Bodies we fail: productive embodiments of imperfection

Sturm, J.V.

Citation for published version (APA):
Acknowledgments

The making of this doctoral thesis has spanned over the last seven years and has been shaped by innumerable encounters, not only with books, theories, thoughts, embodiments, art works, sights, and talks, but also with people. I want to acknowledge those, who were indispensable for this project.

I express my deepest gratitude to my supervisors Mieke Bal, Hanneke Grootenboer, and Murat Aydemir. While writing my MA thesis, I read Mieke’s Introduction to The Practice of Cultural Analysis (1999), and I felt that research has, after all, something to offer me, and moreover, that it has the potential to change the world; a belief that I had almost given up and that came back with a force that has not left me ever since. When I met Mieke in person and was invited to participate in her Theory Seminar before I even started my PhD, I was convinced that the most critical and constructive of academic worlds was being built right then and there, at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis (ASCA): A world that allowed for the simultaneous existence of oppositional standpoints, that translated conflicting disciplinary languages and traditions into inclusive conceptual thoughts, and that productively dealt with the potential failure of such translations. Mieke not only inspired this world with her own brilliance and generosity, but she also encouraged other bright minds to join: Hanneke and Murat have not only shared the small triumphs when one chapter after the other finally took shape, but they also suffered with me through periods of struggle and doubt about my writing and thinking. Their theoretical expertise, close reading, and patience were as valuable to this project as their sympathetic and unobtrusive insistence on probing my borders. Finally, Mieke, Hanneke, and Murat’s kindness and spirit of companionship made this project truly pleasurable.

I want to thank ASCA for hosting my dissertation, for being the source of intellectual inspiration and social exchange, for supporting me in practical, financial, as well as administrative matters, and for serving as my scholarly home base. My heartfelt thanks go to Eloe Kingma, Ania Dalecki, and Jantine van Gogh for their positive and matter-of-factly way of dealing with the most intricate problems of the lives of PhD candidates.
I am obliged to Ruth Sonderegger, Maaike Bleeker, Jaap Kooijman, Patricia Pisters, and Kati Röttger for kindly accepting to be on my promotion committee.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen (KNAW) for the doctoral fellowship that made this PhD financially possible.

For their diligence and eye for details in editing my manuscript, I am grateful to Jim Gibbons and Murat Aydemir. For her support in developing my writing skills, her enthusiasm and optimism despite hard times, I want to thank Susan Stocker. For advocating my work and publishing one of my chapters in Disturbing Bodies (2008), I am indebted to Sylvia Mieszkowski.

I am grateful to my friends and colleagues at the University of Amsterdam for their creative input, shared struggles, as well as regular vital distractions from work: Astrid Van Weyenberg, Noa Roei, Anik Fournier, and Pepita Hesselberth. For the invitation to and the collaboration at lectures, conferences, and other thought-inspiring events in Vienna, Hamburg, Berlin, Basel, Zurich, and Amsterdam I wish to thank my dear friends Sushila Mesquita, Skadi Loist, and Si-Phi Kutzenberger.

Mireille, thank you for always being there, exchanging thoughts, listening, and saying just the right things at the right times. Sonja, how can I thank you enough for never questioning our old bond of friendship despite your legitimate reservations about my thoughts and beliefs? Sophie, throughout the past years, you were my knight in shining armor, rescuing me from “totttal disasterrrs” with your wit, courage, faithfulness, and relentless vigor.

Finally, I want to thank my family: Mum, for your unwavering love and commitment, despite your skepticism. Pa, for your warmth, care, and encouragement. Dominic, for being the best of big brothers, my oldest companion, and the most serious interlocutor, challenger, and defender of my quirks. Bri, my favorite cousin, for your infinite energy and persistence in supporting my life and my work.

Heinze, for twelve years of shared love, life, and work: you are and have been the most valuable source of inspiration, motivation, and humor throughout all these years of writing. When the PhD took its toll on my sanity, you found the strength to keep believing in me. For your dedication in every respect, I dedicate this book to you – with all my heart. Arthur, fröhliches Wesen, thank you for materializing so miraculously in our life.