubs people may be just a little bit more judgmental. But I wouldn't mind doing it. If you told me to do it, if you put on a song, I will do it. But with my experience, I'm not gonna do a square dance to a rap song. It just doesn't make any sense.

Aria: It depends on the music.

Jadon: It does. If a Cambodian song was at a club, at a hip-hop club, I would dance Cambodian.

Aria: It's true. If I was in a club in Cambodia, I guess I'd be dancing Cambodian. Since we are here, we don't hear Cambodian music in the clubs.

Jadon: Yeah. Music makes the tone.

Thus, for Jadon and Aria, heterotopia resulting from their dance performance is kinetic since the power relation of Cambodian and Canadian shifts depending on where they are located and who the audience are.

As dance instructors, they also advocate the importance of offering a learning space where people assemble together physically:

Aria: It's also a good place to meet friends because we spend a lot of time practicing together and know each other's hardships. And sometimes it's just hilarious to watch each other. (laugh)

Jadon: Yes, very much. I mean I think it's a great time to, especially for younger people, it's harder to get together or harder for your parents to allow you to hang out with certain people or a certain amount of people. I think it gives everyone an excuse to be together.

Aria: And also, now as technology isolation has become a very big thing, everyone is, you know, on their MP3s or iPods or sitting in front of the TV or the computer.

Even if it's a once a week practice, it gets people out of their usual isolated bodies and to be a team, be a group—socialize the network.

R: Do you use English or Khmer when you teach dance at Soma Selepak?

Jadon: It's mostly in English.

Aria: Because our Cambodian ourselves isn't that great and if we spoke Cambodian to them, they wouldn't understand much. One of my nieces is in it but she doesn't understand a lot of Cambodian. So speaking Cambodian first will be a challenge to ourselves and even more of a challenge to them. Well, it'd be even more of a challenge to ourselves because explaining it would be just as hard as speaking it. So definitely in English. But when we are on breaks or when I am taking breaks and I am speaking to the elders who are also there, it's half and half. But practice itself is in English.

Jadon: And last semester we had a Chinese girl. So we are not gonna isolate her by speaking Cambodian. English is definitely easier for everybody—easier for the parents, easier for ourselves. I find that it's just the main language we have to. But when it comes to events and stuff, I mean they're surrounded by Cambodians, so it's not that we try not to promote the Cambodian language. We are just more comfortable with instructing in it.

It becomes clear here that Aria and Jadon's dance class operates as heterotopia in which the binary structure does not exist and no one is excluded, no matter where they are from. I am aware that English is a hegemonic language. However, the practicality of English is crucial to this particular type of heterotopia where the two instructors and the students coming from diverse backgrounds interact with one another. In this way, Aria and Jadon as dance performers and instructors form heterotopia as a space where various cultural components are intermingled without being divided up.

### 6.2.5    Heterotopia in Dissonance

Heterotopia is not necessarily always a space with a positive feature. There are occasions when practicing artistic activities in heterotopia involves unpleasant moments and issues arising from discord. The activities of CSAJ discussed in the previous chapter contribute to the creation and maintenance of heterotopia. Their own website functions as heterotopia

linking instantly the creators/owners of the website and the viewers, no matter where they are physically located. However, the CSAJ executives state that some issues exist in heterotopia as a space where Cambodian and Japanese factors come across and collide at times:

> Theara: I heard from an American friend. He said that it makes it easy to predict them, predictable for the Japanese. You can predict anything. So predictable.
>
> Tino: When I ask them a question, I don't need to know the answer. I already know. '*Oishiidesuka*?' I know they will say, '*Oishiidesuyo*'. 'Do you like it?' and they will say, 'Yeah, I like it'.
>
> R: What if they don't like it?
>
> Tino: They will say they like it.
>
> Sophat: But even if they give the same answer, I mean their feelings may be different.
>
> Tino: Yeah, their feelings are different but the way they talk is the same.
>
> Sophat: That is why it is difficult to comprehend what's hidden.
>
> Tino: The way they act is the same but how they feel is different.
>
> Sophat: It's easy to predict the answer but not really their behaviour or their mind.
>
> R: How has your view of Japan changed after you came here and started your student life?
>
> Tino: Before I came to Japan, I thought that Japanese people were really hard working and they didn't like telling jokes. They don't like jokes. They don't joke at all. When I came to Japan, still I think so, too. They don't like jokes. Sometimes I tell them a lot of jokes but they don't laugh.
>
> Sophat: It can be a language problem.
>
> Tino: No. No problem with my language. I tell the same joke to Chinese people and they laugh. Japanese people don't laugh. I don't understand why.
>
> Theara: Maybe they have a different sense of humour. It happens.
>
> Sophat: Maybe when we watch *rakugo* (an entertainment performed by a professional storyteller), maybe you don't laugh.
>
> Chan: I laugh.

Theara: People have different senses of humour. So even with the same story, some people laugh at it and some people don't.

Tino: I find it's easier to talk to women. Japanese men are so strict. They like to talk about themselves a lot. They just talk about themselves, 'I was so good at this, when I was in high school', and I don't really like to listen to that kind of story.

Sophat: Maybe that is their humour.

Tino: "*Kakkotsukeru*. They like to show off.

R: After you obtain your degree here, do you hope to work here?

Tino: I'm doing job hunting in Japan. I want to work here for a few years. Then I will think about my future again. But I'm not going to live here.

R: So you don't intend to live in Japan permanently.

Tino: Life here is not so happy. I don't like the way Japanese people work. It's just that they always have to follow the rules and manuals, and to do exactly the same as what they are told.

Mean: Sometimes I think they don't work for their lives but they sacrifice their lives for work, so there is no meaning.

[Everyone agrees.]

Sharing the insight and the experience gained through the interaction in heterotopia, the executive members reach a consensus on what Mean remarks above. Thus, being situated in this type of heterotopia involves undergoing unpleasantness and inconsistency with one's expectations. In addition, various stereotypical images may result from living in heterotopia in dissonance.

After Tino left and Chan and Theara were away, our discussion continued. The three members—Mean, Sophat, and Sovann—elaborate on some findings they come across as students located in the space where Cambodian and Japanese elements meet:

Mean: For me, the most surprising thing is the way Japanese students behave. When I was in Cambodia, we always obeyed the rules at school and we respected teachers. But in Japan, when I see the manner of Japanese students, it is very surprising. It seems they consider teacher as a friend, when looking at the way they talk, the way they act towards teachers. And sometimes they are late to class and they enter the

class without permission. And also, their behaviour does not show respect, show the fact that they are late. And they don't ask permission from their teacher. Nothing for him. And whenever they want to sleep, they sleep.

R: Do you think students in Cambodia are well-behaved?

Mean: Yes. Compared to Japanese students, maybe they are.

Sophat: Quite strict because teachers don't want students to sleep in class. He's gonna throw a chalk to him, 'Get up!'

Mean: They are afraid of teachers. When the teacher orders something, they obey the orders of the teacher.

R: So teachers have power over students.

Sophat: Yeah.

Mean: In Japan, students are like a clan, so teachers cannot be strict to them. This is the most surprising for me.

Sophat: I think when communicating with teachers, Cambodian students can access teachers in the more friendly manner than Japanese students. When Japanese students talk to professors, there is a big gap; they have to be like, '*Onegaiitashimasu*' (speaking very humbly) or something like that. This is a little bit difficult for us, the foreign students. But in Cambodia, when we approach teacher, it's just like, 'I don't understand this. Could you explain it to me?' in the easy manner.

Mean: But I think it depends on people. For example, in Sophat's class, maybe the manner towards teacher is like that but for my class, it is different or something like that. When I was in my last school, my friend talked with teacher like friend to friend. Some people respect teacher very much but in general, it's something like friend to friend.

Sophat: But I think it is not really a big gap. When you talk to teacher in Cambodian school, you don't feel like you are too inferior like the way the Japanese do.

Mean: The way the Japanese do also doesn't show students feeling too inferior to teacher. It depends on people.

Sovann: Maybe because *daigakuin* (graduate school) is where the higher degree programs are offered, students respect teacher. But in university, the situation of students in bachelor's degrees may be different.

Mean: Mostly, in my experience, I see students talk to teachers, as if they talk to their friends. And one day in my last school, there was a student who was very rude. He talked very much in class and the teacher came from Canada. He ordered that

student to go out of class. He ordered many times but that student didn't do anything. He didn't get out of class. He looked down on the teacher. The teacher's orders had no effect on him.

Sophat: I've never seen that. In my university, when Japanese students communicate with teacher, I see them being very polite.

What it becomes apparent from the dialogue above is that living as a student in heterotopia makes the person become aware of the power relation existing between the teacher and the students, and negative reactions attend this realization occasionally.

As a person in the diaspora, Ms. P talks about unpleasantness and hardship accompanied by being in heterotopia:

Ms. P: As I wrote in my book, I could not afford to think anything, when I came to Japan. Once I got here, I had an intention to lose no time in studying and make a decent living by doing a work suited to my capacity. I do not have a desire to be rich or eminent. I expected that peace would be existent and I shall be an ordinary person and accepted as a human being with freedom and rights assured. This is a matter of course, when we think it over. But I found that against my expectation, it is difficult to obtain this ordinariness. Although nobody imposes restrictions on us, what seems real to me is that there is a barrier among races and ethnicities to some extent, whenever we go. Especially, in our case, the hardest thing was a language problem. We are at a disadvantage in language and also our feelings wise, what happened to us in the past put us at a disadvantage. There was no clear direction we head for and no way to express ourselves in words. I had only a sense of inferiority and thought that it is hard to live no matter where I go. And then, I spent a long time to learn the language and was able to link the past to the present composedly. As already explained, I acquired the language and was able to make a home. At the moment, I publish books and am invited to deliver lectures.

R: How are the past, present, and future are connected in your life?

Ms. P: I cannot separate any of these. With the past too painful to endure, I am here at present. And I want to make the most of both the past and the present for the happier future by making further efforts. Perhaps I may be conscious of this. Without the consciousness as such, it is impossible to write books because many of those who have the same experience hope to get the past off their minds. And now, as you may know, we are living as foreigners in Japanese society. Even if we have Japanese nationality, we are foreigners seen from Japanese society. Considering our past, it put us in great jeopardy. It has no merit for us at the present time. But seen from those who are in Japan, some people say, 'But all of you were able to come to Japan because of the past like that. In reality, it is not easy to come here; you are special'. There are people holding a view like that, so everyone puts the past out of her/his mind as much as possible and is living only this moment with all her/his

might. I wish people would deal with me more ordinarily rather than treating me as special like that. There is a clear difference between the side of the sender of the message and the side of the receiver who interprets it. Actually, I wish I would be accepted not as a foreigner but as a member and an inhabitant in the neighbourhood. But some people have doubts like 'Why is that person in Japan?' or 'On what circumstances does that person live in Japan?'

In this way, what is evident in Ms. P's words is the issue of race and ethnicity in heterotopia where Cambodian and Japanese elements meet. Her case suggests that there is a gap between what the writer in the diaspora intends to convey and what the general public in Japan interpret from her books. In addition, it shows that some interpretations tend to highlight her difference. Such a reaction to her works is clearly affected by the normative view sustaining the line between someone similar to Us and someone different from Us (the Other, foreigner). In spite of the hard experience described above, Ms. P affirms that she ventures to disseminate her message by writing books and never stops placing herself in heterotopia where the past, present, and future of hers are linked with one another.

## 6.3 Art Performance

This section applies Trinh's notion of hybridization to the examination of the artistic activities in which the research participants are involved, and seeks to explore what types of hybridization are actually performed in their daily lives. One type of hybridization is evident in the case of Ms. P, the writer in the diaspora. Her observation below is a good entry to an inquiry into hybridization:

R: In your book, you mention: "My heart travels my homeland everyday". Do you mean Cambodia is your spiritual home?

Ms. P: Yes. Honestly, it is sad that I cannot go there instantly when I want. The environment in which I am now allows me to go there, if I want because I have a passport and it is a safe country. But I cannot go there easily, so it is as if only my consciousness is travelling there. After all, a human being needs something to believe in, that is, Cambodia is a place dear to my heart. The reason is that after having visited Cambodia with my family for the first time in 2001, I realized that

my home is in Japan. … This shows my attachment to Japan, my genuine feelings. It is the place where I feel the most relieved. But when I go to Cambodia casually, I feel, 'It is a nice place as I thought'. I can make myself understood with my Khmer and there is certain mutual understanding without speaking words. Ultimately, even if I stay at a friend's house or a relative's house or hotel, these are places where I stay temporarily, so I miss my home in Japan where I can put myself at ease. My situation is different from those who go back to a home where parents are well and welcome them. So it is not that I go back to my parental home but that I just return to my birthplace.

Here it is obvious that Ms. P is in the complex position. This intricate space Ms. P describes is relevant to the discussion of heterotopia where Cambodian, Japanese, and Canadian elements meet and collide at times. In the same way as heterotopia, hybridization takes various forms. This section employs the terms—Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness—and investigates what these actually mean by drawing on the narratives of the research participants. The forthcoming stories of the participants demonstrate various conceptions of the three terms and how complicatedly these are intertwined in engendering hybridization.

### 6.3.1    Various Perceptions of Cambodian-ness

The terms Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness do not have a singular meaning. The following discussion of Cambodian-ness serves as a good example of this. Mr. S C refers to Cambodian-ness in the teaching and learning environment as follows:

> R: Is there any concept of Cambodian-ness students gain at this school by studying fine arts and design?

> Mr. S C: Yes. There is a certain Cambodian-ness that the students studying fine arts and design acquire. In the Faculty of Fine Arts, we have the policy that eighty percent of the curriculum should be related to the country Cambodia. For example, we offer courses in traditional Khmer art. So everything about Khmer art we have to teach them.

It is clear from Mr. S C's words here that some Cambodian-ness exists in the curriculum and the school puts it into practice. In relation to what Mr. S C indicates above, the CSAJ

executive members discuss the notion of Cambodian-ness based on their experience in schooling in Cambodia:

> R: What elements of education you had in Cambodia make you gain your Cambodian-ness?
>
> Theara: In Cambodia, maybe we have moral education like learning how to respect the elderly and we have history class that maybe builds a lot of nationalism. The history of Cambodia provokes nationalism among Cambodians.
>
> Chan: As for me, as I said before, I saw the child's face. I think maybe she is hungry to learn, hungry to know something but maybe she doesn't have a chance. About the element of education in Cambodia, my focus is not on the soft side but maybe on the hard side, I mean, the infrastructures because some people are really poor and they cannot have access to school, even though the school is nearby. Our government says that school is free for everyone. Actually, it's true. It's free but that's just free paper and free pens—just free from the school fee, so as for poor people, it's still really hard. So mainly, focusing on the element of Cambodian education, if they want to progress, I think the infrastructure of education is useful.
>
> Sophat: I think I got to learn more about what is called Cambodian-ness through literature, especially when I read novels. There are Cambodian novels talking about the lives of Cambodian people, the tradition, and the restorations. I learned quite a lot from that.
>
> Sovann: I think what makes me retain my Cambodian-ness is maybe, for the most part, through my parents. Thinking of the way they educate me, because they are Cambodian, I receive a lot from them. And also, I get an influence from friends in school and also teachers through instruction. Also, there is an influence from entertainment like songs, dance, and something like that because I like dancing.
>
> R: Do you mean traditional Khmer dance?
>
> Sovann: Anything. I also like breakdance. Two or three years ago, I got a chance to learn traditional dance to show it in a youth camp. It's really nice to learn how to dance.
>
> Mean: I have gained Cambodian-ness from mostly the environment around me like education, parents, friends, and the media.

In this way, the CSAJ members describe Cambodian-ness in relation to education, books, family, friends, entertainment, and the media.

### 6.3.2    Retaining Cultural Roots

The dialogues with the study participants regarding Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness show that the discussion of cultural roots is indispensable. The following accounts of the participants present various notions of cultural roots. First of all, the Venerable Nanda explains what it means to retain cultural roots in the everyday life:

> In the daily life, keeping Khmer culture is anything that we do according to the rule of the Khmer ancestors. Especially, we speak Khmer every day. And in Ottawa, we can show our Khmer culture to maintain it through the message such as Dhamma talks. Sometimes we record Dhamma talks on CDs and share them with people because all the people have to work and mostly they don't have time to come to the temple to listen to Dhamma talks, so the one best way that can help them is recording us on MP3s or CDs, sending those, and sharing with every house, every Cambodian house.

The Venerable Nanda thus talks about the maintenance of cultural roots in relation to the daily performance such as the behaviour, the language, and the belief.

In illustrating how she sustains her cultural roots in the everyday life, Ms. P remarks on similar subjects that the Venerable Nanda pointed out earlier:

> In my case, I married a Japanese man and it has been thirty years since I came to Japan at the age of sixteen. When I came to Japan, I felt the need to learn the language before everything. And during the thirty years, I have acquired things like the custom and culture spontaneously. However, in terms of Cambodian culture, the thing is that it is impossible to maintain it unless I make efforts. For example, it might be more natural in the case of a person who gets married to someone from the same country. My case is a mixed marriage, so there are times when I inevitably try to sustain it consciously. Therefore, I learned Cambodian dance by myself (referring to videos). I had a hard time because I did not go to school for dance there. I thought how I could make the country Cambodia known to Japanese people. In addition, speaking of what I can do in general, it would be a diet. For daily meals, I sometimes prepare Cambodian cuisine on a table besides Japanese dishes. But thirty years ago, I could not obtain the ingredients. For instance, for herbs I raise them in my home and for coconut milk I went to Chinatown to buy it. But now there is a grocery in Yokouchi, Hiratsuka, so it became much easier and more convenient to buy the ingredients. Before that, I had a hard time getting the ingredients even to make curry and rice. But if I make Cambodian cuisine three meals a day, my kids will be tired of it, so I make it occasionally. Because of that, Japanese cuisine takes a central part at the dining table in my home. Moreover, speaking of what I can do everyday, I make a habit of burning incense. I offer three incense sticks simultaneously, when I place a cup of tea on the family Buddhist altar in my home.

The kind of incense I use is different from the one used for a Buddhist altar in Japan. After my children go to school, I burn incense and it diffuses an aroma. Then my daughter comes home and when she says, 'Mom, it smells like Cambodia', I feel very glad about it.

Here Ms. P refers to the language, the diet (food preparation), the belief, and the habit as a way of upholding her cultural roots.

Indeed, food is a major topic in the discussion of cultural roots. Sophat articulates the significance of food: "What is maintained in every diet is what is called Cambodian—our morality, our behaviour. I think we still behave, I mean, it is our behaviour; we still maintain what we call Khmer, the Khmer style." Similarly, Aria and Jadon mention food, explaining how the two maintain cultural roots in their daily lives:

Aria: I guess daily life it'll be the food. That's something as a culture you might look at or just smell because there is a very distinctive smell of Cambodian food. Some of them anyways. I guess that's one thing.

Jadon: My main thing is eating the food because once I love the food, you wanna figure out how to make it, which is really good. You can't just be eating hot dogs all day. So growing up in an Asian household, there is always rice available for everyone and then you just gotta learn how to make soup bases, you know.

Aria: It's definitely things we have to learn ourselves just because there are maybe one or two Cambodian restaurants in all of Ottawa, so it's not available everywhere else like McDonald's and Thai. Everyone knows Thai food and our food is fairly similar but there are some differences, you know. In order to enjoy it, still we gotta learn it ourselves.

Jadon: We gotta learn how to make it. My mom wanna always be there. (laugh)

Aria: And I guess other way of keeping our roots is through dance. It's not a daily thing but it is our regular thing in our lives.

Jadon: For us, I think also it's to keep very spiritual with everyone and with our religion. I mean if you are not religious at all, that is completely fine. But there is a lot of stuff that we grew up with, in particular that will stick with us whether be praying before a major event, whether it would be blessing a house before living in it. There is a lot of those little stuff that helps us.

Aria: There are a lot of little things we still do and learn as we grew up. We may not necessarily go to temple every week or every two weeks or whatever it is. There are a lot of little rules and this and that we still follow. And sometimes for me

personally, Cambodian doesn't make any sense or anything like that but I guess it's part of us. We've grown up with following all those rules; we stick to it. Things that are considered rude are still rude now. Definitely, you can't walk over somebody's way or walk over any part of a body.

Jadon: Respecting the elders is the main one. In every culture you can find that but for us, it was a huge must, you know, we had to respect that.

Here in addition to food, Aria and Jadon talk about dance, the belief, and the custom they grew up with as a means to maintain the cultural roots. The two refer to food once again in the discussion of what they want to do when they go to visit Cambodia:

Aria: We are very fortunate here and we probably take that for granted. I'm sure if we go there, we will definitely miss living in Canada very quickly. That's just because this is our home. We've been here for our entire lives. So we are used to everything. We don't regularly realize our fortune and our freedom. I guess that's a big thing about being Canadian—our freedom.

Jadon: I completely agree with that. I find that when we go there, I want to see everything. I want to experience everything for the time that I have. I wanna see it, experience it, meet people, and also make a name there. You know if I'm gonna be there, I don't wanna be portrayed as the Canadian guy. … [B]asically, I wanna see how everyone lives. I might feel sad about it, of how everyone is brought up and how less fortunate everyone is. But I wanna see everything. The fresh food.

Aria: The authentic food because even though our parents can make it, you know, getting food from there versus what we have here, I'm sure they have different tastes, different quality. Food comes up a lot.

Jadon: Food is major in everyone's culture. I mean what kind of culture has no food, memorable food? Look, we have the poutine. Canada has the poutine. We are known for that and the Beaver Tails. But I mean again, food is a huge thing in our country, so experiencing the food, like Aria said, it has different tastes, different methods of making it, and also adding different spices, I guess. There's not a lot of stuff that we have here compared to over there.

In this way, Aria and Jadon present a mode of juggling Cambodian-ness and Canadian-ness in their everyday lives. The conversations on cultural roots thus disclose that food plays an important role in practicing and preserving her/his cultures, and preparing and having Cambodian cuisine embodies the daily performance of Cambodian-ness.

### 6.3.3    Performing Hybridization through Dance

It became clear from the discussion above that hybridization is existent in the research participants' daily performances such as sustaining the cultural roots. As already mentioned, hybridization takes multifarious forms. The following instances of the study participants show diverse ways of performing hybridization in their everyday lives. First of all, the case of Aria and Jadon is helpful in considering what the performance of hybridization means. As discussed in the previous section, Aria and Jadon perform dance in various ways according to the space, the audience, and the music. In the dialogue below, Jadon indicates how important it is to express himself through more than one dance style:

> Jadon: Before starting the Cambodian dancing, I actually first danced Chinese. I've done a lot of the dragon dances and the types of waltz. And then I went into Spanish; I did more of the festive dance styles. And then I went into Cambodian. Cambodian dancing is just extremely for me—everyone will tell you—I have a natural neck for Cambodian dancing whether I know what I'm doing or not. But going into hip-hop was just an experience I wanted to feel to see how wide I can expand my creative realms.
>
> Aria: I think it's a pretty big thing here in Canada as well.
>
> Jadon: Yes. Very huge. And I find that without hip-hop and everything else that I have done, it would not make me as outgoing and I wouldn't be able to express myself. And I also wouldn't be able to stay fit, look good, be creative.

Here Aria states that hip-hop dance comes to the fore in Canada and Jadon suggests that absorbing diverse dance styles brings creativity to self-expression. What becomes apparent from the comments of the two dance instructors is that the performance of hybridization in the context of dance leads to the expression of originality.

### 6.3.4    Performing Hybridization through Music

The case of Mr. K.D shows the merger of the West and the East in music. He describes the phenomenon seen in the learning environment:

Mr. K.D: Students compose using the notation like Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si because the Cambodian music scale system is from France. If we need to sing a song, it must be in Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si, Do. We understand A-B-C or numbers (scales) for ourselves but we have always been using Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si until now because Cambodia was a colony of France. So France brought everything to Cambodia but now I and other people keep this Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si. We practice everyday and I teach solfège, the notation; I must sing in Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si.

R: Do they like to compose modern or traditional music?

Mr. K.D: Now students combine traditional Cambodian music and Western music and some students like to compose Western music. But looking at them everyday, I think students like combining the traditional and Western music.

Mr. K.D thus points out the impact of France on the cultural formation of Cambodia in the

colonial times. He then starts to give a detailed account of the background:

R: How about traditional Khmer musical instruments? Do you use Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si?

Mr. K.D: Yes. Traditional Cambodian music did not think about this before because we lost documentation a long time ago. I don't know if it was in my father's or my grandfather's generation but before I was born, I think, uh, Cambodia had notation for traditional music, not Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si. But in Cambodia there were many wars. In the Pol Pot times, you know, everything was destroyed. After the revolution, from 1979 we started from there again. We have no documents. Traditional music of Cambodia might have used scales different from the Western music scale. But now sometimes we hear music from every country in the world, so the scales, I think, are not the same at all as the Western scale. But now I think music through in the same way as the Western scale.

R: When you play traditional musical instruments, how do you memorize a new song? Do you use the Western scale?

Mr. K.D: Before adopting the Western scale, to play traditional Cambodian musical instruments, my father and grandfather taught me orally and one to one. Traditional music had been passed down orally from generation to generation. There is no document, no notation, and I remember. For example, a hundred pieces must be in my head. And for promotion, I studied Western notations. I started by myself. There was no teacher for this because my teachers did not know about the notation Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si. They taught me orally and I memorized everything. But for my promotion, I studied notations with a Western music teacher. I think unless I study like this, everything will be lost. When the teacher is like that (grounded in the musical notation), I must be able to write the notes. For example, for a Cambodian piece, my teacher taught and I wrote it with the notes. And now some are teaching students like my father and my grandfather did but some teachers use notations for

teaching students. Now I teach with the Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si scale for traditional Cambodian music. It makes very easy for us to play the instruments. For example, playing one hour or half an hour long music is ok because my students can read Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol, La, Si.

In this way, Mr. K.D mastered the Western music scale and notation, and now applies them to teaching and performing the traditional Cambodian musical instruments. He indicates the reason for doing it as follows:

Mr. K.D: By recording with the musical notes, we hope to keep the culture, not to lose it. We borrow the notations from the Western to write for traditional Cambodian music so that we can keep everything for document. We borrow the scale from the Western and we borrow the notation from the Western to write a traditional Cambodian piece. If it is not done like this, I think in the future we will lose everything without document. Because students now don't want to remember by ear and it is hard to do so because they want to take time for another subject. In my experience in teaching, you can't remember or I can't remember because sometimes a traditional Cambodian piece is long.

R: Like how long would it be?

Mr. K.D: It is ten minutes or fifteen minutes in length. They (students) can't remember, so there is one way that I write the notations for them. It makes very easy to play traditional Cambodian music. They must learn Western music. If they do not get Western music, they can't read and practice the traditional Cambodian music instruments. It was my first promotion for having written music. Before that, there was no document. We used to but the Pol Pot regime destroyed everything.

Here Mr. K.D affirms that the Western music notation makes it possible to record the traditional music pieces composed in the past and to bring them back to life through performance.

In addition, he suggests that the utilization of the Western music scale and notation enables the music teacher and the students to restore classical Cambodian music that was almost forgotten and build up something new together with reference to the past:

Mr. K.D: My students create new music pieces. Sometimes they make another interpretation. They make another way; they make another form. Today I think a certain music piece like this but my students have another way. For composing from the material in the past, sometimes I take like this and they get like that. Sometimes I take like this and they approach through another way; they go to another way. Traditional Cambodian music is like this because, uh, it is not fixed.

R: So even one traditional song can be played in many different ways depending on the players.

Mr. K.D: Yes. A traditional music piece can be played in many different ways depending on who the performers are. Traditional singers, traditional music players perform like this way and another way. Sometimes they play and combine the original piece with their own interpretations. When we play, we can compose in this way and we can compose in that way. For example, Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol. After that, [explaining variations aloud here] because this is the civilization of Cambodia—not fixed. But the fixed is the document, notation.

In this way, documenting traditional Cambodian music by making full use of the Western music scale and notation lets a legacy alive and the flexible element of Cambodian music offers many possibilities to performers, thereby leading to creative power.


### 6.3.5    Performing Hybridization through Art Making

Considering the case of Bav, it is obvious that his expression adopting the diverse art forms embodies hybridization. In addition to painting, filmmaking, and performing contemporary dance, Bav is pursuing a wide range of knowledge and skills in the arts:

> I did a stained glass window. The teacher came from Canada and taught us how to make a stained glass work. But the teacher didn't have materials for stained glass windows in Cambodia, so he stopped in Thailand and Singapore to get materials. I made a big one for the airport in Siem Reap. … And also, I studied Woodcut, you know, the Japanese style. The teacher uses wood and carves a picture on it. After that, he puts colour on it, brings paper, and presses it. Woodcut is like the traditional Japanese style. But Cambodia doesn't have the tradition of Woodcut.

As shown in the previous chapter, Bav seeks to create artworks merging the traditional and the modern. His intention as such is evident in the following comment:

> Bav: … I want to perform dance in other countries but I have to find funding.
>
> R: What do you want to tell people through performing contemporary dance?
>
> Bav: For dance, I hope to perform a story of the Khmer, like a Khmer temple or something like that to show Khmer tradition.

While pointing out the issue of securing funding, Bav expresses his will to embody some traditional essence through performing contemporary dance.

Moreover, Bav's remark on a fashion show below proclaims another type of hybridization:

> Bav: And I participated in one fashion show, like wearing costumes made of plastic materials. The trash after people ate was brought and used to make the show. All the plastic materials were used for the fashion show. These are all plastic and a CD here. This is me in costume. I designed it.
>
> R: So the theme of the fashion show is recycling.
>
> Bav: Yes. The show was about recycling waste to make costumes. It was in 2007. This dress is made of plastic bags.
>
> R: Why did you think about using plastics?
>
> Bav: The show focuses on recycling because in Cambodia, you don't think about this. A lot of people eat on the street and put all the garbage away. But the people making artworks think about those who don't think about this, and we brought this concept to make people see like that.

It becomes clear here that hybridizing the artistic creativity and the materials in contempt (plastics in this case) produces and disseminates the ecological message appealing to the audience. In relation to the fashion show raising people's consciousness, Bav talks about the present art scene in Cambodia:

> … [N]ow people make art a lot. Like yesterday, my friend opened an exhibition of photography in a gallery in Phnom Penh. Many people went there yesterday. … Many young Cambodians are interested in art a lot. But Cambodian art is no old.

In this way, taking his artist friend as an example, Bav suggests that artists living in Cambodia are now actively engaged in art creation. His case shows that Cambodian art is on the rise and his manner of hybridizing the various forms of artistic expression has the possibility of not only shedding light on the art tradition interrupted by war but also of proposing an alternative view.

### 6.3.6    Performing Hybridization through the Use of Media

The activities of Ms. T S denote three levels of hybridization. First, WMC disseminates educational information elevating people's awareness in a combination of the radio and the television programs. Second, WMC works in collaboration with other agencies at a national level in order to find a way to resolve the social issues. Ms. T S refers to these two points as follows:

> It is difficult to say that only WMC makes improvement in the country because there are many NGOs working on the same issue. So there should be every part—NGOs, civil society, and the government as well—working together toward improvement. But I just want to express to you how important the media's role is among on-the-ground activities. Suppose that you are on the ground like a training workshop, you can educate one hundred, two hundred, let's say five hundred people. But with media, if you publicize and disseminate information on the radio, how many million people listen to it? And on the television, how many million people watch it?

In addition, the third type of hybridization is evident in WMC's training programs promoting an interchange of personnel between WMC and international agencies:

> Ms. T S: We sometimes assign them to be trained overseas depending on invitations and scholarships.

> R: Trained in which countries?

> Ms. T S: Sometimes in the Philippines, sometimes in Thailand, and once it was not about media but a training in marketing in the USA. Besides outside of the office and outside of the country, we have on-job training. For on-job training here, we recruit expert volunteers from countries like Canada, Australia—different countries to work at WMC for one year or two years. They train the staff in the field. At the moment, we have an expert volunteer from JICA, Japan; his skill is in camera operation. He trains the staff how to use a camera, how to have proper lightening, and things like that. On-job training is very important and very helpful to the staff because the expert volunteers give instruction and explanation, while working; it's easy to catch up. … I remember in 2003, there were four interns from Canada. We signed an agreement with a Canadian organization to launch exchange programs. The Canadian organization accepted one of the WMC radio staff and then WMC accepted four interns from Canada to work at WMC for four months. All the Canadian interns liked to be a DJ for a song request program. Every week a Canadian intern raised one issue saying, 'Hi, everybody! I want to talk about this topic. If you have comments and questions, let's talk', and then callers called in because young callers wanted to practice English. The caller could talk to the DJ.

Some callers asked about the experience in Canada. They were very happy to communicate with the callers.

Thus, WMC places emphasis on enriching the training programs in collaboration with the international organizations both inside and outside the country. As a result, the staffs incorporate the knowledge and skills gained through training into the production of the radio and television programs.

### 6.3.7    Issues in Performing Hybridization

The stories of the research participants illustrated above make it clear that performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two elements in the binary. Kleng's explanation below demonstrates that her art creation does not simply aim to weave the West and the East:

> R: In your installation, do you combine the Khmer art style and the Western art style?
>
> Kleng: For me, it's not much about combining with traditional Khmer art. The question of me combining is: What is the feeling of Khmer people combining with abstract? Because abstract is like more Western, then how can you put your feeling that you are a Khmer artist in abstract art? This is not the way I'm combining. It's not to show 'Ok, this is Khmer art I combine with Western art'—not really much. But I combine with my feeling, with material, and with the way I'm thinking. This is the way I combine art with the Western because here I'd say abstract is not really originally from Khmer art.

Thus, giving her own art production as an example, Kleng indicates that her artworks do not represent the simplified merger of the West and the East but rather, it goes beyond the monolithic categorization. She suggests that the art form in which she transforms her ideas is just classified as abstract and the Western by the standard.

While the instances of the study participants above show the possibilities brought by the performance of hybridization, there exist some problems worth discussing. The first one

can be found in what Kleng remarks on her daily self-expression in relation with people surrounding her:

> And even my style, sometimes they think that I'm a foreigner here but I'm totally Khmer. Because of my style and the way I'm wearing my hair—sometimes I lay it down like that—sometimes they say, 'Hey, did you just wake up?' I'm thinking in my head, 'Oh, no, it's my style'. Too many people around me say, 'Why don't you comb your hair?' After that, I feel ashamed. When nearly graduating, I said, 'Ok, I know my style. I know what to do. I don't care what I'm wearing but I just know how I get the idea of study to get a higher degree. I don't care'. And you see sometimes Khmer women are very special; you can just see 'Oh, this is a Khmer girl'. You can really recognize that. But for me, I do what I want. … I like to do something different. You know it's like to do something more crazy because here the way they do you can see as mostly the same. But I say, 'Oh, I don't want to do this'. Especially, I get the feeling from the first. I don't know what I want to do in the future. Just now [and] before. But I know that always I wear clothes, I choose my style—never the same, never gets the same as people. Of course, in my past time, I used to do the wedding like that and go to the hair salon. It's like 'that' style; it's not freestyle, you know. That style is like 'Ok, stay here. Don't move'. After that, we put on make-up. I always get the feeling: 'Who is she? Is it me?' And after, it went on and on, and stopped. Now I don't wear make-up much. If I do, I say I don't really like this. Many times I still do like the way Cambodian girls go to the wedding or party. Many times we spend a lot of money for doing that. After that, I feel regret, 'Oh, I don't want to do that'. It looks ugly for me because the face is more white and the neck is black. You see what I mean? Many times I say, 'I don't want to do that'. But my friends say, 'You need to do this. You need to make yourself pretty'. So later I do the same. But many times I'm like 'Oh, I don't want to do that. It's too bad for me. It's ugly'. This is what I'm thinking.

In this way, Kleng's case demonstrates that her daily performance collides with what people at large consider as the standard, that is, the norm in terms of performing Cambodian-ness.

Another problem is evident in the point where the previously discussed components—Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness—meet and overlap. In the continued discussion on the maintenance of their cultural roots, Aria and Jadon point out the emotional conflict in performing Cambodian-ness and Canadian-ness:

> Aria: There are a lot of times when I personally would like to yell back and really fight back to some elders but I've never had. For my Canadian side, I really want to speak it out but it's the Cambodian in me that pulls it back because I know once it's out, you can't take it back and I can never disrespect the elders like that, even if I believe I'm in the right. I mean I have to use other forms, be very professional, political how I talk back, not in a rude way.

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Jadon: I don't care! I still do it. I am Canadian. I will do it but I will respect them at the end.

Aria: Maybe he's a bit more Canadian than I am.

Jadon: I'm a little bit more rough around the edge. But if I find in any country, I mean, things do have to change within any country, we all have to grow up, you know, we have to start being a little bit more modernized but also remembering certain things and what we need to do as well.

Aria: I agree

Thus, Aria indicates the reciprocity of Cambodian-ness and Canadian-ness and Jadon expresses the importance of undergoing a change.

The third problem is evident in what Ms. P explains, concentrating on the language usage in her everyday life:

> … Unfortunately, I rarely have a chance to speak the Cambodian language. While my daily communication is in Japanese, I sustain my consciousness as a Cambodian ethnicity by reading the news of Cambodia through the Internet, books written by philosophers and great figures, and so on. When I meet my friends occasionally, the half of the conversation is in Japanese; it is mixed. In the conversation among the Cambodian fellows, the Japanese language is always mixed involuntarily. There was one time when five female friends and I got together. We decided, 'We shall speak a hundred percent Cambodian from now on'. And then, everyone became quiet and taciturn radically. That was very interesting. Everyone including me was not confident. It was a terrific discovery. Surprisingly, it seems that everyone does not have confidence in speaking a hundred percent. Perhaps, each person might be living with children and family members, using Japanese in her home. The four of those whom I met on that day happened to have married Japanese men. I found this interesting but considering it carefully, I think it is a wretched story. … In addition, there was one time when I became tense, when I spoke the Cambodian language. It was about making appearance on television. When this book was released, a local TV station called Cambodian Television Network (CTN) producing very famous programs drew up a thirty-minute program to be on the air on Sunday. Later, I heard that they rebroadcasted it seven times. Since I had to speak Cambodian for the whole of thirty minutes, I got tense extremely. When I watched a recording of it later, I found that I was speaking Cambodian properly. … Because of this thirty-minute program, I was able to verify that I am still capable of speaking Cambodian, my first language, along with my own history of living in Japan for thirty years (my thirty years' experience using Japanese).

Here Ms. P gives a detailed account of the performance of hybridization in her daily life. Her observation shows that the complexity is inseparable from the languages used for self-expression in the state of hybridization. The CSAJ executive members also talk about experience similar to Ms. P's:

> Sophat: We've got mixed up with what is called Japanese-ness and what is called Cambodian-ness. In my case, when I go to school, there is no Cambodian student around me, so I have to adapt myself to the Japanese environment. I have to talk politely to teachers and I have to watch my manner, when I interact with my Japanese friends. It's kind of fun but sometimes stressful. And then, when we are working among our Cambodians here in CSAJ, we can talk freely and we do text messaging during late at night. We have to part ourselves, be flexible. It's just like my school is my Japanese community to me. Only in the CSAJ meeting, meeting here is our Cambodian community to me. It's quite confusing, especially when I interact more with Khmer students, I sometimes find the lack of manner. Or my languages get mixed up, when interacting with the Japanese. I sometimes talk to my Japanese friends in the Khmer language and they are like, 'Wow, what did you just say?' So I have to translate it again into Japanese. And also, when I do presentation in class, I sometimes feel it is very difficult to explain what I want to say because I cannot find terms in Japanese. So I have to think for a while and then I have to explain to my professor in English, and he helps me find key words in Japanese. And everything we have to do is to be flexible.

> Sovann: Cambodia is one life and Japan is another life to me, so it's a new life. Because some activities I enjoyed doing in Cambodia cannot be done in Japan, I have to find other ways to make myself happy. And also, you are disconnected with all the friends. So you start from the beginning, find new friends, and try to adapt to the place you live in because the environment is somehow different from each other. You need to change.

> Mean: For me, I prefer living in Cambodia rather than in Japan. There are many things that I want to do as I was in Cambodia but in Japan, I cannot. The most thing is that I am separated from parents, friends, and many things like food. I want to eat Cambodian food but I cannot eat it in Japan. And there are many places I want to go to but I cannot in Japan. Even though Japan is very clean and has many places for tourism, for me I prefer going anywhere in Cambodia rather than Japan. As Sophat said, in school I am the only Cambodian, so I have difficulties contacting others. I must adapt myself to other Japanese people. When they talk and they are joking, I just adapt myself and try to laugh myself at the jokes sometimes. Besides the Japanese, there are other foreign students. Compared to the Japanese, other foreign students are easy for me to adapt to than the Japanese but we still have a barrier between cultures and between languages.

> Sophat: I agree with that. Even though we try to adapt ourselves to the Japanese environment, I think there is still a gap that we cannot get any closer than that.

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Mean: When they talk about something related to politics, *manga* (comics) or something, even I read some *manga* but I cannot cover all of them. When they talk about something, I seem to have no knowledge or no clue about it, so it is very difficult to approach students.

Sophat: Maybe Japanese *manga* or Japanese entertainment is too broad. In Cambodia, we have only one or two media programs that are very popular, so if you watch a story, maybe everyone knows that story already. So if you talk about it, most of us know.

Mean: Sometimes they invite me to go to karaoke or pub. But even in Cambodian I cannot sing karaoke, so it is very difficult. But fortunately, there are many Cambodian people, so I can contact and have more fun with Cambodian people rather than with Japanese people.

Thus, the CSAJ committee members suggest that there is certain gap between the Cambodian-born students and the Japanese-born students, which is difficult to fill. At the same time, Sophat and Sovann assert the importance of being flexible.


### 6.3.8    Possibilities in Performing Hybridization

It is clear from the comments of some research participants that flexibility plays a significant role in the performance of hybridization and from it emerge possibilities. Jadon values flexibility and gives an account of it from a perspective of a dance performer:

> It's a good work out. You know you laugh a lot. Laugh is an exercise. We love to work with balance, technique, flexibility, and control. All that is within your body, within yourself and your mind. That's helping everybody a little bit out at a time because in reality, balancing yourself physically also helps you balance your mind. When you try to learn balance, you can't be thinking about a hundred different things. When you are learning about technique, you're learning what the technique represents, what each hand signal means, and with the combination of them altogether, what kind of story that tells you. Also the flexibility, I mean, everyone loves to work out where you can be extremely flexible …. Flexibility works out your body, works out your mind, and you get a great laugh out of it at the end.

In this way, Jadon lays great emphasis on being flexible. Referring to "balance, technique, flexibility, and control", he shows that the composition of the four elements creates a story for the performer to tell and for the audience to hear and see.

The story of Ms. P revealed the intricate issues of performing hybridization in her daily life. Even in the complex circumstances, as a writer in the diaspora, Ms. P asserts the importance of flexibility and keeping good balance:

> R: You mentioned your hope to associate with Japan and Cambodia on equal terms. Could you elaborate on that?
>
> Ms. P: When I am asked what my nationality is, I feel that something is wrong with answering that I am Cambodian living in Japan. But it is also odd to say that I am Japanese by nationality. If I am asked such a question, I might use an expression like a Cambodian of Japanese nationality. The point is that blood in my veins is Cambodian throughout my life. But in terms of nationality, I am recorded as Japanese on my passport. It is no doubt that I am basically Cambodian whose birthplace is Cambodia because my parents are Cambodian. It does not matter whether I spend thirty years or fifty years living in Japan. Even if I lived in Cambodia for only sixteen years and keep living in Japan for fifty years, my blood will be left intact. In occasions when I exchange opinions with Japanese people, some say to me, 'A view of a Cambodian person is different, as I thought' and 'Your thinking is Japanese, as I thought'. Occasionally, I have some Cambodian components that I cannot concede. It is appropriate to acknowledge the merits of both. Speaking of child rearing, I spent only sixteen years living in Cambodia, so I cannot talk about anything superb but I put myself in my parents' shoes. My children were born in Japan, so I cannot force them to practice something Cambodian unconditionally. There is certain environment in which they were brought up. For example, when my daughter asks me, 'Mom, what does this Japanese word mean?', I cannot say to her that I am Cambodian and not to ask such a question. Seen from my daughter, I am no different from the ordinary mother in any home. In that case, the influence of Japan is stronger in my life naturally. I like proverbs in both Japanese and Cambodian and often use them in the conversation with my family. It is interesting to see various interpretations. Taking a proverb meaning to play the hypocrite as an example, the Japanese one is 'One puts on a cat' and the Cambodian one is 'A cat draws in its claws'. Even though the two have the exact same meaning, each country has its own way of expression. But it is interesting that both use a metaphor of cat in common. Only the mixed marriage couples like us know this kind of thing, so it is of benefit to me. Therefore, I think a good way is to acknowledge each other's advantage, affect and enhance one another without competing with each other. In doing so, we can stimulate each other in a meaningful way.

Ms. P thus points out that performing hybridization in her everyday life involves the intricacies—the complexity in living in the diaspora as well as the one existing between what she conveys as a writer and what each of the audience interprets. She suggests that it is essential to retain flexibility without looking away from the difficulties in the daily life.

The comments of some participants capture the moment when one specific identity *becomes* influential in their everyday lives. For instance, Kleng mentions: "… [S]ometimes they think that I'm a foreigner here but I'm totally Khmer". Aria remarks: "… [I]t's the Cambodian in me that pulls it back …". Jadon indicates: "I am Canadian". Ms. P states: "The point is that blood in my veins is Cambodian throughout my life". This does not necessarily mean simplicity in the identity (trans)formation. It rather denotes that the participants practice some particular identity at certain moment. When viewed in the context of performing hybridization, the participants' action can be regarded as resistance to the fixed identity, which the dominant discourse imposes on their bodies.

## 6.4    Prelude to Void

In this chapter, I focused on art appreciation, art practice, and performance. Based on the remarks of the study participants on their tastes in the arts such as fine art, music, and film, the first section showed that popular culture from the countries including the United States, China, and South Korea has a great effect on what the general public in Cambodia listen and watch daily. In addition, it pointed out some issues—the strong influence of other cultures, the lack of Khmer originality in the arts, the obstacles that Cambodia encounters in elevating art creation, and the perception that people at large have towards fine art.

In the second section, I drew on the concept of heterotopia presented by Foucault and illustrated the multifarious forms of heterotopia emerging from the artistic practices of the research participants. It became obvious that heterotopia is a space with fluid qualities beyond the conventional notion of time and space. Between the creator of a blog/website located in Ottawa and the viewers around the globe exists heterotopia transgressing the national borders. In this cyberspace, the past, present, and future are mixed together since the

viewers are now checking out the latest news as well as the videos and the pictures of the past events. Heterotopia for some artists is a space where they seek to bring changes to the fixed way of appreciating the arts. The producer/disseminator of radio and television programs in heterotopia encourages the audience to participate in the creation of alternative views challenging the dominant ideology of gender. Heterotopia for the writer in the diaspora exists as a space transcending the dichotomy of Cambodia/Japan, Cambodian/Japanese, and insider/outsider. Writing books and giving lectures in this space uncover what is disregarded by the biased view of Cambodia and the people as well as the way of putting a fixed label of "refugees" on those who are in the diaspora. The dance performers/instructors' practice creates heterotopia as a space detaching itself from the binarism and acknowledging the reciprocal relation among the diverse cultural elements.

Applying Trinh's notion of hybridization, the last section demonstrated several instances of hybridization in the daily settings and also looked at the moments of performing hybridization in the everyday lives of the study participants. What became clear from the narratives of the participants is that performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two components in the dichotomous relation; it connotes heterogeneous elements beyond the dichotomy. In addition, some research participants pointed out the importance of being flexible and keeping balance in the process of hybridization.

Each study participant set out on a journey with fire to accomplish her/his purpose in life. Undergoing both an adverse wind and a following wind, every voyage goes forward. The water keeps running and never stays the same. Sometimes each voyager lets oneself float and swims with the stream. There are occasions when she/he takes a roundabout way. But the stories of the participants reveal the untiring endeavours to attain her/his own Way. Indeed, each participant cherishes every moment of life and keeps up the journey with all her/his

heart and soul. In composing the five scrolls, Miyamoto suggests that reaching the point of void means "… spontaneous entry into the true Way" (1994, p. 20). When a film is in charge of illustrating the journeys of the research participants, what comes into being visually? How does the moving image show their respective, unique Ways?

# Chapter 7: Void

> Without any confusion in mind, without slacking off at any time, polishing the mind and attention, sharpening the eye that observes and the eye that sees, one should know real emptiness as the state where there is no obscurity and the clouds of confusion have cleared away. (Miyamoto, 1994, p. 142)

Here Miyamoto gives an account of reaching the state of Void. As pointed out in Chapter 1, the concept of Void embraces the positive meaning and the possibility that an alternative mode beyond the binary system can emerge. From the cases of heterotopia and hybridization seen in the art practices and performances of the research participants discussed in the previous chapter, it is reasonable to suppose that these have relevance to the concept of Void. This chapter focuses on a film *The Art of Becoming*, produced specifically for this dissertation project. The video is available for viewing on my YouTube channel (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HfCqv33F-f0&feature=youtu.be). The concept of the film is to visualize what heterotopia and hybridization look like in the context of the reciprocal relationship between the research participants and me as a researcher/filmmaker applying Trinh's "speaking nearby" position. I take part in the film as a calligrapher, performer of *mudrās* (Buddhist hand gestures) as well as a musical instrument called *sanshin*, and voice-over. The video is made up of five sections: Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, and Void. Each segment includes an image capturing my handwriting with a brush and voice-over reading poetry composed of five lines aloud. The space between the segments contains a portion of various images and voice-overs of the research participants.

Drawing on Foucault, Trinh, and Miyamoto, this film is also influenced by the intricate writing style of Virginia Woolf seen in *The Waves*. Julie Vandivere (1996) offers a useful interpretation as follows: "To read Woolf's linguistic style as a social project … requires close, careful scrutiny of how her irregular phraseology and her pairing and multiplying of

subjects, verbs, tenses, and moods challenge reality, subjectivity, and hegemony" (p. 231).

Borrowing the counter-hegemonic approach as such, the film lays emphasis on the complexity and multiplicity, which function as a driving force to hinder essentialization and dichotomization. In addition, the complex description of the identity (trans)formation in her work is significant to my video. Tamlyn Monson (2004) investigates how Woolf's conception of self affects the structure of *The Waves*:

> … [T]he central metaphors of the novel suggest a cyclical model of subjectivity—a process of self-constitution and dissolution represented by the image of a wave rising and then crashing, only to be drawn back into the sea where it rises once more …. Each wave, each drop, embodies a stage in the individual's life; each stage is precipitated by a loss of self preceding the formation of another, reconfigured self. (p. 173)

I acknowledge that Woolf's view of self with the ongoing and ever-transforming nature plays an important role in creating *The Art of Becoming*. In the following, I offer a detailed account of how I created the film as a researcher/filmmaker, for I regard providing the viewers with a minute description of the process of producing a piece of artwork as important. Hence, I elucidate the structure of the film, focusing on image and sound.

## 7.1   Image Production

*The Art of Becoming* is different from regular documentary film showing talking heads with a narration giving the viewers an authoritative point of view. The video attempts to avoid representing the research participants as mere objects to be gazed at and understood by the audience. Rather, it focuses on various movements of body, mind, and soul as well as diverse types of performance including daily routines (e.g., people commuting and traffic at rush hours) and rituals (e.g., the Buddhist ceremony taking place in Phnom Penh at night). In addition to these, the film contains my performance of calligraphy, Buddhist hand gestures called *mudrā*, and a musical instrument. Moreover, the notion of time is important to the

video illustrating the transition of time in a day. Starting with a cut of sunrise, the film presents a view seen from a three-wheeler taxi (*tuk-tuk*) in the daytime, at dusk, and in the night.

Michael Sullivan (1989) denotes an alternative perspective resisting the normative view of time as the linear: "Space and time, we have come to feel, are infinite, and our knowledge of them can be but partial and relative. Solid matter has dissolved into an accretion of particles in an eternal state of agitation" (p. 259). In *The Art of Becoming*, I pay attention to the sequence of time (i.e., from dawn to night, past, present, and future) and at the same time, seek to create another layer of time linking the produced film, which is already the past, with the viewers watching it at the present time. Making such an attempt to reflect the complexity and multiplicity of identity and time in the video, I intend to address Woolf's following questions. In her essay "The Cinema", in comparison with literary works, Woolf (1996) interrogates critically the nature of film, which was a newcomer in those days, and poses questions:

> Is there, we ask, some secret language which we feel and see, but never speak, and, if so, could this be made visible to the eye? Is there any characteristic which thought possesses that can be rendered visible without the help of words? (p. 35)

## 7.2    Performing Calligraphy (*Sho*)

As a response to the questions Woolf raised above, I discuss two subjects: performing calligraphy and hand gestures seen in the film. In *The Art of Becoming*, I captured myself performing calligraphy (*sho*), writing the five elements—Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, and Void—in *Kanji* with a brush, and placed these in the film in the order of the dissertation chapters. This is to give a detailed account of how performing *sho* proceeds, thereby illustrating how a new form beyond the binary structure emerges from the combination of a calligrapher, a brush, ink, and paper. In the book *Shodo: The Art of Coordinating Mind, Body*

*and Brush*, William Reed (1989) argues that practicing calligraphy is closely related to the view of Miyamoto asserting the importance of endeavouring to reach one's Way since a calligrapher acquires "… how to calm the mind and rejuvenate the body, through constant discipline and practice in the techniques of the Way (*dô*). Shodo is the 'Way of Brush Writing'" (p. 23). Reed also suggests that handwriting with a brush is not a mere literal expression: "The brush magnifies the power of concepts which are difficult to put into words. The act of painting itself is intense and immediate, but it leaves a lasting trace, a vivid impression of the mind that produced it" (1989, p. 23). As already discussed in the previous chapters, each research participant is engaged in a respective, unique style of self-expression to attain her/his on Way. While assembling in the film the sections capturing the diverse Ways of the participants partially, I chose to perform *shodo* as a means to visualize my own Way resulting from the interaction with the insightful and benevolent participants rather than expressing it in words.

My performance of *sho* in the film is under the influence of Yu-ichi Inoue, who contributed to the development of a new movement called "'Avant-Garde Calligraphy' (*Zen'ei sho*)" (Winther-Tamaki, 2001, p. 72). In the book *Yu-ichi Works 1955-85* featuring Yu-ichi's pieces of *sho* exhibited at the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Michiaki Kawakita refers to Yu-ichi saying: "*Sho* is said to be the expression of lines but the complex and delicate secrets of *Sho* lie in the fact that lines realize themselves in the action of writing characters" (1989, p. iv). Hence, in performing *sho* in the video, I attach importance not to the outcome (the completed handwriting) but to the performance itself.

Focusing on the artistic practice of Chou Wen-chung who composes music and practices calligraphy, Yayoi Uno Everett (2007) suggests what is notable in practicing calligraphy is "… the kinesthetic movement of brushstrokes—the process by which the

calligrapher leaves a visible trace of the dynamic and 'spontaneous flow' of ink in producing the art form" (p. 570). In the film produced for this dissertation project, by capturing my *sho* performance writing a character from the beginning until the end, I intend to show the fluid and successive nature of time and space. This means avoiding the reduction of the performance to a cut of an accomplished handwriting, which results in the re-creation of a singular, static form.

### 7.3    Performing *Mudrā* (*Inzō*)

In addition to performing *sho*, I included myself in the video performing fourteen styles of hand gestures seen in Buddha statues. The combination of the hands and the fingers generates an abundance of hand gestures called *mudrās*. In her book *Esoteric Mudrās of Japan*, Gauri Devi (1999) points out that the fingers symbolize the five elements:

> Every finger has a particular value. The thumb indicates 'infinite space, the void, the ether'. In Buddhism ether is considered to be an element and is identified with the void. The index finger symbolises the element 'air or wind'. The middle finger is the element 'fire'. The ring finger represents the element 'water'. The little finger represents the element 'earth'. (p. 2)

Applying the concept as such, I practiced a variety of hand gestures in the film in order to show the audience how the five elements can take various shapes and act reciprocally. In the book *Mudrā: A Study of Symbolic Gestures in Japanese Buddhist Sculpture*, E. Dale Saunders (1960) explains eight major and six secondary forms of *mudrās* in esoteric Buddhism. Borrowing this lens, I performed a total of fourteen hand gestures in the video and selected the comments of the research participants relevant to the meaning of each *mudrā*.

For the first *mudrā* named *segan-in* symbolizing "… the charity of the Buddha" (Saunders, 1960, p. 53), I regard the following remarks of the Venerable Nanda and Chan as appropriate:

The Venerable Nanda: We have to distribute the Buddha's teachings to people and we want to share our Khmer culture with the community and the Khmer generation who were born in Canada. When they want to know about the Khmer, they will know what Khmer has to do and what Khmer culture is.

Chan: You think that you want to get something that really benefits yourself. But if you do that benefit thing to them [other people] back, you will get something back. It's a kind of charity spirit. I think this phrase is not for doing well as a business vision or something but just for charity spirit. Actually, I'm really inspired the most ….

**Figure 7. Mudrā 1**



*Figure 7*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Secondly, *semui-in* represents "… the gift of living without fear given by the Buddha to Sentient Beings" (Saunders, 1960, p. 59). The strength to convey her/his message fearlessly seen in the comments of Sophat, Theara, and Tino is relevant to this *mudrā*:

Sophat: Cambodia is a country full of heritage, abundant natural resources, and kind and friendly people. Get closer to know it better! That is what I want to convey to everyone who wants to know about Cambodia because I think it is the fact about Cambodia. And Cambodia is just a small country located in Southeast Asia and not many people are interested in Cambodia, so I hope this message may call for more visits to Cambodia.

Theara: Always be the way you are. I learned when I came to Japan because you meet a lot of people and a lot of people have different thinking, ways of thinking.

Everyday you are influenced by others and sometimes you try to act, try to follow some others but maybe it's not good. So I learned to say always be the way you are.

Tino: … When I was in Cambodia, I really liked Japan. I don't really like it right now. But I really liked Japan when I was in Cambodia, so I really wanted to come to Japan. … You cannot do something different from rules. If you do something different, people will hate you. … [L]ike everybody is doing the same thing. You talk with different people but you feel like you talk with the same person.

**Figure 8. Mudrā 2**



*Figure 8.* Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

In terms of the third one *an-i-in*, Saunders states that "[t]he left hand represents concentration …" (1960, p. 73) and "[t]he right hand represents wisdom …" (1960, p. 73). What becomes clear from Mr. S C's words below is that as an artist/designer/educator, he concentrates on passing down the wisdom of art creation to the younger generation:

Mr. S C: … Some of the pictures I take, I take some of the, what to say, the abstract thing in a city—something like not known because this is the image that we don't think before. … I try to guide students here how to make a concept …. … I think that in Cambodia, people know about modern art; step by step they know.

Moreover, I consider this hand gesture as a representation of two important themes and selected the comments of Mr. Pheak, Pit, and Mean referring to "freedom and development", "freedom and communication", and "peace and freedom" respectively:

Mr. Pheak: I want people all around the world to have freedom and carry out development.

Pit: I want people in this country to have freedom. And I hope that people will have communication with one another freely and people can love each other like family.

Mean: The first one is I just want to teach about the characteristics of Cambodian people. Cambodian people are always said to be full of smile. The Japanese media also broadcasts about Cambodians and talks about '*Itsumo egao*' (always smiling). The second characteristic of Cambodian people, I think, is that Cambodian people are honest and mild. And the third phrase I wrote is: Khmer people need peace and freedom. It's not just Cambodian people but maybe many other people need peace and freedom.

**Figure 9. Mudrā 3**



*Figure 9*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

The fourth *kongō-gasshō* portrays "… a gesture of adoration" as well as "… the co-existence of the two inseparable worlds …" (Saunders, 1960, p. 77). As an articulation of the latter, I drew on the remarks of Mr. K.D as well as Ms. P:

Mr. K.D: We borrow the notations from the Western to write for traditional Cambodian music and then we can keep everything for document. … For example, Do, Re, Mi, Fa, Sol. After that, [explaining variations aloud here] because this is the civilization of Cambodia—not fixed. But the fixed is the document, notation.

Ms. P: Broadly speaking, the theme is that the most precious in this world are life and peace. In addition, it is not until securing life and peace that we obtain freedom and rights. In the same way as I do when writing a book, I always hope to stay equal

without a gap between Cambodia and Japan. It is not very good to express likes and dislikes such as praising only one side—either Cambodia or Japan. I feel that I have to deal with the two on equal terms. I am not forced to do so.
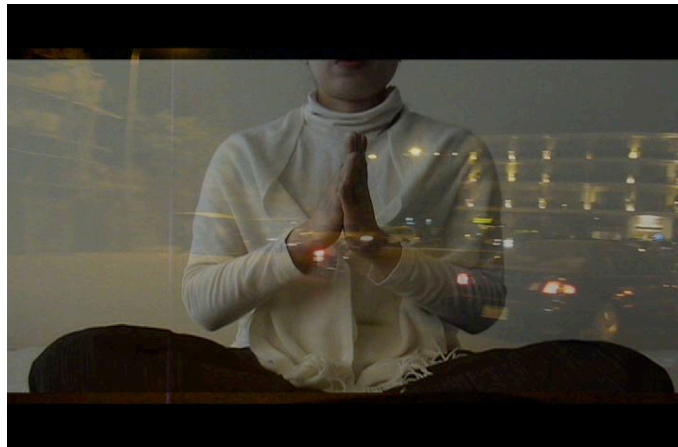
**Figure 10. Mudrā 4**



*Figure 10*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

The fifth *mudrā* called *sokuchi-in* is derived from "… the notion of 'repressing' the evil …" (Saunders, 1960, p. 82). I regard the words of Ms. T S dealing with social issues and working towards the incorporation of a gender perspective in the media production as relevant:

> Ms. T S: I think that media plays a very important role in providing and disseminating informative and educational programs to women …. … [W]e focus on women's rights, human rights, health, reproductive health, domestic violence, gender, democracy, election, legal framework, good governance, poverty, education, you know …. … Instead of blaming women, we have to, you know, talk in a gender perspective way.
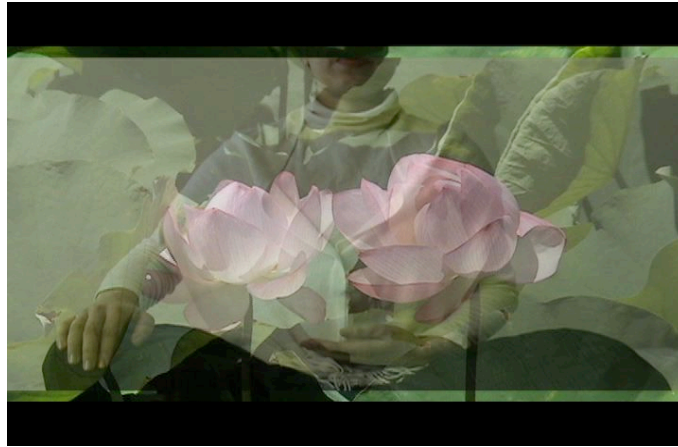
**Figure 11. Mudrā 5**



*Figure 11*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

The sixth one *jō-in* means "… the mudrā of concentration …" (Saunders, 1960, p. 88). The following research participants describe concentration as significant to their everyday lives. Mr. Thy points out that students should concentrate on studying: "I want to say that when a student just playing without studying takes an exam, the student cannot do it. Students study most when they have a teacher who teaches and asks them". Drawing on his favourite saying, Rath indicates the importance of concentrating on what one is engaged in doing: "The proverb I like is 'Time is money.' Time is important and do not waste it". Moreover, the two artists Bav and Kleng discuss the ways of concentrating on art making:

> Bav: I want to know about arts. I want to make all the countries know Cambodia makes paintings. And for film, maybe I want to show Khmer films in all the countries ….
>
> Kleng: … [A]rt is not like to listen to someone and do what they say but it comes from your feeling and shows out from your heart. … When I do art, I like to be in freedom. I don't want anybody to block myself. And after, I say, 'Ok, let it be' and feel free to do something. Then the feeling comes and an idea also comes.
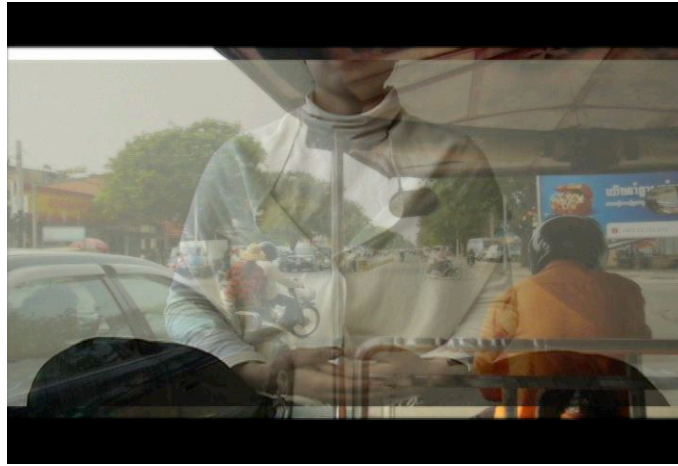
**Figure 12. Mudrā 6**



*Figure 12*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.


The seventh *tembōrin-in* is "… a symbolism which accentuates the movement of the wheel, a continual movement of the Law which is constantly being transmitted to all Beings …" (Saunders, 1960, p. 100). Hence, I selected the comments of Aria and Jadon indicating the significance of the movement of body beyond the expression in words:

> Aria: We are basically on the other side of the world from Cambodia where these dances are originated from, and being able to dance, being able to teach, showing we are your descendants, we are still very proud …. In the form of dance, … you don't need words to express your feelings and to express the message you want to get out, you can see it in the motions and in the facial expressions.

> Jadon: We love to work with balance, technique, flexibility, and control. All that is within your body, within yourself and your mind. … When you are learning about technique, you're learning what the technique represents, what each hand signal means, and with the combination of them altogether, what kind of story that tells you.

In addition, I chose Mr. Naor's words: "My favourite saying is 'A bamboo shoot eventually becomes a bamboo'". His explanation (to be discussed in the concluding chapter) reveals a view of the cycle of reincarnation, which is relevant to this *mudrā*.

**Figure 13. Mudrā 7**



*Figure 13*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Regarding the last one *chi ken-in*, "… the left index (World of Beings) is surrounded and protected by the fingers of the right hand (World of the Buddha[s])" (Saunders, 1960, p. 104). I consider this hand gesture to be showing the reciprocal relationship between the worlds and the remarks of Diamond and Sovann as relevant:

> Diamond: I just want to say I like this country, my friends, and all the people in the country also. I want people in the world to have freedom. And I want people all over the world to love each other and have communication with one another.
>
> Sovann: My phrase is: We are born to seek the truth. Why I say that is because if you look at the earth, … you think it's very big but if you compare it to the universe or something, it's very small. So we humans have to think together as one. We are only one mankind, so we have to help each other and try to seek the truth of the nature or something like science.
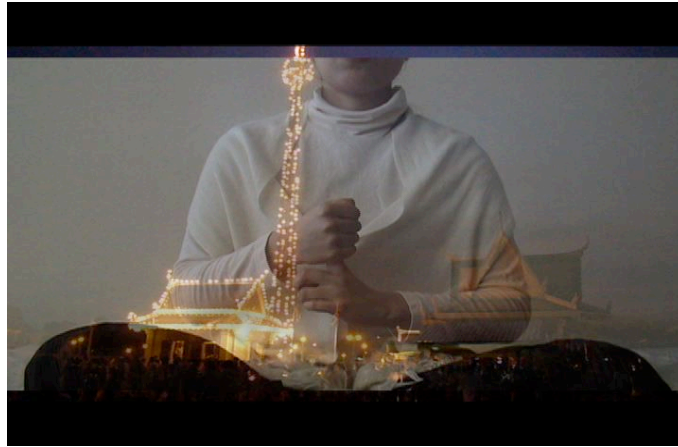
*Figure 14*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

In addition to these eight *mudrās*, Saunders touches on six secondary hand gestures. These include: 1) *kanjō-in* (Figure 15); 2) *buppatsu-in* (Figure 16); 3) *basara-un-kongō-in* (Figure 17); 4) *mushofushi-in* (Figure 18); 5) *ongyō-in* (Figure 19); and 6) *gebaku ken-in* (Figure 20). For these six extra *mudrās*, I included my voice-over reading six pieces of poetry aloud in the video. In terms of the first one, I extracted a sentence from the summary section of each chapter and assembled the five lines into a piece of poetry:

> Having been born on earth, each person starts on her/his own journey called life with steady steps. The fire to confront heavy seas and cut a path never ceases and it keeps lighting each journey. Each one of the voyages keeps on, sometimes facing an adverse wind and sometimes catching a following wind, in order to reach her/his own Way. The water keeps running and never stays the same. Sometimes each voyager lets oneself float and swims with the stream. High up in the sky, a pink petal of the lotus flower is fluttering in the wind, as if it is showing each traveller the Way to attain her/his goal.

I placed this at the beginning of the film. With regard to the remaining five hand gestures, I composed five pieces of poetry named after the five elements and consisting of five lines (see Figures 2-6).
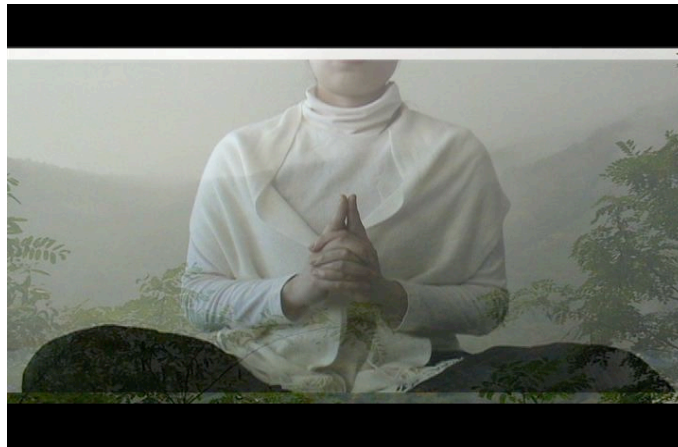
**Figure 15. Mudrā 9**



*Figure 15*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

**Figure 16. Mudrā 10**



*Figure 16*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

**Figure 17. Mudrā 11**



*Figure 17*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.
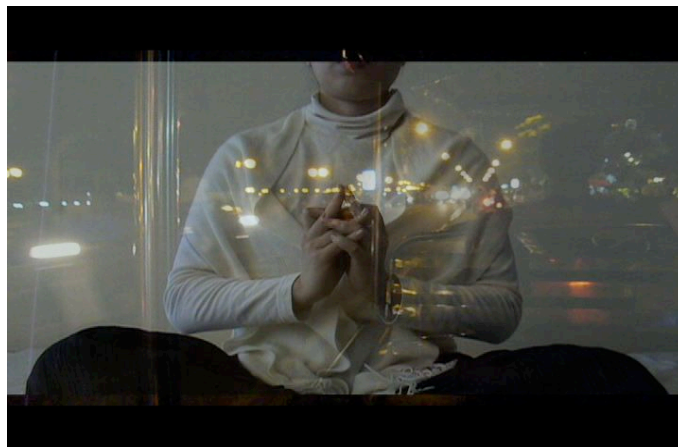
**Figure 18. Mudrā 12**



*Figure 18*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

**Figure 19. Mudrā 13**



*Figure 19*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

**Figure 20. Mudrā 14**



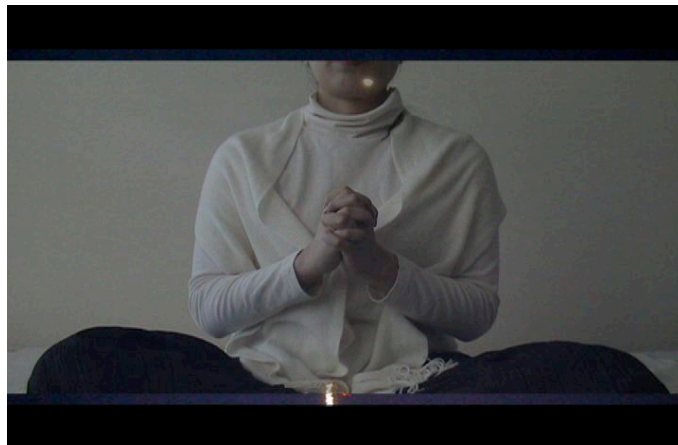*Figure 20*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

## 7.4 Visualizing the Essence of Postcoloniality and Diaspora

The film I produced visualizes the continuity of postcoloniality as well as the mobility accompanied by living in the diaspora through the projection and merger of the images of Phnom Penh, Ottawa, Tokyo, and Okinawa. The body shifting beyond the borders and across

spaces carries the essence of postcoloniality and my own case is no exception. Indeed, postcoloniality is continuous in the Japanese context. Minority groups living in Japan have long been shouldering a burden, as Jennifer Chan (2008) mentions: "Ainu and Okinawans, while having Japanese citizenship, are denied their status as indigenous peoples of Japan" (p. 11). Chan also points out a gap seen in people in Okinawa advocating peace due to the sacrifice during and after the wartime and those who are located in the mainland (*naichi*) lacking the awareness:

> There has been a strong peace and antibase movement in postwar Okinawa, even though it has not always garnered media and public attention in mainland Japan. Between March and August 1945, the only ground battle in Japan was fought in Okinawa, causing the death of 240,000, including about 140,000 civilians (about a fourth of the Okinawan population), nearly double the number of Japanese military deaths. (2008, p. 143)

Acknowledging what people in Okinawa have undergone as described above, I included the image of Okinawa in the video in order to show the ongoing attribute that postcoloniality connotes.

In addition, the notion of diaspora plays a significant role in the film. In *Cartographies of Diaspora*, Avtar Brah (1996) introduces a concept, which she calls, "diaspora space". Brah gives an account of it: "Diaspora space is the intersectionality of diaspora, border, and dis/location as a point of confluence of economic, political, cultural, and psychic processes. It is where multiple subject positions are juxtaposed, contested, proclaimed or disavowed …" (p. 208). In the video, images of Phnom Penh, Ottawa, Tokyo, and Okinawa are placed randomly to portray some essences of living in the diaspora and capture certain moments of the intersectionality discussed by Brah. The reason for the inclusion of Okinawa in the film is that diaspora is inseparable from the lives of many Okinawan people. Patrick Beillevaire (1999) explains the cause of Okinawan diaspora and how the diasporic communities have spread around the globe:

> … [E]conomic hardships, especially during the 1920s when stagnation hit Okinawa prefecture …, compelled about one fourth of the population (totalling some 550,000 at the end of the 1930s) to emigrate either to mainland Japan, where they frequently met with open discrimination, or to overseas territories under Japan's control, or even further to Hawaii and to the American continent. (p. 185)

Hence, interweaving the images of Phnom Penh, Ottawa, Tokyo, and Okinawa, the film embodies the continuance of postcoloniality and the fluidity that diaspora entails.

As it is obvious in Figures 7-20, the film utilizes a layer of images; a moving image overlaps the image of *mudrā* I am performing. The purpose of this is to not only suggest the intersectionality described above but also emphasize the significance of performance. In the article "Cultural Studies as Praxis: (Making) an Autobiographical Case", Handel Wright (2003) remarks:

> Questions of experience, identity and representation and the autobiographical are central in this text and it is important to point out at the outset that for me these are not given, fixed notions nor sources of authenticity but rather constructed, procedural, multiple, overlapping, contradictory and performative. (p. 809)

Wright also refers to "… a conception of the personal and my identity as cultural studies teacher not as authentic and authoritative but as a performance …" (2003, p. 809). Hence, recognizing the power of editing the film as a filmmaker, I place myself in the video not as an authoritative figure but as an actor initiating such performances as *sho* and *mudrā*. To put it in another way, I regard the storytelling of the participants as well as mine in the film as a series of performances. Incorporating myself in the video performing is done to destabilize the relationship between the research participants and me as a researcher. While acknowledging that as a filmmaker I had the initiative in editing, the film aims to let the viewers, including the participants, seize the initiative in watching it based on her/his own point of view.

## 7.5    Sound Production

Sound such as voice-overs and music is crucial in *The Art of Becoming*, for I attach importance to what sound helps the audience hear and see. Interestingly, Everett discusses the close link between music composition and handwriting as follows:

> A calligrapher … 'decomposes' the standard form of characters into a fluid, pictorial art to evoke a particular sensation and image in the mind of a viewer, just as performers transform musical notation into a succession of sonic entities and imbue them with expression and meaning. (2007, p. 570)

Similarly, the video takes account of the transformative nature, which performing *sho* and music entails. One aspect of music that needs to be addressed here is that the viewers find me playing *sanshin* in the film. James Roberson (2009) explains *sanshin*: "The key Ryūkyūan instrument, the *sanshin* is a three-stringed derivative of the Chinese *sanxian* and predecessor of the Japanese *shamisen*" (p. 684-685). Through the performance of the musical instrument, I do not intend to represent typical Okinawan sound. Rather, by merging it and another piece of music together, the film generates a sound scope challenging singularity and fixation, as Roberson (2001) states that "… music does not simply *reflect* a place, sense of space, or local identity, but also creates (and is used to create) these" (p. 214; original emphasis).

By combining various recorded sounds with four pieces of music I composed, the film creates a layer of sounds. For instance, in the Earth portion, the sound of the sea waves overlaps the fast tempo music. The Fire part is where the sound of the traffic overlaps the relatively slow music. In the Wind section, short music pieces played by *sanshin* and xylophone overlap the fast tempo music. And the Water part is where the sound of dripping water overlaps the slow music. In the article "Activist Forest Monks, Adult Learning and the Buddhist Environmental Movement in Thailand", Pierre Walter (2007) looks at the contribution of "activist ecology monks" exerting themselves to "… create a spiritual locus for resistance …" (p. 336) and "… foster environmental awareness and dialogue …" (p. 337).

The worldview underlying their activity "… embodies a critical questioning of dominant ideologies of export-oriented economic growth, corporate consumerism …" (Walter, 2007, p. 343). The movement as such is relevant to the video since through the layer of sounds, I attempted to evoke the sense, the awareness of the surroundings of the audience. Moreover, the film is comprised of a layer of voices: my voice-over reading the poems aloud overlapping the participants' voices. I interwove this with the image of my *sho* performance. Through the layer of voice-overs of the research participants and myself, I hope that from the combination of image and sound emerges another heterotopia between the video and the audience and hybrid states of being and becoming.

In this chapter, I discussed the process of making *The Art of Becoming*, focusing on the production of both image and sound. The film avoids representing the research participants as mere objects to be gazed at and known by the viewers. Instead, it places emphasis on the various movements of body, mind, and soul as well as the diverse types of performance including the daily routines (e.g., people commuting and traffic at rush hours) and the rituals (e.g., the Buddhist ceremony taking place in Phnom Penh at night). In addition to these, the film contains my performance of calligraphy, the hand gestures called *mudrā*, and the musical instrument. The notion of time is also important to the video capturing the transition of time in a day. Regarding the application of sound, I presented the meaning of playing *sanshin*, the layer of sounds such as the sound of the sea waves overlapping the fast tempo music, and another layer of voice-overs of the research participants and myself. Making such an attempt, the film proposes a suggestion of what heterotopia and hybridization look like in the context of the reciprocal relationship between the participants and me as a researcher. What is clear from the produced video is that the journey of each research participant keeps on. High up in the sky, a pink petal of the lotus flower is fluttering in the wind, as if it is

showing each traveller the Way to attain her/his goal. Now it is time to move on to the concluding chapter.

# Chapter 8: Conclusion

> In all arts and sciences, rhythm is not to be ignored. There is even rhythm in being empty. … Harmony and disharmony in rhythm occur in every walk of life. … Know the rhythms of spatial relations, and know the rhythms of reversal. (Miyamoto, 1994, p. 30-31)

This concluding chapter first provides a summary of findings. After that, it returns to the concept of "heterotopia" and explains how it was used in this study focusing on the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity embodied in the lives of the research participants and myself, sometimes *becoming* at the centre and sometimes *becoming* at the margin. Then I illustrate how Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization enabled this research project to demonstrate not only the intricate ways in which the identities of the research participants and mine are constructed, performed, and transforming continuously, but also the fluidity of such identities constantly shifting beyond boundaries and across spaces and intersecting with gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and religion. In addition, I discuss the implications of this study—attaching importance to what is in-between writing, filmmaking, and performance—for education and research. Finally, I conclude by pointing out some future research directions.

This study brought visual culture and artistic practice/performance with digital and non-digital media into focus and explored how the individuals of Cambodian heritage living in Ottawa, Tokyo, Hiratsuka, and Phnom Penh sustain networks beyond borders through the use of technology, and what forms of expression using digital and/or non-digital media are actively practiced on a daily basis. I applied the concept of "heterotopia" by Foucault (2002) and Trinh's version of the notion of "hybridization" to the crystallization of the following three visions: (1) to uncover the research participants' (re)actions to the dominant meaning and representation of Cambodia, the people, and culture created by the media (i.e., TV,

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magazines, newspapers, etc.); (2) to show various forms of artistic practice and performance by the participants (e.g., photographing, filming, performing, painting, blogging, writing books, and teaching art); and (3) to propose a novel approach for education and research, which brings a critical lens in dealing with the issues of immigration and taking into account the significance of the arts for the daily lives of people living in the digital age.

In this research project, placing myself in the "speaking nearby" position as practiced by Trinh (1982), I produced a short video entitled *The Art of Becoming* showing the audience the diverse performances of both the research participants and me as a researcher/filmmaker. As explained in Chapter 3, this study puts into practice the concept of "blurred genres" proposed by Geertz (1983). In the case of my dissertation, practicing "blurred genres" means obscuring the borders between social science and art as well as the text and the visual. The method of blurring the boundaries is particularly useful for this research project in exploring what "heterotopic" spaces look like and what types of "hybridization" are performed in the everyday lives of the research participants. From the attempt to interweave the research methods and merge the boundary between the text and the image emerged not only the diverse perspectives and forms of expression of the study participants regarding his/her-story, language, education, food, time, and space, but also the intricate and heterogeneous modes of being and becoming of people in the globalizing times.

Starting with the stories of the research participants behind the history of Cambodian diaspora, Chapter 4 illustrated the impact of visual culture and technology on the everyday lives of the participants as well as both the productive side and the problematic side—beyond the borders of Cambodia, Canada, and Japan. The five advantages became apparent from the discussion of the ways of participating in visual culture and utilizing visual technology. These are: 1) the accessibility to information through various sources including books,

newspapers, magazines, radio, television, and the Internet; 2) enriching communication within the community as well as across the national borders; 3) the preservation of memory made possible by the use of technological tools; 4) the enhancement of teaching and learning; and 5) enabling various forms of expression.

The comments of the study participants suggest that the utilization of visual technology encourages creative power and the produced works invite the audience to take part in visual culture. However, at the same time, they revealed some issues regarding both the physical and the emotional aspects of experiencing visual culture and applying visual technology. In terms of the physical aspect, competition for making a profit is aggravated by the rapid diffusion of visual culture. In addition, the research participants pointed out the issues of access to technology and the cost involved. With regard to the emotional aspect, some participants stated unfamiliarity with the application of visual technology and discomfort accompanied by it. In the context of diaspora, the research participants showed that there are some obstacles—the expense of using the technological inventions, a language difficulty, and a generation gap, for example—to fully participating in visual culture and utilizing technology smoothly.

I also drew on the research participants who observe the images and stories that are generated by the mass media. It became obvious that the participants are *critically* engaged in decoding messages produced by the mass media. Their critical observations disclosed which stories are told repeatedly and which are excluded from encoding. In addition, the study participants elucidated the problematic views leading the audience to have stereotypes regarding gender, race, and ethnicity. Furthermore, some participants discussed their experiences as both the decoder (viewer) and the encoder (producer). Hence, the research participants are by no means passive receivers of messages encoded by the mass media.

Chapter 5 introduced the unique forms of artistic expression of the participants, including performing and instructing Cambodian dance, painting, filmmaking, performing contemporary dance, creating and maintaining websites and blogs, teaching music, playing classical Cambodian musical instruments, creating installation works, writing books and giving lectures, teaching fine arts, creating mixed media art, producing and broadcasting radio and television programs, and so forth. Aria and Jadon perform and teach Cambodian dance to students of the younger generation in Ottawa. Seeking possibilities for the arts, Bav practices various artistic styles such as mixing the traditional and the modern in his art pieces. The CSAJ executives—Chan, Mean, Sophat, Sovann, Theara, and Tino—not only expand the network of Cambodian students studying in Japan but also perform a crucial role as a bridge between Cambodia and Japan. Mr. K.D teaches music and gives performances as a classical Cambodian musical instrument player. Kleng is active in transforming her ideas into an installation work, a three-dimensional shape. The Venerable Nanda makes full use of visual technology and disseminates the teachings of Buddha across both physical space and cyberspace. Ms. P releases her writings and delivers lectures without turning her eyes away from her bitter memories. Mr. S C acts as a scholar working towards the advancement of teaching and learning in Fine Arts and artist/designer putting his energies into production at the same time. Ms. T S as the executive director of WMC takes the initiative in producing and broadcasting radio and television programs that offer educational information to the public. Thus, it became apparent that each research participant carries out a mode of expression which is the most suitable to convey her/his own message.

Taking account of the fluidity and flexibility of water, Chapter 6 looked closely at art appreciation, art practice, and performance. First, the remarks of the study participants on their tastes in the arts such as fine art, music, and film showed the strong influence of popular

culture from various countries including the United States, China, and South Korea. At the same time, their narratives revealed some serious issues standing in the way of elevating the level of art creation in Cambodia. These include the lack of Khmer originality in the arts, the shortage of Cambodian-born professionals who teach and pass on the artistic knowledge and skills to the next generation, and the difficulty of making a living by artistic activities. In addition, the financial condition of the nation affects the art school administration and the norms of society have an impact on students in choosing their majors and entering employment after graduation.

Drawing on the concept of heterotopia proposed by Foucault, I also explored the diverse forms of heterotopia emerging from the artistic practices of the research participants. It became clear that heterotopia is a space with fluid characteristics beyond the conventional notion of time and space. It takes multifarious forms and exists between: the performer/teacher and the audience/learner; the creator of a blog/website and the viewer; the writer and the reader; the artist and the audience; and the radio/television program producer/disseminator and the audience/participant.

With regard to the examination of art performance, I applied Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization and demonstrated several instances of performing hybridization in the daily settings. What became obvious from the narratives of the research participants is that performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two components in a dichotomous relation; it connotes heterogeneous elements beyond the dichotomy. In addition, some research participants expressed the importance of being flexible and keeping balance in the process of hybridization.

In Chapter 7, I explained the process of making a film *The Art of Becoming*, focusing on the production of both image and sound. Unlike "normal" ethnographic and documentary

films, my video is reluctant to represent the study participants as the mere objects to be gazed at and understood by the viewers. Instead, it lays emphasis on the various movements of body, mind, and soul as well as the diverse types of performance including the daily routines (e.g., people commuting and traffic at rush hours) and the rituals (e.g., the Buddhist ceremony taking place in Phnom Penh at night). For that, the film contains my voice-over and performance of calligraphy (*sho*), the hand gestures (*mudrā*), and the musical instrument. In terms of sound production, I discussed the meaning of playing *sanshin*, a layer of sounds such as the sound of the sea waves overlapping the fast tempo music, and another layer of voice-overs of the research participants and myself. Making such an attempt, the film showed what heterotopia and hybridization look like in the context of the reciprocal relationship between the participants and me.

## 8.1  "Heterotopia" in This Study

Drawing on the concept of heterotopia proposed by Foucault, I looked closely at the art practices in which the research participants are actively engaged (see Chapter 6). Clearly, there exists a layer of heterotopic spaces—those emerging from their artistic activities and the one arising from this dissertation itself. First, it became clear from the accounts of the Venerable Nanda, Mr. S C, Mr. K.D, Bav, Kleng, Ms. T S, Ms. P, Aria, and Jadon that heterotopia comes into being between: 1) the creator of a blog/website and the viewer; 2) the artist and the audience; 3) the radio/television program producer/disseminator and the audience/participant; 4) the writer and the reader; and 5) the performer/teacher and the audience/learner.

Through the discussion of heterotopia, Foucault advocated the necessity of cultivating criticality to deconstruct the normative view and acknowledging the world(s) in which people

live as heterogeneous spaces. Indeed, heterotopia coming into existence in the art practices of the research participants questions the hegemonic view regulating the way of perceiving time and space. In other words, these models of heterotopia negate not only the clear division of time into past, present, and future but also the unquestioning classification based on nationality. For instance, between the creator of a blog/website situated in Ottawa and the viewers around the globe exists heterotopia transgressing the national borders. In this cyberspace, the past, present, and future are mixed together since the viewers are now checking out the latest news as well as the videos and the pictures of the past events.

Heterotopia for some artists is a space where they create artworks and seek to bring changes to the fixed way of appreciating the arts. The producer/disseminator of radio and television programs in heterotopia encourages the audience to participate in the creation of alternative views challenging the dominant ideology of gender. Heterotopia for the writer in the diaspora exists as a space transcending the dichotomy of Cambodia/Japan, Cambodian/Japanese, and insider/outsider. Her case implies that in considering heterotopia in the context of diaspora, there is a need to apply a broad view without limiting the discussion to nationality. Writing books and giving lectures in this space uncover what is disregarded by the biased view of Cambodia and the people as well as the way of putting a fixed label of "refugees" on those who are in diasporic situations. The dance performers/instructors' practice creates heterotopia as a space detaching itself from the binarism and acknowledging the reciprocal relation among the diverse cultural elements. In this way, it became obvious that heterotopia exists taking various forms in the daily lives of the research participants.

On the other hand, the accounts of the study participants suggest that heterotopia is not necessarily always a space with a positive meaning. There are occasions when practicing artistic activities in heterotopia involves unpleasant moments and issues resulted from

discord. For instance, what became evident from the comments of the CSAJ executive members and Ms. P is the issue of race and ethnicity in heterotopia where Cambodian and Japanese elements meet and sometimes collide. Ms. P illustrated a gap between what the writer in the diaspora intends to convey and what the general public in Japan interpret from her books. She also stated that some interpretations tend to highlight her difference. Such a reaction to her works is clearly affected by the normative view sustaining the line between someone similar to Us and someone different from Us (the Other, foreigner). Despite her hard experience (discussed in Chapters 4 and 5), Ms. P affirmed her strong will to disseminate her message continuously by writing books and placing herself in heterotopia where the past, present, and future of hers are linked with one another.

In addition to these models of heterotopia, I argue that this dissertation itself promotes the emergence of heterotopia between the reader and the written text as well as the viewer and the produced film. As described in Chapter 3, it is inappropriate to consider the relationship between centre and margin as a dichotomy in this research project. Through the presentation of a mode of blurring the borders between social science and art as well as the text and the visual, this study challenges the hegemonic view perpetuating essentialization, categorization, and dichotomization. Regarding the text, my attempt to bring forth heterotopia embodies in the writing style applied in Chapter 4 (see Sections 4.1.1-4.1.5) and Chapter 5 describing the various styles of artistic expression practiced by the research participants. Unlike the analytic narrative seen in other parts of Chapter 4 and Chapter 6, these sections set great store by the comments of the study participants. This transferred the role of the narrator/storyteller to the research participants and destabilized the fixed relationship between the participants and me as a researcher.

In terms of the film *The Art of Becoming*, it placed emphasis on visualizing the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity, which function as a driving force to hinder essentialization, categorization, and dichotomization. Taking account of the sequence of time (i.e., from dawn to night, past, present, and future), I created another layer of time linking the produced film, which is already the past, with the viewers watching it at the present time. In addition, the video avoided representing the research participants as the mere objects to be gazed at and known by the audience. Rather, it focused on various movements of body, mind, and soul as well as the diverse types of performance including the daily routines and the rituals. The video also captured my performance of calligraphy, the hand gestures, and the musical instrument. Through a layer of sounds, voices, and images, the film negated the conventional power structure between the viewers with power to "see" and the subjects to be "seen". Thus, borrowing Foucault's "heterotopia" made it possible for the text and the film to bring forth a space where multiple stories are woven together and diverse components merge beyond the binaries. It is of great use in this research project focusing on the complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity embodied in the lives of the research participants and myself constantly shifting across spaces, sometimes *becoming* at the centre, and sometimes *becoming* at the margin.

## 8.2    "Hybridization" in This Study

In addition to the concept of heterotopia, applying Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization enabled this study to demonstrate not only the intricate ways in which the identities of the research participants and mine are constructed, performed, and transforming continuously, but also the fluidity of such identities constantly shifting beyond boundaries and across spaces and intersecting with gender, race, ethnicity, age, class, and religion. The

stories of the study participants denoted the various conceptions of the three terms—Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness—and how complicatedly these are intertwined in engendering hybridization (see Chapter 6). It became apparent from the dialogues with the participants regarding Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness that the inquiry of cultural roots is indispensable. The study participants presented the various perceptions of cultural roots. The Venerable Nanda, for example, referred to the maintenance of cultural roots in relation to the daily performance such as the behaviour, the language, and the belief. Similarly, Ms. P mentioned the language, the diet (food preparation), the belief, and the habit as a way to retain her cultural roots. The discussion of cultural roots also revealed the significance of food (everyday diet). Sophat, Aria, and Jadon suggested that food plays an important role in practicing and preserving her/his cultures, and preparing and having Cambodian cuisine embodies the daily performance of Cambodian-ness.

The accounts of the research participants disclosed that hybridization takes multifarious forms and there are diverse ways of performing hybridization in their everyday lives (see Chapter 6). First, the case of Aria and Jadon performing dance flexibly according to the space, the audience, and the music showed that the performance of hybridization in the context of dance leads to the expression of originality. What became obvious from the case of Mr. K.D is the merger of the West and the East in music. Mr. K.D pointed out that documenting traditional Cambodian music by making full use of the Western music scale and notation lets a legacy alive, and the flexible element of Cambodian music offers many possibilities to performers and leads to creative power. Considering the case of Bav, it became obvious that his expression adopting the diverse art forms (e.g., painting, filmmaking, and performing contemporary dance) embodies hybridization. His manner of hybridizing the various styles of artistic expression has the possibility of not only shedding

light on the art tradition interrupted by war but also presenting an alternative view. What became clear from the activities of Ms. T S are the three levels of hybridization. First, WMC disseminates educational information elevating people's awareness in the combination of the radio and the television programs. Second, WMC works in collaboration with other agencies at a national level in order to find a way to resolve the social issues. Thirdly, hybridization becomes evident in the training programs promoting an interchange of personnel between WMC and international agencies. In this way, the stories of the research participants demonstrated that performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two elements in the binary.

At the same time, the instances of the study participants exposed some problems accompanied by the performance of hybridization. For example, Kleng's case showed that her daily self-expression/performance collides with what people at large consider as the standard, that is, the norm in terms of performing Cambodian-ness. In addition, there exists a problem in the point where Cambodian-ness, Japanese-ness, and Canadian-ness meet and overlap. In the continued discussion on the maintenance of their cultural roots, Aria and Jadon indicated the emotional conflict in performing Cambodian-ness and Canadian-ness. In terms of performing hybridization on a daily basis, Aria pointed out the reciprocity of Cambodian-ness and Canadian-ness, and Jadon articulated the need to go through changes. Giving a detailed account of the performance of hybridization in her daily life, Ms. P suggested that the intricacy is inseparable from the languages used for self-expression in the state of hybridization. The CSAJ committee members stated that there is certain gap between the Cambodian-born students and the Japanese-born students, which is difficult to fill. At the same time, Sophat and Sovann asserted the importance of being flexible. Acknowledging

these issues, it became evident from the comments of the research participants that flexibility plays a crucial role in the performance of hybridization and from it emerge possibilities.

Thus, drawing on Trinh's version of the notion of hybridization made it possible to illustrate the instances of hybridization in the daily settings and capture the moments of performing hybridization in the everyday lives of the research participants. What became clear from the narratives of the participants is that performing hybridization does not necessarily mean combining two components in the dichotomous structure; it connotes heterogeneous elements beyond the dichotomy. In addition, some study participants expressed the necessity of being flexible and keeping balance in the process of hybridization. In sum, the performance of hybridization embraces a great deal of possibilities including the emergence of an alternative space beyond the binary system. In this way, the notion of hybridization propounded the importance of paying close attention to the process of being and becoming, and the utilization of it enabled this research project to bring a new lens to the examination of the spaces and the identities of those who inhabit the in-between space, thereby destabilizing the previously established boundaries.

## 8.3 Implications for Education and Research

This study blurring the border between social science and art advocates utilizing various forms of art in both formal and non-formal educational settings, and inspiring scholars and students to produce creative and innovative works, using art. The practice of teaching and learning is inseparable from the current trend of video recording and sharing on websites such as YouTube and social networking sites. Scholars articulate the necessity of integrating the arts into the realm of education (Goldberg, 2001; Shohat & Stam, 1994; Siegesmund &

Cahnmann-Taylor, 2008). Merryl Goldberg (2001), for example, elucidates the power of the arts leading to a positive change in the context of schooling:

> The arts serve as a methodology or strategy for learning—expanding traditional teaching methods into a fascinating and imaginative forum for exploration of subject matter. Using the arts as a teaching tool in the classroom broadens their function from the more traditional model of teaching *about* the arts and provides opportunities for students to transform understanding and apply their ideas in a creative form. (p. 25; original emphasis)

Here Goldberg pronounces that alternative modes of teaching and learning emerge from the application of the arts in the curriculum. In addition, Goldberg contends that putting the arts to practical use in the school setting makes diverse ways of expressing opinions and dealing with knowledge construction possible: "As a language of expression, art gives rise to many voices in the classroom and opens many avenues for all students to work with knowledge" (2001, p. 25). Similarly, Richard Siegesmund and Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor (2008) portray the potential of utilizing the arts in schooling as well as educational research:

> Arts-based educational research is particularly well suited for understanding—and demystifying—the human relationships that enhance learning. Such research can provide evidence that helps us understand how excellent teaching engages students in the structures of deep learning. The outcome of such learning is personal agency: autonomous individuals who have the capacity to imaginatively shape their own lives by having the courage to write their own stories. (p. 244)

Siegesmund and Cahnmann-Taylor thus proclaim that artistic inquiry functions as the powerful instrument not only for enriching the quality of learning but also for fostering autonomy in expression and creativity. Moreover, Ella Shohat and Robert Stam (1994) point out the significance of applying audio and visual materials to teaching in the multicultural classroom. They call it "… audio-visual pedagogy" (p. 10) and suggest that this pedagogy makes it possible to "… deploy the social heteroglossia of the classroom itself to call attention to the students' own ideological assumptions and affective investments" (p. 357).

Hence, the utilization of the visual in education is closely related to the enhancement of critical thinking.

The cultivation of critical thinking in education is essential since it helps learners recognize the environment around them, connect themselves to the larger context, and furthermore, transform thinking into action. The participants in this study provided various modes of self-expression based on critical thinking. In Chapter 4, the study participants showed the ways of applying a critical lens and decoding messages produced by the mass media. For example, the story of Ms. P implies that certain images and stories broadcasted by the media cause stereotypes of race and ethnicity, which lead some viewers to act on an unbalanced principle drawing a line between those who fit the norm and those who do not. In addition, the research participants suggested that there is a risk that people with different personalities might be classified simply as a single, unitary group of "Cambodians". Moreover, it became clear that there are messages generated and distributed repeatedly and persistently. Ms. T S pointed out that a problematic view of gender is encoded, produced, and distributed by the media. She urged journalists as producers to have the agency to think critically and encode messages, taking a gender perspective into consideration.

The critical observations of the research participants exposed the firm existence of the hegemonic view. In the article "Walking a Tightrope: The Many Faces of Violence in the Lives of Racialized Immigrant Girls and Young Women", Yasmin Jiwani (2005) describes its operation: "… [T]he dominant hegemonic order works in an insidious manner, privileging conformity over difference and valuing assimilation over plurality" (p. 868). The instances of Ms. P and Ms. T S showed that as producers, the two are actively engaged in sending their messages challenging the dominant system.

Critical thinking is thus important, for it helps us become aware of social issues surrounding us and inspires us to take the initiative not as passive receivers but as producers generating vistas resisting the normative worldview. Fostering critical media literacy through education is indispensable for it. Ladislaus Semali (2000) articulates its forte as follows:

> The general outlook of this approach is to develop systematic educational inquiry methods and models of critique, decoding, analyzing, and of reading biased media texts. An analysis and critique of texts and images of women, minorities, people from other cultures, ethnic groups, and images of other social groups is important to unpack, uncover, and recognize stereotypes, derogatory bias, and discrimination. Such exercise also helps to detect and understand how these texts and images help to structure our experience and identities. (p. 33)

As demonstrated earlier, applying a critical perspective to decoding messages produced by the mass media makes it possible to see what is hidden, in other words, what story is untold. In addition, the utilization of a critical lens to encoding enables the creator/producer to propose alternative perspective(s). Hence, the acceleration of critical media literacy in education is crucial to correspond to the current phenomena that are driven visually, and it leads to making criticality practicable in the everyday life, acknowledging diversity, and encouraging non-hegemonic views to emerge.

Combining the qualitative research methods such as interview, filmmaking, and performance within the produced film, this dissertation reflected a layer of stories, images, sounds, and voices, and this attempt blurred the borders between the text and the visual as well as social science and art. The film *The Art of Becoming*, created specifically for this research project explored what heterotopia and hybridization look like in the context of the reciprocal relationship between the research participants and me as a researcher/filmmaker. Influenced by Miyamoto's philosophy discussed in Chapter 1, the video consists of five sections: Earth, Fire, Wind, Water, and Void. Each segment contains an image capturing my handwriting with a brush and voice-over reading poetry comprised of five lines aloud. The

space between the segments includes a portion of various images and voice-overs of the research participants.

Both filmmaking and performance are indispensable for this study showing—both literally and visually—"hybrid" being(s) and becoming(s) of the research participants and myself as well as "hybrid" spaces inhabited by these individuals. Ruth Holliday (2000) delineates the significance of applying video as a method below:

> The use of video as a *process* in the research is equally important (compared with, say, the use of still photography), not only in allowing a representation of the performativity of identity to show through, but also in running that alongside the narrativization of identity … and in reflecting the selection, editing and refining that constitute identity and performativity as process in all our lives …. (p. 509-510; original emphasis)

In this way, the utilization of video/film in research makes it possible for the readers/viewers to become aware of the (trans)formation of identity as "a process". As identity persistently undergoes a transformation, sociocultural difference is neither fixed nor unified but changeable in accordance with the positionality of each individual. In the article "An Endarkened Feminist Epistemology? Identity, Difference and the Politics of Representation in Educational Research", Wright (2003) elucidates this point:

> … [I]dentity is not only plural but conspicuously so: our focus is not on the wholeness of the researcher but on the many discourses with (and indeed against) which the research identifies. Second, identity is not seen as given and complete but as open and in process, as both being and becoming. Third, identity is seen as relational and elements will gain prominence or recede depending on the circumstances the subject occupies and the others in the given situation. Fourth, identity is not essential … but much more loosely and tenuously a manifestation of a series of identifications. (p. 207)

Being away from fixation is indeed necessary for research in the twenty-first century in which postcoloniality and diaspora take as many forms as diverse experiences and stories of people. Bringing filmmaking and performance into research makes it possible to deal with hybrid identities being constructed, negotiated, and transforming constantly. In the article

"The New Flâneur: Subaltern Cultural Studies, African Youth in Canada and the Semiology of In-Betweenness", Awad Ibrahim (2008) gives an account of the complex nature of becoming of immigrants as follows:

> As displaced subjects (including myself) who encountered new social, cultural, and linguistic spaces and practices, I will argue that African youths *have become*. They have become a negotiated product of the translated Old and New. To negate one or the other is to obliterate part of what has become. (p. 247; original emphasis)

In this way, what immigrants—whether voluntary or forced—undergo on a daily basis repudiates the clear division based on the binary system. Hence, the application of the notion of intersectionality is crucial for research in order to not overlook the intricacy and heterogeneity of being and becoming of study participants.

Through my approach in this dissertation, I assert that incorporating film and performance in research destabilizes the border between the written text and the visual, and enables the researcher to propose an alternative view resisting and challenging essentialization, categorization, and dichotomization. Some scholars also advocate the necessity of integrating art in the context of teaching and learning as well as educational inquiry (Barone, 2003; Fischman, 2001; Hickman, 2007; Sullivan, 2005). They suggest that qualitative researchers applying visual methods tend to encounter obstacles due to the predominance of the tradition placing a value on scientifically approved data and the written text. In regards to this phenomenon, Gustavo Fischman (2001) enunciates the need to take notice of the impact of "visual culture" on education and integrate it into educational research. In so doing, Fischman states that "[t]he incorporation of visual cultures requires that educational researchers critically incorporate the notion of inquiry and the reflection of what we see and how those images are constructed and reconstructed by all the participants of any given research project" (2001, p. 31). It is clear from Fischman's claim here that educational researchers need to pay attention to the ways in which study participants interpret and

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construct the visual image. This is relevant to Tom Barone's discussion on film-based research in education. Barone (2003) pronounces that film-based research on schooling has a potential to generate "… modes of representation … outside of the parameters set by the prevailing master narrative" (p. 207) and thereby "… contribute[s] to the creation and dissemination of a new set of images through which the educational experiences of public school teachers and students are understood" (p. 202). To achieve this, Barone indicates that it is essential to consider the intended audience of a film and the power relation between the filmmaker and the viewer (i.e., the power of the filmmaker in producing representation and addressing to the audience).

It is crucial to give consideration to the audience, as Richard Hickman (2007) argues, laying stress on the vigorous use of the arts in educational research. Acknowledging the merit that "… the arts, and in particular visual art, can reify the ineffable" (2007, p. 315), "… the audience", remarks Hickman, "plays a significant part in the nature of any art phenomenon and it is this factor which can add another valuable dimension to the interpretation of the 'data'" (2007, p. 316). Moreover, regarding data generated by using the visual arts, Graeme Sullivan (2005) portrays its potential as follows:

> It is possible to consider 'the visual' not only as a descriptive or representational form, but also as a means of creating and constructing images that forms an evidential base that reveals new knowledge. Seen from this perspective, the role of visual data in research can be used to move beyond the contribution to explanatory knowledge production, and to a more ambitious state of transformative knowledge construction. (p. 180)

Sullivan thus suggests that data resulting from research applying visual methods can function not as the mere object to be presented and apprehended but as the driving force to promote alternative ways of thinking. In this way, scholars illustrate the multiple possibilities embraced in the integration of the arts in research, teaching, and learning. As already mentioned, my dissertation project utilized YouTube as a means to disseminate the film. I

suggest that future research can examine more on the use of social media beyond the conventional ways of delivering academic work.

The application of various forms of art in qualitative research provides researchers with freedom to question and challenge the grand narrative (re)creating knowledge as the absolute truth, and to go beyond the binary system, as long as they give consideration to the issues pointed out earlier. Through a layer of stories, images, sounds, and voices in the written text and the produced film, this study proposed a novel model of art creation, which can be used in the teaching and learning settings and educational research. However, just as the narrator/storyteller in Trinh's *Reassemblage* declines to reproduce the grand narrative objectifying the observed and constructing the absolute knowledge, those who are engaged in writing and filmmaking need to take account of authority, power, positionality, reflexivity, gaze, and representation. At the same time, it is important for the researcher/filmmaker to direct her/his attention to the audience interpreting data diversely and the intricate relationship between the film producer and the audience. Theorists such as Elizabeth Ellsworth (1997) called the act of the filmmaker conveying certain message/information to the targeted audience "a mode of address". Ellsworth suggested that the filmmaker's mode of address and response(s) of the audience are not necessarily fit to each other. Similarly, Kevin Miller and Xiaobin Zhou (2007) analyzed how students view classroom videos and denoted that "… viewers bring a variety of different kinds of filters …" (p. 332). Thus, the complicated address-and-response relationship between the filmmaker and the viewers is applicable to the relation between the curriculum as a mode of address and students/learners as those making response(s). Ellsworth pointed out that "… perfect fits are impossible … between text and reading, modes of address and viewer interpretation, curriculum and learning, the ideal or imagined student and the real student, multicultural education and

actual students' feelings about race" (1997, p. 47). According to Ellsworth, disagreement/inconsistency is not something to be removed. Indeed, tension is inevitable for the creation of not one-sided but the reciprocal relationship between the researcher/filmmaker and the audience and for the emergence of alternative views resisting the hegemonic discourse.

## 8.4   Hope for the Future

Through the various styles of expression using both digital and non-digital media, all the research participants—Aria, Bav, Chan, Diamond, Jadon, Mr. K.D, Kleng, Mean, the Venerable Nanda, Mr. Naor, Ms. P, Mr. Pheak, Pit, Rath, Mr. S C, Sophat, Sovann, Ms. T S, Theara, Mr. Thy, and Tino—guided me as a researcher/filmmaker to realize that the realms of possibility are boundless and perpetually expanding. These individuals appeal to the readers and me to apply a critical lens to what we hear and see. In the article "Philosophies of Adult Environmental Education", Walter (2009) indicates the importance of taking notice of multifarious opinions: "There are countless unsung stories of environmentalists, activists and adult educators—women, people of color, elderly, aboriginal, Queer, disabled, working-class—that likewise deserve the attention of researchers and writers …" (p. 21). Indeed, the stories told in this study are unique respectively and rendered service to the proposition of the implications for education as well as research. The journey of each research participant continues. Looking into the future with hope, each traveller steps forward in order to reach her/his own Way. Mr. Naor's explanation of his favourite proverb below implies that there are brilliant prospects for the future:

> … [T]he bamboo shoot represents the bamboo itself and it relates to the youth or the children that are born and they are compared to bamboo shoot and eventually they grow up and replace the elder one that are either the leader of the country or the

people, the citizens of Cambodia. They will eventually take over and replace. They are the future generation of Cambodia.

The art practices and performances in the daily lives of the research participants clarified the possibility of creating a space where the complex and heterogeneous being(s) and becoming(s) are intermingled and intersecting with various elements including gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, and religion. Jadon, for example, asserted the necessity of being flexible from a perspective of a dance performer. He suggested that the composition of the four elements—"balance, technique, flexibility, and control"—creates a story for the performer to tell and for the audience to listen and see. Ms. P stated that performing hybridization in her everyday life involves the intricacies—the complexity in living in the diaspora as well as the one existing between what she conveys as a writer and what each of the audience interprets. She argued that it is important to retain flexibility without looking away from the difficulties in the everyday life. The daily performances of the study participants discussed in this dissertation elucidated the need to take notice of the moment and the transition, that is, the dynamics of being and becoming. Helena Grehan (2001) denotes the significance of performance:

> Performance can provide a platform that presents ideas in a layered fashion without proposing singular answers or static formulae for interpretation. It is a site for exchange in which contradictions are highlighted and responses encouraged from spectators as participants, rather than as viewers. (2001, p. 147)

The performances illustrated in the text as well as in the film played a crucial role in generating the reciprocal relationship not only between the research participants and me as a researcher/filmmaker but also among the text, the video, and the audience.

Through the combination of writing, filmmaking, and performance, this dissertation also portrayed the continuance of postcoloniality and the fluidity that diaspora entails. Mr. K.D's teaching practice, for example, embodies the succession of postcoloniality in that he

applies the Western music scale and notation to the conservation of classical Cambodian music pieces. The case of Ms. P reveals the fluidity as well as the potential resulted from her positionality, which is living in the diaspora. Paul Gilroy (2000) describes the potentialities of diaspora as follows:

> Diaspora is an especially valuable idea because it points toward a more refined and more wieldy sense of culture than the characteristic notions of rootedness …. It makes the spatialization of identity problematic and interrupts the ontologization of place. (p. 122)

Ms. P gives a detailed account of her experience living in the diaspora below. She articulates her ongoing journey and ever-shifting ground:

> R: A person who was born in Cambodia and now resides in Japan drew a picture as an example showing what it means to live beyond national borders. The illustration suggests that a human being who lives inside a black dot can only see the black, in other words, his/her view is limited but he/she can broaden his/her perspective by going beyond it. What is your opinion about that?
>
> Ms. P: Then it may be impolite to those who have never been abroad. I am quite the opposite. … This (the black point) is the conclusion. Think it over. What would be the joy of leading a life violently jostled in this way? In other words, do I have a broad view after having left the country in this manner? Being born in Cambodia, growing up in a small town called Phnom Penh (if the Pol Pot times did not exist), being surrounded by warm hearts and love of parents, going on to the next stage of education ordinarily, getting married, making a home, and meeting my end in the country: These are the commonplace but the happiest for me. Many unexpected things happened and I realized that I have reached up here. My mental horizon has expanded surely through the media but I must go through undesirable things to that extent including contradictions in this world, the fear that the weak are victims of the strong, and the menace of the authority. Certainly, it is fortunate for us to 'be able to expand our horizons by going overseas'. However, we cannot suggest that many of those who are unable to go abroad are leading unhappy lives.

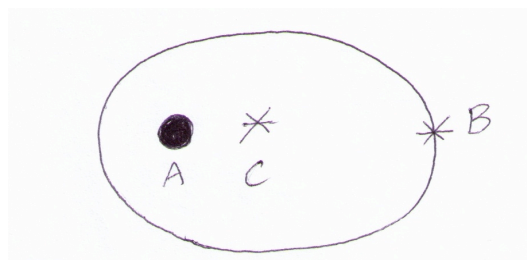**Illustration 2. Drawing of a Diasporic Position**



*Illustration 2*. Image of a diasporic position. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

Using the illustration above, Ms. P continues to discuss her intricate positionality:

> … I think that being in this black part is happy enough. To put myself in this picture, I am currently hanging about round here (C in the figure). Actually, I want to be back here (A) but cannot do so easily. The time when I return here means the time when I am ready for death. When my bones are buried, I can be back here at last. What I mean here is how I could say this is really a happy thing. In short, I cannot reach here (A) until I am violently jostled further more in here (inside a circle). I have been trying to return here spontaneously. This is not a backward-looking way of thinking. I am happy at present. Surrounded by my children, I am throwing myself into here (inside a circle). But my ideal is to go on a serene journey and get back here (A) in the end. I have been making a life journey and am now at the turn. Suppose here (B) is the turn, I have come up to here (C). This picture is not mistaken. Having set out from here (A), I have come here (C) now and finally, I am trying to get back to a starting point. At first, being uncertain how to keep myself alive, I fled from here (A) and came here (C). Now my writings are finally completed, I have performed a part that I ought to. At the moment, I am making preparations for a return step by step. I just have a different opinion from that of the person who drew this picture. There is no single, correct answer in life. Everyone has her/his own ideas and there are as many opinions as there are people.

In this way, Ms. P offers a version of becoming and suggests that her location keeps shifting. At the same time, she expresses a hope for going home, while she is in the diaspora. Hence, from the point where Cambodian-ness and Japanese-ness meet and collide at times, and the past, present, and future merge, she sends her message through her writings continuously. Chan (2008) refers to human potentiality seen in the activities based on critical thinking and the vigorous participations beyond the boundaries:

> The title of this book, *Another Japan Is Possible*, reflects the slogan and frame of mind of some of the alterglobalization activists in Japan, who are part of a larger

global justice movement worldwide that rallies around the belief that another world *is* possible. … It aims at alternative models of globalization based on transparency, democracy, and participation. (p. 17; original emphasis)

Similarly, Ms. P's activities discussed in this study demonstrate the importance of transgressing the borders and binaries and proceeding with self-expression from the in-between space actively.

As clearly shown throughout the dissertation, Miyamoto's philosophy derived from practicing the diverse forms of art is useful for this research project integrating various research methods and visualizing a fluid and open trajectory reflecting the her/his-story, language, space, time, being, and becoming of the research participants as well as myself. In this study, I placed emphasis on the possibility of what is in-between art and social science as well as writing, filmmaking, and performance. Denzin describes the alternative approach to move away from the convention:

In performance art, a performance becomes a dialogical, often improvisational work that takes authority away from the text; the emphasis is on the performance, not the work per se. … The world outside the text, including the audience, is brought into the performance. The performance becomes a transformative process in which performers are no longer locked into fixed characters in a text. Audiences may become active participants or coperformers in the performance. (1997, p. 107-108)

Through the combination of the text, the film, and the performance within the video and drawing heavily on the narratives of the research participants, this study showed what is in-between the written text, the visual material, and the oral her/his-story, and proposed an alternative horizon destabilizing the boundaries and binaries established and maintained by the normative discourse. As a researcher/filmmaker, I conclude this dissertation with the hope that studies applying criticality and a multi-angled view, and challenging the barrier sustained by the hegemonic view will thrive.

**Figure 21. At Night/Prelude to the Future**



*Figure 21*. Still from *The Art of Becoming*. 14 minutes colour film. 2012. © Hiroko Hara, 2012.

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