



Prospectus for a Future Body: Synchronometrics **By André Lepecki**

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Ten Notes for Choy Ka Fai's Prospectus for a Future Body

1. Were we to find a principle of violence in choreography—the latter understood as the design and execution of predetermined movements and gestures—it would be the following: a subject will be formed, created, designed, trained, physically as well as mentally, to receive someone else's movements and then execute them perfectly, upon command.
2. It's as if violence in choreography functions according to the principles of abduction: first one captures (young) bodies, bends them, trains them to be ideal receptors of movement; then one captures minds and makes them yield to commands, while demanding also perfect memory. Not surprisingly, the modern notion of discipline is a product of the era that also brings choreography (the word and the practice) into the world.
3. In this scheme, choreography also functions according to military principles, or according to a technology predicated on structures of command and obedience.

This is why choreographer William Forsythe once referred to ballet as being a “system of command.” Regarding the transmission of movement, such a system requires the ideological fantasy of the dancer as *tabula rasa*, as ideal receptor who will move according to someone else’s will and corporeal attributes.

4. Choreography then can be seen as a body-snatcher, and the dancer as a host for spectral possession.

5. Under this violent formation, the dancer’s body is ideally conceived as an open body on at least three levels: telepathically, telekinetically, and teletemporally. It is triply available for all sorts of spectral intrusions, manipulations, receptions: telepathically, to receive the choreographer’s intentions without a glitch; telekinetically, to incorporate and then “excorporate” muscular and nervous expressions from this virtual transmission; teletemporally, to be an ephemeral station, a precarious, momentary receptacle for movement that must continue, into the future, beyond any individual dancer’s life.

6. But there is more to this violence than the ideal of endless and flawless transmission. There is what we may call (after Michel Serres) the parasitical principles of communication: inevitable deviation, unavoidable disturbance, and permanent noise. These are the inherent conditions of the world. Choreographic violence starts when choreography cannot stand deviation, cannot accommodate the dancer’s agency, cannot accept that the nervous system has its autonomy, and that sometimes it takes over, that it has to take over, that sometimes bodies do break apart, are always breaking apart, that all dancing is break-dancing, and that all minds forget, and that forgetting is the precondition for the unexpected, the crack through which irresistible wishes and improper desires creep in, inflecting choreography away into unforeseen becomings, making it align with something else.

7. Violence meets choreography thanks to the mystery of animation, the omnipotent theocratic dream of infusing movement into the inert, of wanting to control matter and its futures by controlling the life and sense of its movements. Freud saw in the sudden eruption of movement, in what is supposed to be inert, the perfect example of the uncanny. But it is precisely in the uncanny that choreography pokes its fingers—a fatal attraction. Choreography’s violence is to always go about pushing

and plucking some mass of bone and meat to see if it can make it dance. “Dance!” The ultimate colonial sadism over the bare life of the barely living, nearly dead slave.

8. Choreography’s violence feeds off an omnipotent belief that everything must move according to its wishes. Call it Dr. Frankenstein’s paradigm: animation at all costs.

9. Choreography’s violence lies in its belief that life is only movement; and, moreover, that living movement is the oriented circulation of electrons shooting through inert matter. It hallucinates that as long as an electrical connection is secured, the rotten shall move, regardless of costs.

10. And yet, despite all this potential for violence, there is a profound irony in Choy Ka Fai’s project. A choreographic laughter emerging as potential for freedom within the machinations of commanding transmissions and obedient bodies. In Choy’s project we find buzzing noises all the time, and movement happens in and as noise. In this racket, in this commotion, the sonic and the kinetic fuse as one and the same. Leibniz understood the soul (in Latin, animus, that is to say, animation) as a permanent buzzing, and Choy links this buzzing animation directly to the ghostly video image of a dancer that is now a corpse (Tatsumi Hijikata) into his own body. And, of course, despite the supposedly direct electric link, the resulting movement is always erratic and never the same. This is Choy’s revelation—deep, profound, uncannily real: choreography is a dance macabre, and the dancer’s softest gestures are but a tamed spasm.