Connecting Asia-Pacific Hip-hop – The Role of the Cross-Cultural Intermediary

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Abstract

This thesis examines a network of highly mobile and internationally connected subcultural participants in what is defined as an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture. I conceptualise these figures as 'cross cultural intermediaries' and argue that they have been crucial agents in the development of the regional subcultural scene. These individuals participate in, and transform, local, regional and globally-oriented Hip-hop. Working across media, art, commerce, and between marginal communities and the state, they can appear in a variety of roles, drawing in different ways on their cultural origins, intercultural literacies, business skills and community ethics. Where most Hip-hop studies are grounded in one place or are focussed on a single individual, I use an international comparative study across five Asia-Pacific cities – Bangkok, Singapore, Shanghai, Tokyo and Melbourne – and seven case studies of individual intermediaries. These examples are used to draw conclusions about self-expression and media making, the creation of cultural and economic value, and the use of Hip-hop arts to promote social inclusion and engage with marginalised communities.

This thesis takes an ethnographic approach to research Asia-Pacific Hip-hop across a four year period. The methods used for investigation include a prolonged participant observation both in the material world and online, and in semi-structured interviews, to build on the related work in cultural studies.

I build on the work of scholars who examine cultural economy and cultural entrepreneurship, to demonstrate the various ways the seven case studies operate – as enablers, activists, risk takers, experimenters, negotiators, connectors and mentors – to advance Hip Hop subcultures and their arts such as dance in and between Asia-Pacific cities. In particular, I draw on Pierre Bourdieu's work on the political economy of culture, notably his concepts of habitus and cultural capital. The thesis also draws on Bourdieu's notion of the 'cultural intermediary' and others who have worked within a Bourdieusian tradition on youth focussed subcultures. It examines how these individuals amass and deploy cultural capital in and between places to create new cultural businesses, tastes, flows of cultural products and ways of participating that extend across the region.

The work of the cross-cultural intermediary is discussed with reference to contemporary subcultural and digital media studies. I examine the differences between those working in a 'communitarian' tradition and those with commercial motivations, as well as hybrid forms between the two. I also trace the importance of digital media in the development of international music cultures such as Hip-hop. I draw on Fogarty's idea of imagined affinities as a symbolic reference to the transnational connections that sustain Hip-hop communities across Asia-Pacific Hip-hop.

Finally, I outline a new subcultural actor that takes advantage of a cosmopolitan habitus, internet media and communications, economies of cultural production, and regional mobility, to enhance unique iterations of Hip-hop and connect them to a larger Asia-Pacific network.

Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at any university or equivalent institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Signature: ……..

Name: ……

Date: …….

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List of Abbreviations

ACM	Art Centre Melbourne
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
BIS	Breaking In Shanghai
BoTY	Battle of the Year
BPU	Breakdance Project Uganda
L2R	Limbs2Riddem
LNB	Late Night Bangkok (LNB)
NGO	non-government organisation
PRC	People's Republic of China
TM303	Thug Mansion 303 Records
UGC	user-generated content
UK	United Kingdom (UK)
US	United States (US)
VPN	virtual private network (VPN)
VWO	voluntary welfare organisation

Chapter 1: Introduction

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a surge of interest internationally in the idea of the 'Asia-Pacific Region'. This period saw the rise of Japan as a major economy and an increase of trade and movement of people across the region. Asia-Pacific regionalisation led to the ideas of the 'Pacific Century' and 'Pacific Rim' and formation of regional initiatives like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). After the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a general retreat from examining the Asia-Pacific region alongside the erosion of inter-regional policy and politics in a return to nationalism. Across the globe, we can see a similar return to localism in phenomena like Trump and Brexit. These oppositional voices to globalism are the result of what has been described as globalisation fatigue which has prompted various political shifts towards national development. Such attitudes are also felt in the Asia-Pacific region, where leaders mobilise nationalism to bolster their regime's legitimacy, for example, Rodrigo Duterte in the Philippines and Abe Shinzo in Japan. Alongside this retreat from globalism, tensions have arisen as identity politics have heightened and there is a notable displacement of people between nations. This suggests that the embeddedness of people across the region cannot be unwound so simply. We can think of this human displacement as a cultural aspect to globalisation that is unavoidable and changes at a different pace to the top-down decisions that can shift the state of national-global alignments.

In the wake of the 2008 global financial crisis, globalism has been widely associated with the abstract and inhuman worlds of business and finance, free trade deals and a loss of cultural identity. However, this neglects the fact that internationalisation has also been a human-cultural phenomenon. Unlike previous efforts that have looked at the top-down structural associations that have helped connect the Asia-Pacific (i.e., through government partnerships, commercial capitalism, or media), this thesis approaches the Asia-Pacific region from the bottom up through the examination of inter-regional subcultures, a prime example of which is Hip-hop.[1] This regional subcultural exchange builds on earlier work that was interested in this alternative form of regional-global exchange (e.g., Gilroy 1993; Iwabuchi 2002; Ko 2004; Huat & Iwabuchi 2008; Kim 2013), but no previous study has attempted to look at the lived realities of its participants and how they contribute to this multidirectional and multinational exchange in detail. This thesis asks, what have been the factors in the emergence of an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene?

This thesis argues that a central figure in this development are cross-cultural intermediaries, which this thesis theorises and explores in detail. They are a group of subcultural participants moving

[1] Throughout this thesis, the capitalised term 'Hip-hop' is used to refer to the cultural entity under investigation, as opposed to hip-hop in practice.

between places and facilitating local-global programs, business partnerships, flows of media and movements of resources (cultural, human and economic) in the development of this regional exchange. The notion of local-global reflects the nature of projects grounded in place, but engaged with, or connect to, a global discourse and transnational community. The movement of subcultural styles and identities between people and regions is not a new phenomenon. These cross-cultural figures have a number of antecedents—from impresarios to cultural entrepreneurs and social activists—who have emerged through a practice of multidirectional local-global development and tending to gaps in cultural markets and communities. However, they have also evolved in recent years in a number of ways that require analysis. One aspect of their practice unique to the contemporary era is their reliance on digital tools and cheap travel to work on the development of projects that enable multidirectional flows, both physical and digital, across borders, especially between Asia-Pacific cities, making regional connectivity a decided outcome of their work.

One example is Rory Kirkham, a Canadian music tour manager and performer working from Bangkok who connects a range of audiences to local and international acts across the Asia-Pacific by drawing on a professional network of venue owners, promoters, agencies and performers. Rory is also a prominent figure in the Breaking community and has performed with and educated emerging and established dancers across the region in Tokyo and Singapore where he connects with fellow international cultural agents featured in this thesis—Ryo Tanahashi, Dennis Panelligan, Katsu Ishikawa and Felix Huang. Felix is another illuminating example of this new mobile cultural agent, as he creates regional connections through the Asia-Pacific's largest annual Hip-hop performing arts festival, bringing together hundreds of people. Huang is a subcultural business owner, but is also concerned with regional development between cultural communities. As he once asked, 'what's more important, the money or the global community? For me, the global community' (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

These individuals are but two examples of the cross-cultural or intercultural intermediaries who will be examined in detail throughout the thesis. Their local-global focus and methods deployed in developing inter-regional exchanges between local, regional and global networks are unique to this time. They are educated; understand commerce; utilise social media to enhance their practices; prioritise embodied in-place, social interactions and performance; are internationally mobile; and enjoy a cosmopolitan freedom. They leverage these qualities to create local, regional and globally oriented Hip-hop ventures, for example, the Radikal Forze Anniversary event or the Cyphercode international clothing label, which are both commercial and communitarian in their motivations. In exploring such examples, this thesis addresses three key questions. How do these cross-cultural intermediaries contribute to the structure of an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene? How do they mediate between internet-based digital media and embodied performance and sociality in physical space?

How do they enable local Hip-hop and act as cross-border catalysts creating cultural, social and economic value?

1.1 Charting an Asia-Pacific Investigation

This thesis looks at the Asia-Pacific region through an investigation into one or two case studies in five global cities. These cities were chosen because of their contrasting contexts and their regional connections or reputation in Hip-hop. A number of studies have explored the Hip-hop tradition in some detail across a number of localities in the Asia-Pacific including Singapore (Mattar 2003), Australia (Mitchell 2008; Arthur 2006, 2009), Japan (Condry 1999, 2006, 2007) and China (Wang 2012; Barrett 2012). However, few have looked at the plurality of the subcultural form (i.e., dance, art, lyricism and curation) between different national contexts. In some areas, like Thailand and China, studies have focussed on 'rap' as a form of expression and as a discourse. By contrast, the present thesis sets its scope as Hip-hop in global cities connected by communications, travel and finance across the Asia-Pacific region, and is interested in the diversity of Hip-hop practices beyond popular music studies.

The methodological approach used to examine this regional subcultural exchange is a type of media ethnography that draws on an interview method and is informed by ethnographic observation. I am, myself, embedded within these subcultural communities and follow them online via social media. I also draw on my own knowledge of Hip-hop and the global field gained from own extended participation in the subculture since 2006. As a dancer and musician I have travelled around the world to participate at events in Singapore, Bangkok and Tokyo. Through the aforementioned methods, this thesis captures the inter-regional flows that cross-cultural intermediaries set up and sustain by examining them as they move across borders, host or participate in embodied gatherings, or contribute to online transnational discourse. Using multi-city case studies of Asia-Pacific Hip-hop, this thesis contributes to our understanding of transformation within contemporary creative subcultures in three ways.

First, this thesis argues that a determining factor in the development of an interconnected Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene has been the practices of cross-cultural intermediaries. These are figures who participate in, and transform, local, regional and globally oriented Hip-hop programs. Working across media, art and commerce as well as between marginal communities and the state, these individuals can appear in a number of roles, drawing on their cultural origins, intercultural fluencies, commercial practices and community ethics. The thesis investigates how these practices foster local city-based and transnational Asia-Pacific Hip-hop subcultures. Intercultural intermediaries' practices are diverse and this thesis distinguishes between the cultural entrepreneur, social entrepreneur, activist and

communitarian. However, irrespective of category, these figures all mediate between the Hip-hop subculture, business, the state, media and larger mainstream audiences. The findings of this thesis shed light on an important new contributor to cultural value working at the nexus of local and transnational communities to encourage intercultural dialogue and participation, transnational events, content creation, management and media distribution.

Second, as digital social and mobile media now account for a significant portion of contemporary communication, this thesis is also sensitive to the importance of subcultural media practices as a means to establish new local and global subcultural flows. It demonstrates media's flexibility as a tool in the hands of intercultural intermediaries and in Hip-hop for communication, marketing, mediation and community formation, as well as a supplementary tool that enhances offline physical relations. Such local-global subcultural media practices also demonstrate the changing dynamics of cultural globalisation. In doing so, this thesis explores the opportunities offered by new digital technologies and platforms, but also their limitations, as both embodied practices and old analogue media-making persist as important factors for the development of identity and sociality.

Third, this thesis investigates how these cultural flows are representative of multidirectional, bottom-up, Asia-Pacific globalisations. This thesis draws on a range of studies (Gilroy 1993; Iwabuchi 2002; Ko 2004; Kim 2013) that demonstrate the movement of inter-regional cultural and commercial exchanges through alternative globalisations. Another major example has been the regional consumption of anime, manga and television dramas from Japan which has prompted a reconceptualisation of regional identities, creative cultural adaptation and development. Drawing on such work, this thesis positions global flows of popular culture, even when a form such as Hip-hop has a Western and Afro-American derivation, as not representative of cultural imperialism (i.e., not an imposition of American popular culture on Asia or Australia). Instead, they are interpreted, adapted and made sense of by cross-cultural intermediaries belonging to local Hip-hop subcultures through the experiences and traditions of their own cultures and media that they participate in and consume. Musical and performative forms originating in the United States (US), such as in Hip-hop, are given different local inflexions that are made sense of by cross-cultural intermediaries who diversify local understandings of identity and belonging by connecting local cultures to international networks of cultural exchange.

The thesis draws on alternative globalisation work such as Iwabuchi (2002). However, it does not seek merely to restate the need to think beyond models of Westernisation and cultural imperialism. Rather, it takes a polycentric global order as a given, seeking to understand inter-regional globalising exchanges and transversal forms of globalisation. This approach contrasts with theories of globalisation that see it as a top-down process, typically placing governments, powerful corporations

and national industries at the centre. This thesis argues that globalisation now goes beyond the types of alternative globalisations in the region—typically seen in top-down studies of inter-Asian globalisation (Iwabuchi 2002; Ko 2004)—and is continuing to evolve into something far more multidirectional and cosmopolitan than ever before. These flows are also intensified by an increasingly diverse regional movement of people and their communications. This returns the focus to the type of bottom-up processes of cross-cultural exchange seen in studies of youth subcultures. For example, Birmingham previously researched the influence of Western Indian or Afro-Caribbean immigration on British youth in the 1960s and 1970s (Hebdige 1975b, 1979). However, this thesis shifts the focus out of the national frame to consider how cross-cultural intermediaries are involved in the transformation of culture through structuring and participating in multidirectional exchanges across the Asia-Pacific.

The individuals examined in this study are connected to what we can call an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene. This regional conceptualisation is particularly important in understanding how relative proximity is tied to the development of transnational subcultural networks and subsequent cultural and economic exchanges across the Asia-Pacific region. There have been previous attempts to unify or contextualise the region, for example, the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as an attempt to displace European imperialism in the 1940s.[2] However, the Asia-Pacific conceptualisation more flexibly extends affiliation to the coastal nations connected by the Pacific Ocean (Harvey & Mimura 2006; Sobocinska 2014), becoming a popular and important context for researching regional-global commercial, political, economic and cultural globalisation. In the 1980s to 1990s, the concept became the focus of great scholarly interest (Wesley-Smith & Goss 2010) and was important for the regional categorisation of local-global policy and economic development (e.g., APEC) (Sobocinska 2014). Now, the impetus of economic nationalism following the 1997 Asian financial crisis eclipses the transnational collaborative growth that governments once assumed. Conversely, Asia-Pacific Hip-hop might also reflect a diversity of flows that are unique to this subcultural context and which previous efforts to articulate the region have failed to address. Australia, for example, has been an influential node participating in the Asia-Pacific region due to its geographical proximity, but is often left out of Asia-Pacific collaboration.

Despite this anti-globalist turn, the regional connectivity established in the 1980s is still very relevant in the lived reality of young people in the region. This thesis investigates this human phenomenon in detail and examines how it differs from regional exchanges by state governments and national and multinational corporations. The examination of the lived reality of Asia-Pacific youth demonstrates an increasing willingness on their part to engage in cross-cultural dialogues, travel and participation

[2] Although, in actuality, this idea was Japanese-centric and amounted to the Empire of Japan annexing Asian countries and extracting their resources for the Japanese war effort in the Second World War.

within international cultural economies. With scholarly interests in the region now gravitating towards China, this pluralistic Asia-Pacific exchange that is sustained by the movement of people has been overlooked in contemporary studies of subculture. This thesis reinvigorates this culturally rich conceptualisation via an investigation into the realities and interconnectedness of subcultural individuals and their affiliations with businesses, cultural communities and cultural and creative industries across the region.

1.2 Research Method and Design

The varying living conditions and cultural experiences of the intermediaries chosen for examination are researched primarily through ethnographic methods. The rich cultural experiences that help structure physical and digital flows of subcultural participation, while regionally and transnationally contextualised, are still importantly tied to place, people, communities, urban spaces and unique traditions. Therefore, the primary research methods employed are ethnographic. This develops a detailed qualitative perspective that enables an analysis of varying online and offline cross-cultural intermediary practices and their relations to place.

Preliminary ethnography was conducted in Tokyo, Shanghai, Bangkok, Melbourne and Singapore, uncovering a number of subcultural communities which helped connect me to their leading facilitators. All the cross-cultural intermediaries who surfaced during the scoping of these Hip-hop subcultures were men—not because of any sampling bias, but because this was found to be the nature of the phenomenon. This gendered nature of the phenomenon raises a number of questions about obstacles faced by women and their participation in local-global Hip-hop—interesting questions for future research. For example, does the absence of women have to do with obstacles to mobility for women, the male-centric nature of the Hip-hop subculture, or gendered attitudes within the Asia-Pacific region?[3]

The selected individuals were often seen travelling through regions for subcultural work or to participate at events.[4] I was also connected through the internet (via email and Facebook subcultural community groups) and referrals from subcultural arts organisations and other community members. It became evident that the agency of these individuals was important in their local city's subcultural development (e.g., via events, social programs and creative production) and the wider transversal Asia-Pacific global exchange through physical and digital participation (through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, WeChat, Sina and YouTube) among regional-global networks.

[3] Similar questions were raised by McRobbie (1990) in her critique of the subcultural research conducted by the Birmingham School.
[4] For example, I met Rory Kirkham (see Chapter 3) at Felix Huang's (see Chapter 2) international festival event.

After scoping the field, face-to-face and email invitations were sent to discern the interest of highly involved subcultural figures residing in selected Asia-Pacific global cities. A number of cross-cultural intermediaries were selected, providing eight case studies (see Table 1).

Table 1: Cross-Cultural Intermediaries: Individual Case Studies

Name	City of Residence
Zac Alcampo	Bangkok, Thailand
Rory Kirkham	Bangkok, Thailand
Felix Huang	Singapore
Katsu Ishikawa	Tokyo, Japan
Ryo Tanahashi	Tokyo, Japan
Danny Wang	Shanghai, China
Dennis Panneligan	Melbourne, Australia
Andrew Montell	Melbourne, Australia

Recruitment of some participants was done through contacting prominent figures in the field. B-boy Johnny Yayo and other members of the Fresh Sox crew in Melbourne helped inform this study in its early form and to connect me with their worldwide networks. Other individuals were scoped through a preliminary ethnography of the scene while travelling between cities and becoming embedded in different circles. The general response was positive, although the schedules of more prominent figures meant their time was limited even for initial meetings. There is no doubt that my belonging to Hip-hop culture and relational embeddedness within global networks was a clear factor in enabling this research and the favourable responses of chosen individuals. With such a diverse and culturally plural scope for research (i.e., between seven participants in five Asia-Pacific global cities), cross-national and cosmopolitan research methods become central to informing this research.

1.2.1 Cross-National Comparative Research and Methodological Cosmopolitanism

A useful point of reference in thinking about the themes of the project is the literature on the global city—places of global connectivity, high business activity, political engagement, human capital, cultural and creative activity, and exchanges of information. They are important locales engaging in a world economy and contribute to flows of globalisation. The selected cities where the above case studies are based meet this criteria. The notion of world cities commonly refers to regions that are highly involved in global market operations as defined by their flows of economic and human capital. However, this definition fails to address other aspects of local-global cultural influences. Drawing on Sassen and other city scholarship, Acuto (2011, p. 2970) states that global cities should

> be tackled beyond the economicism that fuels most of the world city literature, with a focus on how these cities are fundamental elements of the global scenario, not solely for their

networking role, but also for their capacity to shape what humanity looks like in the 21st century.

This brings an important cultural significance to the definition of global cities and their role as places that facilitate cross-cultural experiences. The progression of national cultures from different nodes towards a regionalisation like the Asia-Pacific is also defined by the mobility and cultural and economic activity between global cities (Sassen 2005; Soja 2005). Therefore, the cities chosen were also important places of Hip-hop cultural relevance and connectivity. This thesis revises Livingstone's (2003) definition of global cities by contextualising them as places in which the cross-cultural intermediaries in this study operate, rather than as a unit of analysis. In this way, similarities can be drawn to Livingstone's (2003) comparative framework where cities help contextualise or reflect particular differences and universal continuities in terms of culture, governmentality, communication and technology, while also permitting an analysis of intermediary practices from distinctive regional locations as part of a system of interconnected local-global culture and economics.

1.2.2 Establishing an Appropriate Spatial Analytical Tool

This thesis adopted Georgiou's (2003, 2005) use of a three-dimensional spatial matrix, allowing for a multilayered analysis of physical and mediated subcultural practices that are easily compartmentalised (see Figure 1).

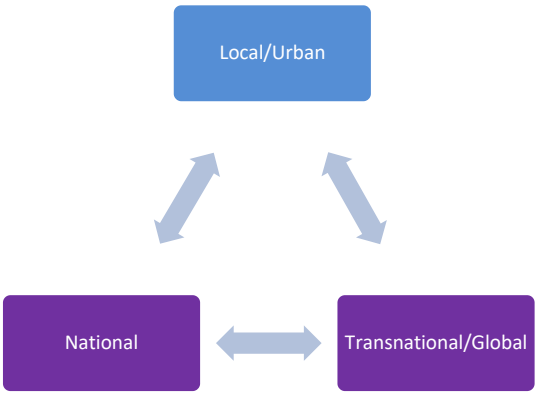

Figure 1: Spatial Matrix of Research Contexts

This model extends the contexts of the research to online (purple) and offline (blue) realms (see Figure 1), making this matrix valuable for the analysis of the contemporary flows of content and communication established by cross-cultural intermediaries and the connections or intersections between various modes of exchange. Further, paying close attention to local contexts also helps interpretation of engagement with translocal cultures of production and consumption in their domestic cultural complexity (Couldry & Hepp 2012, p. 104) and how their practices transition online and what remains of their relations to space.

1.2.3 Global Ethnographic Interviews and Online Ethnography

This thesis used an interview-based ethnographic methodology to document detailed histories of local-global participation and subcultural media use among cross-cultural intermediary case studies. I first embedded myself in five different subcultural communities in the Asia-Pacific for periods of two to four weeks over three years. During this time, I conducted semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interviews with individual case studies to more concisely understand the potential of cross-cultural intermediaries in shaping local-global and regional subcultural participation, while also examining how this is tied to their media consumption, production and local-global distribution. This approach is similar to Rantanen's global-mediagraphy which focusses on the aptitudes of new media with the potential to 'bring the role that "old media" has in the world today, back into the picture' (Teer-Tomaselli & Dyll-Myklebust 2012, p. 452). Ethnographic interviews were also useful in going beyond the role of media and technology, as 'we often lose sight of the fact that it is people who communicate with other people in one way or another' (Teer-Tomaselli & Dyll-Myklebust 2012, p. 467).

A secondary method used was virtual, online ethnography and observation of online subcultural communication and media engagement which helped support interview enquiries and validate interview responses. By examining new media groups, pages and flows stemming from individual case studies located in global cities, online ethnography allows for an articulation of the type of local and transnational participation and intensities of exchange transpiring among and between cross-cultural intermediaries as well as the subcultures they support and participate in. A similar approach was utilised by Wilson and Atkinson (2005) to analyse Rave and Straightedge cultures and their online and offline experiences. Reflecting on Greschke's (2007) diasporic research, Dominguez et al. (2007) notes that while limited in its ability to go beyond observational and screen based perspectives, virtual ethnography can be 'combined with physical observation in multiple sites, in order to explore how the mediated activities are inserted into the everyday life of participants'. This makes the use of virtual ethnography particularly valuable as a supporting method for face-to-face interviews. Such methodologies are complemented by digital translation tools that assist in information retrieval as they become more sophisticated (Balahur & Turchi 2012). Such an approach requires a reflexive ethical approach in the collection and utilisation of public content in this research.[5]

[5] In accordance with research ethics, the individuals forming the case studies were informed of their right to remain anonymous. None of them requested anonymity.

1.3 Thesis Structure

The thesis explores each chosen city through corresponding case studies focussed on cross-cultural intermediary connections to local and global networks, flows of media, information and communication. Each chapter highlights local specificities that are important to city-based and national cultural nuances and demonstrate the importance of cross-cultural intermediary practices in facilitating connections to an Asia-Pacific scene and, in part, a wider global subcultural ethos and network. Chapters 3–7 each introduce individuals as case studies and show how their practice is made important by determinants, themes and roles through an analysis of Hip-hop subcultures from their grassroots to their commercial adaptations. This thesis concentrates on intermediaries in five global cities that have been shaped by different modernising histories, local cultural tensions, governmental relations and exposure to globalising forces.

Chapter 1 introduced the research topic and methodologies used in this thesis. Chapter 2 summarises the literature that informs this thesis from the largest structural level of the global subcultures proceeding down to the cross-cultural intermediary.

Chapter 3 details the importance of foreign influencers and local-global practices of cultural entrepreneurship that help enhance participation and connectivity between local and global Hip-hop communities from Bangkok. The intermediaries explored in the chapter appear in two roles, communitarians and commercialists, who work between socio-economic classes, grassroots communities and large-scale music corporations. The chapter asks, what is the value of cultural entrepreneurship in its various forms in establishing local-global connectivity? Case studies in this chapter connect local Thai scenes to other places, scenes, economies, collections of taste, flows of media, information, content and networks by enacting a cosmopolitan approach in their practices necessary for establishing new local-global perspectives. Foreign intermediaries bring external cultural forms, stylistic approaches, values, tastes and networks of potential connectivity to Bangkok's Hip-hop communities. The chapter also examines foreigners (i.e., intermediaries from outside of the region) who create globalising influences from Bangkok. In this way, the chapter aligns more with developed–developing world globalisation, while also demonstrating how such influential figures are able to refract their cultural practices into local cultural communities and create and receive alternative local-global flows from Thailand.

Chapter 4 considers a cultural intermediary from Singapore who connects a number of Asia-Pacific communities from the nation-state through the region's largest Hip-hop festival and a number of national social value–building programs. This chapter asks, how does social entrepreneurship create positive social value by drawing on social capital (i.e., relationships as resources to create change,

through partnerships with the state and commercial business) in a practice that enables Hip-hop's local grassroots and its connection to the Asia-Pacific scene? In this chapter, social entrepreneurship also appears as a skill passed on through programs that target at-risk youth and disadvantaged communities. The chapter also explores how such entrepreneurial figures are attractive for other economic reasons that help connect subcultural networks across the Asia-Pacific region. A notable example is the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival which has emerged as the pinnacle for annual, regional and international subcultural exchanges, opportunities for networking, trade and multinational media dissemination. The state's concerns with delinquency makes such social roles and programs important for managing the perceived subversive edge that subcultures have in Singapore and enable events like Radikal Forze Anniversary to occur under the soft authoritarian regime.

Chapter 5 considers a unique paradigm of communication, media and subcultural participation that has stemmed from a complicated history of imperialism, revolution and closed borders in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Cross-cultural intermediaries in Shanghai demonstrate the importance of collaboration with the government due to the ongoing censorship of domestic media systems, regulated public spaces that deter street-based subcultural congregations, and a hardened perspective of external cultural forms from an authoritarian state. This chapter asks, how do cross-cultural intermediaries preserve creative autonomy in an authoritarian country that has only recently opened up to the global economy, but is still censorious in its attempts to control culture? And in what ways do they circumvent governmental censorship of Hip-hop in the commercial sphere to maintain a connection to the Asia-Pacific region via large-scale regional festivals and events? Cultural intermediaries in this chapter are shown as proficient navigators of local tensions between the state and external pop cultural forms, ethnic-nationalism/citizenship and foreign expatriates, and the domestic media industry and global media alternatives. A culture of permit requisition changes Hip-hop's visible forms in the city, driving it indoors and making international competitions within the PRC important as international mobility, employment and participation can be difficult for locals hoping to leave. The role of the intermediary in prompting new local-global flows in and out of the PRC requires a subtle subversion of the state through the use of virtual private network (VPN) technology to connect to global social media in an attempt to contemporise local subcultural practices via enhancing pathways of cultural exchange.

In Chapter 6, the cultural intermediaries appear in similar roles as previously outlined (social entrepreneurs or cultural entrepreneurs), but on a much larger commercial scale. The figures studied in Tokyo work with the corporatisation and growing popularity of Hip-hop subcultural participation, while harnessing this corporate power to maintain local-global grassroots Hip-hop. This chapter asks, how do cultural intermediaries in Tokyo benefit from a thriving creative economy of grassroots and

commercial subcultural industries in establishing local-global practices that extend across the Asia-Pacific and beyond? And does the support of corporate capitalism threaten or complement authenticity across local-global subcultural networks from Tokyo? Subcultural participation is exponentially larger in Tokyo and the local-global tension between 'cypher'[6] and competition culture is also made more visible by its large supporting industry and participation. Participating and developing community-oriented and commercial Hip-hop programs and businesses also refract into intermediary practices that create social, cultural and commercial value, aesthetics, styles, trends and distinctions from Tokyo that extend across the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

The final case studies in Chapter 7 are from Melbourne, where we see thriving, state-supported Hip-hop. This chapter asks, to what extent are intermediary practices, enabled by governmental support, contributing to structuring of flows across the Asia-Pacific scene and beyond? Does the arts welfare state pose, in its managerial control, as much of a threat to creative autonomy and authenticity as the Chinese Communist Party and Japanese corporate capitalism, or does it enable a marginal creative expression and provide space for free experimentation and hybridity? This particular nuance is also an important aspect of local cultural and creative industries in creating inclusive cultural projects, events and businesses that stimulate the creative and cultural economies. The cross-cultural intermediaries in this chapter are also discussed as mediators between local-global marginal communities (in Melbourne, across Australia and between the developing world), the state and corporations, and are significant in creating access to participation, visibility, representation and economic resources in the form of charity and arts grants. Their practice aligns with Australia's multicultural state policy by expanding existing methods of engaging multicultural youth. Yet, a complicated history of nationalism and conservative politics has also been reflected in Australia's pop cultural iterations of Hip-hop. This emerges in tension within the local scene, which emphasises the intermediary role to create multicultural and cosmopolitan programs, flows of content and events.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis, providing a summary of the evidence for the various factors at play in bringing together an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene. This is exemplified through the cross-cultural intermediary who is significant for their ability to structure flows between places, communities and economies, is presented. Moreover, this chapter summarises their practice as being contingent on a complex interplay between an idealised embodied physical participation and various digital media practices, international mobility made possible by budget travel, and increasing demands for the subcultural products and services across the region. The final sections highlight relations between the Asia-Pacific scene that chart participation in the making of culture, associations and flows between

[6] Cyphers are informal community cultural exchanges that are often expressed through the art of battling or community participation. They are opportunities for expression. Typically, they appear in forms based around the principles of Hip-hop, for example, a dance cypher or rap cypher.

the networks of cross-cultural intermediaries, and contextualises them as part of wider local and global subcultural communities.

Chapter 2: Charting Asia-Pacific Hip-Hop Culture

2.1 Theorising Subcultures

Most studies on music- or dance-related subcultures have been confined to a national, city, ethnic or neighbourhood frame. They have generally not enquired into figures who move between these spaces. This pattern was established by the classical work of the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies in the 1970s who were influenced by Gramsci (1971) in studying structure and distinguishing youth cultures as organic movements in structured society and by Chambers's (1974) structural semiotics in their analysis of subcultural aesthetics, rituals and symbols. Their work set the foundation for much of the proceeding analysis around class and socio-economic/ethnic change, traditions and the rituals and styles deployed to communicate coded identity and resistance to authority (Hebdige 1975a, 1975b; Jefferson 1975; Clarke 1975a, 1975b; Clarke et al. 1975). The present thesis considers these various processes of symbolic negotiation in processes of popular globalisation, subversion of mainstream logics and in struggles relating to class and social mobility in Hip-hop. However, in contrast to these traditional theorists, the approach of the present thesis goes beyond any single national conceptualisation of a subcultural form and describes something far more globally connected and made malleable by the movement of people and information across the globe—Asia-Pacific Hip-hop.

While much of the aforementioned early work was nationally bound, it remains indispensable in approaching subcultures in a way that is sensitive to historical, socio-cultural, political and economic determinants. These practices are regulated through a set of perceptions, values, norms and aesthetics involving a complex relationship between consumption and subcultural reproduction (Willis 1978; Hebdige 1975b, 1979; Clarke et al. 1975). The adaptation and renegotiation of meanings of style are ritualised by collectives who appropriate symbols of the dominant culture in a process termed 'bricolage' (Hebdige 1979). In the British case, these practices were also made global to some degree in the intersection and overlapping of youth cultures moving between the West Indies and Britain. For example, the Mods borrowed elements from the Jamaican Hustler and Rudie aesthetic, and Skinheads in Britain transplanted reggae which diverged from the Rasta experience in a new local context (Hebdige 1979). This thesis approaches intersections within Hip-hop across a number of cities, cultures and subcultural forms and is strengthened by a multi-city approach that diversifies its scope beyond the confines of any singular stream of globalisation. In this way, it takes the cultural studies framework to help understand the interpretations of the transmission of symbols, aesthetics, language and creative practices, which converge through contemporary local and global cultural

exchanges, into something more cosmopolitan, inclusive and tolerant, while also remaining partially distinguished by place, culture and people.

2.1.1 The Hip-Hop Subculture

How can we understand contemporary Hip-hop culture? Contemporary subcultures, and Hip-hop in particular, are salient examples of multicultural, internationally celebrated subaltern communities. Gramsci (1971) and Spivak (1988) theorised the subaltern as communities subject to oppression from a ruling class made authoritarian from residual colonial power in post-colonial nations. Hip-hop has its origins in this subaltern experience—in the response to moral panics in lower socio-economic New York (Chang 2005)—which, over time, has gained global cultural and commercial popularity, transforming its meaning and allowing adaptation.

Hip-hop culture was born out of a series of cultural practices of expression, emerging from the ever-complicated conditions of poverty, political oppression, increasing crime and socio-cultural marginality of the African-American and Latin American experience (Rose 1994; Chang 2005). It was through community block parties that its creative practices were first developed and given value. For example, DJ Kool Herc's use of turntables to create break-beat loops (George 2004) provided the backdrop for the high-energy dance now known as breakdancing (as termed by the media) or 'breaking', 'b-boying' or 'b-girling' (as authenticated by the subculture) (Israel 2002; Schloss 2009). Lyricists also co-opted themselves into this thriving community celebration by developing their own linguistic rituals which have evolved into the rhythmic delivery of lyrics now regarded as rapping. These performing arts were constructed and unified by an overarching body of communitarian ideas (Morgan & Bennett 2011) as an oppositional and constructive means to liberate themselves from the conflicts that plagued the South Bronx (Weiss 1979; Nicholson 2010). Contemporary representations of Hip-hop, however, often conflate the commercial imaginary of its popular musical form with the wider communitarian practice, when, in actuality, the lyrics and popular musical form were the last cultural practices to develop (Chang 2005). Such asymmetries are due to the commercialism surrounding rap music as it has become a common and popular means of lyrical expression (Minestrelli 2014a) which distanced its creative practice in the wider public sphere from the reality that characterises the broad-based communitarian subculture (Stavrias 2005; Collins 2006).

Hip-hop has now emerged as a global phenomenon, both mainstream and underground. An ongoing effort to establish the importance of this local-global distinction across various Hip-hop geographies has also appeared in scholarship (Condry 2006, 2007; Mitchell 2008; Minestrelli 2014a; Omari 2013). Some research finds analogous applications of Hip-hop arts in enabling cultural communities, linking the political expression and social emancipatory practices in Australia and New Zealand's post-

colonial indigenous communities to the urban, ethnically and socially marginalised identities of lower socio-economic America (Warren & Evitt 2010; Minestrelli 2014b; Panday 2010). Tony Mitchell (2003) frames Hip-hop as claiming the 'glocal' in the context of Australia, and Ian Condry (2006, 2007) positions Japanese Hip-hop as a local-transnational culture. While these localisations are defined by cultural nuances, they are also connected by a global discourse—a body of knowledge and international communitarian and competitive practices. These emerge in global events like Redbull BC One or Battle of the Year which are influenced by 'commercial and economic globalization from above' and 'borderless, cultural grass-roots globalization from below' (Chang & Watkins 2007, p. 56). Pennycook's (2007a, 2007b) analysis of global Hip-hop linguistics similarly positions a common strand of global Hip-hop that intertwines cultural communities around the world. Their similarity, through alternative traditions, also advocates for cosmopolitan creative connections and hybridisations. The growing local-global contextualisation of Hip-hop culture and participation calls for an understanding of how these communities are connected locally, regionally and transnationally beyond the glocal.

2.1.2 Rethinking Local-Global Subcultural Scenes

How are we to theorise local-global tensions in the Asia-Pacific region? This thesis investigates regional intersections and exchanges that help establish an overarching or global Hip-hop culture sustained and connected by consumers and producers of varying subcultural investment. One way to conceptualise a more general local-global community connection is through Anderson's (1983) concept of imagined communities and extrapolating the cultural connection of its original conceptualisation to address the nation to a network of subcultural groups and scenes scattered across the world who are unified through transnational/international cultural exchanges, cultural production and consumption of subcultural media. This notion can be considered a fulcrum that ties together the intercultural connection of a global Hip-hop culture.

Taking Hip-hop as her focus, Fogarty (2012) adapts Anderson's notion of imagined communities to Hip-hop communities, putting forward the notion of imagined affinities to address the shared identifications among globally connected members of Hip-hop-based performative subcultures. These experiences of closeness are sustained through media texts, travel and face-to-face encounters which transcend the local cultural experience. Important aspects of mediation in Fogarty's (2012) study include circulating the heterogeneity of performative styles, knowledge and diversity of identities. Displays of skill are additionally linked to a process of inclusion which stems from a respectful competitive ethos—a 'show and prove' mentality—expressed through participation and regulated through mediations of these experiences. These connections and cultural exchanges are part of the fabric of subcultural scenes. Another way this globally connected scene, or sphere of belonging,

has been conceptualised is as an imagined 'global Hip-hop nation' (Alim 2009). Alim (2009, p. 104) addresses the importance of globalising forms of subculture, which he terms mobile matrices spread via global participation, which represent 'sets of styles, aesthetics, knowledges, and ideologies that travel across localities and cross-cut modalities'.

The subcultural scene has often been defined by way of music subcultures, with Barry Shank (1994) and Will Straw (1991) accounting for its two most popular conceptualisations. Shank's (1994) analysis finds strength in analysing music scenes in their locality, while Straw (1991) views 'the scene' as a connective term that can extend beyond the boundaries of the city, state and nation. The scene's conceptual genesis has also varied from its popular music studies' origins to more broadly encompass diverse creative practices and modes of participation (Bennett & Peterson 2004). These are fields often defined by a shared investment from both creators and consumers, in particular activities and lifestyles (e.g., music, art or fashion scenes). The term can also be used to describe creative networks within local, translocal and virtual (transnational) settings where the relationships between production and consumption of cultural goods, services, signs and ideology intersect (Bennett & Peterson 2004; Haenfler 2014).

In this way, scenes are helpful in analysing the transformation of urban spaces and that of intercultural experiences through transnational participation. This generative use conceptualises a wider fluidity of practices and identifications in a way that subculture alone cannot (Bennett & Peterson 2004). However, Hesmondhalgh (2005) is critical of the usefulness of such terms and the over-generative meaning it has come to summarise. Such concerns necessitate careful definition and conceptualisation. In the present thesis, the concept of scenes can be incredibly useful if taken as a tool of structural contextualisation. Diverse subcultures like Hip-hop are not concerned solely with music, but by a wider range of performing arts practices and, therefore, require conceptualisation that goes beyond popular music studies. To do so, each subcultural stratification (both in practice and in fandom) derived from the Hip-hop subculture should be considered part of the scene, as they are in an ongoing process of interconnection, draw from the same traditions and celebrate identity in similar ways.

However, there are still important distinctions to make in terms of how these participants, fans and communities intersect and interact. In line with the central theme of negotiating an Asia-Pacific scene, this thesis finds value in the concept of the scene to encapsulate a wide array of subcultural creative practices and participation between nations in its observation of a transnational phenomenon. Scenes must also be thought of as planes of participation where subcultural and broader mainstream audiences intersect as the term has to be distinguished from subculture which is governed by a cultural ethos, such as Hip-hop culture. This multilayered understanding of how scenes are structured allow

me to discuss various types of local and global participation of highly involved subcultural agents, contextualising their cultural practices between city, national (or translocal) and global (transnational) scenes.

2.1.3 Subcultural Participation and Identity

While scenes have come to encapsulate a wide variety of participant's subcultural association, practices of subcultural authenticity are often distinguished in Hip-hop communities by particular types of participation (for example, by choice of creative expression, knowledge of the field and its symbols—i.e., connoisseurship) or the value of cultivated accumulated experiences and group membership across time. In many traditional subcultural studies—which stem from a long research history and situate the notions of identity around a 'fixed' core—a number of opinions have emerged to re-evaluate the meaning of subcultural participation and identification.

More recently, research has posited subcultures as being more fluid than previously thought. Bennett's (1999) criticism of the conceptualisation of subcultures has been influential here. Bennett argues that the use of the term 'subcultures' is often muddled in varying interpretations that position subcultures as hermeneutically tied to class and subversion. In a Maffesolian reconceptualisation, he suggests these groups may better be understood as neo-tribes. His argument, which I find convincing, rests on the notion that subcultures are no longer rigidly defined and restricted by class, but are also understood via their relationship to the increasing marketability of subcultural consumer products and media representations. He conceptualises neo-tribes as 'a series of temporal gatherings characterized by fluid boundaries and floating memberships' (Bennett 1999b, p. 600).

While this perspective is useful in determining the varying modes of participation of young people in this thesis, it is perhaps not suitable to describe a complicated multinational subcultural network and its various subcultural divisions/nuances, as this account more narrowly dismisses the relevance that subcultures have had, and continue to have, as cultures of tradition—both united and stratified locally and globally. There is indeed a necessary revaluation of subculture and its traditional relation to class as theorised by the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies. While consumerism and mediations have complicated interpretations of 'mainstream' and 'non-mainstream' stratifications of subcultural groups, there are also internal processes of in-group self-regulation that are similarly important in structuring notions of authenticity. This thesis considers the importance of Bennett's (1999) argument in addressing the marketisation of these alternative lifestyles, but still finds the application of 'subculture' useful in articulating local neo-tribal tensions and global continuities.

Traditional models of participation highlighted two types of identity: that which resonates at the subcultural core and that at the periphery. Drawing on Clarke et al.'s (1975) dichotomy—which posits

subcultural groups in terms of 'loosely defined strands' otherwise known as 'milieux' or groups that 'develop a clear coherent identity and structure'—Williams (2011) critiques the core–periphery duality that has polarised a number of contemporary subcultural studies through the adoption of these traditional subcultural identity contextualisations. Instead, Williams (2011) offers a more rounded perspective, which the present thesis utilised to evaluate subcultural identifications and participation. The above types participation highlighted in this duality are, in fact, more fluid than once thought and instead can be represented as the 'poles between which all subcultural phenomena may be located on a continuum' (Williams 2011, p. 35). This approach enables this researcher to more diversely consider, and inclusively discuss, a number of identifications established within different cultural and market contexts, as well as socio-political and economic conditions, among both cross-cultural intermediaries and their wider communities.

2.1.4 Intercultural Subcultural Media and Connectivity

Hip-hop culture has been shown to move between people on local and global scales via mediation (Atton 2002; Henderson 2010; Fogarty 2012) and scholarship that has begun to address acquisitions and exchanges of knowledge, expressive empowerment, identity performances and online–offline translations across subcultures (Williams 2006; Wilson & Atkinson 2005; Campos & Simões 2014). However, the literature on digitally-mediated subcultures pales in comparison to the pre-digital literature, especially in addressing Hip-hop. There has been some debate around the effect of digital media on how the world experiences distance (Friedman 2006; Goldenberg & Levy 2009; Kolb 2007; Mosco 2000). It is important to be critical of the dynamics of the online–offline living duality that has been made common by the widespread acceptance of digital media use. While digital media use informs an important part of the subcultural practices of this thesis's case studies, it does not attempt to make a contribution to new media studies scholarship. Instead, media use helps refine the manner in which subcultures are connected between nations by institutions of representation (e.g., Redbull) and highly mobile, transnational cultural agents (i.e., cross-cultural intermediaries).

2.1.4.1 Rethinking Local-Global Distances and ICT Connectivity

How do we explain the duality between the online and the lived realities of cross-cultural intermediaries? Distance is an important factor in understanding how subcultural participation is structured and what these factors bring to individual notions of identity and belonging. However, conceptualisations of distance are often drastically polarised by debates around its social, economic and cultural implications. Such debates are played out in regard to individual relationships with space, technology, physicality and the connections or separations between transnationalism and the

importance of locality. To deepen an understanding of the effect of digital technologies on ideas of distance I will now review some debates in this area.

The mythology of the 'death of distance' or 'flat world' theses argued in the late 1990s and early 2000s by business and financial journalists such as Cairncross (2002) and Friedman (2006) have been popular precursors to a new media reductionism. Indeed, the technological globalisation of the internet has impacted human connectivity, expression, understandings of identity and varying types of access to global information (Bruns 2003; Bruns, Highfield & Burgess 2013; Burgess 2013; Hartley, Burgess & Bruns 2013). However, these discussions perhaps overemphasise the transformative capacities of such tools for communication, often overlooking the weight of local cultural, historical and subcultural examples.

The importance of physical proximity has not entirely eroded as we have seen in transformations of the past (e.g., via emails or internet commerce). For example, Battiston et al. (2017) found that face-to-face communication is still the most important mechanism of collective professional communication, despite all of the advances in global communications and technological adoption over the last decade. This re-emphasises the importance of physical proximity and national or regional closeness for both commercial industries and social connectivity (Ghemawat 2007, 2011; Goldenberg & Levy 2009).

While the death of distance thesis is in tension with antithetical arguments, both highlight important aspects of digital communication's role in society. By acknowledging the merits and weaknesses of these arguments, this thesis can articulate a more balanced and critical understanding of online cultural intermediary practices. This approach contextualises subcultures' relations to distance with reference to the necessities of cohabiting physical spaces in their work. In this thesis, digital communication tools are taken as extensions of the shared spaces of communication (Mosco 2000) formulated. Drawing on definitions offered by Kolb (2007), we might also think of these extensions in terms of how distance is more importantly structured in a contemporary world. Distance cannot simply be reduced to a proximal relationship and, instead, is driven by a multidimensional array of factors. These are termed 'connective gaps', which Kolb discussed widely in his works but, for the purposes of this thesis, is best defined as:

> … between actors/nodes, whereby the more connective gaps that exist between actors, the more distance exists between them. Connective gaps occur on multiple technical and social dimensions. Technical gaps can occur in any ICT medium, including travel to face-to-face meetings. Social gaps can occur in emotional, interpersonal, group, organizational, economic, cultural (including language), political, historical and philosophical dimensions. Security is another socio-technical dimension where risk creates security gaps. Along with increases in social and technical connectivity, individuals and groups will at times choose

> to keep or establish some gaps between themselves and others, thereby 'keeping their distance. (Kolb 2007, p. 10)

From this perspective, the widespread adoption of technology is quite clearly enabling new global connectivities, but, more pertinently, it acknowledges new ways of encountering and manufacturing distance. With these more moderate perspectives in mind, variables of human autonomy and imagination are brought back into scope. This allows for a more comprehensible approach to the enhancement of inter-regional transnational networks and their density as enabled by the cross-cultural intermediary.

Therefore, this research will make a second contribution to subcultural media studies by theorising the importance of physical proximity in social interactions as a more dynamic relationship between online subcultural participation and cohabitant space. The importance of embodied experiences, performances and physical connection have always been important 'rituals of relationship and occasion' (Clarke et al. 1975, p. 47), and this thesis illuminates this online–offline duality by critically analysing cross-cultural intermediaries' use of digital social media and how it is utilised, valued and interpreted in different contexts.

2.1.5 Subcultures and the Creative Economy

The local-global subcultural endeavours carried out by the agents investigated in this thesis also operate within the context of local-global cultural and creative economies. To contextualise such figures, an analysis of their participation and connection to cultural and creative industry scholarship can help situate part of their practice in cultural entrepreneurship (see Klamer 2011; Scott 2012; Moore & Gibson 2013). As both creative businesses and intermediary figures have a role in the regulation of cultural and creative industry flows of production and consumption they contribute to, their curation of such is ostensibly tied to growing national and international desires to capitalise on cultural and creative labour. As such labour becomes attractive to the state in supporting the arts, cultural and creative practices and entrepreneurship have become a popular topic of research (Florida 2002; Kong 2006, 2012; O'Connor 2016). There are some issues with defining the boundaries of cultural and creative industries as they, at times, can overlap and intersect in addressing governmental or corporate goals (Kong 2014). Reformations and realignments in the cultural and creative industries demonstrate how governments have become more willing to embrace the arts and legitimise subaltern cultural practices as part of their economic strategy (Kong 2014). Therefore, cultural and creative industries function at the intersection where arts and entrepreneurship collide. At the core of such coalescence is the cultural and artistic expressions that can be wielded to stimulate local, regional and national development and create spill-over effects on the wider global economy.

Alternative subcultures have only more recently become legitimised ways to participate in cultural and creative industries. Moreover, there has been a greater attention given to the entrepreneurship associated with the creation of new cultural and creative industry ventures that utilise, and are often driven by, subcultural agency, standards or lifestyles (Lehmann & Seitz 2016). Campbell (2013) suggests that this is an effect of post-hobby creative work, where youth groups have intertwined their subcultural practice with professional creative employment. She refers to McRobbie's (1994) subcultural analysis which highlights the process of subversive practices that can also inform the creation of subcultural enterprises that help sustain independent employment. Such small businesses often begin as projects of passion, before finding success or securing funding from the government or corporate sponsors. By contrast, Campbell (2013) highlights a growing division in generational creative labour and employment, distinguished by established and emerging creative practices. These are important factors to consider when devising policy that is attentive to the needs of youth participation so that they may negotiate their way out of bedroom/basement economies. Subcultural creative labourers and entrepreneurs also become more attractive and appealing cultural agents when they collaborate with the state via legitimised cultural work—their business acuity sanitises or softens much of that which could appear confrontational, subversive or controversial in the eyes of the state as they operate between public and private creative industries (Moore & Gibson 2013).

2.2 From Impresario to Cross-Cultural Hip-Hop Intermediary

This thesis identifies one figure fluent in navigations of public and private cultural and creative industries as the cultural intermediary. This figure has a history in the cultural industries and their role has been conceptualised in a number of ways as agents of cultural exchange and entrepreneurship. The impresario is one way this figure has been examined, from its theatrical origins to the multifaceted character operating as curator, producer, promoter and talent manager in Hollywood. The impresario has often helped shape public image and opinion by designing attractions between performers and audiences (Rojek 2001) and the accessing and mobilisation of financial and human capital among other resources. This figure also appears later as a type of cultural entrepreneur often associated with a Schumpeterian 'creative destruction' by devising new ways of tending to gaps in the cultural economy by combining social objectives with cultural and creative work (Naudin 2018). These cultural entrepreneurs are agents of cultural change, proficient in organising cultural, financial, social and human resources as tastemakers and gatekeepers (Rae 2007; Scott 2012).

Other cultural intermediaries in the music industry have appeared as venue operators, record label producers, and artists and repertoire developers, proficient in connecting culture and business via an entrepreneurial acuity (Fairchild 2014). A major theorisation is also provided by Bourdieu (1984, 1993). His cultural intermediary appears in a number of creative roles in which they wield their

knowledge of the field, tastes and 'cultural capitals' to help legitimise cultural products and services (Bourdieu 1984; Maguire & Matthews 2012, 2014). Contemporary research has advanced such roles to engage with current manifestations into a number of other flows of consumption such as intellectuals and art experts (Hesmondhalgh 2006) or anime scanlators (Lee 2012). However, few studies examine how cultural intermediaries operate between *sub*cultural and popular audiences, between cultural value and creative economies, between cities and nations and across transnational networks (Lee 2012).

2.2.1 Understanding Cultural Intermediaries

Bourdieu's (1984, 1993) notion of the cultural intermediary is one way the present thesis can conceptualise the cultural agents it examines, although it will require some transposition to deal with contemporary determinants that enable their contemporary local-global role. Bourdieu's (1984) original conceptualisation positioned cultural intermediaries within their respective fields as 'merchants of need' who work through the creation of new tastes. They are involved in practices of 'sales, marketing, advertising, public relations, fashion, decoration and so forth' and are especially talented in cultural production and organisation (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 359). They are typically cited as producers of cultural programmes, on television and radio, or as social commentators or critics of quality newspapers and magazines. Felix Huang (explored in Chapter 4) runs a social enterprise to curate cultural programmes and help structure international tastes through his international event, Radikal Forze Anniversary. These cultural intermediaries parlay their work as integral parts of creative economies where their self-imbued practice, which draws on their cultural dispositions, revolves around the consumption and development of new tastes in niche or mass audiences (Maguire & Matthews 2014).

Intermediaries function to construct value, denoting what and, by association, who 'is legitimate, desirable and worthy' (Mcguire & Matthews 2012) by developing new means of framing cultural products and advocating receptiveness towards new cultural influences. In Fairchild's (2014) study, these endeavours require a professional entrepreneurial habitus. Such communicative and framing functions for new cultural goods and services are facilitated by a reflexive process where intermediaries draw on their upbringing and experiences (habitus), contributing to an aesthetic taste and social accomplishment, learned dispositions as consumers, and new devices of professionalism to assist their practices. Similarly, Maguire and Matthews (2012, p. 5) describe cultural intermediary abilities to create influence as varying by degree of 'professional authority' flaunted in 'new modes of corporate professionalization'. By negotiating symbols of their field, they contribute to the 'wider reproduction of legitimacy' in a number of industries (Maguire & Matthews 2012, p. 8). Lee (2012, p. 163) argues that these traditional intermediaries are bound by their desire to accumulate cultural

and symbolic capitals in local industries 'such as recognition and reputation', while also being 'bound by commercial imperatives'. Lee (2012) alternatively positions new cultural intermediaries as dissociating from the market economy in more symbolically driven ventures.

2.2.2 Elevating Cross-Cultural Intermediaries

Bourdieu (1984, 1993) developed the concept of intermediaries only in relation to national contexts. However, it has since been developed for international scenes. Lee (2012) lifts Bourdieu's work out of the confines of a local and domestic scale, citing digital technologies and internet communications in enabling increasing flows of international production and consumption. This approach notes the previous limitations of working within national market economies 'guarded by, high-level investment, employment of professional knowledge and skills, and tight ownership control over the content via copyright enforcement' (Lee 2012, p. 135). Now, the capacities to develop, produce and circulate content are more globally accessible and disposable. Digital media has reorganised the focus of business, socio-cultural media representation, communications and local-global participation—and this applies to subcultures (Lee 2012).

As this thesis similarly explores a contemporary subcultural phenomenon across the Asia-Pacific, it will adopt such a contemporary approach to the cultural intermediary. Despite the debate around the growing inclusiveness of the term as highlighted by Maguire and Matthews (2012), the cultural intermediary examined in this thesis requires such a reflexive definition to look at increasingly complex cross-cultural practices between nations, cultural groups, economies and governments. Therefore, 'cross-cultural intermediary' is a term that can be used to highlight a role important to contemporary cultural and creative industries, that may continue to appear and may find itself at a crossroads where the lines may again become blurry as to who these intermediaries are as technology continues to connect our world and alter our local-global abilities.

2.2.3 Cultural Capital and the Intermediary

In this thesis, the navigation between scenes by cross-cultural intermediaries occurs most concretely through participation between nations through media, communications and budget travel. Another way this thesis can understand the impact on media production and consumption is through an examination of the flows established and regulated by highly active, prominent and mobile subcultural public figures. They are experienced early identifiers and their longstanding participation has endowed them with skills; familiarity with subcultural symbols; professional and social networks; and the necessary reputation to engage communities, commercial enterprises and governments. Their unique position is differentiated from common consumers and producers of culture and content by their participation in an alternative subcultural economy where their practices engage an incredible

number of moving parts, from local communities to regional-global networks of exchanging flows of information, products, services, human resources and economic capital. Katsu Ishikawa's local-global practice set up via his conglomerate IAM co., ltd. consists of a range of initiatives that intersect with these networks of flows via productions, collaborations, mediations and the movement of people around the world (e.g., via the promotion street-wear aesthetics or in educational exchanges) (see Chapter 6).

The value of intermediary practices and influence can be analysed with the help of other aspects of cultural theory posited by Bourdieu (1984, 1986) who explores the links between taste and social structure. While Bourdieu's concepts are valuable tools of analysis, this thesis does not attempt to make a contribution to field theory. Rather, it makes use of applicable notions to explain subcultural phenomena. Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) work on field theory is useful in understanding how subcultural agents participate within a social space he terms fields of 'cultural production'. Participation in a field is informed by a tacit recognition of, and willingness to ascribe to, the rules, value systems and stakes associated with particular areas of interest (e.g., art, music, theatre or subcultural art making). It is via this recognition that individuals draw on their judgements of taste informed by a complex relationship between cultural practice, accumulated educational experiences and social factors attained via familiarity with social structure and parent culture. This is denoted as the 'habitus' which structures one's social reality through perceptions, dispositions and sensibilities arising from family upbringing, schooling and childhood community.

This individual socialisation also develops a type of knowledge that denotes social status known as 'cultural capital'. As such, it is a key marker of social distinction. Such a theory also finds value in the idea of social connectivity and individual networks—the status and merit of who you know—which are symbolically transformed into 'social capital'. Social capital also implies an ability to continue to accumulate more cultural capital. As a result, these banks of alternative capital also demonstrate how symbolic power is not necessarily tied to the ownership or acquisition of economic capital alone, but more abstractly intertwined in one's social sphere and taste judgements.

Commenting on Bourdieu, Maguire and Matthews (2012; 2014, pp. 15–16) discuss how these distinguishing capitals also lead to social stratification even when some taste judgements may be acquired by others from other walks of life. They reference knowledge that is tacitly acquired through a socialised education of taste, such as 'views of modern art', which may be acquired by participants in other social classes. However, such individuals differ in the other various 'areas of everyday life' that confer cultural capital (e.g., their clothing, furniture and food choices). Regardless, something is to be said of how notions of 'good taste' are developed and acquired, especially as, for the most part, they are theorised as belonging to a dominant social group who legitimise other's similar taste

judgements. This can unify and separate people through their associations with established normalities. Therefore, tastes are also 'stratified in legitimacy relative to the dominant group's "good" taste' (Maguire & Matthews 2014, p. 16). Traditional uses of Bourdieu's theory can appear reductionist in their treatment of subculture, especially subcultures born from marginality or of low cultural capital, whose members often rebel and subvert such distinctions of dominant class cultural capital. This thesis requires a more subculturally aligned perspective to explore alternative lifestyles which do not intersect with the mainstream and, instead, structure their own systems of values, social hierarchies and cultural production.

Moreover, this thesis finds some similarities with Bourdieu's (1984) articulation of the cultural intermediary role, at least in what he described in terms of social-class (i.e., belonging to the new petit bourgeoisie). All but one of the intermediaries investigated in this thesis share affluent backgrounds. They have significant social mobility and, therefore, time and exposure to tastes and international contexts. This helps them develop their cultural capital and comprehension of the world. While this thesis finds similarities with Bourdieu's work, it also argues that cultural capital is obtainable from participation within positive, educational and motivating Hip-hop subcultures.

2.2.4 Subcultural Capital: Inverting Systems of Cultural Value

Bourdieu (1984) argued that individuals as cultural consumers vied for visibility through distinction—a reflexive and often passive dialectical expression. This theory of consumption is useful in contextualising class relations and cultural stratification. However, his approach in a number of ways conceptualises legitimate culture through a restrictive understanding of class power and legitimised culture. By comparison, subcultural individuals and communities alike are regularly subverting, resisting and defining new cultural practices that exist outside of mainstream cultural capital configurations. One example is apparent in countercultures and subcultures who deny the value of what Bourdieu's cultural capital represents. Instead, they reorient associations of 'legitimate culture' towards subaltern cultural practices and expressions of cultural histories, social ethics and in new processes of cultural consumption. Subcultures born out of socio-economic and cultural marginalisation, like Hip-hop, are especially interesting in the way they can be interpreted through Bourdieu's work due to such restrictive notions of cultural production and taste. Bourdieu may have argued that Hip-hop would ostensibly be regarded as a practice of low cultural capital. However, to deal with the complexity of subcultural social relations, cultural production, consumption and exchange, some augmentation of his theory is necessary.

Sarah Thornton (1997, p. 202) offers a compatible approach in her subcultural work, finding value in Bourdieu's schema as it 'moves away from rigidly vertical models of social structure' and instead

‘locates social groups in a highly complex multi-dimensional space rather than on a linear scale or ladder’. Thornton embraces the Bourdieusian tradition, while noting the limitations of the cultural theory in engaging with cultural groups operating on the fringe who reject mainstream cultural norms and systems of value. To approach new sociological dimensions of Bourdieu’s structural theory, Thornton (1997, p. 203) introduces the idea of an additional stratification of capital relating to subcultural practices, identity and socialisation unique to such groups—subcultural capital. This type of distinction can be both ‘embodied and objectified’ in ways similar to how Bourdieu’s cultural capital is made visible. Her definition suggests:

> Just as books and paintings display cultural capital in the family home, so subcultural capital is objectified in the form of fashionable haircuts and carefully assembled record collections…Just as cultural capital is personified in ‘good’ manners and urbane conversation, so subcultural capital is embodied in the form of being ‘in the know’, using (but not over-using) current slang and looking as if you were born to perform. (Thornton 1997, p. 203)

Her critical distinction between Bourdieu’s cultural capitals also notes his disregard of the importance of the media and its effect on socialisation in his analysis. As such, in an economy of subcultural capital, media consumption not only appears as ‘another symbolic good or marker of distinction’, but is also understood as a ‘network crucial to the definition and distribution of cultural knowledge’ (Thornton 1997, p. 203). In lieu of the alternative social structures within subcultures, subcultural capital is still transformable into economic capital. However, its alternative logic liberates it from the class boundaries relative to Bourdieu’s cultural capital. Such subcultural applications are very useful in analysing vastly different cultural practices to those which Bourdieu explored. This subcultural application offers more suitable ways to delineate value to the cultural practices of the case studies explored in this study, while also contextualising the importance of DIY media[7] in the circulation of cultural norms and expressions of taste.

2.2.5 Hip-Hop Cosmopolitan Capital and Enabling Intercultural Exchanges

The cross-cultural intermediary working between subcultures must also be able to engage with a world connected and disconnected to navigate language and cultural barriers that hinder intercultural dialogues between the developed and developing world. The necessary international orientation can be understood as ‘cosmopolitan’, alleviating tensions of difference tied to group membership within communities, nations or regions by contrasting such localities with a consciousness of one’s context as a citizen of the world (Habermas 1998; Appadurai 1996; Appiah 2006). Habermas (1998) articulates institutional cosmopolitanism as tied to international laws that help structure and create

[7] DIY traditionally refers to ‘do-it-yourself’ processes. Subcultures often created their own media out of whatever means they had access to, for example, drawing and writing up magazines by hand and then photocopying them for distribution.

political and, subsequently, social consensus around human rights. The institutional approach advocated by Habermas is at times overly procedural. As Kurasawa (2002) points out, his position 'overshadows the issues of forging transnational solidaristic relations between individuals and groups', and while this 'cross-civilizational…egalitarian public discourse' is also structurally important, there is something more social that is disregarded in his systemic and legalistic political approach.

The present thesis is, by its very nature, concerned with something more socio-cultural that applies to the growing transnationalisation of cultural communications and mobility. This position often falls under what theorists discuss as normative cultural cosmopolitanism, which at times is argued to be elusive and lacking an understanding of the political or ethical factors that make up the totality of its theoretical whole (Gilbert & Lo 2009). Kurasawa (2002) argues that the academic literature on cosmopolitanism is skewed towards such ethical and structural directions. Moreover, he distinguishes normative cosmopolitanism as a process where:

> all individuals understand themselves first and foremost as universal subjects, citizens of the world, and members of the great human family. The well-being of faraway strangers should be no less of a concern than that of our immediate neighbours, for we are all, as free and equal individuals, participants in a universal political culture that entitles us to the same rights and protections regardless of our specific circumstances or identities. (Kurasawa 2002, pp. 236–237)

Kurasawa also discusses the problematic ethical underpinning that complicates belonging via the 'shedding away of national ties', where 'to be at home everywhere also means to belong nowhere' obfuscating identity and real relations to place (2002, p. 237). Socio-cultural theorists Arjun Appadurai (1996) and Jonathon Friedman (1994) examine cosmopolitanism through transnational research on hybridising identities and travelling cultural groups. These cosmopolitanisms and cosmopolitan encounters are hinged on intercultural communication and exposure.

Nevertheless, the degree to which the world is orienting itself to embrace the intercultural conditions that define contemporary globalisation (culturally, technologically, politically and economically) are constantly changing. Cosmopolitan competencies are afforded to many born to the privileged in capitalist society and can be understood by way of conceptualising such as an aspect of cultural capital. Drawing on Bourdieu's (1986) idea of cultural capital, Ghassan Hage (1998) discusses how it is acquired from cultural exchanges and education. Cosmopolitan capital, he argues, is significantly more accessible to an advantaged class in society—thereby linking the notion to the global mobility and class membership to the upper and middle classes of Australia. Traditionally, cosmopolitan capital was afforded to factions of international travellers who developed a 'class of consciousness of frequent travellers' (Calhoun as cited in Kurasawa 2002).

More contemporarily, cosmopolitan capital can produce new possibilities for participants within contemporary subcultures, that is, people who may traditionally have had less accessibility to formal institutions or who lack formal skills are now able to acquire new cultural and subcultural knowledge from engaging with different structures. Alternative flows of media globalisation, for example, now provide the tethered and nation-bound with new ways to be cosmopolitan, especially in global cities that celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity. Other examples of intercultural exchanges that also enhance individual cosmopolitan competencies can be linked with the growing international expatriate labour force as necessitated by corporate globalisation, third culture families and diaspora who fragment and augment their cultural identities through new practices of transnational belonging (Casmir 1978; Casmir & Asuncion-Lande 1989).

In accordance with this global development, this thesis also explores new ways in which this capital is obtained through culturally oriented youth travel which is enabled by supporting subcultural networks and contemporary budget travel—an original application. Hip-hop, for example, transfers knowledge as it is in part motivated by intercultural exchanges (both physically and online). This international community-based subculture celebrates a multicultural ethic (Chang 2005) that often overrides cultural dissimilarity, while providing a necessary system of cultural practices for individuals to acquire such cosmopolitan experiences from their locality (i.e., via expression, participation, media and communications) (Fogarty 2012)—although the confrontations within domesticity are almost always complicated by nationalism, a tendency that stifles most idealistic cosmopolitanisms (Kurasawa 2002). In many ways, Hip-hop is a pathway to establish cosmopolitan capital, as it is driven by local-global cultural exchanges and a multicultural awareness fostered by a global Hip-hop system of ideals, international competitions and events that celebrate this international community ethic.

Hippie subcultures from the 1950s through to the late 1970s similarly found countercultural cosmopolitan capital via pilgrimages through Asia, Turkey and Europe commonly referred to as the 'Hippie Trail'. These were often romanticised and spiritualised trips through the Asia-Pacific, where identifiers found an advantage in being cosmopolitan in a type of compensatory effort for belonging to colonial nations. This cross-cultural experience was an important marker of cosmopolitan travel motivated by countercultural ideas and shifts in Western cultural attitudes following periods of decolonisation (Gemie 2017). Since the 1970s, budget travel has also played a significant role in enabling such subcultural and countercultural youth mobility (Sobocinska 2014). Unlike the older form of cosmopolitan travel through a developing Asia, contemporary Hip-hop travel and networks exist between global cities in the region and are no longer places where this type of bourgeois Western cultural tourism transpires. Instead, their participation in the global economy has made modern Asia a place of regional significance for subcultural travellers. Therefore, cosmopolitanism and

cosmopolitan capital are an essential part of theorising the local-global mobility, identity, belonging and international fluencies of cross-cultural intermediaries and their participation between cultures.

2.3 Alternative Globalisations and Transversal Exchanges

Contemporary music subcultures also have a history of travelling across continents and nations. This has been researched in a number of historical contexts, for example, post-war Britain and the Caribbean Ska and Rasta subculture's refraction into the United Kingdom (UK) (Hebdige 1975b). Traditionally, subcultures, like many other cultural phenomena absorbed by pop culture, are adapted and co-opted into a mainstream media and discourse (Clarke 1975b). At times, this has changed subcultural practices or led to a subversion of mainstream media practices. Popular culture has also traditionally been seen as cultivated and disseminated by powerful economic centres in the world, for example, the Americanisation of cinema through Hollywood (Maisuwong 2012) or food via McDonalds (Ritzer 1993). Early globalisation theorists focussed closely on the enabling powerful Western nations that engaged in processes of cultural, media and economic imperialism (Tomlinson 1999). However, the effects of cultural imperialism were later placed into tension in a dialectic relationship between their homogenising and heterogenising forces (Banerjee 1998; Robertson 2012). While these theories present useful understandings of how subculture, people and finances have moved around the world, these traditional discourses are often overly reductionist in their approach, favouring a discourse that focuses too narrowly on powerful Western centres.

By contrast, more recent readings of globalisation acknowledge the agency of local cultures in resisting or augmenting powerful global flows. Mexico, Brazil and Venezuela have grown to dominate the 'intra-Latin American trade in film, television and music' (Jan 2009, p. 69) and, similarly, Hong Kong and Japan have dominated pop culture in the Asian region (Iwabuchi 2002). These augmented flows have further been termed localisations, or glocalisations (Robertson 1992, 2012), to denote hybridised cultural forms that are subject to influence from universalistic and particularistic forces absorbed through forms of media, culture, education and aesthetics. Again, such positions often look closely at the flows of media, communications, capital and cultural goods across the globe, placing nations like the US at the centre of the modernising world. These Western-focussed perspectives were later challenged and augmented by intercultural dialogues around alternative globalising flows from the East (Ko 2004; Iwabuchi 2002, 2004).

Iwabuchi discusses popular cultural flows from Asia as stemming from alternative centres of globalisation, referencing Tokyo as an example. Tokyo has not only been an integral exporter of electronics via large corporations like Sony, but is regionally significant in the dissemination of aesthetics (through fashion) and cultural texts across the East Asian region in the form of television

dramas and music (Iwabuchi 2002, 2004). Other theorists similarly track the movement of popular music, art and pop culture exports across the globe from alternative centres of contemporary globalisation (Ko 2004; Kim 2013).The Hallyu Movement or Korean Wave has attracted significant scholarly attention (Huat & Iwabuchi 2008; Kim 2013), but there have been few studies of alternative, bottom-up subcultural globalisation. Moreover, most research in these disciplines examines restructuring or dismantling theories of imperialism from a top-down perspective (e.g., through flows of capital set up by trade agreements or sustained by corporate or governmental connections), rather than the type of multidirectional globalisation that moves between people (i.e., the agents of cultural change that this thesis articulates). To understand this phenomena, we need to rethink globalisation and reconceptualise how a cultural element is regulated by the mobility and activities of cross-cultural intermediaries.

Subcultures like Hip-hop reflect the above tensions in being polarised as a globalisation from the West or as a localisation or alternative globalisation, for example, the global popularity and export of J-Rap or Japanese Hip-hop (Condry 2006). As previously mentioned, this thesis examines something beyond the imperial or alternative and repositions globalisation as transversal. What is interesting about transversal globalisations, and what this thesis examines in more detail, is how these nuances are globalised via cross-cultural intermediaries who are both helpful in extending Hip-hop's nuances locally, but also play an instrumental role in connecting local communities to a global network of Hip-hop participants, businesses, flows of information and media in a multidirectional process of globalisation.

This thesis argues that these multidirectional flows help reconcile tensions with local-global traditional mainstream media which has been criticised as misunderstanding and misrepresenting subcultural and cultural realities (Ang 2017; Soutphommasane 2014a; Clarke 1975a; Lewis 2002). By contrast, new internet-based media platforms have shifted contemporary media relations, enhancing the visibility of subcultures and their media products (DIY and professionally curated), intertwining audiences with global flows of culture, subculture and cultural goods (Lee 2012; Kim 2013). While some argue that social media can also be limiting in the exposure to diversity via social media filter bubbles or narrow-casted content (Pariser 2011), new intercultural exchanges and exposure have become more possible than ever, with technology-dependent youth finding ways to integrate global information into migration and adaptation processes, aiding in cultural competencies across borders, redefining global identity and discourses of ethnicity (Callahan et al. 2018). Such uses are oriented towards more cosmopolitan understandings of society (Hull & Stornaiuolo 2014) and are possibly applicable to subcultures. This type of practice also establishes more hybridised identities and cultures, rather than essentialising multiculturalism, in a process of recreating cosmopolitan ideals across social reality. This process is comparable to what Hage (1998, p. 133) discusses as the

function of a cosmopolitan multicultural fantasy which informs, regulates and influences identities, cultural perception and interaction within the 'multicultural real'. Therefore, this thesis considers the power of digital subcultural media practices among intermediaries and general audiences, as well as their globalising role and influence in regulating local-global flows of subculture, facilitating intercultural exchanges, managing creative networks and creating intercultural experiences necessary for the development of cosmopolitan attitudes.

Therefore, the final contribution of this thesis is to regional globalisation studies by way of the articulation of an Asia-Pacific scene. This scene is connected by a network of regional transnational participation and transversal globalisations in which cross-cultural intermediaries play a vital enabling role. This is demonstrated through the analysis of evidence about how such intercultural encounters are facilitated by cross-cultural figures and global flows of media, communications, people and economic capital.

Chapter 3: Bangkok: Foreign Influences and Cultural Entrepreneurship

Zac Alcampo, game designer and member of the international Hip-hop street-dance community, reminisces about his early experiences as a dancer in Canada in the early 2000s: 'you could learn more from ten seconds of playing with someone than ten years of conversation and what is street-dance but playing?' (Alcampo, Z. interview, 2015). Situating himself in Bangkok's busy urban city centre, polluted by the fumes and humming of thousands of car engines, Zac meets a group of welcoming friends at one of the city's high-end commercial spaces. This is their arena for free expression. He recalls the discomfort he felt from first encountering a 'siloed' community, underdeveloped and disconnected, on his arrival in Bangkok in 2012: '[people here] stick together and seldom mix. But for me, that's something you can break out of through the expression of some kind of art' (Alcampo, Z. interview, 2015). Further downtown, Rory Kirkham traverses the nightclub scene where he connects with a local 'DJ subculture'. The hidden corners of Bangkok's busy nightlife is his playground and business. Despite moving between countries for music tours, Rory also makes time for local Thai Hip-hop youth like young Guru, from Thug Mansion Records 303, contributing to his event, Hood Paradise. Rory describes his role as a connector of scenes 'to market their stuff for them and be part of it and share that' with new audiences (Kirkham, R. interview, 2015).

Like many localised cultural forms, Thai Hip-hop has emerged through a process of pop cultural globalisation and local appropriation. Hip-hop's grassroots in Bangkok have been complicated by the power of the music industry in Asia in structuring popular tastes and perceptions via an elaborate system of regionally connected mainstream media. While Thailand resisted Western colonisation, the nation has experienced a number of other waves of Western and East Asian culture, from various streams of migration, corporate globalisation and international tourism. Today, Bangkok has significant agency in the global economy, but relies heavily on these transient visitors and new residents.

This chapter examines two cross-cultural intermediaries whose work is determined by local specificities in Bangkok and who play an important role in connecting the city and its subcultural groups to networks of transversal exchange across the globe and Asia-Pacific. They are just two examples of how this region is connected by figures who facilitate the movement of culture across borders. As will be shown, cross-cultural intermediaries can be theorised in a number of ways depending on the focus of their activities, and this chapter shows that they may be understood as cultural entrepreneurs. Cultural entrepreneurship is important in facilitating local Hip-hop and its connection globally through cultural and creative industries and independent not-for-profit work. In

Bangkok, this type of entrepreneurship is important in helping cultural agents procure pathways for cultural and creative work and its visibility in the global sphere.

The concept of entrepreneurship is strongly associated with business discourses. A classical point of reference is the work of Schumpeter (1912, 1976), who argued that through exploiting and innovating market conditions, entrepreneurs bring about what he termed creative destruction, shifting a system of logic or way of doing things. More recently, the concept has been adapted to other contexts. There has been a wealth of discussion on cultural entrepreneurship (Banks 2006; Klamer 2011; Moore & Gibson 2013; Naudin 2018). The concept is best defined by Naudin (2018) who examines a number of its interpretations and contexts. She argues these individuals are often creators of cultural, symbolic and economic value who appropriate ideas from entrepreneurship, for example, autonomy. This market autonomy is also compatible with the delivery of ethical, artistic and creative objectives that are aligned with the needs of the cultural sector 'at a grassroots level' (Naudin 2018, p. 127). This proactive cultural work can often be seen tending to gaps in markets or state support.

Recently, Scott (2012) and Moore and Gibson (2013) have introduced a Bourdieusian angle on the concept which is particularly useful in this thesis. Moore and Gibson (2013, p. 37) describe cultural entrepreneurs as figures who 'compete as individuals, movements and generations' who also 'amass and deploy capital' in traditional industrial capitalist entrepreneurial activities and also more abstractly through expressions of their habitus and deployment and accumulation of cultural capital. As outlined in Chapter 2, cultural capital includes a range of abstract resources—such as style, contacts, education, risk taking or marketing savviness—and has become common in contemporary scholarship, notably that of Bourdieu (1984) and in Thornton's (1996, 1997) subcultural extension of the concept. While Bourdieu did not use the concept of the entrepreneur, other scholars have created the path for such extensions. In this way, this thesis finds a useful application of cultural capital in the Bourdieusian sense to the concept of the cultural entrepreneur.

This act of deploying economic and cultural capital in creating new ventures can also generate further cultural or economic capital for cultural entrepreneurs. Such a process is reflected in practices of market dependence or practiced autonomy from the market (such as 'art for art's sake'), which can help them procure real autonomy from the success in a bourgeois marketplace 'where consumers seek the distinction of categories like "avant-garde", "alternative", "underground" or "indie" ' (Moore & Gibson 2013, p. 39). Such interplays between pandering to, and declaring independence from, market incentives creates new distinctions between cultural entrepreneurs in their practices and mobilisations of capital.

In the following discussion, the concept of the cultural entrepreneur is used in line with Naudin's (2018) definition and the aforementioned Bourdieusian extension. The varying motivations for work that might be understood through these lenses are also taken into consideration.

In this chapter, we see acts of cultural entrepreneurship that highlight two types of work—the communitarian and commercial—in the space between Hip-hop's grassroots community projects and commercial music industries in Bangkok. Fauchart and Gruber (2011) discuss the communitarian entrepreneur as drawing on an experience of their belonging in a process of seeking to improve part of their community. This figure is motivated by a value of reciprocal support and the solidarity that contains and develops interpersonal bonds (Fauchart & Gruber 2011)—commonly seen in not-for-profit work. This can also lead to multidirectional flows of validation, appreciation and innovation between communitarian endeavours and their audiences by way of incorporating them into the development process (Shepherd & Patzelt 2017). By contrast, commercialists find an economic motive that can at times sacrifice their creative autonomy in favour of greater returns—a process increasingly familiar to market actors in cultural and creative industries. But these are not mutually exclusive and can be understood as two ends of a spectrum where different configurations of competing motives are able to overlap in different cultural entrepreneurial contexts and projects.

In contrast to an academic tendency to confine cultural entrepreneurship to a domestic context, this thesis argues that there are contemporary examples of how these practices are more internationally oriented than once thought. For example, Zukin (2011, p. 161) argues that cities develop new economic, cultural and symbolic value through the efforts of local entrepreneurs who are involved in establishing an edifice of 'distinct and authentic sense[s] of place'. Indeed, cultural entrepreneurship has strong relations to place, but what is more important is its augmentation in the face of the growing capacities for content mobilisation, transnational business relations and global networking made possible by social media.

It should be noted that the cultural entrepreneur is not always synonymous with the cross-cultural intermediary. While various cross-cultural intermediaries draw on similar skill sets and market know-how exhibited by cultural entrepreneurs, not all of these entrepreneurs are able to assume such internationally spanning roles and are bound by their national contexts. The types of cultural entrepreneurship that involve cross-cultural intermediation are about facilitating and regulating local-global cultural and economic exchanges. In this way, the cultural entrepreneur that takes this initiative is only one of many possible roles that connect to cross-cultural intermediation. In exploring these notions, this chapter will consider how cultural entrepreneurs work in a local-global capacity to enhance local and Asia-Pacific Hip-hop.

This is worked out in this chapter through the examples of 1) Zac Alacampo, a Filipino-Canadian expatriate and internationally renowned dancer, who has established a local-global community group who share knowledge, media and community support in real life and via a corresponding social media space, and 2) Rory Roketto, a Canadian national living in Bangkok as an event manager, tour promoter, music importer and DJ, who has ties to the growing underground and commercial-cultural and creative industries by way of Hip-hop and other popular music forms. They demonstrate an interesting influence on the local scenes that, at times, mirrors wider economic/cultural imperialism, even in its resistance to the imposition of monocultures and grassroots missions. However, their practices also highlight locally specific interclass tensions in Thailand and a growing desire to be globally connected.

3.1 Background: Thai Subcultures

The status of subcultures in Thailand has been strongly affected by the political history of censorship and civil unrest in Bangkok. These socio-political determinants are important in understanding and contextualising this chapter's cultural entrepreneurs, their practices and their intersection with local and international communications, capitalism, media and globally mobile communities.

Early classical and traditional music in Thailand drew influences from various Southeast Asian cultures and northern Thailand's Isan music (Mitchell 2009). Music in Bangkok in the last half century emerged from popular cultural-folk music, like *Luuk Thung*, and encounters with Western and Asian contemporary, European classical and Afro-American music. By the 1960s, popular rock and other localised Asian-inspired musical forms (like String music, synthesised from cultural exchanges with US soldiers in Vietnam) emerged in mainstream culture. However, Thailand's cultural arts policy forced many songwriters away from alternative styles towards the mainstream state-approved genre of *Luuk Thung* as a means to nationalise Thai music and resist Western imperialism (Mitchell 2009)—a tactic similarly deployed by Mao in the PRC. This was due to the loss of state control evident in Bangkok's political brushes with communism and tensions between left-wing student activism and the anti-communist dictatorship.

Subcultures in Bangkok first emerge from the mobilisation of working-class socialists in resisting Thailand's authoritarian military governance. Born out of this period of conflict, the working-class subculture and music style *Phleng Phuea Chiwit* ('Songs for Life'), which hybridised traditional Thai folk and Western popular music (including US anti-war musicians such as Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger (Eamsa-ard 2006)), were adopted as songs of protest among students within the pro-democracy movement of the 1970s. Tensions erupted into the 1973 protest which resulted in the Thammasat University military massacre (Ettinger 2007).

How does alternative music find its way into Bangkok? In the 1980s, contemporary global music forms and their associated subcultures, such as Punk and Hip-hop, surfaced within commercial music media. Global capitalism softened the state's reception to similar subversive music practices as the spread of popular flows occurred most prominently through the movement of powerful international corporations into Thailand, including music labels such as Sony BGM and media companies like STARTV (bringing Channel V and MTV to Southeast Asia). This narrative demonstrates the Thai music and media economy modernising to standards of powerful centres of globalisation, notably America and Japan, the result of which has been a movement to draw the general populous towards more pre-packaged regional Asian pop industries that resonate with the state's vision of order and obedience.

This brief history highlights the role of the government in national censorship and capitalist globalisation. Due to a long history of official opposition to socialist movements, transnational corporations, Western tourism and global media have become embedded into Bangkok's culture and economy. Despite Bangkok's avid consumption of East Asian and Western music and pop culture, its export of cultural and creative industries have been far more inconspicuous when compared with other global cities in the Asia-Pacific (United Nations 2015). In light of these developmental limitations on cultural production in the city, this chapter highlights global music subcultural traditions that have been taken up by young people and thrived both within and outside of the mainstream in Bangkok. It asks, how have foreign cultural entrepreneurs enabled the youth in Bangkok to play out contradictions in their parent cultural conditions via Hip-hop in Thailand's once censored, class-based, capitalist society? The chapter demonstrates how Zac and Rory wield foreign cultural capital in shaping both commercial and grassroots Hip-hop in the city and across the Asia-Pacific region while the state maintains its distance.

3.2 Introducing Foreign Cosmopolitan Capital

The two case studies in this chapter highlight a cosmopolitan outlook that is necessary for a transnational approach in connecting people, working between businesses and mobilising global networks. This type of global consciousness is driven by competencies acquired from various intercultural exchanges that contribute to the development of what might be understood as a cosmopolitan habitus. These competencies are also tools linked with cultural capital. They denote socio-cultural experience, intercultural skill and often a degree of affluence that enables international travel (Hage 1998). Both Rory and Zac were raised in Canada, where they experienced everyday multiculturalism alongside a number of emerging and evolving subcultures, before relocating to

Thailand.[8] Their class position and its relevance in the acquisition of intercultural competencies can be understood through the introductions below.

3.2.1 Introducing Zac Alcampo

In 2015, I was invited to a regular Hip-hop street-dance event by Zac Alacampo, a Canadian with Filipino heritage who had moved to Thailand to work for an IT start-up focussing on game design. We had met in a small Hip-hop bar in Royal City Avenue, The Beat Lounge, where he playfully moved across in a number of dance styles, even transitioning into Salsa for a brief moment. He spoke with excitement in all of our conversations and showcased the skill of an excellent communicator. Upon hearing that I was also was a dancer who participated in this culture, Zac quickly extended an invitation to his community meet-up, WeGotTheSpot. Over the next few weeks I would frequent this community hang out, occasionally with Rory, to familiarise myself with the community group and see how this cultural space was structured and run and who it attracted. What I found a diversity of people who looked to Zac as a leader and conduit for the various styles and cultures scattered across the city.

Zac's settling in Bangkok has benefited from a number of exchanges with cultural diversity. Zac was shaped by exchanges with people from diverse ethnicities and immigration histories during his early life in Toronto, one of the 'world's most multicultural and urban centres' in which immigrant groups, as of 2006, made up '49.98% of the city's total population' (Siemiatycki 2011, p. 1214). Canada similarly acknowledges a colonial diversity as a nation from its global encounters with the French and British expeditions. Moreover, Zac's cultural hybridity as a second-generation Filipino-Canadian is also significant in enhancing his appreciation of cultural plurality and hybridity. As will be shown, cultural entrepreneurship builds on this awareness of, and comfort with, cultural diversity.

In his adolescence, Zac turned to subcultures in search of new means of self-expression following the passing of his father. His first subcultural experiences were with the Canadian Rave scenes which fostered an early fascination with dance and music on his path towards Hip-hop as a 'more constructive' approach to self-development (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015). Hip-hop in Canada, like in the US, attracted a number of culturally and economically diverse youth to its creative practices, while also having a commercial appeal (Simard 2014). Zac's skills, learned through college, as an artist and designer, were important aspects of his early participation in Hip-hop due to how they aligned with graffiti and allowed him to create and exchange street art for economic and cultural

[8] The fact that both cross-cultural intermediaries in this chapter were from Canada was a coincidence. Their selection was based on their sizable contributions.

resources like status or reputation, shaping an early enterprising skillset useful to the cultural entrepreneur.

Zac's practice is usefully understood through the concept of cosmopolitan capital articulated by Hage (1998) and defined in the previous chapter, especially as a foreigner who is automatically provided certain distinctions from the general urban poor majority in Thailand. Despite his early experience of multiculturalism, Zac's intercultural competencies have also been derived from the associated petit-bourgeois privilege of international mobility, exemplified by his travels across Europe, the US and the Asia-Pacific for employment and on journeys of self-discovery. As a university-educated designer, Zac's employment in the global videogame industry played a noteworthy role in his global mobility. Additionally, his employment also awarded him compensation in the form of the requisite economic capital to pursue his personal travels and relocations. Therefore, Zac's cosmopolitan capital is partially hinged on his class position. As previously discussed, class was a marker that Hage (1998) identified as a determinant for one's local-global awareness and international socialisation and appears regularly in this chapter.

3.2.2 Introducing Rory Kirkham

During preliminary research in Singapore, I met Rory Kirkman, a b-boy and DJ from Vancouver, invited to participate in a global Breaking tournament and festival, the Radikal Forze Anniversary 2014. I got to know him over a few days while he danced as part of one of the main events and shared his life experiences at any opportunity. One important piece of information I learned from being part of this social circle were Rory's plans to give up his work in sales in Canada to move to Thailand to start a new chapter in his life in music. After moving to Bangkok in 2015, Rory created strong connections with local Hip-hop and underground electronic music subcultures out of which he has established a career in the music industry. I followed the early stages of Rory's career, going to events and catching up with him to talk about what his plans were into the future and what lessons he had learned from his past in Canada.

Rory's childhood travel and international engagement with Hip-hop subcultures are again examples of how class-related privileges play out in the development of cosmopolitan capital. However, they appear in the more traditional sense that Hage (1998) conceptualises (i.e., as connected to parent cultures). Unlike Zac, Rory attributes the majority of his intercultural literacy to his middle-class, Anglo-Canadian family for his educational access, financial security and international awareness. As in Hage's (1998) conceptualisation of cosmopolitan capital, childhood travel was a significant aspect of this type of cosmopolitan habitus-building. This has permitted Rory an understanding of the world that has provided him the requisite intercultural competency to relocate, carve out opportunity in new

cultural contexts and an ability to feel comfortable in many places around the Asia-Pacific, as required by his work.

Like Zac, Rory also found his way into Hip-hop through other youth subcultures. For example, Skate subcultures and their local figureheads, The Red Dragons, who 'were into Hip-Hop' and idolising these figureheads 'draws you into it…' (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015). This was also accompanied by a number of alternative subcultural music interests that paralleled his early identifications with Hip-hop—Punk, Grunge and Rock 'n' Roll. Rory's early life demonstrates an important appreciation for subcultural plurality and intercultural dynamics.

The above encounters with cultural diversity have created the cosmopolitan capital that he regularly deploys in his everyday life, considering cultural sensitivities in international contexts. This type of awareness is significant for his work in Bangkok as a music importer and DJ in developing business relationships and harnessing economic and socio-cultural attitudes of host cultures into successful promotional strategies. This intercultural practice provides an important foundation of his cross-cultural role in facilitating subcultural connections between culturally dissimilar groups and in establishing his own connections to host subcultures.

A key concept guiding Rory's practice is that of 'respect'. This concept has widespread currency in Hip-hop culture globally and he has adapted it to various cultural contexts in his travels. Respect is discussed as a means of civic engagement that assists in navigating cultural traditions and helping to establish social connections abroad:

> For me, one of the things with cultural awareness, just to show respect when I'm in another country, I always immediately learn to say hello, thank you and goodbye. If you can say hello, thank you and goodbye, people just appreciate that in any language, even if you say it all shitty and broken, you're trying.
>
> It's *my* job, because I'm living here. I can't expect them to cater to me, it needs to be the other way around, where I cater to the way things are … You can't expect them to do it your way, you have to do it their way. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

The above can be thought of as an expression of cosmopolitan capital and also provides a type of authority over others who are tethered to place and inexperienced in the wider world. This brings Rory a type of cultural distinction and enhances his ability to establish networks in varying domestic contexts outside of Thailand, for example, in Japan, where he lived, taught English and danced for two years. Like Zac, Rory's travels and international living across the Asia-Pacific make him adept with intercultural communication, which is essential for gaining access to subcultural spaces, like the various clubs owned or run by expats along Thong Lo, and participation among global cultural and creative industries via music agencies with branches in Thailand, like Six-Six Asia or Supermodified.

3.3 Foreign Cultural Entrepreneurship: Western Imperialism or International Capacity Building?

Both cross-cultural intermediaries in this chapter bring globally acquired cultural capital to Bangkok. They nuance local Thai Hip-hop through promotions, partnerships, event management and community engagement, connecting the local scene to a global network of cultural exchange. An introduction to these ventures and their local-global functions are tied to their status as foreigners, highlighting an interesting dynamic around the globalisation of culture from the West. This is important because of the sizeable role they play in diversifying and reorienting local subcultural engagement. In this way, Rory and Zac can appear in line with traditional theories of globalisation that position Hip-hop as a Western pop cultural globalisation. However, their cosmopolitan focus challenges traditional Western imperialism. What we see in both cases is a strategy that connects their practices with the development of local-global perceptions, access to subcultural flows of content and international connectivity, not only to and from the West, but, more importantly, across the Asia-Pacific region.

3.3.1 Disconnected Dance

After moving to Bangkok, Zac searched for local dance communities, but found the city scene dissociated and siloed. Various subcultural pockets were scattered around Bangkok (e.g., practice spots at Rama 4, at Central Bang Na, by the MBK BTS or along Khao San Road) and, for the most part, the inner city formalised a model of participation through private lessons at dance studios. While b-boys happily reclaimed the street, other Funkstyle disciplines found comfort in clean and modern studio spaces. The prioritising of commercial success over sustainable community programs also shifted the local emphasis from what is generally a community-based practice.

Such commercial foundations ironically sustain socio-economic divides in Thailand and discourage interclass and intercultural socialisation, complicating the understanding of the global Hip-hop discourse around community growth. As a result, Hip-hop dance in Bangkok has progressed at a slower rate than elsewhere. Hip-hop's emphasis on cultural exchanges in the form of knowledge, aesthetics and traditions (performative styles, philosophy, fashion, slang, etc.) relies on this community practice in its regulation, as well as in the continuation of reciprocal generational support that contributes to the growth of diverse cultural communities (Chang 2005). With few inclusive spaces in the inner city, Zac's extensive knowledge of Hip-hop culture and cosmopolitan outlook are necessitated in the cultivation of new experiences:

> I've been fortunate that they always get me to judge Locking jams and all-styles jams… But I judged one comp here and the level was just not good. And I was sitting there thinking

> ‘this is my fault’. You know what I mean? ... I’ve learnt from a lot of the OGs (older generation) and all that, and if I’ve been doing it for 10 plus years now, I should be putting some kind of knowledge out and shouldn’t be looking at them saying ‘fuck, what am I seeing?’ (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

Zac’s desire to intervene in Bangkok’s Hip-hop scenes might be seen in terms suggested by post-colonial critiques of Western capacity building abroad. Zac’s cultural and cosmopolitan capitals offer him a way to wield a type of power over locals common to other Western developmental work. Said (1978 as cited in Omar 2012) argues that it is through ‘a mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabularies, scholarships, imaginaries and doctrines’ that offers agents from the West a type of advantage. Zac offers useful external discourses to stimulate local community development, but against the background of the colonial history of the region, such interventions could also be seen as problematic. Sen (2004) argues that local cultures find strategic ways of creating their own systems and capabilities. They develop ‘human capital’ that allows them to act autonomously, not necessarily at odds with external globalising forces, but in a way that asserts their independence. As a Canadian, Zac brings elements of a Western development ethos to his subcultural projects, but in a much more subtle way. However, his work is cultural and much less threatening than the technocratic development commonly associated with Western development. Moreover, his work finds strength in diversifying flows from Thailand between global and regional neighbours, rather than solely back to centres of Western prominence.

Woo (2012, p. 659) examines cultural intermediaries in their transnational capacity by examining nerd-subcultures and argues that these intermediaries ‘are not simply economic agents but also culturally and socially situated actors motivated to do this work for its intrinsic reward’ and serve as gatekeepers and regulators of aesthetic standards. Similarly, cross-cultural intermediaries like Zac find alternative reward in the regulation of subcultural knowledge and codes via the transmission and mediation of traditions and aesthetic standards across and between cultures, nations and the globe. This local-global reorientation helps lift Bangkok’s fragmented Hip-hop identity into something unified from the ground to the globe:

> When any city gets to a certain level with street-dance, a certain flavour comes out… There’s so much talent here and they’re so hungry—there’s so much heart in these kids. All they need to do is get together and dance together more… You don’t climb the ladder alone. It’s so much slower alone. That’s what they need to do to put Bangkok on the map and give it a street-dance identity. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

Here, Zac is finding the ‘heart’ among Thai youth and connecting the local community to global networks to help them find their own voice in a global discourse of traditions and practices. This communitarian connection enhances local Hip-hop through encouraging local expression, but also

helps local participants reflect on their position in relation to local, regional and global dance community contexts.

3.3.2 Diversifying Local-Global Music

While settling in Bangkok, Rory established a circuit of DJ events and partnered with Finnish DJ Sir Walt, and together they created Late Night Bangkok (LNB). To accommodate local tastes, Rory diversified his repertoire to include performing contemporary dance music (House and Techno). This was an important turn that helped him establish new local partnerships with venue owners, production companies, promoters and music importing agents. By using social media platforms to promote his activities, the LNB collective brought Hip-hop to inner city bars in Bangkok via their Yo! BKK events. Outside of his commercial practice, Rory works with local Thai Hip-hop collective Thug Mansion 303 Records (TM303) as a resident DJ. These commercial and collaborative ventures are largely responsible for the development of a reputation among networks of local and international music industry agencies scattered across the Asia-Pacific region.

Rory's association with Asia-Pacific entertainment industry corporations Six-Six Asia and Supermodified have largely been enablers of his work as a performer and tour manager for artists throughout the region. His role requires him to utilise his social networks and cosmopolitan capitals to help work between and connect local (Thai) and global music markets in the Asia-Pacific, the US and Canada. Working for such large music industry agencies has made him aware of his role in structuring both mainstream and underground tastes through partnerships with venues, promoters, corporations and performers across the region.

What this demonstrates is an important entrepreneurial skillset necessary for navigating and networking between various music industry circles. Like Zac, Rory has found ways to fill gaps in Bangkok's Hip-hop culture among other music subcultures through a process of introducing and shaping new tastes in the Thai market. This is done by drawing on regional connections to bring emerging and established acts into Thailand, or on tour in Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and the PRC. Such a network has become critical for the cultural and economic success of their intercultural collaborations in sharing and exchanging professional artists and networks of support (e.g., promoters and venue managers) to help structure collaborative tours and events (as agents of the cultural economy and as audience members). His connections outside of the region are also significant in bringing global tastes to the Asia-Pacific such as Pomo, French Kiwi Juice and E.CALI.

This network of music industry professionals appears similar to traditional music entrepreneurs which have previously appeared as trend-spotters and connectors in the music industry. Frith and Horne (1987) suggest these figures are engaged by record labels, ad agencies and media businesses and

make use of a certain type of experiential field knowledge and business know-how to structure new tastes. Rory belongs to a contemporary iteration of this profession, making use of a unique regional mobility and physical connectivity made possible by budget travel and social media (see Section 3.5.3) alongside a business acuity learned through independent practices played out in the cultural and creative industries. What this exemplifies is the realised cultural value of these entrepreneurial initiatives across the Asia-Pacific region in producing both flows of cultural content and commercial success.

Both case studies fulfil the previously described criteria of the cultural entrepreneur. Zac and Rory are both active cultural workers who make use of an enterprising skillset to tend to gaps in Hip-hop in Bangkok. These projects are tied to both the production of local cultural value and are informed by a cultural capital derived from the knowledge of foreign markets and cultural practices. In line with Naudin's (2018) definition, these individuals are both able to appropriate aspects of entrepreneurship through their cultural work to meet their own and others creative, ethical and economic needs. This type of flexibility to serve various needs in Bangkok demonstrates how cultural entrepreneurship is not motivated by a narrow or fixed agenda. Rory's example, in particular, highlights how cultural entrepreneurs are able to meet both cultural and commercial needs of local and global networks at the grassroot and commercial level.

3.3.3 Imbalances of Power and Local-Global Participation

Both case studies also highlight imbalances in the way Hip-hop is consumed and made accessible in Thailand. Zac and Rory's practices both offer varying levels of potential resolution to these issues, although remaining barriers are highlighted in discussions of socio-economic status and the varying types of subcultural participation enabled by their work in Bangkok. The creative industries in Thailand are among the top 20 exporters of creative goods such as fashion and jewellery products (United Nations 2015), but their policy is concerned with the efficiency of production and commercialisation of certain sectors (predominantly designer goods) as part of an economic strategy, rather than developing social value through and access to the arts.[9] These two cultural entrepreneurs work in navigating imbalances in power through a passion common to their role. Naudin (2018, p. 110) suggests cultural entrepreneurs often wager their work in relation to market conditions before demonstrating a 'willingness to cooperate, for mutual benefit and as a contribution to the city's cultural development' which can be 'undermined by a lack of resources or tensions between individuals or support structures'. These deficiencies stem from changes in acquisition of music industry revenues, lack of governmental support for participation in the creative and cultural

[9] Social value creative industry focusses are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7 in the context of Melbourne.

industries and a widening socio-economic gap, which are reconciled in part by these aforementioned local and global acts of cultural entrepreneurship.

In Rory's case, his work in establishing a range of events helps demonstrate how access to his work can often be limited to the financially marginal in Bangkok. This is partially due to the dramatic inequality that denies the lower-working class access to experiences in the inner city—Rory remarked on a 'greater disparity of wealth and separation between rich and poor here than I've ever been accustomed to before in any other country' (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015). A major trend that has affected how Rory's events are positioned within the local market is the shift to digital music distribution which has created a paradigm shift in the music industry. Instead of focussing on record sales, artists, promoters and tour managers now gravitate towards live music as the primary method of commerce due to a loss of revenue to digital music piracy and streaming media (e.g., Spotify, Apple Music and Pandora) (Holt 2010). The live emphasis tends to reduce access to popular high-profile international music acts by local audiences in Thailand. As Rory observed:

> Looking at the club dynamic, somebody who makes 10,000THB a month can't afford to pay 1,000THB at a club on drinks. It's impossible, it's just out of reach. It's a gap that's impossible to close.
>
> Finances are just required [to participate]. The artists that we book cost money, we have to make money to pay the artists, we have to make money for ourselves, we have to make money for the supporting acts…so it's not a gap I can bridge in that (music tours). Bridging those gaps is beyond the ability of an event organiser…it's more of a governmental, political and an overall ideological paradigm shift that's required. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

The live music imperative also returns back to the economy of music which now structures concerts as 'monopolies rather than as complementary features to recordings' (Holt 2010, p. 248). This complicates participation in popular live music in Bangkok for the underclass or marginalised and the extent to which Rory's work is successful or able to tend to communitarian ideals. The above commercial inflexibility distinguishes Rory's practice from other smaller scale communitarian-cultural work in Bangkok that can more easily accommodate marginal groups.

Similar barriers exist outside of the subcultural music market, but are less restrictive to general participation. Zac highlights issues in the local-national Hip-hop scene's development in its disconnection from the social value of non-commercial, communitarian Hip-hop traditions. The commercial focus in Hip-hop dance scenes in Bangkok is partially because the visibility of Hip-hop dance in Thailand is mainly received through popular mainstream media which has traditionally marketed its identity alongside a particular lifestyle populated by products and events. For consumers in this commercial culture, such marketisation has made street-dance more conspicuous, while diluting its cultural value by positioning it in a pay-to-participate model:

> I remember having a conversation with someone in the studio scene and they were telling me that dance here for Thai people, is not high-so [high society], but it's for the privileged. That's because you have to buy everything here in terms of dance classes and all that stuff. Clothes, gear and access to events. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

This is not to say that the urban poor are not participating in street-dance, but its mainstream visibility is marketed to the upper-middle class. The socially and economically marginal participate in different capacities due to such widespread inequality. This gap is also a result of socio-political economic marginalisation tied to class politicisation following the 2006 election which visibly divided the rural and urban poor from the inner-city rich as the city became divided by red and yellow shirts to represent their political alignment (Hewison 2014). Zac argues that such overwhelming class tensions can only be overcome by a not-for-profit approach designed to create sustainable relationships between participants and city spaces irrespective of class.[10] Nonetheless, these class-based perspectives are pervasive and define different models of subcultural authenticity represented by the commercial sphere and other independent self-sustained communities, where Hip-hop identity is played out in different contexts.

As demonstrated in both examples, there are real socio-economic divisions that these two cultural intermediaries are able to tend to in different capacities through cultural entrepreneurial practices in Bangkok. The above discussion highlights how commercial and communitarian motives limit or enhance their ability to manage their reconciliation of social gaps in the accessibility to the local cultural market where varying degrees of risk enhance or limit access to participation. What we see are two distinguished public-spirited approaches to cultural entrepreneurship that satisfy different target audiences through strategic methods of creating opportunities to connect Bangkok's Hip-hop scenes to local and wider globally diverse communities and tastes, in person and transnationally.

3.4 Cultural Entrepreneurial Logic and Incentives

While entrepreneurs are traditionally motivated by financial reward, similar arguments have been made about cultural entrepreneurs in the more contemporary self-employed professionalisation of their creative work (Naudin 2018). By contrast, cultural entrepreneurs might also be motivated by communitarian ideals to demonstrate how there are other moral and ethical underpinnings to subcultural work that eschew commercial motives in favour of non-monetary purely cultural outcomes. Naudin's (2018) work helps us to understand these variations. She argues that cultural entrepreneurs are unconsciously and reflexively able to 'contest, reject or adopt identities and characteristics associated with normative entrepreneurial behaviours', and such elasticity enables cultural entrepreneurship to be a multidimensional practice (Naudin 2018, p. 48). The examples

[10] See Section 3.4.2 for Zac's approach.

below highlight how the agents in this chapter work along a continuum where commercialist and communitarian poles represent the differing logics and incentives that drive their cultural practices.

3.4.1 The Commercialist

Commercialists, by definition, are motivated by a strong economic incentive common to traditional entrepreneurs. Cultural entrepreneurs of this type are not necessarily different, but there are some important distinctions to be made in how they express themselves and articulate their practice in relation to commerce and culture. While economic wealth is often a strong motivator for traditional entrepreneurs, cultural entrepreneurs are not necessarily defined by such incentives. They also can eschew commercial motives for favours in human resources or for status (e.g., via social responsibility). Rory's work overlaps in this space as a global music industry agent and as a self-employed artist. Both aspects of his practice are highly commercial on orientation (e.g., via the marketisation of identity of himself, other artists and/or agencies; branding; and competing for market dominance). Indeed, Rory's example demonstrates a commercial necessity, despite Bangkok's socio-economically disparate landscape, which makes his work for international entertainment agencies in the cultural industries incredibly difficult. However, Rory's agency work also tends to a number of cultural niches in Bangkok who are provided new products and flows of external tastes from outside of Thailand. This factor plays a large role in motivating his work and its impact is largely culturally satiating as it is defined and sustained through relationships, communities and niche audiences.

Rory's cultural entrepreneurship is peculiar as he balances lucrative commercial (agency) work and less monetarily driven cultural work (with local grassroots music collectives, for example, TM303). It is an important decision to move between commercial and communitarian (underground) projects, as it provides him an opportunity to establish an authenticity that is derived from remaining connected with niche audiences. Irrespective of his incentive or how he leverages his foreign distinction to take advantage of gaps in local music and entertainment markets, his value to the city and various scenes is significantly cultural. This is made more prominent against the backdrop of Thailand's complicated history with music and resistance that has impacted its reception of global subcultural forms, especially beyond the waves of pop culture accompanying late-twentieth-century corporate globalisation from Japan and the West. Despite the varying degrees of cultural influence Rory's work is responsible for producing (e.g., new tastes spread across the region), the majority of practice remains unequivocally tied to, and defined by, commercial market forces that demand economic return.

Economic motives in cultural entrepreneurial work blur the line between authenticity and selling out due to the way these motivations often can be perceived to be at the sacrifice of creative autonomy

or cultural value. The transformation of subcultural arts into commercial returns is part of a growing pattern of legitimised subcultural work that also contributes to community growth. It often takes economic capital and competition to create a sustainable economy of scale before subcultures can grow to the size we see in global Hip-hop today. This commercial-cultural interdependency helps legitimate the transformation of culture by the market. Banks and Hesmondhalghm (2009, p. 418) suggest cultural entrepreneurs are skilful in finding ways to make the logic of the market suite their agendas, rather than ruling over them. Rory switches between a subcultural participant and cultural agent (as a tour promoter or tastemaker) as a strategy to remain in touch with his communities, while also producing work in the wider commercial market for the agencies he works for. Naudin (2018) suggests cultural entrepreneurial work should also be seen in context, and self-exploitation or 'selling-out' are not necessarily outcomes of participating within a commercial market, but are instead driven by what Banks (2006) refers to as a moral economy. This is a process where field actors participate reflexively, in determining 'what is "good" (and therefore bad) [practice], exhibit moral ways of acting towards others and negotiate the balance between holding instrumental and non-instrumental values' (Banks 2006, p. 456). In supporting grassroots events put on by local Hip-hop acts like TM303 while also structuring highly lucrative international tours of international artists like Skrillex, Pomo and French Kiwi Juice, Rory finds a way to negotiate his creative autonomy away from perceptions of subcultural or self-exploitation, permitting him more creative autonomy within both underground and mainstream commercial markets.

Although he skilfully wields this skillset, he also distinguishes himself from the world of business via his subcultural identifications to his own cultural entrepreneurial practice which he situates outside of normative commercial operations. Eikhof and Haunschild (2006) discuss this as a trend in artistic communities, where cultural entrepreneurs draw on their distinction in the production of cultural goods by aligning themselves with alternative subcultural lifestyles in which business logics are embedded but conceptualised and perceived differently. Moreover, Rory is an important example of how a commercial drive can be coupled with cultural work in a global economy of entertainment exchange. This hybridity in the production of cultural experiences is interestingly transformed into economic success and symbolic power across an Asia-Pacific network and within the wider global market. Rory's ability to traverse both underground and commercial landscapes appears as an alternative marker of cultural capital which is perceived and wielded as an essential part of his reputation as a 'tastemaker'.

3.4.2 The Communitarian

In contrast to commercial-cultural entrepreneurial projects is more community-oriented entrepreneurial work. Bourdieu (1984) suggests traditional creative work is more aligned with

commercial incentives and McNay (2004, p. 182) is exceptionally critical of how Bourdieu, 'underestimates the autonomy of agents because of the tendency to reduce symbolic relations to pre-given social relations'. Cultural actors in this sense are not bound by their relations to structure and market, and instead can practice autonomy outside of such influential forces. One way this alternative logic appears is in the creation of ethical or moral values that are not strategically focussed on the economics of the commercial sector. To elaborate, communitarian entrepreneurial work may stem from an enterprising behaviour common to commercial entrepreneurship, however, it is differentiated by an alternative drive that does not seek, or necessarily receive, direct economic reward. Banks (2006) similarly challenges the reductionism of the neoliberal capitalism approach associated with entrepreneurship in the contextualisation of cultural entrepreneurial practices. His work looks more directly at alternative logics for cultural entrepreneurship in challenging market cultures and establishing new social, cultural and symbolic values. Zac's practice is an example of where we see this play out via a communitarian practice of cultural entrepreneurship.

To understand Zac's work, we have to also understand how communities are developed and how communitarians look to enhance these groups through programs that create or enhance alternative social and cultural systems of value. Communities are defined at the intersection of historical, political and cultural contexts that shape human behaviour and align individuals into assemblies of affinity (Seitz 2003). Seitz (2003, p. 256) defines a community as 'a shared culture or body politic with a common set of values, norms, preferences, and aims; a collective history; and a set of defining beliefs and practices that each individual shares'. Moreover, these collectives connect individuals by mutual socialisation and can be powerful in subverting markets, governments and structure. This phenomenon was remarked upon in the work on subculture and counterculture from Birmingham (see Hebdige 1979; Hall & Jefferson 1975). Hip-hop dance communities in Bangkok have more recently found value in shared practices via Zac's communitarian initiatives which stem from a wider global discourse of developmental and progressive Hip-hop. Utilising his distinction, he works alongside local communities in the development of events for an ever-growing community. He also brings together local and international participants to engage in local-global development, made possible through networks of physical and digital cultural exchange.[11]

Zac's focus on capacity building also helps other cultural workers in Bangkok learn cultural entrepreneurial skills. This transmission is significant, as the way it was traditionally learned and supported by global institutions in educational policy and discourse is still minimal (Hagoort 2015; O'Brien 2014), especially in Bangkok. Capacity building motives also point to a skills gap which gives significance to communitarian practices that support the acquisition of formal skills for

[11] See Section 3.5.

organisation and management. The ways these formal skills are acquired are made possible by observations in the real world. Examples include meeting with partners who support the community program by offering space (e.g., the W District Shopping Mall); and in the management of corresponding online community groups. These offer individuals opportunities to learn about branding, event management, what tools help with marketing and dissemination, and how to differentiate between commercial and not-for-profit work. In line with such not-for-profit cultural entrepreneurship, Zac does not benefit economically, although he eschews commercial incentive in favour of alternative rewards that manifest in more abstract ways. These primarily appear in the forms of subcultural capital (i.e., power or influence in the local-global subcultural sphere) and social capital (i.e., the cultural resources or networks he may call upon).

3.5 Subcultural Media: From Early Identifications to Global Networking

Both commercial and DIY media play a significant role in regulating subcultures—a point established in the classic work of the Birmingham School (Clarke 1975b; Hall & Jefferson 1975; Hebdige 1979). This section charts different waves of media production and consumption and how each has influenced the development of a subcultural literacy and methods of cultural entrepreneurship. This historical contextualisation demonstrates the importance of these products in their own capacity building through a familiarisation with the traditions, ethics, aesthetics, expressions and symbols of Hip-hop which are reproduced in their own mediations and entrepreneurial projects.

3.5.1 Pre-Digital Media: Imagined Affinities

A number of authors (Fogarty 2012; Chang 2005; Kong 2010) have made connections within pre-digital Hip-hop communities in terms of 'imagined communities'. Zac and Rory's reflections on their use of media in their projects stem from a similar 'imagined community' connection to Hip-hop from the consumption and distribution of VHS video tapes (and later DVDs). Their 'imagined affinities' (Fogarty 2006) to this global community of consumption is an important precursor to their work in structuring contemporary inter-regional flows of media and communications as cultural entrepreneurs.

This early media consumption was received from two places, as a product of an independent subcultural exchange and via mainstream media. Much of the media exchanges in the 1990s and 2000s aligned with traditional developed–developing world globalisation from Europe and the US and only rarely emerged from alternative centres across Asia. During this time, VHS tapes were highly profitable in their cultural exchange value due to their international rarity and limited production. This type of scarcity also presented barriers which the subculture has historically subverted by a practice of bricolage (i.e., duplicating, compiling and combining various elements to

create new cultural products and values) (Fogarty 2012), allowing its consumer base to grow. In contrast to DIY media, Hip-hop's early commercial appeal and popularisation via televisual broadcasts (e.g., Yo MTV Raps in 1989) often conflated Hip-hop as popular music with the more diverse collection of identities captured by the DIY scene. These commercial mediums also marked a widening of consumption in the US, from its original Afro-Hispanic audience to mainstream, white suburbia (Rose 1994) along with a shift to more explicit representations of identity in rap music (Flores 2012). While Hip-hop music quickly won a popular cultural space (allowing for its global ascendency and industry growth), Breaking, which more positively celebrates identity through community relationships, became secondary. The distances between these two spheres of media are significant as they refract into the logics that Zac and Rory adopt in their work.

Music media helped expand Hip-hop audiences beyond the underground. However, over time it began to narrowly capture the communitarian ethic of the subculture in favour of a new popular music discourse from which Hip-hop has become inextricable. Rory coupled his consumption of mainstream music media, for example MuchMusic (a Canadian MTV alternative), with live participation at concerts and via playing records as a DJ through the local club scene. Breaking came with the territory during the 1990s, but later faded from this scene. Pope (2005, p. 92) discusses this entertainment industry shift as contributing to reorganising audiences from the 1980s where 'every person in the crowd was a participant in one of the four elements' of Hip-hop, to the 2000s and beyond where album sales define Hip-hop and 'buyers are not actively involved with Hip-hop culture'. As this pushed dance out of the mainstream in the late 1990s, Zac discusses the dissolution of the tradition of generational acknowledgement as celebrities and industry begin to capitalise on dancer's creative practices. His not-for-profit work also stems from such imbalances in the representations that are rooted in these tensions brought about by the commercialisation of Hip-hop music media. As Zac reflected:

> It's commercial media but no one is giving the information and they still don't. I think that's a big problem. Usher's learning from 'Flomaster'—call that out all day. Yo, Michael Jackson learned from the Electric Boogaloos, [if] you learned from all these people, call that out. Thank you for putting the movement out there [in the mainstream] but call that out, give credit to where it came from… So, it has been out there from the 70s up until now, but it never gets called out. Dancers get pushed to the side and I think that's terrible. But, if you search for it, you're going to find it. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

Bourdieu (1993) looked at similar divisions in large- and small-scale niche production and consumption with reference to art. He conceptualised two distinct models, the market and fields of limited and extensive production and consumption. Bourdieu suggested that limited fields of cultural production often appeal to nuances in niche audiences, where consumers are typically other artistic peers, and the field of extensive or mass production appeals to mainstream and legitimised tastes and

consumption. Similar aspects of these divisions have been explored in more fertile crossovers between alternative arts practices and popular cultural industries in Australia. This work draws on a range of DIY media examples comparable to the VHS trade in the Hip-hop context, for example, public-access radio, multicultural television or indie records in the 1980s (Moore & Gibson 2013; Moore 2014). In a similar way, early DIY Hip-hop texts can be understood as practices in a market of limited production, whereas their contemporary consumption has become blurred in a similar crossover between popular and alternative cultural production and consumption.

Zac reflects on deficits in this small market as being bridged by subcultural community leaders and connoisseurs of Hip-hop media who established household archives for community cultural exchanges. These archivers can be looked at through a Bourdieusian lens as field actors who tended to gaps in the market of limited production. Such actors might also be considered communitarian-cultural entrepreneurs compiling, trading and exchanging cultural text in the production of cultural value. Their archives helped diversify global subcultural connections, both in person and via distributed copies (and sometimes copies of copies):

> …you meet someone like Scramble[lock] and they have all the footage ever—these people are just hoarding it and getting it. You need someone like that and you'll see dope shit. It was the same with music man, it was always someone's mixtape or whatever—it was a different time. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

Copiers and archivers were often awarded reputation for their role in maintaining a sense of connectedness for small and emerging scenes (Fogarty 2012) and were important precursors to the cross-cultural intermediaries that the present thesis conceptualises. These figures could also be considered local cultural entrepreneurs, as they looked at gaps in their subcultural market and reproduced cultural products to be exchanged for a type of subcultural capital derived from their contribution in enhancing subcultural literacy.

The above examples demonstrate how Hip-hop representations were separated by two distinct spheres of media, communications and production and consumption, commercial and DIY. What is important is the way in which their impacts are interpreted and refracted in Zac and Rory's contemporary cultural entrepreneurship. This media duality has been especially important in shaping Zac's motives for developing a grassroots network of Hip-hop exchange that is inclusive, pays tribute to the diverse histories of those who came before and that provides space for the expression and education of various contributors. This publicly spirited work might be thought of as an expression of a communitarian habitus if we are to look at his learned experience as a driving part of his contemporary cultural practice. Rory, by comparison, leans more directly on this cultural–commercial duality, making use of media's power to disseminate and cultivate audiences for both cultural and economic ends in the music entertainment industry. Their reflections highlight the importance of their media consumption

in shaping their cultural entrepreneurship and contemporary use of subcultural media. The next section shows how they capitalise on the local-global potentials brought about by the internet.

3.5.2 Digital Shifts: Networks of Potential

The shift towards digital media over the past 20 years has opened new ways of developing international networks. The arrival of the consumer internet in the late 1990s saw online forums and instant messaging services emerge as new forums for subcultural connection. Zac and Rory were quick to note the importance of services like MSN and AOL Messenger and website forums like www.bboyworld.com (US) and www.style2ouf.com (Europe). These extensions of space-time enabled the first online Hip-hop exchanges through new digital environments, allowing international communities to collaborate, communicate and establish new flows of content. Further, these digital spaces have become new areas to participate in to claim dominance, authority and respect and to discuss the politics of Hip-hop identities among a community of global contributors (Kong 2010). Zac and Rory seized these new opportunities to establish local-global networks and tried to utilise them in their own practices—a pragmatic identification of an opportunity that is classically entrepreneurial (Naudin 2018).

Despite slow connection speeds, the exchange of videos, pictures, archived discussions and news was slowly globally collated and made accessible. This shift in subcultural and wider cultural communication capacities helped shape the multidirectional network of subcultural flows and community ties that exist today, as it became a tool for cultural exploration and connection, offering an alternative way to understand cultural difference and enhance cosmopolitan capital:

> I started downloading all these clips and saving them to my computer and watching them and the cool part was that you started to see Breaking from new places where I didn't think they had it—like Korea and Japan… That's when it became easy to really connect with people and keep in touch with people. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

English served as a tool to parlay with others across these new digital networks and was supported by the Hip-hop argot to bridge language barriers. These platforms represent an important part of a paradigmatic shift in expanding access to transnational social capital development, especially for those tethered to their locality. This global connectivity is also made possible by the plurality celebrated across Hip-hop's creative disciplines, in its language and overall ethos, which promotes a multicultural openness. Most importantly, these forums were operated and sustained by niche audiences which, on a global scale, contribute to something more substantial.

In line with the above, the early digital shift altered participation in two key ways. First, independently run websites and forums helped reclaim the power associated with regulating subcultural identities,

rituals and the progression of their collective practice back from corporate media which had previously proven exploitative. While the VHS trade previously saw to this internal regulation, it had never been possible for global contributors to engage in a collective international discourse simultaneously. Second, the limitations on physical exchanges (to obtain media, to attend events both locally and internationally) were now partially resolved. Bedroom cultures and physical networks were now given new avenues for participation, a local-physical and a global-online mode. These flows of content represent essential aspects of Rory and Zac's cultural entrepreneurial practices in tapping into transnational flows to start creating relationships, networks and projects internationally. As Rory reflected:

> So you go to this jam and you wouldn't necessarily talk to all these b-boys, but you would see them and then you'd leave. And then the footage would come online and everybody would be commenting on it. And you would connect with people through that. People started to be like oh that was Rory Rocket and direct message [me] and be like 'hey can I add you on msn?' I actually made friendships with b-boys through MSN Messenger that I had never met and didn't meet for years, and then finally met years later and we are still friends till this day… A lot of the early connections were made through…bboyworld and MSN Messenger. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

Further, these communicative capacities to maintain subcultural relations and cosmopolitan identifications are the foundation of the international fluidity that has enhanced and enabled their practice of entrepreneurship in connecting audiences to new cultural flows.

3.5.3 The Social Media Shift

Just as early digital media helped advance network dynamics for locally tethered communities, social media enhanced how these networks are structured. This section focuses on how these advances in technology and software development altered local-global community engagement in a subcultural context and what these online and mobile platforms offer in terms of new ways of marketing and promoting (at the individual, community and organisational level).

3.5.3.1 Example 1: Teaching in Japan—A Social Media Perspective

Rory has taken advantage of access to international travel provided by his previous corporate and cultural employment, travelling throughout the Asia-Pacific. While living in Tokyo, he taught workshops as a dancer and played records at events as a DJ to sustain his life abroad. Throughout his stay, he managed his subcultural career through social media. This has been researched in other contexts across the region (e.g., independent Indonesian musicians (Harnish 2013)). This independent management can also be understood as a type of cultural entrepreneurship as this subculturally oriented enterprising behaviour in this example laid the foundation for much of Rory's later work in Bangkok.

Over his two Japan tours where he taught Breaking workshops, he made use of social media to structure events and invite local community leaders to help connect him to new students and the overall success was the result of 'keeping relationships with people there, through these social media platforms…where [I] otherwise wouldn't be able to' (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015). In addition to managing these expanding social networks of students and local community contacts, social media represents an important aspect of his expression of skill within a subcultural market (i.e., subcultural capital). As an international practitioner of Hip-hop arts, this subcultural capital appears in a number of forms such as the language used; his repertoire of subcultural achievements; the experience from long-term international participation; and a set of unique skills, style or knowledge to offer. For Rory, social media are tools that help manage and maintain his reputation and visibility in the local-global sphere. They have allowed him to 'to put videos of myself out there, people were able to stay up to date with where my level was at. So they'd know "he's good enough" to do this or to do that' (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015).

What we see in Rory's example is the use of social media marketing practices that align with the self-marketing of micro-celebrities (Senft 2008) and social media influencers (Khamis et al. 2016). They are an opportunity to obtain and deploy capital in new cultural markets and various subcultural fields of participation, providing him new access abroad through the management of his multiple aliases and professional profiles. This again demonstrates his entrepreneurial capacity to transform opportunities offered by technology into realised outcomes for the promotion of his self-enterprising cultural practice. This includes designing and creating events, uploading videos to demonstrate credibility and leaning on his friends in Hip-hop to help share the event pages with relevant audiences. Rory's early work in the Asia-Pacific reflects an interesting dynamic that social media offers subcultural agents for self-promotion and network management as a means to develop online portfolios of curated content to enhance their visibility in subcultural markets. In the next example, we see how these self-promotions have enabled his regional visibility and subsequent reputation in the Asia-Pacific region.

3.5.3.2 Example 2: International Music Agency Work

Compared to Rory's early work in Breaking communities, the music industry demands in Bangkok and across the Asia-Pacific require an awareness of evolving tastes and practices between markets. This element of his practice has only recently become possible. Bilton (1999, p. 26) pointed out that pre-digital cultural entrepreneurs had limited opportunities 'to develop managerial skills, to analyse the structure of organisations or to engage with the changing dynamics of the global cultural economy'. The changing dynamics of the global cultural economy are especially important for work between markets of limited and extensive production. Rory demonstrates an acute understanding of

which music acts are popular in what cultural markets; how much regional costs for touring, promotion and venue hire are; and governmental restrictions around public performances (e.g., permit culture in the PRC) that restricts his music industry work. Now that these relations, networks and sources of information are locatable online, from venue managers to leading industry managing directors, they offer international agencies and smaller cultural businesses opportunities to connect to and establish their own international professional networks of support. The peculiarity of this example is how Rory used social media to enhance his local and global cultural entrepreneurship via its cross-cultural capacity and how this impacts the development of audiences and professional networks from Bangkok and across the Asia-Pacific.

Rory's history of international travel, subcultural familiarity and skillsets as a music performer make him a prime candidate for developing international agency partnerships and music tours. Such work requires interpersonal skills to successfully broker business relationships between cultures. His role in cultural industries in Bangkok also differs in its commercial function to his work within communitarian Hip-hop subcultural circles, although he may draw on these resources (e.g., mobile dancers or music acts) to help tend to gaps in the market. In this way, Rory operates as an intermediary between grassroots music acts and the commercial sphere. In this sense, his role is not unlike a traditional gate keeper, although it is more flexible due to the increasing demand for underground and alternative artists by mainstream audiences.

By leaning on networks, maintained through social media, his ability to facilitate cross-cultural connections remotely demonstrates social media potentials for local-global subcultural communication:

> That's one of the coolest things about social media platforms these days. You can stay in touch with people you don't even speak the same language as, [and] I can reach out and say 'hey I'm coming to your city, for something totally unrelated to what brought us together in the first place', but as soon as I'm there, we can connect, meet and plan… I connect people in two cities I'm not even in. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

The remote connectivity offered by social media has enhanced his ability to continue to structure tours while travelling through the region. Rory's success in transforming this type of remote work into real outcomes is also the result of his ability to be regionally mobile, made possible by budget air travel by airlines like Air Asia, and the professional networks he has established (as an international performer, talent manager and tour promoter, he is taken care of by companies and friends alike).

He equates his network to an international 'DJ Subculture', as those who exchange professional contacts across the region perform at each other's events and help connect one another when entering

new markets. This type of collaboration also parallels with contemporary music creation, where 'certain periods and places are considered hotspots of creativity, where new musical ideas are shared and movements arise' (McAndrew & Everett 2014), highlighting the importance of proximity for travel in this Asia-Pacific network. We see similar cultural exchanges by musicians becoming commonplace as the internet stimulates increasing levels of global collaboration and socialisation (Park et al. 2007). Rory's example highlights an ongoing regional exchange that occurs in both physical and digital form, alongside flows of cultural products brought together by social media and agency resources. His work also relies on an increasingly diverse flow of performers and professionals physically moving between cities in the region. This movement of communications, resources, content and people has shifted the local and global patterns of music consumption—not only in terms of Hip-hop, but across a number of other popular global music genres.

3.5.3.3 Example 3: Online–Offline Relations in a Community Project

Zac's utilisation of social media to enhance his communitarian practice in Bangkok relies on his proficiency with technology from his early adoption in the 1990s and IT background. In YouTube's infancy, Zac was one of the few DIY content producers and curators who shared content that would go on to become popular across the Asia-Pacific and enhance his global reputation.

> It became one of the first Locking videos on YouTube. You couldn't find anything before, and it blew up. It became super viral. The first time I went to Singapore, and…the Philippines….dancers…came up to me...like 'yo All-Terrain Locking! Oh my god, that was the best! You and Scramble!' A lot of people have been like, 'that started me with Locking'…. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

Zac's role working between cultures using social media has evolved and can be seen in his project WeGotTheSpot, a free offline community event he organises and supports through corresponding social media. This example demonstrates how a strong communitarian ethic is combined with a refined enterprising skillset to organise events, establish partnerships and open dialogues between grassroots collectives and corporations in real life that have the potential to transition online.

WeGotTheSpot, from its inception, was designed to stimulate local community engagement and offer opportunities for social, cultural and subcultural exchanges with international Hip-hop performing arts communities travelling through Thailand or connected to Zac online. One main aspect of his practice is to help others build social capital by drawing on his own cosmopolitan habitus looking outward and across the region to structure new connections between socially, economically, culturally and subculturally diverse groups that have their own distinct logic and dynamic:

> That's what I'm trying to do…I've seen many different circles through it [WeGotTheSpot]. I didn't know I wanted to bridge that [socio-economic barriers], but I wanted to bridge

> dancers and it actually has bridged those things…I don't like that division…I have super high-society, rich friends and they come see what we do and they love it—*that's* great…So maybe that's what it is, breaking down those barriers. We might not be saving kids off the street, but bringing one human closer to another in the way they think and look at each other, that's everything you know. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

This democratic and socio-economically transcendent space for sharing a celebration of Hip-hop has also welcomed painters, spoken word poets, DJs, and performers from a number of alternatively globalised street-dance forms like Dancehall[12] and Vogue.[13]

In Thailand, reinventing or borrowing elements from other global art forms is commonplace. It is widely used in creating local traditional music and its local nuances (i.e., String, Luk Thung, Phleng Phuea Chiwit) (Eamsa-Ard 2006). In line with this practice, Zac's community group leans on international traditions to help produce locally nuanced Hip-hop community practices. Most importantly, the group ethic stresses a communitarian approach in supporting the sustainability of Hip-hop in Bangkok, given its fragmented pop culture history. Zac's work helps create a dynamic local-global group structure that extends across the city, into the suburbs, across the country and internationally, which has helped him create a discourse around ethical values of respect while helping individuals develop meaningful and strategic relationships: 'the relationships come with the community, because if I'm "Joe" in the middle of nowhere with nobody and no community, that's harder—I need another person to session with' (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015). This community ethic is also tied to something more pragmatic in Zac's mind—it represents a way to create a sizeable level of engagement that is noticeable locally, regionally and across wider global networks of cultural exchange.

To ensure the visibility of such programs, Zac parallels this offline network with an online social media community that helps enhance local connectivity to international participants who pass through Thailand. This practice enhances the diversity of flows that move in and out of the city and offers new means of providing community access to new places (locally and internationally) via networks of affiliation:

> I have a sizeable number of people [on Facebook who] are dancers that I have never met, ever, and [who] I talk to a lot, and when the opportunity comes, if I'm somewhere or they come here, we'll meet. Which I think is a beautiful thing whereas, otherwise, we may have just walked by each other on the street and never gotten down. (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015)

[12] A music and dance culture from Jamaica.
[13] A modern house dance developed from the Harlem ballroom scene.

The size of the local-global group has grown substantially since its inception.[14] While Zac suggests 'the word of mouth thing is still more magical than the internet thing', he admits the utility of these applications in creating these connections and communications is unparalleled (Alcampo, Z, interview, 2015).

Research around the use of social media for community relations is useful in analysing Zac's practice. In addition to being significant platforms for global communication, digital interfaces enable complex ways of negotiating identity and creating fandom, stimulating new formal literacies, pop cultural literacies and intercultural connectivity for cultural groups (Williams & Zenger 2012). This is especially important for establishing a sense of the local, with respect to the growing multidirectional multicultural exchanges that characterise contemporary pop and subcultural participation. In the same way that Williams and Zenger (2012) suggests new media literacy practices are shaped and mediated by pop culture, the same can be said of defining subcultural literacies from engaging with online community curations and archives of collective cognitions. For example, a member of WeGotTheSpot's group posted the video 'Beneath the Surface: An In-Depth Look at Popping & Boogaloo' which tracks previous generations contribution to the dance with the tagline 'Some of you were talking about history.....keep searching and questioning' (WeGotTheSpot, 14 March 2015). These discussions become constitutive of an archived flow of media that is an accessible and traceable measure of engagement and cultural exchange.

With a number of converging media tools for production, curation and engagement at their disposal, the group offers participants a place to contribute to a new Hip-hop discourse defined by expression, marketing or the documentation of new subcultural traditions (presented in posts of significant milestones, performances, history, music, knowledge, etc.). These practices also form an important part of conceptualising the local and opening access between international consumers of these subcultural flows. For example, a number of videos like 'Bangkok Boogie – Locking4Life Canada' (Scramblelock 2015) have emerged in the group to celebrate the city's urban environments and crossovers with international guests. These local-global collaborations are important online texts in modernising Bangkok's subcultural dance scenes so that they may participate and be identified by other participating cultural groups in the sphere of global exchange.

Zac's role in WeGotTheSpot's offline–online practice as a cultural entrepreneur enables these connections and networks of exchange across the world where flows are shared, embodied and remediated back into the global sphere, to be consumed again between cultural groups. In this way, we see his cultural entrepreneurship function in a way that facilitates cross-cultural exchanges through others and his direct role in connecting agents. Importantly, WeGotTheSpot also functions as a way

[14] It has over 700 members as of 2018.

for him to champion local community figures, helping them establish their own subcultural capital in local and global spheres of participation. These figures help sustain the local-global dynamic necessary to bring Hip-hop communities together. It is in the sharing of similarities noticeable in the mobile matrices of global Hip-hop that help regulate and define a transnational scene in an attempt to strengthen the communitarian thread that connects the local to the global. These communitarian acts of cultural entrepreneurship more obviously demonstrate Zac's role as a cross-cultural intermediary through a dynamic use of social media tools.

3.6 Limitations to Transnational or Online Intermediary Work

While social media allows for new types of subcultural communications, content delivery and business practices, there are a number of offline interactions that are undeniably as important. Dance, music and shared physical experiences are essential aspects of participation in Hip-hop culture. This physical importance raises the question of how this is even possible to recreate online, not to mention that the communication of abstract ethical values that are often obtained tacitly—aspects that are an integral part of most contemporary Hip-hop subcultural communications (Simard 2014).

In Bangkok, technology offers Zac and Rory the ability to function as cross-cultural intermediaries involved in structuring flows of content, information and professional networks as a means to go beyond face-to-face networking. Understandably, these cross-cultural intermediaries are not always conscious of the magnitude of their local and global function and the extent to which digital media tools make their work possible. Thornton (1996, p. 29) examines the importance of technology to subcultures, arguing that as new tools are introduced they become 'absorbed into culture' to the extent to which its use becomes ubiquitous and it appears 'organic'. For some aspects this translates relatively seamlessly (i.e., networking and chatting), while in others it remains contentious (e.g., holistic digital participation). Despite the functional utilities social media offers cultural and subaltern communities for exchanges and connectivity, there are distinct differences between offline and online participation. Rory is aware of this and used Breaking as an example:

> …the way you explain this to people has a massive impact and I think people can relate to it more in person than they can online. You can say this stuff to a person online, but when you're there with your hands and showing them physically what you're talking about—it goes a little deeper for people. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

Physical community-based participation is ingrained in Hip-hop's culture. While digital mediums make it more accessible, there are still physical rituals that are important:

> Breaking—it's like, the circle, the cypher and the floor. It's like a sacred place…for us, where you let loose and you're yourself, and you connect with the music and vibe with the people, and share energy, and the moment, and everything… That's everything to Breaking

> culture. Without that, you could teach someone online to do everything and they could copy it, and practice it in their living room. But, if you don't have that face-to-face circle environment, then they're not really doing what we're doing. They're removed from what we do and where it comes from. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

This embodied experience has been problematised by Frith and Horne (1987), who highlight the implication that technology has in presenting a 'false' method of engaging with Hip-hop culture. Kong (2010) highlights similar tensions between the use of technology and maintaining authenticity in contemporary Hip-hop (predominantly in Breaking), where there is still no replacement for the embodied physical cultural exchange. Interestingly, this tension also stems from Hip-hop culture's digital translation which has been described by Simard (2014) as less a problem of medium and more an issue of mediators. This discussion is useful in understanding that there is still some utility in transitioning community bonds online if done correctly (as noted in regard to the WeGotTheSpot project). However, digital participation, relationships and self-expressions online are also contextualised within an internet culture that operates under a different logic that is both platform bound (which faces its own issues such as internet trolls, social justice warriors, fake news and social media bots[15]) and representative of converging interests of various referential groups (i.e., community leaders who play out their ideological differences online).

As social media ostensibly brings participants closer together transnationally in a global public sphere, new distances emerge between generations. While new identifiers have an expanding repertoire of tools at their disposal for local-global engagement, there is a generational rejection or digital divide where some find profound meaning only in sharing within the embodied subcultural experiences. This brings into light Kolb's (2007) theory of connective gaps (defined in Section 2.1.4), which accounts for new digital distances created from evolving communications dynamics (a phenomenon revisited throughout this thesis).

Similar tensions in relation to physical space and participation were recounted in relation to Rory's work as a performer and tour manager in the music industry, where the value of his role is made possible by physical audiences inhabiting real-world venues. Through his management of music events, he finds physical participation more conducive for the effects of the cultural exchange of tastes:

> I could listen to the music at home by myself, but its extra special out somewhere… you play it and you share it with everybody else and you can see them enjoy it. People dance to the song that *you* like and connect to it, and you connect it to other people. (Kirkham, R, interview, 2015)

[15] See Marwick and Lewis (2017).

This embodied sensation as both performer and audience member is an important aspect of physical presence, as music in its performative, experienced and recollected capacity has the ability to create a liminal space that extends beyond physical faculties and notions of time (DeChaine 2002). These experiences are profound in their tribal congregation and semiotic recollection. They are described by Rory as more favourable than the digital streams of content he contributes to in an online taste-making experience which are comparably temporal and disposable—a result of the overwhelming competing flows offered by free global music platforms (Holt 2010). Additionally, physicality also extends from these shared spaces for performance and spectatorship (e.g., sharing meals or engaging in physical relationships) which helps enforce senses of local community and structure new aesthetic traditions, skills, uses of language, attitudes and embodied styles and musical exchanges among performers and fans. There is certainly something more important that connects his creative practices in their physical manifestation as shared local-global subcultural experiences for communities and audiences in Bangkok.

Bangkok's subcultural music and dance scenes are slowly moving towards global competitiveness, as their grassroots and commercial-cultural and creative production is now being connected and propelled back into the global sphere from where many local influences are flowing. What the above discussion demonstrates is an integral balance between offline and online engagement to successfully utilise social media platforms as tools to make these connections between audiences, content and networks of peers and professionals. Furthermore, there is something more spiritual conjured in the physical participation described by both case studies that extends outside of the online transnationalism of social media intermediation. This participation is what lays the foundation for the sustainability of the local scene and wider Asia-Pacific region, that is, the participation connected by cross-cultural intermediaries, their professional networks, community groups and collective yearning to develop a local-global connection from Bangkok. This is especially important to the tethered urban poor in Bangkok who are reliant on open and free physical events to participate and who lean on social media to tap into transnational flows of discourse and content in the city and region.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the importance of cultural intermediaries in establishing local-global connections from Bangkok to an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture. It focussed on the cultural entrepreneurial function of cross-cultural intermediaries. This is not the only way intermediaries can be seen and later chapters will highlight other functions. What we have seen from the case studies in this chapter is an important application of cultural logics in commercial and communitarian entrepreneurship by these cross-cultural intermediaries who enhance local commercial and grassroots Hip-hop and facilitate their connection to the Asia-Pacific region in three distinct ways.

First, social media is an integral part of these practices of cultural entrepreneurship in advancing local community connectivity and their awareness, consumption and contribution to global flows of content and communication. These flows are locally, regionally and globally relevant and are created by intermediaries in person or remotely. These flows often extend between the developed and developing world, but the most prominent are the multidirectional flows between neighbouring developing cities in the Asia-Pacific.

Second, the importance of physical congregation, cohabitation and international mobility developed by intermediaries is critical in sustaining these subcultural endeavours. Dancers draw on this embodied experience as a way to share in a collective practice of expression and tradition, while music industry professionals move between regions to perform; develop fan bases; and develop or sustain their relations with agencies, venue owners, performers and promoters.

Third, by performing a connective role, cross-cultural intermediaries are able to expose local communities to gaps in their subcultural knowledge by drawing on resources and experiences from elsewhere, while simultaneously influencing the creation of new traditions, tastes and flows from Bangkok. As a result, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of foreign cultural capital (and its cosmopolitan form) in diversifying local DIY community-based subcultures and subcultural music industries and how this capital it is wielded in online and offline contexts.

The next chapter examines how a local cross-cultural intermediary creates social value in his work to ground Hip-hop in the nation-state of Singapore which has emerged as a popular node for regional Asia-Pacific Hip-hop participation.

Chapter 4: Singapore: Social Entrepreneurship and the Local-Global Stage

Walking among Singapore's high-end shopping malls, the sound of music and cheering crowds roars through the streets. The chants belong to the thousands of participants who have come to participate in the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival hosted by R-Studios, a local dance academy owned by local social entrepreneur Felix Huang, a b-boy, businessman and ambassador for Hip-hop. Once a year, his crew, Radikal Forze, hold their anniversary celebrations in Singapore's central business district, opening up their homes to, and securing city spaces for, thousands of global Hip-hop practitioners to socialise, trade and create international networks and partnerships. Felix recounts his motivations for sustaining the local-global annual event for the last decade: 'my dream is to make Singapore the next place that all Hip-hop practitioners wanna' come [to], to work or to chill or to do something that [they] like to do' (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

Singapore's public image of cleanliness and anti-delinquency is at odds with Hip-hop imagery and the notion of 'street culture'. These practices appear subversive on first glance and, at a surface level, are complicated by cultural agents like Felix who have appeared in the news for professed crime.[16] Beneath this surface, Felix is continuously attempting to reconcile his public image by operating his own social enterprise, contributing to the national economy through large-scale global events, maintaining relationships with governmental agencies (e.g., National Arts Council Singapore), and working closely with community programs for underprivileged, at-risk youth. At times, Felix's work resembles Zac's communitarian practice in Bangkok and at others the inter-regional commercial practice of Rory. However, Felix's practice is differentiated by a social approach that is essential in creating and working with relationships to help produce programs of social inclusion for cultural and economic marginal groups such as the LGBTQI community or delinquent youth that often excluded or overlooked by governmental systems of support. Felix's entrepreneurial drives couples this social work with a contribution to Singapore's cultural and creative industries and the regional Hip-hop culture through prominent global events.

This chapter examines Felix as a cross-cultural intermediary whose work is determined by Singapore's local condition. With no natural resources, Singapore has built its economy on human capital and harnessing the economic and social value of international capitalism and local creative industries. These conditions afford an opportunity to look at the intermediary within a new context. I will be using the conceptual framework of social capital and the social entrepreneur to demonstrate

[16] Felix was charged for using violence in an altercation with a taxi driver (see Chong 2013).

how this socially aware approach is important in reconciling the perception of unproductive or socially disruptive Hip-hop in Singapore, repositioning it as responsible. This is demonstrated primarily through a flexible embrace of commerce to meet social ends to support projects that offer social and economic value locally in Singapore. This type of entrepreneurship is important in enabling local Hip-hop under soft authoritarianism and, subsequently, its ability to contribute to and shape the inter-regional cultural exchanges that have defined Singapore as a node in a regional-global Hip-hop network.

What does this type of work reveal about the creation of social engagement and value? This has appeared across the globe in a range of contexts. Robert Putnam's (1995) examination of social clubs in the 1950s and 1960s explored the usefulness of social scenes in curbing youth delinquency through civic engagement. Community groups were once powerful in harnessing civic engagement to produce a certain kind of character in its membership, while providing a social structure for the negotiation of identity and belonging through social connection. Putnam (1995) considers these points of connection and association as a function of social capital that is seen in most social configurations, whether it be bowling clubs or youth gangs. His definition refers to a network of support, norms and patterns of communication across what were once thriving social scenes.

While Putnam's concept of social capital has been criticised (Portes 1998), its application to describe social formation, engagement and collective management of group identifications is relevant to subcultures. However, Putnam (1995, p. 665; 2000) was unwilling to examine certain social groups that he believed operated to the 'detriment of the wider community' (e.g., youth gangs). This ignores the connection that subversive and subaltern communities have had to forming positive subcultural experiences. Hip-hop, for example, which was influenced by youth patch gangs in the 1970s, drew on attendant gang traditions and social capital to lay the foundation for what has transformed into the productive, communitarian and performative contemporary Hip-hop culture.[17] Nevertheless, since Putnam, there has been a further deterioration in traditional social scenes and the associated attainment of social capital, often linked by academics and commentators to growing individualism and neoliberalism since the 1990s. Gilbert (2013) examines the discussion around neoliberalism, highlighting the complexity brought to both social and economic life from self-interested competitive behaviour at the individual, corporate and cultural level.

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 119) perceive social capital as:

[17] Skinheads and anarchists who rejected the austerity set in motion by the Thatcher Government's resurgence of anti-socialist bourgeoisie rule in the UK were similarly associated with the rise of Punk.

> the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition.

They find that these social connections align with class structures in the preservation of status. The argument can be applied to youth subcultures, but also needs to be adapted. Thornton (1996, 1997) suggests that youth are motivated by a different order of prestige encompassed in interclass subcultural experiences. Here, social capital is made malleable by her extension of Bourdieu's theory, grounding its relevance in the authenticity of subcultural capital—a case of 'who you know' enhancing 'what you know'. Such approaches are useful in defining how social entrepreneurs in this chapter are positioned in the local-global subculture in which they participate.

Advances in new social media tools require this notion of social capital to extend between online and embodied networks. Online connectivity can materialise into an embodied face-to-face form, which is a new type of relationship. It contrasts with subcultures of the 1980s which were organised predominantly around face-to-face encounters. This chapter demonstrates how this social capital is essential for the local-global role that cultural intermediaries play as social entrepreneurs in regulating sociality across Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture.

One way to understand the mobilisation of embodied and digital social capital is through the activities of social entrepreneurs. Community activist and thinker Andrew Mawson (2008) categorises these figures as individuals who apply a business logic to their experience of the field and make use of their position among various networks (i.e., via social capital) to instigate change for and via socially oriented projects. This type of social entrepreneurship 'takes place when agents from civil society organisations form partnerships with agents from market-based private enterprises without any "obstructing" intervention from the state' (Hulgard 2010, p. 10). Another useful definition is offered by Indigenous Australian activist Noel Pearson:

> The social entrepreneur is somebody who manages to mobilise the under-utilised common resources in order to achieve lasting change. But the main assets of the social entrepreneur are creating and working with are relationships. Unexpected relationships between members of the local communities, staff of government structures, at all levels, business people, politicians, anybody who has an interest in social development where it was thought not to be possible. (Pearson as quoted in Jaffe 2003)

While this is a useful definition, Pearson has been criticised for the use of this concept which has adopted a business rhetoric of 'responsibility' and 'entrepreneurship' at the expense of critical perspective on the ongoing effects of colonialism. These criticisms complicate his use of the notion in his activism, suggesting it needs some rescuing from this politically entangled position. Naudin (2018, p. 17) conceptualises social entrepreneurship as 'a global movement, popular with

governments which seek to encourage citizens, charitable, volunteer and other non-commercial organisations to be entrepreneurial in addressing social issues'. This type of entrepreneurship is 'distinctive from the individualistic and commercially driven capitalist narrative' and tends to social issues through a type of entrepreneurial intervention (Naudin 2018, p. 17). The attractiveness of this work to government makes social entrepreneurship a particularly valuable tool for enabling forms that might otherwise be seen as delinquent or threatening by the state, like Punk Rock or Hip-hop in Singapore. This chapter demonstrates how social entrepreneurship legitimises Hip-hop in Singapore through the creation of social value, as the state has traditionally been wary of subcultural forms and their propensity for delinquency. Harnessing social capital via social entrepreneurship helps transform Singaporean subcultural youth into makers of culture, providing them a new social mobility as active citizens, rather than marginalised delinquents, thus permitting Hip-hop a freedom to develop into a node of regional-global subcultural prominence in the Asia-Pacific. Before detailing the case study, a brief examination of local cultural contexts is necessary to establish the conditions in which Felix operates and has been shaped by.

Unlike non-native English speaking countries, Hip-hop's success in Singapore is partially credited to the use of English as a local lingua franca. Resulting from Singapore's colonisation by the British, English has persisted as one of four official languages (English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil) in the modern multicultural Singaporean state. Looking closely at how this multilingualism and multiculturalism make it easier for cross-cultural intermediaries to promote and create social connections from Singapore, this chapter focuses on how Felix utilises social entrepreneurial work and practices of social capital building to establish a local community identity, state partnerships and local-global connectivity. The chapter asks, how does social entrepreneurship create positive social value by drawing on social capital in a practice that enables Hip-hop's local grassroots and its connection to the Asia-Pacific scene? It finds that this social capital takes the form of relationships that are resources to affect change and work through partnerships with the state and commercial business.

Felix is a local event manager, subcultural public figure and business owner. He hosts annual local-global festival events such as the Radikal Forze Anniversary, leveraging his status as a local pioneer and global figure to bring together communities across the Asia-Pacific and rest of the world, establishing Singapore as a powerful centre for Hip-hop. Felix's work is also concerned with the local socio-cultural tensions in Singapore (in terms of identity, class and ethnicity) and those between the various cities in the region that are connected to Singapore through the Radikal Forze Anniversary and their regional proximity.

This case study builds on the previous chapter by looking at the dynamics of cultural entrepreneurship and offering an alternative social conceptualisation of how this applies in Singapore. This social entrepreneurship is also articulated as one of the many roles that cross-cultural intermediaries might assume in creating local-global connections. The case studies in Bangkok showcased how cultural entrepreneurship creates cultural value projects that connect national communities to a global and especially Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture. This is differentiated by the various social goals and outcomes that motivate and define this type of work. While cultural entrepreneurship relies partially on a similar social logic, this case study is distinguished by a practice of leveraging social capital connections to create sustainable and often socially beneficial programs that intersect with state interests and help support communities where the state is deficient.

4.1 Subcultural Interactions with the Singaporean State

The Singaporean Government has been hesitant in embracing subcultural forms, but has also distinguished its approach from hard authoritarianism (such as that in the PRC).[18] The type of subcultural movements that push against the state and social order are given much less freedom than in more democratic nations like Australia,[19] and have traditionally been policed and monitored by the state. Despite this, multicultural subcultures like Hip-hop that have a tradition of community development have found alternative footholds in Singapore due to the changing dynamic of social subcultural work that not only contributes to the Singaporean economy, but redefine its subversive image through professional business practices and programs that support at-risk youth.

Over the last decade, Singapore has become more sophisticated in its approach to alternative creative arts alongside the rise and popularity of creative industries literature (see Florida 2002). This has softened the attitude around subcultures and creative scenes that have become more conspicuous to the state as social collectives of production and economic development. Hip-hop is no longer perceived as one-dimensional delinquent or confrontational, and is instead now understood as a helpful and productive communitarian system of social values and cultural exchanges (although with some reservations). One example is the increasing state support (e.g., through the National Arts Council) given to social enterprises and voluntary welfare organisations (VWOs) that draw on Hip-hop arts to create social infrastructure for local youth.

This understanding has not developed without its challenges. Anti-government mentalities associated with some of Hip-hop's imagery and history (e.g., gangsta' rap group NWA's 'Fuck the Police') that many subcultures have similarly exhibited (e.g., Punk) are not sustainable in Singapore. Policing

[18] The PRC is explored in Chapter 5.
[19] Australia saw waves of moral panic that framed subcultures and countercultures like the larrikin, skinheads and mods as deviant. However, they were given more liberty. See Homan (1998).

delinquency has been relatively easy in Singapore due to its small geographic space. Even a moderate figure such as Felix has appeared in the news for brushes with the law (Chong 2013). While Felix's exchanges with the police have brought some negative attention to his subcultural practice, he is regularly working to rectify his image and ensure Hip-hop's current local social value is not damaged by his past: 'stigma, injury and prison did not kill my passion for breakdancing' (Felix as quoted in Stomp 2016). Local mainstream media attention has until recently done little more than reduce his identity and subcultural community ties to a stereotype (one that the government has been wary of for decades in their attention to controlling the spread of youth gangs). For years, prior to his appearances in the news, Felix had worked as a dance instructor teaching at a number of schools across Singapore. This alternative record of socially responsible Hip-hop has allowed him to have some resolve, start his own social enterprise and enter a relationship with a number of commercial, state and not-for-profit agencies.

4.2 Introducing Felix Huang

In 2015 I met Felix while travelling to the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival. Prior to running this large regional festival, Felix was an important figure in establishing local Singaporean Hip-hop culture, so much so that his crew, Radikal Forze, is known by many, even those outside the subculture, for their involvement in the local entertainment industry and the increasingly popular festival they throw every year. Such successes have been contingent on an international approach necessary for making Hip-hop culturally accessible in Singapore by welcoming many local and regional cultural communities to the island nation. I spent time at the festival, making sure to give Felix space to carry out his operational duties, before conducting a face-to-face interview. He carries himself with confidence and is friendly, but can demand respect. He is slim, wears glasses and fits his self-description perfectly, 'gangster but geeky' (Huang, F, Interview, 2015).

Felix's local work is also shaped by a number of historical, cultural, economic and political determinants that can be contextualised by first charting his own genesis within Hip-hop in Singapore and across the Asia-Pacific region. Radikal Forze has over 30 years of history in Singapore, as b-boys and event managers (responsible for bringing prominent Hip-hop acts to Singapore like Wu Tang Clan from the US and performing alongside them in local venues like Zouk). Their local legacy has given Felix's contemporary work an advantage (with existing promoter networks, venue contacts and an understanding of the local entertainment industry) that has been leveraged in the development of new international social connections with organisations and communities within and outside of the region that make his local and global work possible today.

According to Felix, Breaking emerged in Singapore as early as 1983 during its first waves of global popularity. Like most of the world, Singapore's first wave of Hip-hop subcultures was brief and it was not until the late 1990s that Singapore's second generation of b-boys emerged. Among the various crews was Radikal Forze, a collective of local youth brought together by DJ WIZ to feature in the Phuture Room at Zouk (one of Singapore's most popular night clubs). Zouk became a symbolic venue for a number of local subcultural music scenes (for both consumers and performers) and their associated subcultural forms. Reclaiming urban spaces and club venues, the founding seven members recruited a new generation of prospects including Felix.

In the following years, alongside a growing interconnection with the entertainment industry Radikal Forze began managing Hip-hop events both communitarian and commercial, from event management to local programs for at-risk youth. Through various movements between the region for subcultural travel, Felix 'earned respect' among the local Singaporean and neighbouring Malaysian subcultural communities. Leading Radikal Forze to the fore of the nation's subcultural networks, he took his practice abroad. This duality between commercial and local grassroots Hip-hop has propelled Felix to the vanguard of international subcultural relations in Singapore.

His initial global network building, managed through entrepreneurship and regional subcultural travel, is an important aspect of how he came to value the social capital approach that he embraces today (i.e., leveraging his standing among the 'thousands of people [who] are my friends' to create new cultural exchanges (Huang, F, interview, 2015)). This approach is reflected in his local social work through his social enterprise R-Studios and is an important aspect of the Radikal Forze Anniversary. Social connections are the foundation of Felix's practice and are the most important resource in the creation of community. In our interview, he reflected on developing this community ethic through business, asking: 'what is more important—the money or the global community? For me, the global community' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). Such a focus on providing international cultural exchanges and social connectivity by eschewing his commercial motives have brought Felix's practice authenticity and respect from the state and within global Hip-hop culture.

4.2.1 The Importance of Respect in Establishing Social Value

From all of his international experiences, Felix indicates that his ability to maintain his social and subcultural reputation over time is due to a type of 'respect' for host cultures while abroad:

> I think one of the things that has allowed me and my crew to be able to be cool with so many people is because, yeah, we're tough guys, but we're not assholes and we bother to show respect when we are in *your* context. A lot of people demand respect, 'I'm this, I'm that, why aren't you talking to me in this language?'…but for me it's like why don't you learn to speak Vietnamese? Why don't you lift a finger to try and understand what their cultures

> are so that you can relate to them better? So I try to give that extra to understand. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

This might be thought of as a cosmopolitan ethic of care and demonstrates an important awareness and understanding of cultural diversity. It can be framed as type of cultural competency that permits Felix more fluid transition between cultural communities and their customs and can be equated with the previously discussed notion of cosmopolitan capital (Hage 1998). Cosmopolitan capital is often awarded to the bourgeoisie who are more able to travel from a young age and form cultural literacies through discourse and experience (Hage 1998). This was explored in Chapter 3 in line with expat case studies and here Felix showcases how locals are able to obtain cosmopolitan capital in the same way. Like Rory, Felix was brought up in a middle-class family. His father was an academic and business owner before falling on hard times. Nevertheless, his cosmopolitan outlook is linked to his family's initial middle-class access to regional travel which enabled him to receive a university education in Australia.

However, the Hip-hop value of respect also helps gain access to new intercultural social networks and capital. It is a constitutive part of Hip-hop's identity that resonates from its early communitarian traditions, as Felix reflects: '[t]radition, respect, foundation, hard-work, creativity—there are so many things you learn as a street-dancer with a Hip-hop mentality' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). Notwithstanding the origins of the respect ethic in US Hip-hop, a similar notion is also important in various Confucian cultures and is an important factor that has shaped Felix's habitus as part of a Singaporean-Chinese family, permitting him a more fluid comprehension of the various applications of the concept. Respect functions as a civilising value that enables Hip-hop's baseline respect for diversity. Through the mutual obligation and exercise of showing and earning respect, all different cultures cooperate. Moreover, respect emphasises the political and idealistic message of the dignity of all within the subculture despite poverty and marginalisation. This is also enacted in wider society through a demand for respect evident in practices of subversion or creative expression. It is not an ethnic-cultural tension that is played out at Hip-hop events and, instead, is an aesthetic, stylistic and skilful clash that demarcates respect. Importantly, respect is a vehicle that acts as an informal means of border crossing and aids in the development of cosmopolitan capital (Brimm 2018) within Hip-hop subcultures and between cultural communities, as it opens the subculture to new experiences and people. It also functions as a means to avoid conflict and violence between groups and individuals—a type of public harmony especially welcome in authoritarian Confucian nations like Singapore and the PRC (Li 2006). Thus, respect is argued to be a way of legitimising and dignifying Hip-hop within national cultures, especially those with aligned and compatible cultural traditions.

Respect for diversity is also tied to a process of examination, research and action through enacting cultural customs as a way to demonstrate respect to foreign cultures, their daily realities, cultural traditions, languages and norms. This has allowed Felix opportunities to get close to a number of foreign and regional cultures and be welcomed as a member of their communities. This is demonstrated by his sustained international crew memberships from his residency in Australia via Fresh Sox and through his travels across Europe with his associates from 7$. He argues that this respectful approach is a vital asset in overcoming cultural barriers that distinguish and situate individuals as cultural outsiders:

> I feel that going to different countries and experiencing different cultures helped me to understand a lot of things outside of dance which in return also helped me to properly build with these people (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

Notably, subcultural affinities and slang help overcome other divisive socio-cultural barriers. Nonetheless, extending oneself further to understand local cultural settings is still considered most important:

> It's just a cultural thing. For every other country, like Japan, if you speak to someone senior you take a short bow. You know what I mean? Like In Japan, if you're talking to somebody of status and he doesn't really know you and you're not talking eye-to-eye, it's always much better to be more polite—and also showing that you have basic respect for their culture. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

The frustrations outlined in these comments are a response to the Western imperial ethos that is still enacted in exchanges between international Hip-hop communities as traditional hierarchies still prevail (although to a lesser degree). Importantly, Felix's early identifications, international travel and brushes with Western 'cultural authorities' throughout Asia (notably participants from the US) have influenced his more progressive intercultural approach. The tensions in this global Hip-hop have also has become a characteristic of his habitus, driving him to work on projects that enhance intercultural dialogues and cosmopolitan exchanges across the Asia-Pacific. One important event is the Radikal Forze Anniversary which draws on his experiences abroad and brings thousands to Singapore from around the world in a global exchange. The above analysis demonstrates the importance of international travel in establishing an ethic of care comparable with cosmopolitan capital, crucial in navigating culture between the developed and developing world. In this practice, respect importantly connects Felix to a number of existing and emerging participants as they hear of him from friends, see him in content online or meet him at events and workshops across the region.

4.2.2 The Hustle

Throughout the course of our discussions around the enterprising logic of his work, Felix regularly made reference back to the 'hustle', a concept important to various forms of cultural and social entrepreneurship. He connects his practice with the developmental idea of inspiring the youth to think critically about how to become self-sufficient hustlers within Hip-hop culture in a 'how will you make your mark and get by' approach. What we see in the example of Felix is an important community leader who carries with him a weight of making his practice productive and economically viable, irrespective of his actual monetary success (a hallmark of the petit bourgeoisie that affords him lower risk in such endeavours). As Pearson (as quoted in Jaffe 2003) observed of the social entrepreneur: 'There are people who want to take on this role, and there are people in the communities who will be inspired by them'.

The meaning of the 'hustler' has, in a number of ways, departed from the negative connotations that originally appeared within American politics, folk culture and commercial representations in popular culture since the 1960s, for example, the famous US film *The Hustler* (1961). Felix's hustle should be distinguished from the 'hustler' image that appears in the mainstream Hip-hop media is an embellished and commodified masculinity and has been linked with a life of misogyny, capitalism and violent or criminal behaviour. Garnes (2009) argues that this image has become an emphatic representation of hustling made possible through the commodification of the delinquent side of Hip-hop into a marketable identity from which music labels have significantly benefited. Conversely, what Felix describes is far more productive: 'just printing shirts or throwing a small event, its actually training you to think how to hustle' (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

In the same way that Hip-hop was a tool to unite inner city urban youth and give them strength in responding to problems such as gang violence and the drug trade, 'hustling', in its communitarian Hip-hop context, can be understood as a type of entrepreneurship that departs from the delinquent or criminal conceptualisation (Naumoff 2014; Garnes 2009). Most interpretations explore something more neoliberal in their reflection on class and cultural struggles for mobility (e.g., Netflix's *Atlanta* (2016)) than in Felix's social practice. Felix's more communitarian approach to Hip-hop transforms the subversive edges of the subculture's image as does his 'hustle'. As an example, Felix uses the term to outline his own experiences in legitimate business—as an event manager, promoter and social worker—that have not only granted him a number of important formal skills, but endowed him with an important social network awareness that he links with what we have seen as a social entrepreneurial competency.

R-Studios may also be thought of as a supporting structure to the hustle of others, as the organisation offers employment to a number of these self-reliant local and international subcultural artists. Felix's vision of self-made business links the hustle to working in subcultural industries as a form of cultural and social entrepreneurship:

> Think about it, just printing shirts or throwing a small event, its actually training you to think how to hustle. And a lot of people think of [the] 'hustle', this word, 'hustling' [has] a very negative connotation. You know, 'he's a hustler'. But in my opinion, hustling is just about trying to find money, making the means, trying…to get by. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

Reflecting on generational successes in business within Hip-hop culture, Felix highlights this shift as something important that will help sustain the culture:

> Because that's what we need now. I mean like, Hip-hop has been around for what, 30 odd years? I mean look at the OGs (older generation). Do any of the OGs have any successful business? I think not. They have a name, they've built credibility, but they were all uneducated street kids that created something bro, that's now a worldwide phenomenon. But how well did they do in business is another thing. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

His above criticism is not about generational business intelligence, but about how Hip-hop culture can and has progressed into a sustainable subcultural lifestyle and communitarian culture in a way that was never thought possible before. He uses business as a way to mobilise Hip-hop's cultural ideas and ethics, widening the access to participation to something inclusive and educative:

> You see, before I started the studio, I was like 'fuck business' right? You know 'fuck money, fuck business, fuck this, fuck that', but once you start getting involved in business and start realising we need this to go to the next level for this culture, we can't say 'fuck you' to the people who don't dress Hip-hop, we can't say 'fuck you' to the people who don't like Hip-hop. We should be telling them to come and check it out. We should be subtly educating them about what we are about. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

It is this inclusive approach that defines Felix's hustle and how Hip-hop is framed for success in Singapore. While economic returns may still propel some part of the desire to work within the cultural and creative industries, the money made is often paired with providing social services and social value. This services a number of local governmental, cultural and creative industry objectives, while permitting subcultures more agency within the nation-state and enabling large-scale local-global events like the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival which nets the state a significant economic reward for their approval. It is held in Singapore's central business district with a regional and international attendance of 'b-boys, b-girls, & street dancers from Australia, Denmark, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Switzerland, UK, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam, Canada, & USA' (Huang as quoted in Radikal Forze Jam 2018). Such an event also demonstrates a social significance,

bringing together thousands of people from all walks of life (many who the state is often at odds with) into Singapore to celebrate as a global community in Hip-hop that is both connected and uplifting.

4.3 Creative Industry Objectives, the Confucian State and Governing Identity

Felix's social entrepreneurship is also made possible by the expansion of Singapore's cultural and creative economies. One way this is happening is through the state acknowledging the social value of cultural and creative industries. This has occurred alongside contemporary multidirectional pop cultural globalisation, where alternative subcultures like Hip-hop have been given a regional cultural and economic significance. These lifestyles have only more recently become legitimised in the state's plan for the arts and creative industry development (National Arts Council 2011).[20] However, they are still managed within a cultural policy that the state narrowly defines in a cautious step towards full embrace.

One way to manage them has been in the formation of local creative industry clusters, giving them space to operate within state regulations (Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore 2002). Moreover, a number of historical policy changes have loosened the traditional wariness of alternative arts practices. Lily Kong (2012) recounts the various stages of governmental investment in the arts through policy revision. In the 1980s, policy was designed to support creative arts in an endeavour to help stimulate tourism in an acknowledgement of the importance of the creative economy following a number of nations across the globe (e.g., the UK or US). By the 2000s, the state had become overtly economic in its focus (as is common in Singapore's tempered capitalist approach and economic opportunism), exploiting the creative economy through state policies that had previously supported its cultural and creative agents. One important aspect of this change is how this imagining of the creative industries has transitioned the focus towards the social value of cultural practices, goods and services. The practices are still tied to ideas of:

> …social formation and [a] cultural milieu [that the state] desires for Singapore. Specifically, it is a social formation that is plugged into the global economy but socially and culturally anchored in Asian roots, abiding by certain moral codes of good/bad that are constructed as particularly 'Asian'. It is, above all, a social formation in which Singaporeans feel a sense of belonging and 'insideness'. (Kong 2006, p. 110)

More recent attempts to update this policy have required further bureaucratic reimagining where the state has been forced to adapt and re-evaluate its suspicion of subversive art and culture (Chong 2014). This has occurred most poignantly through policy that returns to a support of art where the state aims to 'bring arts and culture to everyone, everywhere, everyday' as a means to 'promote creative

[20] The National Arts Council website also showcases a number Hip-hop dance arts education programs that they support in Singapore (see https://aep.nac.gov.sg/nacaep/nacaep.html).

expression and encourage participation and engagement of all Singaporeans in the artistic and cultural life of their communities' (ACSR as cited in Chong 2014, p. 29). This reconciliation is also made as a competitive effort in benchmarking the national creative industries in the global economy. These objectives attempt to reconcile Singapore's distance from contemporary pop culture. However, this policy is still wielded conservatively in defining a preferred productive and desirable creative expression, leisure and identity.

What this requires is a skilful tactic to redevelop the state's perception of Hip-hop through aligning its public image with policy objectives to make it more desirable. Such agendas from the 2000s onwards have recurringly been interested in the importance of 'social capital' and strengthening 'community bonds' (Ministry of Trade and Industry Singapore 2002, p. 3). Felix's work has become significant in creating and fostering these connections through the cultivation of programs that target at-risk youth or culturally marginal communities in Singapore. His work dignifies Hip-hop and distinguishes its practice from the wider popular culture that is seen as immoral.[21] Moreover, by creating large-scale local-global events that bring thousands into Singapore each year, the value of Felix's social capital becomes a powerful tool for reshaping Hip-hop's economic value and cultural significance in Singapore.

4.4 R-Studios: A Social Capital Approach

To help conceptualise Felix's role as a social entrepreneur, we can examine his primary local work at R-Studios. His management of social capital in this endeavour is aimed at creating social value, business networks and civic community engagement in Singapore. To maintain subcultural relevance in Singapore, Felix has used his subcultural reputation and called on professional local networks established through the entertainment industry to develop his own local performing arts studio in the central business district. R-Studios has been operating since June of 2010, providing the local Singaporean public and dance subcultures an accessible space that offers a number of classes (Breaking, Popping, Jazz, Locking, Dancehall and Hip-hop choreography), has rentable rooms and hosts a number of events to help develop relations between peers and mentors. R-Studios is open to a number of age groups involved in the performing arts with a mission 'to help support local participants' artistic potentials, to be an international platform for international communities to learn, teach and perform at, and to connect these communities through dance and urban art-forms' (Recognize Studios 2016). Such work aligns very closely with the state's desire to be both nationally

[21] Goh Keng Swee's address of Western youth culture in the 1970s projected popular music as a threat to cultural harmony, the state and Singapore's overall morality.

focussed and international, and with the importance of social value outlined in their creative industries policy.

Initially, the formation of the studio was met with a number of local barriers. Local businesses in Singapore are constrained by a number of governmental policies regulating the use of spaces as both commercial business and social enterprise. The studio's location in the central business district on Orchard Road[22] requires roughly S$20,000 a month in rent and operating costs (as of 2015). Felix has often invested significant money from his other business endeavours into supporting the studio's development. It was not until 2014 that Felix began the transition to convert the commercial dance school into a social enterprise to help support local socio-economically underprivileged individuals and at-risk youth organisations. This decision exemplifies an application of a business logic obtained from his international education to a process of community building that enhances the agency of his subcultural work and enables such opportunities to tend to a social milieu where the state is unable.[23] By applying this type of enterprising behaviour to raise communities and cultures where the traditional state apparatus fails or is unable to manage alone, the notion of the social entrepreneur becomes an important means of understanding Felix's role in shaping local social capital. As in traditional social scenes (see Putnam 1995), this is done through programs targeting Singaporean at-risk youth (i.e., potential delinquents or criminals who are often from underprivileged or marginalised backgrounds) and using Hip-hop to foster a sense of local-global belonging, instil moral and ethical values, provide opportunities for creative skill development, and pass on formal skills (e.g., business knowledge).

4.4.1 Addressing an 'At-Risk' Social Milieu

Felix's support of at-risk youth is a response to a history of conservative cultural policing and the failings of the state in providing adequate supporting social infrastructure. Singapore's history of juvenile and adolescent delinquency is rooted in socio-economic divides, conservative parenting, cultural clashes and the failure of state preventative action to support and reorganise the delinquent subculture (Murphy 1963). This has continued into more contemporary times as tensions can still appear rife (although they are becoming less threatening) between the state and different subcultures like Hip-hop and Punk Rock in Singapore—a possible consequence of their alienation from the state as both delinquent and not aligning with the New Asian nationalism strategically communicated through the government and cultural and creative industries. A number of governmental policies have attempted to curb youth dissent and regulate 'troublesome' ideology. One way this occurs is in the

[22] The studio later relocated to Shenton Way.
[23] Shanty towns are another example of this type of internally regulated social entrepreneurship in developing community housing and informal economies outside of the state system that typically displace and further marginalise impoverished cultures.

refraction of state concerns into media regulation in the hope of 'moulding young minds from the tender ages of infancy till teenage-hood' (Rao 2014, p. 58). Just as youth street gangs are an issue in the US, in the eyes of the Singaporean state, which emphasises social order and cleanliness, Hip-hop can appear threatening. Unlike the evolution of Hip-hop street cultures in America, local interpretations of graffiti culture or street-dancing that emphasises street-based congregation have distanced the government for what, on the surface, can appear confrontational, delinquent and difficult to manage if permitted autonomy.

For example, the semantics of the Radikal Forze complicate Hip-hop's reception by conservative governments as it is subversive on first glance. This is problematised further by Hip-hop's general departure from traditional cultural, ideological and aesthetic norms and substitution of governmental systems. The government is wary of even the most subtle of subversion and is ill equipped to support and represent marginal communities (many participating youth are from low socio-economic backgrounds) (Chong 2014). In policing minority gangs, Singapore has tried to recreate social control over a number of these marginalised and disadvantaged communities, placing a greater burden on the state. This contrasts with the Singaporean police's symbiotic relationship with Chinese secret societies (born out of the early Chinese Triad colonies) that have traditionally been less of a 'political threat' and serve a role in regulating a number of 'social functions', similar to the way the Japanese state interacts with the Yakuza (Ganapathy & Fee 2002, p. 145). Hip-hop too departs from rebellion towards constructive community engagement in Singapore. With the help of a subcultural ambassador and social entrepreneur like Felix, new relations are able to bridge these divides between state and community through constructive politicisation and participation through arts:

> My studio is actually a social enterprise, so I do a lot of classes for a lot of 'youth at risk' and underprivileged families here. That's one thing that's close to my heart. I've been to jail twice so I kind of feel that this is what I feel like doing, because dance and Hip-hop culture made me who I am today. And I'm sure that it can influence them if they are willing to embrace it—I just need to create the opportunity for them. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

Felix's work through R-Studios in providing opportunities for marginal belonging and space for creative expression resonates twofold with the goals of the social entrepreneur. First, sustained social development is often cited as a key motivation behind social entrepreneurship and Felix has identified a social cause that has been left untended by both the market and government. Second, the social entrepreneur makes use of a business competency, but does so by navigating and establishing relationships between local communities of interest, governmental staff, business people and their commercial institutions. This has allowed the R-Studios to work more closely with a number of local VWOs such as Singapore Boys Hostel, Beyond Social Services, AG Home and Pertapis Home.

As a social enterprise that works closely with VWOs, R-Studios has been important in enabling the visibility of Felix's Hip-hop social work, allowing him to create partnerships with the Singaporean National Arts Council (a government-run institution) and SCAPE (a non-profit organisation aimed to facilitate creative youth development). Due to the limited support offered by government bodies for alternative social development initiatives in Singapore, Felix's pilot programs are left with economic gaps, and these are financed by other commercial endeavours that draw in large sponsorships from commercial businesses (e.g., Jabra, Monster), institutions or social enterprises/VWOs (e.g., SCAPE). In this way, social entrepreneurship is a function of Felix's local role as a cross-cultural intermediary working between cultures of business, politics and the local people and stems from a local network across the Asia-Pacific region.

4.4.2 Negotiating Marginality: New Asian Identity and Subcultural Inclusion

The fact that Hip-hop adopts a non-exclusionary, communitarian, multicultural and interclass ethos makes Felix's role in producing programs of recognisable social value in Singapore particularly important in tending to wider gaps in general social inclusion. The state's lack of resources or unwillingness to support and manage alternative identity practices stems from a complicated conservative political history and modernisation of their laws and cultural policy.

The state efforts to transform social inclusion is also tied to a renegotiation of Confucian values in the face of global liberal democracy. This process of contemplating 'democratic revitalization of their political and social institutions' (O'Dwyer 2003, p. 39) and cultural policy, still accounts for a relatively nebulous move towards real social and political change. Despite a greater inclusion offered to creatives in Singapore by revisions of cultural policy, artists are still at the centre of an 'edification of institutions and prevailing political structures' (Chong 2010, p. 139). In this tension to democratise their values in line with global norms while also remaining nationally focussed, the management of diversity in Singapore has been complicated and primarily construed through media and state policy. This has left a relatively large gap in belonging which necessitates inclusive social entrepreneurial approaches to community like that of Felix to help again find a means to manage diversity. What we see in Singapore is similar to the mediated politicisation of a multicultural narrative crafted around tolerance that often caters to the dominant Anglo-Celtic populace in Australia (Hage 1998). Part of this is the top-down emergence of a pan-Asian identity that has intersected with regional morals, values and conceptualisations of ethnicity. What Hip-hop in Singapore demonstrates is an alternative bottom-up means of establishing identity and belonging through cultural practice and community organisations. This practice represents the multicultural real and the creative industries have become a place where we see this true diversity thrive in Singapore.

Audrey Yue (2003, 2006) suggests that the state's approach to cultivating a pan-Asian identity is driven by a conservative cultural ideology of being firstly Asian and secondly Singaporean, eclipsing the multicultural real of Singapore in a return to Confucian collectivism. This is a legitimised culture of the dominant cultural capital, propelled through the nation-state by an 'authoritarian technique of cultural governance' emphasising conformity—to look, behave, act and aspire to a conservative pan-Asian sensibility—that is communicated through 'one-way linear flow, from top-down' exchanges with citizens who are 'reorganized through shared Asian values' (Yue 2003; 2006, p. 29). Those left out of these articulations of nationalism or regionally connected identities are the varying individual factors that are instead 'tolerated'. This has, for many years, applied to various subaltern communities in Singapore of which youth subcultures are but one example.

Another example of this tolerance are LGBTQI communities who face similar exclusion from national discourse through media censorship and antiquated laws that criminalise homosexuality in a rejection of the 'autonomy of the emergent gay and lesbian movement' (Yue 2006, p. 29). While this view is mainstreamed via the state, a number of identities still push against official representations through creative expression, creating social networks and via art (Lim 2014). Unlike Hip-hop, which has entered an age of reconciliation of its value within the state, these communities remain marginalised despite the increasing support to undo this institutional neglect and modernise laws of sexuality. Such repeals are nascent, however, as a determined milieu tackle such contentious issues in other national creative industries like theatre (Lim 2014) or participation in inclusive practices like Hip-hop.

Hip-hop offers this collective alternative means of identification in an unbiased cosmopolitan welcoming of all identities (including European expats, Malaysian and Indonesians who are typically given a secondary status to Chinese-Singaporeans) which is at odds with the conservative 'New-Asia' tactics deployed by the state over the last few decades. Unlike tensions with other social milieu, Hip-hop has a relatively more flexible position to find ways to collaborate with the Singaporean state to promote inclusion indiscriminately within its own sphere of cultural exchange, especially due to its various disciplines, avenues of diffusion (commercial and cultural) and iterations (primarily, its communitarian form). Hip-hop has recently become a site of expression among the oppressed tolerated communities with local musicians like ShiGGa Shay making steps through his music to create progress in local music discourse and the representations of the LGBTQI community. This is significant both from an industry perspective and in the face of the above authoritarian intolerance which is yet to be resolved.

Returning to Pearson (as quoted in Jaffe 2003, p. 21), social entrepreneurs are a logical outcome of the failure of the public sector in reconciling oppression: 'things are beginning to happen in many

countries, where the public sector faces the same challenges as in our country'. In this regard, social programs like Felix's that are responsible, geared towards social development and inclusive community building, are important in enhancing access to community support and an alternative belonging. Despite the notable tensions between marginal groups and the state, there has been an important shift by the Singaporean Government to permissiveness for Hip-hop's social embrace, powerful in uniting people in Singapore and from across the globe both physically and via a digital social network.

4.5 The Radikal Forze Anniversary

Felix's social entrepreneurship through R-Studios has also enable him to work in a local and global capacity simultaneously. This is done by drawing on networks of not-for-profit groups (e.g., SCAPE) and commercial partners (e.g., international street-wear label Carhartt) to help produce the annual Radikal Forze Anniversary festival event and engage with international audiences. Starting as a tradition of gathering friends from around the world, the Radikal Forze Anniversary has evolved into one of the Asia-Pacific's most popular international Hip-hop community arts festivals. The four-day program offers an opportunity to compete with and learn from international and interdisciplinary subcultural participants and community leaders in a process of cosmopolitan network building. Free dance workshops are given, competitions are held, parties are ongoing and intercultural dialogues are anything but scarce. Throughout the event, Felix invokes a communitarian spirit in his audience: 'keep learning, keep sharing, keeping evolving, let us build towards a better future, for all of us who are passionate about what we do, and let's keep it going and keep the dream alive' (RPProds 2018).

As the anniversary now attracts over 2,000 participants a year from over 30 countries, it symbolises a significant occasion for cultural and economic exchanges—everything from hanging out and battling through dance to trading clothes, records and merchandise. While flows have traditionally travelled into Singapore, shaping its local Hip-hop culture, the nation-state has more recently become a popular node in connecting agents of the global sphere and contributing to a multidirectional global exchange. Singapore is now a popular exporter of media, aesthetics (via clothing like Felix's Hancai clothing label) and locally specific subcultural traditions (e.g., 'Hancai' is slang used to denote good times) which are refracted back into the global by travellers connected in person and online.

It should be noted that the festival format is not new within the subculture and its local uptake by Felix stems from the increasing consumption of pop culture via the internet that has enabled new ways for Singaporeans to consume music, interact and access global information. Most importantly, these flows help make identity malleable and open to new influences (Mattar 2003), and they also open opportunities for new business models and event formats. The development of the local-global

festival is also complimented by the loosening grasp on cultural and creative production once perceived as subversive by the state. This reinvention or localisation of the festival format through the Radikal Forze Anniversary is a key initiative in harnessing local geography, venues, creative partnerships and social media. This aligns closely with Felix's goal 'to make Singapore the next place that all Hip-hop practitioners wanna' come to work or to chill or to do something that you like to do' (Huang, F, interview, 2015), thereby refining Singapore's role in global Hip-hop by providing a global stage for cultural exchanges.

4.5.1 Appealing to Marginal Southeast Asian Communities

With the involvement of subcultural pioneers like Mr Wiggles (Rock Steady Crew, US) and Storm (Battle Squad, Germany), the Radikal Forze Anniversary also presents new opportunities to local Asia-Pacific communities to meet and learn from influential community leaders. This is particularly important for regional developing nations in Southeast Asia like Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Laos and Indonesia that are defined by a greater degree of economic inequality and immobility, restricting their ability to attend comparable European or American festivities like the Yalta Summer Jam (Ukraine), Notorious IBE (France) or Freestyle Sessions (US). Felix discusses the regional subcultural communities in these countries as tacitly belonging to more severe conditions of economic marginalisation when compared to the affluent Western and East Asian nations in attendance. In addition, access to budget travel for more affluent nations has steered Felix's attention back to the Southeast Asia region, highlighting economic relativity and the importance of regional proximity:

> …those guys are broke…know what I mean? Like I believe that if I never do an Australian qualifier, the Aussies can come anyway. You can get a $300 return trip now—there's no excuse. But those [Southeast Asian] guys, to get 300 bucks, they probably gotta' work for a year or more. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

Because of this, Felix has attempted to scale his pricing for the festival to be more affordable, raising the financial risks:

> Every year, I anticipate this amount of people and if I'm going to charge 50 bucks, I'm going to try and keep [it like] that because its affordable not just for the people in Singapore, but its easily affordable for the Australians, Europeans, Americans; but, I'm more thinking about the people in Southeast Asia—Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos—where 50 bucks is a shitload for them. So I don't want to negate the possibility that cash is a problem to come to the event. So I always try to moderate. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

Felix also works alongside subcultural event organisations in a number of developing and relatively impoverished Southeast Asian countries by establishing regional qualifying competitions so that

these communities have an opportunity to compete for flights and a position in the top 16 seeds of the main competition.

This opportunity has implications for the role that the global event plays in influencing transnational community development through enabling new streams of access to Singapore for marginal communities. Felix has held qualifiers in Manilla, Bangkok, Jakarta and Melbourne. Depending on the financial capabilities of the organisations he works with, Felix creates sliding scale franchising circumstantially:

> Friends who want to do it, who are down and they are cool and I know why they do it, I don't need a franchise fee ...it's not a lot, I make it reasonable. But I have to [charge those capable of paying] because you're latching onto my event that is costing half a million dollars to run... (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

This altruistic social connection between the region also returns to a scholarly concern around social entrepreneurship in that it must 'demonstrate the ability to be scalable and to make sustainable changes in society' which it seemingly does (Naudin 2018, p. 18). However, the expansion into the region also complicates the extent to which Felix's social entrepreneurship is able to tend to wider social issues outside of Singapore.

The connection between his social practice and the social value it creates in Singapore has a clear significance in reconciling negative perceptions of Hip-hop among the state and local audiences, while tending to local social issues and becoming an important alternative arm of local cultural and creative industries. By contrast, the extension of support into the wider region may provide some critically needed opportunities for participation and regional connectivity, but Felix's regional work is limited in its ability to reconcile sustained local-global social issues elsewhere. Therefore, the capacity for international social entrepreneurs is also limited based on their networks, familiarity with the field (including cultural communities, professionals, creatives and governmental representatives) and their focus in achieving social goals. Felix's primary focus is on connecting local Hip-hop to Singapore, rather than creating more sustainable flows between Thailand, Laos, Malaysia or the Philippines. This extension of his social practice enables an important regional accessibility to Hip-hop events, however limitedly (once a year), and signifies an important connection of the Asia-Pacific. Despite this, there are limitations to the way that Felix's social entrepreneurship can create lasting impactful change that tends to social issues shaped by local technological, political, economic and cultural determinants. Nevertheless, Felix's regular movement through the Asia-Pacific is a powerful uniting presence that helps shape regional belonging and connectedness (i.e., through embodied and digital social capital) and helps pass on the value of reciprocal investment into Hip-hop as he does so, investing in marginal regional communities while establishing new flows of people into Singapore that otherwise may not exist.

4.5.2 Opening Subcultural Economies and Social Spaces

The Radikal Forze Anniversary creates economic and cultural benefits in two distinct ways. First, through enabling a number of other subcultural exchanges, and second, by enhancing international business exchanges through such intersections between local and global scenes, helping them establish new audiences of consumption, fandom, support, loyalty and connections to possible collaborators and investors. Felix applies a sort of reciprocal investment into not only Hip-hop, but simultaneously into a culture of social entrepreneurship by encouraging both casual and professional exchanges. By promoting this type of open intercultural communication, the event also offers a space for business exchanges with consumers and prospective partners. Many of these examples include local and international Hip-hop grassroots clothing labels like Funk & Furious (Ukraine), Cyphercode (Japan) and Hancai Clothing (Singapore) which make their way back into the global sphere in physical and digital forms (i.e., through mediation of sponsorships or product features in festival media on Facebook, YouTube and Instagram).

This aspect of Felix's event helps enhance and regulate a local-global subcultural economy that may otherwise be inaccessible to people who cannot travel. The modernisation of subcultural trade is an aspect of international exchanges that reflect something more native to Singapore in its support of global capitalism. Additionally, Felix takes large economic and reputational risks to try and facilitate his 'dream…to make Singapore the next place that all Hip-hop practitioners wanna' come to work…' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). By merging Hip-hop culture with what he describes as a 'hustle' philosophy, the Radikal Forze Anniversary offers both cultural exchanges and opportunities in Hip-hop to learn a business skillset where representatives 'create networks so that [they] can start to work together, without my involvement' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). This networking capacity is also another form of his facilitation of social capital building that creates connections between entrepreneurs from Singapore or transnationally between regions. Two notable visiting entrepreneurs include Katsu Ishikawa (CEO of WeAre Studios and co-creator of Cyphercode clothing) and Andrii 'Intact' Kurnosov (owner of Funk & Furious clothing). What is demonstrated in this aspect of his practice is the importance of bringing Hip-hop participants and businesses together physically and then allowing them to transition their relationships to online.

What we see in this facilitation is an expanded engagement with a global network of consumers, producers, participants and community leaders. Felix ties this practice to the 'next level', which defines a type of authenticity that comes from an embrace of a Hip-hop lifestyle. He does so carefully, highlighting the importance of introducing the youth to such an important social enterprising logic and the ability to leverage these relationships in a reciprocal investment into social development.

4.6 Social Media and Social Capital

Despite social media's importance in promoting Felix's projects around the world, maintaining meaningful social capital connections requires a cosmopolitan outlook. Social media is an incredible tool for the management of diverse social capital that is leveraged by Felix in the development of projects. However, he makes key distinctions in how his relationships are structured in the real world, how this resource is alternatively structured in cyberspace and the skills required to manage these relationships. There are a number of differences in the formation of social capital online and these connections are valued differently and require different attention and investment. A critical point of our conversation suggested that in the age of social media, face-to-face communication is still the most important factor in establishing meaningful social connections: 'one of the main things is to meet me in person so that we can talk because text is easily misinterpreted' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). Sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 explore the different values of these two forms of social capital.

4.6.1 The Importance of Physical Professional Communication

Throughout our interview, Felix identified social media as a key tool for managing relationships between international subcultural networks, local scenes, commercial representatives and political associations. However, he considers face-to-face communication fundamental to establishing meaningful subcultural and business relations. This is a tension similarly played out between online and offline methods of communication, participation and content delivery in Bangkok (see Chapter 3).[24] For example, the work in obtaining government approval (i.e., permits and licencing) and sponsorships from local-global corporations in Singapore involves offline face-to-face practice:

> Business is all about talking to people in person. You can [only] talk so much business on email but if you don't meet and *really* talk you'll never get it done. So that is also a big thing for me here, because Singapore is so small, the network's easy. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

The implications of such practices align with existing research on the importance of face-to-face communication in managing business relationships. Lee and Jones (2008, p. 561) find that direct face-to-face communication is a critical point for 'communicating beliefs, trust and emotions during the bonding of close work-related contacts'.

This face-to-face approach to establishing and maintaining professional social capital can also be broken down into structural, relational and cognitive dimensions. The structural dimension of social capital is afforded to highly networked and embedded field actors who benefit from the creation of strong social systems and understanding 'who to reach and how to reach them' (Nahapiet & Ghoshal

[24] Rory's professional network and Zac's various subcultural networks were established through Felix's and other's movements throughout the region.

1998, p. 244). Felix has benefited from scaffolding strong face-to-face networks within and outside of Hip-hop—across the Singaporean market (e.g., by way of sponsors like G-Shock, Carhartt and Hennessy), government and to other cultural communities overseas. The relational dimension of social capital refers to the degree to which field actors build emotional and behavioural connections to others through a history of interactions, helping to establish authority, expectations and mutual dependence (Adler & Kwan 2002). This relational element is also contingent on the degree to which field actors are embedded within their networks, are seen and are trusted. For example, Felix's face-to-face communications with corporations and government agencies in Singapore helps him create reputation that can later be leveraged. This has enabled him to establish:

> …a very respectable and credible name, where I can call somebody up, meet them, and say 'hey this is my event and I got to know you from so and so and he's already told you who I am', and it's easy for me… (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

The cognitive dimension of social capital relates to shared understandings, most commonly understood through a mutuality of ideas and norms that strengthen relationships (Nahapiet & Ghoshal 1998). As a Hip-hop participant, Felix's cognitive social capital is strengthened by his embrace of a Hip-hop lifestyle (from its fashion to its slang) as it connects him to cultural communities at home and abroad. In a professional context, his cognitive social capital is built on his ascription to the shared visions or goals of the state or corporations and in his ability to deliver outcomes as an entrepreneur. These shared understandings help Felix establish what is considered relational social capital that represents the degree to which he is embedded into social structures.

Felix's ability to create strong relationships through face-to-face communication rests on the size and complexity of commercial, governmental and cultural networks to which he is connected. His determined face-to-face approach has enabled his local success in integrating subcultural forms into the cultural and creative industries, pop culture, social initiatives and in establishing local-global flows of content, people and capital into Singapore from elsewhere. Aside from this important face-to-face social capital acquisition and development, Felix also uses digital tools that transform the structure and value of the network of social capital online.

4.6.2 Digital Transitions and Understanding Intercultural Relationships

Social media is framed by Felix as a means to manage the transformation of embodied social capital online. While social media offers an increased ability to maintain his social capital transnationally (i.e., new means of extending the social network and maintaining a relational embeddedness among various social configurations), he finds a number of limitations troubling. One limitation faced in sustaining online engagement is a lack of tools for navigating language and cultural barriers online, especially due to the diversity of Southeast Asian communities that make up his primary audience.

This is problematised further by the uneven penetration of internet across the Asia-Pacific and the varying degrees of financial access to, and use of, ICT across impoverished nations (Rayamajhi 2017). Hip-hop slang as an Afro-American lingua franca was thought to help bridge gaps in these limiting intercultural contexts (Chang & Watkins 2007) and provide alternative semantic connections in the face of difficult language barriers (Pennycook 2007b).

> …in terms of Hip-hop slang, everybody in the world knows 'fresh', everybody in the world knows anything related to Hip-hop. Most of the kids that don't even speak English properly, they know, 'dope', they know 'kicks', they know all the jargon and terminology. So, of course it does help, for sure, because that's something we are all emotionally vested in and it's an easy conversation. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

Slang is shown to be an important neutral ground for basic conversations. However, online, this small body of vocabulary is not sufficient to create intercultural understandings. Instead, Felix suggests that physical meetings help individuals understand each other's everyday contexts—their cultural behaviours, living conditions, traditions and expressions. Therefore, online connections that are not transitioned from the physical world might be understood as weaker social relationships of less commitment, investment or mutual understanding.

The above online–offline social capital duality might also be analysed through Mark Granovetter's (1983) well-known distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' ties. Weak ties refer to the loose relations of acquaintance that are often void of mutual investment and support. The management of weak ties is also an aspect of the culture produced by social media technology as a result of increasingly quick, inexpensive and stress-free connectivity (Donath & Boyd 2004). However, such vast connectivity can be useful due to the ability to advertise to a diverse network of global consumers. When asked of the value of these connections, Felix suggests 'it has helped a lot, in reaching out to people we have never met and who are outside of our network' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). However, this can reduce online social capital to nothing more than an opportunity for business and audience expansion. To strengthen relationships, Felix notes the importance of expressing an online cosmopolitan ethic of care—to 'dig deeper and try and understand them on a personal level, on a cultural level, rather than just on the art form side' (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

Strong ties are what can be considered a type of bonding social capital shared between partners, close friends and family (Putnam 2000). These connections are based off strong structural formations, shared cognitive understandings and higher levels of network embeddedness. These ties require a great degree of investment in the lives of others, their living conditions and knowledge of how to navigate diverse social networks. Strong ties are also importantly based around a reciprocal trust that diminishes the transactional opportunities that might arise from weak ties. When parties establish trust, they more willingly cooperate and can continue to strengthen this bond (Fukuyama 1995;

Putnam 1995). This does not mean that social capital formed from online encounters cannot be meaningful, but these relations are often more difficult to nurture at an indefinite distance. Lipp (2012) suggests that the development of strong social ties is contingent on different limiting national contexts, for example, censorship and freedoms of travel.

Social media removes the importance of establishing the mutual intercultural understanding that Felix suggests is often only understood by being physically embedded in other contexts. The emphasis Felix places on meeting people allows him to establish the type of trust necessary for developing stronger ties. It allows him to carefully draw on his experiences from travel to strategically shift the way he speaks to others in a range of contexts online. When asked if he modifies the way he communicates, Felix responded, 'of course, and even to people who understand the English language differently' (Huang, F, interview, 2015). This is especially important as English is often the neutral lingua franca of global Hip-hop networks online and critical for maintaining international social connections within the subculture:

> I think dance itself is already a bridge, but I feel that can only bring you so far, but if you actually dig deeper and try and understand them on a personal level, on a cultural level, rather than just on the art form side—cause that's easy for any of us to identify [with]. But outside of the dance and Hip-hop culture spectrum, getting to know people on their level and to understand their situation. Like in Malaysia, how are they living in Malaysia? How do they go about their daily lives? You have to be able to communicate English that they understand, you know what I mean? Like when I talk to a Malaysian or talk to a Vietnamese it's like 'how you do? You good now? Come Vietnam soon. Chill?' In a way they can get it. (Huang, F, interview, 2015)

This transition of Felix's cosmopolitan capital into what can be thought of as a type of digital cosmopolitanism allows him to better maintain a diverse network of strong ties. This digital cosmopolitanism is also informed by his decades of international travel and work with cultural communities across the Asia-Pacific—an experience available to a privileged class of internationally mobile people. Therefore, social media represents an essential technology in maintaining a global network of scale offering means to 'keep people in contact, even when life changes move [individuals] away from each other' (Ellison et al. 2007, p. 1165). However, this more sophisticated transformation of relationships between offline and online realities requires a critical intercultural awareness that helps sustain transnational senses of relational belonging.

While social media platforms are significant in reshaping the way that networks of social capital are established, managed and translated between the real world and cyberspace, these tools are still not understood as substitutes for face-to-face communication. Felix instead suggests such platforms are a type of internationally spanning enclosure where users visualise and manage connectivity from the increasing number of local-global relations and flows that are transplanted and/or remotely structured

in cyberspace: ‘social media allows me to keep track of what people are doing, not only what they are doing but how they are doing’ (Huang, F, interview, 2015).

4.7 Conclusion

Through the example of Felix Huang this chapter has demonstrated the importance of cultural intermediaries in establishing local-global connections from Singapore to an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture and beyond. This chapter has focussed on the dynamics of ‘social capital’ and how it is wielded as a resource. This chapter has explored this through the concept of the ‘social entrepreneur’. This moves away from the cultural entrepreneurship of the previous chapter and focuses on something far more socially inclined in its creation of value, the type of resources used and the way in which they are mobilised. What we have seen in this chapter is an application of this social logic in the Singaporean cultural and creative industries via entrepreneurship in grassroots Hip-hop and its connection to a larger Asia-Pacific culture.

Social entrepreneurship creates positive social value in Singapore through local social enterprises like Felix’s R-Studios that aligns with state creative industry objectives and helps tend to gaps in local inequalities. This social inclusion supports subversive, economic and cultural marginality in Singapore where there is insufficient state-provided social infrastructure for managing real diversity. This has softened the view of Hip-hop’s subversiveness, repositioning it as productive. Such movements have enabled Singapore’s connection with Asia-Pacific Hip-hop via the approval of local-global events like the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival which generates a wealth of social and economic value for the state through harnessing Felix’s professional and subcultural social capital.

The importance of physical congregation is argued to be a critical factor in creating the type of social capital essential for strong intercultural and professional ties. These weak and strong ties are also shown to have the ability to be transformed online via social media platforms. In both cases, what we see is a necessitated ethic of care that requires a cosmopolitan approach that harnesses an understanding of various cultural and professional contexts, normalities and traditions to sustain and mobilise this social resource in Singapore and in exchanges across the wider Asia-Pacific.

Social media, by way of this transformation of social capital online, has been shown to also be a significant factor enabling Felix’s local-global practice, especially in attracting large audiences to Singapore. Further, this chapter highlighted a distinction between weak and strong social capital ties. The ability to create weak ties is partially tied to contemporary social media use as expanding social networks is part of contemporary online cultures. This highlights the condition of humanity in our contemporary time, where a human–human, human–machine dynamic has become inexplicably embedded in social practices online. This brings back the importance of physical embodied space and

communication for establishing strong ties that become a more powerful resource when carefully transitioned to online. The ability to manage a breadth of intercultural social capital also requires the cross-cultural competencies common to the intermediary.

The next chapter examines how different forms of cultural and social entrepreneurship have been taken up in Shanghai. Shanghai is one of the most international cities within the PRC and has become an important node in Asia-Pacific Hip-hop despite its closed history.

Chapter 5: Shanghai: Redefining Global Hip-Hop in the People's Republic of China

Amid the thick smog from Shanghai's industrial quarters and the bright lights of the city's skyscrapers, a Hip-hop subculture thrives underground. Only a short walk away from the Jing An Temple, Caster Studio welcomes students of street-dance from across the city. It is here that one of Shanghai's most celebrated dancers teaches a new generation of participants. This is Danny Wang, a local Chinese resident, cultural entrepreneur and an internationally recognised b-boy. Danny belongs to a select few of a generation of early identifiers in China who took to Hip-hop and travelled the world to establish an international reputation. His internationalism with dance derives from travel as part of a regional entertainment industry exchange, alongside subcultural travel to explore the world and learn of its Hip-hop traditions. Such a repertoire has not been easy in Shanghai, which has been a site of trouble for external subcultural forms in the past. Hip-hop is practiced very differently in the PRC compared to the rest of the world and Danny has played an important role in creating an awareness for Hip-hop locally through its street-dance identity, carving out new local freedoms to participate in local-global exchanges by bartering with the state, international corporations and other global competitions as well as through his own studio and local-global event Breaking In Shanghai (BIS).

China's economic centres and creative industry hubs are mainly concentrated on the east coast. Shanghai's history of internationalism, censorship and current participation in global economies via its cultural and creative industries, renders it a locale of intrigue, especially when considering the cultural and economic value of subcultural intermediaries (an aspect not particularly visible in the cultural life of the city and one that will be unearthed by this research). This is because of its ability to accommodate alternative arts while also being heavily regulated by the state. Hip-hop, which typically emphasises a type of liberation from parent systems of institutional ideology and governmental oppression, becomes a particularly interesting phenomenon within the context of the PRC's one-party system. Hip-hop's local adoption is far more recent than other musical and performative styles—although, like the PRC's authoritarian market socialism, its roots date back to the 1980s. Music in Shanghai has been dominated by commercial pop due to its more lucrative position in the East Asian region and a history of subcultural forms being used for dissent. The troublesome role of music started with the rise of the Chinese delinquent (Liumang) in the 1980s and revolts against state ideology and parental cultural paradigms which were often met with violence, shaping the state's efforts in censorship. Under such conditions, Hip-hop is both restricted and

enabled in different ways and its communitarian value is again conflated among the emerging local Hip-hop music discourse.

This chapter examines Danny Wang as a cross-cultural intermediary whose work is determined by an increasingly complex dynamic of developing globalism from a relatively autochthonous, censorious country that has more recently modernised. This chapter draws on the frameworks of entrepreneurship from the previous chapters in discussing Danny's work in the cultural and creative industries and his ability to negotiate creative autonomy. His work plays a unique role in facilitating multidirectional flows of content, people and capital into China through new commercial-communitarian projects from Shanghai. Moreover, it is useful to also consider Marxist and communist critiques of commercial culture that informed the PRC Government's reactions to internal conflicts and shaped policies around delinquency and, in a Chinese context, cultural imperialism from developed industrialised nations, alternative Chinese modernities and diasporic cultural influence in Asia and the West.

Unlike other nations in the region, China has undergone some of the most dramatic cultural shifts in the last century, from Western penetration, communist revolution, the Cultural Revolution and Maoism to its current participation in global cultural flows. Cultural policies from the 1950s restricted consumption of external cultural forms, severely limiting exposure to international music subcultures. Since then, China has had a number of brushes with youth dissent through popular music which have recurrently been met with violence and harsher censorship. This chapter explores two aspects of one central question, how do cross-cultural intermediaries preserve creative autonomy in an authoritarian country that has only recently opened up to the global economy? And in what ways do they circumvent governmental censorship of Hip-hop in the commercial sphere while maintaining a connection to the Asia-Pacific region via large-scale events?

This is examined through the case study of Danny Wang, one of Shanghai's pioneering b-boys, Hip-hop event managers and community leaders. His work in Shanghai could be compared to Felix's in Singapore, transforming Hip-hop dance into a lucrative and productive practice saleable to the state and valuable in negotiating sponsorships. Danny has drawn on the skillsets of both social and cultural entrepreneurs to tend to gaps in the subcultural industries in Shanghai, developing a large international festival that helps nuance local Chinese Hip-hop through intersections and interactions with regional participants and global community leaders.

Live events and festivals have already been demonstrated to be important aspects of Asia-Pacific Hip-hop engagement. Négrier et al. (2013, p. 13) argues that festivals are economically and culturally important for the arts, the state and the economy as they contribute to a diversification of 'participative

social experiences'. They are also shaped and made malleable by local (social, cultural and political reception to music, arts) and global determinants (popularity and relevance of styles, artists, or public figures) (Négrier et al. 2013). For Hip-hop participants in the Asia-Pacific, they are important places for embodied shared experiences and cultural exchanges between local residents and a globally mobile milieu of participants. In the PRC, state cooperation is essential which makes the skilful negotiations of cultural entrepreneurs imperative, especially when proposing large international events.

Like Felix, Danny rescues Hip-hop from an authoritarian pressure that suppresses most subcultural forms, but his work is less contingent on leveraging social relationships to create sustainable change. Instead, it creates cultural value through servicing gaps in the subcultural market. In contrast to the previous case studies, Danny operates under uniquely complex political conditions that limit public expression and congregation, making coded subversion important. What we see in Danny's case is a practice of negotiating a type of creative autonomy that functions within boundaries of specific market contexts and helps Hip-hop find alternative footholds in China through large commercial events and government collaboration.

5.1 Historical Encounters with the West

To understand the conditions shaping Danny's contemporary work, it is useful to reflect on intersections with international culture in China and the nation's struggles with modernisation over the last century. Subcultures in China are interesting due to their relatively contradictory position within a strict authoritarian regime. Until recently, Westernised cultural forms such as Hip-hop have had little visibility in the PRC. This is due to both a distance from the West and a complicated history of music and media censorship that has diminished its local reception. Despite this, Chinese youth have still found ways to participate in the creation of local Hip-hop through glimpses into the global from bootlegged and pirated media distributed inconspicuously, allowing Hip-hop to grow underground.

While Western musical and subcultural encounters occurred as early as the 1920s in China (Jones 2001; Ho & Law 2011, p. 2012), many popular music forms faced a systematic prohibition before the revolution. For example, jazz was adopted within Shanghai and later condemned. From the 1920s up until the close of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1970s, jazz was represented as 'yellow music' in an attempt to steer the population towards more anodyne national genres like *tongsu* (Wang 2013). The mandarin character for 'yellow' also means 'pornographic' or 'erotic'—a reference to the state's distaste for imported Western depravities that were perceived as a threat to the national culture.

The Cultural Revolution of the 1960s intensified suspicions of Western art and music. The Revolution had a significant impact on the general ethos around expression in China and was momentous in shaping the state's approach to censorship and managing dissent. The ramifications of this internalisation of culture meant a slowing of the growth of domestic creative industries, especially the production and performance of music (Ludden 2012; Jones 1999).[25] What this closed approach meant for music was a centralisation of consumption around state-approved genres (Ramet 1994). This control of culture was an outcome of Mao's enthusiasm for Marxist–Leninist ideology which emphasised art as a tool for the dissemination of governmental messages to the poor, working class and military in a restructured society (Wai-Chung & Wing-Wah 2012). Such heavy regulations during the Revolution and early post-revolution years meant that encounters with the West were limited to classical and popular 'high' arts (Yang 2007).

In post-revolutionary China, especially over the last four decades, state cultural policies have undergone dramatic changes allowing the nation to more actively participate in the global economy through a reform of the cultural and creative industries (Xue & Zhong 2012). Music independent of both mass commerce and the state is, however, seemingly less prominent in plans for artistic revitalisation, creative city development and urban regeneration. There is a noticeable focus on popular saleable alternatives (Montgomery 2009). This is partially due to events where subcultural music has been associated with resistance. One example is the Democracy Movement of the 1980s which, at its apex, was brought to a halt by military action during the Tiananmen Square protests. A number of artists played a role in breaking cultural norms and reflecting on the discontent and disconnection of youth under the PRC's political system. Cui Jian played a role in this movement, his music reflecting a youthful yearning for democratic modernisation through songs like 'Nothing to my name' (1986). Hou Dejian, a Taiwanese pop star, also sang of a civil disconnection in China during protests in Tiananmen Square, highlighting tensions between Taiwan and Hong Kong and their push for independence while criticising the PRC's resolute stance (Jaivin 2001). Such a politicised Rock subculture resulted in bans against performance. Arrests were made for any resistance and censorship again became a central tool for state control. This period of conflict led to a type of self-censorship and lack of interest from major record labels and promoters in engaging with subversive art, splitting the industry into myriad independent underground musicians and a select few commercial producers (Meyer-Clement 2015).

Such restrictions did not entirely prevent the flow of global cultural goods. An immense amount of record waste to be recycled by the West was instead smuggled into China (De Kloet 2005a, 2005b).

[25] This has similarly occurred in other socialist countries from the 1950s onwards in an attempt to establish a sense of social obedience. Both Soviet Russia and East Germany went through periods of censorship, cultural policing and a transformation of the arts into methods of propaganda.

These products were refurbished by workers and then distributed through black markets known as *dakou* in the 1990s (Cockrill & Liu 2013). Similar markets appeared in Soviet Russia, whereby discarded x-ray plates were used to press bootleg recordings, known as 'ribs', creating a channel for music flowing from the US and the UK while national borders were closed (Troi͡tskiĭ 1987). In China, this new oasis of foreign cultural goods was responsible for a new underground culture of music exchange that was facilitated by small record labels in the wake of more relaxed political regulation that accompanied the state's increasing desire to be globally connected in the 1990s (De Kloet 2005c). These markets also symbolise an important uptake of Hip-hop in China as one of the first points of exposure (Liu 2014).

In more contemporary encounters with international popular music, the state has adopted a bifurcated approach, tolerating pop culture within the newly modernising nation (Huang 2003; Wang 2013) while continuing to tightly censor the music of subcultures deemed potentially dangerous (Cockrill & Liu 2013). The pop industry has more recently globalised and advanced via Taiwan, the world's most 'active importer' of South Korean and Japanese pop culture (Sang-Yeon 2008a, 2008b), and Hong Kong, where pop culture from the West has traditionally been framed as less threatening (Berry et al. 2009). These popular flows have enabled Hip-hop (Xi Ha) to develop more freely in the PRC's music sphere where its aesthetics and identities have similarly been taken up by the youth (De Kloet 2005d). These developments are from a number of intersections with Western subcultural media and international travel. There were 'only [a] few Hip-hop artists in the period before the 1990s' and it was more widely popularised by mainland Chinese diaspora in Taiwan, Hong Kong and the US returning with new cultural goods during the 2000s (Khan 2009, p. 233).

Now, Hip-hop is incredibly popular in many forms. The commercial music aspect remains separated by mainstream media and the government seems to have issues specifically with Hip-hop's local music identity. New musicians from China have become incredibly popular via television shows like *Rap of China* (中国新说唱, produced by media company iQiyi), and after some contestants engaged in promoting 'drug culture', the State Administration of Press, Publication, Radio, Film and Television declared that it 'specifically requires that programs should not feature actors with tattoos [or depict] hip hop culture, sub-culture and dispirited culture' (quoted in Quackenbush & Chen 2018)[26]. Such a move positions Hip-hop as a culture that is 'tasteless, vulgar and obscene' (Changli as quoted in Quackenbush & Chen 2018). It is interesting that such aggressive censorship applies only to the world of Hip-hop associated with rap music in China due to concerns of dissent and threat to national cultural values. However, rap emerges as a powerful mode of marginal expression and

[26] State concerns also flare over the nations Uighur minority finding a popular mode of expression through rap (Walker & Hartley 2013).

presents challenges to the political system. By contrast, the state has more willingly embraced Hip-hop dance which is more broadly considered street-dance (jiewu) as shown on television in *Hot Blood Dance Crew* (热血街舞) and *Street Dance of China* (这！就是街舞) — ironically, produced by the same media company responsible for Hip-hop's aforementioned commercial music controversy that triggered censorship for alleged promotion of drugs and delinquency.

The above demonstrates a wariness by the Chinese state towards youth music and its subcultures in fear of acts of dissent and subversion. Despite this, underground markets in the 1990s and contemporary popular music economy have enabled Hip-hop's local consumption and adoption. What is interesting about the literature on Hip-hop in China (at least that in English) is that the discourse focusses heavily on the creativity of lyricists and musicians. This chapter explores Breaking as an alternative Hip-hop practice to address this gap in the literature and demonstrate an alternative history of Hip-hop that stems from its performing arts. What is interesting is how dance is given an alternative creative autonomy and perceived very differently from the music of Hip-hop in China, enabling an alternative subcultural literacy. Such divisions offer openings to cross-cultural intermediaries in developing Hip-hop in China.

5.2 Introducing Danny Wang

Danny Wang is a local Shanghainese Hip-hop pioneer and global subcultural public figure. He works in Shanghai as a local cultural entrepreneur and is responsible for a range of educational programs, a performing arts studio and a series of large-scale local-global events. During my time in Shanghai he was busy making a number of television appearances. Nonetheless, he was happy to make time to discuss the history of Hip-hop in China and where he has made his contributions. After a series of messages back and forward on WeChat, we met at a Starbucks, where we spent most of the day talking. He is polite, enthusiastic and speaks English gleaned from his travel and participation in Hip-hop. His local success is partially a result of his experience as an early identifier of Chinese Hip-hop culture and the international subcultural capital he has accrued through exchanges with other global cultural leaders. Danny has been notable in his attempt to create local-global connections, important in enabling the local community's international mobility, as well as his own, to other regional and global Hip-hop nodes. This has brought him, the city and the nation some distinction by increasing the visibility of Chinese Hip-hop in global networks and through the provision of support for the often tethered, internalised local Shanghainese and wider national Hip-hop dance cultures in China. As in the previous case studies, such familiarity with intercultural travel and experiences abroad have helped shape an outward facing cosmopolitan habitus that enhances cross-cultural intermediary abilities to work between cultures. Unlike the previous case studies, Danny's genesis in Hip-hop is

tied to his engagement within a particularly unique local subcultural history and development that he traces back to the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Figure 2: My Interview with Danny Wang, July 2016

China's early embrace of Hip-hop dance was through a small dance troupe of traditional and contemporary dancers who travelled to New York to study through an institutional linkage program. These programs offered scholarships to contemporary Chinese performers to attend exchange programs and workshops overseas (Gitelman 1995). Their engagement with street performers was important as they encountered major US exponents such as the New York City Breakers and the Dynamic Rockers, a group of influential early identifiers of high subcultural capital. This first generation of dancers were exposed to an authentic experience of Breaking at its origin before returning to China with new movements to inspire the youth.

In addition to their early travels abroad, the Chinese dance troupe also learned of Hip-hop dance from blockbuster films, such as the subcultural classic *Breakin'* (Silberg 1984).[27] Such texts were important for closed cultures as they offered glimpses into the world outside of China. These texts also introduced new dance forms and alternative movements into the Chinese public sphere that were not aligned with traditional Chinese cultural arts:

[27] Silberg's 1984 film *Breakin'* was also known as *Breakdance* and *Break Street 84'* in different parts of the world.

> ...they never believed dance could do something like this—you can open your mind and open your body, and do anything—because the classical dance is always keeping [you tight] and holding your body. Everybody did the same—training, always [was the] same. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

Danny mentions the importance of this text on the youth of his generation and how it connected them to new ideas and forms of expression. Its influence has also been documented as an important work detailing the rapidly changing youth mentality and its expression through film (Berry 2009, p. 144; Zhou 2007, p. 121). *Yaogun Qingnian* [*Rock Kids*] (Zhuangzhuang 1988) is one example, which transplants the storyline and group dynamics of Silberg's original, replacing the cast with some of the dancers who had gone abroad to study dance in the previous years. These early identifiers were among Danny's first influences.

During these early years, Hip-hop dances began to emerge in various pockets across Shanghai's city. Danny recounts his early engagements with Hip-hop in nightclubs. These venues had only recently re-emerged as these spaces had been outlawed during the Cultural Revolution due to their role in enabling gambling, the trade of narcotics, prostitution and intercultural socialisation (Wakeman 1995). The 1980s and 1990s also saw greater support for community dancing with a number of dance halls restored or built by the state. During this period, there was a revival of social dance where rock-dancing (yaogunwu or yaobaiwu) and disco were common among the working class in Shanghai (Farrer & Field 2015). Music was also influential at these entertainment venues, however, unlike the various musical forms that influenced the development of Hip-hop, like Funk, Electric Funk or Hip-hop music, China's Hip-hop dance culture developed out of a very different context:

> Everybody knows the music in New York, after 1980 it was…electric, Afrika Bambaata.., electric breaks and electric funk…So after 1990, China started Hip-hop…this was [through] disco and funk, not electric funk like *planet rock* (Bambaata 1986). Just disco, a lot of disco music. We [didn't] have hip-hop, electric funk or electric breaks, nothing… (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

At this time, popular DJ technology was also unknown to Chinese dance halls and nightclub establishments. Pre-recorded tapes were instead played back-to-back in the absence of the turntable and record collections. Danny recalls going to nightclubs as a youth with his mother as she would curate the music of a local establishment in Shanghai. We might describe this experience through a Bourdieusian lens by articulating Danny's proximity to this type of music curatorial work as a tremendous influence in shaping his habitus. These spaces were not only sites of early Hip-hop dance culture, but were associated with a return to leisurely consumption of popular music as the opening of borders in the 1990s hastened local-global pop cultural localisations and obsessions. This club culture was transformed in the late 1990s by the growing techno music boom and saw Hip-hop dance's retreat from these spaces.

This rapid change in evolving music taste among Shanghai's few venues resulted in Hip-hop's local identity, networks and foundational knowledge, incoherently forming within the local context. Hip-hop was not yet 'Hip-hop', and instead divided practices with which specific milieus identified (e.g., rappers were rappers and dancers were dancers, but neither were Hip-hop). This fragmentation is an important factor that has led to the isolation of Hip-hop music in the wider social and political discourse:

> Nobody knew the 'Hip-hop' words, they just call this 'rapping'. Some areas would call it rapping and some areas would call it jump-dance and some areas would call it bounce-dance. In Shanghai, we called it the bounce-step, because when we started we saw the running man. But Locking, we [did not] call this 'Locking', we called this 'big hand', because you're always using your hand to pose…Some areas would call it 'rapping' because it was done with 'rapping music'…So all we had were different words. So sometimes we call the swipe or swipe spin, we call this big circle. We call floor six-step, small step [and] every different city had a different name. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

Hip-hop's original conception in the West was more clearly defined and brought together creative disciplines united by peace, unity and love. In the PRC, more disparate interpretations of these creative practices across the nation have contributed to a difficult local comprehension or definition of what Hip-hop symbolises.

The lack of access to international media and information in the PRC resulted in the various elements of Hip-hop becoming distinguished and defined loosely by meanings that were often lost in translation. The collective knowledge of the city and national scene were further complicated by the immense distance between the PRC's various regions and first-tier cities (places that first encountered Hip-hop) and the availability and difficulty of navigating between regions via public transport. This was later improved on by the government's infrastructure 'speed-up' campaigns (in 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001 and 2004) which improved the national rail networks.

At this time, local internet development became a powerful connector for local dispersed Hip-hop cultural pockets. Communities were brought together by a local hub, 51555.com, which operated like bboyworld.com and style2ouf.com, becoming China's first online network of subcultural exchange. This was similarly a place where local issues were played out and local glimpses into the global dance community made possible. These factors have been essential in enabling the growth of the local scene by way of cultural entrepreneurs like Danny whose contributions have advanced these local and global connections.

5.3 Local-Global Cosmopolitan Capital: Intercultural Subcultures in Shanghai

Previous chapters developed the concept of cosmopolitan capital acquired through intercultural experiences and enhances the border-crossing capacity of cross-cultural intermediaries. It is a concept

that applies particularly well to Danny, as he has had a number of intercultural experiences in China and abroad. Danny's journey to acquiring cosmopolitan capital is fascinating and demonstrates underlying motivations for establishing his local-global commercial-communitarian projects. While attending the Shanghai University of Sport as a gymnastics student, Danny developed a number of important intercultural skills from interactions with international students—a skillset integral to cross-cultural intermediation as demonstrated in the previous chapters. His experience included an engagement with other East Asian cultures, unusual in China due to the histories of bloody conflict (particularly with Japan) (Henriot 2012, p. 107).

During his enrolment, Shanghai and Fu Dan University hosted a number of international students, opening access to education for expats and as a means to establish partnerships through exchange programs with other universities. These were sites of various new intercultural exchanges, particularly from East Asian countries like Japan and Korea, but also welcomed others from the US and Europe. At this time, the university setting was ripe with cultural conflict and inter-school rivalry between local Chinese citizens and Japanese international students. Danny reflects on an important moment in his youth at an impromptu competition between students on campus:

> But remember, I can do everything (Breaking wise), they (the Japanese students) can only do the flare and the windmill—it's very easy…I smoked [them]…Afterwards they [were] like, 'you're awesome, I want to learn from you'. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

This illustrates an important function of Hip-hop in neutralising conflict through its communitarian, multicultural and participatory ethos (Chang 2005)—even in the Chinese context, where Hip-hop's values are often misconstrued. Danny's participation is exemplary of how Hip-hop operates to overcome these intercultural tensions. In his subsequent exchanges with US, European, Japanese and Korean cultures, international students helped him develop an international perspective that would later distinguish him from the wider mainstreamed insularity of China and a conservative perception towards foreign influences (especially with cultures that threatened the imperial nation in the past). This not only diversified his understanding of the international depth of the subculture through an exchange of DIY subcultural texts from the West and Japan (where no other alternatives existed in Shanghai at the time), but provided him a type of cosmopolitan outlook that would later be rewarded within and outside of the PRC. This international student community offered a means of developing a cosmopolitan habitus without the need for travel. These early international connections also allowed Danny later to travel through Hip-hop, developing cosmopolitan capital in two distinct ways. First, through professional work in the local-global and regional entertainment industries (throughout Japan, Hong Kong and Taiwan), and second, by way of the intercultural encounters from self-directed subcultural travel, such as in his visits to Europe, the US or Korea.

Danny's Japanese network in Shanghai worked in collaboration with Japanese entertainment corporations (e.g., idol schools and talent agencies) who were looking to expand into the Chinese region. The globalisation of Japanese pop culture and its move into Shanghai is a significant alternative globalisation (Iwabuchi 2002) that stimulated an intercultural exchange between the neighbouring nations and influenced the PRC's local pop culture. Danny was part of this uptake and was, for a short period, a celebrity of sorts:

> The management company…that came to Shanghai. They wanted to train students. So we studied sing[ing], performance, everything. They wanted to contract us—my group, we have 5 [people]—they wanted us to go to Japan to learn to [become singers], like a singer group. We take the first flight to go to the other cities to go to performances. [I] had fans take my name card waiting at the airport. Very popular! And big money! So we had contracts on TV shows and films. So a lot of popular Hong Kong stars like Guo-Fu-Cheng and Wang-Lee-Hom—we were in cooperation together. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

This small stint of training enabled him to travel to Japan and a number of Chinese cities on the mainland and in Taiwan and Hong Kong, granting him new means of gaining economic and cosmopolitan capital. This enabled him greater international mobility and exposure to cultural diversity in the Asia-Pacific region, from his participation across East Asian media industries, an ability not commonly given to those in his field, especially peers from China. Such professional international engagement overseas separates him from the old *huaqiao* diaspora who often migrated into trade work to procure remittances (Le Bail 2005). By contrast, Danny's overseas travel belongs to a more fluid condition of the bourgeois lifestyles of the entertainment industry. This exposure has helped him develop perspective from outside of China looking inwards, helping him identify the importance and value of Hip-hop dance as part of the cultural and creative industries.

The position of Hip-hop dance in the Chinese entertainment industry is connected to local-global pop cultural production. This relationship has transformed street-dance into a valuable asset for local cultural agents who work in television, event management or advertising. It has also allowed cultural entrepreneurs like Danny to create supporting social infrastructure in the creative industries—in his case, through a performing arts studio. Such work takes more of a communitarian approach to enhancing the local dance communities. For example, Danny has developed educational programs that help transition casual participants into professionals. This aligns with the state's cultural policy for revitalisation through creative industries and has helped contextualise street-dance within a performing arts and popular cultural discourse. The result is seen through various media channels capitalising on these once underground cultures including programming managed by the state (e.g., CCTV Dance Competitions). In this way, Hip-hop dance is given a unique freedom, contrasting with its popular music uptake which is constantly scrutinised and threatened with censorship. Such an embrace by the state is bolstered by the interconnectedness of agents like Danny within the regional

creative industries. The Chinese distinction of street-dance has offered more creative autonomy to businesses, cultural entrepreneurs and performers as their practices seemingly do not threaten the state through any obvious subversion. Hip-hop dance in Shanghai takes on a similar identity to other areas in the Asia-Pacific where Hip-hop is heavily commercialised. However, this professionalisation is valued, rather than scrutinised, for its authenticity. This has enabled Danny's entrepreneurial practice that finds both cultural and economic value in street-dance as 'art', saleable both to the state and corporations.

Aside from his cultural and creative industry work, Danny has also traversed the globe through independent subcultural travel, participating abroad in Asia, Europe and the US. In the early 2000s, he travelled to one of the world's largest international Hip-hop festivals in France, the Notorious I.B.E., where he established new networks within global Hip-hop communities. Returning as one of China's few internationally recognised b-boys, his reputation evolved and his new status provided him the necessary subcultural capital, making him visible internationally. This networking and engagement in local-global scenes has brought him new opportunities in judging other international events (e.g., Floor Wars 2006 in Denmark). By maintaining his local-global significance through travel and returning to local communities with new understandings, Danny has amassed incredible social networks, which is partly attributed to his ability to parlay in English (often the neutral language in Hip-hop communities, as discussed in Chapter 4). English in many ways offers an important mode of communicating between cultures and, without it, Danny may have been unable to establish such diverse networks across the globe. These networks have become the cornerstone of his local-global contemporary practice, aiding the creation of large-scale international events.

As we have seen in previous case studies, cultural entrepreneurs often work to bridge commercial and non-commercial forms. Rory, for example, similarly drifts between commercial work and communitarian investments, influences and motivations for his work. Such commercial and communitarian cosmopolitan encounters have also been important in Danny's case. This is exemplified in one of his businesses, Caster Studio, a performing arts studio that brings together his experiences of professional performance and community engagement from across the world and recontextualises them within the Chinese context. This endeavour is shaped by Danny's communitarian and commercial influences that are refracted into a cultural entrepreneurship that helps cultivate a global Hip-hop in Shanghai.

5.4 Hip-Hop Entrepreneurship with Chinese Characteristics: Caster Studio

In 2006, Danny opened Caster Studio as a way to cultivate a local Hip-hop dance community and support participants wanting to professionalise, for example, by helping them with promotions,

marketing and understanding public relations. The gaps he has identified in the local subcultural market stem from the limitations around congregation and the freedom to dance in public spaces. These conditions have made it difficult to sustain physical bonds of a large and dispersed Hip-hop cultural community. The withdrawal from street performances (common in more liberal countries like Australia or Japan) and the associated cypher culture tradition have changed the nuance of Hip-hop dance in the Chinese context. Instead, it is transformed into something indoors, often appearing partially commercial, and has become intertwined with a local competition culture. Such limitations offer prime opportunities for development. In response to this withdrawal from the street, Danny has developed the studio both as a practice space and a dance school.

Caster Studio is a multilayered business registered with authorities under Shanghai Dahe Shengping Culture Media Co. Ltd that provides dance classes and mentorship alongside event management and training for artists in how to negotiate the local cultural and creative industries (Caster 2014). The success of such endeavours is made possible by Danny's status as an early identifier among local Hip-hop communities and as a public figure, working with the government in reforming street-dance education and leveraging his experience in music and on television, having become known from his participation on CCTV's national street-dance competitions which he regularly won. Over the last decade, the studio has become an institution for street-dance, allowing a radical expansion from its headquarters in the Hongkou district in Shanghai into a network of studios across the country, supporting hundreds of mentors and thousands of students.

Through his work in Caster Studio, Danny has noticed two key tendencies in the younger generation. The first is competitiveness, young Hip-hop artists are 'always focus[ing] too much on the battle and [to] win' (Wang, D, interview, 2016). The second is their lack of business savviness. These are both interesting aspects that reflect a nuance in local Chinese Hip-hop dance culture. First, a competitive culture that has developed generationally from competitions on television (e.g., Tong Tong Club's Competitions from as far back as the 1990s) and the lack of organic community exchanges in public spaces that, in other places, make the dance more of a social, often chance, encounter of hanging out. Mentoring new students so that they are able to participate in this competition culture with a wider comprehension of Hip-hop traditions also demonstrates how this ethos is generationally learned, but also made malleable by intermediaries like Danny who bring back a communitarian understanding to China through global Hip-hop. To balance this competitive ethos, Danny demonstrates an importance of cultural exchanges through Hip-hop by setting up 'a practice group for the younger generation and teaching the kids' (Wang, D, interview, 2016).

Second, the emphasis on a business know-how helps teach participants the means to harness the cultural and economic value of street-dance. This enables and helps legitimise a new type of

subcultural labour that frames street-dance as 'art' and links Hip-hop to a type of competency for working in the cultural and creative industries. This type of work satisfies social outcomes, for example, supporting socio-economic mobility, and by applying a business approach it is often impressive to governments (Naudin 2018). The Caster program also teaches what can be thought of as a type of cultural entrepreneurship, a freelance self-enterprising ability linked to Danny's own endeavours or professional habitus obtained from working throughout the region in the entertainment industry and the local emphasis for street-dancers to work together with corporations (e.g., G-Shock or Sketchers). This has meant Hip-hop has become more commercially positioned. However, it is also given a creative autonomy through cross-cultural intermediations, for example, Danny's partnerships with powerful international corporations like Nike, Sketchers and G-Shock. This is also expressed as a key studio objective that cultivates participation within the media and music industries (ironically, not so much Hip-hop music, but more so in the larger pop vehicle[28]), the artist economy and in advertising work (Caster 2014). These commercial endeavours also contribute to creative industry objectives (Yang & Černevičiūtė 2017) that soften any perceived connections to subversion or street identity. As seen in Chapter 4, this strategy has also been followed in Singapore where Felix aligns his practice with programs that target at-risk youth to develop social infrastructure for diversity where the state is unable.

In the Shanghai case, such programs draw on Danny's sports background and he has been involved in incorporating street-dance into physical education in China. This is done in a bottom-up way through community programs partnering with 64 universities across the country, and a top-down way by demonstrating the 'team-building' capacity of the dance through programs for the government (Wang, D, interview, 2016). The connection with physical education is facilitated by Danny's relationship with the deputy secretary general of the National Street Dance Executive Committee of the former State Sports General Administration, who is also the former vice president of the CCTV National TV Street Dance Competition and one of the directors of Caster Studio. This move from street culture to education and government collaboration has transformed Hip-hop in Shanghai, giving it a mainstream cultural and economic value under a new educational framework. The reconceptualisation of street-dance further distinguishes it from Hip-hop music.

By reconceptualising street-dance and reframing it through participation in creative industries and education, it has deepened the value of Hip-hop dance locally and opened new discourses with the state who have been more willing and interested in supporting its various local cultural and economic footholds across the country. This distinction has further fragmented the local Hip-hop subculture into specific subcultural milieu who once together participated in an overarching Hip-hop culture.

[28] Perhaps an offshoot of the Korean wave, as it has been influential in China and similarly co-opts street-dance into its identity.

Admittedly, this process is not uncommon in the West, where there has also been a departure from the collective celebration of Hip-hop where music now dominates the mainstream discourse (Pope 2005). Danny's occasional collaboration with the state is also somewhat unusual. In most of the classic studies of subculture, any interface with the state has almost always been oppositional (Hall & Jefferson 1975). Danny's work however, reflects the condition of Hip-hop in Shanghai and a need for legitimisation and relevance in the cultural and creative industries. The outcome of this cultural and creative industry connection appears to enhance the sustainability of local subcultural projects (as we saw in Felix's example in Chapter 4).

Danny's commercial and governmental work has also brought his studio to the attention of businesses and investors. In 2018, Caster Studio was regarded among the best dance studios in China and received tens of millions of Chinese Yuan through angel investor financing from corporations iQiyi, Chenhai Capital and Wuhan Mutual Entertainment (Lu 2018). Such investment is prompted by the significant role Caster Studios has in the creative industries, in addition the cultural capital of its teachers, as sanctified by gatekeepers on iQiyi's popular television show *Hot Blood Dance Crew*. Such work has increasingly transformed into something that is classically entrepreneurial through attracting alternative funds through seeding, venture capital and independent investors through engaging with risks and opportunities in the local market (Dibrova 2015).

The above discussion demonstrates a complex enmeshing of cultural and social entrepreneurship. Danny's profile has allowed him to find ways to create opportunities for himself and others, despite the barriers to Hip-hop in establishing a local identity. His work is made possible by a creative autonomy that is linked to subcultural capital, professional networks, state connections and business experience. However, it also raises questions about the extent to which it is possible to maintain authenticity while also opening paths between the subculture and to mainstream commercialism. Holding Hip-hop as an art, at high value, in this process of marketisation may also come across as inauthentic or selling out as in other places such as the US. But what is actually occurring is a response to local conditions and historical determinants, and it is this marketisation and legitimisation of Hip-hop dance lifestyles that allows its ongoing local development in the PRC.

5.5 International Hip-Hop: Street-Dance Events in the People's Republic of China

In facilitating local-global cultural exchanges, Danny has used international events to create multidirectional flows of influence and participation between the PRC and the rest of the world. His work in bringing large-scale local-global events to Shanghai is where we see his cross-cultural intermediary practice most clearly, creating connections between China and the Asia-Pacific region

and the wider international community. These connections continue to help local Hip-hop dance communities modernise or 'catch up' to their global counterparts. The international scope of this work has been important for the local subcultural community in its creation of both cultural and professional local-global networks of exchange. These events have taken on a competition format shaped by local determinants and global examples (e.g., the Notorious I.B.E. in Europe or Radikal Forze Anniversary in Singapore). What we see in Shanghai is an expansion of a local-global competition format into China through connections to mobile travelling cohort of subcultural agents. These are both incidental flows of people and those who are brought into China by figures like Danny who are familiar with global Hip-hop and experienced at making things happen in China through negotiation with the state and corporate sponsorships.

One of his first and largest contributions in enabling China to enter this process of international Hip-hop exchange was investing in Battle of the Year (BOTY), an international Hip-hop dance competition that first appeared in Hanover, Germany in 1990. Its expansion internationally has provided it a global recognition derived from the evolution which was started by 'a local youth culture centre with 500 hard-core fans' and has expanded 'to an arena packed with more than 12,000 roaring spectators and B-boy crews from all over the world' (Battle of the Year 2014). The event has defined a type of Hip-hop world cup event paradigm that various international practitioners harness to stimulate flows to different regions of the world. In 2005, Danny ran the first Chinese qualifying competition in Shanghai, securing new international mobility for local performers to participate in Germany. By 2007, BOTY was also supported by a regional competition that brought all the qualifiers from Asia to one place (usually China). In addition to BOTY, Danny has also facilitated other Asia-Pacific regional mobility through the production of competition qualifiers from Japan and Korea in Shanghai. His work with R16 secured new pathways for finalists to Korea and Freestyle Session to Japan. Such events allow China's best dancers new means of participating in Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture. Admittedly, the benefits of this need to be balanced against an elitism embedded in the competition culture. There are certainly tensions between the focus on winning (that Danny emphasises) and a communitarian outlook that prioritises cultural exchange. This has reoriented Danny's focus to instead create an event that brings international communities to Shanghai to promote a more locally focussed celebration of Hip-hop.

5.5.1 Harnessing the Global in a Chinese Context: Breaking In Shanghai

Danny's local-global event BIS represents an important shift back to creating strong networks between local Chinese communities and helping facilitate local-global cultural exchanges in a Chinese context. The event's role in stimulating regional tourism is likely another reason for the ongoing creative autonomy Danny has been permitted in hosting such events annually from Shanghai.

BIS's local-global relevance is supported by a series of qualifiers held across the world in New York, Los Angeles, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Europe and Brazil. Such events are made possible by commercial promoters and sponsors (e.g., Sketchers) and through redirected funding from Caster Studio. Despite this return to a local-global cultural exchange in Shanghai by mobilising international networks, Danny has diversified the flows into the city, bringing it a new distinction as an alternative Hip-hop or street-dance city. Nevertheless, the global qualifiers and flows he facilitates have also earned him criticism:

> We got a lot of heat from bringing a lot of international breakers who often won the battles. People said we don't support the Chinese breakers but that's not true. We made this so people in China would battle the best and become better. (Wang as quoted in Jussi 2017)

Such an event is important and should instead be thought of as an opportunity for local engagement with international agents through workshops and cultural exchanges. This is especially important for the Shanghainese scene as it:

> [does not] have a lot of b-boys. So I want all the b-boys [to come] back, [to] watch and [train] together. So we can see the young generation—how they can dance…This is the point for us, we show to the young generation that we are still watching you guys. If you need any help, we can support you. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

Support at BIS comes in a number of forms. First, through open free workshops to all levels of dancers from different styles. Second, unlike other regional festivals like the Radikal Forze Anniversary, BIS takes a unique approach to help support generational differences in the dance, splitting them into under and over 18 categories. By doing so, Danny hopes to encourage more interaction within and between emerging and established generations that are often separated by decades of experience when they compete. He has also stated that BIS is an opportunity for all cultures to come together referring to Hip-hop's principles of peace, unity and love. This offers younger generations their own sphere of participation to promote inclusiveness for dancers at different stages of developing their practice. Third, it offers local participants an opportunity to establish networks with travelling international participants. Fourth, the competition offers thousands of dollars for winners of the various events.

This endeavour illustrates a need to be global that has been played out in a number of subcultural contexts in China. There is much debate in China about whether the country's development has been based solely on copying or has also involved recreating. Hip-hop is no exception and the process of mimicry applies to street-dance inasmuch as it has within the history of rap music, where, compared to the West, 'we will always be in a state of copying. When we have something new, we will throw away the old one. We have all sorts of music, but none is properly digested by us' (Zhang 2000, p. 19). This is perhaps a symptom of rapid modernisation and a yearning to be connected globally as the PRC becomes increasingly intertwined into the global economy. Such rapid development has called

for an authentic participation by replacing the emphasis on celebrating the Chineseness of earlier generations with an articulation of a new China that is defined by an eagerness to transform into the contemporary and cosmopolitan. This was also true for youth in the 1990s coming out of the Rock era (De Kloet 2005a, 2010). Some artists find their way of subverting the limitations of the local Chinese market to establish global audiences, which help bring them a legitimacy that is later acknowledged in local contexts. Acts like the Higher Brothers, for example, found new international success through collaborating with international online music channels like 88Rising who focus on creating Asian connections to the Western market and have helped popularise Chinese Hip-hop internationally through cultural collaborations with artists in Korea, for example, in songs like 'We-Chat' (ft. Kieth Ape) (2017). This move to first establish an international reputation has been significant for their success in Shanghai, who look to the popular global trends that are given a type of legitimised cultural capital that is authenticated by the world outside of China. This tactic is also true of Danny's international subcultural practice that has brought him the credibility that enables his local-global work with street-dance.

BIS is uniquely positioned to make use of local geography to help bring together the translocal with wider global scenes, as there is a deficit of internationally oriented street-dance events (with the exception of a few such as Keep on Dancing) and limitations to both political and economic freedoms to participate outside the PRC. This type of modernising global connection and renegotiation of forms is facilitated not only by people leaving China and returning with new subcultural knowledge (Khan 2009), but through using international resources in locally produced culture. This is facilitated by partnerships made overseas, by circumventing the local market, with neighbouring and global cultural entrepreneurs like John Jay from Korea who have supported the event previously. Moreover, there has been an increasing global connection at these large events between regions across China and crews from Japan, Korea and, increasingly, from Russia. Such events have a regional significance in the Asia-Pacific region due to their proximity, however, the main purpose is to help transform the local Chinese scene by way of international global exchanges of all sorts. To stimulate cosmopolitan encounters, Danny draws on networks within and outside of the Asia-Pacific to stimulate diversity of both culture and stylistic approaches. These exchanges also become part of flows from Shanghai that are remediated out either by popular media producers via YouTube (e.g., Bboyworldasia China) or through DIY videos (e.g., 'Breakin In Shanghai (B.I.S.) | Bboy Vlog | Ep 33', Dyzee Diaries 2017).

Danny's influence in shaping the industry and his role in creating such events, has given him greater creative autonomy than most others. But this success is also contingent on transnational and translocal communication, whereby two spheres are often divided by the locally specific media practices that constrain local audience consumption within the domestic market. To create the sustainable global subcultural connections across the world that have helped him run his qualifiers and support him

through participation in Shanghai, Danny has become a proficient user of both local-specific and global media tools.

5.6 Making Use of Media: Between Translocal and Transnational Scenes

The way that Danny has worked in creating such large-scale local-global events is contingent on his use of local and international social media as a means to mobilise people, promote his work and maintain social and professional relations (i.e., social capital). Unlike the majority of nations in this study, the PRC has limited the local population's engagement by censoring or purging content. The 'Great Firewall of China' has been employed by the state to help cultivate an internal media sphere to stimulate local economic growth, while also facilitating the aforementioned process of authoritarian censorship. This includes censorship of powerful and increasingly ubiquitous global social media that has played a significant role in helping connect people to each other and to content through transnational social networks. Circumventing these barriers has been important for local Chinese intermediaries like Danny to participate in a wider international economy. Developments in VPN technology have secured an important means for locals to regain access to this sphere of exchange and commerce. Despite this, for Danny to manage local-global events of such scale, as we see in BIS, a perceptive understanding of both local culturally specific and global social media practices is required.

There is an importance ascribed to various digital tools for managing personal and professional networks and audiences within and outside China. During the early adoption of the internet in China, there were few ways of interacting with the global sphere from China. Danny recalls Bboyworld.com as an important connector for Chinese communities who were able to speak and read English. In Shanghai, this access to international resources and uses of the English language are more common. For the wider population, however, language barriers are a severe limitation on engagement with global websites, especially among more autochthonous regions across second- and third-tier cities who were the last receivers of the internet. Those who are unable to engage with the global internet congregate instead around a translocal hub, 51555.com, that tended to the national scene. This platform has been incredibly useful in shaping local Hip-hop culture by offering local participants and event managers opportunities to create digital networks and reach audiences across the large distances that separate China's western border and east coast—an opportunity Danny was quick to capitalise on in the development of his own events and projects.

In the international context, Hip-hop cultural exchanges developed by social media and internet streaming have generally stimulated a greater accessibility to subcultural content for audiences. Within China, something dramatically different has emerged in its internet culture and transition into

an age of social media. This is shown to be a result of the censorious domestication of media within the PRC which has been a powerful strategy in stimulating the local economy by allowing an oligopolised industry. These developments have been challenges to Danny's local-global creative autonomy and demanded a subtle subversion through the use of VPN technology and an intercultural skillset to negotiate between both local and global systems of cultural content exchange and communication.

5.7 Social Media Tools and Working Between Cultures of Consumption

There are a number of distinctions in the ways that content is positioned online, how individuals connect, and how flows are established between places. By comparing Chinese and international social media in Danny's practice, we see the importance of the cross-cultural intermediary in navigating tensions. A starting condition of such practice in China is the use of VPN technology to circumvent government censors. Restrictions on social media in China have left local Hip-hop communities with few means to communicate with their various international counterparts. To diversify through cosmopolitan exposures, Danny must traverse two distinct systems of media and their unique consumer logics to create new local-global connectivity.

5.7.1 Connecting Locally: Chinese Social Media Cultures and Hip-Hop

Danny recognises the different patterns of consumption between global and Chinese social media. One example can be seen in the comparison of YouTube with the Chinese alternative Youkou Tudou. As China's local digital media sphere is heavily regulated by governmental policy, Youku Tudou, one of the largest user-generated content (UGC) video platforms, made a unique development. CEO Victor Koo suggested that Youku Tudou has had to adopt a hybrid model that provides both UGC and professionally produced content (Stanford Graduate School of Business 2014). YouTube only provided similar services in recent years. Youku Tudou's model was a response to low internet penetration rates that stifled UGC culture in China during the 'golden years' of social media (2005–2010), during which penetration was between 8–35% (Internet Live Stats 2016). Youku Tudou has offered much less flexibility for monetisation, requiring it focus on subscription-based funding (Stanford Graduate School of Business 2014). As a result, there are significant differences in the types of content produced and shared.

What we see most contrastingly between the two media spheres (internal Chinese and external global) are different logics of platform capitalism and how they have shaped a sharing economy (Langley & Leyshon 2017). For intermediaries like Danny, this is also a subcultural tension between producers and powerful media corporations and their ability to diminish the value of art through extortion:

> …they are using our culture, any media using the culture… Any different media [collaborating] with us we say 'pay the money for me'…so if they don't give the money I don't want to use the media. They are different in Europe and in the States, they may give online event[s] on YouTube, but we never do that. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

This has driven event managers like Danny to partner with media companies organised around subscription-based or digital ticketed content delivery. Per Langley and Leyshon (2017, p. 15), such companies 'enrol users through a participatory economic culture' so to also 'extract rents from their network'. Danny discusses partnering with powerful media giants like Tencent:

> Now [that] all the compan[ies] have money, everyone wants to have [a] program. If you have the program like BIS, even the biggest (media corporations) [will] want to buy. If we [sell] the event…BIS fan can watch on TV (via the internet). So this is [the] future. So this is why China is different as a country. A lot of countries give [content] free for the YouTube. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

However, there are a number of global breakdancing videos updated and made available on Youku Tudou, contingent on the labour and curation of fans (unlike YouTube, where channels have become important pillars of a global exchange and professionalisation of media and subcultural industries, for example, StanceTV has emerged as a leading provider of global content and has attracted global sponsors as well as benefitting from YouTube monetisation). The lack of UGC and network engagement (Li et al. 2013) with international content means glimpses into the global are limited. This transforms the role of DIY media into a practice that now requires more curation and professionalisation as they are positioned as commodities within China's local subcultures and cultural and creative industries. By moving to improve this type of dual model by reinvesting in the development of UGC, Youku Tudou hopes to enhance the amateur–professional spectrum (Zhao 2016).

A brief content analysis also demonstrates the sort of differences in web traffic, video availability and cultural consumption that separate the Chinese and global spheres of consumption. In 2016, YouTube was the second most visited website in the world with an average of over 20 billion views per month (Similar Web 2016a). Youku Tudou attracted only 220 million views with a heavy concentration of traffic in China and the surrounding regions (Similar Web 2016b). A search of the term 'bboy' on both platforms can also serve as a point of comparison. YouTube had over three million search results, almost 40 times the amount available on Youku Tudou. When looking more closely at content surrounding Danny's work that now exists on both platforms, we can see interesting patterns of local-global subcultural media consumption.

In regards to the video 'BBoy in Shanghai | Mason Rose | UDEF | UDEFtour.org' (UDEF Tour 2014), which showcases Danny's annual event, local views on Youku Tudou demonstrate a preference for

local Chinese content where almost 14,000 views had amassed as of 2016. By contrast, on YouTube the same video has only 2,274 views as of 2016. Coverage of other global events from Europe, such as 'IBE 2012 - All Battles All - Red Bull BC One All Stars Vs. Young Gunz' (Prodance TV 2012) show a different pattern of consumption. It had over one million views on YouTube, while the same video on Youku Tudou had only 1,372 views as of 2016. These examples demonstrate differences in cultural tastes. China has an internally focussed culture of consumption with a strong preference for localised material. This has been challenging for creating interest in international events from China and partially underpins Danny's decision to import global Hip-hop into Shanghai through BIS.

Other significant channels of distribution for Danny's work are highly versatile social media mobile applications like WeChat which bring together social media, e-commerce and professional services similar to LinkedIn. The platform's genesis in the Chinese market has been a result of the realisation of local media oligopolies Tencent, Baidu and Alibaba. WeChat's rapid expansion has led to an overwhelming adoption, with unprecedented growth made possible by few alternatives and constant micro-innovations that have positioned it more favourably in the local and global market, ranked as the number one app in iPhone stores in 15 international markets such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other Latin American and Middle Eastern countries (Yang et al. 2016, p. 416). Its local adoption has been the result of a type of positive infiltration of all aspects of local Chinese life, from individuals networking, to managing corporate communication and delivering governmental messages (Yanes & Berger 2017). Such a platform has been powerful in marketing events to a translocal scene, as WeChat emerges as a channel that has more 'functionality to reach users than any other means' as it is enjoyed 'not only by users in Tier 1 cities, but is used all over mainland China' (Yanes & Berger 2017, p. 16). This is one of the primary methods in which BIS is broadcast across China, although other powerful alternatives contribute to Danny's local marketing strategy and content delivery.

Sina Weibo, China's version of Twitter, also provides Danny local creative freedoms to connect the local community and cultivate new audiences as it has emerged as one of China's largest micro-blogging sites. It also deviates from the above Youku Tudou premium content model and allows professionals and enterprises like Caster Studios the freedom to customise their profiles for the production and sharing of content. Its multimedia capacity also enables a diverse range of options for content management, identity expressions, and cross-country information diffusion (Huang & Sun 2013; Zhang & Negro 2013). Like WeChat, this platform has also been important in connecting internationally to diaspora through partnerships with businesses overseas (e.g., Oz Entertainment in Australia) (Jiang 2013). Accordingly, Weibo is an important and strategic 'home-base' for Danny's Caster Studio in showcasing upcoming events, updates, studio locations, network affiliations between teachers and students, and the work of new staff. Consumption and engagement of such content is

also affected by cultural factors. In the West, consumption is often structured around content positioned for individualistic purposes, whereas in China, consumption by netizens gravitates towards media more oriented to collective forms (Zhang & Negro 2013). This strengthens Danny's business visibility, as his work is often showcased as both a type of social enterprise that creates community relationships, collaborating with supporting institutions.

In sum, it is clear that the media environment navigated by Danny is unique, both limiting and enhancing his creative autonomy within local and global creative industries. Regardless of the differences between the Chinese internal system and open global alternatives, their use is significantly tied to English and Chinese as lingua franca, and consumption is underpinned by a number of internal and external determinants. To create meaningful participation between wider non-Chinese local-global audiences, Danny has to change the way he communicates, what media platforms he uses and the social capital he calls on to help market and attract international participants to Shanghai to participate in the BIS festival.

5.7.2 Fanqiang and Virtual Private Network Transnationalism

Limited audiences globally concurrently consume Chinese social media alongside popular global alternatives. This has meant Danny has had to lean on global alternatives not only to extend local-global subcultural connections, but to establish a presence for Shanghai and China in the global sphere where, despite their size, their representation has been limited.[29] This is not only significant for fostering international relations and visibility, but reverberates back into China through the nation's new culture of VPN users. This is a culture of subtle state-tolerated resistance that is common to international corporations, expat work forces and subtle youth resistance also known as *fanqiang* or 'scaling the wall' (Lum et al. 2012, p. 4). The government's domestic restrictions have largely been motivated by a wariness of the potential for social media to unite people and create movements of resistance (e.g., the Arab Spring). Irrespective of these political determinants, a culture of escaping censorship is both a strategy and response to the imposition of the Great Firewall that controls local netizen and organisational access to the global internet (Tan et al. 1999). What we see broadly in China is this culture evolving, where intermediaries like Danny are becoming necessary and commonplace for circumventing censorship to participate in global discourse and to create and sustain diverse local-global flows.

VPNs are a relatively recent phenomenon and different groups have picked up and discarded these tools for various reasons. Danny's example should be contextualised within the larger Chinese experience. His ability to mediate between domestic and global media systems from Shanghai has

[29] Danny suggested upwards of 3,000 members were participating in the Chinese Breaking scene in 2016.

developed out of his own desire to be international, but not all residents feel as he does. There are entire generations who have grown up accustomed to having information censored and show little interest in 'escaping' (Xiao 2018). Stanford and Peking Universities' joint study revealed that when given the freedom to explore further, the majority of citizens had little interest in seeking out sensitive content, but demonstrated a critical reflection on internal media censorship in China (Chen & Yang 2018). What is more significant to the youth participating in this circumvention is the exposure to a 'diversity of lifestyles and mindsets that are quite different from what we have in China' (Luo as quoted in Xiao 2018). This is also shown in Vice's short documentary, *China's Youth Breaking Through the Great Firewall*, which looks at how 'Shanghai's bold new generation of artists, designers and musicians' are participating in cultural exports (I-D, 2018). This also represents a desire of some youth to be global and Danny subtly cultivates this desire by way of participating in the same VPN culture.

By scaling the wall, Danny is able to distribute communications to his extensive connections across the globe via Facebook, regularly updating his profile, building group pages, connecting others and sharing content. This is bolstered by YouTube channels like BboyWorldAsia China that have helped document and give exposure to the East Asian region, positioning Danny's international event BIS alongside other popular alternatives. By drawing on his digital social capital and using these channels for distribution, Danny is able to mobilise his international connections within Shanghai in staging his local-global event. His management of such transnational networks also relies on his own physical travel that allows him to represent China in the global sphere (e.g., heading to Singapore to participate in the Radikal Forze Anniversary).

Online, language is an incredible limitation that stifles meaningful connections of others who are tethered to China—a problem sophisticated machine-based translation services such as Google Translate have only recently begun to resolve. This means that what hinders others' desire to externalise content is also about traversing this intimidating global system of communications when it can be communicated more easily within a paradigm of familiar culture and language. This makes Danny's connection even more significant in Shanghai, as many Chinese dancers do not want to use social media to build community with others, instead preferring to focus on more superficial uses for creating businesses that are of low subcultural capital (e.g., selling fake shoes). Nevertheless, this points to the significance of such cross-cultural intermediaries who are working as Danny does in forming creative networks, governmental clout and corporate value for local Hip-hop from Shanghai in the hope that it is able to thrive locally and become more intertwined within the global discourse through his exchanges and promotions using global media.

5.7.3 Finding Cultural Distinction in Face-to-Face Interactions

Although social media (both Chinese and international) has produced such important outcomes for Danny's local-global practice and the wider Chinese community, he rejects the use of social media for sharing important subcultural traditions. During the interview, he often indicated that to engage authentically with Hip-hop requires physical connection. This physical closeness is an important aspect of fostering meaningful relations—a trend also noticeable in the previous case studies. Despite the ability to maintain relationships and to communicate with others online, Danny finds physical colocation the best way for him to demonstrate 'respect' (Wang, D, interview, 2016). Hip-hop respect was also examined in Confucian contexts in Singapore and has proven here, as in the previous case studies, an integral factor in managing relationships. This respect is expressed in a number of different ways and connected to the importance of building strong global community relationships within an international Hip-hop culture.

> Actually, I don't want to use WeChat to communicate with the dancers … with any person I only use face-to-face to show my respect. I go to a lot of international competitions—sometimes they want to invite me, sometimes I just go by myself, sometimes I have to organise the events…So I want to go face-to-face and talk about history and share the knowledge. (Wang, D, interview, 2016)

This rejection of online mode of cultural engagement is distinguished from the Danny who utilises social media for the maintenance of social capital and promotions. This approach also contrasts his professional practice to his cultural engagement: 'if not business, and for culture, I still want to [be] face-to-face training together, talking about the story [of Hip-hop]' (Wang, D, interview, 2016). Moreover, this physical mode of participation challenges the dominant paradigm of Hip-hop consumption in China (by way of popular flows on TV and online) which has come to define its broader Hip-hop culture (i.e., catching up to the rest of the world). Regardless of Danny's attempts to diversify local Chinese Hip-hop, the majority of participants still copy or 'bite' popular local and global Hip-hop artists, rather than refining their own creative practices. He links this with the immediacy of online media consumption, where who is popular is given the greatest reward. By contrast, his face-to-face practice is an important element of cultural development that communicates an alternative perspective that is put into tension with online consumption. For Danny, this face-to-face communication helps him maintain a communitarian authenticity, while also creating authentic Hip-hop experiences in China that provide him subcultural capital and reputation.

5.8 Conclusion

Through the case study of Danny Wang, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of cultural intermediaries in finding ways to maintain creative autonomy within authoritarian countries where

there is a relative lack of freedoms. It has contextualised Danny within a unique history of intersection with global pop culture and the development of the local Chinese Hip-hop scene. Like other intermediaries in this thesis, Danny has developed programs combining commercial and communitarian motivations. Winning space for such programs requires a certain political pragmatism. They are only possible in Danny's case because they align with the state's plans for urban regeneration and the revitalisation of Shanghai and the arts. What we have seen from this case study is an application of culturally enterprising logics to manage Hip-hop in line with a censorious government, so that multidirectional local connections can be made more easily from China to the Asia-Pacific region and the wider global sphere.

The place of subcultural cross-cultural intermediaries in the PRC is tied to a problematic history of popular cultural expression formed by fragmentation and brushes with state censorship. In the case of Hip-hop, the delinquent and subversive aspects of Hip-hop are misconstrued and exaggerated by the government, ignoring its communitarian ethic and diverse art forms and leading to its official marginalisation as a threat. Such confusion of this identity is most notable between rap and dance disciplines. This signals the importance of reconciling these traditions through exposing the local population to a global discourse within the Chinese context. This is done by cultural intermediation that harnesses the street-dance identity that is celebrated in the mainstream and is intertwined within the creative industries by framing it as an artistic output. This street-dance identity is a strong focal point for the media industry in both government and corporate sectors in which intermediaries become key collaborators. Danny's work has helped connect these powerful institutions and their resources to enhance local community growth through subcultural businesses and large local-global competitions. His business has become a cornerstone of the local Shanghai scene, important in connecting local agents to work, negotiating endorsements from corporate sponsors and reconciling governmental tensions with the subculture via productive Hip-hop practices (although they are not clearly perceived as Hip-hop).

Danny's cross-cultural intermediation can be seen as having two distinct aspects. First, he brings together aesthetics, knowledge, business practices and cosmopolitan perspectives into the Chinese Hip-hop dance context from overseas travel and his connection to large transnational social networks across the globe. This has helped progress the local Chinese street-dance scene in Shanghai through the provision of local-global events and by supporting inter-regional and global exchanges. Such international exchanges are often facilitated by Danny by way of flights to neighbouring regions, funded by corporate sponsors or at personal expense. Localising local-global subcultural exchanges has helped Danny facilitate more substantial exchange between the local Chinese community and international representatives by way of regional visitors from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and Japan, and visitors from Europe, the US and other parts of the world.

Second, he is active in developing a Chinese presence in the global sphere through creative local and global social media practices and network management. The local Chinese media sphere requires a specific kind of field knowledge and understanding to engage with local channels of diffusion for community building. This is especially important for the management of the national scene and provides connectivity from Shanghai that extends across the nation. However, there are still cultural distances to the type of local-global engagement seen in other chapters, slowing the development of cosmopolitan communitarian Hip-hop in wider China. Danny's attempts at intermediation in Shanghai is but one example of a committed agent facilitating these connections, despite immense language barriers and systems of censorship that restrict local use of global media.[30]

What we see in Shanghai is an extraordinary commitment by a few internationally mobile agents like Danny[31] who are able to look at Hip-hop through a Chinese lens and also understand the importance of connecting its cultures to the traditions, communities and happenings of the global sphere. For the city and the nation to become more prominent in global Hip-hop, influential intermediaries like Danny take on the responsibility of bridging this local-global divide. Nevertheless, as a nation that has had such a complex negotiation of Hip-hop identity, Danny and others have started this local-global reformation through regional connectivity in the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

The next chapter examines how two local cross-cultural intermediaries in Tokyo work at different levels to create local-global engagement in a city where Hip-hop has become hyper commercial and a site for significant corporate investment.

[30] This project originally had a wider scope of subculture in mind and one case study with a local punk rock cross-cultural intermediary revealed other ways local subcultures are being connected, how their products exported and how they are accessing new information to help redefine their international belonging.

[31] Other groups have also started this working in an international capacity in and outside of China to put on events like the United Dance Organisation's Asia-Pacific Street Dance Championships or Keep On Dancing's annual World Cup.

Chapter 6: Tokyo: Entrepreneurship, Nationalism and Grassroots Commercialisation

Walking through Tokyo late at night showcases the neon city's metropolitan beauty, but once the signs turn off and the trains stop, a new nightlife begins. Not in the bars along the mouth of the Shimuda River or the many boutique restaurants in the artists' district of Shimokitazawa. At night, Hip-hop culture in Japan thrives as dancers populate Mizokonuchi Station and local rappers take to Shibuya Crossing to meet. Walking through the station is Katsu Ishikawa, one of Japan's legendary b-boys known across the Kawasaki Prefecture and beyond for his Hip-hop cultural work. Not far from the station is his dance studio, WeAre, where he hosts a number of events for the emerging Hip-hop youth in Tokyo and around the world. Ryo Tanahashi is another late night frequenter who joins him at Mizokonuchi, donning a business suit while he stays to share his experiences and show support for the local scene. Mizokonuchi is one of Tokyo's Hip-hop geographies that have been integral for its development. This identity is also celebrated and co-opted into Ryo's event BDM Supa Jam, a cultural community event that brings together agents from across the world. Only a short train ride away, their friends at Redbull prepare for the international Breaking tournament Redbull BC One that draws in a travelling network of Hip-hop diaspora and a city of avid Breaking fans unlike anywhere else in the Asia-Pacific.

Unlike typical localisations of Hip-hop in this thesis, Tokyo's nuances appear more radical in their departure, both commercial and underground. Like Shanghai, Tokyo is dominated by a single ethnicity and has experienced periods of censorship that have limited local consumption of international cultural products. In contrast to Shanghai, the case studies in this chapter illuminate how subcultural familiarity, identifications and expression create distinction among a mono-ethnic citizenry in an open and highly connected nation. Unlike Shanghai and Singapore, Tokyo is distinguished by an alternative embrace of modernisation and hybridisation of youth subcultures in the city. This has been a result of its general openness to the world and consumption of international flows of foreign cultural products such as sport (especially baseball), music and art. This is one of the many reasons why popular expressive mediums like Hip-hop have become prevalent in Japan, lending its art and traditions to an enthusiastic local participation.

The popularity of Breaking in Tokyo has also made the city one of the world's largest Hip-hop dancing metropolises. In such a place, cultural intermediaries have become prominent agents of subcultural practices and traditions such as community relationships and cypher culture. These intermediaries interface with both underground and commercial networks (sponsors like G-Shock) and organisations to produce new programs, events and cultural works, for example, the event Dream

Cup and Supa Jam hosted in Manilla Phillipines and in Tokyo. Their work draws on different mixes of cultural and social entrepreneurship from socially oriented youth work to commercial-cultural enterprises in facilitating local-global connections from Tokyo and abroad. These entrepreneurial forms appear in this chapter in forms of social activism, collaborations with corporations and with community networks. The outcomes of social and cultural entrepreneurship in Japan have helped create sustainable local and internationally spanning subcultural businesses like Katsu Ishikawa's conglomerate IAM Co. Ltd, events like the Cyphercode pop-up clothing stores or BDM Supa Jam and programs for the youth including lectures and Hip-hop camps.

This chapter examines Katsu Ishikawa and Ryo Tanahashi as two of Tokyo's cross-cultural intermediaries whose work is essential in stimulating both underground and commercial Hip-hop connections across the nation and beyond. I look at their work through the cultural and social entrepreneurial frameworks defined in the previous chapters and how they amass and deploy cultural capitals in the development of events and businesses and how they carve out pathways for mobility. They showcase a unique local Hip-hop embrace that extends from both commercial (through its major venues, consumption of international Hip-hop and corporate capitalism) and underground organisations (independent small businesses, grassroots events and community programs) in the subcultural industries. The work of these intermediaries is an important aspect of shaping Tokyo's local urban Hip-hop connection to the wider national scene. It also connects them regionally and globally, challenging Japanese particularism. In the Japanese context, we see their practices harnessing local geographies (e.g., Mizokonuchi Station, Yayogi Park, Harajuku or the Kawasaki City Prefecture) and connecting the local scene globally in the real world and in cyberspace (via social media).

Unlike other countries in this research, Japan has been the centre for the creation of alternative inter-Asian global flows of music, television, fashion, art, architecture and electronics (Iwabuchi 2002). Japan has also been an avid consumption of Western pop culture, making external forms easily digestible. The demand for Hip-hop has moved into Japan through corporate capitalism, for example, the expansion of prominent US record companies like DefJam opening in Tokyo. Alongside this corporate globalisation, we now see local subcultural agents structuring new flows of content, information and cultural products across the world with a particular focus on the Asia-Pacific.

In light of Tokyo's history of strong outward facing corporations, international cultural exchange and embrace of external culture in its modernisation, local cross-cultural intermediaries operate within a particularly thriving creative economy that has become both locally and internationally relevant, connected and supported by corporations and government. To many subcultures, corporate capitalism and state co-option has often posed a threat to authenticity through processes of selling out as seen as

far back as post-war Britain (Hall & Jefferson 1975; Heath & Potter 2004). This easy corporate co-option has long been critiqued (Frith & Horne 1987; Moore 2012, 2015; Gibson & Moore 2013). However, in Tokyo, a new symbiotic dynamic is noticeable. This is exemplified in cultural marketing strategies deployed by Redbull who supports the development of subcultural arts through events (e.g., Redbull BC One), offering finance for collaboration (through sponsorship) and new employment (e.g., professional dancers). This chapter examines the dynamics of creative autonomy and authenticity through two central questions: how do cultural intermediaries in Tokyo benefit from a thriving creative economy of grassroots and commercial subcultural industries in establishing local-global practices that extend across the Asia-Pacific and beyond? And does the support of corporate capitalism threaten or complement authenticity across local-global subcultural networks from Tokyo?

These questions are explored through two case studies. Katsu is the CEO of Japanese subcultural conglomerate IAM, Co. Ltd., and an international Hip-hop cultural leader whose work has seen the global legitimisation of Hip-hop arts in sporting events (e.g., at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games). Katsu can be thought of as a cultural entrepreneur in his management of subcultural businesses such as the Cyphercode clothing label or Dreamcup dance event that draw on and enhance the cultural value of Hip-hop, and he can also be thought of as a social entrepreneur in work such as the Hip-hop Kids Camp that create social value and mobilise social resources. In his work, he leverages a unique authenticity, from his early identification and global experience, which helps him navigate production between niche and mass audiences. Ryo is a local DJ, dancer, event manager and international engineering consultant, working six months of the year in Japan and six months in the developing world (the Philippines and Uganda). Unlike the previous case studies, his international networking with places where Hip-hop is relatively undeveloped has made him a crucial connector of marginal or under-represented Hip-hop globally. In contrast with Katsu, his work entails a less commercially entwined cultural entrepreneurship. His local-global event management makes use of the market in Tokyo to create cosmopolitan and communitarian not-for-profit local-global Hip-hop events (similar to Zac). While the focus of this chapter is on the above intermediaries and their local-global practices, it is important to contextualise their examples within a history of local pop cultural reception, exchange and reproduction that differentiates Tokyo from other East Asian case studies in this thesis.

6.1 Pop Cultural Reception in Japan

The Japanese experience is similar to the development and reception of Western cultural forms seen in Chapter 5. As in the PRC, Japanese Government hesitation at embracing Western popular music has historically restricted local reception of external pop culture. During the periods of conservatism and imperial authoritarianism, artists were oriented towards the production of ‘national music’ (*toturnin no ongatu*) (Atkins 1998, p. 348). Foreign music, in particular jazz, was criminalised, but

given alternative life through co-option by the state in the 1930s. This transformed the genre into a fashionable tool to prescribe essential notions of 'Japaneseness' to citizens through softening its form to become known as light music (keiongaku). This represented a 'compromise that would satisfy state censors [and] cultural nationalists in the arts world' (Atkins 1998, p. 349). The outcome of this localisation was a tension between the nationalists and subculture of international consumers at the fringe, sustained by an underground milieu 'which consisted of musicians, singers, dancers, record collectors, coffee-shop and cafe proprietors, and critics' who had their 'own sense of values, fashions, and modes of speaking' (Atkins 1998, pp. 348–349). This early example demonstrates a unique strategy that redefines external cultural forms through the local Japanese cultural experience. The war on music also produced countercultural and intellectual leftist critiques of the state (e.g., lawyer Masaki Hiroshi on art in *Chikaki Yori Magazine* (1937 as cited in Atkins 2001)). However, unlike China and Thailand, Japan avoided state-perpetrated violence, experiencing more relative freedoms of expression during periods of imperialism. This history underpins many pop cultural adaptations in Japan (e.g., Japanese Hip-hop) where external forms are given new life within a legitimised and localised culture of reproduction.

Despite this historical resistance to fully acknowledge the power of popular subcultures, Tokyo's youth continued to challenge state censorship and subvert social expectations, creating marginalised subcultures as early as the 1920s (Atkins 1998) that continued in the post-war period. These practices are evident in a number of popular exported and localised subcultural forms, for example, Visual Kei (a Japanese glam-rock nuance in the 1980s) and Japanese Rap or J-Rap (a Hip-hop localisation). The arrival of Hip-hop in Japan was the result of various local entertainment industries looking to exploit new foreign markets.

Despite its local adoption, there are a number of criticisms that stem from this process of localisation. Some suggest it is merely an imitation of 'styles and sounds', which has been 'condemned as cultural theft' by 'overt nationalist authoritarians' from the West (Morris 2010, p. 2). Contemporary Hip-hop identities are dynamically and critically reimagining Hip-hop through a reflection on their local relations to its US inspiration and many 'share scepticism towards authority (the US), while embracing risk, difference, and social change' (Morris 2010, p. 2). This logic of resistance to and acknowledgement of an external cultural authority has also shaped local interpretations of authenticity across Japan's Hip-hop disciplines. By 1994, J-Rap was considered both a uniquely localised genre and the result of a 'sickening commercialism' that had exploited Hip-hop culture (Condry 1999, p. 56). In line with Iwabuchi's (2002) discussion of Japan as an alternative centre of globalisation, Osumare (2007, p. 92) considers Japan's economic power as a developed industrial modernity, rapid urbanisation and 'political centrality in Asia' as a key influence on 'indigenous rap and breakdance communities throughout the region in nations such as China, South Korea, and even

Thailand and Malaysia'. This influence was achieved via the corporate globalisation of intercultural music television collaborations, for example, *Channel V*. Japan is regionally an early adopter of Hip-hop and enjoyed active international flows coming in and being exported for much of the twentieth century, in strong contrast to other East Asian powers such as China.

6.2 Corporate Capitalism and the Enhanced Hip-Hop Sphere

In Tokyo, and across Japan, Hip-hop is now an important cultural commodity and performed culture. As a result, understanding the local contexts of industry and community support helps demonstrate the scale of the scene and intensity of participation in Tokyo. Initiatives set up by commercial giants are a prime example of how mainstream businesses have tapped into both the grassroots and commercial Hip-hop scenes in Japan by providing financial support and incentives for collaboration. In turn, these corporations have become integral in shaping Hip-hop's commercial appeal and cultural relevance in Japan—notably more than in any other national context explored in this thesis. Katsu and Ryo (Anija) both partially ascribe the success of Hip-hop to the intersections of grassroots and commercial cultures in Japan, with the former explaining, 'Redbull Japan really supports the culture' (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016). Further, Redbull caters to a number of mainstream and alternative sports and has, as argued by Kunz, et al. (2016, p. 512), 'created or taken over their own sport events and media channels, creative producers, and agencies that support their brand strategy'. Their cultural marketing strategy is considered 'best practice' in the development of branded content. Driven by a unique approach to cultural marketing, Redbull in Tokyo favours a process that strategically employs staff based on their participation within, and knowledge of, subcultural communities. This recruitment strategy co-opts the subculture into corporate capitalism, while also focussing on producing and bringing authentic experiences of Hip-hop (both Japanese and internationally) to central public figures (early identifiers like Katsu and Anija) and wider general audiences (spectators in physical attendance or online).

This commercial harnessing of the subculture by Redbull is an important factor for the cultural appeal and popularity among the local scene in Tokyo, as many of their operations are centralised there. One example of how this marketing force hybridises Hip-hop with popular commercial products is the two-way promotional strategies with local technology giants. The 2016 Redbull BC One Nagoya Breaking Finals event coincided with the release of Capcom's video game *Street Fighter V* (2016), enabling streams of cross-promotions through online and television commercials (Redbull 2016a, 2016b) such as the release of the Redbull BC One Breaking costume pack for playable characters in Capcom's flagship game (patch 1.11). These relationships emphasise the growing interconnectedness of alternative sport and subcultural communities (e.g., e-sports and Hip-hop) in ventures that bring

together sponsorships and partnerships between large market sectors (an achievement more difficult for small-scale grassroots collectives).

Redbull also supports a range of alternative arts endeavours in Japan through music and various subcultural programs. Other notable events include the 2017 Music Academy in Tokyo which showcases a variety of musical talent including contributions from electronic and Hip-hop artists. Intermediaries often help create the connections that link corporations and grassroots cultural agents. What is significant about Redbull's reputation and ability to support the arts is its capacity to connect with grassroots movements that draw on corporate sponsorships and large-scale promotion to pollenate alternative art, sport and music such as large-scale Hip-hop global events like Redbull BC One. In many ways, the Austrian company's success is driven by corporate globalisation. However, its alternative sports marketing has helped its focus diversify, stimulating the growth of what were once small and under-represented fringe communities. While in many ways Redbull has economically benefited from such sponsorships, marketing and event management, they are also an important populariser of street culture and subcultures at both localised and global levels. If nothing else, Redbull is an example of how corporate capitalism has also more rapidly enabled the expansion and alternative globalisation of subcultures, especially in receptive cities like Tokyo.

While it appears that Hip-hop's local popularity is defined by a dichotomy between commercial and underground Hip-hop cultures, in actuality there is a symbiosis working under the surface between corporate capitalism and grassroots communities in the development of local Hip-hop scenes and culture. This has brought diversity to Japanese Hip-hop which now enjoys an array of hybrid forms that reflect both the national and the cosmopolitan through ongoing exchanges between local and global scenes. The two intermediaries examined in this chapter are important agents in facilitating this diversity and these connections between the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. What we see in their examples are practices that have benefited from, and at times been complicated by, involvement with corporate capitalism.

6.3 Introducing Katsu Ishikawa

Katsu demonstrates how Breaking has been legitimised as an art form for recreation, sport and business. He also shows how it may be used pedagogically to offer access to an alternative education and social mobility. He is a well-respected leader who is passionate about Hip-hop. He is always well-dressed, often donning his own brand Cyphercode and pulls comedic faces as he expresses himself in conversation. Throughout the preliminary research for this study, Katsu was described by many as the 'blueprint' of the travelling b-boy, being among the first to create a successful lifestyle and career out of international participation. I had met him a number of times over the last decade

prior to our interviews in Tokyo in Melbourne, Sydney and in Singapore. Katsu's experiences from his globetrotting have shaped his work through interactions with cultural marginalities abroad and establishing an incredibly diverse network of people. He is enthusiastic and emotional when he reflects about his experience on Hip-hop, pulling faces and was almost brought to tears in our interview when thinking about the compassion others have showed him throughout the years. For his contributions, he is recognised and championed by local and international sports associations and government bodies as an ambassador for Hip-hop and the Kawasaki City Prefecture. This case study demonstrates how his role as a subcultural intermediary enhances new flows of communication, knowledge and temporary movement between the Asia-Pacific region by leveraging his subcultural, economic and cultural capital.

Katsu's fluency with Hip-hop is also informed by an early acquisition of subcultural texts (like VHS videos such as *Freestyle Session 1-5*). The early consumption of these subcultural products can be seen as a 'differentiated consumption of knowledge', providing a subcultural capital and distinction from other consumers as a type of connoisseur consumer (Quintao & Brito 2016, p. 2). Like Quintao and Brito, Bourdieu (1984) frames this type of connoisseurship as another expression of cultural capital, distinction and taste. Because Western dancing was banned, coded style and connoisseurship became important for subcultures in Japan, and this approach to subcultural style persists and can be seen in Kastu's practice. Katsu's subcultural literacy was also enhanced by other important connectors of street culture in the city, like the Tribal clothing store from which we see this type of early connoisseurship enhanced by the importation of media, music and clothing from outside Japan. Business played an instrumental role in connecting Japan to global Hip-hop culture during the 1990s and early 2000s as one of the few purveyors of global cultural products, style (via fashion) and information (in the form of magazines and VHS tapes). Tribal was among the few early corporate sponsors alongside Echo Apparel that developed a business model through supporting the alternative sport and 'urban arts' market before being trumped by Redbull in the 2000s who now commands influence in the subcultural market.

Katsu's work has also been shaped by his travels around the world. He recalls three distinct reflections learned from his time abroad. First, his motivations to become a global Hip-hop ambassador are sustained by an emotional connection to a cosmopolitan Hip-hop culture—a type of romanticism of the Hip-hop life defined by a mutual respect shown in the collective love for humanity, the culture and the art. In line with this, Katsu presents himself as a paternal figure, cultivating this same respect and desire to participate among the youth: 'it's good for their future' (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016). Second, he acknowledges the various bourgeois privileges he has benefited from as a university-educated, middle-class Japanese citizen and how this drives him to help socially and economically marginalised communities in the developed and developing world. This might be thought of as a

version of 'nobless oblige' in a Japanese context, perhaps historically underpinned by the practical ethics of the samurai code *Bushido* that have contributed to the respectful foundation of Japan's cultural traditions (Nitobe 2002). When asked about this, he recounted his interactions with the urban poor in Vietnam:

> This is fate you know. It's not fair for them. I can do anything because I was born here. My passport, 'oh Japanese!' That's already VIP. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

Third, he discusses Hip-hop as a learned experience that celebrates an alternative approach to communitarian mainstream values—one that he believes can provide a socially driven alternative education that teaches discipline and, for those willing to devote themselves to the culture, a type of spiritual release from which they 'can learn everything' (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016).

As a result, Katsu's role is multifaceted. His work ranges from providing educational programs to the youth in Japan to supporting international subcultural development through creating events and creative partnerships with local and global cultural communities and international sport associations. As a judge, Katsu has also acquired a type of cultural capital that he can leverage to give credit to others' practices and contributions, acknowledged by participants within his immediate and extended cultural field/s of participation, and as a connoisseur who has benefited from a mastery of the subcultural forms and symbols. Furthermore, Katsu has developed a number of commercial endeavours targeting local and international audiences by leveraging his reputation and subcultural capital into economic and cultural successes. This has appeared in three distinct ventures under a parent company, IAM Co. Ltd. First, through WeAre dance studio, developed to provide space for the local cultural community to practice and for hosting local and international workshops. Second, through a youth Hip-hop camp that helps cultivate new youth networks with the help of high-profile mentors. And third, through his clothing label Cyphercode which aims to create new cultural distinctions of 'style' to disrupt the global stylistic focus that had previously been locked in a type of homage to 1980s and 1990s Hip-hop fashion.

Katsu's role as a subcultural intermediary can be understood from his participation in both cultural and commercial terms. In Katsu's work, we see a transitionary intersection from and between limited and extensive modes of production and market participation in an attempt to maintain his authenticity while transforming his subcultural work into an economically sustainable practice. Bourdieu (1980) and others who use his work to describe an 'economy turned upside down' (Moore 2015) have looked at the way artists acquire such authenticity by enacting an independence from, and a disregard for, the economic value ascribed to their work in an attempt to claim autonomy from the market. This performance of autonomy and sometimes achievement of it makes the work very attractive to a

particular discerning counter or subcultural market, conferring authenticity. In Hip-hop, this might be understood as subcultural capital, reputation and street credibility.

In Bourdieu's terms, this value in an avant-garde, or fringe community of peers, can, over time, accrue great financial value and cultural capital of being 'classic' or 'legendary'. Various historical examples such as works by Van Gogh and Picasso to the Velvet Underground are contrasted with those who are immediately popular and subsequently ephemeral and forgotten. The bourgeois fascination with countercultural art has brought a status to fringe artists who disregard economic incentives in favour of their artistic authenticity, empowering new social and artistic mobility. Katsu has similarly translated his practice of authenticity (illuminated through various modes of participation in Hip-hop, for example, as a mentor, through activism and not-for-profit work) into a brand that has become commercially successful from the eschewing of commercial motives elsewhere and the performance of autonomy in his socio-cultural work. His independence from a crude mainstream mass market has bestowed on him an aura that is appealing and saleable in a more discerning subcultural market that is critical of systems of power. While these subcultural markets operate under different magnitudes of exposure and intensity of consumption compared to the commercial mainstream, Katsu's subcultural endeavours are lucrative by way of an alternative mass audience in the Japanese and the global or transnational fringe that can match domestic mass markets.

6.4 Harnessing Subcultural Geographies for Cultural and Social Entrepreneurship

Similar to how Felix runs his studio in Singapore, Katsu's WeAre studio is aimed at enabling new youth interactions and social mobility through Hip-hop. This space is also the base of his wider subcultural business IAM, inc. where a number of subcultural groups work behind the scenes, running a dance academy for the youth (the Flooriorz Academy, a term-based Breaking tutoring program), organising events, maintaining financial records or organising stock for Katsu's clothing label. A number of public spaces have also become important locations for the local Tokyo Breaking community. Two famous public locations in Tokyo for dancing are Yoyogi Park, also referred to as 'Break Park' (Osumare 2007; Condry 2006), and Mizokonuchi Station.

The *Hokoten* (Hokousha Tengoku, trans. 'pedestrian paradise') street in Yayogi Park is tied to the origins of Hip-hop and Breaking culture in Japan where, as far back as the 1980s, dancers and music aficionados congregated to listen to Hip-hop music on their *Disco Robo* (boom boxes) (Condry 1999). Conversely, Mizokonuchi is home to an ongoing tradition of occupying the metropolitan train platform after business hours, a custom that extends back as far as 22 years (as of 2016) according to the BDM dancers. Despite the long history of Hip-hop and subcultural significance in Tokyo,

Mizokonuchi has been at the mercy of police who have wielded their legal power to command instant vacation of the area. Katsu's WeAre studio is one way he has hoped to remedy this tension:

> Always we practice in the street, you know? Like, sometimes public people complain and shit and some police men come in. It's not [an] official place so that's why. Still, I love it, but I thought I need some base. If someone from far away … come to Mizokonuchi [station] to practice, what if police come? We can't practice. 'Okay, let's go to the studio'. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

The regulation of public dance is not new and has roots in the response to the emergent popularity of US dancing, dance halls and dance schools in the 1930s. The 1937 National Spiritual Mobilization campaign framed dancing as a 'bad influence on the nation's public morality' (Atkins 2001, p. 139). From then on, only officially certified locations could entertain dancing until midnight, placing restrictions on spontaneous expressions that have persisted to the present day. In 2014, the ban on unlicensed dancing was lifted as a means to modernise and conform to global standards under pressure from, and in preparation for, the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games (Hartley 2015; Lhooq 2014).

This complicated history of public, social dance in Japan contrasts with the overwhelming size of the contemporary Japanese dance scenes.[32] Further, the state's regulatory role in policing dance is at odds with its contemporary embrace of Hip-hop as a way to sanitise and formalise its status through championing intermediary figures and their programs as well as the intensity of the corporate investment that often supports these initiatives. Paradoxically, this history of low-level oppression is also useful in enabling subcultures like Hip-hop, as they transform into legitimised cultural businesses in which authorities and a conservative citizenry have little recourse to interfere. The WeAre studio also helps relieve state anxieties around subversive street cultures by permitting them an alternative space for congregation and participation. This is further remedied by the social value that its government-endorsed subsidiary programs offer to local youth.

6.4.1 Shaping Youth Networks Through Social Entrepreneurship

Katsu's studio is important in creating social value. This is done through an annual kids camp that brings together local Japanese youth (with growing inter-city participation) alongside a network of mentors and interdisciplinary Hip-hop enthusiasts. This camp focuses on creative, social and formal skills through Hip-hop workshops, programs for student collaboration (in dance or in cooking and cleaning), creating community ties and structuring a network of youth support. Katsu uses Hip-hop as a way to embrace his previous pedagogical ambitions to be a physical educator. In this subcultural pursuit, he combines Hip-hop with formal skill building. The camp uses Hip-hop community

[32] Estimated by case study individuals are roughly 20,000 b-boys and b-girls as of 2016, not to mention other associated Hip-hop dance styles like Popping or Locking.

principles as a means to help the youth develop social capital while promoting a communitarian responsibility and cultural exchange. Economically, it is one of the largest generators of revenue for IAM Co., Ltd, with student fees of roughly ¥45,000 (approximately A$565) per student. Despite the costs, testimonies from parents attest to its success in providing their children with role models and networks, aiding in positive social development. However, the flat price model puts lower socio-economic families at a disadvantage, and while this is due to the high cost of independent operations, it is also an oversight. Katsu suggests that the program requires state intervention/funding to make it less exclusionary:

> …if I have the money, I really want to teach the kids for free. That's my aim. But right now, I don't have the money to run it, that's why I get the money from them [parents]. …So it's kind of difficult, but one day for sure I wanna' work with the government to run it. But we have to show how beautiful Hip-hop [is] to the government first. That's why first we work hard for it—we need the money. …So, [the] kids camp is the most important for me to make Japan[ese] Hip-hop culture, because I don't care about the [individuals] over 20 years old or something—they already have thinking [set mentality]. But kids [are] super flat (impressionable)…what I've learned from Hip-hop, I want to teach to the kids that experience…it took me 20 years. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

This venture is influenced by his experiences in using Hip-hop as a means to travel, network and learn about business. He has created two pedagogies through Hip-hop. One focuses on demonstrating the value of social capital in enabling youth travel (i.e., staying with others who invest into their community). This is especially salient in his emphasis on the value of respect—between peers, mentors and students, and as a means to create community and to validate participation. The other approach looks at establishing a value for discipline and emotional expression from Hip-hop, transforming lessons learned from dance into other sectors of life. These values (respect, generosity, sociality, vulnerability and discipline) speak to a multitude of practices within and outside of Hip-hop, notably navigating cultural communities, creating businesses and negotiating for resources.

One way we can understand Katsu's Tokyo-based practice is as a social entrepreneur (previously discussed in Chapter 3). Programs like the kids camp that deliver social value through the cultivation and mobilisation of social capital reflect this *social entrepreneurship.* This type of work is also passed on through the aforementioned pedagogical approach that emphasises building sustainable networks of inter-generational creative relationships by bringing Hip-hop youth from across the nation to Tokyo. As a social entrepreneur, Katsu is also a more attractive agent for government support (e.g., from the Kawasaki City Mayor), sponsors and charitable private investment due to his ability to deliver social outcomes (e.g., the creation of positive youth social capital by facilitating reciprocal community collaborations) via independent business—a practice at odds with conservative perceptions of multicultural street-based subcultures (Morris 2010) that have, until recently, stifled governmental involvement in developing more accessible and sustainable subcultural dance programs

in Japan. The kids' camp is an incredibly popular program that is championed in the Kawasaki Prefecture and has become an intriguing educational endeavour that parallels the success of corporate Hip-hop events such as Redbull BCOne or Monster Tournaments.

6.4.2 Cypher Code: Redefining the Hip-Hop Aesthetic of 'Fresh' and Supporting Asia-Pacific Marginalities

The last tier of IAM, Co., Ltd.. is Cyphercode, an international clothing label Katsu established by drawing on his local and global networks to make, import and market clothes. This business can be thought of as a form of cultural entrepreneurship that attempts to create new cultural value locally and globally by redefining the global Breaking subcultural fashion aesthetics from Tokyo. The brand is inspired by a 'lifestyle deeply rooted in the art of B-boying and elements of Hip Hop culture' that brings 'together street fashion and the worldwide cultural movement' (Cyphercode 2017). Cyphercode leverages the symbolic power of a diverse range of subcultural agents to whom Katsu is connected. Their profiles contribute to a type of cultural marketing also employed by Redbull. Katsu harnesses these networks to create its distinct style, co-opting cultures from around the world into its production and is promoted by well-respected agents globally. It aims to redefine the 'kind of cheesy' banal fashion from 'the late 1990s and early 2000s' into something more aligned with the street wear looks of today (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016) and to reinvigorate global community connections.

The success of Cyphercode is also linked to Tokyo as a centre of global fashion, often given cultural and symbolic power in global fashion discourse. The Harajuku districts have emerged as leading contributors 'to the aesthetics of [global] fashion' and continue to attract regional producers to Tokyo 'in search of new ideas' (Kawamura 2006, p. 784). Kimura (2013, p. 4) suggests that fashion in Japan also functions as a local practice performed by Japanese youth to 'express their freedom' in a type of subcultural resistance to conservative social expectations—a type of bricolage or coded meaning from resisting through style (Hebdige 1979). Western cultural industries have also co-opted Japan's cultural power in references to these fashion centres in Tokyo. Harajuku, for example, has recurringly appeared in popular television and music as a reference to the eclectic, alternative and fashionable. Gwen Stefani's studio album *Love.Angel.Music.Baby* (2004) appropriates Japanese culture by playing off the cultural exoticism of the region, referencing Harajuku. But this utilisation of Japanese culture confuses the idea of Japanese identity and fixes it in a projection of 'signifiers of Japaneseness' hybridised to create 'semiotic excess' (Oh 2017, p. 367). Nonetheless, while the West may appropriate and complicate the construction of Japanese identity in mainstream media, Harajuku's success has also been enhanced by the attention brought to it by its sometimes exploitative mediated representations.

In central Harajuku, Dancers Collection stocks a number of local brands, including Katsu's Cyphercode, and also provides an array of services to help individuals and small businesses create custom clothing and jewellery—significant advances for the DIY community who are given means to manufacture their own products. In 2018, Cyphercode also featured a pop-up shop in Harajuku as the location is important for both local and international subcultural fashion networks (i.e., followers of international street wear shops like A Bathing Ape, Supreme, Carhartt and a number of commercial resellers). But Harajuku also offers a place where performed identity is celebrated, which we see in its attraction of, and catering to, a number of subcultures (e.g., Gothic Lolita's) (Gagné 2008). Outside of Japan, Katsu has featured Cyphercode at other subcultural events in the Asia-Pacific such as the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival in Singapore and Nice Fest in Melbourne. In this way, Cyphercode is not only a vehicle for the delivery of new local-global aesthetics, but is strategically positioned to harness local geography and events where global subcultures and subcultural businesses thrive.

The brand also has a strong focus on cosmopolitanism and international subcultural engagement. The 'Share the Vibes' collection collaborates with the Kapayapaan project who support youth in disenfranchised communities in the Philippines. Through these projects, Katsu helps bring awareness to the developing world, which also provides him new cultural capital as Cyphercode becomes viewed as a socially responsible enterprise. Cyphercode plays an important role in harnessing global charitable investment through the sale of its clothes—donating 20% of their profits—helping to support projects like Kapayapaan that rely on donations to continue. This transformation of cultural practices and liberal thinking into economic returns is a practice typically at the heart of cultural entrepreneurship (Naudin 2018). Like cultural entrepreneurs in other respective fields (Leadbeater & Oakley 1999), Katsu is able to leverage his subcultural capital through various streams to diversify his activities across a range of commercial and community projects.

Economic capital is also shifted between endeavours, through new partnerships or leveraging resources both cultural (e.g., the cultural capital of being charitable) and social (networks, audiences and organisations). Hence, the above socially responsible international initiatives transform the value of civic engagement further into cultural and economic capital for Kapaypaan, Cyphercode and their various beneficiaries. As a result, Katsu is also able to contribute to developing Asia-Pacific cities by bringing together his various streams of capital in the creation of real cultural and social outcomes. One is the 2017 Dream Cup, a free event that supports local subcultural development in Manila made possible through the provision of economic resources from Katsu's personal investment and business endeavours. This event also brings together Cyphercode in partnership with other charitable investors, corporate sponsors (G-Shock) and regional cultural organisations that support youth development (e.g., Kapayapaan Philippines, Mix Mix Australia and Tiny Toones Cambodia).

6.4.3 Transforming Sport as a Tool for Subcultural Legitimisation: The Youth Olympic Games

Another significant aspect of Katsu's work in the subcultural industries is in determining the status of Breaking at the 2018 Youth Olympic Games. This endeavour required Katsu to lean on a number of his professional and subcultural networks to bring together government, corporations and cultural organisations. His ability to co-opt the local government to support his proposal was made possible by his extensive work within the prefecture in which WeAre is based. This has brought him favour with the Kawasaki City Mayor who has been a prominent advocate for Hip-hop as a productive mode of youth engagement, bringing Katsu's work distinction from governmental endorsement. The project was brokered by the World Dance Sport Federation and prominent global Hip-hop cultural leaders to help garner support for the initiative. In this, we see Katsu's intermediation between the local and global Hip-hop subcultures, as well as between the local government and international organisations like the Olympic committee and World Dance Sport Federation.

In 2017, the official proposal for additional sports by the International Olympic Committee (2017) approved the new sport category as a way to engage larger youth audiences. Through embracing Hip-hop, government officials and media institutions are also able to control its public image, making it more palatable to wider conservative audiences and neutralising its association with confrontation, delinquency and subversion. Leading up to the 2018 Youth Olympics, Katsu presented seminars and lectures addressing the compatibility of Hip-hop with sport (e.g., the lecture 'Culture or sports? Olympics and Culture Can Coexist' presented at the 2017 Street Culture Academy hosted at the University of Tokyo (Raw School 2017)). His work highlights how Breaking as a creative community art form has a place in both cultural industries and emerging sporting paradigms (the intersection of which exists already in large commercial world cup events set up by corporations like Redbull).

Despite his success in contributing to this legitimisation of Hip-hop dance as sport, Katsu is aware of the shortcomings of these programs in communicating Hip-hop's communitarian ethos. The co-opting of governments, organisations and corporations is a method to help diversify and captivate audiences before Hip-hop traditions can be introduced and their value renegotiated among the masses. The sport paradigm opens up an entirely new mainstream discourse around Breaking and Hip-hop that legitimises the cultural form and roots it in a new type of athletic employability.

> [It's] like skateboarding becoming an official sport of Olympics 2020, that's a street scene...The government will pay the skateboarders, but for us, it's for the street. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

For Katsu, sport is the intermediating tool that connects the underground and mainstream representations of Hip-hop culture, widening accessibility for mainstream audiences while also

finding ways to rectify how Hip-hop is understood among them. This is partly because sport is an important global spectacle that attracts investments from commercial partnerships and governments and maintains, renews and stimulates new interest in physical athleticism. The National Basketball Association has had a similar genesis in mainstream consumption—a street milieu who play community sport and an international industry of skilled professionals. Accordingly, physical athleticism is also a tool for prestige building in the international sphere, as well as a stimulating force for participation among audiences who, in turn, widen the pool of national resources available for elite events like the Olympics (Grix & Carmichael 2011). The support of corporate capitalism and the state in this program perhaps threatens traditional Hip-hop authenticity by redefining it within a non-subcultural context. However, the Olympics's status brings with it alternative markers of prestige endorsed by grassroots community leaders (with high subcultural capital), suggesting that this authenticity is also negotiated from both sides.

6.5 Digital Media and the Question of Authenticity

The popularity of Katsu's work within and outside of Tokyo and Japan, as evidenced by his sell-out sales on Cyphercodes online store, is also made possible by social media. These tools have offered new means of engaging audiences and creating connections between Tokyo and the rest of the world for both business and personal reasons. His work at WeAre benefits immensely from his ability to connect students to local and global networks of content and participation, for example, through local and international mentorship at workshops hosted at the studio. Cyphercode benefits from the various modes of marketing and e-commerce available online, such as Instagram advertising and their online store. And his work with the World Dance Sport Federation and Olympic Games Committee has required an ongoing management of local-global networks which is facilitated by these technologies. Therefore, both individuals and organisations are contributing to a larger regional discourse and subcultural market than ever before, incorporating marginal voices from places like Manilla. This has largely been made possible by social media and the content produced for these platforms with the support of business. Katsu discusses the local Tokyo expansion as a result of bottom-up grassroots networks and top-down premium global event management, such as Redbull Music Academy or BC One, where 'the Japanese cultural managers understand [Hip-hop] culture' (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016). This increase in subcultural engagement in the city, as well as Hip-hop's general visibility and accessibility, has brought into being new tensions between community and artistic autonomy and the value of a corporatised Hip-hop culture. Katsu discusses these in detail, drawing from his experience in Tokyo and from his regular international travel.

Corporations like Redbull and Monster have become key players in regulating a popular commercial Breaking discourse through the provision of resources and by co-opting subculture into marketing.

This has led to the creation of a number of new opportunities for artists in the form of legitimised subcultural employment (e.g., Redbull/Monster B-boys) and for smaller subcultural businesses, like Katsu's studio or clothing label, to thrive. Redbull's BC One is one of the largest Breaking world cup events that emphasises the competitive ethos of Hip-hop and has played a significant role in reorienting the subcultural focus. Unlike many grassroots productions, events or programming, BC One has used a sports format with commentators, high-budget production and live streams to millions via their content streaming portal (RedbullTV 2016). While the economic success and global expansion of this subculture has been widely enhanced by these corporate entities, Katsu discusses how they have also produced a seemingly homogenising force:

> Everybody looks the same, yeah? This is a creative thing…Like if you and I have some tips for your moves, just go [meet up], and watch it from your legs you know? Just go there and talk to them, [ask] 'why are you like this?' If [it comes from] YouTube, [they] watch BC One. Yeah we can get the moves, but it's not like creative you know? …[The] really good thing is that information is really quick to [find]…Now you stream right? We can see it live! But at that time (the past)…we had to wait a half year to watch that. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

This competition culture is contentious as the format shifts the practice away from artistic shared cultural exchanges within cyphers towards a globally consumed competitive–economic ethos. Katsu's assessment of these debates reflects an ongoing tension within the Hip-hop milieux between traditionalists and commercialists. This difference between creative milieus across popular mediums (e.g., art, music and Breaking) is also a typical reflective symptom of commodification under capitalism (Bridson et al. 2017) where a perceived loss of 'realness' is often tied to a departure from what is culturally 'true' or 'authentic' based on the autonomy of the artist. To traditionalists, deviations from cultural traditions compromise the central identity of Hip-hop. On the other side of the debate, commercialists critique traditionalists for their inability to accept the new dynamics of Hip-hop culture in the digital era. Both perspectives fail to actually engage with the hybrid reality that dynamically intertwines community-based arts within a commercial capitalist system. The latter is particularly significant as it helps sustain the development of new subcultural media markets and business practices that enable the high levels of subcultural growth seen in cities like Tokyo.

The expansive commercialisation that stems from popularising Hip-hop arts can also be understood as the result of the global embrace of neoliberal practices that have extended the operations of free market through to the dynamics of 'public cultural life' (Beal et al. 2017, p. 13). The self-enterprising logic in creating independent Hip-hop businesses often requires cultural agents to understand the costs and benefits of their participation at different sectors of the subcultural market, that is, between not-for-profit grassroots and commercial divisions that are defined by different levels of precarious employment and insecurity. The decisions of entrepreneurs require an analysis of the value and

sustainability of their practice (Ross 2008). Within a commercially supported market, the elite are given the greatest access to economic resources for their mutual collaboration. This type of corporate capitalism can obviously corrupt or overpower the communitarian motives of Hip-hop as advocated by grassroots collectives, as it has in mainstream media in the past (Fogarty 2012).

Despite this, there is a persistent cultural milieu dedicated to maintaining Hip-hop traditions and negotiating this space with commercial institutions, of which Katsu is an example. The effects of neoliberalism will not be discussed in this thesis in detail, but it is useful to draw parallels with the market logic that has emerged in Tokyo and wider commodification of Hip-hop culture around the world. What has undoubtedly emerged is a noticeable shift in participation defined by a contemporary wave of subcultural marketisation. In this process, Hip-hop culture is met with increasing levels of support from corporate capitalism and the enormous growth of audiences made possible via social media. Therefore, the question of whether subcultural traditions and values will be moulded by a market-driven logic has become a prominent one. The work of intermediaries like Katsu, who try to strike a balance, is important in this context.

6.6 Authenticity for the Digitally Close and Physically Far: Friends or Fans?

Katsu's practice engages an avid audience of online consumers who participate differently from those participating in Hip-hop in the physical world. Online platforms help create new accessible routes for marketisation and connectivity between consumers and producers through the mediation of events and promotional material, in line with harvesting data to target subcultural consumers. They also enable new forms of trust and authenticity related to immediacy and intimacy (Banet-Weiser 2012; Lambert 2013). Katsu has used his position to cultivate these forms of relation. For example, positioning his events and clothing label to showcase cultural history. His audience often contact him and he attempts to maintain good public relations, although this has become challenging. The communitarian practices of sharing and offering mentorship in Hip-hop are in tension with emerging and evolving paradigms of digital communication, marketing and online social etiquette. Offline barriers such as time, status and physical distance limit the development of meaningful relationships with celebrities. Online, networked communication however, has transformed access to public figures into something more transient, where relationships are often weakly constructed and fleeting due to the emphasis that social media places on the accumulation of social connections.

While new connectivity seemingly reduces the physical barriers of communication between fans, public figures, community leaders and celebrities, an important division between fan cultures and friend networks is highlighted online. Baym (2012) discusses this as a misunderstanding fostered by digital audiences who blur the line between connection and meaningful relationships. This dynamic

can be explained through the distinction between strong and weak social ties[33] (Granovetter 1983; Putnam 2000). There is now an erosion of perceived distance between audiences and public figures as they transition their fame and identity into cyberspace. There has never previously been a time where everyday people from all corners of the world could be consumers of the personal lives of others in such an intimate way. Alongside this shift in consumer consumption and perceptions is a strategic use of social capital to capture attention, which can then be capitalised on through advertising or other commercial strategies (Davenport & Beck 2002). Katsu's subcultural practices have brought his fanbase online, which has also enhanced his commercial agency as Cyphercode has become more easily accessible. However, as levels of connectivity heighten, so does the challenge of dividing his attention. Katsu feels obliged to practice a congruent ethic of care that is customary in Hip-hop offline:

> Lots of people message me on Facebook with their clip you know? Like 'hey some advice?' I don't want to do that! … it's really easy to contact, you know, and I really appreciate [that] they respect me…If I [was] to do the same thing, I'm going to *see* them [in person] to ask [questions]. (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016)

Kolb (2007) has suggested that the internet has reduced specific barriers between consumers and producers, which has similarly given rise to new ways of manufacturing distance. In Katsu's example, we see a manifestation of these new manufactured distances in behavioural and ideological detachments in technology and e-community interactions. Furthermore, Baym's (2012, p. 312) analysis of how public figures navigate their influence online is useful in considering how different agents have contradictory 'attitudes toward power and closeness with their audiences'. For subcultural traditions that operate under communitarian principles of participation, individuals like Katsu, 'are in uncharted and ever-changing waters, making it up as they go along' (Baym 2012, p. 312).

Making note of the tensions that arise from this often weakly constructed virtual participation, Katsu emphasises the value of offline, face-to-face contact in establishing meaningful relationships, in a similar manner to Felix (see Chapter 4). While the internet has enabled multiple ways of interacting with content and community, digital consumption and connections are often experienced as shallow. For Katsu, participants in Hip-hop should still 'just go' to see people as 'people spend too much time from a distance' (Ishikawa, K, interview, 2016). This highlights the importance of physical, personal and community relationships and the importance of place, where streets, landmarks and venues also hold alternative meaning for subcultures. O'Connor (2017) argues that the latter are important historical settings for secular subcultural pilgrimages. Katsu similarly values the subcultural experience attached to place (e.g., Yayogi Park and Mizukonuchi Station) and agents (especially due

[33] See Section 4.6 for a discussion of the strength of relationships.

to Hip-hop's creative disciplines being modelled around live performance). In this context, it is important to commit to travel and physical presence.

6.7 Returning to the DIY: Finding Authenticity Through Offline Distinction

The above issues highlight a new social dynamic brought about by a virtual and material world distinction. This distinction also is made in other ways in Katsu's practice as the internet becomes saturated with overwhelming amounts of content that often omits important information such as community histories or traditions. This social media disconnection from the material, embodied world and wider Hip-hop culture has also influenced Katsu's creation of new physical media content that serves a dual purpose. First, this brings new flows of curated cultural content to subcultural consumers (e.g., exclusive interviews with figures from Hip-hops early development) and second, it offers new opportunities to market Cyphercode—a commercial–communitarian–cultural entrepreneurship.

The brand has already had some success in legacy media, having been showcased in local Japanese fashion publications (e.g., *Ollie Magazine* 2017). These magazines have, for decades, been important texts that define style, identity and cultural relationships within the city (Cameron 2000). Despite *Ollie*'s Japanese orientation, its popularity has also made it readily available for export across Asia. It has been taken up particularly by connoisseurs who distinguish themselves through the consumption of international content. While these magazines are tied to subcultures that connect through fashion, they are still more transparently catalogues of capitalism. In a similar way, subcultures have often been documented in DIY zines as a way to establish distinction from the mainstream and commercial cohort of producers and consumers. Katsu similarly finds value in this DIY practice. The content of these publications offer insights into subcultural histories and conditions of other Asia-Pacific Hip-hop cities (e.g., Manilla), while simultaneously serving as a grassroots strategy to promote Cyphercode without external investment. Examples are *Flow Magazine* (2016) and *Share The Vibes* (2017), the covers of which are shown in Figure 3. Both are published in English as a way to distinguish products from local Japanese content and find alternative footholds across the world.

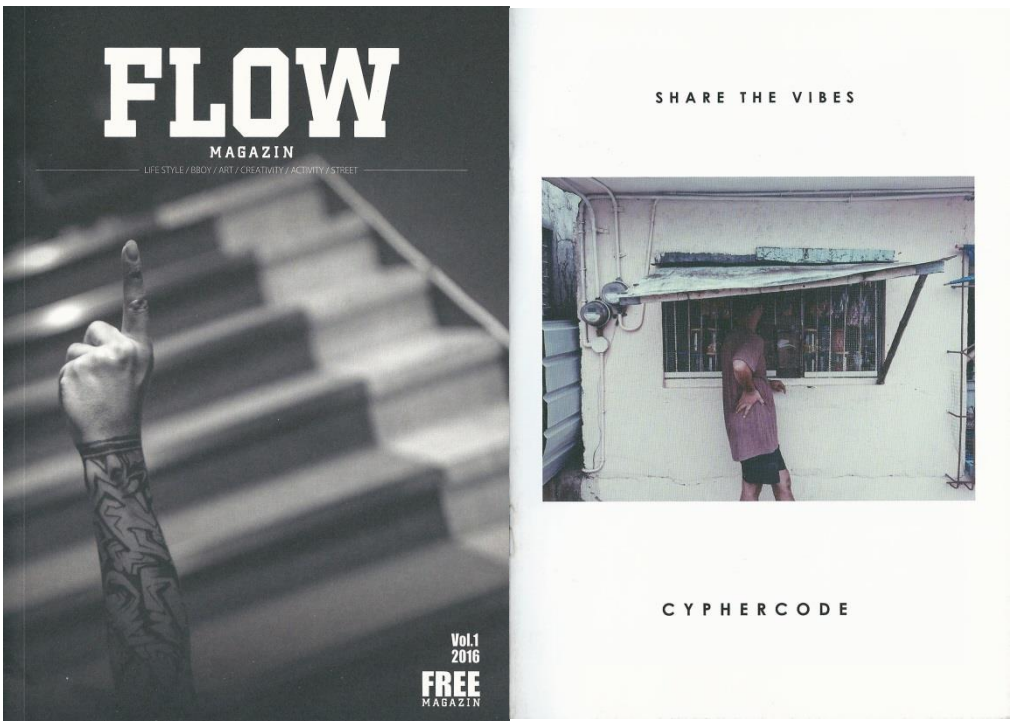

Figure 3: *Flow Magazine* and *Share The Vibes* Advertising Cyphercode

Source: Flow Magazine (2016) and Share The Vibes (2017).

Through these publications, Cyphercode is able to accrue symbolic capital through distinguishing their promotions from mainstream online media. The symbolic value of free physical content differentiates Katsu's position from the mainstream capitalist market and, again, awards him and his brand an authentic sense of respect and reputation—a subcultural capital later transformed into economic capital through sales. This distinction and physical authenticity can also be claimed by consumers who are awarded subcultural capital for differentiating their consumption from a mainstream cohort. Such outcomes resemble common communitarian philanthropic investment that bolsters community participation and increases business visibility (Grant 2012, p. 54). In this way, Cyphercode finds value in a DIY approach to distinguish itself in an alternative mass market that is dominated by various corporate entities.

6.8 Introducing Ryo Tanahashi

Ryo Tanahashi, who goes by the name Anija, is one of Tokyo's veteran subcultural agents. We have had chance meetings at Radikal Forze Anniversary where we talked and in Melbourne in his attendance of Nice Fest (see Chapter 8). He is always incredibly modest, welcoming and friendly, and is always ready to dance. I would see him most days after he finished work at night during my stay in Tokyo, and we would talk or spend time with others at his house or Mizokonuchi Station. His work is multifaceted as he operates between various cultural economies as an event manager, teacher, mediator and host. Unlike Katsu, his practice tends more to be a grassroots Hip-hop milieu in Tokyo

and overseas, creating a distinction with the more commercial Hip-hop sphere through his local-global event Supa Jam. This event has been hosted in Tokyo and the Philippines and brings together the underground scenes in a celebration of Hip-hop cypher culture. Anija also plays an important role as an intermediary in connecting people to the local Japanese Hip-hop culture by way of his communitarian role as a Hip-hop host. Outside of Japan, he travels for professional engineering work in Uganda where he is a mentor and contributor to Breaking Project Uganda, a communitarian program that supports youth development in impoverished areas. His use of social media in creating connections between Uganda and Tokyo have opened a unique flow that has improved the visibility of the marginalised region among Japanese and wider global networks.

Anija first became involved in Hip-hop in the regional town of Gifu in the early 2000s, before he moved to Yokohama then finally Tokyo. Anija's development stems from a unique Japanese university culture that was important in regulating city scenes. These practices are often tied to an age-based hierarchical model known as *jōge kankei* between juniors (*kohei*) and seniors (*sempai*). This system is a reflection of a traditional cultural value system that emphasises respect for elders. Clubs and circles are the organisational expression of *jōge kankei* across educational institutions, and are differentiated by their models of organisation and institutional support. Clubs are university-funded programmes that aim to develop skills through regional, national or international sport tournaments. By comparison, circles are aligned with creating social value through arts, sports, academia and other technical skills, taking form in student-run operations that provide more autonomy from the bureaucracy and formalities of the university club expectation.

Breaking circles set up more liberal spaces than seen in the general patterns of participation across universities by partly deformalising the *joge kankai* model through a greater openness to the mixing of age groups participating in their activities. When communities are small, they are more likely to embrace difference and as distinctions are important in performing autonomy. While this cultural form is still ingrained in university culture, it represents an interesting deviation from, and partial subversion of, traditional systems that more strictly reinforce the *Kohei–Sempai* relationship in its indoctrinated form. In this way, the formal value of these practices is transformed, allowing for more egalitarian identifications and expression. Pre-digital network building also occurred through these circles, strengthening subcultural connections to a wider city and national scene. It also offered a means of accessing new resources by tapping into a wider flow of subcultural products and discourse before being supplanted by internet resources.

Like the various other case studies in this thesis, international travel has also been an important factor in developing the cosmopolitan approach necessary for cross-cultural intermediary work. Like Katsu, Anija has spent a significant amount of time travelling the world—to Australia, through Asia and the

US. His travels were important in navigating different contexts through Hip-hop but, more importantly, provided him a reflexivity that brought into focus Japanese Hip-hop's nationalism and divergence from the wider global Hip-hop ethos.

In Japan, expressions of diversity and deviations from the mainstream were often misconstrued as 'not Japanese'(Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). This is partially a result of a local resurgence of commercial Japanese Hip-hop culture in the late 1990s and early 2000s following Western record companies' international expansion and local distribution (e.g., Def Jam). In a similar practice to the nationalisation of jazz, J-Rap also evolved as a practice of mono-ethnic recreation (with the exception of some deviations). In this practice, we see a type of cultural collectivism that supports inward-looking uniformity, group association and strength in an exclusionary mono-cultural identification that has been reinforced by beneficiary in-group cultural practices over centuries, typically experienced in relationships to business, family structures, city and farming communities (Cauquelin et al. 2014). In Japanese Breaking, participants similarly 'don't [aim to] understand other cultures' and are tied to a nationalism that has been pervasive (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). Anija cites Katsu as an example to explain how he opposed cultural norms and became part of a cosmopolitan-avant-garde in Hip-hop:

> He was kind of a bit famous at the time in Japan. But I didn't really like him at the time because Katsu was maybe too aggressive at the time? Looks not Japanese! His dance did not look like Japanese and [the] Japanese doesn't like it sometimes. It's [a style] kind of from America. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

The particularisation of style and forms in the Japanese context is important in understanding the cultural harmonisation that underpins a number of cultural and subcultural traditions in Japan. The above examination of Breaking in Tokyo (and wider Japan) reveals interesting local idiosyncrasies that offer something culturally distinctive from its original form. Conversely, this level of idiosyncrasy also dictates the degree to which local subcultures become overtly insular and closed off from other international iterations. How then, do inherently cosmopolitan and transnationally mobile actors such as intermediaries work within local traditions of cultural insularity/conformity?

Anija's participation overseas contrast with his experiences of this insularity common in Tokyo. The distinguishing feature in the US, for example, was the practice of 'cypher culture' which had been somewhat overlooked by many Japanese communities. This concept relates to a collective participation and exchanges through dance. Cyphers are not understood as competing in a formal sense and they are not presided over by judges. Cypher culture eschews a formal competitive ethos, although many participants also remain active in competitions. Nonetheless, cypher culture represents a distinctly different mentality towards the value of the dance and often appears in community events that are underground, unmediated and less lucrative than the spectacle of competition.

> Japanese b-boys doesn't understand what we did before. Because all old era, the b-boys from Rock Steady Crew Japan made the cypher before, but they never [taught others] about that culture. So [Japan] was more into battles or competitions or something [else]. Only people from overseas knew that style. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

For the local Japanese scene, cypher culture has been difficult to comprehend as there are few local practitioners who structure events around this type of community participation and cultural exchange. Instead, many flock to the large-scale corporatised events that have brought economic growth to the subcultural market and by contrast, cypher cultural engagement is minimised. To help connect Japan's local scene back to this tradition of collective cultural exchange, Anija has created a series of events over the years in a process of communitarian-cultural entrepreneurship that connects local and global community participation.

6.9 A Supa Jam: At Home and Abroad

Drawing on his familiarity both with local venues and global Hip-hop traditions, Anija has used his local subcultural capital as a DJ and dancer to establish his own events. As a DJ, he plays across Tokyo, most notably at The Room, a small venue in Shibuya that also employs prominent local and international guests (e.g., DJ Muro). His work outside of Breaking has enhanced his social capital and allowed him to create interdisciplinary connections between b-boys and DJs that he has incorporated into developing Supa Jam. This event prioritises the aforementioned cypher cultural focus, altering the formal judging–battle format, the distinction of which he credits to Frankie Flave:

> The original idea is from Frankie. Frankie told me we should make just cypher jam and then exhibition battle, anywhere, anytime they really want to. If they really feel the music, they really feel the music to battle, and the atmosphere, they can start anywhere. …I got to know more DJs through The Room like…Coco, Muro and many good DJs from there. And I really wanted them to spin at a b-boy jam and then I put them to the Supa Jam [as] main DJs. And then also, I put DJ Mar, DJ Tee and Kogataro or something. I wanted to see them spin together. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

Unlike large-scale Redbull competitions that showcase the global elite, Anija focuses on celebrating the diversity of local and global underground scenes. In marketing Supa Jam, Anija has tried to include as many different kinds of participants as possible by addressing each in their own language. The extension to an English speaking milieu also opens Tokyo's underground scene to others who are able to parlay with the lingua franca. This cosmopolitan Hip-hop ideology also symbolically represents a subtle subversion of Japanese cultural nationalism.

Supa Jam was first hosted in Japan in 2012. It celebrated local subcultural histories in a homage to the crew sustaining the Mizokonuchi public practice area, notably BDM. BDM Supa Jam, while very successful, is a non-profit event. The Tokyo event helps bring diversity to the scene through a

connection of local and global grassroots enthusiasts. Katsu and Anija both suggest Hip-hop has succumbed to a globalising pressure to commercialise. This is most notable at large-scale, world cup events, with both contrast to work. 'Like, every SilverBack event looks the same and the Monster events all look the same' (Tanahashi, R, interview 2016). Both intermediaries focus on establishing alternative cultural value. To support alternative Asia-Pacific Hip-hop exchanges, Anija has rn Manilla Supa Jam in the Philippines, supporting alternative flows of Japanese participation abroad and continuing a celebration of intercultural engagement. This event is largely reliant on the communications between regions via digital media, and requires careful transnational coordination with other agents and venue owners—a skillset typical of cross-cultural intermediaries. This is typically through making phone calls, sending emails and social media invitations and coordinating members of BDM who help manage logistics and marketing. In his efforts, we see a symbolic, cosmopolitan and reciprocal contribution to local-global Hip-hop discourse.

Anija eschews slick professional promotions, preferring a DIY approach that draws on community contributions and networks to secure venues and market the event. In doing so, he distinguishes himself from the professional commercial market as a grassroots cultural entrepreneur, appealing to a community that sees his work as authentic and rejects the sensationalism that drives more commercial Hip-hop projects. Instead this event is often in a smaller venue where there is almost no event to be had. Instead of intermittent competitions, what is seen looks more like a day of community engagement. While embracing this modest approach, the event still is able to maintain flows of local-global creative employment such as bringing DJs and dancers from across the world to perform or judge due to the alternative mass audience of dancers in Japan.[34] Despite being not for profit, the event still boasts significant international engagement with acts such as Style Element's Frankie Flave and Stunt Man (US), 7$'s Pepito (Australia), Cockroach Crew's Torb the Roach (Norway), MZK/Ready to Rock's Que Rock (US) and various DJs as both employees and participants including Muro, Mar and Ruhei the Mind from Japan and Skeme and Fulldeck from the US. Anija's communitarian contributions, while not for profit, are abstractly transformed into symbolic power and subcultural capital in the form of respect that can also be leveraged for various advantages, such as calling on favours from others to attend and help promote the event. Despite this, Anija's communitarian venture is still an example of cultural entrepreneurship that manifests new cultural and economic value for various local and international participants from Tokyo, across the Asia-Pacific and globally.

Anija's work with Supa Jam attempts not only to diversify local Japanese perspectives, but support cultural communities outside of the nation. It moves away from Japanese parochialism towards an

[34] If estimations of 20,000 b-boys are correct, even a marginal amount of participation can produce the necessary economic capital to maintain the event.

engagement with a global Hip-hop culture. What is seen is a more plural experience of cultural community than in a traditional context with a number of nationalities coming together. This attitude stems from a cosmopolitan ethos that is in tension with the nationalist-cosmopolitan model of post-war Japan that preserved contradictory institutional logics (Saito 2011). More recently, reforms have again shifted towards a policy that focuses more clearly on cultivating 'cosmopolitan nation-building, where nation and world society are conjoined' (Saito 2011, p. 141). This is a clear reaction to increasing levels of multidirectional globalisation, mobile world populations and the rise of intercultural digital communication. As the nation adapts to the changing conditions of contemporary society, Anija has similarly moulded his practice in a drift away from nationalism and towards an interconnected multicultural world. Despite policy shifts, multiculturalism and embraces of diversity are still limited by an exclusionary culture that clings to 'the myth of Japanese racial homogeneity by recognizing diversity while maintaining ethnic and racial boundaries' (Seiger 2018, p. 1).

Hip-hop experiences such as Supa Jam have been very important in creating an intercultural network to support and celebrate multiculturalism. Condry (2007) defines Hip-hop identities in Japan as an expression of something that is intrinsically Japanese, but moving beyond traditional nationalism. Other accounts suggest local Hip-hop identity expressions are far more nationalistic (Morris 2010). Some ethnic and racial particularisms are still noticeably relevant to Breaking culture in Tokyo. However, agents like Anija help draw participants towards more global Hip-hop discourses through events like Supa Jam. Any efforts in facilitating cosmopolitan and communitarian experiences, continue to shift the boundaries of the type of this 'cultural politics of difference' that 'rejects racial or ethnic essentialism in favor of a more complex understanding of how identity is constructed and enacted in diverse ways' between cultures (Condry 2007, p. 639). Japanese Hip-hop through Anija's work appears as an intrinsically hybridised culture and is empowered further by local-global cultural exchanges in celebration of both subcultural and traditional cultural diversity. In our interview, he suggested 'b-boys [find it] very easy to understand other cultures', comparing it to other Hip-hop disciplines (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). Unlike the more internationally focussed large-scale events that bring thousands of participants together (such as the Radikal Forze Anniversary discussed in Chapter 4 or the BIS discussed Chapter 5), Supa Jam is more modest in its approach, claiming smaller steps towards renegotiating cosmopolitan Japanese Hip-hop from Japan and abroad, without sacrificing authenticity or 'realness'.

6.10 Reciprocal Ethics of Care: A Note on the 'B-Boy' House

Anija also plays a role in connecting international scenes as a Hip-hop host. In this role, he opens his doors to travelling participants of Hip-hop subculture who wish to connect to Tokyo and wider Japanese Hip-hop experiences. This role exists independently from any market incentive and defines

his commitment to Hip-hop global cultural community development. Reisinger (2015, p. xii) argues that contemporary tourism hosts 'generate new thoughts and ideas, create new meanings' from 'interacting with other people from other places'. Moreover, their exposure to diversity enables a revaluation of 'their social, cultural, political and environmental beliefs', offering new opportunities to move 'towards new values of openness, tolerance, sharing, empathy, compassion, justice and peace, unity and oneness' (Reisinger 2015, p. xii). Similarly, Anija's role provides an opportunity for mutually beneficial intercultural experiences.

Since 2008, Anija has hosted more than 100 participants who toured through Tokyo (this researcher being one of them) for leisure, competitions or learning from locals. His motivation for supporting members of the global Hip-hop community is due to his internalisation of the subculture as his 'main lifestyle' and 'foundation of my life' (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). What is important to him is sharing, supporting and facilitating authentic subcultural experiences in the Japanese context. He attributes much of this ethic of care to interactions with Frankie Flave, an early identifier from the US:

> I knew him as a famous international b-boy and he just came up to me, 'you Japanese?'…very friendly. Then I was so surprised, even the things…people came to ask you know? And then he asked me 'where you going to stay?'…he said we can stay at his place…At the time Frankie said the b-boy community is very small and tight, that's why he's helping people from overseas... So loving. I was surprised by that mentality. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

This mentality contrasts with Japan's individualised idiosyncratic cultural exchanges and also demonstrates an openness to outsiders uncommon in Japan. The immense impact of this communitarian approach led to a shift in Anija's practice:

> I really understand when people come from overseas. I really want them to enjoy it, because Frankie did it for me, so maybe I can do it for someone. And then I try to, and we can enjoy in Japan. But I also enjoy [it]. It's a very good thing for me. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

He is proud to produce authentic experiences of Japanese Hip-hop and culture as they are symbolic of an expansion of the discourse of reciprocity that helps sustain Hip-hop communities and their mobility globally. His hosting includes everything from taking the visitor to prominent Hip-hop bars, introducing them to the dance scene and playing records in his apartment. This also brings Anija subcultural capital, a respect shared across a network of travellers who have come and gone. His contributions were also picked up on by Redbull's cultural marketing division who were planning to do a documentary on his contributions in anticipation for the 2016 BC One competition. Overall, this work demonstrates an alternative grassroots support for global Hip-hop networks that parallels the large-scale competitions, and both contribute to the growth of the subculture. This is distinguished

from the commercial sector and rewards him with a type of communitarian authenticity that brings attention to his other cultural work such as Supa Jam.

6.11 'Enter the Stage' and Navigating Alternatives for Distinction

In Japan, online local media hubs for social exchanges and the circulation of event information have emerged and are essential for connecting the local scene. The 'Enter the Stage' platform, in particular, offers significant value to the Japanese scene, allowing the transmission of subcultural event information, media, art, businesses and other forms of subcultural advertising (Enter the Stage 2017). Despite its benefits to the local Japanese scene, Anija is weary of using local popular mediums to promote his creative projects:

> Yeah [it's] Japanese, my friends all use [it]. I can say it's really dope (good)... But at the same time [even though] I can see the events on Enter the Stage, everything's the same! Like, every SilverBack event looks the same and the Monster events all look the same. I can see the difference from, you know, Freestyle Session. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

Similar to the way that Katsu describes YouTube's ability to create an imbalanced representation of Hip-hop culture, this centralisation of content has driven event marketing into a pattern of competitive homogenisation. In a dismissal of the economic pursuit obvious from this process of imitation, Anija looks to global digital media alternatives to ensure he distinguishes his projects and includes international audiences. The denunciation of Enter the Stage as a public relations tool is one way Anija distinguishes his taste:

> Image is very important for the event (BDM Supa Jam). If you use Enter the Stage, the image is very similar to the other events, you know? I don't really want to use [it]. My friend owns it so I don't really want to diss (insulting)… but I don't really use [it which] means I [have] another mentality. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

Like Katsu, he expresses his taste in returning to physical traditional media promotions, bringing his event an alternative authenticity where people can 'really feel and see the passion' (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). This is an important way of addressing an alternative cultural milieu who value that alternative. The distinction of engaging in legacy practices and paradigms helps resurrect this type of cultural consumption for the discerning connoisseur consumers in Tokyo—similar to the way that the revaluation of vinyl has re-emerged as a material practice that also brings status to consumers in the music market (Van Der Grijp 2015). Anija's case demonstrates a determined effort to maintain subcultural authenticity through the varying methods of conveying distinction: 'Image is very important for the event I [have] another mentality' (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016). At the same time, while he distances himself from the commercial Hip-hop practices of Tokyo and the globe, he also shows respect for these alternatives as they bring different contributions to cultural growth.

6.12 Breakdance Project Uganda

Anija's case also allows us to consider how Asia-Pacific projects connect themselves to the world. In Africa, we see corporations investing to harness resources and build infrastructure and, alongside this, we see new contributions to the development of cultural value through Hip-hop. Anija contributes to local Hip-hop arts programs that help engage disenfranchised youth. One he works with closely is Breakdance Project Uganda (BPU) organised by b-boy Abramz Tekya of Rock Steady Crew. The delivery of BPU's vision relies on a number of teachers, mentors and community members that sustain its programs across the African region. This is achieved by travelling to regional towns to transition young participants into roles of leadership—a type of skills building that enables new social mobility through employment. This network of leaders travel between regions to then help stimulate ongoing civic engagement, as Anija recalls:

> …the students of [Abramz] are more than 1,000 people. Not only in his area, but he's been around a lot of areas. Uganda has a lot of cities, Kampala is the capital city and Gulu kind of local and poor, more poor area, and then Jinja is more across from Kenya. And he has a lot of branches there—he teaches younger people to teach younger people. That's what I'm impressed [by], his mentality. Always, he's teaching breakdancing there but…Abramz is teaching young b-boys [and girls]. Now the head office for BPU [has] more than 10 people, the main guys, and each of them are teaching everywhere. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

During his intermittent periods of living in Africa, Anija often travels alongside Abramz to assist with teaching and mentorship—another type of Hip-hop nobless oblige. In this way, he is able to help introduce a unique cultural perspective into the Ugandan Hip-hop context, providing new local-global access to discourse, foreign cultural products and information. Moreover, Anija mediates flows between Uganda, the Asia-Pacific (via Tokyo) and global networks to showcase Uganda's cultural champions as they are under-represented in the global sphere. This is due to the restrictions on migration, political instability and the colonial political relations that have oppressed the impoverished region. Additionally, a global metropolitan gaze orients audiences' attention towards popular, prosperous, industrialised and highly urbanised centres in developed nations. These mediations back to Japan also help to validate blackness in Japan, significant given the 'ambiguous racio-cultural status' of Black mixed-raced nationals (Hughes 2003, p. 336). This is enhanced by the increased mainstream visibility of other Black-Japanese Hip-hop artists in commercial media (e.g., Wez Nakajima on the television show *Terrace House* (2017)). By helping communicate Hip-hop culture between the developed and developing world, Uganda has become more identifiable to larger networks of online participation.

Anija's participation coincides with a significant shift in industrial development in the region by corporations from the West, China, Russia and Japan (Bijaoui 2017, p. 1). Nippon Koei (one of

Japan's oldest engineering consultancies and Anija's employer), for example, is one of many multinational corporations who have interests in developing the region. China has also recently been active in investment and development in its £56 billion pledge to help develop African infrastructure, primarily in the sub-Saharan region (Poplak 2016). Notably, these bids for development also highlight new tensions between economic and cultural Asian imperialisms and globalisations embodied by colonial migratory work that is outsourced to the East Asian region. As an employee of a powerful international corporation, Anija is able to enjoy a different type of flexibility (economically as well as subcultural access and participation) than other local Ugandans participating in Hip-hop. This is another reflection of the international globalising power that Japan possesses economically and culturally.

Despite this ongoing foreign infrastructural investment flowing into Africa, internet penetration rates remain relatively low compared to more affluent nations like Japan, limiting Ugandan access to international flows of digital media and discourse, with 19% penetration across Uganda (Internet Live Stats 2017a) compared to 91% penetration in Japan (Internet Live Stats 2017b).

> Now they know about Freestyle Session, but yeah, only big events. They know there are a lot of cultures, but younger people from there, the younger b-boys/girls don't know how global [it is]. (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016)

While Uganda's scene is still in need of cultural resources to help Hip-hop modernise and thrive, the local youth are also not as interested in ascertaining information that concerns the state of global Hip-hop (although, that may be ignoring their struggle in favour of popular alternatives) and, instead, are focussed on learning from their local and visiting subcultural champions to help empower their home-grown networks. Anija's intermediation across the Asia-Pacific and the rest of the world creates an important connection from places like Tokyo to the Ugandan scene. To summarise his contribution, he stresses, 'nobody knows [them] and maybe only I can do that [create connection back to Japan]' (Tanahashi, R, interview, 2016).

6.13 Conclusion

Through the examples of Katsu and Anija, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of cross-cultural intermediaries in establishing local-global connections from Tokyo to an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop culture. The chapter examined how these connections reach between the developed and developing world. The particular focus taken here has been examining how cross-cultural intermediaries benefit from a thriving creative economy of grassroots and commercial subcultural industries in Tokyo in establishing local and global practices that extend across the Asia-Pacific and beyond. These case studies demonstrate the role of corporate capitalism in Hip-hop's genesis and

how intermediaries negotiate authenticity and work with creative autonomy to confer authenticity within a large commercially supported subcultural market. In this corporatised environment, there is a growing communitarianism in a fast-changing commercialised subcultural landscape. Practices adopted to distinguish themselves from this corporate-enhanced Hip-hop bring the cultural entrepreneurs in this chapter alternative cultural capital.

In both cases, there is some form of acceptance of the corporate co-option as it helps support subcultural development, despite its shortcomings, and emerges in Tokyo through a common appreciation for corporate influence or a symbiotic collaboration. One way the cultural and social entrepreneurial endeavours of intermediaries in Tokyo have benefited from this corporate capitalism, is from the greater commercial saleability and grassroots support of Hip-hop that stems from its rapid expansion, specifically in Tokyo, where an alternative mass audience has appeared. In Japan, and unlike anywhere else explored in this thesis,[35] there is a more willing embrace and celebration of this influence as it contributes to the collective goal of subcultural development, despite its economic or cultural motivation or outcome.

Cross-cultural intermediaries in this chapter negotiate terms of representation and find ways to manage authenticity in the face of increasing institutional interests being co-opted into Hip-hop culture. Katsu and Anija maintain authenticity while leaning on the market to deliver cultural, social and economic outcomes. Despite running a number of lucrative businesses, Katsu often eschews commercial motives through activism and in his devotion to Hip-hop development, which partially distinguishes his practice from the market, whereas Anija's work is devoid of any commercial motivation and is concerned entirely with creating cultural value, awarding him a different type of authenticity among the underground scene.

Both accounts also demonstrate the importance of social media in marketing and creating and leveraging connections between people and places. For famous cultural leaders like Katsu, this is complicated by a new culture of digital subcultural engagement and a lack of interest in the physical community practice, creating new dynamics of authenticity between the real and digital world. Physical media has also reappeared as a means to establish distinction from the digital mainstream and wider commercial sphere that can be homogenising in favour of making projects sustainable at the cost of cultural value.

[35] In Shanghai, there was also a corporate embrace, but with greater state involvement.

The next chapter examines how a similar dynamic is played out in Melbourne with the support of the state where a cross-cultural intermediary works at procuring multicultural experiences of Hip-hop within the city and across the Asia-Pacific.

Chapter 7: Melbourne: State-Supported Hip-Hop Development

Riding the trains from the outer western suburbs of Melbourne into the city, the influence of Hip-hop is plastered across the walls as graffiti dons everything from tunnels to high rise buildings. The city has a long history of celebrating street cultures and Hip-hop can be seen across the city in record stores, news agencies, bars, night clubs and on the streets themselves. Walking from Flinders Street Station to the Art Centre Melbourne (ACM), Hip-hop rhythms echo through the street and across the Yarra River. Behind the ACM, a multicultural audience gathers to watch Inner Beat, a Hip-hop performance art show, part of the Asia Topa festival. Among the crowd are renowned Hip-hop leaders, one of which is Dennis 'Nasa' Penelligan, who watches with his students and colleagues from the arts precinct. After the closing of the show and a tram ride, he meets a group of DJs, dancers, music producers and Hip-hop aficionados at local Hip-hop venue, Horse Bazaar, to celebrate. Once the party dies down, it returns to business as usual, with new projects on the horizon in Melbourne and abroad in the Philippines, which bring together communities from around the world. While the locale may be on the edges of the South-Eastern edge of Australia, it is intertwined with the happenings of the Asia-Pacific.

Unlike many of the insular mono-ethnic cities examined in this chapter, Melbourne is strongly defined by multiculturalism. Unlike Singapore, Australia has exhibited a tension between the Anglo-Celtic majority, what was historically was called 'White Australia' (Hage 1998), and a growing post-war non-European multi-ethnic cosmopolitanism. This chapter examines the work of a cross-cultural intermediary figure and the importance of utilising subcultural practices not only to challenge a white national identity, but to promote cosmopolitanism and the support of marginality (at home and abroad). This work with marginalised communities makes Hip-hop in Australia important in connecting older Australian cultural forms (e.g., Indigenous cultures) to inclusive practices of expression. Hip-hop is celebrated at both the underground and commercial level. As a result of these two cultural streams, Australian Hip-hop communities resemble their origins in the US, but have been shaped by an alternative history of local identity politics. Like Tokyo, Melbourne has a long history of subcultures, with a flamboyant, working-class, larrikin, youth street culture and an equally colourful artistic Bohemian tradition that extends back to the nineteenth century. This has been significant for the local reception of subcultural arts and the agency of cross-cultural intermediaries.

This chapter examines Dennis Pennalligen (Nasa), whose work is essential in creating inclusive multicultural Hip-hop programs and events, building connections across the nation and region. Nasa's work can be framed in different ways. This chapter revisits cultural and social entrepreneurship, considering how these ways of operating are used to create meaningful projects that collaborate or

intersect with the state. In Melbourne, these entrepreneurial skillsets are important in helping cultural agents in the arts sector bid for corporate patronage in a developed capitalist economy that is complemented by significant state support for cultural development. This funding is often awarded to those who can deliver cultural or social outcomes. Due to a history of post-colonial settler nationalism, this work is also contextualised within a history of complicated diversity that stems from polarised political cultural policies over the last half century. This has led to the development of what has been criticised by Hage (1998) as a result of 'White multiculturalism'. This is a governmental policy that ostensibly embraces ethnic diversity with a language of 'celebration', 'harmony' and equal access to the rights and resources of citizenship, but in practice essentialises, manages and tolerates ethnic groups without sharing power, embracing genuine difference or negotiating the complex hybrid identities in Australia. This chapter asks, what is the importance of cultural and social entrepreneurship in addressing the situation of marginalised communities? How do cross-cultural intermediaries create opportunities for others to participate locally and bring global cultural exchanges to Melbourne?

7.1 Australian Hip-Hop

Melbourne is the capital of a former British settler colony, where the Indigenous population was dispossessed and the vast majority of the population were descendants of immigrants, from the British Isles and Europe, for most of its history since the nineteenth century. More recently, Melbourne has experienced increasing migration from Asia, the Middle East and Africa and has become incredibly diverse (as of 2016, 28.4% of the population of the state of Victoria were born overseas in over 200 countries) (Victoria State Government 2016). Despite a relatively more successful integration of immigrant populations than most multicultural societies, politicians and media play off of tensions between the Anglo-Celtic majority and this evolving multicultural Australia. This tension is also reflected in Hip-hop's localisation, examined below, highlighting a tension between white and multicultural Australia. The white dominant narratives in Australia threaten the communitarian power that Hip-hop boasts in many places leading to its stratification. This has been criticised as a white Hip-hop experience.

The white Hip-hop narrative is differentiated from the multicultural character of Hip-hop that appeals to the culturally marginalised. For much of its initial commercial success, Hip-hop in Australia was stigmatised in mainstream discourse as it built on an external cultural form from the US, leading to the creation of a distinct localised nuance, local history and cultural practice (as in other forms like jazz, rock 'n' roll and modern art in the mid-twentieth century). Similarly, in the way that various media reflections on cultural diversity have been criticised in Australia (Hage 1998), mainstream Hip-hop music has popularised a dominantly white Australian ethos. White Australian Hip-hop often

showcases the 'Aussie' accent as a core part of its identity and is a performance commonly associated with the 'perspective of white suburban males', leading to its delineation from the global form as Skip-Hop (Joyner 2016). This is a result of the success of groups like Hilltop Hoods who dominated local Hip-hop charts after becoming popular in the 2000s. Thomas Rock of local Hip-hop outfit Def Wish Cast spoke of this in a radio interview with Triple J:

> This dominance in Australian Hip-hop has meant that some of the youth are seeing the phrase 'Australian' as a badge of White Australia and that's very separate from everyone from my generation that saw hip-hop as hip-hop. (Rock as quoted in Peril 2012)

This outcome is also partially due to the influence of Eminem's movie *8-Mile*, a story of a young Anglo-American youth and his struggle to find identity through participation in the underground Hip-hop community in Detroit. This narrative validated non-Black participation within Hip-hop communities internationally and was responsible for the acceleration of Hip-hop's local cultural appeal to white Australia, despite its early multicultural adoption (Arthur 2009; Rodger 2011).

This was further problematised by the scarcity of oppositional discourses to media institutions who celebrated local Hip-hop imagery by championing 'Aussie' groups such as the Hilltop Hoods. This has fragmented Australian Hip-hop cultures, forming distinct cultural practices and fragmented scenes. Hip-hop, therefore, in its popular musical form, developed as a cultural practice disconnected from its multicultural independent communitarian origins. The stigmatisation of participation in foreign music cultures was also largely a result of tensions in public discourse (e.g., about how to negotiate a local identity as distinct from the African-American experience). Hip-hop was 'emerging in the US the UK, [across] Europe, even Asia. Australia was very reluctant to adapt to it' (Montell, A, interview, 2017). The local nuance connected a new authenticity among 'white middle-class Hip-hoppers whose race and class origins distance them from this socially located space' to create distinction in both 'form and content' (Cutler 2003).

Fieldwork interviews with Andrew Montell, creator of Hip-hop Australia's first Hip-hop magazine Out4Fame and contemporary lifestyle magazine Acclaim, also highlighted the historical cultural determinants that underpin this move to reclaim multiculturalism in Hip-hop:

> …you have this terrible by-product of that thinking, where there are like whole communities of white Australian kids who have grown up on this idea of Aussie Hip-hop being a separate genre to what has been going on internationally and they think it's a white genre. (Montell, A, interview, 2017)

This brings into question the role of cultural intermediaries who work between marginalised multi-ethnic Hip-hop communities and state institutions to enable expression and bring in new audiences. There are similarities between Nasa's work in Melbourne and the programs to promote social

engagement of Felix and Katsu in Tokyo. It speaks both to the participating subcultures and formal institutions such as charities, cultural agencies and government funding bodies. One significant discussion that emerged from our interview is based around how Hip-hop is used as a platform for an engagement with the multicultural real and, through this, how it is able to make artists and subcultures more translatable to the global sphere. This is important as it counters the commercial and aesthetic appeal of the localised Hip-hop to its dominant white, Anglo fanbase, which is slowly disappearing as many artists now have dropped the 'authentic' Australian accent to become more internationally saleable.

Similar Anglo-dominant patterns have been identified elsewhere. For example, Bennett's (1999a) research on pop cultural localisation examines this very process of negotiating a unique connection to an overarching global Hip-hop narrative. In Britain's Newcastle, for example, Hip-hop has been a white working-class phenomenon due to 'the lack of a substantial black presence'. Hip-hop enthusiasts are 'not content with forming a romantic association with the African-American experience' (Bennett 1999a, p. 21), so have constructed their own distinctive notion of subcultural authenticity around the day-to-day realities of working-class 'Geordie' youth (Bennett 1999a, p. 21). In a similar way, the Australian Hip-hop experience has been shaped by unique socio-cultural and political determinants that have been pushed back by the increasing cultural diversity in contemporary Australia.

Local intermediaries now challenge the remnants of the white dominant narrative in Australia through projects that empower disenfranchised and marginalised cultural groups through skills building and communitarianism. Nasa's work seeks to procure more culturally plural experiences of Hip-hop culture that connect globally mobile participants with local subcultures and vice versa, doing so through state-funded projects and charitable investment. A good example is free dance classes provided by not-for-profit group Limbs2Riddem (L2R), or in the creation of events that bring together local cultural communities and their international counterparts. Therefore, this chapter asks two additional questions arising from Nasa's practice. To what extent are intermediary practices enabled by government support? And does the arts welfare state pose a threat to creative autonomy and authenticity? In answering this second question, we need to keep in mind comparisons with the Chinese Communist Party (see Chapter 5) and Japanese corporate capitalism (see Chapter 6).

These questions are worked out through the example of Dennis 'Nasa' Pennalligen, a Maori-Australian who has participated within Hip-hop subcultures for the last two decades. Nasa meets the criteria of a cross-cultural intermediary as he works at facilitating cultural connections through projects that bring local communities in touch with each other and with a global Hip-hop, online and

in the real world. These projects are focussed on increasing access to the arts for marginal groups and empowering youth expression.

Firstly, in Melbourne, he is a key contributor to the arts by way of his own independent practice, working with local non-government organisations (NGOs) and collaborations with the state in programs that support marginalised cultural communities (often via local, state and federal government funding that provides infrastructural support for Melbourne arts projects). The dominant history of 'British Race Patriotism' (Curran & Ward 2010) is put into tension with the more recent successes of contemporary ethnic diversity (following the formalisation of governmental multiculturalism in the 1970s) and critiques this imperial belonging. Hip-hop has also reflected this tension, where it is bifurcated into white Aussie and multicultural streams. With this historical context in mind, an important question arises about the significance of Nasa's role in connecting cultures to institutions and audiences in Melbourne. How does Nasa as an intermediary work between marginalised ethnic Hip-hop practitioners and the state in creating support and valorisation of Hip-hop arts?

Secondly, as an important Melbournian Hip-hop cultural leader, Nasa is also involved in creating international connections through an annual three-day Hip-hop performing arts festival, Nice Fest, and through his ongoing contribution to the Manilla-based cultural organisation the Kapayapaan project. His work with the latter demonstrates the extrapolation of this social and culturally progressive use of Hip-hop in Melbourne to empower other marginal communities in the Asia-Pacific.

What is peculiar about Nasa's case as an intermediary is that, unlike the other case studies in this thesis, his family were of a working-class background. This means that he has not had the kind of middle-class benefits, such as extensive international travel, discussed in the previous case studies. Working-class mobility has often been aided by social intervention in Australia such as government assistance, minimum wage policies and free state education. Nonetheless, his example demonstrates an important acquisition of cultural capital and social mobility he has defined for himself through Hip-hop. Before diving further into Nasa's work, we should first contextualise the success of Hip-hop practices with a brief history of Hip-hop's reception in Australia.

7.2 Subcultures and International Pop Cultural Reception in Australia

The Hip-hop phenomenon crossed the world through movies like *Breakin'* (Silberg 1984), among other flows of DIY and commercial content, and was adopted by a number of enthusiastic local early

identifiers.[36] The local Australian Hip-hop nuance emerged as a unique and isolated reflection of the original US practice with dancers, musicians, DJs and MCs coming together in the creation of a new Australian Hip-hop. This history has been complicated as the mainstream discourse has assumed a white perspective until more contemporary times where the state and media institutions are attempting to more accurately engage with the multicultural real and are being held accountable for their misrepresentations. Hip-hop is also one way this has become possible as it has represented an important space for the free expression of identity across indigenous and other local marginalised groups (Gooding Jr et al. 2016; Minestrelli 2014a, 2014b; Stavrias 2005). Hip-hop is also a place of hybridity that goes beyond official governmental multiculturalism and has always celebrated real intercultural mixing in its everyday forms. This has been especially important to non-Anglo immigrations after the 1980s from Asia, the Middle East, Polynesia and Africa, as well as earlier waves of Southern European immigrants. Many of these formed the underclass participating in an alternative, culturally diverse Hip-hop culture.

Separated from the rhymes and raps of the music industry, the local Breaking community formed under much different contexts. This discipline evolved into something more multicultural and less confused by the representations of the Australian Hip-hop in mainstream music. Nasa suggests it is because Breaking requires the most communal activity and interaction of all the Hip-hop arts, due to the importance of physical exchanges that sustain communities, their traditions and competitions. This distinguishes this branch of Hip-hop in its ability to create inclusive spaces for participation, compared with the local Hip-hop music scene that is often more about cultural production, consumption and commercialisation. This space still suffers from the lineage in commercial white Australian Hip-hop and is powerful in redefining how Hip-hop is situated in Melbourne's arts sector.

The advent of digital media has also reorganised much of the local-global media sphere via international connectivity, participation and accessibility to subcultural resources with transnational communication and pop cultural encounters becoming more commonplace every day (e.g., the Korean Wave and international fan communities) (Kim 2013). In Hip-hop, we see a growing multicultural resistance to the once mainstream White Hip-hop discourse through publications like Acclaim Magazine:

> It's convenient to claim that this country is multicultural but when you look at our media landscape it's not…Obviously I'm a white man as well but I consider myself a multiculturalist and I think that when real multiculturalism takes place, Hip-hop will be the logical [place for it]…it will be the voice. (Montell, A, interview, 2018)

[36] Almost every case study could cite this film or refer to its influence in some way.

This is bolstered by an increasing interconnection of Breaking communities locally and globally that have enabled further cosmopolitanism. Examples include the movement of Australians to Singapore, for the Radikal Forze Anniversary, and other cultural diversities into Australia, for events like Nice Fest that are outlined later in this case study. Australian Hip-hop has increasingly been drawn into the Asia-Pacific Hip-hop networks examined in this thesis. Alongside such globally diverse encounters, Australia also faces increasing levels of international migration. With an increasing media and cultural diversity, Hip-hop becomes a useful tool for intermediaries in improving community relations and empowering migrant communities.

7.3 Introducing Dennis 'Nasa' Pennalligen

Dennis is an internationally renowned b-boy, a local performance art producer-director and community leader for Melbournian and Asia-Pacific youth (by way of his work in Manilla). His practice is made possible by working with local grassroots cultural enterprises like Cohealth Arts Generator (a cultural community arts organisation) and collaborating with larger prestigious organisations like the ACM. I have known Nasa since I was a teenager as we both gravitated to Hip-hop in Melbourne. He has always been a progressive figure championed for his individuality and style. His role in Melbourne's subcultural communities is defined by a diverse practice where he takes on many roles as an event manager, teacher and participant among local and global Hip-hop communities.

Melbournian Hip-hop has a long history like many of its other urban subcultures. Unlike other case studies in this research, Melbourne's reception to Western pop culture and post-colonial flows (that positioned its European-based culture more open to flows from the West, initially via its imperial connection to the UK) are put into tension with the consumption of forms from the various immigrant cultural origins. Nasa's example illuminates how Hip-hop intersects with the performing arts in Melbourne, how such intersections are both ignored and supported by the state, and how multiculturalism in Melbourne is coupled with a Hip-hop cosmopolitanism to produce engagement with the multicultural real. Nasa's international activities as a dancer and event manager also reveal interesting insights about how he also interfaces with, and supports, local and global disenfranchised communities through contributions to community arts programs overseas (i.e., the Kapayapaan project.

Nasa's participation dates back almost two decades to Melbourne's early Throwdown competitions (established in 2002 by Wicked Force Breakers). His first influences were the Immortal Shining Ones, a Melbourne-based crew, whose members went on to form Fresh Sox (whom Nasa, alongside other cross-cultural intermediaries in this study like Katsu, Anija and Felix, were later welcomed into as

members). The 1990s saw something of a downturn of interest in Hip-hop in Melbourne, as in many other places around the world. Hip-hop cultural leaders who continued to work on development through this period had an advantage entering the 2000s as they were the last of their generation of early identifiers. Nasa recalls going to events set up by important community leaders like Arch Rival of Wicked Force for the youth to participate and freely express themselves through non-exclusionary cultural exchanges:

> For me now, I'm always comparing it (Hip-hop) to my own culture, so Maori culture or family wise. It's sort of that group support that you get. I find them real similar because it's got this generational structure to it. Like if you take the culture seriously enough, like for my own personal culture with my family's…That's where I draw the connection it's really about respecting your elders and previous generations in order to build and keep the thing going. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

This type of generational role is integral to the subculture as it facilitates a flow of investment (mental, physical, reputational and economic) into Hip-hop cultural programs for ongoing cultural community development. In this sense, leaders play an important role in creating spaces for participation, collective belonging and, as seen in previous chapters, educating the youth in ways to become self-sufficient within Hip-hop culture. More importantly, these individuals are also seen as educators and social workers who establish programs that keep 'young participants out of a criminal career' and inspire 'them to read, to write, to express and articulate themselves, to engage in school work, to meet schedules, and to adapt to and cope with different social situations' (Ringsager 2017, p. 77). This type of relationship also helps bridge generational divides between the contemporary communitarian Hip-hop and that of the streets, valorising the former to conservatives who do not understand Hip-hop culture (Hicks Harper et al. 2007). Contrasting this approach of conservative parent cultures, there is now a greater attention given to Hip-hop now as a legitimate pedagogical tool that helps create critical reflections on system, culture, race and politics of difference, fostering critically reflective and positive youth development (Akom 2009). This varying formal and informal educational legacy of Hip-hop's use creates pathways for the legitimisation of the form, while promoting a culture of reciprocity and community. Nasa's work similarly recognises the value of Hip-hop in providing opportunity to youth through the cultural development made possible by the aforementioned generational structure that has driven his own investment back into the culture. Nasa draws on his Hip-hop experiences to navigate cultural boundaries, stimulate positive youth cultural exchanges and facilitate a sense of belonging.

7.4 A Note on 'Digging': Going Deeper Into a Hip-hop Philosophy

One practice that Nasa referred to regularly in thinking about Hip-hop culture was 'crate-digging' for records. For music purveyors, this practice was incredibly important for gaining knowledge of various

genres and their respective fields. Nasa also looks at digging as a means to learn about life—it is a foundational practice driven by curiosity, consumption and expanding one's repertoire through exploration. This is also central to his work in empowering self-directed learning among local-global youth, comparing digging to a skill of worldly enquiry that goes beyond Hip-hop. Other subcultural studies suggest this type of consumption also exposes individuals to an assortment of other areas of life as part of a 'love of music; obsessive-compulsive behaviour; accumulation and completism; selectivity and discrimination; self-education and scholarship' (Shuker 2004, p. 311).

> Back then you get into Breaking, its *actually* Hip-hop as a whole thing and so you get into the idea of DJing which makes you go 'oh'. [You] listen to rap songs and 'oh, my parents has the original song', and you go into their records, and what I'm saying is you get into this whole 'digging' thing. And digging as in any information which is like 'oh shit!'. At some point, you realise Breaking started before [you were] born so you want to shuffle back in time… (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Therefore, digging can be thought of as a form of research and enquiry, and also a type of 'connoisseurship' via consumption. In this way, Hip-hop opens up discourse to explore not only the history, culture, art, and international politics relevant to the form, but simultaneously creates pathways to informal self-learning. This form of cultural consumption that differentiates Nasa's participation and knowledge of the field has brought him distinction as a type of consumer connoisseur of Hip-hop, similar to Katsu. What is unique to Nasa's approach to digging are skills and literacies acquired outside of traditional educational settings that are translatable beyond the subculture, enhancing literacy, expression, reading, writing and creative production.

> I'm reading James Bowen books; I'm reading Mya Angelou at like 17, which I just wouldn't have done if this all didn't happen. So I'm going down to the dollar book store and just picking up 'interesting'… I think that's the main way that it reverberated into my being and my agency, just having that more…inquisitive mind. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

7.5 Imagining Affinities and Connecting Regional Communities

Nasa's first connections to Hip-hop culture were through global VHS and DVD media. His early identifications with this transnational community allow us to understand how media consumption shaped his desire to create real connections through local-global events. Pre-internet, a number of music retailers and specialty stores (e.g., *This Is It* in Richmond) connected the fragmented Hip-hop milieu in Melbourne as they did for the postpunk 'indie' scenes and subcultures (Moore 2012). Australia's first Hip-hop publication, *Out4Fame* (1999–2005), became a seminal text for the then-underground dance communities and was paralleled with an online space for engagement and information retrieval. These spaces gave access to community members like Nasa to explore the city,

national scenes and international happenings in detailed flows of curated content and communications.

Out4Fame was a DIY magazine set up by another cultural entrepreneur Andrew Montell who brought together bedroom DIY subcultural production with state funding via the New Enterprise Incentive Scheme. Out4Fame's first editions resembled a more hobbyist project distributed in photocopy form prior to receiving the state support that allowed its evolution into a full colour spread, and then to a regional expansion (coupling the close Australia and New Zealand scenes). The subcultural zine emerged alongside various advances in subcultural communication that helped develop Australian access to Hip-hop in both its localised and international forms. These were primarily internet websites like www.ozhiphop.com and www.ozbboy.com and Triple J's first weekly Hip-hop show. Arthur (2009, p. 93) suggests that these infrastructural advances led to the first forms of translocal dissemination 'in Australian history' that offered local artists new means of having 'their music heard nationally', and for b-boys their stories told. Out4Fame was championed as one of the most important Hip-hop media texts in Australia.

> In there, among other stuff, was an article called 'B-boy Red's Breakdown'…he would basically let you know what happened in the last two months in the Breaking scene in Australia. Whether he was there or not, he knew enough people to get the information, and it was just a two page layout. And you're like 'oh shit!' …the more and more the gaps are being filled and you're sort of understanding of everything that's going on and around the place. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

These texts were important in connecting individuals to their local scenes and to other local communities through exposure to intercultural communication (using English as the lingua franca). They have also played a role, at a national level, in reflecting multicultural participation. Independent publications like Out4Fame have reflected the diversity of Hip-hop communities, whereas the mainstream media have been widely criticised for being failing to represent cultural diversity (Klocker 2014). Out4fame offered opportunities for individuals to relate to others from different backgrounds. Its function as a media outlet might be compared with that of independent radio, which has traditionally supported diversity through providing public access (Davies 2005). Taking into account these means of winning back diversity in the late 1990s and early 2000s in Australia, Hip-hop has challenged mono-cultural attitudes that maintain or emphasise one favoured identity expressed by the state and aging conservative pundits. This is sustained by a multiculturalism of tolerance (Hage 1998) and the preferred rock 'n' roll cultural form favoured in the media.

Nasa's describes his local-global subcultural belonging as metaphysical and illusory. One way of conceptualising this is through Anderson's (1983) notion of the imagined community and imagined affinities sustained by the exchange of local-global subcultural media texts (Fogarty 2012).This type

of imaginary connectivity resonated with Nasa, in his own reading of Fogarty's work (for his Master's thesis) and his experience of local Hip-hop and early glimpses into the global.

> Like when you're 15, not much takes you out of your suburb so when your imagination is stretched out of there, it opens up bigtime…watching videos, it's like 'whoa there's like 300 people at this jam in LA' that maybe happened three years ago, but it makes you think, I'm a part of *this* (Hip-hop) now. Like if I do *this*, I'm like somehow with those guys, and these guys. …I guess a lot of young people might dream about travelling but I never had that in my head. And then, not only did I feel like travelling, but I have a purpose—'I'm gonna' go to LA and I'll immediately have like 1,000 friends', you know? It's a pretty cool feeling to have when you're a kid. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

These communications represent for Nasa a way of engaging in a local and global diversity—a feeling of being internationally connected while tethered. This has helped him establish a cosmopolitan competency from Australia during his youth, unlike many intermediaries who acquired this knowledge from travel. Nasa has drawn from his own migrant background and intercultural encounters within the Australian multicultural Hip-hop context to validate his competencies. His account highlights the importance of negotiating identity in different contexts which enables him to oscillate between his traditional cultural identity, host culture (as a Maori-Australian) and his belonging to a global subculture and the importance of creating these faculties in others.

7.6 Independent Hip-Hop Arts Production

Nasa's work in the arts uses entrepreneurial skillsets to develop projects that help legitimise Hip-hop in a sector that is often wary of street culture. His projects focus on enabling participation in a number of forms. Nasa's independent work brings together a cast of multicultural identities from across Melbourne's western suburbs to create a dialogue that also displaces a common discourse around the rough, poor, wasteland. This reflective work in the west has also coincided with an incredible amount of investment in the region, with suburbs like Footscray transforming through gentrification and urban regeneration. Gentrification, however, presents an ongoing struggle to the local municipality in navigating cultural policy and the effects of urban regeneration on residents. Glow et al. (2014, p. 495) argues that 'any potential realisation of the economic benefits of gentrification' must be 'balanced against the needs of a significant population of resident professional artists, and the social inclusion needs of socio-economically disadvantaged residents'. Collaboration with cultural agents like Nasa offers a way to work towards creating cultural outcomes from artistic merit, socio-cultural and economic inclusion, and remuneration for often disconnected artists living in this area through Hip-hop programs. This also is an important move to address a gap in the traditional 'high-arts' sector, where Hip-hop is often under-represented. Nasa's practice is made sustainable by way of a not-for-profit, for-the-artists approach helps him practice a type of autonomy from the market.

Nasa's decision to enter the field comes at a time when it is increasingly difficult for young people to become artists and negotiate funding. Since the 2015 shift in political representation, there has been a significant reduction in arts funding allocations to many small- and medium-sized arts organisations who support the broader arts community (Caust 2017). These organisations and individual self-represented artists are now at the mercy of more conservative cultural policy. This policy has also blurred the funding criteria (i.e., as set out by the Australian Council of Arts) towards more philosophical expectations, creating confusion and asymmetry in how to approach applications. Hip-hop programs have suffered as a consequence as many community programs have found it difficult to vie for these increasingly scarce resources. These programs are also regulated by arts curators who find an advantage in aligning themselves with preferential arts sectors sanctioned by the federal government. This is a pattern typically of conservative governments who often favour the interests of major institutions at the expense of smaller organisations who take risks on this broader arts community (Getzner 2015). Theatres and orchestras receive the most funding and dance companies receive the least (Feder & Katz-Gerro 2015). This places pressure on state government funding institutions like Creative Victoria, a Labour Party creation committed to enhancing expression of diversity, to support community and alternative arts.

To deal with this precarious market and the gap where Hip-hop arts remains relatively under-represented, Nasa has become a crucial connector of artists to opportunity through his own independent arts practice. In 2015, his work for Big West Festival supported a cast of emerging artists by acquiring state government funding from Creative Victoria, approved for its ability to connect cultural organisations and marginalised communities. Such a project requires a skillset that is both culturally and socially entrepreneurial. It must establish cultural value by addressing gaps in the cultural market through transforming cultural practice into saleable commodity. It must also develop relationships between young people, state agencies and not-for-profit cultural organisations to make things happen. Nasa's early work represents a significant feat for someone without experience in the arts sector, especially during a time where cultural policy has become so restricted.

Nasa's role in creating accessible multicultural artworks in a not-for-profit capacity has also brought him respect and reputation with the Hip-hop community and also within the arts sector, earning him some autonomy from purely commercial relations. As discussed earlier in this thesis, this autonomy gives practices an alternative authenticity, separating them from the market. And such works also find ways into flows of bourgeois consumption, and are lent status, economic and cultural capital, bringing his work new sustainability and accessibility. This symbolic power has been important for establishing a presence in the local Melbourne field, from which new professional opportunities in the sector have opened for him to continue to work with Hip-hop. This ongoing employment in the

sector is by way of collaborations with cultural organisations and NGOs that support marginal communities.

7.7 Cohealth Arts Generator: Supporting Diversity and Marginality

Nasa draws on diverse social networks to create partnerships and programs with cultural organisations that strengthen youth networks within Hip-hop communities. In many ways he is, like Felix and Katsu, a social entrepreneur. Unlike some intermediary programs in this thesis that are commercialised, Nasa's social entrepreneurial work aligns more closely with the key missions of his employer, Cohealth Arts Generator. Their main focus is working:

> with individuals and communities who experience limited access to arts and cultural opportunities. Through participatory arts practices, Cohealth Arts Generator aims to increase wellbeing and agency by unlocking creative potential and building connections to the broader community. (Cohealth 2018)

Such organisational support is also critical for Nasa's ability to create sustainable Hip-hop programs, as it brings his practice support and credibility when applying for funding. Cohealth, like independent artists, are also at the mercy of ongoing bids for funding (i.e., via the Australian Council for the Arts and private philanthropic donors like the Besen Family Foundation), limiting the support they can offer. Nonetheless, these organisations help Hip-hop programs find institutional support and legitimacy by endorsing Nasa and co-opting established institutions into collaborations (e.g., the ACM).

Nasa's interests as an intermediary lie with connecting communities through subcultural arts practices. As a social entrepreneur, Nasa brings together people and creates opportunity by leaning on his networks of friends and colleagues to develop projects that have social value for others. His work also produces cultural dialogues between cultural communities, mainstream audiences and the state (by way of collaborations). Such work is enhanced by his familiarity of the Melbourne field and his relationships with venue owners, cultural communities and subcultural communities—important resources that he brings together in his work. Some notable works include *Inner Beat Live* (2017), a recurring project that creates access to high-art spaces through collaborations with the ACM, the latest iteration exploring Asian migrant and Indigenous identities in Australia through Hip-hop arts. The nature of such work requires an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the diversity of traditions, practices, lived experiences and histories of various cultural groups. Nasa draws from his own cultural experience, Maori heritage, from his parent's stories of migration, and the importance of community that he has come to embrace from Hip-hop to inform his practice. Hip-hop arts wielded correctly are an ideal vehicle for this type of creative intercultural collaboration and exploration. Such practices

are integral to inclusive multicultural programs that support cultural community development (a key criteria of the Australian Council for the Arts).

The above cultural work exemplifies successful ground-up multiculturalism, which brings to light debate around the success of Australia's multicultural policy in its integratory models of participation, expression and access. Immigrant and refugee voices are an important part of Nasa's work with Cohealth. To understand the value of these programs provide for the Asian, African and Indigenous marginal groups who look to Cohealth for help, a genesis of their politicised condition must first be detailed.

These cultural groups have often been put under scrutiny by local and international commentators. One example in Australia are reactions to asylum seekers from Asia who were labelled 'boat people', a term that spring boarded the state's detention program which was described as 'torture' by the United Nations (as cited in Hamad 2018). Another is the recent tensions with 'African gang violence' stirred up by politicians like Peter Dutton, Australia's Federal Home Affairs Minister (Karp 2018). This discourse and expression of cultural diversity on television, in publication, on radio or in public address can be understood as an uneven and inaccurate representation of cultural communities, showcasing their struggles, but rarely their integratory successes.

While in many ways the state also aims to support Indigenous and First Nation peoples of Australia, it is often criticised as being too reductive in drawing from a colonial logic that suggests that economic subsidisations can resolve a history of oppression. This type of logic positions colonial intuitions as superior (Cunneen 2008) and suggests the needs of this cultural community are compatible with the state's model of support (Carlson 2016). The profound shift following the Mabo judgement in settling land disputes in the Torres Strait Islands saw to a revision of the colonial logic of 'terra nullius' ('land belonging to no one') and has created momentum for a new ground-up Indigenous agenda that moves to decolonise land and acknowledge indigenous sovereignty. Asian-Australians too have also faced a history of discrimination rooted in the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* that inaugurated the White Australia Policy that was phased out in the early 1970s in favour of multiculturalism and diverse immigration. Due to Hansonism in the 1990s (a racial prejudicial campaign developed as a response to Asian immigration) and despite the increasing Asian presence in the form of migration, trade and pop cultural accessibilities, Asian-Australians are 'still often subject to discrimination and marginalisation' (Ang 2017, p. 340). This occurs at a number of levels where the agency and competencies of Asian-Australians are put into question and is a key reason for their under-representation in national politics and in locally developed commercial media (Soutphommasane 2014a, 2014b). Nonetheless, we see an evolution of unconscious biases in the clustering of similar

cultures in the formation of what might be called 'ethno-burbs', bringing the importance of location into focus for intermediary practices in harnessing multicultural Australia (Li 2009; Ang 2016).

Where is the success of good cultural work like Nasa's in this discourse? Nasa's work looks to create an alternative grassroots narrative that challenges these articulations of identity disseminated through politics and mainstream media. While Nasa helps promote inclusive and progressive multiculturalism, there are still disconnections between the official multicultural policies, individual understandings of Australian identity and the manner in which cultural communities feel valued as 'Australian' or are problematised as abject 'others'. This reflects a shallow state engagement with the multicultural real, where efforts to co-opt cultural communities appears as merely a 'tolerance', which is implicitly critical and can be withdrawn (Hage 1998). This prompts the importance of grassroots cultural projects that are brokered by cultural community leaders like Nasa. One example is the L2R Hip-hop youth program that supports marginal groups in Melbourne's West (see below). State collaboration always brings with it a risk to autonomy, although cultural organisations like Creative Victoria and Cohealth act as a buffer to negotiate the terms of their cultural work—which has recurringly been funded.

The above highlights a notable disconnect in Australia's representation of cultural diversity and the multicultural real. The result is a tension still rife across Australia, despite Melbourne being one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world. Nasa's work secures a space to negotiate an alternative type of intercultural dialogue between multicultural, indigenous communities and white Australia in an attempt to reconcile tensions. Returning to the idea of the ethno-burb, Nasa's Footscray-based professional practice attracts a number of migrant and indigenous cultures to its doors. Cohealth Arts Generator forms an important part of the Footscray Community Arts creative cluster, situated in a culturally diverse suburb with 56% of residents with parents born overseas and over 20% of Asian descent (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016). In this field of cultural production, Nasa has emerged as a key figure who uses his subcultural reputation and legitimised cultural capitals (of being educated, globally experienced and an established artist) to help create projects that continue to support the evolving diversity and social cohesion of the West and city through Hip-hop arts.

7.8 Limbs2Riddem

In addition to his agency work, Nasa also contributes to the L2R Next Generation program, a not-for-profit and registered Australian charity, where he is a dance instructor, community leader and assists in its management. This organisation similarly looks to empowering young people from diverse ethnic and lower socio-economic backgrounds through Hip-hop arts and alternative education. L2R

offers free classes and workshops to fulfil its key mission, creating networks between young individuals who are from:

> newly arrived, culturally and linguistically diverse, at-risk and low socio-economic backgrounds from Melbourne's western and outer western suburbs. Our participants identify with over 22 different cultural groups including Burmese, Myanmarese, West African, East African, Vietnamese, Chinese, Anglo Australian, Chinese, Iranian, Indonesian and Indian (L2R 2018)

Nasa is involved in two key initiatives at L2R alongside his administrative contributions and applications for funding from philanthropic and government donors. The first is Breaking@Braybrook which sees around 20 participants between 12–25 years old meet up to learn about fitness, health, social cohesion and Hip-hop culture. The workshop builds a space for expression in the western suburbs of Braybrook and Sunshine and has been operating since 2012. This weekly workshop is designed to provide long-term engagement with youth from various cultural backgrounds. It is a space where peers can exchange through dance, socialise, and talk about their issues. The program boasts a rich diversity of students from East and West Africa, Vietnam, China and India, but is predominantly made up of a Myanmarese/Burmese majority. The other initiative is L2R Squad which provides professional development and insight into the professional dance industry (although Nasa is a supporting mentor and not the active teaching artist).

Organisations like L2R are especially relevant in multicultural nations with such diverse streams of migration, especially with the influx of refugees relocating to escape geo-political conflict or other punitive living conditions. The management of increasing flows of migration has become an increasingly contentious point of discussion by the nation's political leaders and media. Among the reasons is both the white ethnocentrism that has at times dominated commercial media in Australia and the wielding of refugees and asylum seekers as a political tool (Bolger 2016). By contrast, independent organisations with thousands of members like the Refugee Council of Australia (2018) have documented the worsening conditions of off-shore detention programs—a voice of opposition to the state's persisting programs of remand. With such harsh outcomes faced for refugees and asylum seekers attempting to reach Australia, it is not unexpected that there is a dissonance between their new host culture (in its governance and media system of cultural representation) and their own patterns of socialisation. For those who are permitted residency, they face a complicated existence. They are forced to both partially assimilate—hybridising their traditions with Australian culture—and are further alienated by the general mainstream political and media ethos. This has driven many to turn inwards towards their cultural communities and, in some cases, to anti-social, illegal activities or cultivation by extremist political-religious groups. This makes all the more necessary to find positive ways to engage migrant communities in Australia.

The rise of what Li (2009) and Ang (2016) refer to as ethno-burbs helps us understand the complexities of integration into multicultural Australia, where communities turn to find solidarity in similarity—a return to tribal congregation. In the above tensions, we see an array of home versus host relations that complicate conceptions of identity, culture and belonging that drive this ethno-burb structure, rather than providing methods for successful cultural integration. This makes Nasa's role at L2R a key strategy to support multicultural engagement as he facilitates new dialogues between disparate groups, through an ongoing process of engagement where they might otherwise not have stable positive role models or socio-cultural support. Furthermore, it challenges siloing by offering many new or existing migrants opportunities to discuss the challenges they face in adapting or finding belonging within Australian society in a diverse context. While cultural communities often have their own methods of support—through cultural associations, specific cultural public service media (e.g., SBS) and, in some instances, online international content distributors who help connect diaspora (e.g., China's many streaming services like Youku Tudou or iQiyi)—there are few avenues that celebrate a multicultural dialogue reflective of Australia's actual diversity. Outside of media, subcultural forms, like Hip-hop, have been shown to be significant ways to engage marginalised cultural communities locally and internationally (Gooding Jr et al. 2016; Warren & Evitt 2010; Minestrelli 2014a).

Breaking@Braybrook offers not only a place for multicultural youth congregation, but for mentorship. It is a place where the youth can feel safe and accepted, free from the threat or judgement from the pressures of the outside world. Most importantly, it is a place where the youth are able to reflect and build confidence in a creative community practice. We might frame how Nasa addresses the critical socio-cultural aspects of integrations of diversity into Australian society noted above through an analysis of his practice in line with some scholarship around Hip-hop as a pedagogy. In the same way that rapping lends youth a practice that encourages self-reflection and expression so that they are able to understand complex cultural conditions, so too does Breaking. Such critical reflections on systems of culture, governance and histories of racial politics give the youth an opportunity to make sense of their reality, despite the adversity they are presented with (Akom 2009). By taking interest in fostering this youth development by way of strong Hip-hop and cultural leaders, L2R is able to create positive support networks during important years in youth socialisation, helping youth develop new capabilities to engage with a more pluralistic notion of community, identity and belonging.

While other intermediary programs establish social value through network building and Hip-hop arts with disadvantaged youth, their business models can often complicate participation for individuals who would otherwise be deprived of such experience by poverty. By contrast, L2R's not-for-profit motivation ensures free or inexpensive dance programs allowing activists, like Nasa, to cultivate rich intercultural experiences. To operate in such a capacity, L2R is reliant on funding and support from

a number of charities, local council organisations and government funding bodies (from local councils to federal organisations) and Nasa has worked in procuring philanthropic funds from the Mayer Children Fund to contribute to this pool of economic support.

7.9 Using Social Media for Youth Engagement

Nasa's various networks are also maintained through social media and are important for connecting audiences to his youth work. He uses social media, such as Facebook groups and group chat functions, to share lessons, media and stay in contact with his students at L2R outside of classes. In this way, social media has enhanced his ability to organise and mobilise Melbourne's Hip-hop youth between fields:

> I don't know how I would correspond with 40 young people all around the western suburbs and organise to rock up to a venue. Just the immediacy …of social media... And I like to engage kids more than just on a Saturday afternoon and Facebook is good for that—keeps us in touch. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

We might think of Nasa's use of social media as a way to provide new means of linking users to each other and to a transnational flow of content which he intermediates. Despite this, he also expresses concern for youth media consumption with some scepticism towards the amount of content that now blurs representations of Hip-hop identities with more mainstream consumer culture. This wealth of content is also disposable, temporal and belongs to a seemingly infinite content cycle. Such market saturation from 24-hour media sharing has also led to a noticeable diminishing of the curiosity, excitement and obsession that Nasa valued in his early practice of digging—where many young people now only scratch the surface. Powerful search engines and algorithmic processing like Google searching can also weaken critical research, further eclipsing the importance of digging by attracting young people to a culture of settling for convenience. This alternative Hip-hop curiosity is now replaced by an overwhelming accessibility to leisure and a paradox of choice.

> Ultimately with anyone, I think you're lucky to get good at one thing in your life so like, the idea of being engaged in something fully, you're lucky to have that once in your life…for me that happened with Breaking only because, in some way…we had the internet but we didn't have it in that way where information falls in your lap. Back then, you had to go and find it. I was lucky enough to latch on to something like Hip-hop, found it, loved it and was able to start my own journey outward like that right…whereas, the information now, with young people, they [don't] have that. They can learn a little bit about breaking and learn a little about scootering. And whatever the hell else, and it's just like endless right? So it's like 'maybe this week I want to be a musician, maybe next week I want to fidget spin this', and then something else—something else is always coming. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Nasa reflects on how his obsessions and curiosities were connected to the rarity of subcultural products and information that created unique attachments to the subculture in the same way people held onto rare memorabilia or visited museums to examine historical cultural texts:

> …the format of things going onto an online platform is where you don't have the artefact anymore…I had that video when I was 15 right and was like 'nobody else in the fucking country has this!' And I'm sitting here watching it and I have some keys to some secret thing almost…Whereas not Instagram; now they push it up to a minimum of 15 second videos, that's all you get, a little disposable piece of nothing, that everyone puts out there like its gold, but it's not. In a week no one's ever gonna watch it again, whereas I was watching that video for two years—just back-to-back. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Similar temporality applies to marketing practices and the distribution of event coverage:

> So there's still a 10-hour event—the event gets distilled down. It used to get distilled down to like an hour-and-a-half, two-hour video. Now it gets distilled down to a two-and-a-half-minute video, or it might just be the best move of that whole day. And then there's tomorrow anyway, so that's just gone, you know what I mean? (Penelligan, D, Interview, 2017)

The temporality of content brings into questions the disposability of this consumer product and community connectivity. These fleeting experiences highlight the importance guiding the youth to prioritise how they learn, engage and support each other in a real community, both emulated online and embodied offline, rather than being defined by their consumption of media. Nasa's response to this digital media consumption is a critical stance to social media use aligned with his own curation and the positive development he hopes to foster.

By focussing on developing community connections, Nasa's approach favours physical participation. This returns to the importance of engaging in the material world and co-presence as an authentic mode of community engagement. This physical community participation stands in contrast to online participation that dominates the global Hip-hop discourse—symptoms of hyperactive media cultures of consumption. Youth who celebrate the physical community ethic and Hip-hop culture are also rewarded by Nasa's reciprocal investment.

> I think all of that has changed people in the fast pace internet kinda' world that we are in, and just your ability to do something else if you want. But I think where people go wrong…people don't want to do their homework anymore. So you're seeing a lot of young people that get to the surface level of many things but never get deep into anything. You can put that [same passion] into politics or anything really, that's what I'm seeing and that's why …when I do work with young people, I'm really interested in the ones that…seem like they are gonna go deeper. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Overall, Nasa's role as a youth mentor and teacher not only helps us understand the importance of cultural organisations like L2R in providing opportunity and support for disadvantaged communities, but reveals the significance of his intermediary function in facilitating their connections locally by

way of physical community participation and transnationally through curations of media flows. To supplement these local community programs, Nasa also creates opportunities for local-global engagement in Melbourne and abroad through events of scale that attract multicultural audiences from various cities in the Asia-Pacific.

7.10 Kapayapaan: Local-Global Charity, Crowd-Funding and Hip-Hop Activism

There is also an international aspect to Nasa's attempts to provide opportunities to the disenfranchised. He has been involved in applications for development grants, fundraising and local-global collaborations with cultural agencies in the Philippines. In his final year in a university Master's program, Nasa proposed a strategy to support Asia-Pacific marginalised communities through Hip-hop for which he was awarded an Asia-Pacific development grant. His first port of call was Manilla where he worked with b-boy Mouse who brought him to the Kapayapaan project run by SAS crew. Nasa set up MixMix Asia, a charity organisation to help support this program and other disenfranchised Hip-hop communities in the Philippines through the provision of economic support, community events and by bringing together cultural leaders from around the Asia-Pacific to assist in community development programs. Kapayapaan is an NGO that provides access to education in the form of formal skills (e.g., mathematics and English) and Hip-hop community arts (dance, music and visual arts) to disenfranchised and impoverished Filipino youth. In collaboration with local and international Hip-hop cultural leaders and cultural intermediaries (like Anija and Katsu), Nasa has played an instrumental role in fundraising, event management and brokering partnerships on behalf of the Kapayapaan project.

Nasa's work also might arouse post-colonial critiques of Western capacity building abroad. However, like Zac, his work is focussed on building capabilities among the disenfranchised so that they might find ways to more autonomously work to support their communities without the necessity for further intervention. In these lower socio-economic areas in Manilla, youth are especially at risk of getting involved in the drug trade or gang networks. These regions are also regularly exposed to gun violence under the laws passed by conservative president Rodrigo Duterte, making Kapayapaan especially important in providing alternative spaces for belonging. Securing inclusive spaces for participation, education and youth development is not done by any means of radical intervention and instead via a social approach that helps creates strong networks as part of a long-term social infrastructure. Nasa's work becomes increasingly important in developing sustainable Hip-hop community practices by helping create an Asia-Pacific network of support. This is done to help them build awareness of what they do and broker important partnerships with communities and negotiate resources like those sent by Katsu from his network in Japan, allowing them to maintain their independence from any external,

non-Hip-hop corporations, NGOs and government. In this way, Nasa helps structure this social infrastructure in a way that the local government is unable to manage, or is hesitant or uninterested in supporting. As in other cultural contexts previously discussed, governmental wariness of Hip-hop in the Philippines is informed by conservative ideologies that have problematised subcultural dance in mainstream discourse (Perillo 2013, p. 95).

Nasa's work in the Philippines also represents a grassroots cultural arts exchange between Australia and Asia that seldom gets noted in sustainability discourse (which often emphasises faux traditional folk arts, or high arts exchanges by state institutions like art galleries, museums or the opera). Instead, Nasa's work falls between these dominant discourses and is at a disadvantage due to the way the Australian media, arts sector and government perceives Asia—othering the region, rather than harnessing the Asia that already exists within Australia to engage with the region's complexity by championing cultures from the ground up. This work also highlights the complexity of Australia and Asia's relations that are intertwined and lived out in the socio-cultural realities of Asian-Australians. Working with Filipino-Australian partners like Efren Pamilacan, the work of subcultural intercultural intermediaries like Nasa demonstrate a meaningful Asia-Pacific cultural exchange that embraces hybridisation and innovation as well as a new kind of creative local-global social development.

This type of work draws on skillsets of a social entrepreneur tending to gaps in the local economy where obtaining funding via NGOs has become increasingly difficult. Nasa's work as a cross-cultural intermediary in setting up these networks between Australia, Philippines and Japan provides a network of support both economically and via the sharing of skills and knowledge (e.g., business and event management skills), enabling the programs to flourish and leaders to gain access to ways of thinking that enhance the project's sustainability. While the support of Asia-Pacific communities allows programs like the Kapayapaan project to support more participants, local representatives would continue this work without funding, as it provides so much positive value to the local youth where there are no alternatives for expression.

To maintain his relationships abroad, Nasa and his team (friends and members of his crew from Australia who work alongside local and regional cultural agents and agencies) use digital social media to remain in contact. Social media has also played an important role in creating global exposure for Kapayapaan as it has for Nasa's advocacy. These digital alternatives also provide an important opportunity to harness global economic capital that supplement events that are generally funded by proceeds from face-to-face fundraising:

> Platforms like gofundme.com enable us to generate our income as well, so places like that are useful for us on the internet. I've created our own word-press that takes donations from there and we get a lot of correspondence from that website. That's how we find teachers

> sometimes, volunteers or news channels have contacted us through that as well. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Such programs have also benefited greatly by Nasa's ability to engage with wider global networks by creating new flows of content online.

> The jam that we threw for the Philippines in 2013 which was a Philippines fundraiser…We organised that in three days, you know—artists and a turnout of like 300 people. You know a three-day turnover can only happen on social media now. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Social media offers subcultures and marginal groups important tools that have only become more recently utilised for social causes—set up independently of established NGOs who are already dealing with a variety of social issues. In many international NGOs, internal bureaucratic issues limit the extent to which subcultural programs like Kapayapaan are visible, legitimised or prioritised when crises like disasters and geo-political conflicts require more immediate aid. In this way, Nasa's work in connecting marginal communities in the Philippines holds a particular global importance in that it brings attention to regional marginal groups and how they might be supported by an alternative Hip-hop network of development and support set up across the Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene.

7.11 Nice Fest: An Australasian Celebration

In addition to his local developmental work, Nasa also provides a number of spaces for local communities to engage with international performing arts and subcultural networks. His contributions here bear comparison with Felix and Danny, who localise Asia-Pacific participation in their cities. Nice Fest, an annual three-day Hip-hop performing arts event, brings together a team of professional dancers, DJs, event managers, videographers, visual artists, venue owners, and state and cultural agencies. The coordination involved highlights the organisational skills required of the cultural entrepreneur. The event attracts a diverse participation from across Australia and the wider Asia-Pacific region, connecting local, national and global scenes offline and by corresponding online content pushed out to the global sphere. Nasa reflects on his role in facilitating these events:

> I see now as an older person in Hip-hop culture, if I take the good and the bad from the previous generations that give me their thoughts and wisdom, and I look back as an older dude thinking about people like Arch Rival, who was running Throwdowns when I was like 15 years old (one of the only b-boy events here)…and seeing that he was doing that out of his own pocket just so those kids could have a space to dance. Understanding that now that I'm older—it's something I should be doing. So, creating those spaces now to make sure the thing goes on. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

Through Nice Fest, Nasa not only fortifies his role as a cultural leader, but his efforts support a type of international community development by creating new international cultural connections. Many of these connections are made via personal and social media invitations to prominent guests from

around the world. Felix is one notable mention, who brings with him a significant subcultural capital recognised across Asia and opens new opportunities for Melbourne's status in the global sphere by supporting the event. Felix also contributes to Nasa's practice by aligning Nice Fest with his own event, the Radikal Forze Anniversary—the winners of Nice Fest receive tickets to Singapore to participate. By incorporating other regional cultural leaders into the event as a means to offer Melbournians opportunities for local-global engagement, this also attracts other streams of participants in the region (e.g., Checkered Minds crew (from Singapore) or other cultural intermediaries in this thesis like Anija). Like Radikal Forze, this event also provides new spaces for small- and medium-sized business owners to market and distribute their products within a subcultural economy. Such opportunities also create alternative business connections, or what might be thought of as a type of subcultural business scene, by positioning street-wear brands like Sokudo from Melbourne or Fourwalls from Sydney alongside Katsu's Cyphercode from Tokyo.

Nice Fest is aligned with Nasa's other not-for-profit work and sustained through fund raising and support from the Australian Council of the Arts, Creative Victoria and the City of Melbourne. The event's success relies not only on this financial support, but is tied to the social capital he and his partners have acquired professionally and subculturally, assisting in securing venues, partnerships and features in the form of musical performances from prominent artists. Some notable examples include Cooking on Three Burners, DJ Spell and Everinlo who provided the music throughout the day. Nice Fest may resemble a number of global competitions around the world, but is differentiated by its business model that co-opts the state through funding while focussing on providing authentic community experiences to grassroots street-dancers. B-boys from across Australia enter the battles against crews who are brought together on the day from the US, Japan and Singapore. Crews fly from Queensland to battle Melbournians in a rivalry that has gone on for decades. Anija even negotiated time away from work in Japan and Uganda to be there to support the event in 2017. In the 2018 edition, the event used a cypher focus brought together with a competition format. This was a process of who can dominate the informal spaces for participation within which judges are embedded, participating and taking mental notes on who to sanction. The event format resembles a hybridity of event structures previously discussed in Tokyo (see Chapter 6) in a move to preserve the cypher culture tradition by adapting it to the contemporary competition model favoured by industry, creating a new type of large-scale communitarian event. This shifts the spectacle of competition into a room full of communal activity where cyphers open and close organically and a timer dictates the time left to flaunt your moves.

Nasa has continued to call on his subcultural networks and partnerships to create an event that is supported by local grassroots communities, artists, and venues. An example is his partnership with local venues like Horse Bazaar who are local scene supporters and collaborators who often invest in

Hip-hop projects. Nasa has a long friendship with venue owners Fumi and Taka that stems from their history of collaboration within the Hip-hop scene (Nasa also ran a fundraiser for the Philippines at their venue). Venues like Horse Bazaar are also brought new customers and status as part of these collaborations, making their participation mutually beneficial. The small city venue sees new bands play, DJs spin and groups of dancers get swept up in the intimate and authentic atmosphere they help curate. This makes international events particularly significant for these small scene supporters in attracting international audiences, given Australia's geographical remoteness and general disconnection from much of the world. Nasa's connections through the Asia-Pacific, for example, to Katsu, Anija and Felix, make this event even more appealing as it draws on resources from across the globe. Moreover, this exemplifies not only a possibility to generate significant subcultural engagement, but works to the advantage of the state, in exchange for their financial support, in three distinct ways.

First, it satisfies cultural policy objectives of supporting the broader arts market which often does not take notice of subcultural practices like Hip-hop. Second, it creates local cultural value for the City of Melbourne, which is co-opted into Nice Fest as the city becomes a key point of focus in the regional Hip-hop market for a brief moment every year. Such a program is significant, as the state has often co-opted subcultures into the appeal of its urban centres to stay relevant and stimulate interest in the nation (e.g., the Grand Prix or large music festivals like Laneway held in the western suburbs). This is because creative subcultures often 'make continuing, well-documented, contributions to established city cultures for relatively low outlay' (Shaw 2013, p. 333). Nasa's work with Nice Fest scales what are generally small local projects into international events that bring significant attention to the city. Third, this attention is appealing to the state as it produces subcultural tourism, which has become an increasingly saleable and noticeable trend across the Asia-Pacific with an increasing level of activity made possible by budget travel and partnerships (through international competition rewards like Felix's collaboration noted above). Therefore, subcultural tourism offers the city an alternative flow of economic stimulus for a relatively low outlay that also helps support the development of independent business. In this way, the cultural entrepreneurial model of Nice Fest enables Hip-hop's economic feasibility in terms of Nasa's negotiation for state investment. These negotiations are part of a hustle mentality that brings together streams of funding and draws on Nasa's mastery of language (attained from his postgraduate education) to help frame Hip-hop in a way that is not only saleable to the state, but aligns with its 'cultural community' focus.

That Nice Fest has succeeded without corporate sponsorship has been empowering to the local dance community, but has also required Nasa to think critically about the event's future sustainability. If the state is unable to support it as an ongoing event, it is likely some kind of sponsorship will be necessary. This brings into question possible corporate sponsorships and with it a negotiation of

authenticity. Nasa is quick to distinguish his approach in our interview by suggesting an alternative to the common sources which are leant on for funding across the globe, primarily Redbull. In contrast to the way many commercialise their competitions with help from large corporate entities, Nasa suggests it is more important to create an oppositional discourse to unhealthy energy drink companies that capitalise on the dance (Monster or Redbull) and promote more healthy alternatives. Some notable examples that came up in conversation include health foods or ethical water companies. Nasa sees a need to move forward in liberating the scene from its traditional pool of sponsors, towards a market more aligned with positive community-based physical activity.

7.11.1 Experimentation: Diversifying Cultural and Subcultural Engagement

For Nasa, there are many aspects of dance that are important for the local Hip-hop community. One way he articulates the importance of dance is through his own Maori identity. Dance is one way in which he sees his own culture connect to their cultural heritage (e.g., the Haka, Poi or Waiata ā-ringa), while also being a place where social identity can be expressed, protests transpire and cultures are given space to freely showcase their group memberships (or tribal affiliation). There is no difference in Hip-hop. Nasa looks at the subcultural structure in a similar historical-generational manner, celebrating an alternative identity, set of traditions and cultural history that is unique to his experience in Melbourne, but also intersects with others globally. Subcultural dance offers individuals who may not find strong connections to their own cultural traditions or have difficulty oscillating between different cultural spaces (i.e., third-space cultural identities) an opportunity to live through an alternative cultural heritage and lifestyle. Nasa's work with Nice Fest works at uniting individuals in Melbourne and from around the world to celebrate true diversity and help communities find space to play out their identities.

These spaces provide dance communities an opportunity to also curate their own celebrations in a way that is authentic and participatory. Each community looks to a leader to provide curation for example from judges (from the Popping, Locking, Krumping, Breaking and Waaking disciplines). Through this intersection of styles and cultures, the event challenges the traditional subcultural idea by applying a Hip-hop ethos to support a diverse community of participants of culture and style. For example, Breaking tends to be very exclusive and male dominated, and by opening that space for more influence from other disciplines it exposes the male majority to new ways of participating with dance. The event challenges the dominant way of behaving in any one dance form, as we see exchanges between cultures, art forms and intersections within the Hip-hop community and outside of it. One way this occurs is in 'all-styles' battles where the form of participation is undetermined, and individuals are not restricted to express themselves only in one style, allowing dancers to move between Breaking and Funkstyles (Popping and Locking) or any other street-dance style as they

please. At the event, b-boys and b-girls watch Poppers and Lockers, Krumpers watched Waakers or team up in the cyphers. In this way, Nice Fest affords inclusive environments not only for cultural communities, but for new subcultural exchanges between communities. It diversifies the body of participation in Hip-hop culture by way of their 'street-dance' connection, despite some forms originating outside of the traditional Hip-hop conception (e.g., Dancehall, a Jamaican popular music and dance form). Unlike many event formats, Nice Fest offers an opportunity to break down barriers and create new hybridisations through an appreciation of Hip-hop culture and its junctures between pop culture, the city, cultural traditions and their varying nuances.

7.11.2 Cypher Cultural Distinctions in Hip-Hop Events: Neo-Tribes or Subcultures?

In contrast to most competitions and festivals explored in this thesis, Nice Fest hybridises competition and cypher cultures.[37] It also embraces a diversity of styles that are often not clustered together. This is part of an effort to manage the tensions that stem from the cypher-competition dichotomy, and to create new revelations by using Hip-hop as a tool to connect dancers. Cypher Culture is one branch of the overarching festival event which employs an alternative model of participation akin to Anija's Supa Jam, fostering engagement through a loosely structured competition format. This approach has brought Nasa success in a market that has become increasingly fragmented. Such innovative approaches are rewarded with distinction.

> …they invite 16 b-boys from around the world, it's like the craziest muscly explosive devices and put them into one competition and people love this one thing (acrobatic power moves)—it's just becoming its own thing. There's literally events that are…just cyphers the whole event. There's no event to be had you know? It's literally just like a lot of communal activity going on…So people will travel across the world just to go to one of those. (Penelligan, D, interview, 2017)

The looseness of events described and used by Nasa could perhaps be understood through Andy Bennett's (1999b) concept of 'neo-tribes'. Bennett developed the concept to talk about more open youth cultural formations—ones that were not rooted in social identities such as class. In 'Subcultures or Neo-tribes', an influential article of the late 1990s, Bennett (1999b, p. 600) described neo-tribes as temporal gatherings 'characterised by fluid boundaries and floating memberships' and their style's differentiated and fragmented by consumption.

In the 1990s, Bennett (1999b, p. 599) pushed his argument to the point of abandoning the concept of 'subculture' altogether. He believed it to be an unworkable 'objective analytical tool in sociological work on youth, music and style'. He contextualised his argument in the example of the urban dance music scene in Newcastle upon Tyne in north-east England. His examination of music and its

[37] Defined in Section 6.7.

connections to style and socialisation speaks to the malleability of youth subcultural identifications and their fluidity in different markets, emotional states, social settings and cultural communities. The style and coded identity of the dance music scene has largely been destabilised by a mainstream adoption and appropriation of what was once more traditionally subcultural—where society's general appreciation of the form was less prominent. In this same way, Hip-hop has become popular in the mainstream, although its scope and diversity is not always accurately captured.

Bennett's argument applies to Nasa's case in that it highlights a similar shift in patterns of consumption and changing boundaries of style associated with Nasa's practice, as well as the wider fragmentations within Hip-hop. However, the term 'subculture' continues to have significant currency and, so long as we are aware of its shortcomings, remains a useful one. Although incredibly internationalised, Hip-hop collectives are connected through an ethos, a body of music, styles of performing arts, a sense of identity and community. Of course, patterns of engagement are quite different from the classic post-war subcultures. What we see in this Hip-hop context is an array of scenes, ideas, formats for participation and identities that all fall under a loose subcultural umbrella. Participants use the same argot, draw on common traditions and are defined by an underground and mainstreamed milieu.

In this context, to dismiss the concept of subculture entirely may be going too far. Bennett's criticisms of subcultural theory and the way it positions social structure as a determining factor to the formation of youth affinities certainly has validity. However, the differences between the concept of 'subculture' and 'neo-tribe' may not be as absolute as implied in his work in the late 1990s. It is important to recognise that Birmingham's reference to social structure to theorise how youth play out social contradictions is but one element of subcultural studies. It is possible that the subcultural concept can also be extended to deal with contemporary determinants for youth affiliations and lifestyles, in the same way 'neo-tribes' has been carefully designed to. This is perhaps where I depart with Bennett's early post-subcultural alignment. I hope my application of the classical work on subcultures might help demonstrate its contemporary usefulness.

With some qualifications, the subcultural lens remains a useful and workable way of understanding international Hip-hop. In fact, transnational Hip-hop may serve as a much-needed bridge to showcase how the subcultural notion might be married up with post-subcultural ideas like 'neo-tribes'. Bennett (2011) has more recently called for such an accommodation for youth cultural studies. Perhaps the way forward is not to polarise conceptual frameworks, but to look at them as occupying a spectrum. This would allow for the analysis of more fluid relationships between style, as derived from youth consumption of music or popular flows of content and communications, with respect given to powerful subcultural traditions and ethics—taken up by communities across the world that are, for

example, connected by an Asia-Pacific or global Hip-hop culture and ethos. Some progress might be achieved by moving beyond these debates to reconsider how these two ways of understanding youth identity, choices, style, belonging and participation are both valid and intertwined.

It might be the acceptance of experimentation that differentiates Hip-hop from more rigid articulations of traditional class-based coded identities. In Hip-hop's early form, b-boys and b-girls co-opted Salsa dancing and Kung-fu into Breaking and the result of these movements became part of a foundation of the dance. Again they evolved when gymnastic elements were introduced. Hip-hop music was also the product of experimentation where the looping of 'break' sections of popular funk records became the repetitious grooves that underpin its cultural genesis. These practices gave birth to the community tradition of expression and cultural exchange that has become valuable to marginal communities as much as to affluent cultural entrepreneurs and intermediaries. It is a place where inclusive experimentation drives the articulation of its shared identification and where the co-option of popular forms have regularly informed the creation of new practices that extend the subculture's boundaries.

This pattern remains the same today. However, it has become more difficult to comprehend following various points of international uptake—by communities who all share a common subcultural ancestry that is celebrated and traceable nationally and internationally—and its global commercial co-option. Industries across the world have also looked to subcultures and 'the street' for new aesthetics, fashion, and slang and has regularly commercialised them (e.g., Hip-hop from the 1980s), by which time subcultures often had moved on. This is part of capitalism's dilution of cultural ideas. Prominent subcultural participants in Hip-hop instead distinguish their consumption from the mainstream by way of connoisseurship and often a reciprocal investment back into the culture, much like the communitarian-cultural entrepreneur in this thesis. The subcultural tradition and communitarian ethic of Hip-hop should, therefore, be differentiated from its mainstreamed identity, as it still exists as a place for creativity, subversion, fun and presents a distinct power to bond that is arguably rarer and stronger than any thread of consumerism that brings people together.

We might take Hip-hop as an example then of a culture that is both neo-tribal and subcultural. The subcultural approach recognises the umbrella and overarching communitarian ethos, the set of alternative cultural traditions that connects and unites communities across the globe, evidenced by this thesis. Within this subcultural structure we might see various neo-tribes emerge between groups who participate across the various creative disciplines, or fragments of the wider Hip-hop umbrella that are both differentiated by their patterns of consumption and style. For example, between music and Breaking or even Breaking between places, for example, in Japan or in Melbourne. What might typically be thought of as a Hip-hop lifestyle in a one community (in terms of style of expression or

taste in music) might appear nuanced when compared with others. To not recognise the distinctions within the subculture would be naïve. However, Hip-hop is a subculture of diversity and can be compared with more general national cultural configurations that allow for hybridity. For example, in multicultural nations like Australia or Canada, there is a shared culture that overarches a diversity of participants. In Hip-hop, we can articulate the subculture in a similar way as the totality of various neo-tribal hybrid Hip-hop forms.

Nasa's work plays with this experimentation and subcultural flexibility to bring together new identities through Hip-hop culture and to develop the subculture again through exposures to both cultural attitudes and stylistic ideas. It is a pastiche of cultural forms producing something new, as was Reggae and Ska in the British context. What this means is that 'subculture' can also be a term lifted to involve an experimentation that can augment and influence practices, styles and sensibilities. I argue that Hip-hop is therefore an inherently fragmented subculture, defined by participation that has always been neo-tribal in some sense—graffiti artists, musicians, dancers and turntablists bring with them distinct fashions, lifestyles and traditions perpetuated by consumption and that often cross over—but this is no less a configuration of a wider subcultural conceptualisation where participants are brought together locally and globally under a united subcultural ethos. What this points to is, again, a reconsideration of how subcultures bring together and co-opt different attitudes, forms and cultures from outside its traditional form to evolve, as seen in Nasa's example. This is not to say that neo-tribalism is not happening, but there is perhaps still room to extend the subculture notion, at least in the Hip-hop context, to act as a connective protoplasm that contains various milieu, lifestyles and identities. All of these contribute to the evolution of new and old subcultural traditions that enhance participation and provide alternative agency to citizens that might otherwise be disengaged.

7.12 Conclusion

Through the example of Nasa, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of the state in enabling local cultural intermediary projects that help support local community and Asia-Pacific Hip-hop development. Like the symbiosis of corporate capitalism and local grassroots communities in Tokyo, leaning on the government for funding is more common to the cultural and social entrepreneurs in Melbourne. State support is valuable in enabling marginal creative expression and experimentation through Hip-hop arts, as is recognised by cultural entrepreneurs and organisations alike. There is some hesitation towards a full embrace of state funding, as there is always a chance that shifts in the political landscape will slow or even stop funding for alternative subcultural programs. There are also concerns that by collaborating with the government there may be a loss of autonomy from the creative sacrifice necessary to align with its criteria. These factors are wagered and taken into consideration

by cultural entrepreneurs like Nasa, who align their Hip-hop practice with cultural community development—a key objective of the state and many philanthropic donors.

Nasa's role in Australia is multifaceted, but focussed heavily around developing programs for youth expression and for marginal access to networks of support, representation and expression across Melbourne via L2R and globally through international events like Nice Fest. For both of these operations, he works closely with cultural communities and helps navigate NGOs and state agencies for funding. This work is particularly important in enabling a type of youth mobility through the arts and requires cultural and social entrepreneurial skillsets to make things happen. His work in Australia offers opportunities to local youth from more marginal backgrounds through mentoring programs, employment for independent artists and local-global connectivity that helps produce more cosmopolitan Hip-hop discourses out of Melbourne that are reflective of the multicultural real. Outside of Australia, his work in the Philippines has also benefited from state funding and has enabled him to connect Asia-Pacific networks through the Kapayapaan project to support regional marginal groups.

This chapter has also shown the interconnection of certain scenes between the Asia-Pacific more explicitly, via cultural intermediary connections transnationally. This is done in a number of ways. Events like Nice Fest harness Melbourne's closeness to the Asia-Pacific region to stimulate participation and offer opportunities for regional collaboration (e.g., partnerships with other intermediaries like Felix who offers winners the chance to participate in the Radikal Forze Anniversary festival) which simultaneously attracts local and regional communities to Australia. In Nasa's work with Kapayapaan, we see the importance of bringing together Asia-Pacific subcultural communities who have more access to resources and are able to contribute to the growth of marginalised Hip-hop communities in the region. This type of intermediation demonstrates the scale and disparate conditions of Hip-hop in the region and creates cultural and economic connections between the Asia-Pacific by way of charitable investment, cultural resources and opening new opportunities for local-global cultural exchange.

This chapter also highlights the dynamics of subcultural media use by local communities and its instrumental role in connecting people to places, when at home, abroad and remotely. Nasa's reflections on digital media are shown to also be influential on how intermediaries understand cultural consumption and create distinction from the alternative mass market that is inundated with seemingly limitless information. Despite this, such social media tools are essential connectors of the transnational scenes he works within and between, whether for marketing events, generating discourse, creating partnerships, organising events or advocating for charitable investment.

Overall, there is a distinct connection and a recognised network of exchange at play that connects Nasa to a transnational network of Hip-hop exchange in the Asia-Pacific. As seen in previous chapters, this Asia-Pacific connection is growing and, with more highly involved agents like Nasa, will become closer by way of establishing networks of cultural exchange and support.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis has explored an alternative, often complex and multidirectional type of globalisation that is distinguished from powerful corporate or political globalisations. It has done so by focussing on cross-cultural intermediaries, a type of connector of people, scenes, economies and communities. The seven figures across five global cities have all been involved in expanding local networks around Hip-hop to a global mode of participation and celebration. Unlike much of the scholarship on Hip-hop, this study has focussed on the wider performative elements of Hip-hop culture. This study demonstrates how Breaking and DJ'ing have become increasingly powerful in creating transnational connections between city cultures, the developed and developing world and the Asia-Pacific and beyond. As set out in the preliminary work of this thesis, there are three main areas to which this study has made a contribution. The following sections detail the results of the study with respect to these aims.

Firstly, this thesis has shown that the cross-cultural intermediary is a critical figure who works as a connector of people, places and economies, in the development of what has become an interconnected Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene. These figures are examined in a number of contexts in which they work as cultural and social entrepreneurs. Their work contributes to the transformation of various types of subcultural participation by structuring local, regional and globally oriented Hip-hop programs from each of their localities and abroad.

In Bangkok, cultural entrepreneurs set out to create new global connections through music and dance by tending to gaps in Bangkok's developing subcultural market. The growth of the Hip-hop subculture in Bangkok has been suppressed by a rampant consumer culture and conservative political history, limiting its popularity and scope compared to other cities in the region. Intermediation by way of cultural entrepreneurship is shown to create cultural and economic capitals in the form of bringing music tastes from elsewhere to the city, or enhancing local subcultural structures by way of open community groups. These practices are also motivated by varying commercial or communitarian ethics. Both Rory and Zac showcase distinct types of cross-cultural intermediation. One appears in the form of a cultural community project that brings together local Hip-hop communities with global subcultural travellers connecting residents to discourse, content and transnational networks. Another takes form in the structuring of Asia-Pacific music tours which draws on alternative professional networks of venue owners, music promoters and small and medium-sized entertainment agencies.

In Singapore, social entrepreneurship has helped validate Hip-hop in the city by empowering at-risk youth and enabling Hip-hop to find roots in the nation-state. Despite its soft authoritarianism, the state has become increasingly accepting of Hip-hop forms as they not only bring new social value but

contribute to social infrastructure for groups to which the state is unable or unwilling to manage on their own. In addition, Hip-hop projects also align with local creative industry policy, creating social value while also contributing to economic growth by legitimising the subcultural form through business (i.e., Felix's social enterprise R-Studios). The rationale for investing in social entrepreneurs (i.e., human capital) is particularly compelling in a country with no natural resources. This has allowed Hip-hop in Singapore to gain a significant regional profile, playing host to the Asia-Pacific's largest Hip-hop dance festival—the Radikal Forze Anniversary—further aligning with the state's desire to be a regional hub.

In Shanghai, the development of Hip-hop has been managed by intermediaries, in a similar way to Bangkok and Singapore, through cultural and social entrepreneurial projects that help connect local scenes to global flows and tend to gaps in local subcultural markets. However, it has also had to overcome restrictions in access to global social media, language barriers, an inwardly focussed national culture and an authoritarian state highly suspicious and censorious of foreign influences. As in Singapore, cultural and social entrepreneurship have been important in gaining legitimacy with the state and commercial investors. A relative difficulty of international travel out of China has led local cultural entrepreneurs to negotiate with the state to bring global networks and resources into the country.

In Tokyo, Japan, cross-cultural intermediaries work between the developed and developing world and participate in cultural and social entrepreneurial projects which have benefited from a thriving alternative mass audience for Hip-hop. A sizeable subcultural economy has attracted the support of corporate investment that has both benefited and complicated Hip-hop's cultural relevance. Hip-hop in Tokyo has bifurcated into its commercially supported forms (including popular record companies, clothing labels and as supported by energy drink corporations) and underground alternatives (boasting a distinction from the mainstream). Both Katsu and Anija and their programs are beneficiaries of the alternative mass audience made possible by the popularisation that stems from corporate investment. This is particularly interesting as their local and global projects receive no financial governmental support and yet appear sustainable. Such work often relies on a symbiosis that is often not appreciated in many other cultural contexts (i.e., between underground and commercial cultures) and in Tokyo, Hip-hop thrives from the balancing of influences.

In Melbourne, we see a cross-cultural intermediation that is sustained through streams of state subsidy and institutional support. Unlike the corporate capitalism of Tokyo, the state becomes an enabling force for much of these alternative subcultural projects that help bring people together locally and internationally. Cultural and social entrepreneurship again appear as important ways to legitimise subcultural businesses and demonstrate cross-cultural intermediaries' abilities to produce outcomes

locally and abroad. Some of these outcomes include increasing access to creative expression for economically and culturally marginalised communities, enhancing support for Asia-Pacific migrant communities through charity programs and creating cultural and social value in the city by way of sizeable local-global events. This approach engages state and federal programs that support multicultural participation and cultivates 'creative Victoria'[38] and social inclusion (in Melbourne and abroad). Nasa competes for these funds, independently and with the support of cultural institutions, to enable projects that scale from local suburbs and councils to global networks.

All the cross-cultural intermediaries in this thesis have carved out their role by working across media, art, commerce, and between marginal communities, corporate sponsors and the state. The thesis has shown the importance of their work in fostering both local city-based and transnational Asia-Pacific Hip-hop subcultures. It has illuminated the importance of this new contributor—the subcultural creative leader—in their creation of cultural and economic value at the nexus of local and transnational communities.

The work of the cross-cultural intermediary is also significant as it highlights a contemporary global condition where nations are bound by an inextricable global human interconnection, while they remain formally defined by rigid illusory (and sometimes real) borders. By encouraging intercultural dialogue and participation, transnational event and content creation, international talent management and media distribution across the Asia-Pacific, they demonstrate a sensitivity to these contemporary conditions. The case study participants in the thesis appear in a number of roles, shaped by their various cultural origins, economic and political determinants, intercultural skills, appreciation of commerce, and the relevance or embrace of community traditions. All of them have a desire to create connections between place, people and communities both through physical presence and digital media and contribute to the creation of cultural and social value of their respective cities and networks.

Secondly, this project has demonstrated the importance of new subcultural media practices around social media. These practices have been involved in structuring ideas, opening spaces for identity and belonging, marketing events and creating translocal and transnational community networks. The extent of their development varies among the cases examined. One ongoing limitation is the way information is communicated or is made visible online in the typical written word, or video format. Most case study participants also found social media problematic as it promotes the creation of weak social ties. Along with these seemingly weaker connections social media also propels an imbalanced representation of Hip-hop's communitarian traditions that are often eclipsed by popular and commercial media, for example, Redbull who saturate the online sphere with media of high

[38] Creative Victoria is also the name of the official state organisation and cultural arts policy discussed in Chapter 8.

production value that is propelled above the DIY alternatives provided by communities. This online commercial culture is contrasted with an alternative offline mode of participating that is characterised by strong community ties made through inhabiting the same space and from a collective participation. This dichotomy in participation has brought a new dynamic to offline interactions. When the virtual is ubiquitous, physical presence is given a new aura of authenticity, complicating the use of these social media tools for communication and participation.

Cross-cultural intermediary practices have also greatly benefited from a physical mode of networking, participating and working. The thesis demonstrated that embodied communication and participation is especially important in the creation of strong ties. It has been shown that physical relationships are similarly important when creating partnerships with the state, corporate sponsors, cultural community agencies, artists and venues. For many cross-cultural intermediaries, social media is a powerful but complementary tool that enables them to maintain projects and relationships set up through a dynamic interplay between online and offline modes of participation and being. This is incredibly important for both local-national projects and working abroad (for example, Anija and Dennis run events in the Philippines as discussed in Chapters 5 and 6) as digital technology affords new flexibilities for remote management and marketing.

Despite the importance given to physical presence, online media is incredibly powerful in helping cross-cultural intermediaries to connect and structure new flows of content and communications between people and places. The thesis has demonstrated that digital technology is a supplementary practice. It cannot substitute embodied physical participation, but it can offer an opportunity to transition embodied social capital online so that individuals might maintain personal and professional relationships at a distance when life conditions change. This digital transition also produces digital traces or curated archives of content and communications which are a by-product that new initiates and early identifiers are able to tap in to.

Powerful global connections have always brought with them positives and negatives. The development of computers, the internet, smart mobile technology and digital social media enable a creative and alternative form of local and global belonging. These new ways of being local and global transnationally bring with them new cultural and economic value that is contingent not only on technology but on human interaction, both online and in an embodied real-world context. This analogy serves to demonstrate the impact of technological globalisation as a force that is imbalanced in both its implementation and socio-cultural use.

Thirdly, this thesis has shown an alternative, multidirectional, bottom-up cultural globalisation that extends across and between Asia-Pacific global cities. These flows have become less to do with

corporate globalisations or the alternative Asian globalisations theorised by Iwabuchi and are, instead, something far more constructive, cosmopolitan and diffuse, that stem from the regional movement of people and their communications. This appears in the mobility of cross-cultural intermediaries in all chapters, in their attendance of each other's events, through their regional collaboration or frequent enabling of local and global Hip-hop forms and community mobility. These cultural exchanges rearticulate globalisation as a bottom-up phenomenon and extrapolate these movements regionally through the seven cross-cultural intermediaries involved in the transformation of regional Hip-hop cultures through structuring and participating in increasingly diverse multidirectional exchanges across the Asia-Pacific.

It is an important time to highlight this interconnectedness of place and people. We are currently seeing a significant retreat from globalism and a return to nationalism. Brexit is a perfect example of this. The UK's retreat from the European Union reflects the irreversible effect of globalisation which has rendered the nation inextricably connected and integrated into a region. The inability to extricate themselves is partially the result of the spread of human capital embedded across the region. With a retreat from strong regional development with nations in the Asia-Pacific similarly turning towards national development, what we see is a similar embeddedness of people across the region. Now nations balance national development with their global participation. Within that balancing act cross-cultural intermediaries are a countervailing force to the inward-looking nationalism by sustaining connections to different countries and cities through Hip-hop. This might be thought of as a cultural aspect to globalisation that is unavoidable and changes at a different pace to the top-down decisions that can shift the state of national-global alignments.

It is difficult to see how globalisation in the Asia-Pacific can be unwound. Countries in the region are now inextricably connected and reliant on a number of exchanges that sustain their economic growth. With varying levels of regional prosperity, some of these locations are defined by a greater degree of marginality, with little state or corporate support, while others thrive from powerful corporate and state intervention. The cross-cultural intermediaries in this thesis showcase a sustained yearning to be global and cosmopolitan, which has enabled an intensification of regional participation that bring these disparate economies together. In the Asia-Pacific, there are a number of incredibly complex networks of people who are being brought together in different contexts. What is important is how local determinants have shaped local scenes and how these scenes are connected to an abstract global Hip-hop culture to which they all share a relation and common understanding. That is not to say that this process of interconnection is weakening the importance of local nuances, and in fact, there are distinct histories and cultural practices that make Hip-hop in each city unique. By contrast, there is an increasing concern for a homogenisation of cultural forms that stems from the intensity of Hip-hop flows disseminated by social media which provide a wealth of good and bad information that is

becoming indistinguishable as time goes on. The grounded practices in place are about people, venues, bodies and space but these scenes are becoming increasingly global by way of cross-cultural intermediaries who are connecting places and people through digital media, their own mobility and by facilitating the cross-cultural mobility of others.

Cross-cultural intermediaries are connected to what is conceptualised as an Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene that has developed over the last few decades and has become increasingly interconnected. This phenomenon is enhanced by the relative proximity of nations in the region as budget flights enables many (cross-cultural intermediaries and their wider communities) to travel more freely than ever before. Such travel is supported by the creation of strong transnational subcultural networks and ongoing cultural and economic exchanges across the region as noted above. There have been other attempts to unify the region before; however, this has been done primarily through state associations and economic agreements and war/imperialism. This thesis has reinvigorated the notion of the Asia-Pacific through an alternative culturally rich conceptualisation by an investigation into the realities and interconnectedness of cross-cultural intermediaries and their regional affiliations (with businesses, cultural communities, and cultural and creative industries across the region). Asia-Pacific Hip-hop, therefore, brings with it a new way of clustering people through a regional connectivity that is still relevant in the lived reality of young people. Unlike the state and national corporations, they are engaging more willingly in cross-cultural dialogues, travel and participation. While scholars seek to orient their attention to China, this thesis brings back into light the value of examining more plural Asia-Pacific exchanges that are not only shaped by government and finance but are produced and sustained by the movement of people.

Where might the findings of this thesis lead in terms of future research? Throughout this study there was a noticeable male dominance within all of the Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scenes explored. This may be the result of a masculinity perpetuated by the music market and body practices through Hip-hop's evolution, or possibly the result of the lack of social reward or status awarded to females participating in Hip-hop culture who are then drawn to other socio-cultural spaces to participate and express themselves[39]. There is not enough research on this phenomenon and there are emerging non-male cross-cultural intermediaries that are working in a similar capacity to the figures in this research. The accessibility to many of these case studies was facilitated by local-global connections from Melbourne (through agents, cultural organisations and subcultural businesses) and with more resources and time, other intermediaries of other orientations might be identified in the future—

[39] See Fogarty et al. (2018)

especially to ward off criticisms of bias that echo McRobbie's (1990) critique of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies.

Future research might explore the idea of cross-cultural intermediaries in a period further into the future where technology and the state of mobility may have evolved. This might also mean subcultural groups might be conceptualised differently or the subcultures themselves have evolved into something new. What is important to consider is a new set of questions: are these future cross-cultural intermediaries offered a different mobility in different places or periods of time compared to those exhibited in this study? What do their cross-cultural intermediation say about the state of local-global exchanges and transversal globalisation? What role does technology now play in facilitating these exchanges? And what does this mean for understandings of subcultural authenticity and the duality between online and offline engagement?

This thesis has revealed three important aspects of contemporary culture. Firstly, that human social configurations like subcultures are not always subversive. Instead, they can be connected and motivated by an alternative cosmopolitan subcultural belonging and motivated intermediaries. Secondly, that while we are more connected and have access to the world via the internet, proximity and physical encounters still play a significant factor in the connection of many within the Asia-Pacific Hip-hop scene. And thirdly, globalisation is not simply a process of dominated versus domination from the West or other centres of alternative globalisation as previously argued in scholarship. Globalisation is generally framed as a relatively impersonal and abstract soulless force that is the result of trade agreements and finance which benefits various configurations of the global elite. Instead, this research has shown it to be more complex, multidirectional and to also be driven by the movement of human capital that goes beyond any one way of looking at the movement of resources, people and culture. The Asia-Pacific is only one example of a transnational networked community who look to each other beyond the confines of their cultural heritage and national boundaries for connections, support, to celebrate in cosmopolitanism, for new opportunities, and for collaborative expression. What is most moving, and what underpins this exchange is a network of impassioned leaders who are connecting their more tethered comrades in Hip-hop to a global community that was once imagined and is becoming a reality.

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