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Embodied Tactics of Social Space

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"Not the act of tracing boundaries, but their cancellation or negation is the constitutive act of the city."[1]

"For the mass of unemployed, demobilized workers without an occupation, Paris is a tapestry of trajectories, a series of streets and avenues in which they roam, for the most part, with neither goal nor destination, subject to a police repression intended to control their wanderings."[2]

In reflection on the topic of embodiment I've chosen a body which traverses space in direct tactile and physical engagement with matter. A body of intuition, memory, and practice. A body intensely focused yet radically calm. A political body whose vector is forever indeterminate, an engaged body whose path once chosen is intimately known. A body of movement and action. In the city, a body amongst all other bodies. The body I've chosen to consider is that of the *traceur* (feminine *traceure*) in the art of *parkour*, one who practices *l'art du déplacement* (the art of displacement).

Parkour is a movement practice born of the working class suburbs of Paris, France. Founded by David Belle in Lisses commune during the years 1995-1997, parkour focuses on practicing efficient movement to develop one's body and mind to overcome obstacles quickly. According to Belle, "the physical aspect of parkour is getting over all the obstacles in your path as you would in an emergency. You want to move in such a way, with any movement, as to help you gain the most ground on someone or something, whether escaping from it or chasing toward it."[3] Parkour practitioners are referred to as *traceurs*, derived from the verb *tracer* which normally means "to trace", or "to draw", but also translates as "to go fast".[4] Parkour's emergence as a movement practice can be situated within the histories of formalized performance modalities including acrobatics and dance[5], sporting practices such as mountain climbing and running, and extreme practices such as BASE jumping[6], yet parkour is a practice without formal definition. Fluctuating somewhere between the grounding polarities of a philosophy and a practice, its mooring is epistemologically unbound.

As a focus of theoretical inquiry parkour functions as both ideal site and problem child. Theorizing parkour is the antithesis of practicing parkour, and that contradiction is not lost on this author. Michel de Certeau provides a working model for considering our object of study in his chapter "Theories of the Art of Practice*"* from *The Practice of Everyday Life*. De Certeau suggests that, "the 'objects' of our study cannot be detached from the intellectual and social 'commerce' that organizes their definition and their displacements."[7] Indeed, the intellectual and social commerce of parkour serve as my primary focus and necessarily distanced consideration of the movement.

Drawn to parkour as an ideal site for consideration of Henri Bergson's embodied

philosophy in *Matter and Memory* and *Creative Evolution*, my intense affinity for the

topic ultimately left me lost in contradiction. I asked, How can one encapsulate the

philosophical bindings of a movement which rejects the very notion of pragmatism in

favor of an excessive and seemingly dangerous dose of *élan vital?* In what way is

parkour an embodied practice, and what does it mean to theorize parkour in light of its

clear position on action over question? How does the network play a role in the

propagation of an embodied philosophy? Where does history reside in the movement?

Once these contradictions and questions emerged, the problem of writing parkour became

clear. Parkour plays eloquently into the double-bind of theory versus practice, and was

therefore a perfect problem child for the task at hand.

Yet this site/ problem child must be approached with a degree of intellectual pragmatism.

Parkour does not *seek theory*, it *is action*. To cross the borders of theory and action

demands an engaged textual style, and a flexible schematic upon which to ground these

crossings. Parkour can be woven into texts, it can be captured by a camera, it can be

explained as a phenomenon. Yet these representations, these images, these symbols, this

text, and an infinite array of discursive meanderings will never *be* the action they seek to

encapsulate. As De Certeau states, "If it is true that *forests of gestures* are manifest in the

streets, their movement cannot be captured in a picture, nor can the meaning of their

movements be circumscribed in a text. Their rhetorical transplantation carries away and

displaces the analytical, coherent proper meanings of urbanism; it constitutes a

'wandering of the semantic' produced by masses that make some parts of the city disappear and exaggerate others, distorting it, fragmenting it, and diverting it from its immobile order."[8]

I explore parkour through a circuit which is simultaneously theoretical and philosophical, cultural and historical. In its essence, parkour consists of bodies and situations. Its body composed of disenfranchised youth born of immigrant populations in the working class French suburbs. Its situation traceable through the sociopolitical realities of the city. Parkour traverses and binds the spaces of suburbs and cities, yet its viral influence is facilitated by global networks and virtual communities. The parkour movement presents a challenge to spatial and ideological constraints by vaulting itself over the walls designed to contain, control, and exploit its infectious energy. For some, this movement is meaningless, for others it is nothing less than movement and matter possessing a curiously political nature.

I intend to traverse the subject of parkour as a traceur might navigate a set of stairs. I do not wish to ascend the stairs in a linear fashion, but rather to explore the potentiality of the stairwell, its irrefutable materiality, its forces and physics, and its everydayness, as much as a matter of displacement in the parkour movement. The necessary contradiction of an intellectual exegesis of parkour is juxtaposed with the *action itself*. The ephemeral cultural material in consideration – digital video clips, photographs, and online excerpts of interviews with its primary practitioners – will serve to highlight the problematic of an embodied theory of the traceur.

From Lisses to the World

"Every 'proper' place is altered by the mark others have left upon it."[9]

In an online digital video clip entitled *Le Parkour de Nuit*[10], our vision is that of a Sony Nightshot infrared video camera. The filmmaker wanders along the mysterious path of an equally mysterious group of young men. The video includes no location sound, instead composed of what can only be described as an ambient jungle; an ethereal soundscape of synth pads, animal calls, and tribal percussion. The resulting visual and sonic synaesthesia are haunting.

In this 9'14" clip, the group of 10 all wear white. Their movements appear to be an intertwining of gymnastics, acrobatics, balance, mimicry, and collective risk-taking. Their strange actions interwoven upon a random series of urban obstacles: sidewalks and pedestrian corridors, parking blockades and bridges, walls and fences, even a tree. Upon this seemingly endless series of obstacles their leader establishes a movement challenge upon which the others demonstrate their competence, one by one, as if engaged in some type of primal mimicry. Their faces reveal little expression in the monochromatic glow of infrared video, their bodies movements become the primary source of meaning.

At the tree their leader ascends. He reaches a large limb and with a circular gesture throws his body back around toward the ground. The others follow in turn. The pixilated video fades to a steady visage, the superimposition of David Belle's watchful gaze.

Another long shot reveals David in mystical, almost yogic, perambulation. The symbolic triangulation of his arms and the young men who follow reveal some strange form of communal mimicry. Like a space cult summoning the end of time. Into, over, upon, and through a graffiti-riddled subterranean tunnel, onward toward a series of more formidable obstacles including a small office building and a multi-story modern apartment complex.

Le Parkour de Nuit is a key artifact of the earliest moments of the parkour movement. We see David Belle, its founder, and his eager young disciples: Sebastien Foucan, Kazuma, Stephane Vigroux, Johann Vigroux, Karim Mouhous, Rudy Duong, Tinaro, Sebastien Goudot, and Michael Ramdani. The clip is amateur, yet also anthropological. The distanced and inquisitive memory of a suburban species whose existence was previously unknown. Today, parkour videos proliferate. A "parkour" search of Google reveals 7,680,000 results. A search of YouTube 117,000 clips. The internet affinity for parkour is not surprising. The art of displacement emerged concurrent to a rapidly expanding net culture of the late 1990's. For parkour adepts, the video clips offer instructions for a practice in absence of a presence. The clips provide a visual means of cross-cultural transmission and they serve as its network archaeology.

In the English translation of a TF1[11] interview from 1999, David Belle talks while sorting through a stack of old photographs. "It's some kind of quest for my father. It's my history. In my history, I look behind and other people are following me." In fact, they are. In this video, a new group of young men follow David through Lisse. They emulate him in the tactical exploration of parkour's terrain, the suburban districts of Paris (*banlieue*

parisienne). A seemingly infinite expanse of social constructs and poured concrete. From the top of a building David surveys the rooftops, "Over there, it's Evry." He pauses to survey the vertical landscape. "We train a little more in the 'green' (in parks), but this is the playground." From David's viewpoint we look out over an impossible landscape of monochromatic rooftops offering building-to-building, death-defying vertical jumps. A series of movement challenges, imminent change, architectural form and social dysfunction. For David Belle, this is the space of an embodied practice of everyday life.

Bergson's Embodiment: *Matter and Memory*

"As my body moves in space, all the other images vary, while that image, my body, remains invariable. I must, therefore, make it a center, to which I refer all the other images."[12]

In *Creative Evolution,* Bergson explores "the leap" as being indicative of intelligence engendered by the body in action. Bergson writes, "He who throws himself into the water, having known only the resistance of solid earth, will immediately be drowned if he does not struggle against the fluidity of the new environment… Only on this condition can he get used to the fluid's fluidity. So of our thought, when it has decided to make the leap." Bergson wishes to demonstrate agency in a critique of the intellectual enterprise. He states, "So you may speculate as intelligently as you will on the mechanism of intelligence: you will never, by this method, succeed in going beyond it. You may get

something more complex, but not something higher or even something different." And in service of his concept of *élan vital*, Bergson concludes, "You must take things by storm: you must thrust intelligence outside itself by an act of will."[13]

In *Matter and Memory*, Bergson details the physiological structure of human agency. "The brain appears to us to be an instrument of analysis in regard to the movement received and an instrument of selection in regard to the movement executed."[14] The brain, in recursion with the body, form a perceptual engine - the nervous system – whose function is to prepare representations, "to receive stimulation, to provide motor apparatus, and to present the largest possible number of these apparatuses to a given stimulus."[15] Herein, Bergson offers a model of perception directed as much towards action as it is towards knowledge. That is, a perceptual system designed to prepare representations within, *and precisely simultaneous to*, the body without.

"And, if this be so, is not the growing richness of this perception likely to symbolize the wider range of indetermination left to the choice of the living being in its conduct with regards to things?"[16] Bergson's question is in the form of answer, a *choice* in regard to *things*. For Bergson, our perception, situated in a material world, provides dynamic reciprocity between that world and our being within it. Our bodies exist as ontological fields, Bergson's *zones of indetermination*, wherein, "the real action passes through, the virtual action remains."[17] Bergson posits an embodied philosophy in which our movement *in* the world plays out as the ontological parallel to our perceptions *of* the world. Bergons's mind/ body reciprocity poses a radical challenge to Descartes dictum

Cogito ergo sum, and extrudes the Platonic worldview by altering the temporal nature of subjective experience.

Gilles Deleuze, in *Bergsonism*, extends the temporal functioning of space even further. For Deleuze, "The past literally moves toward the present in order to find a point of contact (or of contraction) with it."[18] Deleuze gives Bergson's material world and other bodies their own duration. "Material things partake directly of duration," and through coexistent multiplicities of time, "movement is no less outside me that in me."[19] Duration here is neither conceptual nor qualitative. Instead duration serves to illustrate the disconnect between the *perception of* and the *being in* space. Describing the parallel between Bergson's and Einstein's respective interests in temporal multiplicity he writes, "What is simultaneous in a fixed system ceases to be simultaneous in a mobile system. Moreover, by virtue of the relativity of rest and movement, these contractions of extensity, these dilations of time, these ruptures of simultaneity become absolutely reciprocal."[20]

Parkour engages Bergsonian philosophy as the conceptual reciprocity between mind and body, space and time, city and culture. The traceur can be seen as both the physical embodiment of Bergson's zone of indetermination as well as a political existence whose subjectivity resides within the complex social and structural dynamics of the urban landscape. As a movement practice, parkour offers an embodied philosophy and a historical continuum which can be traced through space and time.[21]

Bodies as Vectors

Historically, parkour is derived from the Situationist practice of the dérive (or drift),

a movement practice antecedent to parkour's emergence in the suburbs of France over 20

years later. As in parkour, the dérive provided agency where agency was denied. Through

the dérive, the body was rendered as a vector of positional subjectivity, designed to trace

its political position upon the architectural landscape and within social spaces of the city.

Guy Debord, the itinerate leader of the Situationist movement writes in 1958, "One of the

basic situationist practices is the dérive, a technique of rapid passage through varied

ambiences. Dérives involve playful-constructive behavior and awareness of psycho-

geographical effects, and are thus quite different from the classic notions of journey or

stroll."[22] Through the dérive, the Situationists created an ontological practice predicated

on movement through urban space sans productive intent. The *means-sans-end* was the

act itself, of moving forward, of human locomotion situated with the sociopolitical sphere

of the Situationists everyday life.

Debord's praxis (in the Marxist sense) was a reaction to spectacular society – a rampantly

commodified reality from which he sought an escape. The Situationists means were art

and the body, not revolution through the bore of a rifle. Instead, the Situationists wielded

new weapons allied with an emergent subculture of artists, activists, filmmakers, and

writers whose critical locus and primary medium was culture itself. Through the dérive,

the Situationists sought to sanctify the social space as the site of a new praxis. Sadie

Plants writes of the dérive, "it was intended to cultivate an awareness of the ways in which everyday life is presently conditioned and controlled, the ways in which this manipulation can be exposed and subverted, and the possibilities for chosen forms of constructed situations in the post-spectacular world."[23] The space of everyday life, the locus of working class exploitation was the city. Its architecture designed to define space, format existence, erect barriers, and to control movement into, through, and around it. The Situationists sought to redefine urban space through the dérive, a practice of politically and philosophically engaged movement against that space.

With the dérive, Debord called for a radical ecology. "The ecological analysis of the absolute or relative character of fissures in the urban network, of the role of microclimates, of distinct neighborhoods with no relation to administrative boundaries, and above all of the *dominating action of centers of attraction*, must be utilized and completed by psychogeographical methods. The objective passional terrain of the dérive must be defined in accordance both with its own logic and with its relations with social morphology."[24] Seeking fissures - spaces for intervention - Debord brings awareness to the city through the spatiotemporal conditioning of situation and space. Subjective agency is offered by the ability to inscribe meaning in movement. This deceptively pedestrian inscription is anything but arbitrary. As Debord muses. "Chance is a less important factor in this activity than one might think: from a dérive point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones."

Debord's "zones" are nothing less than zones of power. Vortices of control appearing within and traced upon the contours of the city – buildings, sidewalks, bridges, pedestrian walkways, and tunnels – essentially, the ecological milieu of everyday life. The dérive presented itself as a radical approach to the centers of nation states, commerce, culture, and control. As a means of repurposing the city, the dérive was a method to reclaim social space as a body within it. An act of agency in a world increasingly diminished of political determination, set upon by the Situationists in a state of wandering discovery as a reconfiguration of the social. According to Plant, "to *dérive* was to notice the way in which certain areas, streets, or buildings resonate with states of mind, inclinations, and desires, and to seek out reasons for movement other than those for which an environment was designed. It was very much a matter of using an environment for one's own ends."[25]

Debord's political ecology of the urban space, the movement praxis of the dérive, and the emergent cultural conditions of Europe's cities set the stage for Parkour's emergence 20 years later. European cities swarmed with immigrant populations following the societal trauma of Nazi fascism. Under these conditions the people produced an evolutionary offspring adapting to the historical conditions endemic to nation-states and their political technologies of power. Herein, the dérive and parkour emerge, valences of an urban molecularity. An engaged politics of the body mapped upon the contours of the urban space. What I call bodies as vectors. *A political body whose vector is forever indeterminate, an engaged body whose path once chosen is intimately known.*

Spatial Stories

La Dame du Lac is temple, monolithic remains, and the birthplace of Parkour all at once. One of the first artificial structures built specifically for the purpose of recreational climbing, Pierre Szekely's 1975 sculpture defines suburban architectural whimsy. The concrete and reinforced steel structure stands 17 meters tall on an artificial pond in the middle of the Paris suburb Evry-Courcouronnes. In the early 1990's La Dame du Lac would claim the lives of two French climbers causing subsequent closure of the climbing structure and its surrounding park. The park was encircled by a tall fence, the public was locked out. Here, against the calculating conditions of sovereign law, in opposition to stasis, against the flow of logic, theory, force, and power; David Belle would meet his matter and his memory. Here, David would also meet his friends. And here, Upon La Dame du Lac, a movement practice was born.

In the *The Practice of Everyday Life* De Certeau writes, "Every story is a travel story – a spatial practice." Urban existence is tactical existence, "spatial practices concern everyday tactics."[26] De Certeau, brilliant thinker of tactics, time, and everyday life provides a binary algorithm to map the city. He writes of "spaces" and "places",

> A place (*lieu*) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence. It thus excludes the possibility of two things being in the same location (*place*). The law of the "proper" rules in the place: the elements taken into consideration are *beside* one another, each situated

in its own "proper" and distinct location, a location it defines. A place is thus an

instantaneous configuration of positions. It implies an indication of stability.

A *space* exists when one takes into consideration vectors of direction, velocities,

and time variables, this space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It

is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it.[27]

The ensemble of movements - David Belle and his traceurs – propel their bodies through

suburban trajectories. Leaping from building to building, the traceur inscribes meaning

through transversal engagement of architectural space which defies logic. De Certeau

situates these movements as, "spatial practices (that) are attracting attention now that the

codes and taxonomies of the spatial order have been examined." He cites "locative

subjects" and "spatial expressions", drawing from psychologuisitics, phenomenology,

semiotics, ethnomethodology, and spatial metalanguage as byproducts of this fascination

with, "studies concerning spatializing operations (and not spatial systems)." [28]

For De Certeau, "*space is a practiced place.*" Here the body is an indeterminate vector, a

multiplicity of velocities, nothing less than space as measured by the change of time (Δ).

Delta as change, movement, action, perception, matter, and memory. A close reading

reveals nothing less that De Certeau's affinity for a Bergsonian movement of time and

space. Yet De Certeau's world is the fertile terrain of a post nuclear continent and the

myriad social movements emerging from the 1960's. Within this milieu, he describes the

possibilities of a practice of everyday life, engaged within architectural space, and inscribed upon the newly emergent social networks of Europe's post-war memories.

The Trace of a Body in Space

De Certeau's trace is inscribed through the act of walking - a logical precursor to parkour's more extreme spatial tactics. Walking is a, "space of enunciation," within a spatial order which , "organizes an ensemble of possibilities and interdictions." The walker, like the traceur, "transforms each spatial signifier into something else." In De Certeau's parlance, "Walking affirms, suspects, tries out, transgresses, respects, etc., the trajectories it 'speaks.'" [29] The enunciating body traces meaning en route, across the urban landscape through movements within, upon, around, and into space.

De Certeau edges closer and closer to our object of study. He writes, "The art of 'turning' phrases finds an equivalent in an art of composing a path (*tourner un parcours*)." [30] In parkour, the hard "k" was substituted by David Belle and his followers to representing the immediacy and danger of their movement praxis. Parkour corresponds to, "manipulation of the basic elements of a constructed order," the city as the omnipotent ordering of matter. And like the tropes of rhetoric, we may refer to parkour as De Certeau refers to the tactical walk, "deviations relative to a sort of 'literal meaning' defined by the urbanistic system." [31] These deviations emerge from the mundane, from Super 8 films in

the living room of David Belle, and spread out into the realm of gestural semiotics, by way of leaps, vaults, passings, traversals, and jumps of a historical subject.

If De Certeau finds the oppositional flux between "place" and "space", his operative schema – the body – generates that flux. In *place* he finds the, "*being-there* of something dead, the law of a 'place,'" as we find at La Dam du Lac, site of social inscription and laws warning of imminent danger. Recreation re-inscribed as *restricted access*: an abandoned site of possibilities. In *space*, De Certeau finds, "a determination through *operations* which, when they are attributed to a stone, a tree, or human being, specify 'space' by the actions of historical *subjects* (a movement always seems to condition the production of a space and to associate it with a history)."

Parkour's historical subjects present to us the undeniable action of bodies in space. Yet Parkour offers less by what it puts forth – movement/ action of bodies – than by what it seeks to leave behind. That is, the recursive loop of binary self-reflection in favor of a living algorithm of experiential engagement. Parkour prefers action over words, body over technology, situation over architecture, space over place, and the present over the past and/ or the future. In the words of its founder, "We do it because we feel a need to move, we feel a need to exist - to show that we are there. Our aim is to take our art to the world and make people understand what it is to move."[32]

The Embodiment of Parkour

Henri Bergson writes, "The distance which separates our body from an object perceived really measures the greater or less imminence of a danger, the nearer or more remote fulfillment of a promise. And, consequently, our perception of an object distinct from our body, separated from our body by an interval, never expressed anything but a *virtual* action."[33] In parkour, the imminence of danger is embraced as experience not in a manner of reckless disengagement but rather as a philosophy of movement and action in the aggregate of images culminating from the traceur's *line of flight*.[34] The urban landscape serves as the site of virtual action in the course of engaging the sociopolitical realism of parkour.

He continues, "But the more distance decreases between the object and our body (the more, in other words, the danger becomes urgent or the promise immediate), the more does virtual action tend to pass into *real* action,"[35] thus defining the movement of parkour from the virtual to the real. That is, the movement from A to B, through intuition, as engaged with matter and memory in the spatial and temporal dimensions of parkour.

In Bergon's progression, this collapsing of space between our body and the object of engagement leads to the affective stage when the distance is reduced to zero. He writes, "Suppose the distance reduced to zero, that is to say that the object to be perceived coincides with our body, that is to say again, that our body is the object to be perceived. Then it is no longer virtual action, but real action, that this specialized perception will

express, and this is exactly what affection is."[36] Affection, then, is experienced in the

body of the traceur via the act of tracing the virtual space of the urban architecture.

Parkour enacts philosophical embodiment by engaging this virtual potentiality in an

acute, and very real, engagement of the spirit and of matter. In a way extracting the spirit

from matter as energy, or in the Bergsonian sense of *élan vital*, toward a perceptual

reconfiguration of the urban space.

This spiritual and perceptual reconfiguration is the essence of the parkour movement.

From its origins in the Parisian suburbs, parkour is now widely practiced outside of

France. The youthful intensity of the Dvinsk-Clan[37] in Latvia is one such example of its

viral influence. Parkour's global movement indicates a profuse cultural dissemination of

philosophical idealism engaged through active recovery of cultural memories, urban

topographies, and reclamation of social space. Parkour provides a distinct movement

away from the virtual and toward the actual. In some sense this movement owes much to

first person identification in the virtual space of video gaming, yet parkour refutes the

physical inactivity fostered by gaming culture. It is an engaged first person based in a

very real physical reality, and within the physical body, which makes parkour a

functional ontology rooted in the embodied experience of everyday life.

I would suggest that parkour provides an outlet for the tension of social memory, an

engaged response to historicity through revolutionary actualization, and therefore

functions as an embodied philosophy. Like Buddhism, which long precedes it, or in the

auotpoiesis (literally, auto (self)-creation) of Chilean biologist Francisco Varela, parkour

addresses the fundamental dialectic between sense and form, mind and body. *As autopoietic system - the body and its affect intimately paired within the dynamical system of urban space - parkour's sensory-motor coupling demonstrates, par excellence, the continuous dynamics of an embodied philosophy.*

In his seminal work, *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*, Chögyam Trungpa posits a Buddhist solution to the particularly modern notion of paranoia, which he defines as the "interference of spontaneity transmuted into action". Trungpa suggests, "There are no special tricks involved in overcoming this... It is a question of leaping," summoning the terms of parkour, *passement or vault*, to jump or leap. He continues, "How to take the leap is very difficult to explain in words; one simply has to do it. It is rather like suddenly being pushed overboard into a river and discovering that you can swim; you just swim across the river. However, if you were to go back to the river and attempt to practice, you probably would not be able to swim at all." Here Trungpa's spiritual metaphor perfectly parallels Bergson's philosophical one, "It is a question of spontaneity, of using the current intelligence. One cannot explain taking the leap in words; it is beyond words."[38]

In one way, parkour is beyond words. In another, it is non-discursive site and embodied philosophical form. Parkour demonstrates clearly, without false problems, the liberating potential of affective experience in spatiotemporal and historical movement(s).

Endnotes

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[1] Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998, 85.

[2] Virilio, Paul. *Speed and Politics*. New York: Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series, 1986, 29.

[3] *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parkour* (Interviews with David Belle are particularly rare, and more commonly found on Internet user groups and online digital video clips than in published form.)

[4] Ibid

[5] Initial efforts at commodification of parkour appeared in the form of the musical show *Notre Dame de Paris*, which also served as the source of division amongst its founding practitioners.

[6] BASE jumping is a sport involving the use of a parachute or the sequenced use of a wingsuit and parachute to jump from fixed objects--with the parachute unopened at the. "BASE" is an acronym that stands for the four categories of fixed objects from which one can jump: **b**uilding, **a**ntenna, **s**pan, **e**arth.

[7] De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, 2002, 43-44.

[8] De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, 2002, 102.

[9] (Ibid., 44)

[10] La Releve presents *Le Parkour de Nuit*. http://videos-parkour.fr/ Date unknown.

[11] TF1 is a French Television channel

[12] Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. New York: Zone Books, 1998, 46.

[13] Henri Bergson. *Creative Evolution*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1911, 193.

[14] (Ibid., 30)

[15] (Ibid., 31)

[16] (Ibid., 31)

[17] (Ibid., 39)

[18] Deleuze, Gilles. *Bergsonism*. New York: Zone Books, 1991, 70.

[19] (Ibid., 75)

[20] (Ibid., 79)

[21] This history *is* also biologically traceable. David Belle's father Raymond was born in Vietnam in 1939. His father died during the First Indochina War and Raymond was separated from his mother during the division of Vietnam in 1954. Raymond Belle was taken by the French Army in Da Lat and subsequently received a military education and training. Following the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, Raymond, 19, was repatriated to France. Raymond would go on to serve not as a soldier, but as a firefighter in Paris' elite regiment *saspeurs-pompiers* (military firefighters). Raymond Belle would serve as the primary inspiration for the development of parkour through his son, David, and Sebastian Foucan, David's childhood friend.

[22] "Théorie de la dérive". Internationale Situationniste #2 (Paris, December 1958). Pg, 62.

[23] Plant, Sadie. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International and After*. Routledge. 1992, 58.

[24] "Théorie de la dérive". Internationale Situationniste #2 (Paris, December 1958). Pg, 62.

[25] Plant, Sadie. *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International and After*. Routledge. 1992, 59.

[26] De Certeau, Michel. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, 2002, 115.

[27] (Ibid., 117)

[28] (Ibid., 116)

[29] (Ibid., 98)

[30] (Ibid., 100)

[31] (Ibid., 100)

[32] http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/1939867.stm

[33] Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. New York: Zone Books, 1998, 56-57.

[34] Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

[35] Bergson, Henri. *Matter and Memory*. New York: Zone Books, 1998, 56-57.

[36] (Ibid., 57)

[37] http://video.google.com/googleplayer.swf?docId=-5999931506460611586&hl=en

[38] Chögyam Trungpa, Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism, Boston: Shambala Publications, 1973, p. 238.