

THE COSMOPOLITAN PERFORMERS:  
CHINESE-INDONESIAN MIGRANTS IN PERTH, AUSTRALIA

Monika Winarnita<sup>1</sup> & Natalie Araujo<sup>2</sup>

ABSTRACT

*Dance performances embody both the potentialities of multicultural and cosmopolitan identity and their contradictions. Through an ethnography of Chinese-Indonesian female migrants in Perth, Western Australia and their dances, this paper provides a window into understanding an intertwining of 'glocal' affiliations and cosmopolitan self-representations. Representing the largest visible group of Indonesian migrants in Australia, the Chinese 'descendants' (keturunan) perform as Indonesian traditional dancers on the Australian multicultural stage, to 'celebrate the institutions of the state(s) in which [they] live' (Appiah 1997, 633). Nevertheless and perhaps inevitably, this cosmopolitan identity was often tinted with uncertainty due to the ambiguity surrounding their positioning as a legally and culturally accepted ethnic group in Indonesia. When viewed as 'ethnic' dancers from Jakarta, these women were seen as 'legitimate' cultural representatives; the Indonesian migrant community accepted the discourse of Chinese historical settlement in Jakarta, creating a cultural syncretic influence. However, their own internal sense of belonging was disrupted, particularly due to the lingering memory of the violent 'May Riots' of 1998, which targeted Chinese-Indonesians. For many, the uncertainty generated by this violent episode became the reason for migration and settlement in Perth. Migration, the Australian multicultural stage, and a cosmopolitan worldview thus provide the spaces for Chinese Indonesians to express a cosmopolitan affiliation with Indonesia despite the traumas of the riots and the realities of being in a neighbouring country.*

INTRODUCTION

Insights from ethnographic fieldwork with Chinese-Indonesian migrants in Perth, Western Australia add to the debate and literature on belonging and identity in the diaspora and diasporic cultural performances. This fieldwork

was carried out by author one in 2007 with annual returns to the field until 2011. Analysis of Chinese-Indonesian migrants' cultural practices as a diasporic community indicated that they adhered to a translocal form of cosmopolitanism and expressed cosmopatriotic sentiments. Author two's critical analysis of cosmopolitanism, gender, migration and disrupted lives among Latin American migrants in the United Kingdom informs the analysis of selected life histories of Chinese-Indonesian dancers in Perth (Araujo 2013).

The Chinese-Indonesian research participants were members of the 10,000 strong diasporic community in Australia. Many of the research participants migrated to Perth after the 'May Riots' of 1998, whereby 'anti-Chinese' violence erupted in Indonesia's capital city, Jakarta, and, to a lesser degree, other Indonesian cities. The violence, which was directed at Chinese-Indonesians, many of whom had resided in Indonesia for centuries, involved murder and mass rapes (Volunteers Team for Humanity 1998, 7; Colombijn 2001, 34). Occurring in the aftermath of the Asian financial crises, and as a reflection of local political instability, the riots were internationally reported as being perpetrated against the three to four per cent of the Indonesian population which controls 70 per cent of Indonesia's economy (Stanley 2006). The riots were also reported and written about as a form of state violence whereby a distinct *modus operandi* was in place with accusations towards the Indonesian special forces led by the then President Suharto's son-in-law Prabowo (Volunteers Team for Humanity 1998; Colombijn 2001; Purdey 2006; Strassler 2004). The 'May Riots' in Indonesia, directly and indirectly, precipitated the dispersal of an estimated 150,000 Chinese-Indonesians. In the aftermath of the violence Chinese-Indonesians fled to countries in the Asia Pacific region such as Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, and to farther flung areas in the USA and Canada (Nonini 2003, 2006). In Australia, Perth, only four hours flight from Jakarta and in the same time zone, emerged as a primary migration destination (Ong 2007).

Author one's participant observation involved practising and performing Indonesian dances and routinely socializing with Indonesian migrant women who were part of an amateur housewife hobby dance troupe. Author one is half Chinese-Indonesian on her mother's side and half *pribumi*, or Indonesian native on her father's side. She migrated to Australia at the age of twelve with her family in 1991, seven years before the 1998 'May Riots'. Therefore, author one describes her position as that of 'partial insider'. She finds affinity with Narayan's (1993) concept of multiplex identity, an identity held by one of mixed background in which – depending on the context, situations and relations of power – different aspects are chosen or forced as a defining identity. Narayan (1993) further argues the need to acknowledge particular and personal loca-

tions because by doing so one admits the limits of understanding from the insider position. Nevertheless, this position also arguably provides certain privileged access to and knowledge of the lives of the research participants.

Being able to physically ‘pass’ as Chinese-Indonesian, author one was identified by other Indonesian community members in Perth as belonging to the Chinese-Indonesian diaspora and was invited to perform with the dance group as one of the Chinese-Indonesian dancers. There were fifteen dancers who were author one’s main interlocutors with whom she danced, practised, performed and engaged with in day-to-day participant observation in 2007, and returned to visit each year until 2011. During the course of fieldwork, author one conducted semi-structured interviews with interlocutors in order to obtain life histories. The ethnographic material in this article centers primarily on three dancers of Chinese-Indonesian background; namely, Julia, Yessy, and to a lesser extent a younger dancer called Nadia.

For Chinese-Indonesians in Perth who arrived after 1998, the concepts of a cosmopolitan identity and cosmopolitan patriotism – celebration of a variety of cultures and institutions of the state(s) within which one lives – can also be used to reflect their migration situation. In order to become legitimate Indonesian cultural representatives in Perth, members of the particular group of Chinese-Indonesian dancers whose stories we explore performed Jakartan ‘ethnic’ dances. However, we argue that similar to findings by Nonini (2004, 2006), their migration narratives are inflected by the violence of the 1998 ‘May Riots.’ The violence of the ‘May Riots’ and the related feelings of insecurity experienced by Chinese-Indonesians were among the major motivations for migration to Perth for many in the diaspora, including the primary informants. Nevertheless, the dancers portrayed here also maintained narratives of cosmopolitan privilege in relation to their recollections of Jakarta prior to migration and in their reflection on annual return visits to friends and relatives in Indonesia. Some of the women in the dance troupe were married or related to international athletes. Their cosmopolitan identities were further reinforced through socializing within an international social circle that included ex-patriots and Chinese-Indonesian national / international badminton athletes. At the same time, the women were themselves cosmopolitan patriots who were invited to celebrate the institutions of the Indonesian State through performances at state-sponsored Indonesian Independence Day celebrations and Australia’s Harmony Day multicultural festival. While cosmopolitanism, like ‘community’, is often portrayed and analysed in overwhelmingly positive terms (see: Joseph, 2002), these women’s life histories demonstrated the complexities of cosmopolitanism in lived experience and expression. In examining

the complex deployment of cosmopolitanism in this context, this article is a critical reading of life history as a way to understand the utility of cosmopolitanism as a practice and an analytic of the disrupted lives of female migrants through their diasporic cultural performance.

We present the lived experiences of two Chinese-Indonesian female ‘ethnic’ dancers which leads into a discussion of the practice, theories and method of cosmopolitanism. Then we focus on diasporic performances, their Chinese, Betawi syncretised cultural performances; and, how their representation of diaspora and translocal identities engender an understanding of cosmopolitanism in its vernacular sense. We conclude by explaining how our findings amongst Chinese-Indonesian migrants in Perth add to the debate and literature on cosmopolitanism as belonging, identity and a diasporic cultural performance.

#### EXPRESSIONS OF COSMOPOLITANISM IN DISRUPTED LIVES

Julia and Yessy, the main subjects of this article, both migrated to Perth after the 1998 ‘May Riots’. While each of the women had a different experience of, and reaction to, the riots, the foregrounding of violence and the coverage of the riots brought into question their own understandings of their respective identities and relationships to the Indonesian State.

#### *Julia*

Julia, one of the Chinese-Indonesian dancers with whom author one performed, migrated to Australia with her ex-pat husband and three children after 1998 because of her experience of the ‘May Riots’. As she spent a significant amount of her adult life and career in Jakarta, Julia identified as being Jakartan, even though she was born in Medan. Moreover, her three children were born in Jakarta and went to the Jakarta International School for children with non-Indonesian fathers. On the days of the riots she remained sequestered at the international hotel where she worked. Though she stayed in Indonesia in the immediate after-math of the riots, Julia’s sense of uncertainty and insecurity as a result of the riots impacted on her everyday life. For example, Julia said that she used to love walking to and from work, across a pedestrian bridge over a main central road. In fact, along with her ex-pat husband, she was a member of the international jogging and power walking ‘cross country’ group called the Hash House Harriers. She stopped walking after the riots. As a Chinese-Indonesian woman, she did not feel safe returning home to her Anglo Australian expat husband and children, despite the relatively short walking distance.

While this may seem like a minor shift, the abandonment of one of Julia's daily activities and sources of pleasure spoke to the larger impact of the riots on her sense of self and place. Though she had viewed Jakarta as home, and herself as free and safe within the city, in the aftermath of the riots a conflicted sense of self and identity emerged. Julia recognized that despite her personal sense of belonging to Jakarta, she might be the object of violence there.

Nonetheless the sense of disruption engendered by the 'May Riots' did not completely negate Julia's allegiances to Jakarta. In Jakarta she was part of an expat social circle through her children's international school and membership in international clubs. Julia's cosmopolitan Jakartan identity was thus represented by this international circle of mobile elites. After the riots, when she and her family ultimately migrated to Australia, she took with her to Perth this translocal subjectivity. After settling in Australia, Julia visited Jakarta occasionally. She described her social life in Perth as mirroring her lifestyle in Jakarta except that in the Australian context she felt herself to be an Indonesian ex-pat who partook in Indonesian cultural activities. These activities included being a member of the consulate-sponsored traditional orchestras of *Angklung* and *Gamelan*, as well as being a member of the housewife dance group.

However, participating in these group activities involved tension and contradiction in subjectivity (Dragajlovic 2008). In Australia, she viewed herself predominantly as an Indonesian, as opposed to Chinese-Indonesian, and took part in Indonesian state-sponsored activities. Through her engagement with Indonesian cultural performance Julia can be seen to represent what de Kloet and Jurriens (2007, 12) refer to as 'the double articulation [of cosmopolitanism] that is placed and displaced, territorialized and deterritorialized, at the same time.' For Julia, this double articulation related to experiences and intersections of migration, ethnicity, class, and gender. Through transnational cultural connections and dance performance she quite literally embodied the contradictions and tensions inherent in, what Gaylene Becker (1999) refers to as, 'disrupted lives.' Cosmopolitanism emerges as a means of making sense of disruption and violence, particularly with respect to the dual traumas of the physical, psychological, and national violence of the 1998 'May Riots' and of 'displacement' to Perth.

Yessy

A deeply conflicted sense of belonging characterized the experiences of other members of the dance troupe as well. Even for those whose migration trajectory was not immediately directed by the 'May Riots', complex affiliations with

the Indonesian State informed by the riots impacted translocal subjectivities. This is evident in the life history of Yessy, another member of the housewife dance troupe.

Yessy was born in central Java but regarded herself as a resident of Jakarta. Even after she immigrated to Australia, Yessy frequently returned to Jakarta and described it as being a significant place in her life experience. She had moved there in her youth with her older sister, who was an Indonesian national badminton player. Because of her sister's connections and the family's move, Yessy socialized with Olympic stars: Olympic badminton gold, silver and bronze medalist of Chinese-Indonesian background. In general, being with these international athletes in Jakarta provided Yessy with a cosmopolitan lifestyle. The badminton athletes were both mobile elites and Indonesian patriots who competed internationally.

Even as they represented Indonesia internationally, some of these athletes only received their full Indonesian citizenship in 2006 (Winata 2008). The change of Indonesian citizenship laws from *jus sanguinis* (citizenship by paternal descent) to *jus solis* (citizenship by land of birth) in 2006 affected Chinese-Indonesians' citizenship status (Winata 2008). Thus, those who were previously stateless were no longer classified as such even though they continued to experience various forms of day-to-day discrimination. Those who had 'dispersed' and emigrated also had a means to return or regularly travel back and forth between their new country of residence and Indonesia. Palembang Liu described how even though 'diaspora' was the condition of 'statelessness read as homelessness' including a sense of loss, there is also the possibility of recovery or re-creation – for example, the state of Israel for the Jewish diaspora (2007, 283). Similarly, though for many Chinese-Indonesians the trauma of the marginalization and victimisation is still part of their national narrative, many Chinese-Indonesians were more fully able to recover their connection with Indonesia upon being granted full citizenship status after 2006.

In her interviews and day-to-day interactions with author one, Yessy recalled her family's fear for her older sister's safety in Jakarta during the time of the riots. Her sister had initially moved to Jakarta by herself without any family members and was alone at the time of the 'May Riots'. Yessy believed it would not have mattered whether or not her sister was a national athlete, she would not have been safe had she been in the wrong place at the wrong time during the riots. Yessy's family believed that being identified as 'Chinese' would have determined their fate. Though thankfully she was safe, the sense of vulnerability that her family experienced stayed with Yessy.

Whereas Julia's move to Perth was directly informed by the violence of the 'May Riots,' Yessy's migration story was nuanced. She also came to Perth in order to attend university. It was on the university's badminton team that she met her Anglo-Australian husband. As a result of this relationship, she settled in Australia. Like Yessy, many Chinese-Indonesian migrants' dispersal revolved around their experience described by Ang (2007) as 'empowerment, enrichment and expansion as mobile elite migrants'. As in Yessy's case, these people immigrated to Australia under the category of 'business migrants' with economic capital, as skilled migrants, or as international students (Nonini 2003, 2006). Each of these categories speaks to privilege and possibility. Business migrants, skilled workers, and students are all 'desirable' migrant categories whose value is measured not only by merit or experience, but also by potentiality. However, as the violent history of the 'May Riots' demonstrated, many of these migrants might also be defined by their vulnerability. In many instances they could be classified as refugees, however, at the time the chance of migrating to Australia under the status of 'refugee' was slim (Nonini 2003, 2006). While Yessy's ability to study in Australia spoke to her privilege, her experience was also informed by the fear and precariousness that she carried with her as a result of her family's reaction to the 'May Riots'.

Yessy had aspirations to become an Australian Permanent Resident after she completed her bachelor's degree. However, unlike her Chinese-Indonesian housemates, who graduated from university at the same time and were able to apply for permanent residency under an independent skills visa, Yessy's arts degree did not give her enough points to apply for skilled migration. Instead, she applied through a spousal visa. Her strategy was similar to the experiences of other Chinese-Indonesian women post the 'May Riots,' who, wanting to leave the country, joined international match-making sites in order to gain spousal visas to the United States and Canada (Wong 1998). A Wall Street Journal report by Wong (1998) outlined the women's fear of remaining in Indonesia. Women were using whatever visa category possible to obtain visas especially when they did not have the funds to pay international student fees or did not meet the requirements for skilled or business migration.

Yessy and the other Chinese-Indonesian female dancers in Perth who are at the center of this article all gained their status as permanent residents in Australia through spousal visas by being the partners of Australian men. As has been noted elsewhere (Wong 1998), they valorized a narrative of romance and true love over any other migration motivations. This narrative reinforced the 'special' status of the women and lent itself to positive self-characterization. It also highlighted a cosmopolitan narrative of openness, not only to the possibility

of love, but also to other cultures. As Nava (2007) has noted with respect to interracial and intercultural relationships between British and Afro-Caribbean women and men in London in the post-war period, marriage can be symbolic of embracing otherness and the expression of the cosmopolitan self in the most intimate of circumstances. The deployments of these mobility strategies sought to address the material and physical challenges of Chinese-Indonesian positioning in order to maximize the positive possibilities for individuals and their immediate relations. For many displaced individuals, however, material and social positioning are only two among a multitude of displacements. Just as the Chinese-Indonesian women's visa strategies or mobility more broadly may address physical and material needs, cosmopolitan self-representations function similarly to address issues of consciousness and belonging. A cosmopolitan self-representation for a marriage migrant may strategically bridge internal and emotive disruptions.

Yessy met the housewife dance group members through her husband's university social circle, specifically through an Indonesian studies group and traditional xylophone orchestra or gamelan musicians. The consulate sponsored gamelan group consisted of consulate staff members, Indonesian women married to Australian men, Australian men who studied or were interested in Indonesian cultural performance and mixed Indonesian-Australian young adults. Yessy joined the housewife dance group because she had an interest in drama and traditional dance. She attributed this to her Javanese grandmother and felt she was of assimilated Chinese and mixed-*pribumi*, or Indonesian native, decent in ways similar to the geneology of the Chinese syncretic dances she performed. Yessy thus expressed a cosmopolitan openness through her dance performances that mirrored both a life history of mixed identity and represented an openness to a mixed intimate relationship.

Though a complex relationship to the Indonesian State informed her decision to migrate, in Perth festivals, alongside other dancers from various migrant communities, Yessy nonetheless represented Indonesian 'culture' on an international stage. Expressing a complex cosmopatriot identity, her representation of this culture on an international stage was an expression of her cosmopolitan experiences as a Chinese-Indonesian mobile elite based in Jakarta and Perth. It spoke directly, to her privileged position. At the same time, through her dance performance she was able to reference her simultaneous experience of marginalization as a member of an oppressed minority in Indonesia.

To discuss the experience of members of the Chinese-Indonesian diaspora in relation to cosmopolitan theory is to see cosmopolitanism as it is utilized and

evoked in political and intellectual projects and in the lives of individuals. It is to recognize that displaced lives rarely conform to the neat boundaries of cosmopolitanism's common definition: unrestricted belonging and freedom from national limitations. As Wardle (2010, 381) noted, 'the truth is that 'cosmopolitanism' currently provides an umbrella for conceptual, methodological and empirical insights that can sit together uncomfortably on close inspection.' While cosmopolitanism is on some level about globality, as Appiah (1997) has argued, cosmopolitans are not necessarily 'free from national limitations or attachments' – indeed, they may be 'patriots' whose self-identification is deeply interwoven with national narratives. The experiences and subjectivities of Julia and Yessy contribute to an understanding of a cosmopolitanism that is situated, complex and even conflicted when expressed through self-identification, belonging, and, ultimately, patriotism. This is evidenced in their narrative imaginings of their migration trajectories and in their performance of gender, ethnic, and class identity through dance. It is to these artistic articulations of cosmopolitanism that we now turn.

#### DIASPORA AND CHINESE JAKARTA SYNCRETIC PERFORMANCE

*'Nyok kita nonton Ondel Ondel nyok, nyok kita arak Ondel Ondel nyok (Let's watch the Ondel Ondel – papier-mâché – doll parade –, let's parade the Ondel Ondel dolls around [the neighbourhood])'*

As part of their sponsored performances, Julia and Yessy, along with other members of the Indonesian women's amateur housewife hobby dance group were invited by the Indonesian Consulate of Western Australia to perform at a diasporic community celebration of Indonesia's 62nd Independence Day organized in 2007. The group decided to perform the Ondel Ondel dance, a created folk-inspired dance from Jakarta, which they debuted in Perth and choreographed specifically for the event. At this event, the Ondel Ondel was one of three 'Betawi' dances from Indonesia's capital city Jakarta, all with a syncretic Chinese-Indonesian cultural influence in the costume, music, make-up and martial arts 'Kung Fu' movements. The Indonesian consulate in Perth, Western Australia had organized their own dance troupe as well as communicated to other amateur groups that they wanted 'Betawi' performances to appeal to the majority Chinese-Indonesian migrant population. Although Chinese-Indonesians are a minority group in Indonesia they are a majority amongst the Indonesian diasporic community that resides in Perth.

This Jakarta Betawi cultural performance in Perth and specifically the Ondel Ondel dance by a group of Chinese-Indonesians, is thus significant to under-

standing how a translocal form of cosmopolitan identity is performed in the diaspora and how it speaks to the nuanced self-identifications of performers such as Julia and Yessy. The Indonesian government's endorsement of a Betawi dance form, performed by Chinese-Indonesian women in Perth, can be seen as a means of engaging and managing a transnational multicultural population. For the performers themselves, however, the dance form was a means of expressing, and making sense of, complex identities and relationships to the Indonesian State, as well as their disrupted life trajectories.

Those who claim Chinese ancestry comprised of over 60 per cent of the recorded 7880 (DIAC:2006) to 10000 (Indonesian Perth Consulate in Jakarta Post:2005) Indonesian migrants in Perth. This meant that as a diasporic community, the majority Chinese-Indonesians can socialize extensively among themselves. This was primarily done through social networks provided by Indonesian language churches (Wimsett 1999; Nonini 2003, 2006). This was a similar situation to that described in research on Chinese-Indonesian migrants in California, USA (Cunningham 2009) and Toronto, Canada (Nagata 1988, 1999). The Californian research showed that the Chinese-Indonesian migrants engaged with the minority non-Chinese-Indonesian Muslim migrants mainly by visiting Indonesian community or cultural events organized by the consulate. In comparison, Chinese-Indonesians in Perth engaged extensively with other Indonesians also by performing at cultural and community events. Moreover, the Chinese-Indonesian female dancers, through performing 'Betawi' ethnic dances from Jakarta, were portrayed by the Indonesian State as legitimate cultural representatives.

The *Betawi* people, from the Dutch word for Jakarta – Batavia, however have been argued to be of mixed cultural backgrounds including: Sundanese (from West Java), Javanese, European (or part European such as Indo-Dutch and Portuguese: pre-Dutch colonials), *Mardjikers* or Dutch colonies' freed slaves (Black Dutch), Chinese (who make up 8.3 per cent of the population) and other migrants (Hugo 2005, 7). This mixing was the by-product of both colonialism and development. Graeme Hugo (2005) argues that it wasn't until the development of colonialism (post 1700s) that the majority of Chinese individuals were encouraged to migrate to the Dutch East Indies and settle in Jakarta. Moreover, Chinese migration from rural West Java in the 1950s assisted the growth and urbanization of Jakarta in the post-independence period (Hugo 2005,16). Because of this relatively recent and largely immigrant identity, Betawi culture lends itself more readily to appropriation.

As experienced by author one and related to her by her fellow troupe members,

for Chinese-Indonesian dancers this enabled them to imagine themselves as part of a hybrid mix of local ethnic Betawi groups from Jakarta, which was a feature of intercultural performance in Asian diasporas (Um 2005, 5). Um argued that diasporic performances were defined by hybridity rather than by essence or purity even though the notion of tradition associated with memory of homeland was crucial to the construction and representation of both diasporic and cosmopolitan identities (2005, 5). The Chinese-Indonesian tradition includes an assimilated culture called the *peranakan* which is the basis for their legitimacy discourse. It is a syncretic cultural influence that was resident in Indonesia prior to colonialism by various European powers, The Chinese-Indonesian and their diasporic performance can thus be interpreted as an outcome of 'intercultural processes signifying multiple cultural identities and expressions of political aspirations negotiated by the community, host and home nation states in a post-modern context of globalization' (Um 2005, 7).

The discourse of Chinese syncretic cultural influence on Betawi dances as performed by Chinese-Indonesian dancers in Perth draws attention to performative cultural discourses, but also subtly highlights an undercurrent of cross-class awareness embodied in the performance. A particular feature of the Betawi dance we are highlighting is the *Jaipongan*, which is a popularized version of a female harvest fertility dance with hip shaking movements that are considered somewhat erotic. The Ondel Ondel dance's Betawi movement of *Jaipongan* from Indonesia's capital city Jakarta is thus subject to a process of class-conscious sanitization in its translocal performance in Perth. While from the perspective of the consumers this rearticulation of the art form may be seen to have the effect of distancing or divorcing *Jaipongan* from its 'less desirable' roots of a female harvest fertility dance that became popularized in the poorer, unsafe and well known prostitution area of Jakarta, the implications for performers were distinct. In performing a translocal version of *Jaipongan* in Perth, female performers such as the Indonesian migrant women dancers, who often saw themselves and were viewed by others as privileged or elite, also expressed a cosmopolitan awareness of and openness to 'lower' class aesthetics.

#### TRANSLOCAL FORMS OF COSMOPOLITAN EXPRESSION

Cross-class awareness was not the only defining feature of the troupe's performative choices. At performances of the Ondel Ondel doll dance in 2007, members of the consulate, the housewife dance group, the Chinese-Indonesian dancers themselves, other Indonesian performers and some members of the Indonesian community audience described the Chinese cultural influence

in the Betawi ethnic group's dances and the history of Chinese residency in Indonesia's capital city. The performers themselves were wearing Chinese syncretic inspired wide sleeves, red, gold and green coloured costumes, as well as makeup and hair with accessories that typifies a Chinese 'doll'. This phenomena of performing 'Chinese-ness' has been analysed by Sin Wen Lau (2007) in her research on how the bodies of the Chinese Australian young female dancers are transformed into performing Chinese-ness through costumes and classic dances for the Australian multicultural stage. There was similarly an initial imposition through request by the Indonesian Consulate on the housewife dance group whereby the Betawi Jakarta dances transform the dancers' 'Chinese-ness' into a dual representation of Indonesian nationality and residence in Perth. This in turn contributed to the perceptions of Australian multiculturalism. This positioning, however, also both engendered and reinforced the dancers' cosmopolitan self-conceptualization.

This self-conceptualization of cosmopolitanism was seen in the way in which the dancers approached performance. 'We should perform this dance I like it, it's good, *yihuii* I like the *jaipongan* hip shake... it's really authentically *Betawi* (Jakartan)' said one of the dancers to Julia, at the groups first dance rehearsal two months prior to the 2007 Independence Day performance. Yessy commented as well that our performance was a combination of *Jaipongan* dance which has some hip shake but also Chinese Kung Fu martial arts movements. *Jaipongan* was a popularized secular version of the Sundanese (from West Java) *Ketuk Tilu* singer/dancer/prostitute fertility performance as a popular performance in Jakarta's lower class and red light district area in the 1970s and 1980s. However, *Jaipongan* subsequently became sanitized for the middle class television consumption (Murray 1995). Yet this dance form is also used as a symbol of a syncretic Chinese-Indonesian and Betawi culture. By recognizing and embracing the multiple cultural traditions – ethnic, class, and place based – that informed their performances the women were expressing an openness that transcended their own specific identities and experiences. This openness of *Jaipongan* inherently requires an openness to the other. Openness to the other is itself a recognition of the other in one's self and is a defining feature of cosmopolitanism (Robinson 2007; Irving and Reed 2011). It is perhaps unsurprising then that these women who were positioned both as embodied representatives of cultural symbolism of a diasporic community and as other to the cultures they performed drew on the discourse of cosmopolitanism in representing themselves.

Cosmopolitan strategies were not only used to express openness. Syncretic and cosmopolitan performance was also a means by which the women negoti-

ated fraught translocal relationships and identities. This is seen in the way in which dancers' expression of their cosmopolitanism became more prominent in two Harmony Day Festival performances four years later in 2011. At events at a smaller local Perth shire venue and a larger Asian Australian Association Burswood concert hall event, the troupe performed a different version of the syncretic Chinese-Betawi folk dance. They changed the Ondel Ondel dance choreographed for the Independence Day festivities in 2007 to a Jakarta *Jaipongan* dance. The choreography emphasized cosmopolitan 'Chinese' martial arts movement while getting rid of any overt sexualised hip gyrating movements of the *Jaipongan* movements derived from the *Ketuk tilu* singer/dancer/prostitute fertility dance genre. This shift was informed by what the dancers' characterised as ambiguous feelings toward performing 'sexy' dance moves. These feelings were themselves influenced by the women's experiences of sexual objectification and danger in Indonesia in the post-'May Riots' period. This sexual objectification related to derogatory racist and sexist remarks they experienced on the streets of Jakarta as 'Amoys,' a term with connotations of a lascivious Oriental used in the rapes associated with the 1998 'May Riots' (Budianta 2002; Winarnita 2011). The controversy surrounding the legitimacy of mass rapes in the 'May Riots' went so far as counter-claims that prostitutes were hired to stage these public 'rapes' (Strassler 2004). In light of these associations, in 2011 these female Chinese-Indonesian dancers replaced the 'doll' dress costume in their Jakarta *Jaipongan* created dance with black martial arts pants for the Kung Fu like movements. One of the younger dancers, Nadia, described the new dance as inspired by the film 'Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,' a Chinese popular movie and world-wide box office hit that was also well known in Indonesia. Empowerment through dance was thus not achieved through performing sexiness. Rather, it was achieved through performing martial arts and self-defence movements, which highlighted competence, capability, and dynamic agency and referenced both Chinese heritage and globalized identities.

Importantly, this internationalization of syncretic Chinese-Betawi dances was performed by Chinese-Indonesian dancers on the multicultural stage while they were represented as Indonesians by virtue of consulate patronage. The women adapted dances to reflect their ongoing negotiation of uncertain positioning within the Indonesian context and with the emerging identities as Indonesian cultural representatives. In doing so, they negotiated various forms of 'multiscalar identities' and a cosmopolitan projection. Furthermore, dancers such as Nadia, Julia, and Yessy had communicated their enjoyment in performing the Jakartan 'ethnic' dances and their own improvements through an emphasis on internationally renowned martial arts movements associated with

Chinese-ness. The dance was introduced in festivals in Western Australia as an Indonesian dance, the dancers were also described as Jakartan folk dancers. Given that Jakarta was a site of intense anti-Chinese violence in 1998 and a critical part of the women's migration narratives, this representation embodied both the potentialities of multicultural identity and its contradictions. These 'glocal' affiliations oriented these women toward not only multicultural articulations of self, but also toward cosmopolitan self-representations.

Cosmopolitanism as practice, theory, and method is explicitly concerned with the recognition of those individuals whose everyday lives and embodied experiences of the world are characterized by multiple, simultaneous, and sometimes conflicting spheres of belonging and projects of allegiance. As noted above, for members of the Srikandi Indonesian women's amateur troupe these included the role of Jakarta and Australia as sites of belonging as well as identities as Chinese-Indonesian in a post-May 1998 period, and as female performers and migrant women. Literature on Indonesian female dance performances (Hughes-Freeland 2008, Hatley 2008; Larasati 2013), in particular, has analysed the performer's agency in the face of gender structuring discourse. Larasati's work; for example, described marginalised and stigmatised Indonesian female dancing bodies, which were labelled by the state as communist and deviant in 1965, became reconstructed as disciplined and refined in international cultural diplomatic activities (Larasati 2013, 6). For the women of the dance group's syncretic dance performance, the utilisation of cosmopolitan strategies was as much an attempt to understand self as to engage with multicultural others. While Betawi performance appealed to multicultural and cross-class understandings of what it was to be Indonesian, especially when performed on stages in Australia, for these women it was also a collective assertion of agency and identity against the backdrop of complex experiences of gendered ethnic identity within the Indonesian context.

#### RECONCILING COSMOPOLITAN PATRIOTISM

Why would the Chinese-Indonesian dancers want to be Indonesian cultural representatives when they had been persecuted as an ethnic minority and compelled to reside in another country in order to feel safe? The narratives of fear described by the dancers point to their fear of mob violence, but they do not explicitly implicate the Indonesian State as complicit in the violence. A similar analysis was given by Ryter in that the official account of Chinese-Indonesians who became asylum seekers to the United States post May 1998 had scant mention of any fear of the government or authorities but mentioned a fear of other Indonesians (2006, 228). Furthermore, Ryter argued that the

Chinese-Indonesians who were victims of violence and discriminated upon by the country's majority, nevertheless, had no urgency to sever national ties to the homeland (2006, 231). Media description of the Chinese-Indonesian migrants who fled overseas portrayed them as being unloyal and questioned their allegiance to the Indonesian State (Stanley 2006). This may also have played into the aspirations of some of the diasporas members to be seen as patriotic. Cosmopolitan patriotism can seem very rosy and inclusive as a moral and ethical ideal. However, there is a danger in it being used too loosely without a critical cosmopolitan approach. It may be necessary, as in this case, to see its social application as a form of aspiration to belong, and as a performance of this aspiration by an ethnic minority diasporic group.

Julia and Yessy's narratives and their participation in the performances also highlighted the importance of place. Jakarta is regarded as a cosmopolitan city by Chinese-Indonesians such as Julia and Yessy who identify with it, either as a birthplace or a place of recent residence. They carried this identification with Jakarta-the-place as part of their migrant identity in Perth. While McKay (2006) argues that cosmopolitanism equates to being a citizen of the world instead of a 'translocal' ethnic identification, the Chinese-Indonesian dancers, on the other hand, gave importance to being 'translocal.' They found value and worth in being part of a Jakarta and Perth cosmopolitan social circle of internationally mobile elite members of society such as the Consulate staff and their family and ex-pats in both cities. Here cosmopolitanism was closely associated with both mobility and grounded privilege. However, it was not solely or even fundamentally characterized by these qualities. Rather, cosmopolitanism for these women represented an unbounded space for negotiation and generative self-creation. Thus, a cosmopolitan worldview was both indicative of openness to the world (and one's self) and of an assertion of agency. In choosing to describe themselves as cosmopolitan, these women explored the imaginative possibilities of circumstances beyond their control. Nevertheless, their form of cosmopolitanism was, similarly to trans-local identity, place-based, and expressed through 'cosmopolitan patriotism,' that is to say, being Indonesian cultural representatives in Perth. This notion of the cosmopolitan patriot is inspired by Kwame Anthony Appiah's (1998) analysis of 'grounded cosmopolitans,' whose culturally rooted loyalties to state(s) co-exist with an openness to the world, engendered by mobility, potentiality, and importantly strategic choice and necessity. In this instance, the dancers were cosmopolitan patriots who celebrate both fraught cultural difference and the institutions of the states by performing in Indonesian Independence Day 'unity in diversity' community celebration and Australian multicultural Harmony Day Festival. Their performance of a Chinese influenced ethnic Betawi cultural syncretic

dance was in line with Appiah's ideal of cosmopolitan patriots rejecting majority ethno-national culture.

In understanding the Chinese-Indonesian migrant dancers' descriptions of Jakarta and their valued cosmopolitan social circle, we are not eulogising the moralistic ethics of the argument or dismissing these feelings of cosmopolitan patriotism but rather working to analyse and understand them, thus providing a critical cosmopolitan approach as apart of a social analysis perspective (Delanty 2006). Similarly to other cosmopatriots who think and feel simultaneously beyond and within the nation (de Kloet and Jurriens 2007; Robinson, 2007), Chinese-Indonesian cosmopolitan patriotic identities were contested as mobile elites and diasporic refugees, migrants, citizens and permanent residents. Theirs was a subjectivity always in negotiation and in a process a self-fashioning. Therefore, the subjectivity of Jakarta to Chinese-Indonesian migrants in the dance troupe was crucial to their self-identification as mobile cosmopolitan and transnational subjects who could legitimately perform as representatives of Indonesian culture in Perth. This legitimacy also rests on the discourse of a translocal Jakartan identity performed as Chinese cultural syncretism 'ethnic' Betawi identity.

#### CONCLUSION

In this paper we have presented ethnographic insights into the self-identifications of Chinese-Indonesian dancers and the diasporic community to which they belong. Analysis of Chinese-Indonesians as a diasporic community uncovered a translocal form of cosmopolitanism and expressions of cosmopolitanism. What also needs to be emphasised is that the particular local place of persecution that was part of their diasporic narrative of migration, Jakarta was simultaneously a site of trauma and the place with which the Chinese-Indonesian individuals at the heart of this account most identified. Julia and Yessy continued to engage with Jakarta through travel, social networks, narrative, and performance. In doing so, they re-created a sense of belonging that attempted to reconcile the tensions and contradictions in their understanding of their migration trajectories. This sense of belonging was expressed through syncretic performances as a hybrid mixing and merging of Chinese cultural influence on Betawi ethnic dance.

As well as the analysis of Chinese-Indonesian migrants' experiences in Perth contributing to the literature on belonging and identity in the diaspora, it also contributes emerging ethnographic understanding of cosmopolitanism in practice. It does so through a three-pronged analysis. First, we have ex-

amined the ways in which dancers took on this localized Jakartan, Chinese syncretic performance as a way of negotiating their sense of belonging and cosmopolitan identity. They did this despite their performance being initially a suggestion made by the Indonesian consulate. Secondly, we have shown that a description of their subjectivity is place-based and not place-bound, and thus it does not mean that migrants are not also cosmopolitan. In fact, the trans-locality of being a Jakartan in Perth was associated with a valued cosmopolitan lifestyle. The dancer's cosmopolitanism nevertheless was a grounded or a rooted cosmopolitan patriotism where cultural loyalties to states coexisted with an openness to the world and performance of cultural hybridity. Here cosmopolitan patriotism is not treated as a moral political ideal but a social analysis to understand the cosmopolitan self as a subject in motion, negotiating and self fashioning the various contestations to identity and belonging. Furthermore, the subjectivity as a Jakartan, Chinese-Indonesian was crucial to their identification as mobile cosmopolitan subjects who could legitimately perform as a diasporic representative of Indonesian culture in Perth. Thirdly, we have sought to contribute to understanding how cosmopolitanism can be utilised in practice as a means of sense-making by individuals whose life trajectories have been disrupted. While the women whose life narratives are analysed here have in various ways been impacted by the 1998 'May Riots' and the lingering uncertainty engendered by those events, each drew upon a cosmopolitan openness as a means of bridging that uncertainty.

Cosmopolitanism demands that attention be given to individual consciousness as much as to communitarian practice. This focus on consciousness and on individual practice has important consequences for the discipline of anthropology because the valuing of cosmopolitanism injects into contemporary anthropology the figure of [...] the individual human being who occupies a 'global' space as suggested by Rapport (Rapport 2007, 223).

This cosmopolitan and humanistic anthropology with its focus on the cosmopolitan subject emphasizes the autonomy, agency, and liberty of individuals by positing that the individual exists 'beyond particular communitarian arrangements' and is 'capable of authoring personal identity and properly at liberty to exercise this capacity' (Rapport 2007, 225). Our focus here is on how individuals navigate and engage the complex entanglements of displacement, diaspora, nationalism, patriotism, gender, and class that characterized their experiences of the world and themselves.

## NOTES

- 1 Dr Monika Winarnita is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Anthropology Department, University of Victoria, BC Canada, with an Honorary Affiliation to La Trobe University's Anthropology Department. She is working on a Canadian Social Science and Humanities Research Council funded international comparative study on 'Southeast Asian Women, Family and Migration in the Global Era'. Her fieldwork is amongst Indonesian skilled migrant women in the health and education sector in Melbourne Australia. At La Trobe University she is working as a Research Associate in the ARC Discovery Project (2014–2016) among the Malay community on Australia's Cocos (Keeling) Islands. She has recently received a La Trobe Research Focus Area – Transforming Human Societies 2016 funding as a Co-Chief Investigator on the project 'Multimedia, Migrant Identities and Family Relationships: A Qualitative Investigation'. Dr Winarnita is the author of 'Dancing the Feminine: Gender and Identity Performances by Indonesian Migrant Women' (2015) Sussex Academic Press, UK.

Email: m.winarnita@latrobe.edu.au

- 2 Natalie Araujo is a Lecturer in Anthropology at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. She holds a Masters in Latin American Cultural Studies and PhD in Social Anthropology from the University of Manchester and Juris Doctor from the University of Melbourne. She has conducted fieldwork in Europe, Latin America, Asia, and Australia and has researched and written on a range of topics including migration and cultural citizenship, gender-based violence, sustainability, educational inclusion, and cosmopolitan identities.

Email: n.araujo@latrobe.edu.au

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