Dislocating Applied Theatre:

Crossing the Borders between Practice and

Context.

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outweighed the joys.

Abstract

Dislocating Applied Theatre: Crossing the Borders Between Practice and Context.

Amongst ongoing state programmes of austerity, heightened nationalisms, and a bitter public debate around migration, this research project is positioned within the field of applied theatre. This thesis investigates the ways in which recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, that developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, were situated in, shaped by, counteracted, contributed to, reproduced and/or resisted contexts of austerity and migration. Through this, the thesis and the research it represents examines the relationship between applied theatre practice and its contexts. First, it develops a critical concept of 'context within' for applied theatre, reimagining context as flat, dislocal, and woven through practice. It then seeks to trace the shifting threads that weave between practice and context, and unravel the knotty double binds and points of contradiction on those threads.

Alongside this, it draws from critical and cultural theory, with a detailed focus on Gayatri Spivak's theories of representation, ethical practice, and participation. This research adds to the field of applied theatre by offering a routes and strategies for practitioners and researchers to analyse the relationship that any example of applied theatre practice might have to a chosen context, through original theories of *intention*, *representation*, *effect* and *affect*, which develop through the analysis of the case study material. It also develops critical thought around what it means to work in an imagined local context, invoking some thinkers largely neglected by applied theatre discourse, to analyse the relationship

between the self of the applied theatre practitioner, and the other of the marginalised participant.

This research engaged with three arts projects, working on themes of forced migration, in Yorkshire over the course of a year, through an ethnographic process. The first analysis of this case study material focuses on a piece of street theatre that used puppets to share a narrative of a sinking boat of migrants seeking rescue and refuge. The second focuses on the participatory workshops of the second project, which led to the creation of a piece of shadow theatre. The final piece marked the 70th anniversary of the partition and independences of India and Pakistan. Through the case study analysis, I search for the border crossings between context and practice on the four threads of connectivity.

The thesis makes claims for the relationship of applied theatre practice to people and place, as enmeshed in unique and dislocal constellations that connect to broader, global networks, and facilitate points of refusal and political effectivity, even amongst a renewed focus on affect in the field. It offers new theories of intention, representation, effect and affect, as intersecting threads on the networks between dislocal constellations of people, place and practice, and contexts. Offering a novel concept of 'context within', it also ignites strategies for the field, of 'working in the local' and searching for a 'theatre of little contexts'.

Table of Contents.

Table of Figures.

Introduction.

Across this thesis I trace the shifting networks and dislocal threads and movements which connect applied theatre practice to its contexts. I explore the links that three case studies of applied theatre practice have to working examples of, and notions of, context, developing ways that context can become a critical concept for applied theatre and not simply a catchall term. I argue that some of these connecting threads can be found woven into and through key themes discussed in applied theatre, of intention, representation, effect, and affect, and I develop new ways of thinking about these four concepts for the field, and new strategies for practice from this. Through this discussion, I reorientate questions of context for applied theatre toward a novel theory of 'context within', alongside developing new calls to 'work in the local' within a 'theatre of little contexts'. Throughout the thesis, I also mobilise the work of Gayatri Spivak, a cultural thinker whose work has remained largely neglected by the field of applied theatre. In this introduction I begin with a personal introduction, examining my own routes into this research. I then explore the research fields and research questions, alongside a discussion to define some key terms. Following this, I outline the structure of the thesis, and briefly introduce each chapter.

I. Personal Prologues.

My own shifting connections with the field of applied theatre developed during my undergraduate studies; *Community Drama* BA Hons at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA). This course combined practical training in facilitation, direction, and performance skills, with a theoretical engagement with questions of culture, philosophy,

identity and power, and a project based learning with tours to schools, community

performances, and placements (LIPA, 2019). Following this, I moved to St Aidan's College at

the University of Durham, where I studied on the MA in *Culture and Difference*, an

interdisciplinary course that examined the formation and shaping of identities on

"borderlines of all kinds" (Durham University, 2016). During this time I also began to work

as a freelance artist and practitioner, working for arts organisations, in schools, touring

small shows, making site specific performances, and developing projects in community

settings. I have worked with small community organisations, Chol Theatre for example, I

have developed my own work under the banner of Pockets Theatre, and I have

collaborated with other artists, with Front Room Productions for example (Chol Theatre,

2019; Front Room Productions, 2017; Pockets Theatre, 2019). I have also recently

developed large scale outreach projects for the Leeds Playhouse (Robin, 2019). My own

positionality as an applied theatre practitioner is explored at points within this thesis, as I

recognise my own sense of self, and my own ongoing practice, is strongly connected to this

research. I examine the ways this both acts as a point of risk, potentially bringing the

researcher too close to the subject at hand, and of opportunity, bringing a researcher that

is not disinterested, but able to identify with those practitioners observed.

The two different chapters of life that I spent at LIPA and at Durham University initially

came to represent two opposing and incongruous spheres in my thinking and approach to

my practice. I began to haphazardly navigate some of the tensions between the two whilst

still studying in Durham. At this point, I felt ill at ease, and out of place, in the black tie and

gowns of the collegiate system, just as I did in the lectures and seminars where we delved

into complicated thinking from philosophers who were all completely new to me. As

someone not hailing from a wealthy family, unaccustomed to the aesthetics and rituals of

private school England, I felt uncomfortable at the college formal dinners steeped in their

tradition, ceremony, and performances of aristocratic meal times. In the day time, my

training in theatre, as a left leaning cultural practitioner, not astute to the inner workings of

literary criticism or the French postmodernists for example, meant that there was a huge

academic leap I had to attempt to succeed in the Masters course. I found that this gap in

background knowledge did not exist for my classmates who had already developed a firm

grounding in the important titles, names, and dates of cultural theory whilst they had

studied for their undergraduate degrees at the colleges of Oxford, Cambridge, and the like.

As David Cameron took a majority Conservative government to Downing Street, I acutely

felt the effects, and affects, of austerity in my own life, working four part time jobs and

taking on board an inordinate amount of debt, determined to find a way to complete the

Master's degree amidst an economic and social system that seemed to not want me to be

there. Time in the library became a deeply sought after luxury, and so I first read Derrida at

5am, in a professor's office which I should have been cleaning at the time.

It was as I took this academic leap and worked to reconcile these two very different worlds

that I had moved through, and in many ways did not feel at home in, that I began to

consider how the sort of thinking I was engaging with at Durham University might impact

the very different sort of practice I had trained in at LIPA. Some names were familiar, such

as Michel Foucault (1954 – 1984), or Antonio Gramsci (1914 – 1937), and their thinking had

been a small part of my drama school training. Others felt more distant, such as Judith

Butler (1988+), and although not directly taught at drama school, quick literature surveys

showed they were indeed invoked and mobilised elsewhere in the applied theatre sphere.

During a module that explored notions of representing otherness, I engaged with the work

of Gayatri Spivak (1974+) for the first time, in preparation for a seminar. Spivak was

presented to us as a highly important thinker, a pioneer of postcolonial philosophy, and a

founder of the deconstruction movement. I read her work as concerned with that which is

left out in a text, reading for meaning between words, asking who is not speaking, and who ultimately, can never be heard. These concepts resonated with much of what I had come to understand about applied theatre practice. Whilst complicated and confusing, her work also immediately began to bring up tensions when I held it up alongside applied theatre, particularly around the actions of well-intentioned activists and agents of representation. A quick literature survey, and then a longer literature survey, showed that she had been largely neglected by the field, or in the very least not yet fully picked up. The tensions I held between the worlds of Durham University and of LIPA began to centre more keenly on the potentially exciting new ways of thinking that might emerge from a collision of applied theatre and Spivak's writing. This collision became the first ingredient in my early PhD proposals.

The second ingredient emerged from some of the movements of the field at the time. A palpable sense of urgency was arising in communities of artists and theatre makers across the UK and Europe, as they began to intervene, tell stories about, and respond to the unfolding 'refugee crisis' (Zaroulia, 2018: 181-2). People felt the need to 'do something', to respond, bear witness, to help (Cox & Wake, 2018: 137-14). This, alongside the years of austerity in the UK deepening already entrenched inequalities, and stripping away much needed funding and infrastructure for public services, made it seem as though a wave were cresting. Theatre practitioners, amongst other charitable and cultural workers, made their way to refugee camps across the world, as volunteers, leading play sessions, and building temporary theatres. Organisations and practitioners like the Good Chance Theatre, Borderline Theatre Company, Sabine Choucair, and others, developed a presence that, beyond the labour of theatre making, served to document atrocities, and protest police and state violence (Borderline Theatre, 2019; Good Chance Theatre, 2019; Sabine Choucair, 2019). Touring productions sprung up with stories of the unfolding crisis,

warnings against complicity, and demanding action from governments (SBC, 2019).

Theatres and theatre companies, like the Leeds Playhouse (formerly, and at the time, the West Yorkshire Playhouse), aimed for sanctuary awards, demonstrating their commitments to those refugees and asylum seekers that made it to the UK (Leeds Playhouse, 2019; SBC, 2019). Projects in communities also emerged, conversation cafes, language learning through arts, work that looked to make sense of the unimaginable that had become real for so many. Street theatre asked host communities to welcome those in need. Meanwhile in the UK, beyond artistic visions for utopia, nationalism that had been brewing for decades found a new life, and calls for our borders to be strengthened, and for the crisis in Europe to be contained in Europe, won out, and the UK voted to leave the European Union (BBC, 2016).

Across Yorkshire, a range of arts practices dedicated to refugees has emerged over recent years. Leeds Playhouse is arguably seen as a leader in the region, becoming the UK's first theatre of sanctuary in 2014 (Leeds Playhouse, 2019). The Playhouse continues to run a women's refugee choir, ticket schemes for refugees, and a weekly conversation café. Opera North also received the Theatre of Sanctuary award in 2018, for "demonstrating its commitment to making refugees and those seeking sanctuary feel included; giving them a sense of being valued and celebrated through increased accessibility to music, drama and opera" (City of Sanctuary, 2019). The Theatre Royal Wakefield also holds a Theatre of Sanctuary award (Theatre Royal Wakefield, 2019), with nearby CAST in Doncaster being the most recent in the region to receive the award (CAST, 2019). Many of these awards reflect the level of participatory work that these venues carry out with refugees and asylum seekers. Other organisations, like SBC and the Migration Matters Festival, hold dedications to share refugee stories through performance (Migration Matters Festival, 2019; SBC, 2019).

With these basic ingredients, of a Spivak and applied theatre collision, and the above movements of the field, I tentatively started this PhD research project by asking how applied theatre practice was itself being affected by contexts of austerity and migration, at points where these two contexts were developing an acute presence in the daily discourse of the United Kingdom, particularly in England and Wales under the Conservative led governments of 2010 onwards. Specifically, I wanted to ask what effects these contexts had on practices of representation within applied theatre, using Spivak's thinking on representation as a framework for this. I set out to observe examples of practice that responded directly to the refugee crisis, through an ethnographic process. I kept with the notion of austerity and migration as contexts in mind, continuing to engage with and work through the complex thinking of Spivak.

Entering this research the focus of field work held a natural focus in Yorkshire as a result of the funding awarded by the WB Crump foundation, which provides a single scholarship each year to a researcher with links to Yorkshire; for example they might have been raised in Yorkshire, their parents might be from Yorkshire, or their research could be about Yorkshire. Significantly for this research, Yorkshire is also a historic county that has faced much of the brunt of the austerity projects of both the Coalition government and the following Conservative governments (Beatty and Fothergill, 2013: 15). If the five regions worst affected by welfare reforms at the outset of the austerity programme, of which Yorkshire was one, had experienced the same per capita reduction in funding as South East England, local authority incomes would have been £2.8bn a year higher (Beatty and Fothergill, 2013: 16). Landscapes of austerity are both political and economic; welfare reforms during the Coalition government impacted principally "on individuals and communities outside its own heartlands" and generally "the most deprived local

authorities across Britain [were] hit hardest" (Beatty and Fothergill, 2013: 18). Yorkshire

found itself at the heart of intertwined political and economic projects of devolution and

'super austerity' that are explored in more detail in Chapter 1 (Lowndes and Gardener,

2016). Yorkshire also provides variety as a site of research: there are large cities, economic

hubs, areas of deprivation and poverty, areas of wealth and prosperity, dense inner cities

and sparse rural settlements. In terms of theatres there are large, nationally recognized

organisations such as the Leeds Playhouse, with companies like Opera North and Northern

Ballet, as well as smaller theatres, companies, and still emerging sites of practice. Yorkshire

also hosts one of the four reception centres for asylum seekers, Urban House in Wakefield.

In terms of the nine refugee dispersal areas, Yorkshire was the third most welcoming at the

start of this research, accommodating between 14% and 15% of refugees annually (Bennet

2015). With a combination of my own economic precarity, relying on this specific source of

funding and its stipulations, and the rich possibilities of the region for this research, the

project found a focus in work taking place in Yorkshire. The three case studies that this

project analyses are all therefore based in Yorkshire, offering an opportunity for a close

reading and tracing of the movements and shifts within specific examples of local practice

(Latour, 2005: 160).

During this research, and my own personal and professional development as a researcher

over the course of the PhD, new routes of inquiry opened up. Firstly, it became clear that it

was not just the *effects* of these two contexts on applied theatre that could present the

most interesting question for the field, but *how* they were effecting applied theatre. In

other words, could the relationship between applied theatre and context itself be brought

into question? This felt particularly significant for a field that is often conceptualised as

linked to its contexts, seeking to create change in some way in those contexts. I develop

this line of argument across the first part of the thesis in more detail. Secondly, as I

continued to engage with Spivak's writing, I moved beyond her thinking around representation and started to ask how her whole body of work could be important to move the above question forward. In addition to this, I began to mobilise other writers, resulting in a diverse constellation of thinkers that includes Spivak and maintains a unique invocation of her work into applied theatre, but does so alongside a multitude of others. Some of these thinkers orbit Spivak's work, others collide with it, whilst others hurtle away and others yet hold their own trajectories, forming different constellations altogether. There are also a few comets, crashing into this thesis seemingly of their own accord. I explore the details of these diverse constellations of thinkers, the rationale for their use and how I employ them, in the first two chapters.

In this thesis, I continue to engage with austerity and migration as *working examples* of context. I begin by exploring the ways that their relationship to applied theatre is already understood within the field. Following this, I move to consider how context might be further mobilised as critical concept, drawing from a diverse range of thinkers to unpick this unassuming concept. I then explore and consider the shifting threads and traces that might emerge from this as points of interaction or connectivity between practice and context, arguing that some of these can be found woven through themes of intention, representation, effect and affect. Working with the case study material, I work to unravel these four themes as threads, drawing from a method of Spivak to explore the double binds within them (Spivak, 2012: 104). The thesis generates new ways of considering context, arguing toward a notion of 'context within', alongside strategies of 'working in the local' and of 'a theatre of little contexts'. The thesis develops new ways of thinking about the relationship context holds to practice through this, and it offers four new routes of inquiry, possibility, and strategy for applied theatre through the double binds unravelled from intention, representation, effect and affect.

II.   Research Fields and Questions.

This research project is situated in the field of applied theatre, and the case studies that it

focuses on specifically draw from applied theatre with refugees and asylum seekers. In the

opening of Part 1 I engage more closely with the tensions that exist in the settling of the

term 'applied theatre', and seek out some of the ruptures and tensions in this definition. In

this section of the introduction, I first draw from discussions in both refugee studies and

applied theatre to outline some of the difficulties in defining who is, and who isn't, a

refugee, and some of the issues that arise from this. I then return to examine how this

feeds into the thesis.

In the first instance, the United Kingdom takes the *United Nations High Commission for*

Refugees' definition of a refugee, as someone who:

> …owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion,
>
> nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside
>
> the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to
>
> avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and
>
> being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such
>
> events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

> (UNHCR, 1951: 14)

Under this UNHCR definition, migration that is forced by political factors, like a civil war or

state sanctioned violence, is generally more recognised as a refugee movement than

migration that is forced by social, economic, or environmental factors (Richmond, 1993:

19). This internationally recognised legal definition is often used to write out the agency of

refugees; a migrant who appears to exercise choice over their movement might not be

classed as a refugee, even if their primary reasons for movement were *reactive* rather than

proactive (Gold & Nawyn, 2013: 97). For this reason, the field of refugee studies often

employs the term 'forced migration' as an umbrella term, and views refugees and asylum

seekers as examples of forced migrants (Gibney, 2014: 48). Some thinkers in refugee

studies argue towards an expansion of who might be included under the banner of refugee,

to recognise the role globalisation has played in the rapid growth of forced migration,

particularly with reference to climate change (Richmond, 1993: 22). The tensions around

who is included in the term refugee, and who is not are well documented elsewhere, and

has also been picked up in the field of applied theatre (Jeffers, 2012: 7 – 11; Balfour, 2015:

14-15). [1] I continue to engage with these questions in Chapter 1, particularly the ways that

applied theatre practitioners engage with them.

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[1] Moving forward in this project, I continue to use the term refugee, to include both those

who have been granted asylum in the UK, and those who have applied, or appealed, or

might be awaiting a decision. No participants of the arts projects that I analyse in this

research were asked about their migration status, and as such, I use the term broadly. In

doing so I recognise that this might include migrants who fall outside of the UNHCR

definition of a refugee, or those who are seeking asylum. I do so, recognising that the

international definitions of a refugee exclude many forced migrants; in sum, some lives are

deemed more worthy than others. The refusal in this work to adhere to this specific 'status'

is a resistance to that summation. Later, I consider the ways this sort of resistance might

function in applied theatre contexts.

Another term that is used in the research, and that has permeated the ways in which global

movements of refugees are talked about, particularly in Europe and the UK, is 'crisis', or

'the refugee crisis'. It is often applied to describe the recently growing numbers of refugees

and migrants entering Europe, particularly over the last decade, who in many cases are

forced to take extreme measures and place themselves in life threatening danger to travel.

'Crisis' more generally "denotes an ongoing situation where emergencies suddenly and

unexpectedly emerge and produce sudden shock" (Price, 2018: 170). New technologies

mean that these emergencies can interrupt daily life in the UK, with "live visibility of

emergency events" occurring across the world (Price, 2018: 170). The crisis is viewed, or

consumed, from a safe distance through those technologies. 'The refugee crisis' can also be

understood as a humanitarian crisis that is created and facilitated by nationalistic and

unjust asylum laws in Europe (Marschall, 2018: 149):

> When naming the ongoing forced displacement of men, women and children due
>
> to war, poverty or climate change 'crisis', migration is conceived as excess in the
>
> logic of the system that we live in, a system of sovereignty and bordered spaces. In
>
> the public domain, migrants are framed as excess (that is unnecessary overload) for
>
> sovereign European countries; they exceed and put pressure on existing structures
>
> of sustainability and efficiency management, both for individual nation-states and
>
> for supranational bodies like the European Union.

> (Zaroulia, 2018: 183)

The refugee crisis does not only refer to an emergent humanitarian crisis, but to a crisis of

European politics, of nationalism, and is facilitated by the consumption of tragedy through

social media and a 24-hour news cycle. For some of the case studies in this research, this news cycle took on a huge amount of significance, as practitioners observed the emergent 'crisis' solely through this mediated lens as a way to inform their work.

A 2008 report, *Arts and Refugees: History, Impact and Future*, documented the emerging field of arts and refugees at the time (Kidd et. al, 2008). It traced the history of arts practices with, or by, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK over the twenty years prior. The research was structured around three themes: artists, participation and strategic intervention. The report identified trends in practice and funding, outlined the outcomes and impacts of these activities, and made recommendations for the development of the field moving forward. In its findings, the report identified some 200 organisations that at the time were "actively engaged with arts and refugee programmes in the UK" (Kidd et. al, 2008: 4). It outlined a brief history of this field of work in the UK at that time:

> Although artistic practice led by and engaging with refugees has been active in the UK from at least the 1970s onwards, the development of a clearly articulated strand of arts practice working with refugees and asylum seekers is a relatively recent phenomenon, emerging during the 1990s and gathering critical momentum from 2000 onwards. The key factors in the growth of this sector in recent years can be identified as the impact of the dispersal policy, established in 2000, by which asylum seekers were housed across the UK; strategic initiatives and funding programmes initiated by a range of agencies from the late 1990s onwards; and a desire to provide a positive response to negative media coverage of refugee and asylum issues.

> (Kidd et. al, 2008: 4-5).

The research identified that most work in this field had been participatory, with arts

activities and projects used to achieve other social objectives like community cohesion,

integration, or development of language skills for participants (Kidd et. al, 2008: 19). Some

work had also paid attention to the development of refugees and asylum seekers who are

themselves artists, although most spoken to through this report did not want to be

identified as "refugee artists", but primarily as artists, detached from the refugee label.

These artists too often found that they were confined to commissions themed around

migration and asylum, and struggled to make other work, as they had no established

networks in the UK, and found applications for funding or opportunities problematic with

unfamiliar processes, and difficulty building a profile amongst already established UK

artists. This restricted artists, who were refugees or asylum seekers living in the UK, to work

only around refugee stories or themes. Similarly, those taking part in participatory work did

not want to only focus on their stories as refugees: "Participants may wish to tell their

stories of loss and transition, but there should be no expectation that this will be their only

interest and it should be their choice whether to offer these stories or not" (Kidd et. al,

2008: 51).

The report recommended a national strategy be developed in order to:

> "…to grasp the opportunity offered by cultural engagement to address current
>
> government policy on community cohesion" and create "a policy 'context' which
>
> should inform the establishment of a stronger national lead on the use of the arts
>
> in working with refugees and asylum seekers across the UK."

> (Kidd et. al, 2008: 4).

Since 2008, the UK has seen opposite trends to this, with huge reductions in arts funding generally, and a dismantling of the services provided nationally to support refugees and asylum seekers. These trends are explored in more detail in Part 1 of the thesis. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, in their 2016 report on the UK, identified that there was no national strategy to welcome or integrate refugees, and that as a result many find themselves living in situations of poverty, destitution, and often homelessness (ECRI, 2016: 35). The British Red Cross has also criticised the lack of a national strategy, pointing to policy failings like the month long transition period from asylum seeker to refugee status (British Red Cross, 2018). These changes and those like it are also examined further in Part 1 of the thesis, with an interrogation of the hostile environment policy programme, and how this functions as a context for applied theatre practice.

In 2008, Helen Gilbert and Sophie Nield wrote that, "the questions of migration, asylum, the management of international borders, security and 'terror' are at the political heart of our age" (Gilbert & Nield, 2008: 133). Ten years on, Emma Cox and Caroline Wake reaffirm this statement, it "could have been written yesterday" (Cox & Wake, 2018: 137). In the ten years since both the 2008 report on Arts and Refugees, and Gilbert and Nield's reflection on the political spectres of the day, the number of refugees around the world has increased by 48%, whilst Syria moved from being one of the countries to host the most refugees, to sadly producing the most (Cox & Wake, 2018: 137). Cox and Wake also outline what the term "crisis" might refer to, as it saturates different media ecologies with reference to the movement of refugees, asylum seekers, and forced migrants in recent years (Cox & Wake, 2018: 137). This refugee crisis might refer to a crisis of Europe, of bad policy, or of capital that perpetuates global inequalities and seeks to "remain undisturbed by all manner of

spectacularised human suffering" (Cox & Wake, 2018: 140). They argue that the focus on

the crisis on European shores also might occlude other crises elsewhere, with global

movements of refugees and forced migrants across all continents. Amidst all of this, "work

on the intersections between performance and asylum has proliferated" debate and

applied theatre research (Cox & Wake, 2018: 141).

As perceptions in Europe of global refugee flows foregrounded the idea of a crisis of

European borders (Zaroulia, 2018: 183), the UK was already part way through a period of

austerity, following the economic crash of 2008. I explore different ways available of

thinking about austerity, and its impact on applied theatre, in the first part of the thesis,

before asking how it specifically interacted with the case study projects in Part 2. Processes

of austerity rely on the underlying assumption that every less pound spent by the public

sector corresponds to one more pound of spending by the private sector (Blyth, 2013: 2). It

assumes that economic growth is stimulated by the private sector, and by reducing the

activity and spending of the state, gaps in the market emerge for private spending and

activity. This draws from political positions that prioritise the individual, seeing the private

individual as better suited to understand and meet the needs of their local conditions

(Schui, 2014: 125). Later, I examine how this has affected applied theatre practice, and

those often marginalised communities that applied theatre practice engages with.

In this thesis, I argue that, for applied theatre, conversations around context are generally

concerned with what externally influences practice, what practice influences, what practice

is situated in, and what practice emerges from. With the turn to affect in applied theatre,

explored across Part 1, context must be more than this arena of effect (Thompson, 2009:

117). Adding aesthetics and the affective register to questions of context complicates it. For

Part 1 of the thesis, this means that austerity and migration are no longer the social and

political fabric 'out there' that the practice, participants or audience are situated in, but are within the workshop space, theatre, rehearsal, through the practice, participants or audience themselves. The contributions that emerge from this research fill this gap in knowledge, furthering discussions around the turn to affect by providing new ways of thinking about intention, representation, effect and affect, that incorporates these emerging debates.

This thesis investigates the ways in which recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, that developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, were situated in, shaped by, counteracted, contributed to, reproduced and/or resisted contexts of austerity and migration. The argument considers the relationship between applied theatre practice and its contexts, first prioritising, reorientating, and reimagining context as a critical concept for applied theatre, before working with case study material to trace some of the shifting threads and movements that connect applied theatre to its contexts. I centre this analysis on four themes of intention, representation, effect and affect. I move to consider these not as frames or models for analysis, but as knotty double binds, that can be unthreaded and unwound in many ways to generate new ways of considering these four themes, and new ways of considering the relationship of applied theatre to context. I draw directly from Spivak to develop the idea of a double bind (Spivak, 2012: 104) for this thesis as a way of considering these themes as sites that weave together practice and context, but that are not easily modelled, and are rather more knotty. I also draw from Bruno Latour to foreground how this notion of a knotty double bind works to trace complex and shifting threads of association rather than explain away connections as a "certain type of fabric" (Latour, 2005: 160).

The four themes underpinning this that are explored through case study analysis draw from current debates in applied theatre, with particular reference to the turn to affect, and ongoing calls to work in smaller, more local settings, eschewing large claims to social effect. Alongside this, I draw from critical and cultural theory, with a detailed focus on Spivak's theories of representation, ethical practice, and participation. Working from Spivak, who has until this point remained beyond the theorisation of applied theatre, I consider in detail the subject positionality of the applied theatre participant, as other, and I ask what impact this has on a set of practices that often makes claims to give voice to the voiceless. I develop critical thought around what it means to work in a local context, analysing the relationship between the self of the applied theatre practitioner, and the other of the marginalised participant.

The research question at the core this project is:

> What are the relationships between applied theatre practices and notions of context?

To facilitate this analysis, and define the scope of its ambition, the project is centred around four specific sub questions:

1. How is the relationship between applied theatre practice and contexts of austerity and migration already understood?
2. How can context be developed as a critical concept for applied theatre?
3. What is the relationship between recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, which developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, and contexts of austerity and migration?

4. How does this relationship between practice and context function?

I continue to engage with and interrogate these questions across the thesis, which is split into two parts. Part 1 looks to address the first two questions, and Part 2 looks to address the second two. In the final conclusions I return to each of these questions again, to summarise the findings for each, and the significance of those findings.

The research engaged, through an ethnographic process, with two arts projects for refugees and asylum seekers in Leeds and Yorkshire more broadly over the course of a year, and a third case study focusing on the partition of India and Pakistan. The first analysis of this case study material focuses on a piece of street theatre that used puppets to share a narrative of a sinking boat of migrants seeking rescue and refuge, *Driftwood*. The second focuses on the participatory workshops of the second project, which led to the creation of a piece of shadow theatre, *Migration and Settlement*. Following a discussion of the findings of this analysis, the third case study, *Drawing the Line,* is used to further explore the double binds opened up. This case study marked the 70th anniversary of the partition and independences of India and Pakistan with a community performance and celebration event at the Lawrence Batley Theatre in Huddersfield.

III. Unfolding Chapters.

I open Part 1 of the thesis with an introduction to the first two chapters, in which I develop a working definition of applied theatre that underpins the rest of the research. I interrogate the ways the term 'applied theatre' is contested, and explore how this is framed from, and narrated through, the position of the historical 'now'. I argue that, rather than a fixed set of practices or forms, applied theatre is continually orientated and reorientated toward

different practices, politics and communities. As many applied theatre researchers, I

contest and problematize the term, but allow for it to be taken up despite these tensions.

In Chapter 1, *Toward Context Within,* I mobilise three constellations of thinkers to develop

context as a critical notion for applied theatre and for the rest of this thesis. The first of

these constellations is of applied theatre thinkers; I explore the work that has already been

done to explore the ways in which the contexts of austerity and migration are understood

to interact with applied theatre. I consider the key debates amongst these two contexts,

with particular attention paid to shifts in applied theatre away from large claims of social

change and effects, toward prioritising the smaller, embodied, emotional *affects* of

practice. The second constellations of thinkers draw from a variety of fields, to examine

how the contexts of austerity and migration have developed and functioned over the past

decade, with austerity demanding practice that demonstrates its social effects, and

migration policies that police the narratives of refugees shaping decisions made by artists

about stories they feel they are able to share. I consider how the turn toward affect

functions as a resistance to these contexts.

I also draw from a third constellation, of cultural thinkers, to figure the ways that applied

theatre considers context in terms of scale and distance. I argue that with the turn to

affect, models of context must move beyond questions of what influences practice and

what practices influences. I first consider context figured as something that is distant and

elusive, influencing practice as ideology, drawing from Jacques Derrida's hauntology to

examine context as something that haunts (Derrida, 1993: 91). I then focus on Michel

Foucault's work on governmentality, to consider context figured as something that governs

(Foucault, 1991: 92). Throughout this discussion, I work to flatten these figurations, and do

away with questions of scale and distance, and consider how context is instead woven

through practice. Through this discussion, I consider questions of the self, other, exclusion and identity, and argue toward a notion of 'context within' that is further examined and developed in the analysis chapters.

Chapter 2, *Methodologies,* sets out the research methodologies that have underpinned this PhD project. I interrogate the ways in which I embraced a collaborative spirit within an ethnographic process, and consider some of the pitfalls of this as bringing a researcher too close to the cultural text they are observing, drawing from the work of Dwight Conquergood (Conquergood, 1985: 5). I also examine the theories arising from Chapter 1, and select four threads of analysis. I consider these threads as dislocal and shifting, woven between and through context and practice. These four threads are *Intention, Representation, Effect* and *Affect.* I also develop the methods that the analysis will follow; searching for the knotty double binds along these threads. This involves looking for the points of contradictions and border crossings that run through and construct these four core concepts.

In Chapter 3, *Performing a Crisis: Navigating Narrative,* I employ the four threads to analyse *Driftwood* (Faceless Arts, 2016), a piece of performance developed and shared during the first part of the research. The piece placed its focus on the European refugee crisis, sharing the imagined story of a vulnerable and overcrowded migrant boat at sea, struggling in treacherous weather and waves. I argue that although *Driftwood* used the aesthetics of the refugee crisis, it was not directly about it, or indeed making an intervention into it. The changes it affected, the context it partook in, and the confrontations it made, were found in smaller contexts, and amongst the people close to it. These smaller contexts arespaces of resistance and refusal, and as they are situated in interstices and cracks in wider systems they facilitate broader change. The point of tension

that emerges from *Driftwood* is the ways in which it's aesthetics, which looked to a crisis

out there, did not align with the effects and affects that it crafted, which were much closer

to home. I also introduce a performance from the second case study in this chapter,

Extending the Welcome. This performance focused on narratives from refugee participants

of a series of creative workshops. It was then performed back to other refugees and asylum

seekers, as well as shared with the general public through a zine, workshops, and video

replays. This second piece avoided the much fetishized narratives of journeying and arrival.

Much of the aesthetic *Driftwood* was shaped by the crisis 'out there' whilst it actually

affected, confronted and intervened in 'contexts within'. The second case study, *Extending*

the Welcome, focused on working towards and from those 'contexts within', and affected

within that immediate 'local' vicinity. It was not ignorant of wider political contexts of

migration, but simply worked from an understanding of context as a very different thing, as

the experiences of the participants, the responsibilities of the artists, and the self and the

other. In this chapter, I draw from Michael Balfour's work, and argue toward an applied

theatre practice that looks for a 'little context'.

In Chapter 4, *People, Place, Practice,* I continue to discuss the *Extending the Welcome*

project, focusing on the participatory workshops. I argue that, whether through a

participatory process, or performance, working shoulder to shoulder in the local and

engaging with 'little contexts', creates possibilities for the affective realm to produce the

core impact of the work, as affect, and effect. For *Driftwood,* the affective orbited

regarding the pain of others and trauma to rouse action. It was spurred on by an initial

emotional connection to the horrors of the refugee crisis as seen in Europe. This emotional

connection was evident in much of the practice of applied theatre practitioners responding

to the crisis over the past decade, which I detail in Chapter 1. In the analysis chapters, I

argue that shifting constellations of people, place, and practice emerged, intersected,

connected, and became more closely wedded through *Driftwood* and then *Extending the Welcome.* I explore what I mean by constellations, as an extension of framing the field as ecologies of practice. A journey of affect moved through fun, welcome, belonging, and standing shoulder to shoulder, through the *Extending the Welcome* project. I conclude the analysis by arguing that this journey toward affect is ultimately facilitated by working in the local, allowing a space for little changes, with the focus on a unique constellation of people, place and practice.

In Chapter 5, *Dislocating Practice: Double Binds and Strategies,* I draw together the findings from the analysis. I engage with the four threads of analysis and collate the thinking and strategies that have been developed along them in the analysis. This discussion offers new ways of thinking about intention, representation, effect, and affect, for applied theatre, and new strategies for practice. I argue that these strategies for practice, in many ways, contradict the thinking developed through the thesis. I engage with this contradiction in this chapter and later in the conclusions, asking how the theorising *of* practice and the strategizing *for* practice, can work together as contradictory processes.

In Chapter 6, *Drawing the Line: Double Bind as Strategies,* I take up the thinking and strategies developed in the previous chapter, and look to work with the final case study from Chol Theatre to explore how these might be mobilised in future research. I continue to structure the analysis around the same shifting and dislocal threads. At this stage, I also develop further strategies for how the research can be taken further and used. I argue that, rather than a model for application to practice, the double binds offer a route to enter into a practice and theorise from within it. I draw from the work of Spivak to develop this, and ask how analysis can steer away from making accusations against practice, but instead, enter into a text and turn it around to continue searching for new ideas.

To close the thesis, I return to the research questions, and outline how each of these has been addressed, along with the key findings for each. I consider some reflections on the methods and methodologies used throughout the thesis. I also consider the ways that this research and its contributions to the field might be taken up in future, both in terms of research and practice. I argue that the new strategies that emerge from the new ways of thinking in this thesis, must be continually developed. The strategies developed, of 'working in the local' and a 'theatre of little contexts', suit the particulars of applied theatre in the historical now. As the field continues to change, and new futures open, new ground must be sought to speak from, new strategies must be developed from the core theories of 'context within', and new threads must be traced.

This thesis is primarily concerned with two things, the ways in which the response of applied theatre practitioners to the refugee crisis interacted with the contexts of austerity and migration, and subsequent routes for analysis that this interaction provides for future research. The thesis makes claims for the relationship of applied theatre practice contexts, as enmeshed in shifting, unique, and dislocal constellations that reach out and are a part of broader, global networks, and facilitate points of refusal and political effectivity, even amongst a renewed focus on affect in the field. It offers new theories of intention, representation, effect and affect, as intersecting and shifting threads on the dislocal networks between local constellations and wider contexts. Finally, it claims to open new opportunity for future research, both through the theories that are developed and the strategies for practice that these theories ignite.

Part 1: Introduction.

As a term used to describe a set of practices, with a shared history, or as part of a movement, 'applied theatre' is readily contested by practitioners and researchers alike. I engage with this contestation in this opening to the first half of the thesis, applying Foucault's discussions around the archaeologies of knowledge (Foucault, 1969). I argue that the fault lines that emerge from the instabilities of how the field is described are more productive than they are inhibiting, developing a working notion of applied theatre that is picked up throughout the thesis. I then move on to explore contemporary contexts of applied theatre that are at the core of this thesis, first, applied theatre within and upon economic and political landscapes of austerity, then, applied theatre as practised with refugees and asylum seekers, amidst wider contexts of migration. This introduction offers an initial grounding in how the field is already engaging with the questions and themes core to this research project, exploring the areas within the field of applied theatre that this research project is situated in. I also begin to explore some of the ways practice engages with, and is shaped by, specific contexts.

As I seek to work through the tensions and ruptures that emerge through attempts to define, capture, and name the field of applied theatre, and explore some of the similarly frayed histories of applied theatre, I move to consider the ways those histories emerge through the historical now, and the ways in which the historical now functions not only as a lens to view the past, but to construct narratives of it. These histories, bound up in both radical and mainstream movements, foreground and develop discussions about applied theatre and austerity later in this chapter. I conclude by briefly imagining the ways that applied theatre orientates itself toward different dislocal practices, politics and communities, as opposed to conceptualising it as a series of discrete strands of fixed ways

of working. This reflects the ways in which practices, practitioners, histories and trajectories can overlap and intersect. I draw from Helen Nicholson and Jenny Hughes' positions (Nicholson & Hughes, 2017: 7) to reframe applied theatre as a dislocal ecology of practices that is orientated toward these points, and towards certain groupings of people, rather than a set of fixed forms or practices attached to distinct communities. I frame the discussion using aspects of Michel Foucault's *Archaeological Method* (Foucault, 1969).

Archaeologies of Practice.

Foucault argues that ideas, concepts, or models of knowledge that feel unified, are not actually unified at all. To demonstrate this, he deconstructs the unity of the 'oeuvre'. He argues that an 'oeuvre' is, at first sight, as simple as "a collection of texts that can be designated by the sign of a proper name" (Foucault, 1969: 23). It is the whole body of work by a single author. He goes on to problematize this, asking what a complete 'oeuvre' would contain:

> Does the name of an author designate in the same way a text that he has published under his name, a text that he has presented under a pseudonym, another found after his death in the form of an unfinished draft, and another that is merely a collection of jottings, a notebook?

> (Foucault, 1969: 23)

Here he asks if an incomplete book, a notebook, or a book written under a fake name, should be included in an author's oeuvre, as things that that author has written. Whilst at first sight, the 'oeuvre' might seem like a simple unity of discourse, it breaks apart upon

further interrogation, as it becomes unclear where the limit should be placed on what is included in that term. He argues that all attempts to unify discourse are similarly complex and will always fall foul of contradiction and complication.

Attempts to unify practices under the field of 'applied theatre' produce precarious results in the same way, particularly as definitions of applied theatre are often linked to its contexts. These contexts might be the spaces and places that work happens in, for example in "in refugee camps and in third country sites", or linked to the practices employed, for example "projects that facilitate refugee writing, music and performance, dance, theatre and performance, films and the creation of refugee festivals that celebrate diverse ethnicities" (Balfour et. al, 2015: 45). In the introduction to *The Applied Theatre Reader*, editors Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston divorce the field from specific contexts and define applied theatre as theatre 'for' a community, 'with' a community, or 'by' a community with aims that reach beyond entertainment, often involving participatory processes (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 10). Anthony Jackson leaves his definition slightly broader and less formulaic, as "a wide range of participatory, socially engaged, often politically inspired, non-traditional theatre practices usually conducted in spaces not designed for theatre, with and for populations that would not typically constitute mainstream audiences" (Jackson, 2007: 10).

Unsettling attempts to unify the field, Mojisola Abedayo problematizes the term: "I think the term applied theatre does a disservice to so much of the beautiful, eclectic and experimental work in communities that does happen" (Abedayo, 2015: 128). She writes that 'theatre as applied' enshrines an idea of theatre as pure, as though theatre must exist in a pure form before it can then be applied. More than this though, applied theatre, written as it is in the past tense, enshrines itself as finished, complete, "the success of the

work is assured" (Abedayo, 2015: 128). It this sense of completion and finality that Foucault might see as a form of 'narcissism' in the way unities are put forward, searching for a historical continuity that depends on the closing down of the "living openness of history" (Foucault, 1969: 13). If the success of applied theatre is assured, if it is a purity, a finished unification of the field, then there is no potential for failure or possibility.

In reality, failure (Thompson, 2009:15), risk (Baim, 2017: 80; O'Grady, 2017), and possibility (Sloan: 2018) are all at the heart of much of the work the term looks to describe. The interplay between these three elements finds a more complex role in applied theatre through the turn to affect, which will be explored in more detail later in the next chapter, and taken up throughout the thesis. James Thompson argues that "the struggle for beauty" can be that which opens up spaces for possibility, practices that necessitate risk, and eclipse the despondence of participants and practitioners alike that might emerge from a perceived failure (Thompson, 2009: 170-1). Failure and possibility might find a unique place in this, as Thompson argues that frustration with the size of a political task, particularly in settings with immense human suffering, can create the capacity for being affected, with a feeling of responsibility less likely to overwhelm (Thompson, 2009: 171). Whilst the notion of theatre as applied might point toward a practice that enshrines itself as finished and successful, the turn to affect opens up space for risk, failure, and possibility to be understood as playing complex and interdependent roles in applied theatre practice.

Foucault argues that is these contradictions in discourse, or in the history of ideas, that can help to define an idea or unity of knowledge. He argues that contradictions are not errors to be corrected, or secret principles to be discovered, but the very foundations of discourse (Foucault, 1969: 151). Contradiction has a value in the "history of ideas", as it provides historicity to those ideas, constituting what ideas came after, and continually transforming

discourse (Foucault, 1969: 151). Whilst the term applied theatre is a problematic one, which does not, and cannot, fully represent the work it seeks to describe, it is through those contradictions and points of tension and rupture that new knowledge about the field can be produced. Helen Nicholson and Jenny Hughes argue that applied theatre, as an ecology of practice(s), is made up of encounters with borders, rather than staking out fixed or secure positions (Nicholson & Hughes, 2017: 7). Applied theatre is better understood through its dissonances and contradictions as a shifting ecology of practices, made up of its encounters with the margins. Later in this thesis, I explore more of these contradictions and margins, interrogating, for example, the ways in which applied theatre practitioners unwittingly find themselves enacting state agendas their practice claims to resist. I also engage with the thinking of Spivak, whose work has remained beyond the borders of applied theatre, and ask how her sometimes fatalistic conclusions around speech, non-speech, and the well intentioned westerner, upsets models of representation in applied theatre. It is through these points of contradiction and tension that I explore the knotty double binds at the heart of Intention, Representation, Effect and Affect, as a strategy for reflection in practice, and for opening possibility in thinking.

As a shifting and contested field, the practices and movements from which applied theatre emerged cannot be viewed from anywhere except historical distance, with historical discontinuities, and through the lens of the historical now (Foucault, 1969: 130). The work of Augusto Boal (1992; 2008), as influenced by Paulo Freire (1970) and Bertolt Brecht (1964), is often heralded as a crucial origin of applied theatre (O'Conner & Anderson, 2015: 30). However, theatre and other art forms had long been used prior for progressive forms of cultural practice with communities, with visiting entertainers to workhouses in Victorian Britain for example (Hughes, 2017: 40). The emergence of an 'official' field of applied theatre has happened over recent decades (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 10) as it has become

"mainstreamed", evidenced through the huge growth in university training courses and its

"increasing popularity with government and agencies of all political persuasions" (O'Connor

& O'Connor, 2009: 471). I explore the reasons for, and effects of, this popularity with

governments in the first chapter. It is through this institutionalisation and mainstreaming of

the field in the twenty first century, that twentieth century practices and movements are

enveloped into the applied discourse. For example, Boal did not describe his practice as

applied theatre, but his practice is described as applied through the lens of the historical

now, and it is often presented as a point of origin of that 'now' (Prentki & Preston, 2009:

13).

Applied theatre practice also is deeply *connected* to its own historical 'now'. Whilst

histories of the field are complex and contradictory, these histories are seen as rooted in

the "soil of progressive, radical people's movements in various places around the world"

(Prentki & Preston, 2009: 13). Connected to the historical 'now', the way applied theatre is

defined is often linked to what might be understand as the context of specific historical

periods or moments. The post war years saw a 'cultural revolution' take place in Britain and

Europe, with the community arts movement growing out of the same soil as applied

theatre, drawing from its radical techniques (Jeffers, 2017: 39, 51). Vast cuts from the

Conservative governments of Heath and Thatcher held the potential to fatally damage this

movement, but artists and practitioners responded with works that resisted the cuts both

to the arts and public spheres more broadly (Russell Brown, 2001: 527). The political

ferment "born of the 1960's counter-culture" laid the foundations for the next phase of

theatre, during which Applied Theatre would emerge in the forms active today (Jackson,

2007: 444). These histories and moments are all viewed through the lens of the historical

'now', and applied theatre is woven into those contexts as viewed through that lens.

Applied theatre practice also developed from state agendas and actions that became increasingly involved in the arts. The shock of the two world wars had led to an "unusually close integration of theatre with its social 'context'" in European countries (Innes, 2001: 383). Government involvement became a large part of the rebuilding of theatre, particularly in England, with the Labour government assigning a small amount of taxes to subsidized entertainment and the arts, allowing for a "wave of civic theatre-building in the 1950's" (Innes, 2001: 420). Alongside the growth of state subsidised theatre was an increased interest in arts in the community on the part of arts practitioners and funding bodies, the development of child centered education and the place of the arts in that (Jackson, 2007: 131). Here, practice develops from political counter culture and radical people's movements, whilst successive British governments build the theatres that accommodate that work and fund the delivery of it in their own schools. In the next chapter, I explore the ways that context is figured as something that governs in applied theatre, and further interrogate the role of resistance in that, illuminating some of the contradictions that are emerging here.

Applied theatre in its contemporary 'now' takes up a variety of forms. It could be grouped into categories, for example *education*, *community,* and *politics and activism*. These forms are directly linked to the context in which the practice takes place. For example, under these headings, theatre in education, process drama and museum theatre might be grouped under education, growing from practices historically rooted in schools and with pedagogical intent (Jackson, 2013: 10-14). Community theatre, or community performance, might be grouped under community (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 12). Whilst street theatre or protest theatre might be grouped under politics and activism, it is this category that in this case begins to undo the process of categorisation as an exercise in unifying discourse. Clearly, a community performance or a piece of theatre in education could carry political

themes or seek to have political effect. Beyond that, the act of intervening in education or

community with socially engaged theatre is a political act in and of itself (Prentki & Preston,

2009: 14). Attempting to place boundaries on the field of applied theatre by grouping via

context can be a considered exercise, but still "arbitrary" at its core (Thompson, 2012: xiv).

Headings or forms that are used to describe applied theatre practices, whether that might

be Prison Theatre or Theatre of the Oppressed, are best understood as unfixed points of

orientation, rather than fixed categories. Forms of applied theatre, or applied theatre

practices, may be divergent from one another, or intersecting and working toward a variety

of goals. Sara Ahmed writes that orientations are "starting points" (Ahmed, 2006: 8), as

well as points of alignment (Ahmed, 2006: 15). They are points that can be turned toward,

and points that draw focus (Ahmed, 2006: 25). Applied theatre, as an ecology of practices

made by encounters with borders and not fixed or secure positions (Nicholson & Hughes,

2017: 7), can be orientated toward the moving points of education, community, politics

and activism, and may of course be orientated toward more than one, or indeed to other

contexts and forms. This way of reimagining applied theatre reflects the ways in which

practices, practitioners, histories and trajectories can overlap and intersect.

In Chapter 1 I engage with the work of Latour to establish how the connecting threads

between context and practice are also shifting. He uses the term "dislocal" to describe the

ways in which actions are not easily explained as happening in the local, or as a result of

society (Latour, 2005: 60). Rather, they are both. This allows us to shift our thinking from

certainty to uncertainty. We should find our "firm ground on shifting sand" (Latour, 2005:

24). We might also approach the notion of applied theatre, with its shifting orientations

and forms, as dislocal too. However, recognising that the field of applied theatre is

uncertain and contested, and in many ways, unlocatable, does not mean that it is

untraceable. Rather, this tracing of the field, as I have done in this chapter, requires a starting position that recognises the field as dislocal, shifting, moving, creating new ground as well as speaking from old ground. It is the movements of the fields that should be traced, rather than a fixed position sought. Throughout this first part of the thesis I engage with this slow and careful tracing of a dislocal field and it's dislocal contexts.

This reframing of applied theatre, as orientated toward moving points, forms, and dislocal contexts, holds significance for this first part of the work, where I begin to explore applied theatre with refugees. Rather than defining applied theatre with refugees as a distinct and fixed field within applied theatre, or as a unique form of practice, I argue that instead it draws from and is situated amongst the broader ecologies of applied theatre, and can be orientated toward any number of practices or ideas about practice. These ecologies, orientations, contexts and borders, are unfixed and shifting, as such, it becomes impossible to 'locate' applied theatre. Applied theatre is dislocal. I return to the question of practice as location and dislocation again as I ask how practice can be understood as linked to its contexts. Later in the thesis I also argue toward a strategy of working in the local, which again draws from this notion of orientations, and ecologies of practice, and further situates these practices in shifting social, economic, and cultural networks.

1. Toward Context Within.

In this chapter, I explore the ways that context is already figured and conceptualised in applied theatre. I also begin to trace some of the threads and connecting links between practice and context. I ask how context can be developed as a critical concept for applied theatre, beyond its current usage as a catchall term, and why this might be a significant move for the field. The word 'context' comes from the Latin *contextus.* The first part of the word, *con,* means *with*, or *together*. The second part means *to weave*, *to make*, or *to fabricate*, as in *text*ile or *text*ure. I argue toward a flatter understanding of context (Latour, 2005: 174), that looks to its closely woven workings, rather than thinking about it through terms of distance and scale. I argue that context does more than sit outside practice, as circumstance or something that determines meaning but that, but as is found in the origins of the word, it is woven into, textures, and even fabricates practice. Through this discussion, I argue toward a novel concept of 'context within'.

Throughout this chapter, I mobilise a diverse set of constellations of thinkers and writers. The first constellation is made up of applied theatre thinkers. I examine the ways that these thinkers connect applied theatre to contexts of austerity and migration. The second constellations of thinkers are from fields that offer insight into the contexts of austerity or migration more broadly. For example, I delve momentarily into the world of local government studies to understand the rhetoric of austerity in the United Kingdom before linking this to the ways that applied theatre thinkers have engaged with similar questions. I also work with theory from refugee studies and philosophies of migration to build an understanding of this context. The third constellation is of critical and cultural thinkers. I use their thinking to develop a meta-narrative, in a similar fashion to that way I dealt with Foucault in the previous introduction. This meta-narrative frames the ways that context is

already figured in applied theatre through terms of scale and distance. This allows for considerations of how these figures are actually flatter and closer to practice. In other words, rather than figuring context and practice in separate terms, and exploring their connections, I ask what the particular threads are that make those connections. I consider these figures of context in the applied theatre literature as 'arenas of effect', 'context that haunts' and 'context that governs'. As I continue to trace the threads and links between these figures of context and practice, I argue toward the concept of 'context within', that unlike the three figures above, does away with scale and distance and instead works from the understanding that context is woven into and through practice. I further explore the ideas of 'context within' through questions of the self and other, place, identity, and exclusion, to continue to draw out connecting threads.

1.1   Arenas of Effect.

Applied theatre is often conceptualised as theatre *applied to* something; for example, as "first and foremost a form of theatre", a "creation of the aesthetic", that is moved toward social contexts (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015: 33). For this reason, Judith Ackroyd joins the thinkers outlined in the previous introduction and also contests the term. She describes its utilitarian assumptions as reductive, playfully asking what *unapplied* theatre might look like (Ackroyd, 2007: 4-5). Whilst she critiques the term, she does also tentatively embrace it, as a way of describing not a form or practice, but rather, a "range of practices" (Ackroyd, 2007: 10). The *applied* part of the term describes the motivation to effect change as a constitutive part of those practices; in other words, it is the desire to effect change that makes the practice *applied.* Tim Prentki and Sheila Preston argue that the purpose of applied theatre is to effect change in the world that is "outside theatrical discourse"

(Prentki & Preston, 2009: 10). Applied theatre, therefore, moves theatre into new contexts, and seeks to make change in, or to, those contexts.

A model of context for applied theatre that is oriented around these notions of application and change as constitutive for applied theatre, aligns closely with models of context that are also used within the field of linguistics: "context is a resource that the participants might use to achieve their communicative purposes […] It is what speech acts upon; it is their point to change certain features of the context" (Stalnaker, 2014: 15). Within this pragmatic theory of language, context is the thing that offers meaning to what is being said. Context is also the thing that is changed by what is said (Stalnaker, 2014: 25). Applied theatre places processes of theatre in new contexts, and constructs new sets of meanings from them (Thompson, 2012: 43). The diverse ranges of practices that are employed are, as with linguistics, also responsive to those contexts; "a play or technique that is quite acceptable in one place or context may create severe moral problems in another" (Kerr, 2009: 180). In this sense, context is that which externally influences, or *effects*, applied theatre practice, and what practice is situated in. These contexts also can give, or change, the meaning of practice itself (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 10) as it responds to the changing world outside it.

For linguistics, context is also the "common ground between us" (Stalnaker, 2014: 25). In other words, context might be a shared set of understandings, ideas, practices or unspoken ideologies that link speakers and allow them to understand each other. In applied theatre, the common ground of context might be the loosely shared politics, practices, experiences and ideals that the field coalesces around, and seeks to make change from. That which applied theatre is *applied to,* to make this change, can cross multiple boundaries and settings. Common examples of these points of application might be societal, political,

economic, or cultural contexts (Kershaw, 1992: 1; Etherton & Prentki, 2006: 154; McKenna, 2014: 85; Thornton, 2015: 35 – 36). Context for applied theatre practice is also therefore, the thing that applied theatre looks to effect. These notions of context foreground effect, it is that which externally influences practice, that which practice is situated in, and that which practice seeks to change. Context at this point could be understood as simply an arena of effect.

This notion of context for applied theatre aligns with that of linguistics, asking questions about meaning and effect (Preston, 2009: 68). However, with the turn to affect in applied theatre, context must be more than only the arena of *effect*. The role of *affect* complicates a theoretical tool of context as I will explore throughout this chapter. Sara Ahmed describes affect as something that is "sticky", it is that which sticks "or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values and objects" (Ahmed, 2010: 29). Affect is the "messiness of the experimental, the unfolding of bodies into worlds, and the drama of contingency, how we are touched by what we are near" (Ahmed, 2010: 30). Affect therefore is not a binary opposition to effect, nor is it only about emotions or feeling. She goes on to say that affect is an orientation toward something. To be affected by something in a positive way for example is to be orientated toward it as being good (Ahmed, 2010: 32). For Lawrence Grossberg, affect determines how something matters to a person, and how much (Grossberg, 1997: 28). It is a complex set of mediations, the "energy of mediation" (Grossberg, 2010: 193). Affect therefore involves ideas of change and meaning, but is not something that can be conceptualised as 'out there' that practice can be applied to; rather, it is circulating between the people that involve practice, sticking, and making worlds. The common ground of context, or uncommon ground of context in some situations perhaps, is as much affective as it is effective.

Jenny Hughes takes up a "commons perspective" in her approach to applied theatre, which "opens a space for conceptualising theatre and theatre-making as a material and immaterial good available for all" (Hughes, 2017: 77-78). This notion of the commons centres on the "affective, social and symbolic capacities" between people. She writes that the commons is a "source of surplus value that cannot be absolutely enclosed and exploited by the forces of capital, because it comprises modes of social productivity that confound control – codes, affects, symbolisation, knowledge, performance and relationships" (Hughes, 2017: 78). In other words, the common ground of applied theatre is tied into, and cannot be divorced from, the liberal economy in which we live, but also bleeds out of it, and escapes it in those parts of context that exist beyond the arena of effect. Some of these escape routes might be in the move from effect to affect.

Gareth White argues that applied theatre practice has always embodied a kind of theory of art, "particularly in its orientation towards process as much as product, towards redistribution of creative initiative and towards demonstrable worldly outcomes" (White, 2015: 3). He outlines that, at points, this has involved the outright rejection of more conservative, and "oppressive", ideas, found in "high art", which has in turn "entailed a rejection of the values of beauty, creative genius and artistic autonomy that are associated with it" (White, 2015: 3). The applied theatre practitioner does this to prioritise a radical model, with coherence between the art practice and its main function as a vehicle for social struggle, also discussed by Baz Kershaw (1992). In recent years, this view has shifted significantly, with warnings against over-instrumentalist uses of art, and developments of a new appreciation of what aesthetic qualities or experiences, like beauty, might actually have to play in social change, and in doing so, work towards Hughes' notion of the commons (White, 2015: 3).

Much of the debates surrounding the turn to affect in applied theatre emerge from

Thompson's work, *Performance Affects, Applied Theatre and the End of Effect* (2009)*.* The

book starts with a personal dilemma for Thompson. He outlines a participatory project that

he was involved in at a rehabilitation centre for surrendered child soldiers in Sri Lanka,

which later became the site of a massacre. He asks if the theatre project had any link to the

subsequent massacre. He writes; "If applied theatre, or at least my practice of applied

theatre, is in any way complicit in the wider set of factors that made the massacre possible,

then for me it must end" (Thompson, 2009: 16). He is sceptical of the link between the two

events, but he uses the analysis of it to explore the limits of applied theatre practice in

moments of crisis. Later in the thesis, I also move to explore the ways in which applied

theatre practitioners in Yorkshire worked to address the refugee crisis, and I ask similar

questions about effect as a link between practice and context. I argue toward practice that

strategizes to work in closer, more local settings, imagining itself as part of global

constellations of people, place, and practice, contributing to solutions of bigger problems

from its own shifting location on that network of movements.

Through analysing the limits of participatory practices, Thompson arrives at the conclusion

that "participatory theatre should focus on affect rather than effect" (2009: 111). He

argues that if the work is limited to effect, it "forgets the radical potential of the freedom

to enjoy beautiful radiant things" (Thompson, 2009: 6). He argues, not to do away with any

notion of social effect or political outcome, but to prioritise what is currently seen as the

by-products of practice, the moments of enjoyment or fun that occur during a participatory

process for example. (Thompson, 2009: 116). This is framed as the affective turn, or the

turn to affect, a moment in the trajectory of applied theatre where priorities shift away

from social outcomes and the utilities of practice, and toward the embodied and emotional

responses to practice. Attention is turned to affect, as practitioners reorientate their practice toward it.

With the turn to affect, context cannot be consigned to the fabric 'out there' that the practice, participants or audience are situated in. It is something that is within the workshop space, theatre, rehearsal, through the practice, participants or audience themselves. Affect circulates between bodies, sticking as well as moving (Ahmed, 2004: 4). Affect is contingent, sliding from person to person (Ahmed, 2010: 36). This tension generated by the turn to affect demonstrates that a model of context as an arena of effect is inadequate on its own. Context is not simply an external influence, something to influence, a setting or an origin, but it is in the room, thought, felt and lived affectively, moving, sticking, and sliding from person to person. This tension presents opposing ways of figuring context. The arena of effect is figured as external, out there, as it something to be applied to, offering meaning and a substance to change, along with a fixed identity for the field. The arenas of affect are flatter, internal, in the room, or moving through a space, circulating between people and objects.

In the use of the phrase 'flattening context' I am drawing from the work of Bruno Latour. He first argues that action is dislocal, "it does not pertain to any specific site; it is distributed, variegated, multiple, dislocated and remains a puzzle for the analysts" (Latour, 2004: 60). For this project, we might consider 'practice' as a word that is being used to describe a specific kind of action. Latour's argument that this action is dislocal, distributed, multiple etc. resonates closely with many of the arguments made so far, that practice is orientated toward multiple points, an ecology meeting at the borders, shifting and disunified. He describes action as uncertain, a node, a knot, "a conglomerate of many surprising sets of agencies that have to be slowly disentangled" (Latour, 2004: 44). Because

of this he argues that context is "no place to park", and that a sole focus on either a local

site where an action might be considered to take place, or on the broader networks that

influence that site and action that make up 'society', is a route of inquiry destined to fail

(Latour, 2004: 167). Rather, by recognising the "impossibility" of parking thinking and

analysis in one of these two polar sites, that is a place as local or a place as a context 'out

there' (Latour, 2004: 170), an analysis can offer new knowledge about the "topography of

the social" (Latour, 2004: 170). In other words, discussions around action, or practice, run

the risk of looking too far outside for explanation and ignoring the action going on in

practice, or instead too closely at the action itself and ignoring the outside (Latour, 2004:

166). Latour argues that context is a dead term as it looks too far outside an action for an

explanation. For applied theatre however, interrogating the link between practice and the

context it sits in, even if that link is understood as a shifting, dislocal, and knotty, is a vital

part of practice and understanding practice. Rather than do away with conversations

around context all together, I reorientate them to consider context *as* dislocal, moving

between the action and the actions of others, conceptualised as flat, rather than close or

distant. I return to these questions in Chapter 2.4, where I develop a method for untangling

the knots on these dislocal threads of context.

The topographies, or landscapes, I explore in this thesis, are the connections between

practices and contexts. At this juncture we can conclude that these connections are neither

settled in the local or in society, but are shifting threads and networks to be carefully

traced, uncertainties to be interrogated (Latour, 2004: 21-22). Context is uncertain, a

movement, a thread or connection to be carefully examined. As I consider how applied

theatre approaches questions of context, I figure these in ways that allows their

topography to be interrogated, and then flattened, as dislocal and uncertain. In the rest of

this chapter, I move through the ways context is currently considered as scaled, from the

distant and elusive arenas of effect, to the internal embodied affective experiences of participants. I do so to trace the threads between these different figurations of context to practice, examining how they are shifting flat networks rather than internal or external locations, through which I argue toward a novel notion of 'context within'.

1.2   Context that Haunts.

To continue exploring context, and tracing the threads that connect it to practice, I now move to describe and interrogate how it is understood and described as something that exerts influence on practice at the same as it is elusive and undefined. I draw from some of the later work of Jacques Derrida who, through playful metaphors of spirits, apparitions, spectres and ghosts, considered political and ideological phenomena as "always-already", and not simply existing outside of a space or text as an arena of effect, but exerting influence on that space or text. I begin to figure and frame context in this way through Derrida's rich metaphor of 'The Spectre', and explore how contexts are considered by applied theatre thinkers as ideologies with haunting like qualities. For this section, I begin to focus specifically on the context of migration as a working example, in conjunction with applied theatre practices that are linked to this context. As I move to flatten context, I argue that rather than distant and elusive, these haunting contexts are also better understood for applied theatre as affective relationships, moving, sticking, and sliding between bodies and objects. I begin by working through Derrida's thought on the Spectre, before asking how this might help us to understand context of migration, and then bringing in thinking from applied theatre to embed this discussion in the field and this research.

In *Spectres of Marx* (1993), Derrida asks how it is that Marxism persists and is present at the close of the 20th century, after its supposed death. He uses metaphors of haunting and

ghosts to consider how the *spirit* of Marxism still exerts influence, attempting to come into being whilst really not coming into being; as a Spectre (Derrida, 1993: 91). This being and not being is what forms his concept of hauntology, a direct play on the word ontology. As a deconstructive approach, the concept of The Spectre defers meaning and conclusion, sitting outside ontological theories of being and looking instead toward what might be 'to come', and what is 'always already' (Derrida, 1993: 91). A Spectre is the spirit of a thing as it appears, exerting influence, but not really living, living yet, or living ever (Derrida, 1993: 176).

The concept of The Spectre, as an elusive ideological system that haunts, is not dissimilar to Foucault's *dispositif* (Foucault, 1977: 195)*. Dispositif* can be loosely translated into apparatus, and describes structures that enhance and maintain the exercise of power within the social body. Foucault describes the *dispositif* as "a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions" (Foucault, 1977: 194). Exploring the nature of the connections between these heterogeneous elements he concludes that they can be 'discursive' or 'non-discursive'. By this, Foucault means that a discourse could become the programme of an institution, or it could instead be a means of justifying or "masking" a practice that itself remains silent; the *dispositif* can be said or unsaid. The Spectre however, can be more than just the programme of an institution or a mask of a system; it could be a resistance to a system or institution (Joseph, 2001: 100). The Spectre is an ideological spirit, that exerts power and influence through its 'haunting'.

Ideological Spectres, whether positive or negative, lingering or conjured, are everywhere. As a positive corruption and "instrumentalization of spirit", Spectres exist in cultures of the

political, in cultures of communication and media, and in cultures of intellectualism and

academia (Joseph, 2001: 106). Whilst the *dispositif* responds to historical moments of

urgent need, holding a dominant strategic function as an apparatus of power (Foucault,

1977: 195), The Spectre can haunt and linger in a time and place beyond its strategic utility

as an apparatus of power. In this way, Spectres are sticky. They are social relations

simplified, routinized, mechanized, distorted or concealed. An ideological system itself

might be spectral, elusive and haunting, without clear origin. The ideologies and ideologues

that defend that system might also be spectral, as might the opposition to that system

(Joseph, 2001: 100).

The Spectre can be a tool to figure and model the ways that context is understood as

interacting with applied theatre practice, as ideological contexts that are potentially

unseen, haunting, without clear origin, elusive, and inescapable. Preston writes:

> "The historical, social, cultural and material conditions of context also feature
>
> directly and sometimes silently, acting as a direct presence or invisible force on the
>
> work created and facilitated with and by participants"

(Preston, 2016: 18).

Context for applied theatre can be figured as invisible, silent, influencing practice as an

external force. This figure can then be deconstructed and flattened to explore how it

influences. Spectres are the opaque phantoms of ideology (Joseph, 2001: 104). These might

not be the obvious contexts that exert influence on applied theatre practice, government

arts policy or funding requirements for example, but those ideologies that haunt even

those, exerting influence *on* government policy and funding requirements. Later in this

thesis I ask how the case studies interacted with the contexts of migration and austerity. Conceptualising context as something that haunts allows for those influences that are unclear, elusive, and potentially unseen, to still be considered. As I continue to consider context as something that haunts, I look to apply this thinking to contexts of migration, to facilitate this later analysis.

One of the Spectres that haunts from themes of migration, one of those things that Derrida might call "always already" and still "to come" (Derrida, 1993: 91, 177, 213), is the Nation State, from which, the figure of the migrant emerges. Whilst the workings of the modern nation state developed in the nineteenth century (Anderson, 1983: xii), citizenship of those states has become more complicated in a globalised economy with high levels of migration, and systems of citizenship that transgress the borders of nations (Benhabib, 2005: 676). The nation state itself can be considered as a political community imagined by its citizens as sovereign and limited or bounded. This imagination, producing a shared and deep comradeship amongst citizens, is what forms the nation state in the first place (Anderson, 1983: 6-7).

However, collectivities bound by birth pre-exist the imagined or abstracted nation state. As state formations have shifted and changed, and continue to shift and change, the coupling of nationalism with the abstracted or imagined structure of the nation state is an experiment with a limited history and a limited future (Spivak, 2009: 78). Spivak strips back the layers of imaged and abstracted nationhood, and instead, writes about what she calls 'the nation thing'. She asks, "when and how does the love of mother tongue, the love of my little corner of ground become the nation thing?" (Spivak, 2009: 79). Spivak argues that the nation thing is a rock bottom comfort, something understood as a simple there-ness, a self-identity that is imagined and turns history into cultural memory. For Spivak, nationalism

grows from the same imagination that Anderson writes about, where an imagined shared comradeship runs so deep that people are willing to die for the imagined nation. Ahmed similarly argues that the history of, and the idea of the nation state, "sticks", and is made up of how "some bodies move toward and away from other bodies", a movement that "works to create boundaries and borders" and the approximation of the imagined nation (Ahmed, 2004: 133). The Spectre of the nation state appears as always-already, illusive in its origin, but is actually a flat context, and can be considered as an affective mediation, sliding between people and objects. Rather than haunting from distance, the nation state haunts from within and between.

The figure of the migrant can be considered a Spectre in the same way. Thomas Nail argues that it is migration that is the primary condition by which states and societies are established in the first place (2015: 236). It is the migrant that is always already, not the nation state or the nation thing. The figure of the migrant is not a person or fixed identity but a "mobile social position" or spectrum that different people occupy in different times and places. It is a "political concept that defines the conditions and agencies by which various figures are socially expelled as a result of, or as the cause of, their mobility" (Nail, 2015: 245). It is this expulsion that allows for societies and states to be bounded and imagined communities to form. The figure of the migrant, however, haunts these societies and states in a form of resistance, as it threatens these deep nationalisms. The movement of people across state boundaries often interrupts the imagined communities of the nation state as it reveals the global character of social relations and systems of identification that sustain the systems of governance, and the spacialisation of power within the nation state (Sharma, 2013: 233 – 235).

These haunting contexts have exerted influence in the United Kingdom through a variety of policy programmes and paradigms. One of the more present examples of this is the decision taken by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union. Much of the rhetoric surrounding the campaign to leave the European Union focused on taking control of, and securing, the external borders of the United Kingdom (Vote Leave, Accessed 2019). This rhetoric haunts from an imagined distance, but is exerted on, and affects the bodies of, both EU migrants and communities in the UK (Ahmed, DATE). As a result, the number of EU citizens entering the United Kingdom from other EU countries has fallen significantly, amidst a sharp rise in hate crime directed at all minority groups. As an example of an affective context that haunts, the decision to leave the European Union is of huge significance. Whilst the scope of this research project is limited to work carried out around the European refugee crisis, the UK's exit from the EU is still explored later in the thesis, particularly in the analysis of the *Driftwood* project, which shared narratives of forced migration during the time period of the EU referendum and subsequent change in Prime Minister.

As a context figured as that which haunts, migration is always already, as people have always migrated (Nail, 2015: 236), and still to come, as more people migrate than ever before and occupy the figure of the migrant in some way (Nail, 2015: 1). However the haunting context of the figure of the migrant, is again one that is affective, "sticking" to those bodies "that [stalk] the nation and [haunt] its capacity to secure its borders" (Ahmed, 2004: 47). This is acutely so for refugees and asylum seekers, as the "figure of the bogus asylum seeker" circulates, accumulating an affective value, and ultimately justifying the "repetition of violence against the bodies of others in the name of protecting the nation" (Ahmed, 2004: 347). This affective context haunts applied theatre, as practitioners seek to unravel or resist that accumulated affect.

An immediate problem arises in applied theatre through this affective haunting, of authenticity and truth, whilst attempting to unstick the negative and threatening figure of the migrant from the bodies of those it clings to. Agnes Woolley describes one of the challenges of staging refugee stories as a question of whether, initially, artists even hold the "authority to re-imagine traumatic experiences dramatically" (Woolley, 2014: 119). She argues that this perceived inexpressibility, and lack of authority to narrate stories, has led to performances that fetishize verbatim techniques, clinging to oral and written testimonies as authoritative narratives (Woolley, 2014: 119). Much of this kind of theatre moves to educate audiences, and maintains a strong pedagogic purpose, as it seeks to offset "perceived misrepresentation in the press" with more 'accurate' experiences of individuals, perhaps unsticking the affective imagination outlined above. Woolley argues however, that rather than looking to stage authentic truth-claims, flexible dramatic narratives are more suited to exploring the "ambivalences and ambiguities" of life as an asylum seeker in the UK (Woolley, 2014: 122). A reliance on truth-claims, and verifiable experiences, embodies these haunting and affective political structures that require verifiable truths from refugees and asylum seekers (Woolley, 2014: 160).

Alison Jeffers similarly considers how the "right kind" of story is required of asylum seekers by authorities and bureaucratic processes that seek to define who should be allowed to stay in the country and who should not. Often, complex experiences must be retold to fit predefined linear narratives of "individual crisis and flight" (Jeffers, 2011: 46). This smoothing out of complexity for bureaucratic performance in legal settings, in a similar way to the requirement for authenticity that Woolley describes, also finds roots in the work of theatre makers. In attempts to avoid disclosing any transgressions on the part of the refugees represented, artists can disempower the refugee subject, "creating an image of a

victim in the minds of the audience or even a victim mentality in the minds of refugees themselves" (Jeffers, 2011: 46). Work often focuses on the difficulties faced by a refugee once in a new country, rather than the resourcefulness and resilience of the refugees themselves. These linear narratives of crisis and flight also lead to a fetishizing of narratives of journeying and arrival.

Avoiding negative images of refugees at all costs has led to work that relies on "simpler, but often traumatic, narratives of corrupt regimes, forced imprisonment and mistreatment in the refugee's place of origin" (Jeffers, 2011: 46). Jeffers uses Austin's notion of speech etiolation, the way in which repeated speech acts function as a shadow of the original. She asks if theatre, which is "not trusted, is associated with fakery, falsehood, smoke and mirrors" is the best way to represent subjects who are themselves "suspected of duplicity" (Jeffers, 2011: 50). She argues that theatre work with refugees must be reconceptualised as a "debate about nationality, identity, citizenship and belonging" (Jeffers, 2011: 50). Resonating with Woolley's arguments, there emerges here a call for work that avoids linear narratives based on 'authentic' truth-claims, in favour of more complex narratives that wrestle with these broader questions. Those affective and haunting contexts explored above can become a part of this questioning, asking how these figures of migration "stick" and move.

The "right kind of story" paradigm also haunts participatory work, "'authentic' refugee stories are sometimes crafted and manipulated in order to 'give voice' or allow refugees to tell 'their story'" (Jeffers, 2011: 138):

> Nervousness about the negative stereotyping of refugees and the need to create a
> positive image sometimes leads to an over protective approach perhaps based on a

fear that audiences will not like what they hear unless the message is adequately managed.

(Jeffers, 2011: 146)

Jeffers argues that theatre makers cannot ignore or escape these ethical considerations and dilemmas, as though an offer to place stories before an audience holds an implicit guarantee of an "audience that will be sympathetic to them" (Jeffers, 2011: 162). She expands on this in *Refugee Performance, Practical Encounters* (2013), by considering the role of the audience as listener, the practice of being an audience, the experience of being an audience member at a piece of theatre that shares refugee narratives, and the act of 'giving audience to'. Ultimately, she rejects the binary of the hostile uneducated audience versus the audience who is already "on side" and "converted":

> Neither of these possible audience positions is adequate for exploring the very complex sets of negotiations, expectations and outcomes that are involved in a refugee theatre event, especially one in which the performers are themselves refugees.

(Jeffers, 2013: 242)

Polarities of solidarity and ignorance do not account for the complex affective relationships and negotiations between audience and performer, and they lead to work that positions the performer as a cultural missionary, where practitioners are driven by the dangerous belief that they are in a position to show others the way towards liberation (McDonald, 2005: 72-73).

Balfour's chapter in the same book offers similar insight into the ways performances are constructed that tell refugee stories. Using a selection of case studies, he demonstrates the ways practitioners attempt to sidestep the victimhood narrative (Balfour, 2013:176-188). Woolley argues in a similar vein that "an uncritical reliance on experiential truth fails to account for the ways in which narrative is troubled by trauma" (Woolley, 2014: 125). A project that Balfour analyses focuses on the specific needs of the audience, who are also refugees, to develop positive strategies for surviving and settling into relocation. A fictional family works through the problems and dilemmas that might lie ahead, using the experience of the actors and research participants, but underpinned with discussions about support networks and strategies. Another displaces the victimhood of the refugees from their ethnic-specific experiences and content, and focuses on broader political and historical social movements. Balfour argues that it is the paradox of refugee performance, that it can "imply the production of a secure map of experience, by fixing testimonial points and coordinates, which make an encounter with alterity more elusive" (Balfour, 2013: 187). He argues that by exploring 'the other' in different ways, and engaging with different ways of knowing, artists can develop tactics to "sneak up" on this paradox (Balfour, 2013: 187):

> These ways of knowing involve engaging the arts to help transcend the process of mapping secure forms of knowledge onto others, through avoiding victimhood narratives, and foregrounding the importance of listening for stories that emerge in their own time and their own ways.

(Balfour, 2013: 187)

It becomes clear through the work of Balfour (2013), Jeffers (2013), Woolley (2014), and others, that dominant ways of thinking about migration and asylum, haunt the practices of theatre makers working alongside refugees and asylum seekers, or sharing refugee narratives. By attempting to tell the "right kind" of story, artists validate broader assumptions that these right kinds of stories exist, and by attempting to avoid painting 'negative images' of refugees, committing crimes in order to find safety for example, they reinforce victimhood narratives and fetishize points of arrival and journeying. The contexts of the nation state, of the nation thing, and the figure of the migrant, haunt practice, and practice haunts them in return, through affective exchanges and debates that interrogate the 'stickiness' of those ideas to certain bodies. I return to these questions of trauma narratives in part two of the thesis, particularly the fetishizing of dangerous journeying and points of arrival in refugee narratives. I argue that these narratives, whilst on the surface level, look to share stories of the refugee crisis to generate solidarity in audiences, share truthful narratives of trauma, and avoid negative images of refugees, they actually act as a route of exploring the role of the West as Subject, and offer a confrontation of how artists imagine the marginalised other through their own experiences and identities.

These Spectres, of the nation state, the nation thing, and the figure of the migrant, all affectively haunt applied theatre practices, and are affectively haunted by it in return. Broadly, theatre can be a practice through which the nation is constructed, offering a space for collectivities and communities to be imagined (Holdsworth, 2010: 6). It can also be a practice through which the nation is placed under a microscope and critiqued. One example of theatre that places the nation state under a microscope is a recent show by Yorkshire based theatre company SBC, *Where We Began,* which asked what would happen if notions of nation and nationality were taken to their extreme, and every person on the planet was forced to return to their place of birth (SBC, 2018). As the spectres of the nation

state, the nation thing, and the figure of the migrant, haunt in friction with one another, and theatre as a practice finds its own spectrality and spirit of resistance, theatre can become a practice through which the tensions in the national fabric, and fabric of 'the national', are placed in dialogue (Holdsworth, 2010: 7). Through this dialogue, the "unexamined metaphors" that emerge from the figure of the migrant can be examined, allowing us to reach solid ground in where we individually fit on the spectrum of that figure, in resistance to the haunting of the nation that asks us to name home (Cox, 2014: 76-7).

Derrida's hauntology, thinking through ideological systems as Spectres that haunt, provides an opportunity to consider context as something figured as outside of practice, but working through it as an affective circulation. Context stops simply being the fabric 'out there' that the practice, participants or audience are situated in, and becomes something that is within the workshop space, theatre, rehearsal, through the practice, participants or audience themselves. Those people who are involved in the practice, are also involved in imagining the community of the nation state, they experience the cultural memory of the nation thing, and construct the figure of the migrant through occupying space on that spectrum or placing others on it. The opaque phantoms of ideology are present in the practice through the people who are participating in their haunting, or are haunted from within it (Joseph, 2001: 104).

1.3   Context that Governs.

In this section, I move to consider the ways that context is figured in applied theatre as something that governs practice more directly. Whilst context figured as that which haunts looks toward larger, ethereal, processes of ideology, context as that which governs moves

the discussion closer to the shifting (dis)localities in which the practice I will later analyse

takes place. This section focuses on the ways in which context can exert more direct

control over practice, how practice can be co-opted into larger political agendas, and how

it can act as a space of resistance. As with the previous section, I continue to ask how this

process works through and in practice, rather than viewing it as an external factor, moving

away from questions of scale and distance toward flatter ontologies. In this way, "power,

previously extensive and operating from without, becomes intensive and now works from

within" (Lash, 2007: 59).

Context, as a critical concept for applied theatre, has recently been framed as a governing

force by Freebody, Balfour, Finneran, and Anderson, as they very briefly consider "context

as governing" in the introduction to *Applied Theatre: Understanding Change* (2018). They

write that context "defines the notions and articulations of change" and influences

practices, philosophies, and institutional considerations (Freebody et. al, 2018: 5). As they

name context as something that governs, they argue that agendas exert influence on

practice, specifically discussing the impact of donor agendas. I develop this figure of

context as governing more fully in this section, exploring the political and economic

processes of austerity in the United Kingdom, framing them through Foucault's theories of

governmentality, and exploring how this has already been connected to applied theatre.

Whilst in the previous section I focused largely on critical theory before applying it to the

context of migration and applied theatre, in this section I focus first on the political and

economic context of austerity, before illuminating the ways this is figured as a context that

governs for applied theatre. I engage with the ways this is taken up in applied theatre

throughout the section.

As outlined in the main introduction, austerity can be described as a policy of reducing the state's budget to promote economic growth:

> Austerity is a form of voluntary deflation in which the economy adjusts through the reduction of wages, prices, and public spending to restore competitiveness, which is (supposedly) best achieved by cutting the state's budget, debts, and deficits. Doing so, its advocates believe, will inspire "business confidence" since the government will neither be "crowding-out" the market for investment by sucking up all the available capital through the issuance of debt, nor adding to the nation's already "too big" debt.

> (Blyth, 2013: 2)

Programmes of austerity work from the assumption that positive economic growth is catalysed and underpinned by the private sector. A reduction in the activity and spending of the public sector opens gaps in the market for more private spending and activity. This draws from political positions that prioritise the individual, seeing the private individual as better suited to understand and meet the needs of their local conditions (Schui, 2014: 125) Competition in this arena is seen as another catalyst for economic growth (Berry, 2016: 1 – 16). Austerity is most often implemented as a process that reduces perceived dangerous levels of public deficit (Blyth, 2013: 5).

The banking crisis in America and Europe, from 2008 onwards, and the subsequent recession felt across the world, led the newly formed coalition government in Britain to embark on a programme of austerity. Whilst this was in part to meet the immediate problem of the budget deficit and growing national debt incurred after the outgoing UK

Labour government decided to nationalise several banks (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011: 23),

austerity is not generally accepted by economists as an efficient course of action to take in

a time of economic downturn, and an even worse solution in terms of social justice

(Piketty, 2014: 541). The austerity period that followed the financial crash of 2008 can be

more accurately described as a protectionist strategy, working to protect the neoliberal

agendas and processes that actually led to the financial crisis (Berry, 2016: 30-1). Austerity

in this way is a process that is used to uphold the way the economy is currently run and the

broad arrangement of capital, rather than seek structural economic change.

Significantly, the austerity programme instituted in the United Kingdom can also be seen as

a part of wider plans to reorganise systems of local and national governance to reconcile a

variety of policy goals, economic ideologies, and political legacies. These ideologies and

legacies include the two main streams of conservative political thought, one-nation

Conservatism "associated with Tory governments up the 1970's" (Lowndes & Pratchett,

2011: 33), and the more contemporary ideology of the free market and "individualism most

closely associated with the Thatcher governments of the 1980's" (Bulley & Sokhi-Bulley,

2014: 456). This reconciliation of ideologies is complicated even further as the coalition

government sought to accommodate some New Labour thinking, particularly the content

and style of Tony Blair's public sector reform (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011: 36).

At the heart of the coalition's early plans, bringing these disparate parts together is David

Cameron's policy programme, *The Big Society*. As his "core intellectual idea", it aimed to

devolve "powers to communities and establish a greater role in public services for

voluntary and community organisations" (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011: 30). *The Big Society*

looked to move away from 'Big Government' and devolve more powers to local authorities

in ways that would reduce bureaucracy and therefore spending. Big Society vanguards

were set up, with areas volunteering as testing grounds for the project in its initial stages. Liverpool, one of the first vanguards, eventually withdrew from this, claiming that budget cuts to local councils and the removal of community partnerships meant that they were less able to deliver services and provision (Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011: 32). At the core of *The Big Society* is intersecting programmes of austerity and devolution; the reorganisation of public spending is coupled with, and in some ways obscured by, the reorganisation of local governance and localism.

Significantly, whilst most programmes of austerity look to prioritise the private sector and processes of financialisation, *The Big Society* also looked to local communities, charities, neighbourhoods and individuals to fill the gap left by the reduction of state provision and what Cameron saw as a reliance on the state (Buser, 2011: 9; Morris, 2012: 132). This defining feature of *The Big Society* also forms one of its fundamental flaws. Whilst charities were expected to play a much larger role in providing services to the public, the removal of their state funding via the austerity measures of the coalition presented the biggest practical threat to them actually playing that enhanced role (Morris, 2012: 135). Those charities, groups, communities and individuals expected to meet the social needs created by austerity were themselves also subject to that austerity. This is at the core of what Freebody, Balfour, Finneran, and Anderson argue as they imagine context as governing notions of change and possibility for applied theatre (Freebody et. al, 2018: 5).

These broader economic shifts have had implications for applied theatre practice. Prior to the period of austerity that followed the 2008 economic crash, the New Labour governments of Blair and Brown, 1997 – 2010, pursued models of creative economy that coupled creativity with enterprise and entrepreneurialism (Harvie, 2013: 67). The advocacy of the creative industries from the government at this time, with increased funding and

infrastructure for the arts, came with the demand for artists to "act in increasingly entrepreneurial ways" (Harvie, 2013: 68). The social policy underpinning this funding and infrastructure focused on the "measureable "impacts" of the arts" (Belfiore & Bennet, 2007: 136). Some of the assumptions that this relies on are that the arts do produce "positive social impacts", that they hold "transformative powers", and that the change they create is measurable (Belfiore & Bennet, 2007: 137).

In 2007, Neelands argued that applied theatre practices had largely become synonymous with the agendas of the state, creating a "secondary labour market for theatre practitioners and other artists who [sought] work 'beyond theatre' and with those who are vulnerable and marginalised" (Neelands, 2007: 313). Through this, a broader focus on social arts practices that produced measurable positive outcomes developed from the New Labour policies. Further to this effect-driven model of arts practices, the demand for entrepreneurialism amongst artists led to an arts sector increasingly saturated by neo-liberalism, as the New Labour government sought to "embed and naturalise" those ideologies (Harvie, 2012: 14). In the subsequent years, from the financial crash of 2008 and onwards, this relationship to state agendas became polarised, with practice either adhering to increased pressures around producing measurable social outcomes, or occupying spaces of resistance to those agendas and the states social and economic policies.

The austerity that followed the New Labour years, under the Coalition government, and the subsequent Conservative governments, did not do away with the focus on effect and social outcome, but intensified it (Mullen, 2017: 11). Amongst a reduction in funding for the arts, and a stripping back of arts infrastructure, the need to produce measurable effects on individuals became more pronounced, as artists looked to prove their practice was one of those 'deserving' of funding:

"The move in socially committed theatre towards delivering tangible outcomes
through individualized approaches to social problems is now predominantly
recognized as one consequence of neo-liberalism"

(Mullen, 2017: 11)

Alongside this, as the state reduced its funding for arts and culture, it sought to foster an
economy of private and philanthropic giving. This private giving can signal a number of
possibilities including "disinterested giving", "self-promotion", or "instrumentalism" (Alston
& Daker, 2012: 435). At the core of these shifts however, also remains space for agency on
the part of the artists who are subject to them, who are still able to work creatively and
critically against and "amidst such tensions" (Mullen, 2017: 20). Whilst philanthropic giving,
as a funding stream for applied theatre, carries its own agendas, as with the state, complex
chains of agents between policy decisions and delivery are long and agendas are contested.
The artists at the end of this chain also contest this, and negotiate the impact of these
agendas on their work. This contestation is significant in the task of flattening a context
that governs, as it begins to demonstrate the way that this governance happens through
networks and chains of people, rather than as a context influencing from 'out there'.

As the coalition government left office in 2015, and the Conservative party returned to lead
the government alone, the Big Society failed to re-emerge as a policy programme. What
followed has been described by Vivien Lowndes and Alison Gardner as 'super austerity',
with deeper entrenched devolution:

> We suggest that local government now confronts a situation of super-austerity, in which new cuts come on top of previous ones, compounding their original impact and creating dangerous (and unevenly spread) multiplier effects.

> (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016: 358-9)

The cuts that had taken place during the coalition government had been justified with the aim to aggressively and quickly reduce the budget deficit that followed the nationalisation of some banks during the financial crisis. As the Conservative government took up office again in 2015 they affirmed that this trajectory of austerity would continue. Lowndes and Gardner write that devolution acts as a "neat policy manoeuvre which allows the Conservative government to disavow responsibility for fragmented services it can no longer control, in the 'context' of unpopular and unsustainable budget cuts" (2016: 365).

The underpinning hope, that needs previously met by the public sector would now be met by the private or voluntary sector, has continued from the early austerity of *The Big Society* through to the more recent programmes of super austerity and devolution:

> What is emerging, therefore, is a modified version of the new right which is distrustful of the state and privileges the actions of individuals as the basis of society. At the same time, it places considerable emphasis upon the need for community as the driver of local governance. It places a significant faith, therefore, in the ability of individuals to behave as citizens, rather than simply 'consumers'. From the one-nation perspective, this faith assumes that communities can and will self-organise if the state is withdrawn from certain functions. From the new right

perspective, the assumption is that economic incentives can encourage effective governance at the local level.

(Lowndes & Pratchett, 2011).

Optimists celebrate the creativity and resilience shown by local authorities in mitigating the impact of cuts to date.

(Lowndes & Gardner, 2016: 370).

The programmes of austerity implemented by the coalition government and subsequent Conservative led governments grew from *The Big Society* initiative, and in many ways are still informed by it. *The Big Society* relied on narratives of nostalgia, romanticising the past, and looking toward a period of renewal. This narrative was used to frame and legitimise the initiation of a period of austerity, however in reality *The Big Society* worked to undermine local democracy, shifting power to private and third sector organisations. It also offered an idealized view of the community that ignored any concepts of power or conflict (Jacobs, 2015: 29).

The Big Society could be taken up as an example of context that governs, as it has been able to co-opt organisations and individuals into the austerity agenda. Rather than facilitating a reduced state, the programmes of austerity and devolution, understood through the paradigm of *The Big Society*, actually increase the power of the state over individuals and the wider population. Citizens become governed more efficiently and effectively, with governmentality diffused throughout society, as power is moved from the

state to third sector organisations, communities, neighbourhoods and the individual (Bulley & Sokhi-Bulley, 2014: 456; Jacobs, 2015: 35; Lister, 2015: 361-5).

Governmentality is a theory of power developed by Foucault in some of his later writings. Governmentality is wider than government, describing instead, the art of government (Foucault, 1991: 92). Governmentality asks how governments create the conditions to govern, and what the practices of governing are (Foucault, 1991: 87-104). Governmentality is the guiding of one by another, the "conduct of conduct" at a distance, through freedom (Thompson, 2003: 9). An example of this can be drawn from the growth of food banks alongside the implementation of the Big Society. In 2017, Conservative Member of Parliament Jacob Rees-Mogg commented on the use of food banks in the UK, saying:

> "To have charitable support given by people voluntarily to support their fellow citizens I think is rather uplifting and shows what a good, compassionate country we are […] Inevitably, the state can't do everything, so I think that there is good within food banks"
>
> (BBC, 2017).

This demonstrates a fulfilment of a key intention of austerity in *The Big Society*. Whilst foodbanks might be seen as indicative that the state is failing to meet the needs of the poorest in the country, Rees-Mogg recognises them as the final step in the austerity programme. As the state is made smaller, the needs it previously addressed and met are instead met by third sector organisations and communities. Perhaps unwittingly, communities finish the programme of austerity by fulfilling their intended role in it,

meeting the needs no longer met by the state. The political and economic context of the

time, as a process of governmentality, determines the actions of communities.

This devolution of responsibility can become problematic for organisations whose agendas

are not in alignment with the government and other powerful actors. Snyder-Young argues

that, for applied theatre, this can lead to a tension between institutional agendas, who

might look for large scale change, and those of donor agendas, who might wish to maintain

the status-quo (Snyder-Young, 2011: 43). There is tension and contradiction even with

those forces that look to govern practice. *The Big Society* assumes the existence of a

"consensual society", where the aims of third sector organisations, communities,

neighbourhoods and individuals complement those of the state (Milbourne et. al., 2013: 4).

Community is actually better understood as conflictual, and "occluding such conflict

trivialises the advocacy role that some [third sector organisations] adopt in the interests of

less powerful social groups" (Milbourne et. al., 2013: 4). The Big Society prioritises

organisations whose goals do not challenge the goals of the state, excluding those that do.

This produces the diffuse governmentality of the state, co-opting third sector

organisations, communities, neighbourhoods and individuals into wider state agendas

(Morris, 2012: 133-4).

The economies of applied theatre have significantly shifted with the changes to arts

funding explored above. Funding for projects and companies is reduced, but the

requirement to produce measurable outcomes is increased. Whilst the continued survival

of the field over recent years, against the threat of austerity, demonstrates the

resourcefulness and resilience of it, it also demonstrates "a gradual process of adaptation

to market-driven, individualized policy interests resulting in diminished or frustrated artistic

and political ideals" (Mullen, 2019: 25). This has the potential to limit the scope of applied

theatre as the language of business is employed, and structures that "emphasise product and efficiency" are reinforced (Adamonson & Wessels, 2019: 122). Even when practitioners intend otherwise, work can become complicit in, or contribute to, neoliberal inequalities and ideologies (Mullen, 2017: 11).

Foucault's earlier writing saw *resistance* as an inescapable component of concepts of power. His later work on governmentality reframed this, looking toward the relationship between power and *freedom*. Rather than a reaction defined directly by the movement it sought to resist, freedom holds a refusal to submit, a reciprocal incitation and struggle, and a precondition for power and governmentality rather than an effect of it as the thing that power operates through rather than in spite of (Foucault, 1982: 790). In this way, whilst austerity agendas have worked to extend governmentality, organisations are still able to resist those agendas. This presents a complex landscape of organisations co-opted into, or working against austerity agendas, that are all equally able to struggle against those agendas, and whose freedom and resistance may or not be predefined by those agendas. Context interacts with applied theatre practice as it seeks to govern, and conduct the conduct of others, but this in turn determines spaces of resistance, and allows for refusal to that governing. Amongst pessimistic assessments of the ways in which austerity and shifts in arts funding have shaped changes in applied theatre practice, Mullen acknowledges the role of resistance in the governance of practice, arguing that there is still scope of possibility for applied theatre practitioners, as she conceptualises economic "activity and relationships as sites of active critical and creative negotiation" (Mullen, 2017: 13). She argues that whilst practice is, in many ways, affected by broader economic changes, there is still an ongoing struggle on the part of artists to "cultivate ethical economic subjectivities" (Mullen, 2017: 20).

In his 2009 article, *The Politics of Intention: Looking for a Theatre of Little Changes,* Balfour outlines some of the practical ways in which donor agendas can govern the workings of applied theatre practice, and how practitioners resist that. He writes, "in the process of accommodating, adapting to, and being funded by external agencies the risk is that applied theatre can become too close to the powers it may want to question" (Balfour, 2009: 352). Prentki and Preston make similar observations in their introduction to *The Applied Theatre Reader*. They argue that two tiers of work exist, those that receive state funding and therefore act to deliver the governments social inclusion policies, either directly or indirectly, and those that are able to engage in deeper considerations of social exclusion, and critique the state's policies that might entrench exclusion (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 14). There is a clear link between the agendas of funders and the scope that the practices they fund are able to work in. Jonathan Neelands argued in 2007 that the political nature of applied theatre had become confused with the "therapeutic and affirmative" uses of it, and through this confusion, had lost its political capabilities. He argues that this change in course for applied theatre came from the cultural policy of the then New Labour government, which was pro-social and affirmative, rather than politically transformative (Neelands, 2007: 213 – 313).

Balfour argues away from transformative notions of applied theatre, arguing that intentions to create large scale social or political change can actually further ingrain the influence of funder, or donor, agendas. The notion of transformative practice creates vulnerabilities in the field, as funding is handed over with the promise that there will be some change, and so that specific change therefore becomes a term of the funding. The nature and impact of what change is, becomes defined by the funder, and not the practitioner who only "tangentially" addresses it (Balfour, 2009: 353). Drawing from Neelands, Balfour argues that hero narratives "promote testimonials of drama as

precipitating hopeful revolutions and transformative personal experiences" (Balfour, 2009:

353). However, he also explains that it is vital that applied theatre discourse is able "to

distinguish between localised and anecdotal 'miracles'" (Balfour, 2009: 353), and consider

how they are theorised, critiqued and potentially generalised. Nicholson moves to argue

that poorly defined notions of change in the field create opportunities for that definition to

be dominated by donor or funder agendas (Nicholson, 2015: 25).

For Balfour, social change in applied theatre is unpredictable, as it becomes subject to a

myriad of influences, and so he is pessimistic in his critique of social policies, arguing that

change does not often occur in the manner that social architects, or the state, plan:

"centralised social policies, administrated by the state, are bound to failure because the

gap between planning, implementation and administration is far too vulnerable" (Balfour,

2009: 353). Similarly, and as an arm of the state, "the rationale of the useful artist, making

creative interventions into a fixed social reality with predictable impacts is problematic"

(Balfour, 2009: 353). The complex chains of agents between policy decisions and delivery

are long, agendas are contested and negotiated before they reach the applied theatre

practitioner, who also contests and negotiates the impact of those policy agendas on their

work. The figure of context as governing is more complex than a simple system of

domination, as it also speaks to the diffuse relational nature of power that Foucault

develops in his early writings.

Considering these negotiations between donor agenda, policy agenda, and social change,

Balfour looks toward a *theatre of little changes:* "small miracles and changes suggest a

need to check against unrealistic claims, and to ensure that the aesthetic is interdependent

with the possibilities of social engagement" (Balfour, 2009: 536). He concludes with

reflections on the relationship between donors and practice, and frames this relationship

as a part of the performative process of applied theatre, "the practitioner often has to be half car salesman, half ideologue" (Balfour, 2009: 357). It is through resisting the "bait" of large claims to social change that applied theatre might encounter the accidental (Balfour, 2009: 357).

Balfour's conclusions resonate with many of the arguments that Snyder-Young makes in *Theatre of Good Intentions, Challenges and Hopes for Theatre and Social Change*. She describes an anxiety in the field around discussions of efficacy vs affect, with "demands made from funding bodies and policy makers that artists provide evidence of performance impact in relationship to targets defined by those authorities and institutions" (Snyder-Young, 2013: 15). Whilst institutions and institutional leaders might "like the ideas of 'empowerment' and 'agency'", donors will not support work that is against their own interests (Snyder-Young, 2013: 43-45). She argues that artists must take more responsibility for themselves, setting benchmarks with their own tools of evaluation, assessment and performance management (Snyder-Young, 2013: 15).

Snyder-Young engages with discussions around prison theatre. Analysis of prison theatre offers a unique insight into the governance of applied practices, as the relationships between applied theatre practice and the institutions within which it takes place become more readily visible. She first draws from Freire to describe prisons as places where power is profoundly on display, dominant, and punishing. Prisons discipline and transform. She draws from Balfour too:

> If, as Balfour explains, 'Prison is in the business of containment, observation,
>
> punishment, categorization, registration, separation, and on occasion

rehabilitation' (Balfour, 2004: 3), it is not in the business of creating spaces of

radical freedom.

(Snyder-Young, 2013: 70)

One of the main aims of many applied practitioners in prisons is to open that space of

radical freedom in some way, creating spaces of agency, but as one of the most extreme

examples of what Freire calls *prescription,* the work becomes more complex. Snyder-Young

cites Freire; prescription is "the imposition of one individual's choice upon another,

transforming the consciousness of the person prescribed to into one that conforms with

the prescriber's consciousness" (Freire, 1970/2003: 47, in Snyder-Young, 2013). She argues

that applied theatre practitioners approach this contradiction in many different ways.

Some work to radically resist the entire prison system from within, some find they are

limited by donor agendas and work within institutional constraints to create spaces of

agency for those in prison using more humanistic frameworks, others do not at all

challenge the authority or agendas of the prisons within which they take place, but "many

are full of small moments of negotiation with institutional authority" (Snyder-Young, 2013:

71).

Snyder-Young's analysis of applied theatre practice in prisons offers an example of how

institutional constraints, funding agendas, and various approaches to social change and

aesthetic choices can inform how applied theatre is governed. Her arguments resonate

with Balfour's call to a theatre of little changes, as applied theatre in prisons offers a

magnified image of how donor, funder, institutional and state agendas govern applied

theatre practice more broadly and in other contexts where this might be less obvious. Later

in the thesis, particularly in the analysis, I return to these questions of governmentality,

and further interrogate the ways in which donor agendas, particularly in a period of austerity, shape applied theatre practice. I also ask how practitioners see their work as resistant to these governing contexts, and how this process might be complicated.

So far in this chapter I have considered the ways that context is already explored in applied theatre, and I have figured these as 'arenas of effect', 'context that haunts' and 'context that governs'. In each of these discussions, I have explored how these figurations actually function within practice, through affective exchanges, and relational movements of power. I have done so alongside a consideration of the contexts of migration and austerity, and how these are already understood to interact with applied theatre, with implications for practices with refugees and asylum seekers. In the next sections, I move to develop the notion of 'context within', building on the discussions this far.

1.4   Context Within.

In the previous sections of this chapter, I have considered context as figured as an 'arena of effect', something that haunts, and something that governs. Those contexts that haunt are seen as elusive and distant, exerting influence on practice from a seemingly indiscernible distance, but really work through affective exchanges and 'sticky' memories. That which governs appears closer still, operating control and conducting the conduct of the applied theatre practitioner through freedom, but again in reality working through complex chains and negotiations of people and diffuse power. For both these instances, I have explored how applied theatre practitioners consider context, figured these through cultural theory, and then worked to interrogate how these contexts function as flatter, rather than as problems of distance and scale, but within practice. In this section, I move closer to this

notion of 'context within', working through questions of the self and other, and I begin to figure context more fully woven into applied theatre.

In Being and Time (1927), Martin Heidegger explores ontologies of the self, analysing concepts of being. After working through the mechanics of what the self might be, as a "being-in-the-world", he moves to argue that the self always finds itself in a situation (1927: 174-175) and is always confronted with the possible, the future (1927: 182-183). He describes this as a 'thrown-ness', that from being most radically thrown into the world at birth, the self is continually thrown into situations and possibilities. Being-in-the-world is not a formulation that can be broken down into separate parts as a being is always in the world, with situations and possibilities a part of that being. I now look to move to explore how context might be considered as those situations and possibilities that the self is with, and thrown into. Later in the thesis, in analysis, I consider the imagining of the other within this, as contributing to the close tapestry of 'context within'. In this section I begin to explore the ways that the hostile environment, a policy programme that has sought to reduce migration to the UK by making it difficult to migrate, has worked on and through the self, and conceptions of the other. Later in the thesis, I also work through points of analysis that focus on affect and intention, which I trace in the next chapter as threads of connectivity between practice and context. The theory that I use in this section to explore how context is linked to the self, informs the development of this tracing, specifically through Merleau-Ponty's understanding of motivations and intentions. I begin this section by outlining the notion of the Deterrence Paradigm and its constitutive parts, before focusing on the hostile environment and asking how this demonstrates the way context functions *as* the self. In the section following this, I return to applied theatre to make some conclusions and outline the initial ideas emerging in this chapter that are contributing toward the notion of 'context within'.

Complexities that involve the status of refugees, illegal migrants, legal resident migrants, children of refugees, and undocumented migrants, has led to an intensified conflict between notions of sovereignty and hospitality in recent decades (Benhabib, 2005: 657). Borders can be conceptualised through the ways that citizenship, the insider and outsider, is imagined, rather than the ways that states are territorially bounded (Waldinger & Soehl, 2013: 337). This contradiction, between sovereignty and hospitality, forms the core contradiction of what is known as the Deterrence Paradigm. The Deterrence Paradigm dominates Western policies that inform border practices, particularly with reference to forced migrants, refugees, and poorer or lower skilled migrants (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Tan, 2017: 237). States are unable to force refugees to leave their territory under the principle of *non-refoulement*, which means refugees cannot be removed to an unsafe country, and states are unable to penalise refugees for their method of arrival (Hathaway & Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2015: 237). States can, however, work to make it more difficult for refugees to cross the borders into their country and remain there, whilst simultaneously maintaining a "formal commitment to international refugee law" (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Tan, 2017: 31).

In the United Kingdom, the Deterrence Paradigm has found life in the past ten years through The Hostile Environment. The Hostile Environment describes a series of policy programmes enacted by the Coalition and following Conservative governments. Much of the bulk of this policy is found in the Immigration Act of 2014, and the Immigration Act of 2016 (Home Office, 2014; Home Office, 2016). The Deterrence Paradigm can be broken down into five main categories, drawing from the work of thinkers from Refugee Studies, Thomas Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nikolas F. Tan. These categories inform and underpin asylum and migration law across much of the Europe, and can also be used to frame The

Hostile Environment. Below, I briefly outline these five categories, before lending a focus to

the fifth to ask questions about how this illuminates the self *as* context.

The first category of the Deterrence Paradigm is "Non Admission" (Gammeltoft-Hansen &

Tan, 2017: 34-5). This is the process by which legal measures are taken to retroactively

remove or exclude refugees from a territory once they have arrived. This includes

processes like removal to a third safe country. The second category is "Non Arrival"

(Gammeltoft-Hansen & Tan, 2017: 35-6): measures are taken to make border crossings

difficult or dangerous, or countries work together to prevent the onward movements of

migrants. The United Kingdom has worked with other European countries to increase

border control, with the creation of specialised EU border agency Frontex, which conducts

operations at sea to prevent illegal migration, and the intelligence agency Eurosur, which

uses advanced surveillance systems to monitor the Mediterranean Sea (Brian & Laczko,

2014: 89-90). This part of the Deterrence Paradigm assumes that migration is mostly

proactive, migrants choose to travel and can therefore be deterred, rather than reactive,

migrants are forced to travel and have no choice other than to take the dangerous route

(Gold & Nawyn, 2013: 97; Richmond, 1993: 19-21). These decisions have almost certainly

affected plans made by forced migrants, as only riskier options for travel remain available.

This effect is an example of how context and the self are linked through motivations, which

will be explored shortly.

The third category is "Offshore Asylum Processing or Protection Elsewhere" (Gammeltoft-

Hansen & Tan, 2017: 36-7): refugees are forcibly relocated away from the country in which

they sought protection or perhaps detained, for example in the Australian off shore

detention camps. The fourth category is "Criminalization" (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Tan,

2017: 37-8): non arrival policies have led to irregular and illegal migration patterns, with a

huge rise in migrant smuggling and human trafficking. This sort of process, and those who facilitate it, are criminalized and targeted by military action. A result of this has been for smugglers and traffickers to avert risk away from themselves, making them more likely to offload passengers before reaching shore or abandon ships. Ships are also impounded more often, leading smugglers and traffickers to use older, cheaper vessels, and to overcrowd them.

The final category, and the main category that will be discussed when analysing the case studies later, is "Indirect Deterrence Measures" (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Tan, 2017: 38-9). To achieve this, countries might use tactics to create poor conditions for refugees living in them, with detention centres, limits on work or income, and sub-standard housing. This is to create a less desirable image of the country for other asylum seekers who might otherwise attempt to enter. In the United Kingdom, this has been marked by a rise in racist and intolerant speech from politicians and mass media directed at migrants and refugees in particular (ECRI, 2016: 34). Whilst refugees who are brought to Britain by the government via the World Gateway Scheme are offered some support, refugees granted asylum after travelling to the UK on their own receive no support and often find themselves destitute and homeless (British Red Cross, 2014; ECRI, 2016; Refugee Council, 2017). Responsibilities for reporting illegal migrants have been extended to all corners of public life including schools and the NHS, with homelessness charities and third sector organisations, for example St Mungo's, working with Immigration Compliance and Enforcement teams to round up and deport foreign born rough sleepers in exchange for funding (CorporateWatch, 2017: 15).

The five constitutive parts of the deterrence paradigm all look to affect refugees by shaping the world in which they are 'thrown into', to return to Heidegger. Some of these parts

involve the direct physical detention or forced movement of migrants, whilst others affect

their ability to plan and move, and others still look to affect the way migrants perceive host

countries as undesirable. This affecting speaks to much of the arguments developed so far,

that images and narratives slide between people as affective networks, sticking to some

bodies more than others. In this setting, the deterrence paradigm looks to stick to many

different kinds of people, affecting the world that refugees are 'thrown into' by shaping the

perceptions of people living in potential host countries, as well as the perceptions of

refugees of those countries. The deterrence paradigm could be figured as a context that

haunts, or that governs, but as I focus on the fifth element of it, "Indirect Deterrence

Measures", I consider how this illuminates context as deeply involved with notions of the

self and other.

Keeping with Heidegger's notion of the self as being in the world, Merleau-Ponty asks what

it is that connects the self the world, for example, how it is that the self is always in a

situation, and how is it confronted with possibilities? He argues that there are two classical

views, one which sees the self as "the result of the physical, physiological, and sociological

influences" which shape it from the outside, and one which sees a freedom in the self,

aware and attentive to those influences (Wrathall, 2004: 120). He argues that the self is not

one of these binary choices, but it is both at the same time. More significantly, he extends

this further, with a third element, writing that the self is also always embodied, and

influenced by the way the body is perceived by the self and as the self, alongside those

external things.

Significant to this discussion, he argues that this relationship and perception can be

demonstrated through motives. He argues that a motive is broader than intention; for

Merleau-Ponty, intention is an example of motive, but it is attentive and articulated.

Motive is broader than intention as it is the being moved to act in a way or do something. As such it might be unarticulated, or unnoticed. It is the effecting/affecting of and the being effected/affected by the other, situations, and possibilities. It is through this effecting and affecting, that Merleau-Ponty situates the connection between the embodied self and the world it is thrown into. The world effects the self, and the self affects the world, but the self is always already in the world as the self is embodied, and the motivations that shape this relationship can also be embodied.

Merleau-Ponty's theory of motivations, alongside Heidegger's notion of being-in-the-world and 'throwness', demonstrate the ways in which questions of context can draw focus on the self, taking the deterrence paradigm as an example, specifically the fifth element of "Indirect Deterrence Measures". The policies that emerge from the deterrence paradigm, including the Hostile Environment in the UK, seek to affect the ways that migrants perceive a particular place. They do this by creating poor conditions for migrants in those countries, as detailed above, alongside a rise in racist and intolerant language, and the extension of responsibilities for managing and reporting illegal migration into all parts of public life. These policies and policy paradigms are intended to shape the motivations of migrants, and look to shape the ways that migrants perceive themselves in the world, and the world they are in. These policies look to shape the *motivations* of individuals, and affect upon the self.

For applied theatre practice, this reiterates that context is not an external arena, but it is in the room, moving between the bodies of participants and artists alike. Political and social contexts are not only out there, looming as with Derrida, or exerting control and experiencing resistance as with Foucault, but lived affectively, effectively, and embodied. Contexts are also in the social transactions of those participants and artists, as being-in-the-world, practices continue to be the effecting of, and of being effected by, the other. This

interaction between the self and other is a core question for applied theatre. In *The Applied Theatre Reader,* Sue Wilkinson and Celia Kitzinger draw from the work of feminist Michelle Fine, to argue toward working with and through the hyphen between self-other figurations. Fine writes:

"Self and Other are knottily entangled […] When we opt, as has been the tradition, simply to write about those who have been Othered, we deny the hyphen . . . When we opt, instead, to engage in social struggles with those who have been exploited and subjugated, we work the hyphen"

(Fine, 1994: 72, cited in Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2009: 90).

Questions of context for applied theatre cut through notions of the self as thrown into and connected to the world, but they also cut through notions of the knotty entanglement between the self and other, as a practice often orientated toward social struggle and encounters with those on the borders. This holds particular significance for applied theatre practices working with refugees and asylum seekers, which can sometimes attempt to offer a fixed or secure narrative of the experience of the other, and undo any opportunity to experience alterity (Balfour, 2013: 187), or in other words, to work through the hyphen.

In her recent book, *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalisation*, Spivak asks who can claim alterity, that is, the role of the marginalised or excluded other. She writes that the most obvious tools for understanding this, and writing histories of the other, have been gender, race, ethnicity, and class (Spivak, 2012: 58). She argues that rather than being fixed identities that can be labelled as other, these are "gesture points" of alterity (Spivak, 2012: 72). Identities in this way are not fixed or innate, they are not 'essential'. Elsewhere she

instead argues toward a "strategic essentialism"; to be politically effective identities must be artificially named (Spivak, 2013: 214). Discussions of identity must use essentialist language and terms but in a strategic way, with a continuous criticality that understands that "constitutive paradox" (Spivak, 2013: 214). In this argument, she is placing in tension, strategies and theories. She recognises that strategies emerging from theory might contradict or undo that theory. Later in the thesis, I work more closely with this contradiction, to tease out clearly the differences between the thinking this research offers, and the strategies that emerge from this.

1.5   Speech, Voice, Representation.

Earlier in this chapter I engaged with some of the tensions in applied theatre surrounding representation, and the strategies used in sharing the stories of 'the other'. Those contexts of migration that are seen as haunting and governing find life through the ways that practitioners and artists share refugee stories. For example, theatre makers might look to avoid sharing a story that deals with a complex dramatic narrative, for fear that it might not be "the right kind" of story, or that could implicate a refugee or asylum seeker in the hostile environment. By attempting to tell this "right kind" of story, artists run the risk of validating broader assumptions that these right kinds of stories exist in other arenas. They also run the risk of reinforcing victimhood narratives, or fetishizing narratives of dangerous journeys and arrival, as they look to avoid painting negative images of refugees. Often this work relies on 'truth claims', and claims for authenticity, that deny the narrative any sort of complexity and contradiction that might reflect more closely the refugee experience, or explore the complexities of that experience. Questions of representation, of speech and voice, are integral to these debates.

Spivak's argument in *Can The Subaltern Speak?,* centres broadly around a deconstruction of the two key words of the question: "subaltern" and "speak". She explores the ways in which oppressed people, the subaltern, are unable to speak, or find representation. She argues that representation is the bringing together of two practices: proxy political representations, as in standing in for the other or the self, and artistic or aesthetic restaging's of the world, re-presentation. All acts of representation are both political proxy representation and the restaging of the world at the same time. Acts of representation may be read as more or less of either, and they may appear to have more or less effect and affect, but they are nonetheless an interplay of this double bind. Distinctly, for Spivak, a radical act of representation is one that not only enacts the double meaning of the word, but one that attends to both. Her positioning of subalternity finds the subaltern beyond the reach of representation, as unknowable and unreachable. Subalternity is therefore conceptualised as a sort of death of speech and representation, outlined very literally in the complex metaphor of Sati, the practice of widow burning. Whilst attempting to avoid essentialising either concept, her thought on the two leads to the conclusion that the subaltern, as a group of oppressed people, cannot find representation; the subaltern cannot speak.

In an extract of her work found in *The Applied Theatre Reader*, bell hooks makes a similar argument to Spivak as to how it is that the subaltern are silenced (hooks, 2009: 84). For Spivak, the subaltern are silenced as the Subject of the West is prioritised, above all else, creating "an effectively heliocentric discourse, [filling] the empty place of the agent with the historical sun of theory, the Subject of Europe" (Spivak, 1989: 69). The unnamed other to the West finds their identity is contained in difference:

> There is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself […]
> The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not been traced so as to offer an
> object of seduction to the representing intellectual.

> (Spivak, 1989: 80)

hooks also describes the ways in which, what Spivak calls the "representing intellectual",
can only trace those itineraries and subjects that can become objects of seduction to them:

> Often this speech about the "Other" annihilates, erases: "No need to hear your
> voice when I can talk about you better that you can speak about yourself. No need
> to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And
> then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it
> has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still author,
> authority. I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject, and you are now at the
> center of my talk".

> (hooks: 2009, 84)

For both hooks and Spivak, the problems of representing 'the other' centre around the
vehicle through which that representation takes place. For both, it is colonial forces,
dominating voices. Spivak talks about the representing intellectual, who prioritises the
Subject of the West and so is not able to notice the voice of the subaltern, as hooks talks
about the storyteller who digests and retells the story of the Other as their own. Later in
the thesis, I explore some of the implications that this has for applied theatre, as I work
through Julia Kristeva's work, *Strangers to Ourselves* (1991). In this, she argues that the

stranger, or the marginalised other, is constructed as a way to protect the self from

recognising its own strangeness or foreignness. Through a confrontation of its own

strangeness, the self is able to recognise the other as through its same strangeness, rather

than through difference. Later, I apply the thinking above to the case study material, as I

explore the ways in which artists attempted to represent the marginalised other, and how

their own self's acted as mediums for this. I explore the ways in which these processes of

representation ignored the voice of the subaltern, digested and retold the stories of the

other, but also facilitated a confrontation of the other within, which changed the practice

of the artists in later projects.

Spivak's notion of subalternity and representation is a spatialized one, as she writes that

there is "no space" from which the subaltern can speak (1989: 103). This links to other

concepts of space and identity. For Doreen Massey, space is active and lived, it is the arena

of social relations. Removed from the lines of social mobility, the subaltern are excluded

from this. Massey argues that society is constructed spatially, and that this makes a

difference to how it works (1993: 146). Excluded from society, from social relations, the

subaltern are excluded from space. Locating the subaltern is an impossible task for Spivak,

the subaltern are an unnamed other, removed from the lines of social mobility, from

representation, and from identity (Spivak, 1989: 75). David Sibley writes that organised

space is maintained and reproduced in its current form to "embody social values which

individuals or groups have both the power and capacity to retain" and that through this is

becomes alienating to the powerless (Sibley, 1995: 76). He continues:

> There are some groups for whom exclusion is a part of their daily experience, who
>
> will be highly sensitive to alien environments, but their spaces of control are too

small to interrupt the reproduction of socio-spatial relations in the interest of the

hegemonic power.

(Sibley, 1995: 76)

He argues that in these exclusionary environments, difference registers as deviance, which

is in turn characterised as a threat which must be kept out through the erection of strong

boundaries. Whilst this immediately resonates with the earlier discussions around borders,

Sibley also discusses the ways in which the purification of space occurs in smaller settings,

shopping centres where security guards evict young people who do not consume very

much in "a place dedicated to consumption by the family" (Sibley, 1995: XII). Ultimately,

space becomes exclusive as both space and society are "implicated in the construction of

the boundaries of the self but that the self is projected onto society and space" (Sibley,

1995: 87).

This notion of a totally exclusive practice of representation, or spaces of complete

exclusion, throws up tensions for applied theatre practice, in which the content of

performance is often drawn from the experiences, or stories, of marginalised participants

and communities (Preston, 2009: 20). The shaping of those stories, and its transposition

into dramatic forms, is regularly seen as "the province of facilitators who use their

experience to guide the participants through a bewildering array of poetic choices"

(Preston, 2009: 20). The use of personal stories in applied theatre can be viewed as having

"great potential to create positive impact for the tellers as well as those who witness these

narratives" (Kandil, 2016: 212). Running alongside this potential for positive impact is

always the risk that processes can become exploitative, with practice holding the potential

to "devoice the teller", or participant (Kandil, 2016: 210). The tension between exploitation

and liberation in telling the stories of others might be considered as an ethical one, implicating both questions of aesthetic form, and participatory practice, as well as the relationship that a practitioner might have to those they seek to represent.

The anxiety of artists or practitioners, to represent the other with integrity, but without undermining or criticising them, can lead to the "opposite trap of romanticising them" (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2009: 89). Through celebrating others, the applied theatre practitioner might also project onto them their own political agenda, appropriating the other to their own cause (Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 2009: 89). Balfour argues that the value of performance, and sharing stories through performance, is not found through the production of a "secure map of experience" or by "fixing testimonial points and coordinates" (Balfour, 2013: 187). He draws from Conquergood, to argue that the potential promise of story and performance is through the "promiscuous traffic" between different ways of knowing (Conquergood, 1998: 145, cited in Balfour, 2013: 187). It is these different ways of knowing that can "involve engaging the arts to help transcend the process of mapping secure forms of knowledge onto others" (Balfour, 2013: 187). Engaging with these different ways of knowing, Balfour argues, allows applied theatre to avoid victimhood narratives, and foregrounds "the importance of listening for stories that emerge in their own time and their own ways" (Balfour, 2013: 187). In the later analysis, as I track the development of a group of practitioners as they develop work with refugees and asylum seekers, I argue that their engagement with sharing the stories of others begins with the trap of celebrating the other, defaulting to a victimhood narrative that in many ways runs the risk of erasing the refugee voice altogether. As their work in this area develops, they begin to foreground those stories that emerge through participatory workshops, and allow for complexity in the dramatic narratives that unfold.

Balfour's argument, that practice must foreground the importance of listening for stories

that emerge in their own time, speaks to the negotiation of power that is ongoing in

processes that engage with the stories and experiences of participants. Michael Gallagher

has argued, drawing from Foucault, that there are two modes of operation at play in this,

that become apparent as the applied theatre practitioner takes up the role of the artist

who crafts those stories into their aesthetic form. For Gallagher, these two modes are

domination and resistance (Gallagher, 2008: 147). He argues that participatory methods

are not intrinsically liberating, nor are they intrinsically oppressive. Rather, they are

negotiations of power that require careful thinking and navigation. He argues that, in

looking for an emancipatory ethics, the question is not how to avoid using power, but how

"power can be used to resist domination" (Gallagher, 2008: 147). The risk of 'devoicing' a

teller does not mean that an artist should retreat from representation, but that the

position of power they hold should be used to resist domination.

For Spivak, this foregrounding of stories that emerge, as a route to resist domination and

retain complexity in the way 'the other' is represented, might not be enough. In *Can the*

Subaltern Speak?, Spivak interrogates practices of representation that look to retell stories

that belong to 'the other'. To demonstrate a tension in these processes, using the context

of the colonial, she constructs the sentence, "white men are saving brown women from

brown men" (Spivak, 1989: 92). At this point in the essay, she is analysing the way that the

British colonial forces outlawed the practice of Sati, whereby widowed Indian women

would throw themselves onto the funeral pyre of their recently deceased husband. Spivak

does not advocate for the practice of Sati through her critique of the actions of the colonial

forces to, but rather, uses it as a metaphor to outline the ways in which women, under

colonial rule in India, had their voices and agencies written out, even if the representations

made on their behalf would liberate them from a horrific death. Her argument is that

between the British forces arguing that Sati was forced upon the women by their husbands and culture, and the "Indian nativists" arguing that "the women actually wanted to die", the "voice-consciousness" of the women themselves is lost (Spivak, 1989: 93).

Spivak's argument centres on the ways in which those who are totally oppressed, whose identity is contained in their difference, are removed from the lines of social mobility and unable to access representation. She engages with the practice of Sati to demonstrate the ways in which agency is removed from the victims, who are doubly "in shadow" as both colonial subjects and women (Spivak, 1989: 84). Spivak does not engage with the practice of Sati as a commentary on representations made only in law or tradition, but as an example of a failed interventionist model that can illuminate a "section of the social text" (Spivak, 1989: 103). For Spivak, the failure lies in the way the "voice-consciousness" of the women is completely lost, either through the practice of Sati, or the intervention of the British colonial powers. The implications that this discussion holds for applied theatre, as a section of the social text and an often interventionist process, lie in conversations around representation, power, and the positionality of the representing agents.

A notion of 'context within', that does away with questions of distance and scale, and focuses instead on questions of exclusion and power through the self and other, brings with it new tensions surrounding representation. In the analysis chapters, I move to further explore these tensions, working through representation as a thread that connects context to practice. Significantly, I look to develop strategies for practice that engage with the theoretical problems outlined above. In Chapter 2, *Methodologies,* I continue to engage with these implications and conversations, and develop thinking around representation for applied theatre that underpins the later analysis. In that analysis, I continue to invoke Spivak's writing, as I interrogate the subject positionality of practitioners. This discussion

becomes particularly important for the first case study analysis, which focuses on a piece of

street theatre sharing refugee stories, *Driftwood,* that did so without actually engaging

with refugees in the creation of the piece. I develop the arguments made here for applied

theatre, asking if the voice-consciousness of those that piece of street theatre looked to

represent were actually lost, of if their absence can hold a different meaning and purpose. I

ask what the *benefits* of this process might be, drawing from Kristeva's work on the notion

of the other within, or the foreigner within (Kristeva, 1988). I also track the development of

those practices of representation, exploring how the artists moved away from this process

and successfully foregrounded emergent stories, abandoning the linear narratives in favour

of more complex ones.

1.6   Conclusions on Context.

In this chapter I have interrogated the ways that context is figured, discussed, and

employed as a theoretical tool in applied theatre, with particular reference to applied

theatre with refugees. I have also worked closely with writing from cultural thinkers,

alongside writers from a variety of fields orbiting either discussions around austerity or

migration, to figure and then deconstruct notions of context to do away with models that

rely on scale and distance. Through this I have begun to advance the notion of a dislocal

'context within'. Moving forward, I engage with case study material to further develop this

notion, and to ignite strategies for the field of applied theatre. In this section, I draw

together some of the key thinking that has developed in this first chapter.

The turn to affect is a significant moment for applied theatre, and potentially demonstrates

ways that the field looks to resist the agendas shaped by shifts in funding and austerity

outline earlier, and some of the ways that applied theatre has been instrumentalised by the

state. I have previously detailed the link between donor agendas, and that of practitioners, and examined some of the ways that the social policies of the state find life through applied theatre practice:

> The move in socially committed theatre towards delivering tangible outcomes through individualized approaches to social problems is now predominantly recognized as one consequence of neo-liberalism.
>
> (Mullen, 2017: 11)

As programmes of austerity ask practice to deliver tangible, measurable social outcomes, the turn to affect can be framed as a turn of resistance, moving away from those exertions of power. It asks practitioners to prioritise fun, enjoyment, and embodied experiences over "positive social impacts" (Belfiore & Bennet, 2007: 137). The turn to affect facilitates a new political programme for applied theatre, as it acts as a point of resistance to wider agendas that look to utilise practice to drive social change, particularly those of the state.

For applied theatre with refugees, a renewed focus on aesthetics and affect can help to resolve some of the questions around the testimonial and "monological" approaches to sharing refugee stories (Balfour, 2015: 65). It opens potential for messiness, and experimentation in the narratives that are shared and developed, abandoning overused narratives of journeying and arrival, focusing instead on what might have stuck, and what orientations might be at work. As practice is orientated away from social utility, and toward emotional, embodied, affective responses, it meets some of the challenges that Spivak has set up. In terms of representation, the turn to affect means that practice is becoming attentive to both the political re-presentation of the self and other, and the aesthetic

restaging of the world. In Chapter 2, *Methodologies,* I return to Spivak's construction of

representation, and explore it as a route for analysis. In the analysis, as I examine the case

study projects, I ask more questions about what it might mean to be attentive to these two

meanings of representations. In particular, I develop ways of understanding how the

affective and the effective work in synchronicity, and that at the core of both questions, is

the people that practice involves. I draw from some of Spivak's more recent work around

education practice in communities, particularly where practitioners come from cultures

different to participants.

Thompson argues that the turn to affect does not erase the potential for social or political

outcomes for applied theatre, but that it can be part of practice that generates its radical

intent (Thompson, 2009: 118). This is evident in some ways, as a shift to affect offers a

route of resistance to programmes of austerity and funder agendas that prioritise effect.

Whilst Thompson prioritises affect, he issues a call for a broader model of applied theatre

that still facilitates a political project (Thompson, 2009: 46, 174). Change for applied

theatre is figured as both "epic" and "intimate", "micro" and "macro" (Freebody et. al,

2018: 25). Both the effects and affects of applied theatre emerge from what Freebody et. al

call a "commitment to aesthetic imperatives" and "a confidence in negotiating and

engaging with transdisciplinary approaches" that is linked the specificities of the contexts in

which practice is located (Freebody et. al, 2018: 25). As argued throughout this chapter,

these contexts are also discussed as epic and intimate, micro and macro. However, the

political natures of those contexts, and those changes, are more complex. Applied theatre

is not inherently tied to one set of ideologies or politics, "its processes are as available to

fascist regimes seeking to inculcate messages of obedience as they are to democratic

regimes seeking to mobilise active citizens" (Prentki & Preston, 2009: 13).

For Thompson, it is important to recognise that the applied theatre workshop, performance, or rehearsal space, is not pre-political. It does not exist separate from politics, or the production of the social. It is a part of the fabric of culture, economics, and society (Thompson, 2009: 174). Actions within the applied theatre space either contribute to the "doing and making" of those broader systems, or start a process of undoing it. In the analysis, I consider the ways in which applied theatre practices do both of these at the same time, contributing to the doing and making of austerity agendas, whilst resisting deterrence paradigms, using John Holloway's theory of interstitial change as a way of accounting for the tensions that emerge through the turn to affect.

Many applied theatre practitioners "operate from a fundamental, utopian desire for theatre to make social change" (Snyder-Young, 2013: 12). Dani Snyder-Young argues that, amidst the tensions outlined above, applied theatre practitioners often do not think strategically enough about what tactics and processes might spark the change they are looking to make. From the analysis, and the invocation of both Spivak and Holloway, emerges strategies of effect and affect that are both underpinned by a call to work in the local. I argue, similarly to Thompson, that practice is a part of the fabric of culture, economics and society, by drawing on the notions of context developed. I look to reconcile some of the tensions that emerge from this discussion around aesthetics, politics, and the turn to affect.

In this chapter I have examined the ways that context is constructed in applied theatre, figured as 'arenas of effect', 'context that haunts', and 'context that governs'. I have examined the ways that these notions of context are better understood as flatter, dislocal exchanges, as movements of affect, sliding and sticking between objects and people, or as conducting the conduct of the applied theatre practitioner through freedom, working

through complex chains and negotiations of people and diffuse power. I have then considered some of these movements, chains and negotiations, setting up concepts of the self, other, exclusion and representation. Moving forward, I continue to trace the shifting threads and points of connectivity between context and practice, looking toward how these inner workings of 'context within' function through the case study analysis. I continue to engage with applied theatre with refugees, and the working examples of context of austerity and migration.

2. Methodologies.

2.1 Introduction.

The research question at the core of this project is:

> *What are the relationships between applied theatre practices and notions of*
> *context?*

To facilitate this analysis, and refine the scope of inquiry, the project asks four sub questions:

1. *How is the relationship between applied theatre practice and contexts of austerity and migration already understood?*
2. *How can context be modelled as a critical concept for applied theatre?*
3. *What is the relationship between recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, which developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, and contexts of austerity and migration?*
4. *How does this relationship between practice and context function?*

I have begun to engage with the first two questions in the first chapter of the thesis. To answer the second two, I analyse case study material from applied theatre practitioners that worked with refugees and asylum seekers in response to the unfolding refugee crisis, and I explore the relationship this observed practice has to contexts of migration and austerity. So far in the first part of the thesis I have outlined what context might mean, how

austerity and migration function as examples of context, and the relevance this has had for applied theatre. I have figured context as flat, dislocal, and as within practice. In the second part of the thesis I engage with the threads and traces that connect applied theatre to its contexts. I do this by drawing out key themes from the first part of the thesis in this chapter. I later centre analysis on these four themes, searching for the knotty double binds within them.

In this chapter, I set out the methodologies that have underpinned this research, and outline the methods that were used to gather material from the case studies. I explore debates around ethnographic practice, and situate this research within those debates, before describing the details of the case studies I worked with. I then move on to argue toward and set up the four themes that are explored in the analysis, and consider in more detail what searching for the double binds might entail. I reflect on the use of these methodologies and methods at points in the analysis chapters and then again in the thesis conclusions.

2.2   Research Methodologies: Immersion and Observation.

In this section, I work through concepts of collaborative and critical ethnography. I argue that all ethnography is collaborative in some way, and that the ethnographic practice that I employed through this research, whilst not formally a collaborative or co-productive process, looked to welcome this collaborative spirit, and was influenced by collaborative methods. I outline the methods used in this research, and explore some of the risks that emerge through the spirit of collaboration with reference to Conquergood's model of ethical ethnographic performance (Conquergood, 1985: 5). Through this discussion of methods, I also introduce the projects that form the case studies. I introduce the details of

these projects, who was involved in them, what data was collected, and how this connects

to the research question. First, I begin with questions of collaborative ethnography, before

opening up how this functioned practically in the research.

In recent years there have been moves within applied theatre research away from

traditional methodologies, toward action led models, practice as research, and applied

theatre as research (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015: 35). These models prioritise collaborative

methods, reflexivity, and ways of knowing from everyday life. They might also work to

"engage people in identifying problems, considering diverse issues, experience and

perspectives and imagining/enacting possible solutions or futures" (O'Connor & Anderson,

2015: 37). Whilst this research draws from more traditional methods of research, of critical

ethnography specifically, it does not remain ignorant of these wider shifts in the field, and

looks to draw from the collaborative spirit that underpins them.

The anthropologist Luke Lassiter offers collaborative ethnography as a powerful tool to

engage the public with research. He writes that collaborative research involves much more

than advocacy and activism, it is not just a "giving back" (Lassiter, 2005: 84). In

collaborative models,

> …there [is] a full give and take, where at every step of the research knowledge and
>
> expertise is shared. In collaborative research, the local community will define its
>
> needs, and will seek experts both within and without to develop research programs
>
> and action plans.

> (Lassiter, 2005: 84).

Collaborative research "involves the side-by-side work of all parties in a mutually beneficial research program" (Lassiter, 2005: 84). Research, and higher education, finds itself more and more subject to neoliberal values and processes, in similar ways to that of applied theatre as explored in the previous chapter. For example, Henry Giroux has written that the neoliberal proliferation of higher education has led to intellectualism becoming increasingly gated, and calls for public pedagogy, with open access to research and the university (Giroux, 2012; 2016). Lassiter's collaborative ethnography looks to deal with this by prioritising equally the needs of both the academic and the community, and more than this, generating knowledge that is beneficial to both.

Whilst this process works to resist the effects of neoliberalism, it must still acknowledge the potential of unequal, or harmful, power relations present in any partnership between a university and a community, particularly as the research moves "from centres to borderlands, zones of difference, and busy intersections where many identities and interests articulate with multiple others" (Conquergood, 1991: 184). The process of initiating a partnership could throw into doubt the 'radical' potential of a collaborative ethnography. Some of Spivak's arguments around representation of the subaltern, explored in Chapter 1, illuminate the problems that arise here, as she writes:

> For the 'true subaltern group, whose identity is difference, there is no unrepresentable subaltern subject that can know and speak itself […] The problem is that the subject's itinerary has not be traced so as to offer an object of seduction to the representing individual.
>
> (Spivak, 1989: 80)

A collaborative ethnography still invokes the same problems that Spivak, specifically, as a representing agent, the ethnographers work is situated on lines of power that can silence the marginalised other. This issue becomes problematic for applied theatre research, as ethnographers continue to move to engage with "processes where the marginalized might be the authors of their own stories, as co-researchers, and equal collaborators" (O'Connor & Anderson, 2015: 6). Of course, it is not unusual for questions of power and representation to be asked by ethnographers. These are common place concerns. Significantly though, a collaborative ethnography moves to work directly with the marginalised other to mitigate these concerns. A consequence of Spivak's argument however, is that the problem does not disappear, rather it is simply obscured. The subject of the ethnography, reframed as a partner for Lassiter, must still stand as an object of seduction to the researcher for Spivak. In other words, the itinerary of the marginalised other must be known, knowable, and traceable, to meet the researcher as a partner in the first place. Furthermore, the use of a partnership, might confirm the *difference* between the two parties, the 'community' and the 'expert'. If this research is taking place on the 'margins' of society, the partnership might risk confirming and reproducing the 'centre'. I return to questions of difference shortly, as I explore my own positionality as an ethnographer embracing the collaborative spirit.

Lassiter goes some way to acknowledge the cultural contexts and effects of a collaborative ethnography. He describes the ways in which a researcher is a part of the "cultural facts" they describe, and that by standing beside or above them, researchers can do injury (Lassiter, 2005: 88). This resonates with much of the arguments made in the first chapter, that figuring an ethnographer as existing outside a context rather than woven into it is nothing more than just that, a figuration, but one with implications for how the ethnographer imagines their own positionality. Lassiter acknowledges the heteronymous

subjectivity of the ethnographer; they are situated within a culture, with bias, and with their own experiences that inform their practice and research, explicitly and implicitly. This also resonates with Thompson's reflection that applied theatre practice is not pre-political, but woven into the same structures and lines as the social fabric it looks to effect (Thompson, 2009: 174). Context is again, not separate, a different sphere, or simply elsewhere, but dislocally woven through the ethnographer and their site of research. This positionality of the ethnographer leads Lassiter to conclude that a collaborative ethnography is the most effective process, disposing of the falsehood of ethnographer as scientific instrument, and acknowledging that all ethnographies are collaborations in some way. For Lassiter, dialogue is always at the core of an ethnography, and as such those ethnographic processes that might not follow a formal collaborative or co-productive approach are still collaborations in some way (Lassiter, 2001: 141).

This precedent for collaborative ethnography, that all ethnographic practice is collaborative in some way, was taken up throughout this research, rather than a formal collaborative ethnography. I approached workshops or rehearsal spaces with the knowledge that as a researcher, I am not separate from the production of the space I observe, but that I am a part of that text, immersed in the thing that an ethnographer who sees themselves as invisible might seek to read as separate from themselves. The spaces that I observed throughout this research would be different if I were not there, and so I facilitated ethnographic practice that attended to a double bind of immersion and observation, embracing the spirit of collaboration. Shortly, I explore some of the ways this functioned practically, and the limitations of this positionality.

Beyond this double bind of immersion and observation experienced and enacted by an ethnographer, a *critical* ethnographer must ask:

How we represent?

How we evaluate the legitimacy of our representations and

Whether it is possible to effect change in the world?

(Gallagher, 2006: 64-5)

The goal of a critical ethnography is to expose and challenge unfair and unequal power relations by interrogating the relationship between the social and structural constraints on human actors and the boundaries of human agency (Gallagher, 2006: 64). It is profoundly interested in the "relationships of power produced in spaces, marked by differently positioned subjectivities" (Gallagher, 2006: 63). This is a particularly fitting epistemological basis for research in applied theatre as "the activity of drama itself is about taking up positions and spaces to examine the worlds they produce" (Gallagher, 2006: 63). Critical ethnography maintains a conversation, or relationship, between critical social theory and the ethnographic methods being used; "ethnographers assume that both theory and practice must speak to each other and are equally present in any given moment, embedded within one another" (Gallagher, 2006: 66). I argued above that some of Spivak's resignations around representing the marginalised other still linger for even a collaborative ethnography. Taking up ethnography as an example of a site where these problems stick could result in a pessimistic call to stop the work altogether. Alternatively, we might embed this criticism into the workings of a critical ethnography, as one of its critical elements, as an interrogation of the relationships of power.

A critical ethnography is also self-reflexive:

The challenge for critical ethnographers is how they set potential dissonances

(from participants) up against their own provisional understandings, rather than

subsume them into some authoritative research narrative; how, in short, the

researcher makes decisions both in the field and in the writing to guard against the

potential hegemony of her/his own critical interpretation.

(Gallagher, 2006: 63)

The ethnographer must be aware of the implications of their own cultural contexts, asking

how their own contexts and identities intersect with those of the participants.

This critical activity also holds risk. Dwight Conquergood models five performative stances

to explore ethical pitfalls of performing ethnographic material. This model offers reflections

on how, as a critical ethnographer, we represent. The model provides a reflexive frame of

analysis for those creating performance from ethnographic research. The medium of

representation for this research is writing, rather than performance, however

Conquergood's model still offers critical reflections for the spirit of collaborative

ethnography that is taken up in this work:

IDENTITY

	The Custodian's Rip-Off Selfishness plagiarism	The Enthusiast's Infatuation Superficiality singles' bar cruising	
D E T A C H M E N T	DIALOGICAL PERFORMANCE genuine conversation		**C O M M I T M E N T**
	The Skeptic's Cop-Out Cynicism stony silence	The Curator's Exhibitionism Sensationalism tourists' stare	

DIFFERENCE
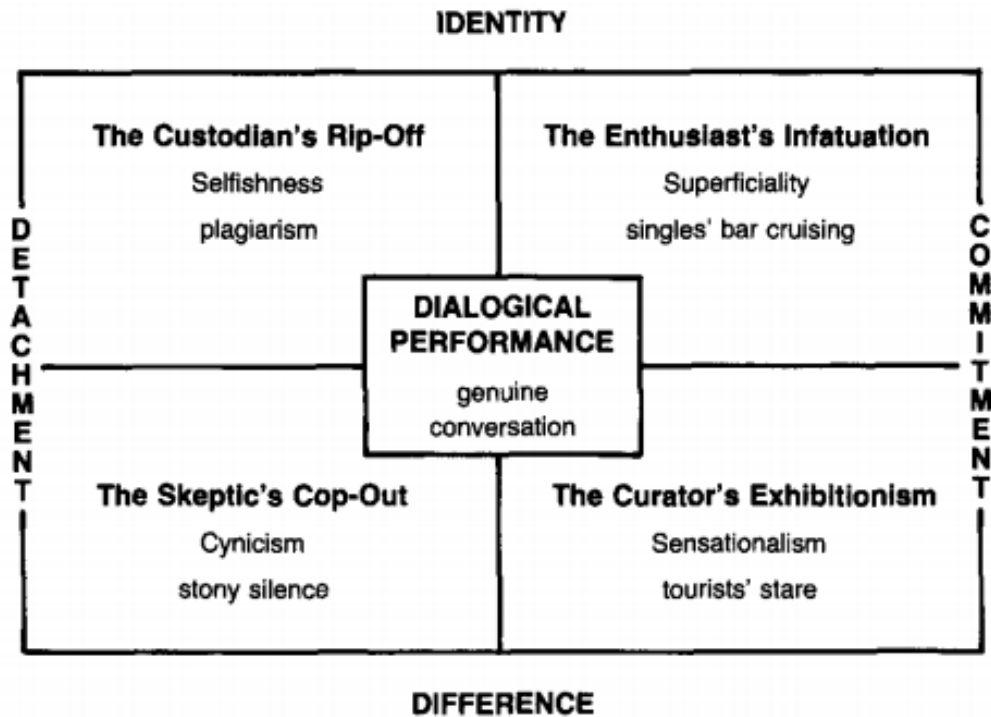
Figure 1 – Conquergood's model of ethnographic performance (Conquergood, 1985: 5)

The Custodian's Rip Off is a selfish ethnographer, who looks to the other with intrigue and genuine inquiry, but holds a severe detachment from them, and is simply acting to plunder people for their knowledge and experience (Conquergood, 1985: 5*). The Enthusiast's Infatuation* is a stance of a hasty identification with 'the other', with an enthusiastic commitment that can "banalize the other" and "seal off the self from any moral engagement" (Conquergood, 1985: 6). *The Curator's Exhibitionism* is a stance grounded on commitment to the difference of the other (Conquergood, 1985: 7), and *The Skeptics Cop-Out* is a stance grounded on the foreclosure of dialogue, shutting down practices that enter into conversation with the other (Conquergood, 1985: 8). At the center point, with a balance between difference, identity, commitment and detachment, is a "path to genuine understanding of others", where the ethnographer is involved in the struggle to "bring together different voices, world views, value systems and beliefs so that they can have a conversation with one another" (Conquergood, 1985: 9). Instead of speaking about a culture, an ethnographer speaks to, and with, the other (Conquergood, 1985: 10).

The work represented in this thesis not a formal collaborative ethnography, but it is built on the same precedent that Lassiter outlines, that all ethnographies are collaborative in some way, centering on dialogue (Lassiter, 2001: 141). This research looks to facilitate ethnographic practice that attends to the double bind of immersion and observation, embracing a collaborative spirit. As a researcher using ethnographic practices, I return to Conquergood's model to explore the ways in which I critically approach this, as I outline the research methods used to gather case study material. First I briefly outline the methods used, before examining their collaborative and critical elements through Conquergood's framework.

2.3   Research Methods: Field Work and Case Studies

Over the course of just over a year, from June 2016 to May 2017, I spent time observing the journeys of two projects. The first project, *Migration and Home: Welcome in Utopia,* was a *Connected Communities* funded arts and research project developed jointly by Faceless Arts and researchers from the School of Education at the University of Leeds. The project consisted of six arts workshops, three at a community centre in Leeds and three at a reception and accommodation centre for asylum seekers elsewhere in Yorkshire. A piece of street theatre also developed through this project, *Driftwood,* using puppets of a boat and refugee figures to share a narrative of perilous journeying and arrival at safety. The second project grew out of the first, with the same organisations developing a second arts and research project with funding from the *Leeds Social Sciences Institute.* This second project, *Migration and Settlement: Extending the Welcome,* ran six participatory arts workshops at a community centre in Harehills, Leeds, for refugees, asylum seekers, and newly arrived people. The project led to the creation of a piece of shadow theatre which

was shared in other local community settings. As the projects have similar names, for

clarity, from this point I refer to the first project as *Driftwood,* as this is the focus of the first

analysis chapter, and the second project as *Extending the Welcome.*

Following these two case studies, I then moved to observe the work of Chol Theatre, as

they developed a new piece of community theatre to mark the 70th anniversary of the

partition and independences of India and Pakistan, on the 12th August 2017. Chol Theatre is

a community arts and theatre company based at the Lawrence Batley Theatre in

Huddersfield. Their work includes "Participatory theatre productions, education

programmes, arts events and projects, workshops, commissions and partnerships" and

"supporting new artists and companies" (Chol Theatre, 2019). The project observed

through this research was a community performance in the courtyard of the Lawrence

Batley Theatre, called *Drawing the Line,* as part of a bigger event, *The Big Masala Tea*

Party. For this research, I spent time observing rehearsals and workshops with facilitators,

artists, and the community cast, and the resulting performance. I come to this case study

toward the end of the second part of the thesis, and use it as an opportunity to test and

refine the contributions made by the research, and explore the possibilities available from

it for future research. For all the case study partners, it was agreed that organisations

would be named but individuals would be anonymised, and so they are represented by the

same random single letter throughout. For example, lead artist C, and musician G.

To gather data from these projects, I spent time observing rehearsals, workshops, planning

meetings, reflections, and performances. I travelled with *Driftwood* to London on two

occasions, to see the piece performed at the Connected Communities Utopias Fair at

Somerset House on the 25th and 26th June 2016, and also the 22nd October 2016 at the

Bloomsbury Festival. The piece was first performed on the 22nd June 2016 at Leeds

University. For *Extending the Welcome,* I observed weekly workshops at a community centre and café in Harehills, and then performances of the final piece of shadow theatre that developed through the project, at a different community centre, and at the then West Yorkshire Playhouse where the piece was performed for a women's refugee choir. For *Drawing the Line,* I observed workshops and rehearsals on a variety of days, with some taking place on a weekend morning and some midweek evenings to accommodate different participants, in various locations across Huddersfield, in July and August 2017. The final performance took place on Saturday 12th August 2017. I recorded and transcribed reflections and planning meetings where appropriate, took extensive field notes during workshops and rehearsals, and collated the various media produced through the projects including pieces of visual art created by the groups, artefacts and objects produced or used in workshops, recorded music created by the groups, and videos of performance, alongside marketing material, published writing on the projects, blogs about the projects, and online material. This data was then coded using the software Nvivo. The data was both categorised into a type, e.g. interview or field note, with the contents coded on the four themes that the analysis is structured around, intention, representation, effect and affect. These points are then drawn from in the analysis. I attach an example of the field notes in Appendix 1.

Approaching the projects with a recognition of the collaborative nature of ethnographic practice, I looked to attend to the double bind of immersion and observation that I outline above. Rather than seek to position myself as an invisible ethnographer, I embraced the reality that my presence in the spaces these projects produced would contribute to that production. For *Driftwood,* this meant supporting some of the work by making cups of tea in workshops, joining conversations about representation and storytelling in rehearsals, and sharing field notes and observations with the researchers from the School of

Education. For *Extending the Welcome,* I became more immersed, and joined the project in

a project management role. Returning to Conquergood's model of ethnographic

performance, this immersion runs the risk of losing a balance between detachment and

commitment as an ethnographer. Being more involved in the work might compromise any

critical distance from it. Questions of identity and difference also emerge through this

process of becoming more immersed in the work. As a practitioner of applied theatre

beyond my academic work, I also find myself in a position of potentially identifying with the

practitioners I observe, without enough critical distance, or "difference" as Conquergood

articulates. The risk here emerges that my engagement with these projects, particularly

Extending the Welcome as I took up a project management role, might find themselves in

Conquergood's frame, *The Enthusiasts Infatuation*, with too much commitment and

involvement to the projects, and too much identification with the practitioners I would

observe.

Working with the double bind of immersion and observation required that I took practical

steps to ensure I would not fall foul of The Enthusiasts Infatuation, and maintain a critical

dialogue with the work. For example, I remained explicit that I would be approaching these

projects as a PhD researcher, and gained the appropriate consent from those involved,

affirming this role. I also worked with Jessica Bradley, from the School of Education,

University of Leeds, to co-write a paper about some of the findings of *Driftwood's* own

research aims; this paper was written as the second project, *Extending the Welcome,* took

place, further defining my role and involvement in the project as a researcher (McKay &

Bradley, 2017). The success of these choices becomes partially evident in a planning

meeting with the artists involved in the project, that I attended in both capacities of

researcher and project manager. One of the lead artists involved in both of the projects

spoke about the overall intentions behind the projects, and in touching on their

involvement with research she says, *"these are things that you might draw on more than we would necessarily focus on" (McKay, 2017, Field Notes).* Significantly for this discussion, she indicated a difference between my role in the work, and the role of the artists present in the room. Whilst we sit in the same planning meeting, sharing cups of tea and coffee, and discuss the plans for the projects, we have separate agendas and areas of focus. This continual process of embracing the collaborative spirit but maintaining a critical difference and distinct role allowed me to preserve a detachment from the project, maintaining a clear role as a researcher amongst those involved, whilst also maintaining a level of commitment and identification with them.

I address more closely some of the implications of my own relationship with Chol Theatre in Chapter 6. As outlined in the introduction to the thesis, I also work as an applied theatre practitioner, developing participatory projects with a number of theatres and theatre companies. Chol Theatre is one of those companies that I began freelancing with as I left drama school, although I do not currently work with them. Through the analysis and discussions that take place in this thesis before I return the Chol Theatre case study, I trace the shifting connections and conceptualise the dislocal networks that emerge from the first two projects, arguing that in some ways they form a community of their own. For Chol Theatre, this discussion becomes more complicated and offers a deeper insight, involving my already established relationship with them as an artist and a freelancer. This meant that I also already knew some of the participants who joined the project, and the artists facilitating the sessions. I interrogate the implications of this, the risks and opportunities offered by this closeness, in that analysis, and also how this altered my approach as a researcher, and the contradictory steps I needed to take at that point to remain separate from the room whilst embracing a collaborative spirit.

In this section I have outlined the research methodology that under pins this project, as critical ethnography that embraces a collaborative spirit. I have explored the limitations and risks of this approach, and outlined some of the strategies used to avoid these pitfalls. I return to the case studies in the analysis chapters, where I explore their processes and practices in detail. I analyze the data gathered using four themes of analysis. In the next sections, I engage with the thinking this far in the thesis to trace four of the threads that run through and connect applied theatre practice to context. I draw from the literature explored in this first part of the thesis, particularly the previous chapter, to locate these lines that connect and run through practice and context, as I continue to ask how the context of austerity and migration interacted with these examples of applied theatre practice with refugees. Before I begin this tracing, I invoke some more of Spivak's thinking into this research, to develop a strategy of analysis that is then taken up throughout the rest of the thesis.

2.4   Knotty Double Binds.

Up to this point in the thesis I have begun tracing the shifting threads and lines that connect practice to context. I now move to draw together the arguments and thinking thus far, selecting the four themes that will deployed in the case study analysis. In that analysis, I move to unravel these threads, and consider new ways of thinking about core concepts for applied theatre that connect practice to its contexts. Later in this chapter, I introduce the four themes that the case study analysis is centred around, drawing from the literature and thinking in Chapter 1. Through this I situate the shifting lines and threads that connect and run through practice and context around four themes; intention, representation, effect, and affect. Before outlining these in detail, and justifying their selection, I consider the method that is taken up in the analysis to unravel these threads. This method seeks to

dislocate the point at which the threads connecting practice and context cross the border from one into the other, making use of the notion of double binds.

This notion of a double bind is one developed by Spivak, underpinning much of her process as a deconstructionist, if not always explicitly mentioned. It offers a route of analysis for this project that opens up possibility in theory, rather than fixing knowledge as firm and final, and vitally allows for the threads that are unravelled later to be continually considered as dislocal, shifting and moving. Spivak argues that a double bind is a "position of two determinate decisions, both right (or both wrong), one of which cancels the other" (Spivak, 2012: 104). In other words, a double bind is a concept made up of two positions, which contradict and oppose each other, whilst still constructing the original concept. In Chapter 1 for example, I worked from Spivak's deconstruction of representation into a double bind. In that particular instance, representation is both always the political proxy re-presentation of the self or other, as well as always an aesthetic restaging of the world. These two concepts contradict and oppose each other, but a practice is one of representation precisely when they run together.

Spivak moves to explain that a double bind cannot be crossed by definition; it is always made of two concepts that oppose each other (Spivak, 2012: 104). That opposition keeps those concepts separate. However in their coming together, the concept "discloses itself" (Spivak, 2012: 104). It is the very crossing between the points of the double bind that creates the concept. Spivak names the point that is crossed as an aporia (Spivak, 2012: 104). For Spivak, this is more than a logical problem or a simple contradiction, but an "experience", held in the moment of indecidability and incongruity (Spivak, 2012: 104). Context is an example of an idea built from a double bind. I have argued that it is dislocated between the local, and the social, as shifting threads that connect and weave together. It is

this indecidability between the local and the social which points to its working as a double bind, but also discloses the notion itself.

In the rest of this chapter, I further refine what some of the threads are that connect context to practice, drawing from the thinking developed in Chapter 1. In Part 2 of the thesis, I organise the case study analysis around these four threads of intention, representation, effect and affect. I use the case analysis to search for the double binds within these threads. The point at which these connecting threads cross from *practice* into *context* is dislocated, it is indecidable, it is an aporia. To carry the metaphor of the thread further, this point, where the double bind meets, can be considered knotty. The ways the thread connects, shifts, and moves across itself is complex and unseen. In undoing the knot, the ends of the thread are brought more closely together, but the knot disappears. This way of working therefore, opens up possibility through the friction of the unravelling, rather than forming a fixed set of frameworks, for example. It does not attempt to explain away context or practice, but traces the connections and accepts them as complex movements (Latour, 2004: 160).

The crossing of the aporia can also be considered as a border crossing. As explored in Chapter 1, borders of nations are not simple lines in the ground, but imagined, constructed, negotiated, and moving. Borders determine both who is *in* and who is *out,* another double bind. There is however, a practicality to the fact that borders, whilst for some harder than others, can be crossed. As Nail has argued, it is the crossing of borders that constructs them in the first place (Nail, 2015: 245). Whilst borders may be as indecidable and indeterminate as the thinking above, there is a moment where one can say, for example, "I was in Canada, and now I am in the United States of America". A border has been walked across, driven through, or flown over. A border holds a practicality, a supposed physical

essence, even with theoretical deconstructions. At this point, Spivak's notion of strategic essentialism can illuminate how the notion of a knotty double bind can have a practical use for both applied theatre researchers, and applied theatre practitioners.

Spivak contrasts strategy with theory, "a strategy suits a situation, a strategy is not a theory" (1993: 4). In strategic essentialism, as touched on in Chapter 1, theoretical concerns around essentialism are suspended, and key "master words" are taken up to allow for political action. Examples of these words might be 'woman', or 'worker', both of which can be deconstructed, but also taken up strategically as though they were essential categories of identity, as banners to march under and effect political change. This might go some way to reconcile the tensions around the naming of the field, 'applied theatre'. Whilst writers deconstruct the term and problematize it, it is taken up in a strategic way.

In her discussion around representation in *Can the Subaltern Speak*, Spivak deconstructs representation into the double bind reintroduced above. Significantly however, rather than settle on the indecidablilty of the concept, she calls for those representing to "attend" to the double meaning of the word. A strategy is attached to the theory, to allow for political action. The strategy remains separate from the theory, as in many ways it undoes the theory. This linking of strategy and theory, at least for Spivak it seems, forms its own aporia, its own double bind, in the same way that crossing borders and conceptualising borders does. In the analysis, as I look for the double binds in the shifting threads traced between practice and context, crossing the borders between the two, and unravelling the aporias at that point, strategies emerge for future analysis, that could also be taken up by applied theatre practitioners. I draw these strategies together, of a 'theatre of little contexts' and 'working in the local' in the conclusions of the thesis.

In the search for the knotty double binds on the threads between context and practice, as outlined below, I centre analysis on the field notes taken during the field research. During the field research, as outlined above, I gathered a mass of data represented in a variety of ways, including field notes, blogs, websites, images of art work, examples of music made, photos, and so on. In the following analysis chapters I centre keenly on the field notes, and make use of some of other data gathered to support descriptions of, and introductions to, the projects. I do so, reflecting on the methods outlined by Latour, as he looks toward a steady , careful, and slow tracing of the movements of action, or practice (Latour, 2006: 135). The central claims of this research do not rely on an objective account of a set of projects that can be neatly extrapolated into models that explain away it's functioning. Rather, it searches for points of indecidability, contradictions and aporias. This close analysis requires a close reading of my own field notes, which allows for these to be unwound and unravelled in motion, as they did throughout the practice observed.

2.5   Intention: 'Thrown-ness' and Motivations.

In this section, I trace the first thread that analysis will be centred around, intention. I begin by exploring a theory of intention that connects practice to context, returning to Merleau-Ponty's model of motivations, and notions of the self and other. I also return to some of the current debates in applied theatre surrounding intention. I again ask how this connects to the work that applied theatre practitioners have carried out in response to the refugee crisis. A significant objective of Chapter 1 was to flatten context. In other words, move beyond acknowledging the given interaction between context and practice, that donor agendas govern practice for example, but to ask how that interaction functions, through complex and shifting networks between funder and practitioner of diffuse power for

instance. These shifting threads that connect practice to context are the focus of the rest of this chapter, teasing out the key themes from Chapter 1 that might form these threads.

In Chapter 1, I argued that notions of context in applied theatre are deeply connected with notions of the self and other, identity, place, and marginalisation. Intention joined this discussion as I introduced Martin Heidegger's notion of the self as "thrown" into the world, and Merleau-Ponty's development of that notion (Heidegger, 1927: 174-175). Merleau-Ponty moves to ask *what* it is that connects the self to the world, and how this thrown-ness acts as a way of being *in* the world (Merleau-Pontry, 1945: 43). He argues that one of the ways this connection can be described is through "motives". For Merleau-Ponty, motive is broader than intention, it is being moved to act in a way or do something. It might be unarticulated, or unnoticed. It is the effecting and being effected by the other, situations, and possibilities. In this way, motive becomes a way in which the self is linked with the world, and so for this analysis, acts as thread connecting context and practice. Significantly, motivations are movements from person to person, speaking to the flatter notions of context explored earlier.

Motivations are different to intentions, and they can also be irrational. For Merleau-Ponty, an intention is an example of a kind of motivation, but an intention is articulated, and it is usually rationalised in some way. A motivation, as the broader umbrella, is not always articulated or rationalised. As it is not articulated, a motivation moves a person to do something, and they might not recognise that it is happening. As it is not always rational, a motivation might not offer a reason to do something, just a movement toward it (Merlaeu-Ponty, 1945: 395). A motivation grows from an antecedent, it is "the relationship in terms of which an antecedent operates on an agent to dispose her to a particular act or experience" (Wrathall, 2004: 120). In other words, something happens to a person, or they

experience something, which then moves them to do something else, or to experience something further. A motivation is that movement. Motivations slide from person to person, sticking as actions. Moving, they are constantly dislocated, as a movement that connects the self to the world. This becomes a thread between context and practice in this way.

One of the ways this is evident is through the ways in which applied theatre practitioners initially responded to the refugee crisis. Joseph Robertson, one of the writers responsible for starting and running *The Good Chance Theatre* in the Calais refugee camp, talks about the need to 'do something' as he outlines the origins of their work in response to the refugee crisis:

> At that moment, everybody in theatre and the arts was thinking: 'How do we respond to this mammoth crisis?' […] And we just touched it, that sentiment, and everyone said: 'Right, let's do it.'

> (The Stage, 2016).

Zaroulia similarly notes the sense of moral obligation shared amongst artists who felt compelled to make interventions after seeing the images of the refugee crisis unfolding (Zaroulia, 2018: 187). Working through Merleau-Ponty's notion of motivation, we might take the refugee crisis, or the specific images of it viewed by artists, as the antecedent. The 'need to do something' is a motivation, whether that exists as an articulated intention, a sticky affect of viewing dramatic images, or remains an embodied, emotional compulsion to act. These motivations might also not always be rational, and the refugee crisis should

not be seen solely as a reason for the ways that artists responded, but as a potential

antecedent of many.

I explored broader debates about intention in applied theatre in Chapter 1, particularly

drawing from Balfour's article, *The Politics of Intention: Looking for a Theatre of Little*

Changes. In this, he argues that emphasis should be moved from "the need for change

rhetoric, impact assessments and the strain for verifiable measurements in defining applied

theatre" to "the need for 'about how theatre actually works" (Balfour, 2009: 356). In the

analysis, I work with the case study material to develop new ways of thinking about

intention, as something that is practiced, and caught between commitments and

responsivity. I also use the word intention encapsulate Merleau-Ponty's "motivations",

exploring intentions that might not be articulated, but embodied, felt, and even irrational.

2.6   Representation: Representing the Other.

The second thread that I unravel in analysis is representation. It entered this discussion as,

like with intention, it connects with questions of the self and other, a core part of the

tracing of how context connects to practice in Chapter 1. In this section, I work through

some of the initial questions that arise from this thread, particularly the tensions around

practices of representing the marginalised other who holds different experiences to those

doing the representing. Following this, I revisit Spivak's deconstruction of representation as

I look toward the role of this in the analysis.

Questions of representation are fundamental to broader questions of how applied theatre

connects to its contexts, particularly as applied theatre situates itself on the margins of

society and often seeks to share the stories of experiences of those who inhabit those margins. In *The Applied Theatre Reader*, Sheila Preston writes:

> The reality that representations depict the real lives of individuals or groups who may be vulnerable and/or marginalised from the dominant hegemony is an ethical as well as a political concern. As cultural workers, whether we are researchers writing about individuals, theatre makers constructing narratives and stories, or facilitators enabling people to write or perform their own stories, we have a responsibility towards ensuring that the representations that are made are produced through a climate of sensitivity, dialogue, respect and willingness for reciprocity.

(Preston, 2009: 65)

In representing the marginalised other, Preston argues that applied theatre practitioners have ethical responsibilities, and that these questions of representation extend into all elements of applied theatre practice, including participation and performance. Representation has emerged as a key theme in the literature in Chapter 1, and a thread between context and practice, through these arguments, as applied theatre situates itself on the margins and in the borders, and as the applied theatre practitioner looks to represent, or facilitate representation, for the marginalised other. Many of these questions also emerged through discussions around applied theatre with refugees, and the ways in which contexts influence practice through representation, the desire to tell the right kind of story for example.

Elizabeth Ellsworth problematizes the very idea of representing the marginalised other in the first place, arguing that there are partial narratives that "some social groups or cultures have and others can never know" (Ellsworth, 1989: 319). She writes that there exists a multiplicity of knowledges that are "contradictory, partial, and irreducible" (Ellsworth, 1989: 321), and that communication that leads to *constructive* circumstances must take place across differences in the form of alliances (Ellsworth, 1989: 324). Ellsworth advocates a strategy that "affirms "you know me/I know you" while pointing insistently to the interested partialness of those knowings, with constant reminders that "you can't know me/I can't know you"" (Ellsworth, 1989: 321-2). Representation can become an oppressive process of being known and spoken of unless the 'representer' holds "affinity" to those partial knowledges and experiences, and in some ways, only self-representation is fully appropriate and possible.

This is a position described by Linda Alcoff as the "retreat response" (Alcoff: 1991-2). Alcoff acknowledges that it is important to "encourage a more receptive listening on the part of the discursively privileged and to discourage presumptuous and oppressive practices of speaking for" (Alcoff: 1991-2), and that sometimes the retreat response is the best way to resolve to the problem of speaking for others. However, she argues that a retreat from speaking for does not automatically foster an increase in receptive listening. Actually, the retreat response may facilitate what she describes as "a narcissistic yuppie lifestyle in which a privileged person takes no responsibility for her society whatsoever" (Alcoff: 1991-2). A complete retreat allows the "continued dominance of current discourses and acts by omission to reinforce their dominance" (Alcoff: 1991-2). The retreat response, she argues, significantly undercuts the possibility of "political effectivity". She concludes:

The source of a claim or discursive practice in suspect motives or maneuvers or in privileged social locations, I have argued, though it is always relevant, cannot be sufficient to repudiate it. We must ask further questions about its effects, questions which amount to the following: will it enable the empowerment of oppressed peoples?

(Alcoff: 1991-2)

Alcoff clarifies that there is a danger in any act of speaking for others and no speaker is immune, but that in some cases there is no other way for political effects to be garnered. An interrogation into the legitimacy of representing the other should deconstruct its effects, namely if such an act enables the empowerment of oppressed peoples.

There is a distinction to be made here between strategic essentialism, practices of representation, and theories of representation. Spivak writes that class, as an example, is not an inalienable description of human reality, it can be swiftly deconstructed, there is no real class consciousness. Class is not essentially constituted. Rather, class is a "strategic and artificial rallying awareness" which has a transformative motive. It "seeks to destroy the mechanics which come to construct the outlines of the very class of which a collective consciousness has been situationally developed" (Spivak, 1996: 214). Ontologically speaking, class becomes, and becomes useful, as a transformative tool, when theories that might point away from essentialist class identities are strategically ignored and those subjugated by it march under that very banner. In much the same way, whilst Alcoff's work rightly points out that there is no discrete ontological place into which an individual can retreat, when enacting practices of representation those essentialist ontologies can be strategically assumed, in a way that resonates with Ellsworth's. The important product of

this synthesis of theory and practice is that Ellsworth's notion of alliances can be more fully realised as strategically essentialist groupings, but that these groupings are not enough to debate the legitimacy of an act of representation, its effects are most important.

Alcoff's interrogation of the retreat response also exposes the spatial nature of representation. The retreat response "presumes an ontological configuration of the discursive context that simply does not obtain"; an individual cannot retreat into their "discrete space" and make claims "entirely and singularly that do not range over others" (Alcoff: 1991-2). The claim that only self-representation is possible or appropriate assumes an autonomous conception of the self, that there is an authentic self that can be disconnected from others. A speaker cannot be disentangled from implicating networks of their own speech and the locations, situations and practices of others. There is no theoretical way to demarcate the boundary between an individual's location from another's. All practices of representation mediate the representation and experiences of others; Alcoff writes: "As my practices are made possible by events spatially far away from my body so too my own practices make possible or impossible practices of others" (Alcoff: 1991-2). It is these networks that cannot be disentangled, and the impossible demarcation of the boundaries between people, that also draw representation as a thread between practice and context. It is dislocal, shifting, made up of the experiences of others and the self.

I have already introduced Spivak's deconstruction of representation. She argues that representation is the bringing together of two practices: proxy political representations, as in standing in for the other or the self, and artistic or aesthetic restaging's of the world, re-presentation. All acts of representation are both political proxy representation and the restaging of the world at the same time. Acts of representation may be read as more or less

of either, and they may appear to have more or less effect and affect, but they are nonetheless an interplay of this double bind. Distinctly, for Spivak, a radical act of representation is one that not only enacts the double meaning of the word, but one that attends to both. In the analysis, I attend to both meanings of the word, and I explore some of the questions raised by Ellsworth and Alcoff, asking for example, what impact artists create as they seek to represent refugees and asylum seekers, with whom they share a great deal of empathy, but little experience or social space. In the analysis, I work more closely with Spivak's double bind, to explore the knots that form in it as seen through the lens of practice.

2.7 Effect and Affect: Practice as Antecedent.

In this first part of the thesis I have argued that context must be considered more than just an arena of effect. Rather than exclude effect from notions of context altogether however, I argue that context simply cannot be limited to it. In this section, I return to effect as a point of relationship between applied theatre practice and context. This has also emerged as a key argument in the previous section, where it is argued that the effects of representation are an important part of considering the ethics of it, "will it enable the empowerment of oppressed peoples?" (Alcoff: 1991-2). If representation is a line that crosses between and through practice and context, then so too is effect. In this section, I return to theories of effect and affect in applied theatre together. I pay particular attention to Thompson's turn to affect. I consider some of the ways that effect and affect are knotted together and intersect, alongside the ways they fray and diverge.

As outlined, Snyder-Young writes that many applied theatre practitioners operate from "a fundamental, utopian desire for theatre to make social change" (Snyder-Young, 2013: 11).

She tracks the historical trajectory of this, drawing from Jonathan Neelands, "From Ibsen to Brecht to Boal, Brook and Bond one can trace a faith in the idea that through artistic transformations of the stage, society itself can be changed" (Neelands, 2004 cited in Snyder-Young, 2013: 11). In the discussion around representation, effect also became core, asking if representation leads to the empowerment of oppressed people. Paulo Freire is often invoked in applied theatre discourse, and at the core of his message is the "potential of the oppressed to transform the limiting situations and structures they found themselves in" (Preston, 2009: 303). Effect is an inescapable part of the relationship between applied theatre and context. Often these effects are figured as grand and revolutionary, but actually exist as smaller, by products of practice (Snyder-Young, 2013: 12). Effect relies on dislocal exchanges between people, in a similar way to intention, creating new motivations or growing from others.

Thompson has argued that applied theatre practice needs to do away with simple or singular effects and to look toward a broader model for applied theatre (Thompson, 2009: 46), through the affective turn, or turn to affect. Much of the argument toward the turn to affect looks to prioritise what has been seen as unintended, or unarticulated, by-products of applied theatre over social outcomes (Thompson, 2009: 116). An important distinction that Thompson makes, is that affect is not the binary opposite of effect, but rather, a more expansive term, an "augmentation of what should be understood, hoped for and considered in relation to any experience" (Thompson, 2009: 120). He argues that it is through a focus on affect that applied theatre can widen its political potential, as a "generator of its radical intent" (Thompson, 2009: 118). I have also drawn from Ahmed to consider affect as sticky, shifting and sliding between people and objects. Beyond the turn to affect, the notion of applied theatre as an inherently transformative practice has been troubled by questions of politics and power (Nicholson, 2005: 11).

In the discussion around intention I explored Merleau-Ponty's model of motivation and intention. A key element of this model is the antecedent, the thing that motivates or moves a person to the next step or action. For intention, I briefly looked at how the refugee crisis acted as an antecedent to applied theatre practice, as artists and practitioners felt the need to 'do something'. In the analysis, I explore the ways in which *practice* acts as an antecedent to effect and affect, as practitioners look to recreate emotional responses in audiences, hoping that this will spur on some kind of political or social action as it did for them. This framing of practice, as antecedent, positions effect and affect as motivations; the movements to do something or feel something as a result of practice. Clearly effect and affect intersect in many ways, but as I return to them in analysis, I work through them separately, to unravel them more fully.

In this chapter I have explored the methodologies used in this research, and the theoretical foundations of these. Having traced four threads that weave through practice and context, I have developed a strategy to unravel these and develop new ways of thinking for applied theatre, as I look for the double binds within each. I have also introduced the three case studies at the core of Part 2, and explored my own positionality as a researcher in these settings. Moving forward, I continue to look for a notion of 'context within', and work from the case studies to ignite strategies for practice from this. I return to questions of methodology at various points throughout Part 2. In Chapter 5 I focus more closely on the knotty double binds and threads of analysis. In the conclusions in Chapter 7, I offer some reflections on the ways these methodologies worked in practice.

Part 2: Introduction.

This second part of the thesis centres around the analysis of three case study projects. Two of these projects, *Driftwood,* and *Extending the Welcome,* were developed by the same community arts and theatre company, Faceless Arts, over the course of just over a year. These Yorkshire based projects developed, initially, in response to the unfolding refugee crisis in mainland Europe. The third project, *Drawing the Line,* was developed by Chol Theatre to mark the 70th anniversary of the partition and independence of India and Pakistan. As I analyse the projects, I continue to trace the relationship they held to contexts of austerity and migration. To do this, I work through the four threads of analysis and methods of unravelling these outlined in the previous chapter.

At this point in the thesis, I have addressed the first two of the sub research questions:

1. *How is the relationship between applied theatre practice and contexts of austerity and migration already understood?*
2. *How can context be modelled as a critical concept for applied theatre?*

In Part 1 of the thesis, I have engaged with literature from the field of applied theatre, and from cultural and critical theory. Through that work I have developed a working model of context that looks beyond claims for situating meaning and effect, and instead offers new ways of considering context as woven through practice. I also explored the ways that applied theatre practice has been shaped by, and resisted, processes of austerity, and how it has responded more generally to the refugee crisis.

In this part of the thesis, I engage with the second set of research questions:

3. *What is the relationship between recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, which developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, and contexts of austerity and migration?*

4. *How does this relationship between practice and context function?*

I work with case study material, gathered through ethnographic research, to answer the first question above, working with those specific examples, to examine the relationship practice had to contexts of austerity and migration. Following the first two analysis chapters, I return to the four threads of analysis to engage with the double binds that have emerged, and the strategies for practice. In Chapter 6, I move to the third case study to explore how these findings might be picked up in future research. Following this, I draw together the final threads of the thesis with a series of conclusions structured around the four research questions, with reflections on the methodologies, and opportunities for the future.

Through the analysis in this second half, I continue to argue toward a notion of 'context within', and develop strategies for practice from this. I develop new ways of thinking about what it means to work in the local, how applied theatre can retain a political programme as it shifts toward a focus on affect, and how artists engage with contexts as woven through their practice. By working closely with the case study material, drawing from the literature in part one, and continuing discussions around context, I formulate new ways of thinking about intention, representation, effect and affect for the field of applied theatre.

3. Performing a Crisis: Navigating Narrative.

In the following chapters I engage with the four threads woven through practice to context selected in Chapter 3, to explore the workings of the relationships of the specific case studies to wider contexts of austerity and migration. This develops findings for applied theatre, opening new possibilities of thought and strategies for practice, as I work through the knotty double binds that run along these threads, and their points of indecidability. In this chapter, I specifically concentrate on a piece of street theatre, *Driftwood*. In the next chapter, I analyse the second project which grew from this, *Extending the Welcome.* *Driftwood* offers an example of an immediate response made by artists to the then growing 'refugee crisis' in Europe. I engage with the ways that the practices observed changed and developed, and the changes in how their work interacted with shifting contexts of migration and austerity. This chapter focuses on practices that work toward creating a piece of theatre, whereas the following chapter moves to focus on participatory practices and processes with a specific community group in Leeds.

The piece, *Driftwood,* focused on the European refugee crisis. It shared a linear narrative, of a vulnerable and overcrowded migrant boat at sea, exposed to the dangerous weather and waves. Using puppets, it was completely non-verbal. The boat emerged accompanied by loud music composed specifically for the piece, and was moved about the street, square, courtyard or performance space, by three puppeteers. The piece was developed by *Faceless Arts* in 2016, as part of a larger project in partnership with the *School of Education, University of Leeds.* The piece was first performed on the 22nd June at the *University of Leeds* campus for a group of refugees and asylum seekers. It was then performed multiple times at *Somerset House* in London on the 25th and 26th June as part of the *Connected Communities Utopia's Fair,* as the project was funded by *Connected Communities.* The final

performance observed for this research was on the 22nd October 2016, at the *Bloomsbury Festival* in London. The piece has since continued to tour sporadically to festivals and events around England.

The narrative of *Driftwood* was constructed from a series of individual moments or vignettes that could be repeated or performed in any order. They included, *"stopping, a comforting mother, a person overboard, someone throwing up, a person fainting and others fanning them, the motor failing, praying" (McKay, 2016: field notes)*. To close the performance, the puppeteers blew whistles, and a final team member waiting by a tent waved a large flag. During the day before the performance, or as the performance happened, passers-by were asked to make flags from foil emergency blankets. As the boat was pulled in with a rope at the end of the performance, audience members were invited to wave these flags to welcome the puppet refugees. They then could place emergency blankets over the puppets, and set them in stands one by one. Through this, audience members were involved in the show, and decided whether to welcome, or not, the puppet refugees from the boat.

In this chapter I engage with the four themes of analysis, Intention, Representation, Effect and Affect, searching for the knotty double binds within them, as shifting and dislocal threads that connect practice to context. I continue to draw from debates in applied theatre around refugee narratives, particularly the ways in which artists craft aesthetics from crisis. I argue that these narratives focus in on moments of journeying and arrival, as the artists create the performance using images of crisis as consumed from a safe distance mediated through modern technologies (Price, 2018: 170). I also argue that the subjects represented in *Driftwood* are not forced migrants, nor is the intervention it makes orientated toward the refugee crisis itself, but that the subjects represented are the

performers themselves, the subject of the well intentioned Westerner, and the audience who are *subjected to* the piece. I continue to draw from the work of Spivak to develop what this might mean, as I argue that the aesthetic re-staging of the world *Driftwood* makes, taking images from the refugee crisis, does not align with the proxy political re-presentation it makes of the self and other, as it does not involve those who experienced the refugee crisis but rather those who have observed it through layers of mediation. Through this analysis, developing the knotty double binds within the four themes, I continue to argue toward context as 'within', rather than context that is 'without'. The aesthetic of the refugee crisis used by *Driftwood* provides an opportunity for this argument to be situated. Working from the notion of 'context within'; I use Balfour's suggestion of a theatre of small changes to further suggest a theatre of small contexts, as a strategy of context within that situates effects and affects in a local and immediate vicinity, both geographically and relationally.

In the first section of this chapter I consider the intentions of the artists in creating this performance. I argue that intentions in applied theatre practice can be placed somewhere between a duality of commitment and responsiveness. In the second section, I work through concepts of representation to interrogate the positionality of the performers of *Driftwood,* and unpick the different subjects of the piece. In the third section, effect, I begin to argue toward a theatre of small contexts, arguing that *Driftwood* constituted a point of refusal to deterrence paradigms, offering a space for audiences to rehearse welcome. In the final section, I introduce the performance from the second case study, *Extending the Welcome,* to consider the ways in which a theatre of small contexts might function as a strategy of context within, and how this extends debates about affect in applied theatre.

3.1 Intention: Responding to Crisis or Committed to Community?

The rehearsals for the *Driftwood* performance took place in June of 2016. At that time, images of global crises of migration were permeating the British media and public imagination (Cox & Wake, 2018: 140). As explored in part 1, artists, from grass roots activist photographers through to celebrity actors, felt the need to 'do something', acting on a sense of moral obligation, compelled to make interventions (Zaroulia, 2018: 187). Intentions that underpin these kinds of interventions are complex (Balfour, 2009: 355), and multiple readings could be drawn. At best these interventions could be read as having 'good' intentions, looking to illuminate and change the devastating reality of forced migrants drowning at sea for example. At worst, they could be read as self-serving, a purification of guilt and anger, doing little more than raising the applause of a placid audience (Snyder Young, 2013: 92). As a complex set of motivations, these intentions might not even be conscious, but rather, unnamed motivations orientated toward a certain situation or group of people.

During a rehearsal on 20th June 2016, performers K, T and C worked with the large puppet boat and puppet people to devise the performance. The boat and puppets used in the performance, shown in Figure 2 below, were already made by C at this point. Before beginning the devising process, the group gathered over hot drinks to talk about the issues involved in the refugee crisis as they saw them, and to watch online videos. The team watched two videos from *The Guardian*, *Death at Sea* (2014), and *The Lucky Ones* (2015). *Death at Sea* is narrated by three friends who attempted to travel from Syria to a safer country in Europe. They were sold on to traffickers by the smugglers they had paid, and were eventually forced to make a dangerous trip by boat across the Mediterranean. The boat they were travelling on sunk, with many migrants dying. The video uses mobile phone

footage shot by one of the narrators, showing the overcrowded and sinking boat from the

perspective of those on-board. It ends with the three friends happy, living in Sweden, but

warning other young Syrians not to make the same journey. *The Lucky Ones* tells an almost

identical story, but from the point of view of a search and rescue operation boat. The on

board team send a drone to locate a reported sinking migrant boat. They then proceed to

rescue the passengers, handing out life jackets and blankets. The rescue boat brings the

forced migrants, many of whom have injuries sustained through torture, to Sicily. Both

videos focus on the much fetishized moments of perilous travel, across the Mediterranean,

and happy arrival, in a welcoming yet strange host country (Marschal, 2018: 149). *Death at*

Sea also includes candid footage from more relaxed moments on the journey, making a

large pot of tea at a house in the desert, which is perhaps an example of an attempt to

make the refugees relatable to the audience consuming the footage (Cox & Wake, 2018:

139), and therefore able to empathise with the suffering endured later. The team of artists

working on Driftwood had deeply emotional responses to these two videos. In my field

notes I write:

> *We watch videos about refugees and asylum seekers to contextualise all this. There*
>
> *are emotive responses from the team, some tears. Much of the imagery in the*
>
> *videos is about boats. There are interviews with refugees too. These images form*
>
> *the basis of the show, boats, journeys.*

> *(McKay, 2016: field notes)*

The emotional response from the artists indicates a personal and empathetic connection to the refugee crisis, and the suffering of migrants drowning at sea. The imagery in these videos forms the basis of *Driftwood*. Images of suffering and desperation, and narratives of perilous travel and welcome arrival, affect the artists in such a way as to compel them to craft an artistic intervention. These mediated images stick to the artists, and craft the ways in which they care about the crisis. This emotional and affective response to the videos then underpin the intentions for the *Driftwood* piece: those same images, brought to the streets of British cities, might also affect passers-by and audiences.

Figure 2 - Driftwood performance at University of Leeds (22nd June 2016)

This intention is explored in a recent article by Zaroulia, *Performing That Which Exceeds Us* (2018). Focusing on artistic interventions that address the refugee crisis, she argues that in attempting to represent that which is far beyond a person's own experience and understanding, work created is underpinned by excess. This excess is "an exaggerated surplus of emotion that triggers a form of political action" and an "intense affective encounter between performer and audience member" (Zaroulia, 2018: 183, 181). This is

evident in the early part of the *Driftwood* rehearsal, as artists were brought to tears by the videos from *The Guardian*. The sincere excess of emotion is what leads to the compulsion to create and intervene, it triggers the political action. This is also a process *Driftwood* looks to exploit, so that the audience experience this same excess and they themselves are compelled to act. This excess could be considered as an antecedent of intention, drawing from the thinking that I outlined in Part 1 with Merleau-Ponty. The antecedent to the project for the artists was their emotional response to the refugee crisis, as observed through news media. They look to craft this project so that it also functions as an antecedent, provoking the same response and need to 'do something' in those who observe it.

Excess, as Zaroulia sees it, is underpinned by both sincerity and obscenity. The sincerity comes from a deep emotional connection to the subject, which triggers the impulse to intervene in the first place. Obscenity is found in the aesthetic intentions of *Driftwood*, where "that what [SIC] should have been kept off-stage (presumably, the figure of the migrant-victim) has now been moved onstage, but not in an authentic way" (Zaroulia, 2018: 286). Whilst *Driftwood* is borne out of sincere intentions, and an emotional connection to the plight of refugees, the newness of the intervention and the reliance on media images of much fetishized moments of travel and arrival facilitates the obscenity. The migrant-victim is moved on stage, but in the form of silent puppets. The aesthetic of the piece is informed by media images of sinking migrant boats. The puppets themselves are made of materials that might wash up on shore, which holds clear symbolism. An important point to make at this juncture is that Zaroulia's use of the term obscenity, and its use here, is not as a synonym for wrong or unethical, but rather speaks to the controversy and ambiguity of excess that can spur on political responsiveness (Zaroulia, 2018: 190). This political responsiveness is at the core of what the artists performing *Driftwood* sought to

achieve. The team developing *Driftwood* are informed by the obscene and excessive

images from *The Guardian*, and it deeply influenced the way they construct the piece. This

is a deliberate choice; the utilisation of this obscenity is what will affect an audience to

political activity.

As an intention brought on by this excess, the development of *Driftwood* exists as a direct

response to 'the refugee crisis'. It also developed amongst the midst of the United Kingdom

European Union membership referendum. The rehearsal drawn from above took place on

Monday the 20th of June 2016. There was a further rehearsal on Tuesday 21st, before a

performance of the piece at the University of Leeds on Wednesday 22nd. The European

Referendum took place on Thursday 23rd, with the team travelling to London to perform at

the Connected Communities Utopias fair at Somerset House as the news of the result and

the resignation of the Prime Minister broke on Friday 24th. The intentions of the team were

informed by the sincere emotional connection to the images of the refugee crisis in a

period of growing anti-immigrant sentiment, which came to a significant peak in the

referendum week (Home Office, 2017).

During rehearsal, the question of the European Referendum, and the rising anti-immigrant

rhetoric, arose:

> *We discuss the EU Referendum. How does this change the show, if at all? Will this*
>
> *show cause issues depending on where it is? This is intended to be performed in*
>
> *Batley and other "white working class" towns. The performers wonder if they will*
>
> *encounter racism or negative response.*

> *(McKay, 2016: field notes)*

What becomes clear through these field notes is that the intentions of the piece, interrogated and questioned in rehearsal, were responsive to the shifting contexts of migration, and the ways in which the artists considered themselves and potential audiences as woven into, and participating in, those contexts. Intentions that respond to shifting contexts might run the risk of themselves becoming shifting, with the attention of the artist moving quickly from social problem to social problem. Aesthetic responses to the emergent crisis, with no commitment to effecting long term structural and political change, run the risk of perpetuating the figure of the refugee as an emotional commodity (Marschall, 2018: 161). Similarly, commitments can be non-performative, a commitment to change that appears transformative but is not followed with any real action (Marschall, 2018: 160).

The double bind that is emerging on the thread of intention here is one between commitment and responsiveness. Intentions formulated wholly by commitment run the risk of being non-performative, with little to no actual action. Intentions that are wholly responsive run the risk of facilitating a practice that lurches from social problem to social problem, based on what crisis or need is identified, or affecting, at the time. *Driftwood* was the start of a partnership between Faceless Arts, Leeds University and a variety of third sector organisations working directly with refugees and asylum seekers in Yorkshire. At the time of these rehearsals, we could read a largely responsive intention, as even the aesthetic of the work taking place is informed by the distant refugee crisis. The networks developed in this project did continue, and the commitment to the communities engaged grew also, into the *Extending the Welcome* project. This signified the beginning of a much longer, and in many ways ongoing, process, committed to working in this setting. The initial response to crisis became a settled yet active commitment, with work that focused on local

and immediate need rather than the refugee crisis. This will be explored further in this chapter as analysis continues, as I argue toward a fuller notion of 'context within'.

The intentions that predicated and supported *Driftwood* were produced by an emergent crisis, an *affective* response to wider contexts of migration. The excess of this response translates to an excess in the intervention, with a sincere obscenity in the aesthetic of the piece. In other words, the intentions the artists held forms as they experienced sincere but overwhelming emotional responses to the images of the refugee crisis they observed. This found life in the way the piece was crafted, which also used overwhelming images of crisis and trauma, growing from their own sincere response. A practice built on affective response finds intentions lurching from crisis to crisis, social intervention to social intervention. For *Driftwood*, this was not the case, as the networks developed and the artists involved continued to stage interventions, found in the second case study of this research project. This points towards a committed responsiveness, that is neither lurching from one intervention to another, nor non-performative, but aims for balance between the double bind. As outlined earlier, this balance can never be achieved, as the aporia at the heart of a double bind is one of indecidability. However, as is the case with this group of artists, this is a point can be continually worked toward, as an ambition for practice.

Intention is not simply the complex set of motivations that underpin practice (Balfour, 2009: 355), but is also an active process as a part of practice. In the next chapter, I return to the thread of intention and ask what might be meant by intention as active, or intention as practised. In Chapter 5, I draw from these findings and those of the next chapter to further unravel intention, before engaging them with the final case study. At the heart of this is the double bind between practice that responds to crisis, or practice that is committed to a community. Whilst this section has examined some of the ways in which the artists who

developed *Driftwood* responded to crisis, the next chapter examines how they developed a commitment to community.

3.2   Representation: Strangers to Ourselves.

I now explore questions of representation, keeping with the *Driftwood* performance, and its images of excess and obscenity. I explore further the imagery used in the performance, the significance of the use of puppets, and the wider implications of speaking for others in this way. I continue to draw from the work of Spivak, and invoke her deconstruction of the word 'representation'. Her work remains largely neglected by the field of applied theatre, and so this discussion continues to offer alternative ways of thinking about representation in those settings. It also offers implications for how we might conceptualise the field as a whole. I continue to develop the notion of 'context within', by first identifying the ways the refugee crisis might be viewed as a 'context without'.

As introduced in Part 1, in her article, *Can the Subaltern Speak,* Spivak offers a unique deconstruction of the word 'representation' that has since underpinned the trajectory of her work. She begins the discussion by critiquing only one sentence from Giles Deleuze. He writes, "there is no more representation; there's nothing but action […] Action of theory and action of practice" (1977, cited in Spivak: 70). Spivak agrees with this in that "the production of theory is also a practice", however she takes problem with his "articulation" of the argument. She argues that there are two meanings of the word "representation" running together in Deleuze's writing. There is representation "as speaking for, as in politics" and re-presentation "as in art or philosophy" (Spivak, 1997: 70). The two are linked, "the staging of the world in representation […] dissimulates the choice of and need 'heroes', paternal proxies, agents of power" (Spivak, 1997: 74). At this point she is

referencing the ways in which re-presentation, the aesthetic restaging of the world, can be appropriated as a powerful tool for oppressors.

Applied theatre more broadly is often conceptualised in similar terms:

"Applied theatre, which always exists in the intersection of the aesthetic, the performative and the political can be seen ultimately as an act of resistance"

(O'Conner & Anderson, 2019: 30)

Spivak argues that all practices of representation sit in this intersection or double bind, but moves to argue that the attention that is paid to this in practice is what facilitates resistance. She argues that a radical practice is one that attends to this double meaning (Spivak, 1997: 74). All representations can be understood, or read, as both aesthetic re-presentations of the world and political proxy representations of the self or other. A radical practice however, attends to both. Both of these meanings are in focus in that practice. The radical practitioner is attentive to both their role in re-staging the world, and representing themselves and others. This has clear implications for the field of applied theatre. This double bind can be taken up as a double bind on the thread of representation woven through context and practice, and used to analyse some of the complexities of the *Driftwood* performance. In the first section of this chapter I began to explore the imagery it used, informed by intentions that were generated as responses to the emerging crisis. In this section, informed by Spivak's understanding of representation, I continue to analyse this imagery.

Driftwood used a large boat, made from lightweight polystyrene and stained to mimic wood. It had a thick blue rope wrapped around each end to use as handles for the puppeteers. The puppets themselves were made from materials that might drift up on a shore, with wood used as their base, empty plastic milk bottles as heads, and netting and fabric covering the bodies. They all wore orange life vests, crafted from old tarpaulin. The puppets stood in bases in the boat. Their arms moved naturally with the movement of the boat, and their heads were moveable individually. Two puppeteers were needed to carry and animate the boat at any one time, rocking it or moving it about the area, whilst the third puppeteer moved the puppet refugees. At some points, the boat was set down and more complex sequences performed, such as a puppet refugee falling out of the boat and then being helped back in. One puppeteer always remained with the boat however, to keep it animated, rocking and alive.

Spivak's double meaning of representation allows for the artistic decisions made to be interrogated more deeply. As an aesthetic re-staging of the world, representing refugees and asylum seekers, the symbolism is clear. The puppets are made from objects that wash up on shorelines, driftwood. In contemporary contexts of migration, forced migrants travelling at sea are often given much the same value as driftwood. The external borders of the European Union specifically are the deadliest in the world, with exponential numbers of people in the thousands dying each year trying to cross them (Jones, 2016: 17). Images of migrants who have drowned at sea washing up on European shore lines have dominated much of the online and print media coverage of this refugee crisis (Cox & Wake, 2018: 139). These deaths are, at least in part, a result of the deterrence paradigm (Gold & Nawyn, 2013: 97; Richmond, 1993: 19-21). The aesthetic choices made by the Driftwood team demonstrate a way in which Spivak's double of meaning of representation functions in practice. The political cannot be ignored in the aesthetic, however, Spivak's interest is in

whether practitioners are attending to both the political and the aesthetic as they engage in those practices of representation. Significantly, she does not look for practices of representation that are in the centre of this double bind, as explored earlier this centre point is unreachable, an aporia, shifting and dislocal. Rather, she searches for practice that is attentive to both elements of it. In Driftwood, as we have seen in the first section of this chapter, the team had complex political and emotional connections to the subject, and their attention to the double bind of representation is woven into, and emerges from, those connections.

Whilst the team had a political and emotional connection to the refugee crisis more broadly, the absence of refugees and asylum seekers in the creation of this piece is notable. The political proxy re-presentation of people, therefore, becomes much more complex in this situation. The information the team gathered about the refugee crisis, and those caught up in it, to inform this piece, largely came from online media. The imagery of boats, the narratives of journeying, and the focus on the much fetishized point of arrival, all develop from and through this mediation of emotion, and of imagery. The political re-presentation of those caught up in the refugee crisis is first filtered through *The Guardian*. It is then filtered through the puppeteers themselves. This piece then, becomes less of a proxy political re-presentation of forced migrants, but of networks of the well intentioned Westerner.

This raises ethical questions that underpin Spivak's work on representation. In *Can the Subaltern Speak,* Spivak argues that the actions of the well intentioned Westerner can write out the possibility of representation for the subaltern. The subaltern is a group of people, wholly oppressed and totally removed from social lines of mobility. Their identity is contained in their difference. This resonates closely with Ahmed's interrogation of the

politics of pain in *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2004). Ahmed argues that there has

emerged an undue focus on pain, injury, and what she calls "the wound" in subaltern

politics, where it has become to stand in for identity itself (Ahmed, 2004: 32). As narratives

of pain and injury proliferate, pain can be turned into a media spectacle to be consumed.

The replacement of identity with a wound, turns the wound into "something that simply 'is'

rather than something that has happened in time and space" (Ahmed, 2004: 32). Whilst

Spivak argues toward a notion of a totally oppressed people, removed from representation,

with their identity contained in difference, Ahmed's argument opens up a route through

which this might happen that holds implications for applied theatre. It is a focus on pain in

processes of representation that facilitates this oppression, substituting the identity of a

subject for the trauma they have endured.

However, Ahmed does not argue that stories of pain should not be shared:

> Forgetting would be a repetition of the violence or injury. To forget would be to
>
> repeat the forgetting that is already implicated in the fetishisation of the wound.

(Ahmed, 2004: 33)

Rather than forgetting, Ahmed argues that we might look to remember how it was that the

surface of bodies, including in a more abstract sense, the bodies of communities for

example, came to be injured in the first place. She argues that this can be found through

different kinds of remembrance, which acknowledge the wounds that remain in the

present, and rethink the relationship between the past and the present (Ahmed, 2004: 33).

Thompson similarly argues that there is tension around the act of remembrance which is

"often linked to a competition of memories, so that what is created can be a competition

of suffering" (Thompson, 2013: 153). He asks who it is that decides something is worth remembering, asking if perhaps those that have suffered a particular trauma or harm might prefer to forget. Spivak's answer to these questions is slightly bleaker. She argues that the well intentioned Westerner only seeks out stories that appeal to them, unable to hear that of the subaltern (Spivak, 1997: 80). Her final conclusion is bleak, answering the title question of her essay with a resounding no. The subaltern cannot speak. The representation of pain that is present in Driftwood becomes a point of tension then. The focus on the suffering endured by the refugee puppets might be a process that removes identity from those it seeks to representing, casting the role of a refugee as a wounded subaltern.

Elsewhere, Spivak defines ethical practice as that which increases, promotes or facilitates agency of the other (Spivak, 2004: 541). In Driftwood, the voice of the forced migrant is silenced, instead we hear the voice of the well intentioned Westerner. However, this is not as simple as the artists speaking on behalf of the forced migrant, or for them, but instead reflects a complex web of ongoing negotiations between the two, that *orbits* the well intentioned Westerner, as they re-present experiences of migration as they understand it from a position of mediated images as outlined above. This raises further ethical questions, the agency of forced migrants is written out, and instead orbits the puppeteers. Agency, however, has already been removed from the subjects of this piece. Sibley writes:

> There is a history of imaginary geographies which cast minorities, 'imperfect' people, and a list of others who are seen to pose a threat to the dominant group in society as polluting bodies or folk devils who are then located 'elsewhere'. This 'elsewhere' might be nowhere, as when genocide or the moral transformation of a

minority like prostitutes are advocated, or it might be the spatial periphery, like the

edge of the world or the edge of the city.

(Sibley, 1995: 49)

Sibley's 'nowhere' might be considered the same as Spivak's subalternity. For Sibley, this

nowhere is linked to death and genocide. Spivak's argument considers the practice of sati,

Indian widows who throw themselves onto the funeral pyre of their husband. The voices of

these women are lost, as the only location rituals of mourning permitted was death. Their

voices become doubly lost as the British intervene in this practice and as "white men are

saving brown women from brown men" (1989: 92). For both, loss of voice is linked to

death. The subjects of this piece, refugees journeying at sea, have their agency removed as

they die. Literal death removes the possibility that those represented may speak for

themselves.

Death of speech might also be considered as not a physical death, or literal end of life, but

a death of space. Marc Auge outlines a concept of 'non-place'. For Auge, a place is an area

that is delineated, an assembly of elements coexisting in a certain order (Auge, 1995: 80). It

becomes a space, when it is animated by people, when it becomes lived and experienced.

Places and spaces are linked to identity. Auge identifies space as more abstract than place.

Place refers to an event, that has taken place, or a myth, which might have taken place, or

history, high places (Auge, 1995: 82). Space is lived, accessed directly, it is the animation of

a place. A non-place then, is a place that does not become a space. It is a place that is not

linked to identity. "Non-places are not relational, historical or concerned with (local)

identity in any way" (Preez, 2015). A non-place is not the abstract opposite of a space, it is

a place that does not create the "organically social" (Auge, 1995: 94). Non-places mediate

relations with the self and with others but only indirectly connected with their purposes. Auge uses examples of airports, waiting rooms, service stations. These are places that are not directly linked with identity, or with the production of the social. Incidentally, the examples he uses are all linked with travelling and journeys. The overcrowded migrant boat at sea might be considered a non-place, between places. Understood in this way, the representations that *Driftwood* makes do not write out the voices of the forced migrant lost at sea, because those voices are already shrouded by their disconnection from identity, and the social. It could be argued that *Driftwood* places these narratives, which are excluded from space, back into spaces that are relational, historical, and concerned with identity.

This idea of non-place can be framed as a metaphor for some of what Spivak argues; that the identity of the true subaltern is contained wholly in their difference. The subaltern are located in a non-place, beyond the margins of society, where identity is not. This extends beyond the abstract and into the physical location of marginalised people. Asylum seekers are situated in non-places like camps or on dangerous journeys. Refugees are situated in reception centres, detention centres, or housing at the edge of a city. In *Driftwood*, refugees are lost at sea. Whilst many migrants lose their lives crossing seas in unsafe conditions, many of those who survive are moved to Sibley's 'no-where', out of the lines of social mobility and into Spivak's subalternity. In many ways, *Driftwood* does not confront the challenge this presents. The performance focuses on journeying narratives, and the point of arrival, seeking to represent people who have their agency removed. It seeks to represent people who have died, or who face a death of voice, in a non-place, in subalternity. It is this death of agency that indicates a death of ethics for Spivak. In *Driftwood*, forced migrants are without agency as their story is told, and agency instead orbits the puppeteers. However, this agency was already lost in many ways. Driftwood

works to make the "invisibility of asylum seekers apparent" in a way that speaks to what Rand Hazou has called "a theatre of dys-appearance" (Hazou, 2008: 185). Refugee theatre, attending to the political re-presentation of others, needs to interrogate these questions of voice, agency, and subalternity, working to confront the challenges they present.

A success of *Driftwood* is found in that confrontation. As explored in Part 1, the notion of 'context within' can be considered through the complex shifting intersections of the self and other, as inescapably knotted together. Kristeva writes that otherness is found within the self. There is no other, no stranger or foreigner, only the other, stranger or foreigner within. It is the rejection of that strangeness and inward foreignness that facilitates outward xenophobia, nationalist movements, and violent borders. The rejection of the foreigner as different comes from the rejection of one's own difference. To discover our own "disturbing otherness" is a "threat". It generates an apprehension, that allowing the other at the heart of the self to appear will unsettle the "proper, solid "us"" (Kristeva, 1991: 192). It is through confronting this concealed otherness, that the other is constructed within the self, that we are able to acknowledge the "ultimate condition of our being *with* others" (Kristeva, 1991: 192). The story told in *Driftwood* is not the story of the performers, and yet as argued above they remain the subjects of it. This representation comes from those performers, the other as imagined within, as a product of empathy, takes centre stage. This is perhaps an example of confronting this concealed otherness. This confrontation of the other within takes place in three ways in *Driftwood.* The first is the confrontation the puppeteers themselves enacted. They created an aesthetic restaging of what they saw as an injustice, a crisis that they have a responsibility toward. This is how we result in a piece that re-presents the puppeteers themselves, it re-presents that confrontation. The second confrontation it makes is to the viewer. This piece looks to take place in "white working class towns", and asks audiences to decide whether to welcome

the sinking boat or leave it to sail on and seek refuge elsewhere. It draws from western imagery of mass media representations of the refugee crisis, focusing on narratives of journeying and the point of arrival, however through this it confronts the viewer, to find their own place in this narrative (Jeffers, 2012: 160). This imagery of the refugee crisis represents the well intentioned Westerner, however, it forces the viewer to interact with that imagery. The job of the viewer is to construct that otherness, or to confront it and welcome the boat. Finally, it confronts the very subject of the well intentioned Westerner by placing it centre stage. Whilst the imagery of the piece is of the refugee crisis, its political power is really as a conversation between the subject of the well intentioned Westerner and itself.

The context of the piece is therefore as much the crisis 'out there' as it is the other and self within. Context 'out there' might be better framed as 'context without'. The phrasing of 'context without' is a deliberate play on words to emphasise the way distant events are mistaken as immediate context, whilst the context that is within, dislocal and immediate, the subjects of the piece, is overlooked. As explored in Part 1, this context is dislocated, shifting, and undecideable, somewhere between the 'out there' and 'within', and both at once. For Driftwood, the aesthetic of the piece is of the refugee crisis, which is out there, yet imagined as local or immediate. The subjects of the piece constitute 'context within', as they are closer and more immediate to it, whether geographically or relationally. 'Context without' is that which is imagined to be immediate yet distant. Spivak's double meaning of representation ties this together. The political proxy re-presentation taking place is of the performers, the audience, and the subject of the well intentioned Westerner, context within. The aesthetic re-staging of the world taking place is of the overseas crisis, 'context without'. In the following sections I will argue toward a strategy of 'theatre of small contexts' that calls for the aesthetics of refugee theatre to work from 'context within',

rather than 'context without'. This, alongside a 'theatre of small contexts', is a strategy that emerges through this thinking of 'context within'.

The practices of representation in *Driftwood* are complex and overlapping. There is an aesthetic representation of the refugee crisis. The location of those it seeks to represent through this is notable, as they appear absent. In some ways this is a result of the ways the piece was constructed, but it is also a result of the intense marginalisation of those migrants. *Driftwood* looks to facilitate a proxy political re-presentation of forced migrants, but in more ways it creates a proxy political re-presentation of the performers and the well intentioned Westerner in general. The value of this is in the confrontation it enables, of the performer, the viewer, and that subject itself. The aesthetics of the piece confront the way in which the forced migrant is treated, as literal driftwood to extend the metaphor. Performed in the context of Brexit, amidst heightened awareness and responsiveness to migration, the stakes are raised, and this confrontation becomes more acute.

Representation in applied theatre practice, as a thread between practice and context, is tied up with notions of the self and other, with a double bind of political re-presentation and aesethetic restagings. Simple decisions to represent others are not as simple as they seem, and can be better understood as a representation of the imagined other through the self instead. A reliance on narratives of journeying and the point of arrival may point the strangeness in the self that is rejected. These narratives are distanced from the experience of the subject of the West, but through attending to the aesthetic and political ways representation happens, confrontation can be unpacked in that. Extending the work of this confrontation might allow for more complex, nuanced representations that respond to the context of migration, moving away from fetishized narratives and aesthetics.

3.3   Effect: Searching out the Interstices.

Driftwood is representative of a wider appetite amongst artists to 'do something'. Observing the atrocities of the refugee crisis, they use their practice to respond as they feel compelled to make a social intervention. The intentions underpinning this are complex, as are the resulting performance practices that seek to represent this crisis and those caught up in it. As explored across the thesis so far, debates in applied theatre have, in many ways, done away with effect (Thompson, 2009: 116 -119). Writers advocate practice and research whereby the effective is subsumed under the affective, embodied experience of the aesthetic performance is the very thing that can spur on, smaller, political changes (White, 2015). Affect is prioritised, and the end of effect is declared. In this work so far, this has had a significant role in unravelling and flattening the role of context. However, this dramatic turn to affect does not do away with effect, rather it questions the roles of effect and affect, and the ways they intersect and weave together. This is more fully explored in the following section, whilst this section focuses on searching for a knotty double bind of effect.

Effects can be accidental or planned, empowering or oppressive, enduring or fleeting. In this section I interrogate the multiple effects of *Driftwood,* before returning to debates about affect in the next chapter. In both sections, I maintain that there is a place for a political programme within applied theatre practice, that the turn to affect does not require this to be abandoned, but re-envisioned in smaller, more local forms. In the next section I argue toward a 'theatre of little contexts', a strategy drawing from the dislocal notions of context developed throughout the thesis, where change is sought in imagined immediate and local vicinities. This focus on an imagined local, sits in contradiction to the dislocal thinking so far in the thesis. This is as the 'theatre of little contexts' functions as a

strategy in the sense of the word as outlined in Chapter 2.4, working from the theory with a

practical and political purpose, but in doing so, working against the theory and undoing it.

In this section, I begin this argument by exploring the local effects that *Driftwood* achieved.

I begin to consider the context of practice as local, exact the ways in which that context has

been effected by *Driftwood*, and explore the significance of these effects. I begin with the

performance itself, and the potential for political effect it contains. I then consider the

networks and learnings that the process of creating and sharing the performance in an arts

and research setting created, facilitating some of the 'commitment to community' that I

explored in the first section of this chapter.

The performance of *Driftwood* was accompanied by an optional arts workshop. Participants

were invited to make welcome flags, using foil emergency blankets as a base, again

drawing from the aesthetics of crisis. People who made flags were able to take them away,

or place them in stands around the area, generally a tent near to where the street

performance would talk place. These flags became the flags that audience members, some

of whom were participants who had made the flags, waved to welcome the boat. This

whole process was optional. Audience members as participants were actively engaged in

the opportunity to foster a welcoming environment for the puppet refugee boats, by

creating flags, waving them, and then subsequently taking care of the puppet refugees.

This resonates with some of the much expounded early practices of applied theatre,

particularly the work of Augusto Boal. The audience here become spect-actors, watching

the action but also engaged and shaping it. They perform a welcome for the refugee

puppets, in what could be considered a rehearsal for real life.

The effects of this are complex, but orbit and are orientated toward the choices the

audience-participants, or spect-actor, are asked to make. Boal argues that through

practicing a real act in a fictional manner, the spect-actor is stimulated to practice the act in

reality (Boal, 2008: 119-20). Through an uneasy sense of incompleteness, the audience

later seek fulfilment through real action. In *Driftwood* this is potentially achieved as the

puppet refugees are placed in stands and left, as objects to be observed. They have been

welcomed, but then set in a non-place. The question core to Boal's argument is if the

appetite to 'do something' is sated, or not. In the three settings the performance was

observed for this research, 22nd June 2016 at Leeds University, 25th and 26th June at

Somerset House, and the 22nd October 2016 at the Bloomsbury Festival, audiences always

waved flags, welcomed the boat, and placed the refugees on the stands wrapping them in

foil blankets. Within the fictitious limits of the piece, the audience were able to take part in

a concrete experience. Whilst it is unknown how this effected the future actions of these

audiences, the concrete experience of rehearsing welcome in the moment invokes broader

questions of context, and the relationship the *audience* have to that.

Returning to Foucault's concept of governmentality (Foucault, 1991: 87-104), and focusing

on contexts of austerity momentarily, this process can be problematized. As I explored in

Chapter 1, core to the austerity programme rolled out in the United Kingdom, particularly

in England and Wales, is the co-option of community led organisations, individuals, and

third sector organisations into the Big Society (Bulley & Sokhi-Bulley, 2014; Jacobs, 2015:

35; Lister, 2015). Provision from the state is removed, to encourage the people to step up

and work together to offer solutions to societies problems. This intention underpinned the

policy programme of The Big Society, and whilst the rhetoric of The Big Society very quickly

faded from public discourse, the intention continued to underpin the following

restructuring of public finance and local government. State funded provision for refugees

and asylum seekers was reduced as a part of this process. A key example of this is the

abolition of the Migration Impact Fund, a fund administered at the national level to offset

potential pressures of sudden or high levels of migration to one particular area, in favour of

the Controlling Migration Fund, a much smaller fund administered at the local level

attempting to do the same thing whilst also policing illegal immigration (Department for

Communities and Local Government 2016). Through *Driftwood*, audience-participants are

asked to welcome refugees, and rehearse this act through the fictional action. As a process

of governmentality, The Big Society looks to conduct the conduct of citizens (Thompson,

2003: 9). It governs behaviour, silently correcting citizens to fill the gaps left by the state.

An effect of Driftwood is the potential enactment of the Big Society agenda, of conduct

governed by it. Situated amidst these political contexts of austerity, as a process of

governmentality, communities and artists do not facilitate change; rather, the complex

chains and movements of diffuse power and affective exchanges that facilitate this context

are supported and reproduced.

However, the governmentality of austerity is upset and interrupted by the governmentality

of the hostile environment. Whilst the audience-participants might rehearse their role in

the Big Society, they also rehearse a resistance to policy programmes that seek to do the

opposite of welcome. As part of the hostile environment, and deterrence paradigms more

generally, search and rescue operations looking to help migrants in danger on boats like

the one *Driftwood* sought to represent, were stopped (Brian & Laczko, 2014: 89-90). The

deterrence paradigm seeks to do the opposite of what the audience-participants are asked

to do throughout *Driftwood.* This paradigm saturates the lives of those audience-

participants, as schools, hospitals, banks, universities, doctor's surgeries, and even

romantic relationships all become places where borders are enforced (Gammeltoft-Hansen

& Tan, 2017: 38-9). The audience-participants of *Driftwood* rehearse the resistance to this

governmentality, they welcome and care for the puppet refugees.

The contradiction of rehearsing an expected role in one context, whilst resisting an expected role in another, looks toward what John Holloway has called interstitial change. Rather than attempting to overthrow a system of politics or power in an all-out revolution, Holloway encourages those looking to change a system to seek out the fissures and cracks in it. He asks that people look for the places where people refuse, and say no (Holloway, 2010: 11). These interstices are vulnerable spots, where change can be fostered. He uses the metaphor of a sheet of ice. It would take a lot of power all at once to explode an ice berg through one simple action, but if thousands of ice picks are driven into the cracks all across it, it will eventually crumble (Holloway, 2010: 17). This again sits in contradiction to the notions of power and change explored so far in this thesis, as shifting, diffuse, working through affective exchanges, and dislocal. In this way, Holloway's interstitial change represents a strategy for practice, rather than a theory of power and change for applied theatre.

Driftwood offers a strategic moment of refusal to the deterrence paradigm. It sits in an interstice that represents a contradiction in government policy, and processes of governmentality, and by acting as a point of refusal it exploits that contradiction. Key to Foucault's theory of governmentality is a move in his own thinking. His previous discussions around power had situated resistance as always accompanying power, but always directly relational to it. In his later work around governmentality, he reframes resistance as freedom. Rather than a reaction defined directly by the movement it sought to resist, freedom holds a refusal to submit, a reciprocal incitation and struggle, and a precondition for power and governmentality rather than an effect of it (Foucault, 1982: 790). As a precondition, it is not directly relational, and more complex. This is partly what leads Thompson to declare the end of effect, as effects become unpredictable in a web of power that might not work in straight lines. However, Holloway's points of refusal signify smaller

acts of resistance and freedom, which might even fall off Thompson's affective register. For example, he names dignity as a weapon against oppressive systems, as something that can contribute to breaking the ice (Holloway, 2010: 49-50). A strategy of interstitial change for practice draws from these notions of 'context within' and the turn to affect, as a focus on smaller changes and affective exchanges within the work might present those very points of refusal. The occupation of points of refusal might function as a strategy for applied theatre, but it also might sit on the thread of effect as one half of a double bind.

The effects of being situated in a fissure are not limited to the audience-participants, but also interact with the artists and practitioners involved. As the project represented the beginning of a 'commitment to community', the practitioners and artists became embedded in that community, as a part of networks of people that facilitated the second project, *Extending the Welcome.* The project also generated learnings for those involved that were carried into the next project, and disseminated to the wider field (McKay & Bradley, 2016). As an act of refusal, *Driftwood* inhabits an interstice within wider contexts. Its effects are facilitated by the rehearsal for real life it offers, and the generation of a 'commitment to community' and practiced intention for those artists and practitioners involved.

3.4   Affect: Towards a 'Theatre of Little Contexts'.

In this section I consider more fully what Thompson has called "the affective register", the many ways in which applied theatre practice creates embodied and felt experiences, including emotional and physical responses (Thompson, 2009: 117). This continues the conversation around context as within and without, entwined with notions of the self and the other, with a focus on those individuals who experience the practice. In this case, the

focus of the practice observed is working towards creating a performance, and then sharing it. Initially, these questions are again applied to the *Driftwood* performance. The focus then moves to the performance that grew out of the second project, *Extending the Welcome*, which is the main study of the next chapter. I argue toward a strategy of a 'theatre of little contexts', building on the work of Balfour, which looks for ways that practice might draw from the notion of 'context within'. Continuing to argue that context is within, I further Thompson's argument, that wider contexts might be altered, or better understood as altered, through affective responses and exchanges.

The intentions underpinning the *Driftwood* performance are deeply linked to the affective register, in emotional responses to images of the refugee crisis. The performers in the piece held affective relationships to those images, making them a primary source of aesthetic influence. This intention looked to effect audiences, and those involved, in the same way. This is seen primarily through the choice that audiences have to make. At the close of the performance, the performers blow whistles as they manipulate the puppets to wave frantically toward the area holding the audience. The audience all hold flags made from foil emergency blankets, and are handed a rope that will pull the boat in. At this point, the audience are able to welcome the refugees on the boat by waving their flags, pulling in the boat, carrying the puppets one by one to stands, and covering them in emergency blankets. Whether they involve themselves in this activity, or whether this happens at all, is completely a choice of the audience. They are able to refuse to help, or to refuse the boat entirely. In fliers handed out to passers-by at the Leeds performance of Driftwood on the 22nd of June, the performance is described as "emotive", and asks:

> Will the audience welcome the Driftwood boat and provide sanctuary for them [the refugee puppets] or will the boat carry on its journey until it is out of sight?

The piece building up to this point uses the images of the refugee crisis to craft an emotive response. The central choice is will we allow these newcomers to enter our country, will we welcome and care for them? In field notes observing a rehearsal for *Driftwood,* I write, *"at the end of the performance we really want to care for the refugees with blankets, and this will help the audience do the same" (McKay, 2016: Field Notes).* The focus here is on the care that will be demonstrated by the performers, and the hope that this will prompt the audience to respond to the puppets with a similar care. The affective responses from the performers to the images of the refugee crisis underpin the piece, as it looks to draw out those same responses in audiences. It looks to make the audience care, for the puppet refugees, and by extension, to care for the people who experience the events shown through the performance.

In many ways, this is a practical example of Balfour's theatre of little changes. He argues that social interventions using theatre should forget about large projects of political change, and instead focus on small changes and miracles (Balfour, 2009: 356). The aesthetic in the work should not be subsumed underneath the social value of it, and can be the source of that social value. He argues that by abandoning large and unrealistic claims, "applied practice might more readily encounter the accidental, and acknowledge that what applied does is not always linear, rational and conclusive in its outcomes, but is more often messy, incomplete, complex and tentative" (Balfour, 2009: 357). In *Driftwood,* intentions were complex and shifting as all intentions do, as argued previously this is because intentions are practiced and not fixed. One of these intentions became wrapped up in affective moments as the artists look to affect the audience to care about the refugee puppets. Famously, Boal has imagined theatre as a "the rehearsal space for real life" (Boal, 1995: 44). The performance of pulling in a puppet refugee boat and caring for the puppet

refugee isn't a rehearsal for literal real version of this, but a rehearsal for caring. There is a dissatisfaction facilitated at the close of the piece, a dissonance between audience member and puppet refugee that refuses to completely sate this impulse. The puppet refugees are left in stands, and simply wait until the crowd disperses or the team clear up the set. They are intentionally placed in a limbo, a non-place. This is heightened as the stands themselves are covered in images of the next step for those refugee puppets, for example, one stand was coated in paper work and forms. The puppets remained in these stands whilst the performers and the audience interact, or disperse. They perhaps enact the confrontation of the subject of the West, silent and motionless, as objects now to be observed. This affect is "little", and through its "incompleteness" the audience might be affected to act further. These images are intended to stick in this way.

A contradiction in this emerges through the aesthetic. *Driftwood* seeks to re-stage a large, political and humanitarian crisis, and intervene in this crisis, as the artists feel the need to 'do something'. It seeks to re-present forced migrants and refugees, making them the subjects of the piece. The real subjects of the piece however, are the performers, the subject of the West, and the audience to whom the piece is subjected. Viewed as a political intervention into the refugee crisis, sharing refugee stories, the piece raises serious doubts. However, viewed as an affective confrontation of the ways the subject of the west, via the performer and the audience, view the foreigner and interact with the foreigner, the piece finds success. The aesthetic of the crisis seems at odds with this, but it is through the excess of the representation and the obscenity of it that the affects are realised. In the second project, *Extending the Welcome,* the creative team worked alongside refugees and asylum seekers to create a performance that focused more clearly on the affective, and employed a wholly different aesthetic.

The narrative explored in the *Extending the Welcome* performance focused on settlement, narrated by recordings of the participants of the project, whilst those participants themselves operated shadow puppets behind a large screen to illustrate their stories. The narratives focused on things like discovering foods from home countries in Leeds market, confusion over the Yorkshire accent, and feelings about the future here. It focused heavily on place and identity, exploring the new experiences of the participants in Leeds and their local area, and on language. The performance was crafted over a series of workshops. First, the participants shared their stories with the creative team over a creative mapping exercise. In this exercise participants were encouraged to draw places of significance to them on a large sheet, making a communal map of the area based on the groups own experiences of it. Prompted by questions, stories were shared of these places. These stories were then recorded multiple times, spoken by the participants who were willing to share. Each time the participant was encouraged to refine what they said, and worked with the creative team to refine it into a structured narrative. Finally, the recordings were edited by musician, G, who removed things like silences, 'erms' and 'aahs', and added in other sounds and noises like sounds from the market, to underscore the speech. The participants made shadow puppets of key things in their stories. Puppets included images of people, places, objects, words, and foods. The group then played with moving the shadow puppets behind the screen to accompany the stories as they were played. This was rehearsed and refined, to bring all the elements together into a single performance. The performance was shared at RETAS in Harehills for other participants of RETAS, and also at the Leeds Playhouse (formerly West Yorkshire Playhouse), for the participants of Asmarina Voices, a women's choir for refugees and asylum seekers.

The creation of the piece was led by the participants, narrated by the participants, and crafted by the participants. The aesthetic was explored and edited by the creative team,

but the main subjects in this instance were the participants. The aesthetic of the performance was much less complicated than *Driftwood* in its immediacy, using block images on a shadow screen, alongside a recorded narration. As the participants crafted the content of the piece and the creative team crafted the aesthetic, a negotiation took place. In the final workshop I recorded an example of this in my field notes:

> *G talks about her editing process of the voice recordings of the group. She has made conscious decisions to edit out some of the natural pauses, umm and ahhhs to make it feel more like a streamlined performance. Taking out imperfections, but thinking about how those imperfections actually make the spoken word more beautiful, it is an indicator of the process of navigating a new language. K takes this a step further by describing how these "imperfections" are actually a part of the spoken repertoire - they are a useful part of language and not imperfections at all.*
>
> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

The participants have provided the content for the piece, and the creative team edit it. They explicitly question their responsibilities as editors, in this moment around the way the narrations are crafted. G has considered "natural pauses, umm and ahhhs" as speech imperfections, as parts of the recording that do not serve the narrative being shared. She thinks about how actually they could have made the recordings more beautiful, as a symbol of the way the participants navigate the English language. K, who is a linguistic researcher, sees these as a useful part of language. Rather than demonstrating a broken version of spoken English, they demonstrate that each individual has their own repertoire of language (Li, 2017). She argues that they aren't imperfections, but communicative tools in their own right. Above all, this discussion demonstrates a deep awareness of the power held in

editing the recorded narrations. This close attention to the ways in which the voices of

participants are shared and edited by artists, as both an ethical and aesthetic choice, meets

the challenge that Spivak sets up (Spivak, 1997: 74), as the artists are attending to the

aesthetic restaging of the world *and* the political re-presentation of the participants.

This piece works more closely toward Balfour's model of a theatre of little changes than

Driftwood. As part of an exploratory project, with no predetermined outputs, it looked to

"encounter the accidental" and worked in a way that "is not always linear, rational and

conclusive in its outcomes" (Balfour, 2009: 357). The process of its creation was "messy,

incomplete, complex and tentative" and so were its affects, and some are able to be traced

through the claims made by audience members at the performance. Whilst affecting the

participants as they shared their stories, the piece had strong affects on the audience

members, who were largely refugees, asylum seekers or newly arrived migrants. At the

sharing at RETAS shortly after the performance finished, I recorded the following in my

field notes:

> *A woman in the audience speaks out and says that she is so glad she came in to the*
>
> *room to watch the performance. She has just arrived in Britain a few weeks ago and*
>
> *is facing a number of struggles. She says that seeing the group talk about their own*
>
> *struggles in their first weeks here helps her. She sees that they experienced the*
>
> *same things as her, but that they have been able to overcome/deal with them.*
>
> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

Words we could use to trace the woman's response on the affective register might be

affirmation, or assurance. I noted that she said she was "glad", which might point to

something between contentment and joy. An individual affect of the piece here is visible.

The aesthetic of this piece does not look to larger crisis of migration, nor did the artists

involved consider it as a radical intervention into the European refugee crisis, but rather it

focused on individual narratives and affects change in audiences in a deeper way. This is

another way in which it becomes apparent that context in applied theatre is exactly that, it

is woven in and through applied theatre, not situated outside it. The aesthetic of *Driftwood*

and the narratives it shared drew from political contexts considered as wide, a crisis that

was happening out there somewhere. It attempted to use this to intervene in this crisis,

but still found its value in smaller, more local affects. The shadow performance for

Extending the Welcome focused on narratives from the participants themselves, and was

performed to those in the local immediate vicinity. This vicinity is both geographic and

relational as the piece was performed to people in the same area of Leeds, and to those

who relate to it through their experience and identities. In this way, context is more fully

understood as within. It is deeply rooted in identity, and notions of the self and other.

This understanding, that all applied theatre practice takes place within specific local and

immediate vicinities, again sits in tension with much of the thinking developed so far, but

prompts an extension of Balfour's discussion around intention. Whilst he looks toward a

theatre of little changes, we might also look toward a theatre of little contexts. Responding

to some of the horrors of the refugee crisis, theatre makers felt the need to do something,

but much of the aesthetic of this work, as seen in *Driftwood*, was shaped by the crisis 'out

there' whilst it actually affected, confronted and intervened in contexts within. *Extending

the Welcome* focused on those contexts within, and affected within that immediate local

vicinity. It was not ignorant of wider political contexts of migration, but simply worked from

an understanding of context as a very different thing, as the experiences of the

participants, the responsibilities of the artists, the self and the other. Context within

theorises context as dislocal, shifting, movements and threads between people. A theatre

of little contexts draws from this as a strategy for practice, doing away with 'context

without' through a focus on an imagined local.

A 'theatre of little contexts', affecting change in the local and immediate, does not require

that practitioners forego a commitment to larger political change. Rather, it is through the

'theatre of little changes', and the 'theatre of little contexts', that these larger changes can

be brought about. As noted, John Holloway has argued that the revolution is interstitial. As

a strategy for practice it seeks to find the cracks, the fissures, the interstices of a political or

social system that change can be accomplished. It is the points of "no", refusal and

resistance against and beyond these systems that can break it apart. A 'theatre of little

contexts' also searches for these cracks, imagined as local and immediate. It sees the

complex systems are in the room, 'context within' rather than without. Context is within

the self and the other, and applied theatre can affect change there.

Although *Driftwood* uses the aesthetics of the refugee crisis, it is not directly about it. The

changes it affects, the context it partakes in, and the confrontation it makes, are found in

smaller contexts. These smaller contexts are spaces of resistance and refusal, and the wider

political context of the refugee crisis is therefore not forgotten, and an intervention is

made. A 'theatre of little contexts', however, might look to build its aesthetics from this

immediate and local context, that is within, rather than that which is without. It can build

an aesthetic from the interstice, the crack in which it is situated. This might look closer to

the performance that grew out of the *Extending the Welcome* project.

In this chapter I have begun to unravel the four threads of analysis through examples of

performance practice from two projects, *Driftwood,* and *Extending the Welcome.* For

Intention, I have argued that there is a double bind between practice that responds to crisis, or practice that is committed to a community. For *Representation,* I have continued to apply Spivak's double meaning of the word, and used it to facilitate a discussion around the role of confrontation of conceptions of the self and other. For *Effect* I began to argue toward a theatre of little contexts, whereby practice is conceptualised within smaller interstices and points of refusal, envisaged as a part of wider change. For *Affect,* I have drawn from the second project to outline what this might look like, and begun to examine what it might mean to work in the local as a strategy. The next chapter focuses on participatory practices in *Extending the Welcome,* and continues to use the four threads of analysis, developing and refining the double binds within them, and the strategies this presents.

4. People, Place, Practice.

In this chapter, I move to the second case study, *Extending the Welcome,* and analyse the participatory practices that took place. *Extending the Welcome* was developed as a continuation of the previous project, *Driftwood.* The same core group of artists and researchers came together to build on what they identified as the learnings from the previous work. *Extending the Welcome* was a series of seven arts workshops in Harehills, Leeds, between the 19th December 2016 and the 5th April 2017. The workshops explored themes of belonging and settlement with participants who were mainly refugees or going through the asylum process. The project combined music, visual art, and performance, culminating in a shadow performance that shared the stories of three participants. This chapter asks what a strategy of working in the local amidst dislocal contexts might look like, and how critical concepts of context intersect with applied theatre as an assemblage of shifting constellations of people, place and practice.

This chapter follows the same analytical structure as the previous one, working through the four threads of analysis in order. These are intention, representation, effect, and affect. These shifting threads trace the relationship between applied theatre practice and its contexts, and I continue to search for the double binds within them. In the first section of this chapter, I ask how the artistic team crafted their intentions for this project, and explore how models of power interrupt or facilitate those intentions. The team looked to create spaces of conviviality, and to place participants in positions of creative control. Through a constant renegotiation of power, these intentions became an active part of the process, rather than simply articulated as a commitment at the start. In the second part of this chapter, I explore how practices of representation intersect with participatory practices, using theories of history making, identity and performativity, focusing on the process of

creating the shadow performance that was shared at the end of *Extending the Welcome.* I also begin to unpick the ways this participatory process is spatialized, as bounded into a workshop but also connected through wider networks of place, space and social relation. Working from this, I introduce Spivak's call to work in 'idiom' (Spivak, 2003: 54), alongside Freire's call to 'respect the language of the people' (Freire, 1968: 96), as strategies for how this spatialized set of practices might work in the local, or in a theatre of little contexts. I then continue to analyse these processes, and explore some of the examples of working in idiom in the *Extending the Welcome* workshops. I explore the ways a theatre of little contexts functions through local constellations of people, place, and practice, embroidered with relationships of power and resistance in the struggle to make history. In the final section, I return to questions of affect, and map the ways in which sliding affective relationships to contexts of migration have shifted through this project, and present an alternative approach to that of *Driftwood.*

4.1   Intention: Renegotiating Power.

Throughout this first section I track a specific choice made by practitioners to facilitate collaboration. At the heart of this operates what became known as the 'silent', or 'open', invitation on the part of the artists, as they looked to facilitate spaces in which participants felt welcome, but not coerced, to share their experiences and stories. I argue that through this, the artists continued to create a space of resistance to contexts of migration, directly as they sought to place participants in positions of creative control, and indirectly as they sought to prioritise the agency of participants within the workshop space. I also problematize these intentions with questions of agency, drawing from Spivak and questions of subalternity. The team initially established a core intention: *"to place participants in positions of creative control" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* Although they

named this intention, they neglected to consider the practical implications of it, and how it might translate into practice. Later in this section, I argue that this naming of intention and neglect of pragmatism might represent a performative intention, rather than a performed one. By this, I mean that the intention runs the risk of remaining a named goal at the outset of the work, holding no real influence over the actual practice. Conversely, I consider that this neglect of pragmatism might actually be the process that facilitated an ongoing negotiation of power that was required for this intention to succeed. From this, I argue again that intention in applied theatre is not something that only underpins or motivates practice, as this runs the risk of confining the concept of intention to a simple practice of naming goals. I argue that it is something that is itself, also practiced, throughout all elements of the work. In short, I argue that intention should be playfully considered as both a noun, and a verb; 'to intend'. This continues to develop earlier ideas around intention as an ongoing negotiation of antecedents and movements.

In the first planning meeting for *Extending the Welcome,* lead artist and facilitator C met with musician E and artist T. In this meeting, C was asked what kind of a performance she thought the participants and artists involved in the project would be working toward, and therefore what it is that the workshops needed to focus on. She answered this question, and began to outline her intentions for the project more widely:

> *I always work in the way that I don't want to make anybody stand up in front of an audience if they're not ready or don't want to. I've tried to be very open about that, I think that as we work together that we will get to that point of sharing. But, I always leave that proviso in. It's not just, 'we're making a play', it's just whatever comes out of what we create that will be the performance. It will be what we're all happy to create and present.*

(C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording)

Her intentions here centre around both the workshops and the resulting performance. She identifies a key intention; she doesn't want participants to feel pressured to perform or to be placed in front of an audience unwillingly. She argues that the rest of the project should be structured around this. The end product may be a sharing of visual art, it may be a play, but importantly it will be *"what we're all happy to create and present"* *(C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording).* C continues and expands some intentions underpinning the project. She begins by outlining an intention from the original funding bid, that the workshops and overall process will place participants in *"positions of creative control" (C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording).* To achieve this, C argues toward a collaborative way of working that will centre around devising work. She also argues that the process needs inbuilt moments of reflection. Finally, she acknowledges the complexity of establishing this process, as someone who ultimately retains power over it*, "I will direct and shape but from within" (C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording).* She argues that this process of collaboration is how the team of facilitators and artists will also work together. Collaboration, distributing creative control, and reflective processes, underpin the intentions for the project from the outset.

What remains unclear at this moment is which decision making processes will be passed to the participants, and how this will be facilitated throughout the delivery of the project. This intention runs the risk of becoming a set of non-performative commitments as explored in the previous chapter. There is an implicit position taken that power begins with the artists. This is demonstrated through the way this intention is articulated: the participants are *placed* in positions of creative control. The artists hold positions of control, but they want to *place* the participants in those instead. This might be representative of an "incomplete"

model of power, which fails to recognise the "complex multivalency of power as it is exercised" (Gallagher, 2008: 137). The participants are not powerless, and conversely the artists do not hold absolute power to then gift to those participants. Conceiving of relationships of power in this way, the artists imagine themselves to be in positions of dominance. The intention of placing participants in positions of creative control is not accompanied by any pragmatic process, and the ways this transfer of power might take place are not defined. This intention could run the risk of leading to a coercive form of participatory practice, where processes are actually guiding toward a final product or particular outcome that is decided by the artists who empower themselves (Cooke & Kothari, 2001: 116). In this case, it could be that the artists talk about placing participants in positions of creative control, but then fail to provide and specificity in how that will work. As they view themselves as the initial holders of power, and do not formulate a pragmatic way to share, or pass on that power, it remains with them. Whilst speaking about participants being placed in positions of power and control, the artists actually retain it, and work toward their own outcomes.

However, to design a strategy for the distribution of power before the project has begun might actually have the opposite effect. A predetermined, or designed, process might remove the possibility of informal, spontaneous encounters, and the ongoing renegotiation of power necessary for this intention to succeed (Masaki, 2004: 126). Masaki draws from policy and development studies to offer the idea that intentions dealing with power require a "reflective vigilance" against imposition and coercion by practitioners (Masaki, 2004: 126). This looks toward facilitating the core intention of *Extending the Welcome*, which could be further framed as a process of democratisation, as power is distributed amongst those in the room. However, without recognising that a process of sharing power is always incomplete, this further claim to democratic practice could also be considered a

non-performative, rather than performed, commitment. Democracy is never complete, but is an ongoing struggle, that is always "to come" (Derrida, 2002: 98). This intention is not static, or simply frozen at the point it was articulated. As an ongoing renegotiation of power, this process of democratisation is best understood as a struggle, which cannot ignore the frontiers or barriers to that renegotiation (Mouffe, 2005: 105). To avoid becoming a non-performative commitment, and to also avoid becoming a tool for coercion, this intention must find life as an ongoing struggle, an ongoing renegotiation of power, with a reflective vigilance. Intention, therefore, is not a named aim that only looks to the future, but again, an ongoing and active part of practice.

In the first workshop, on the 19th December 2016, artist T led the participants in crafting festive lanterns using clear acetate and sticky vinyl. Musician G moved through the participants, as they made the lanterns, trying to gather information about music and songs that might be used later in the project. In my field notes I described this moment, and made brief reflections:

> *G learns music and words from the participants. She is in control of a creative scaffold but not its content. She is attentive to the contributions people are making, searching for music on Youtube.*

> *We have coffee and food after the craft. G continues listening to peoples songs, and shares some she thinks a participant might know - "You might know this song. Some women from Syria taught me this song". She sings it and the participants shout yes. Others join in singing and dancing. G sits back down with the participant and gets to know her.*

(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)

This moment demonstrates the original intention of placing participants in positions of creative control in action. G makes use of the time whilst conversation is happening over craft and then over coffee, she talks to the participants specifically trying to find music and songs that can be used later in the project. In my field notes I reflect that G is in control a creative scaffold, and but not of its content. This means that she is looking to craft the structure of the workshop and exercises, but its creative content, the songs suggested for example, are not predetermined, and left to the participants. In this reflective moment I am perhaps looking toward the work later on in the project, G will take this information away and use it to shape the creative process and what might be made out of the workshops. This affirms C's reflections in the planning meeting, that artists will shape the work but from within. In this encounter, G has sat alongside participants, within the space, and found music that she will work with later in the project, rather than planning this outside of the space, bringing in her own creative suggestions.

This notion of a scaffold is one strategy that might reconcile the models of power explored here. By envisaging a scaffold within which participants provide creative content, power is not considered as a commodity or capacity to be passed from one group to another, but as a complex and multivalent system that involves all individuals in the room (Gallagher, 2008: 147). The artists recognise their dominance over the creation of the work, and they develop strategies in the moment, for example G making use of conversation over craft to talk about music, that allow the participants to exercise their power and agency over it, as they share music and songs that will then be used later in the project. This is a renegotiation of power that is ongoing, rather than planned at the outset of the project.

This also reflects intentions around the ways political themes were approached by C at this point in the work. In the planning meeting, she says:

A major theme emerging from the work is that of conviviality and this can be a really interesting focus this can chime given the current national, international, and political situation.

(C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording).

In the meeting, she defines conviviality as *"to get on with people, to be social".* She adds this is something to look toward in the *"shared activities and shared performance",* and "*how we get on" (C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording).* The use of the term conviviality is significant, framed as an intention, it describes the kind of relationships and social space more broadly that the project wants to foster. C also links the project to national and international situations, but looks to conviviality within this project as a way of considering that context.

The interjection of the term conviviality signals a continuation of the notions of self and other explored in the last chapter, but moves away from questions of how the other is welcomed, toward how we live together convivially. *Driftwood* functioned as a confrontation of the other within, allowing audiences to discover their own "disturbing otherness" (Kristeva, 1991: 192). As an excessive obscenity, it was born out of an emotional response to images of the refugee crisis, as the artists felt the need to 'do something'. The work now settles, moving away from themes and aesthetics that respond directly to crisis, and welcome at the end of that crisis. Instead, it focuses on more nuanced questions of welcome, shaped and framed by the theme of conviviality. The term conviviality emerges

in the work carried out by this same team in the second project, *Extending the Welcome,* as

their practice is embedded in a commitment to refugees and asylum seekers rather than

roused by a sudden crisis. It is also framed as more closely embedded in the immediate and

local context. Within this imagined smaller context, conviviality can refer to processes of

cohabitation and interaction that contribute to multi-cultural spaces (Gilroy, 2004: XI), to

living together in real time in ways that undoes oppressive relationships of racism for

example (Gilroy, 2006: 6), or to free and creative interactions between individuals across

difference (Illich, 1973: 14). Cosmopolitanism asks for a simple openness toward humanity,

and to embrace the diversity that this openness inevitably brings (Skrbis & Woodward,

2011: 45). Broader traditions of cosmopolitanism can be reframed as a vision for global

conviviality when viewed as a social and cultural condition, rather than a political project,

as in *Extending the Welcome* (Mignolo, 2011: 332). Conviviality as cosmopolitanism can

also function as a confrontation, not dissimilar to the process of confrontation explored in

the last chapter:

> In order to enable all citizens in Britain, regardless of colour and cultural
>
> preference, to lay claim to the nation and contribute to an evolving national
>
> identity, the ethnic moorings of national belonging need to be exposed and
>
> replaced by criteria that have nothing to do with Whiteness.
>
> (Amin, 2002: 977)

Amin writes specifically about citizenship and race here, but the core question can be

extended and applied to refugees, who also might not be considered citizens in the way

Amin outlines. The unmaking of Whiteness that Amin speaks to is not a call to "born-again

ethnicity", but a call to lay bare the "intricate process of subject self-formation" in ways

that champion the rights of the stranger rather than the right to decide who strangers are

(Bauman, 2995: 14-5). The question that cosmopolitan conviviality asks therefore, is not

how to get rid of strangeness and strangers, but how to live together, permanently and

daily (Bauman, 1995: 12). Working to foster a convivial participatory process is, therefore,

more than just *"how people get on" (C, 2016: Planning Meeting Recording)*, but deeply

invested in questions of identity. As C outlines, it "*can be a really interesting focus given the*

current national, international, and political situation" (C, 2016: Planning Meeting

Recording). She links conviviality to context, placing the conviviality she hopes to facilitate

in contrast with wider systems of deterrence and inhospitality. The everyday championing

of the rights of the stranger takes on a new meaning in this setting for C. It becomes

political. The selection of conviviality as a theme to explore, in relation to national and

international political situations, demonstrates an awareness of 'context within'.

These national and international "situations" have been explored in depth in Part 1. A key

example is the Hostile Environment policy programme, which impacts directly on the lives

of the participants taking part in *Extending the Welcome*. The intention to create a convivial

space operates in opposition to the deterrence paradigm, which underpins the Hostile

Environment policy programme. As explored in Chapter 1, the deterrence paradigm works

to facilitate a political and social environment that is inhospitable to migrants, particularly

affecting refugees and asylum seekers. Conviviality in this setting works across difference,

fosters an openness toward one another, and invokes another confrontation of the self.

The complexity of this intention further resists the deterrence paradigm by maligning its

effects and affects. The convivial space could be framed as an interstice, a point of refusal

as it creates a social space for those the hostile environment seeks to exclude, and a shared

creative process for those it seeks to isolate and deprive.

In workshops, this intention also emerged in processes that dealt directly with the experiences and stories of the participants. In the 3rd workshop, cultural idiom and customs were explored in a role play exercise. One by one, participants welcomed the rest of the group to their home in Leeds, instructing them on custom and etiquette. For example, some participants removed the table and chairs set in the centre of the room, and those entering sat on the floor in a circle and were offered imaginary food, whilst others asked those entering to take off their shoes. In this moment, the artists were taking cultural idiom, and confusion around custom across different cultures, as a theme to explore through creative exercise and role play. Whilst participants did share their own customs, this sharing did not interrogate or question them. Rituals of home often contain hierarchies and gender imbalances, yet these customs are presented in this workshop without addressing the power relationships at play. Other, more general themes are addressed. Those entering were also encouraged to ask questions of their host. In the final 'home', the group sat around a large table on chairs. The role play collapsed into a conversation about the subject and themes that had emerged:

> *We have a long discussion about the etiquette of visiting different homes. People share different experiences of their home countries, and talk about how this is tied into relationships. I think this has ended up being a good space where people feel like they can talk about their home countries. The participants are the experts of this. We haven't forced this, but a silent invitation was there.*

> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

In this moment, participants began to share stories of their home cultures and experiences. This is something that emerged unintentionally, as the role play "homes" were set in Leeds,

but is a moment that speaks to the intentions of conviviality and placing participants in positions of creative control. These two intentions created what I began to record in my field notes as a "silent invitation". In other places, I refer to this as an "open invitiation". The use of the word "silent" is indicative of the fact that this is an unspoken invitation, as practitioners looked to facilitate an environment and space within which participants felt free and supported to share their stories as refugees and asylum seekers, but also not coerced to do so or shamed for not doing so. The use of the word "open" perhaps reflects upon the conviviality explored above (Skrbis & Woodward, 2011: 45). What emerges through this strategy of open or silent invitation, employed by the practitioners, is an evident careful negotiation between invitation and consent, and the constant renegotiation of power to avoid coercion but foster openness.

The careful negotiation between invitation and consent may be the tension that prevents the customs of welcome and the possible, or probable, imbalances that exist within them, to be interrogated, as outlined above. White argues that the ethics of this sort of participation is not as simple as removing all elements of risk or ensuring consent. He argues that at times, effective participation, "and politically challenging participation – will be that which puts participants in compromising situations" (White, 2013: 92). Through working to continually facilitate an open, or silent, invitation, and through their attempts to abdicate power to the participants, the practitioners write out the possibility for critical engagement with these customs and practices. The themes and questions that are discussed are held at a general level, asking what it means to be welcome and live side by side, without confronting the internal imbalances of power at play within those ideas when practised.

In the following workshop, the group mapped places in Leeds where they feel most at home and settled. On a large sheet, participants and facilitators drew the places they felt a sense of belonging and happiness, and then physically stood on that map to be asked questions and discuss that place. In my field notes I again recorded the negotiation between invitation and consent as I reflected:

> *Opening space for participants to share stories in meaningful ways. This moment is an open invitation. We are not pressing for specific stories or memories, but we are open to hear anything. The room is light, breezy, people feel relaxed sitting around the map. There is a sense of flow, respect. The room feels open and calm. There is no pressure to share stories, but people are sharing.*

> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

In this moment I note the atmosphere in the room. I describe both the environment as it is, "light, breezy", and as it feels "relaxed… open and calm". I reflect that there is no pressure to share stories, but nonetheless, people are sharing. This reflection further deepens the argument that the intentions in this project opened up a space of welcome, which acts in resistance to the hostile environment and wider deterrence paradigms. An intention of the deterrence paradigm is that the stories and experiences of refugees and asylum seekers are silenced in favour of figurative narratives that criminalise and vilify them. The intentions underpinning practice here are to place participants in positions of creative control, and to facilitate an environment of conviviality. This combination is what contributes to the development of the silent, or open, invitation. In this, practitioners are not simply offering an oppositional space of superficial resistance to the hostile environment. Practitioners are not working to elicit stories and narratives that contradict dominant ones of vilification and

criminalisation. Rather, they work to resist the silencing of the hostile environment that facilitates those stories and narratives in the first place. In this way, there is no wrong story, including those of other places in Leeds and the UK where the participants feel unsafe or in danger. Some of these will be explored later in the chapter.

The intentions that underpinned *Extending the Welcome* were broadly centred around power, the ways in which the workshops could become convivial spaces, within which participants felt welcome to share or withhold stories and experiences, and as artists worked to produce a creative scaffold that allowed for a shared creativity and input to the work. Whilst intentions about conviviality, and placing participants in positions of creative control, were named and articulated at the start of the project, strategies and plans for how these might be practically delivered were not. These intentions found success in the exercises detailed above as the artists continually allowed for the renegotiation of power within the participatory process.

Intention is not a verb proper, it is a noun. But it is also a point of discussion and a concept within applied theatre practice that allows practitioners to access deeper questions about their work. Considered as a shifting thread between practice and context, we might playfully unravel it and reimagine it as verb. Within the practice explored above, intention is not best understood as a named set of goals or complex motivations at the outset of the project, but rather a reflective vigilance and an ongoing renegotiation of power. It is precisely because intention is bound up in this constant renegotiation of power that we can reimagine it as a verb, as something that is done through practice, and not simply articulated as a performed commitment. This process is picked up again in the next chapter, as I tie up and unravel the knotty double bind at the heart of the intention thread based on the findings of these analysis chapters.

4.2   Representation: Constellations of Power.

In this section I continue to analyse the participatory processes used in *Migration and Home,* returning to questions of representation. I work through the ways in which identity was explored, rehearsed, performed, constituted and reconstituted through the participatory processes employed. In looking to create a piece of work that could be shared to an audience at the close of the project, the team and participants created performance material, or collected information that could be used in a performance, during workshops[2]. Earlier, I examined an exercise wherein participants mapped places where they felt a sense of belonging. The team continued to work in a similar vein, exploring the ways the identities of the group were connected to, produced by, and embedded within place and space geographically local to them. I argue that this choice moved the process away from an aesthetic of a 'crisis out there', or 'context without', as explored in the last chapter, and encouraged strategies for representation that sought to root it in the local and immediate context. This also brought the focus of the work, and the narratives that emerged, into the current moment. This moved the aesthetic away from the much fetishized points of journeying and arrival toward current experiences and optimisms about the future. I argue that it is these strategies for practice, as rooted in the local, immediate context, and in the current moment, that can facilitate a practice across the double bind of representation.

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[2] In the final section of Chapter 3, *Affect: Towards a 'Theatre of Little Contexts',* I briefly explored this performance. This section works through the participatory processes that led to the creation of the performance.

The dual definition of representation explored in the previous chapter, drawn from Spivak's article, *Can the Subaltern Speak,* is deeply linked to concepts of identity (Spivak, 1989). Spivak uses this definition, whereby representation is always both an act of political proxy re-presentations of the self and other and an aesthetic restaging of the world, to argue toward a particular notion of oppression. Through her argument, she constructs a theoretical position related to identity, the subaltern. The subaltern are those who are wholly oppressed, whose identity is contained completely in their difference. As detailed in the previous chapter, this can be mapped onto concepts of non-identity, non-place, and the death of speech.

Spivak imagines the subaltern, as a theoretical position, to be a non-identity, an imagined non-place that is inaccessible and unknowable. As outlined in Chapter 2, Spivak is critical of essentialist notions of identity, the trap of "the privileging of essence" (1985: 68). However, she inadvertently argues toward an essentialised notion of subalternity, as a static and unreachable position. The tautology of her argument, the subaltern cannot speak because those who cannot speak are the subaltern, underlines and reinforces this. The word subaltern is first used to describe a class of oppressed people by Antonio Gramsci. 'The subaltern' are theorized along with 'the hegemon'. The hegemon are the protagonists of history, making history as dominant fundamental groups (Gramsci, 1971: 52). In a war of positions with the hegemon, the subaltern look to become the new protagonists of history and overtake this dominance. This ongoing struggle continually creates new modes of hegemony and subalternity, with those who make history and those who are subsumed under that making. For Spivak, the subaltern are those who are excluded completely from the lines of social mobility (Spivak, 2005: 475), whereas for Gramsci, the project of the subaltern is to struggle against those lines of social mobility and become active in making history. Subalternity in this way, is not an essentialised static position. Gramsci's writing

"illuminates the nature of the position", as one that is practiced and continually develops (Sarker, 2016: 818). Subalternity therefore, is not a theoretical instrument, but a name given to an identity that is experienced (Sarker, 2016: 819). Moving beyond Gramsci's figuration of the subaltern and of power, working from the notion of 'context within', we might consider the ways that identity is self-constituted also (Lash, 2007: 61). This might be processes of representation and participation. Representation, the combination of the political and the aesthetic, is the way in which this history making takes place, and might be framed within a wider subaltern project of participation.

The struggle to be involved in the making of history, participating in it, is directly linked to the formation of identity and relationships to power. Identity is not static or essential, but performative (Butler, 1993: 95), performativity being a discursive act that enacts or produces the thing that it names (Butler 1993: 13). Through repetition, and with shifting contexts for that discursive act, identity can be understood best as a performative construct (Butler, 1993: 94-5; Derrida, 1977: 10). It is the performative nature of identity that constitutes it. Performativity is not the same thing as representation; however, practices of representation might be considered the discursive acts within the process of performativity. Drawing still from Spivak, this is the political re-presentation of the self, and the aesthetic restaging of the world, or the self in the world. Representation, participation, and identity, combine in an ongoing mutually formative relationship. This is an example of 'context within', drawing notions of power into the practice and bodies of those involved rather than viewing it as an external force (Lash, 2009: 59).

In the *Extending the Welcome* workshops, participants explored their own perceived connections and experiences of different places, and spaces, in Leeds. During the creative mapping exercise introduced earlier, participants stood on the places they had drawn and

were asked questions about the memories they hold of that place and the feelings they

associate with it. Participants explored journeys and experiences, in the current moment,

and in the local and immediate vicinity. This included things like meeting new people,

creating new friendships, and practising language, at parks, the gym, and football pitches.

Following this, participants moved to a different part of the room and, in pairs, retold and

rehearsed the stories and experiences they had just shared. This process of retelling and

rehearsing gave time for these stories and experiences to be told with carefully considered

narratives, and with structure that was closer to a story than a collection of memories and

experiences. The group then shared their rehearsed stories with each other. In the

following weeks, participants who returned to the project regularly, continued to explore

these stories, adding detail and crafting narrative. This was facilitated by musician G and

researcher K, who worked with the participants individually, recording the stories and

playing them back. After the process of rehearsal, retelling, and refining of these stories,

they were recorded in their final form ready to be played as narration for the shadow

puppet performance.

Participants explored how their identities connected to place, in a process that also looked

to create performance material. Whilst the focus of this process is one of exploring and

performing identity, it is can also be seen as a performative process constituting identity

when viewed through a frame of representation. The participants created an aesthetic

restaging of the world, but they also re-presented themselves politically, as connected to

place. This practice of representation, as explored above, is the discursive act that sits

within the process of performativity. This exploration of identity can be seen as a repetition

of it, in a different, aesthetic, context (Derrida, 1977: 10). The workshop space is also not

isolated from the outside world. Whilst there is a structural circle around it, whether the

physical walls of the workshop space, the time constraints setting it apart in the day, or the

imagined separation from everyday life, there is constant interaction with the places

beyond that circle (Van Kerkhoven, 1994). This participation, and reconstitution of identity,

is a part of the history making struggle, as the participants assert themselves into place and

the current moment, through the mapping exercise and the rehearsal of their stories.

There is an aesthetic restaging of the world through the creativity of the exercises, and a

political re-presentation of the self through the exploration and production of identity. This

combines with the connection to the world beyond the outer limit of the workshop space,

and becomes a process of history making, even if just for those present in and around the

workshop. This imaginary binding of the workshop as separate from daily life, whilst also

connected to the world beyond those limits, is an example of how the thread of

representation is dislocal, neither parked in the room or outside it, but traced as a

movement through both.

The final shadow performance told the stories of three participants. These three

participants were the only to regularly attend the workshops each week, whilst others, for

a variety of reasons, attended more sporadically. Their three refined and recorded stories

played whilst, alongside some of the artists, the participants illustrated the narration using

shadow puppets behind a screen and light. Two of the three narratives outlined points of

arrival. However, the stories avoided returning to the much fetishized points of arrival as

found in other pieces of theatre sharing refugee stories, by focusing on arrival in Leeds

rather than the country. Both participants arrived in Leeds by bus, one specifying that they

had come from Manchester. Both of the recorded stories spend some time talking about

the busses in Leeds, particularly initial confusion over how they work. The three recorded

stories share personal experiences and interactions with the immediate and local vicinity,

sharing Yorkshire idioms that have been difficult to understand, *"numpty"*, favourite places

in the city, like Kirkgate Market and the shops on Briggate, and the differences between

Leeds and the country from which the participants came. The participants combined

negative experiences of Leeds and obstacles to feeling settled here, with optimisms about

the future, and positive experiences of Leeds,

> *"I am very happy to be to Leeds, I am very settled to be in Leeds, and Leeds is, Leeds*
>
> *is a good city. And as well, you have many people from other countries, and you*
>
> *don't feel like a stranger in Leeds"*

> *"the people is not very friendly, because they don't have much time to spend with*
>
> *some people, with friends or people. That's why they walk fast, the time has made*
>
> *them stress, they can't spend time, here the time is money"*

> *(Performance Narration Recording, 2016).*

These three stories come from a participatory process that looked to work in a 'little

context'; building its aesthetics from what was seen as an immediate and local context, or

within, rather than that which is without. As explored in the previous chapter, these local

contexts can be imagined as within interstices, cracks within larger political and social

systems, points of refusal and resistance. The participatory process, facilitated by the

ongoing renegotiation of power on the part of the artists, opened a space within which

participants explored, rehearsed and performed their experiences, identities, and

connections to place. As an example of practice employing a' theatre of little contexts',

working toward 'context within' rather than 'context without', it potentially fostered a

stronger relationship to those contexts of migration. The local and immediate vicinity, as

geographical or relational, is not an essentialised place, location or community. Rather, the

local is a meeting and weaving together of social relations (Massey, 2013: 154). The

workshop space is part of a shifting constellation of places and relationships. When viewed

closely it is a meeting place, an intersection of these different lines, but nonetheless still

connected to wider systems through those networks. Massey writes that this allows for an

extroverted sense of place, looking outward, a consciousness of the links to the wider

world. Significantly, she writes:

> This is not a question of making the ritualistic connections to 'the wider system' –
> the people in the local meeting who bring up international capitalism every time
> you try to have a discussion about rubbish-collection – the point is that there are
> real relations with real content – economic, political, cultural – between any local
> place and the wider world in which it is set.

(Massey, 2013: 155)

Connections across these shifting constellations of space, place, and social relation, do not

require an explicit connection to global issues and politics. *Driftwood* crafted an aesthetic

of the 'crisis out there', an aesthetic of 'context without', like the people in the local

meeting who bring up international capitalism to address rubbish collection, it actually sat

in an imagined local constellation, where its effects and affects were more keenly felt and

had impact on those relations with real content. The 'theatre of little contexts' is a strategy

that looks to work within this imagined local and immediate assemblage of place. It also

crafts its aesthetic from within that imagined local and immediate assemblage, for example

using images of the local city, and the voices of the participants. The participatory process

in *Extending the Welcome* were situated within the local, and the performance crafted its

aesthetic and the narratives it shared from that also. However, as part of a system of

constellations, of place, space and social relation, it remained connected to those wider contexts, through its dislocal threads.

This effort to work in an imagined local is close to what Spivak outlines as working in idiom (Spivak, 2003: 39). She uses the example of western health practitioners working in the global south, contrasting those that move from place to place addressing crisis, and those that remain in one place long term. She writes that Doctors Without Borders "cannot enter the mysterious thicket of the languages, dialects, and idioms of the many places where members travel to help" (Spivak, 2003: 39). They must, to do their work, engage with translators, and local interpreters (Spivak, 2004: 524). However, those health care organisations that remain in the place and offer primary care must "be at home in the cultural idiom of the place" to avoid coercion in their work (Spivak, 2003: 54). Freire writes that, in educative projects that look to the liberation of an oppressed people, there must be respect for the language of those people (Freire, 1968: 96). The educator must understand the conditions within which the language of those people is framed, which the thought underpinning the language refers to (Freire, 1968: 96). Spivak's working in idiom, and Freire's respect for the language of the people, is at the core of what it means to work in the local. It is not a geographical local, but a confluence of social relations. In a local participatory process, perhaps a *workshop* of little contexts, facilitators and artists must embed themselves within the place that comes together, and the cultural idiom and language at work there. In *Extending the Welcome,* participatory processes asked participants to explore their connections to local places, and their own social relations. By working through the connection of identity to space and place, it asked participants to engage with their own constellation of social relations, and as a result, worked closely in idiom.

A point of tension arises when Freire's argument is considered further. In the process of creating the final narration, the recordings were edited by musician G, as briefly outlined in the previous chapter:

> *G talks about her editing process of the voice recordings of the group. She has made conscious decisions to edit out some of the natural pauses, umm and ahhhs to make it feel more like a streamlined performance. Taking out imperfections, but thinking about how those imperfections actually make the spoken word more beautiful, it is an indicator of the process of navigating a new language. K takes this a step further by describing how these "imperfections" are actually a part of the spoken repertoire - they are a useful part of language and not imperfections at all.*

> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

The negotiation of power taking place here centres around voice, and who is speaking for whom. It is a clear reminder that amongst all of the above discussions about working in idiom, in the local, and in little contexts, there still remain questions of power and responsibility. The artists, within the imagined local, are also woven into the same constellations of social relations that the participants are. However, these constellations are embroidered with power. Like the local, power is "produced from one moment to the next, at every point, or rather in every relation from one point to another" (Foucault, 1998: 93). This process of participation is facilitated by the artists, and in many ways, so is the local context that is created as the artists set up the project with its workshop space and time, and performances. The artists plan the scope and scaffold for participatory processes, outlining the exploration of identity as related to place, and the performance of identity, and the ways in which identity is itself constituted and reconstituted through the

participatory process. By working in idiom, with the language of the participants[3], and

attending to the responsibilities and intricacies brought about by relationships of power,

facilitators can work toward contexts within which to craft meaningful work.

The participatory processes of *Extending the Welcome* explored, rehearsed, performed,

constituted and reconstituted identity. By connecting identity to place, amongst imagined

local converging lines of social relations that remain connected to wider structures, the

participants entered into different moments of history making. By working in idiom, toward

an imagined local, the artists crafted a process that facilitated this connection, as

representation, participation and identity combined in a mutually formative relationship.

This all expands the notion of 'context within', and offers examples of strategies alongside

working in a 'theatre of little contexts' that moves toward this.

4.3   Effect: Constellations in Space.

Extending the Welcome looked to place participants in positions of creative control, as it

worked to create a piece of performance that would share narratives of settlement and

belonging. The participatory processes employed strategies to work in the local and within

a little context. They also worked in idiom, amongst close dislocal constellations of social

relation, imagined as local. The artists set out with intentions that required them to

continually renegotiate systems of power, as they worked to foster a space of conviviality

within which participants felt welcome to share experiences and stories. As representation,

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[3] This does not necessarily mean named languages, like English or French, but rather the

repertoire of communication that each individual has and employs to construct and convey

meaning (Li, 2017). This is explored more fully in the following section.

identity, and participation worked in an ongoing mutually formative relationship, each producing and produced by the other, the participants were active in history making, exploring and constituting the self and other within these social constellations.

In this section, I return to questions of effect, continuing to focus on participatory processes and practices. I consider the production of social space within the workshops in *Extending the Welcome,* and the various purposes this space allowed. First, I consider the workshop space as one of language and communication. I analyse the ways in which the artists worked in idiom and respected the language of the participants in more detail, exploring the relationship the participants have to language, and the implications of this for 'context within'. I keep with the idea of the imagined local as a confluence of social relations, an assemblage within global constellations and networks of power and relation, and argue that this has implications for how applied theatre can be conceptualised more broadly, offering new ways to think about the field in conversation with contemporary notions of ecology. Finally, I return to the model of interstitial change, and ask how the production of a space that enables and facilitates language and communication, whilst producing and strengthening social relations and ecologies, can be seen as a shifting point of refusal and crack within broader systems.

As explored earlier in this chapter, the local is not an essentialised place, location or community. It is a meeting and weaving together of shifting social relations (Massey, 2013: 154). The workshop space has circle around it, whether the physical walls of the place within which the workshop happens, the boundaries of time within which it happens, or the imagined separation from everyday life:

We are high above the streets. It is clean, smells of new carpet. The building is

embedded but separate to the life - we can see terraces, the city, houses, and

green.

(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)

However, there is still constant interaction with the places beyond that circle, and the street below (Van Kerkhoven, 1994). The workshop is spatially constructed, as is the society it interacts with beyond its outer circle (Massey, 1993: 146). The social and the spatial are inseparable, and function in another mutually formative relationship. Space creates, and is created by, the social, and the social creates, and is created by, space (Massey, 1993: 146). The significance of this, is that the realm of space becomes implicated in the production of history, alongside constellations of social relation. Space is active, lived, a product of social relations, and also the arena for social relations. This has been explored in other ways in the previous chapter and the earlier sections of this chapter, as Sibley's no-where and Spivak's subalternity represented death of space, and as such, an exclusion from the creation of history. To inhabit space, is to be active in the creation of history, and a part of those shifting constellations of social relations. The local is impossible to find in this way, as explored earlier, and rather, practice and context are dislocal. This concept of space can be applied directly to participatory processes, which are often spatialized in their description, a 'workshop space' for example. Conceptualising the workshop as a space, it becomes implicated in history making through its social production, and as it is produced by the social. The participatory workshop as a space, is an arena for social relations, and produces those relations.

The *Extending the Welcome* workshop spaces brought together refugees and asylum seekers with artists and researchers. As explored earlier, representation, identity, and participation worked in a mutually formative relationship, each producing and produced by the other. Core to this relationship, was the exploration of language and communication across difference. This is not limited to named languages, like English or French, but rather the broad repertoires of communication each individual in the space possesses, unique to themselves, which in relation to identity, is never static (Li, 2017). Recent developments within the field of linguistics argue that individuals draw from different elements of their communicative repertoires depending on the space, time, and therefore moment of history making they are situated in at any given point (Blommaert, 2008: 4). For refugees and asylum seekers, the deployment of different elements of their communicative repertoire is complex, with ramifications for the asylum process if one is deemed to speak 'the wrong language' or with 'the wrong accent' for example, as explored in more detail in Chapters 1.

The workshop space, as an arena and producer of social relations, is imbricated with the negotiation and exchange of these repertoires, alongside the diffuse nature of power that saturates their use. The workshop space is one of language and communication. These apparent high stakes make Spivak's call to work in idiom, and Freire's similar call to respect the language of the power, even more complex.

The *Extending the Welcome* workshops directly engaged with themes of language and communication, and experiences around these themes became a part of the recorded narration for the shadow performance, "*The most difficult thing that I found when I first arrived here was a Yorkshire accent*" (Participant, 2017: Performance Recording). These themes were also explored through casual conversation whilst activities were taking place, or before and after the workshop. During one workshop, a participant asked C what it

meant to *"stand there like a lemon"*, and another explained that they had learnt a new

word that day, *"numpty" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*. Much of the work, and conversations,

centred around language. This runs the risk of becoming a practice that is governed by

policy environments and programmes of integration and acculturalisation, as an effect

driven process looking to improve people's English language skills, more akin to an ESOL

course than an artistic exploration of welcome. The artists did, however, engage with

language in more complex ways, as they worked to respect and celebrate the

communicative repertoires of the participants, rather than seek to 'improve' it. For

example, one participant explained how he felt settled when volunteering at the local café:

> *The first place I am without my house, I can feel at my house with the people who is*
>
> *there, is the cafe. I feel safe, and I feel my brain reach me.*

> *(Participant, 2017: Performance Recording)*

He uses two phrases to express a sentiment of settlement and belonging. The first, is that

he feels he is at his house when he is at the café. The second, is that he feels his brain

"reach" him. During the devising process, rather than 'correct' the use of the English

language, from *"I can feel at my house"* to 'I feel at home' for example, the artists

maintained respect for the communicative repertoire of the participant. The images that

the phrase *"I feel my brain reach me"* evoked were further explored through the shadow

performance. The participant created a shadow puppet of his silhouette, or side profile. He

then cut this horizontally, and added a pin to one side of it, so that on the shadow screen,

he could open and close the very top of his puppets head. He also made a brain shaped

silhouette. During the part of the performance where the above narration played, he

opened the top of the head, and placed the brain inside it before closing it again. The

artists respected and celebrated the communicative repertoire of the participants in other ways, working with participants to create a piece of music that combined all the different ways of saying welcome, or hello, that could be thought of in the room *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*.

The metaphor of 'feeling my brain reach me' speaks to a sense of coming to oneself, with a presence in participation implied. It also functions as something that is unique to the space in which it was first spoken, and then augmented, explored and celebrated through the shadow work. Spivak writes that those leading participatory processes must learn to "be at home in the cultural idiom of the place" (Spivak, 2003: 39). Her formation of idiom as a concept is complex, but at the core of it is a sense of untranslatability (Rooney, 2006: 241). Idiom is that which "does not go over" in translation (Spivak, 2005: 100). An idiom like 'over the moon' belongs to the English language, as a combination of words that cannot be directly translated into another language without losing the meaning. It is tied to the culture from which it originates, and cannot go over into another. Cultural idioms are cultural things that cannot go over into other places, rituals, beliefs, practices or customs. Idiom is specific to a place and time, and it is the thing that those leading participatory processes must be at home in, and work 'in', to avoid coercive practice (Spivak, 2003: 39). Emerging from this discussion around the *Extending the Welcome* workshop space is an idiom of communication, with diversity of communicative repertoires. Those in the room, including the artists, participants, and researchers, all spoke different 'first' languages. The only common named language was English. To work in idiom in a setting like this then means to respect the difference of the use of this language, to view the 'imperfections' or 'errors' in the use of that language as useful tools of communication, and to respect the communicative repertoire of each individual in the space.

Looking to work in an immediate local, as a strategy of 'context within', alongside working

in idiom, looks to situate the participatory practice within a particular meeting and weaving

together of social relations (Massey, 2013: 154). This exploits the "real relations with real

content – economic, political, cultural – between any local place and the wider world in

which it is set" (Massey, 2013: 155). Exploiting this returns the practice again to an

interstice within broader economic, political, and cultural systems. It is through this

imagined locality, a workshop of 'little contexts', that broader effect is achieved. One

participant shared how, when waiting for a friend at a high street shop in Leeds, he

attempted to speak to some of the white British people stood around him to practice

speaking English. Those he tried to speak to avoided him, and others couldn't understand

what he said. The celebration of individual communicative repertoires, is perhaps another

facet of the notion of 'context within', as the communicative repertoires of each individual,

within the workshop space, are prioritised against hegemonic named languages, defined

outside the workshop space. *Extending the Welcome* became a point of refusal to broader

attitudes, such as the hostility experienced by the participant above, as it worked in an

idiom that celebrated individual communicative repertoires (Holloway, 2010: 11). As linked

with identity and space, communicative repertoires and idioms at play are not static. The

constant renegotiation of power and reflective vigilance explored in the first section of this

chapter is further required to continue to search out the interstices, which too, are ever

changing and responding to shifting constellations of relation and power (Holloway, 2010:

71-79).

Also within the circle of the workshop space, and a part of the constellations and networks

of social relation, are the artists and researchers who come together to plan, deliver, and

lead the project. They too are imbricated in the weaving together of these social relations.

An aim of *Extending the Welcome,* written into the original funding application, was, "to

continue to build on and thicken the network that is emerging from [the] M&H[4] project and related activities" (Funding Application, 2016: 3). The project also aimed to deepen "relationships with others in the vibrant multicultural and multilingual environments where the [the project] will take place" (Funding Application, 2016: 3). The *Extending the Welcome* project emerged from previous work that had been carried out with the same group of artists, from Faceless Arts, and researchers, from the University of Leeds. These same networks have been involved a number of overlapping sites of practice. Writing about a different arts and research project, that is a part of this overlapping of sites, one of the researchers involved describes the trajectory of this network as "a meshwork made of multiple interwoven threads and traces" (Bradley, 2017: 3). She writes that other threads are being drawn, connecting the work taking place that includes other research projects, work with children and young people, and engagement with higher education (Bradley, 2017: 3, 10 – 11). The majority of this work is arts based, and with participants who are refugees, asylum seekers, or newly arrived migrants. This developing network of practitioners, artists and researchers working in collaboration and across the borders of their disciplines, is also a meeting and weaving together of social relations.

Drawing from the work of Isabelle Stengers, Jenny Hughes and Helen Nicholson argue toward an ecology of practices to describe applied theatre and research practices surrounding it (Hughes & Nicholson, 2016: 3). The idea of 'ecology of practice' is described by Stengers as a theoretical tool for "thinking through what is happening" (Stengers, 2013: 185). She argues that practices cannot be defined by trying to understand what they are,

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[4] M&H, *Migration and Home,* is the first project carried out by this same network of artists and researchers, outlined in Chapter 2. *Driftwood* was the performance that came out of the wider *Migration & Home* project.

but through the construction of new practical identities and possibilities for them to "be present" and "to connect", whilst recognising that these practices cannot be disentangled from its surroundings (Stengers, 2013: 186, 187). Ecologies of applied theatre reach "to the past to the past to understand the present and the future", reflect "on the dynamic between place and community" and recognise that "social change is always enacted in the material present of the here and now" (Hughes & Nicholson, 2016: 3). Describing applied theatre as an ecology of practices allows the practice to "be present" and "to connect" (Stengers, 2013: 186). Moving a step further from the ecology of practices, a constellation of practices allows us to understand applied theatre as a meeting and weaving together of practices, a local meeting place, an intersection of different lines, but nonetheless still connected to wider systems through those lines (Massey, 2013: 154). Significantly, it is imbricated with power, place, and the people who embroider and are embroidered into those constellations. As an arena for, and producer of, social relations, the *Extending the Welcome* workshop space is the locality from which these constellations like this emerged, intersected, and connected.

The *Extending the Welcome* workshop space was one of language and communication. Language was explored directly, and the artists, working in idiom, celebrated the communicative repertoires of individual participants. The workshop space was produced by, and further produced, constellations of people, place, and practice. These constellations are imbricated in power, and power relations. They are a part of the war of positions and struggle to make history. In the following section, I explore the embodied experience of this, returning to questions of affect, and emotion.

4.4   Affect: Shoulder to Shoulder.

In this chapter I have focused on participatory processes within the *Extending the Welcome* project. Initially, I asked how the artistic team crafted their intentions for this project, and explored how models of power interrupt or facilitate those intentions. The team looked to create spaces of conviviality, and to place participants in positions of creative control. Through a constant renegotiation of power, these intentions became an active part of the process, rather than simply articulated as a commitment at the start. I then explored how practices of representation intersect with participatory practices, using theories of history making, identity and performativity, focusing on the process of creating the shadow performance that was shared at the end of *Extending the Welcome.* I also began to unpick the ways this participatory process is spatialized, as bounded into a workshop but also connected through wider networks of place, space and social relation. Working from this, I introduced Spivak's call to work in 'idiom' alongside Freire's call to 'respect the language of the people', to further explore how this spatialized set of practices might illuminate what it means to work in the local, or in a theatre of little contexts. In the previous section I continued to analyse these processes, and explore further some the examples of working in idiom in the *Extending the Welcome* workshops. I explored the ways a theatre of little contexts functions as a strategy for practice through local constellations of people, place, and practice, embroidered with relationships of power and resistance in the struggle to make history.

Extending the Welcome was developed by a network of artists and researchers who had previously worked together through *Migration and Home,* of which *Driftwood* was a part. They engaged with the some of the same participants, working in the same areas and with the same community partner organisations. In the last chapter I argued that this confluence of people, places and practices can be understood as a changing constellation, "a meshwork made of multiple interwoven threads and traces" (Bradley, 2017: 3). This

constellation reaches beyond the projects engaged with in this study, with work in schools

and with young people for example (Bradley, 2017: 3, 10 – 11). *Driftwood,* as a part of this,

was borne out of the need to 'do something', in response to the refugee crisis. As explored

in the previous chapter, the artists were affected by the images of crisis that saturated

print, news and social media in 2015. The intention of *Driftwood* was to intervene in this

crisis, affecting the audiences to experience the emotional response and desire to 'do

something' that the artists themselves felt. This intention led to the use of imagery that

centred around boats, journeying and arrival, and the trauma of precarious refugee travel.

In the last chapter I argued that *Driftwood* better functioned as a confrontation of the

inward otherness and the Subject of the West for both performers and audiences. In this

section, I explore the ways in which the *Extending the Welcome* workshops functioned as

affective spaces, allowing for unplanned responses, experiences, and relationships.

Mapping the affective journey of the work, I argue that the space was one of being

together, of "standing shoulder to shoulder" (Jeffers, 2012: 162). This demonstrates some

of the ways the affective relationship the artists had to contexts of migration had become

more complex. This facilitated a changing practice that was increasingly situated in the

local.

During the first workshop of *Extending the Welcome,* I took a moment to sit to one side to

quickly make notes and record what had happened so far. As I did this, a participant

approached me and said, *"please record that we are having fun" (McKay, 2016: Field

Notes).* Writing about the turn to affect, Thompson has argued that a sole concentration on

social effect or usefulness is in danger of "abandoning the terrain of sensation: of the

aesthetic concerns for beauty, joy, pleasure, awe and astonishment" (Thompson, 2009:

117). Attributes like fun are often present in practice like this, but viewed as a means to an

end, "by-product, wonderful extra or hook to the real work" (Thompson, 2009: 117-118).

He argues that whilst artists recognise the excitement or fun that exudes from their best practice, they are often denied the possibility to celebrate or "elaborate upon the inspiration it provides" (Thompson, 2009: 118). This can lead to a field and set of practices that have an extensive and in depth knowledge of the social and political issues facing the participants and communities, but little skill for "uniting a group in joy" (Thompson, 2009: 118). Fun, and other affective responses, should not be seen as a happy accident, but as entangled in the "commendable purposefulness of efficacy" (Thompson, 2009: 130). The affective response of this particular participant marks a turn in the affective journey of the people, practices and places that had coalesced to produce *Driftwood* and become more defined in *Extending the Welcome.*

Affect was at the core of the intentions for *Driftwood.* Artists experienced emotional connections and responses to images of tragedy and trauma coming out of the refugee crisis, and crafted a piece of street theatre that they hoped would trigger this same response in audiences, as well as providing a space to rehearse welcome amongst a broader climate of hostility. *Driftwood* served as a confrontation of the subject of the West, for those performing and audience-participants. At the point of *Extending the Welcome,* intentions had shifted, and maintained an affective core, as they looked to produce a space of conviviality. In this first workshop, people have fun. This observation might seem simple, but in mapping the affective journey of this work, it is a significant moment. The possibilities of mapping affect are limited to observations made, or moments like this one where a participant discloses their emotions. This particular participant steps out of the activity to say, *"please record that we are having fun" (McKay, 2016: Field Notes).* This might indicate an awareness of the sort of attitude that Thompson is referencing above. It is assumed that as a researcher, I would be noting the technical aspects of the room, and need reminding to record fun. It is the enjoyment of the workshop activities, which

included music, craft and an improvised nativity play, that this participant wants me to acknowledge as most important.

Driftwood was separated from the reality of those it sought to represent. The performers bore witness to the refugee crisis, and the audience of *Driftwood* bore witness to that on stage witnessing (Duggan & Wallis, 2011: 7). The affective responses came from an imagined presence of those it sought to represent. Susan Sontag argues that in representations of extreme trauma, pain, death, conflict or tragedy, there is never really anybody "looking out" (Sontag, 2003: 97). Those images of refugees engulf an audience who might imagine that they (the refugee puppets) will step out and speak, but they will not:

> Why should they seek our gaze? What would they have to say to us? "We"—this "we" is everyone who has never experienced anything like what they went through—don't understand.
>
> (Sontag, 2003: 97)

This is the affective realm that the work is caught up in at that point, regarding for the pain of 'others', attempting to ignite the same desire to 'do something' that the artists themselves felt. By the first *Extending the Welcome* workshop, the affective process had shifted. Now the work was about conviviality, creativity, and it was fun. A notable difference between *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome* is the absence or presence of the intended subjects. Those *Driftwood* sought to represent were not really "looking out of" it (Sontag, 2003: 07), rather the witnessing performers were. In *Extending the Welcome,* refugees and asylum seekers were in the room, participating, and intended to be in direct

control of the creative work. This intention is clearly much more complex, as explored earlier in this chapter, but perhaps represents a shift in the relationship to the affective and the effective that the artists had. This development occurs as the constellation of people, places and practices becomes more closely wedded, and the work becomes more embedded within that. In particular, as practice became more closely wedded to people and place, it shifted to work in the local.

In the second workshop, artist C facilitated an exercise that directly revolved around affective response. The initial task was to make people feel unwelcome. To do this, a participant would say their own name, prompting everyone else to turn their backs to them for a few seconds only, and then continue. From this base point of unwelcome, the participants were then tasked with making others feel as welcome as possible. Initially, people were unsure how to act, but very quickly began doing things like finding chairs for the person who had called their name, getting them a drink, or even fanning them *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* As this escalated, people began using percussion instruments and guitars to make up songs about the person who had been seated and fussed over. A discussion followed about whether this was all actually welcoming, or whether it was isolating in a different way. Starting again, when a participant called her name, she gathered chairs for everyone, all participants passed out glasses and drinks, and someone turned music on in the background. The group improvised as though it were a party, and when realising that everyone felt welcome, cheered; *"we feel more equal, she belongs" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* The purpose of this exercise is not to explore the feeling of being welcome, but to attempt to actually create that feeling. This was achieved when the participants felt equal, and a sense of celebration arose.

This resonates with the way Alison Jeffers extends Levinas's "face to face" encounter (Jeffers, 2012: 161). For Levinas, it is through the unknowable face of the other that the self is known, and the dissonance between the two becomes the thing that produces them (Waldenfels, 2002: 63). The face to face encounter, that maintains a separation between self and other, offers a confrontation, and facilitates ethical relationships. Jeffers moves beyond this, to argue toward "shoulder to shoulder" encounters, reflecting on the proxemics of the theatre and performance:

> In watching theatre about refugees I make that journey of discovery shoulder to shoulder with fellow audience members because the 'host of potential Others' is made up of fellow citizens.

> (Jeffers, 2012: 161)

This is where the above exercise led, to a moment of being, shoulder to shoulder. Here Jeffers is focusing on performance, moving this analogy into participatory practices, we might also call for practice that is shoulder to shoulder, a closer wedding of people in the constellations of people, practice, and place.

This being shoulder to shoulder is also seen at the close of the *Extending the Welcome* project, as the shadow performance was shared with other refugees and asylum seekers at a community centre in Harehills. As previously detailed, at the end of the performance, a woman in the audience spoke out to say that she had only just arrived in Britain, and the experience of seeing the participants share their own struggles in the local area and in recent months, helped her to imagine a future for herself. Whether in a participatory process, or performance, working shoulder to shoulder in the local, engaging with context

within, creates possibility for the affective realm to produce the core impact of the work, as affect, and effect. For *Driftwood,* the affective orbited regarding the pain of others and trauma to rouse action. As constellations of people, place, and practice became more closely wedded, the affective moved through fun, welcome, belonging, and standing shoulder to shoulder, through the *Extending the Welcome* project. This journey toward affect is ultimately facilitated by looking to work in the local, allowing a space for little changes, with the focus on a unique shifting constellation of people, place and practice, rather than the whole universe.

5. Dislocating Practice: Double Binds and Strategies

5.1   Introduction: Returning to Context.

In this chapter I look to distil the main contributions to the field of applied theatre that this thesis makes, drawing out the knotty double binds developed in the analysis chapters, alongside strategies for practice. As outlined in Chapter 2, these knotty double binds are dislocal points of indecidability, aporias, on the threads that run through, and connect, practice and context. The two analysis chapters have been structured around these threads. The double binds that develop here are positions made of two decisions that are both right, and both wrong, which cancel each other (Spivak, 2012: 104). They are the points of border crossing between practice and context. From these theoretical deconstructions, strategies for practice also emerge. These strategies might work to undo the theory, or work against it, but in doing so, disclose those points of indecidability as experiences (Spivak, 1993: 4).

The knotty double binds and emergent strategies allow practitioners and researchers to trace the relationship a practice has to a context, or set of contexts. In this chapter I explore each of the individual threads of intention, representation, effect and affect, and draw out key findings from the analysis to craft these double binds. I begin to apply this analysis to other examples of applied theatre projects that have not been a part of this research, and in doing so, elicit some of the limitations of this way of working. The double binds make further contributions to the field, drawing together novel ways of thinking about, and modelling, intention, representation, effect and affect.

5.2   Intention: Responsive Commitments.

Intention first entered this thesis in the discussions around the Hostile Environment and context as the self and other in Part 1, as a part of what Merleau-Ponty calls motivations. At that point, I used his argument to suggest that motivation is one of the threads of connectivity between practice and context. For Merleau-Ponty, motivation and intention are not synonymous. Motivation, he argues, is a broader phenomenon, of which intention might be an example of. As outlined across Part 1, motivation is being moved to act in a certain way or moved to do something, but a motivation might be unarticulated, or even unnoticed (Merlau-Ponty, 1945: 35-36). Motivation is the effecting and being effected by the other, situations, and possibilities (Merlau-Ponty, 1945: 35-36). It is through this effecting, that Merleau-Ponty situates a connection between the embodied self and the world it is thrown into (Merlau-Ponty, 1945: 35-36, 95). As signalled above, I argued that this provides an argument toward intention as a moving thread of connectivity between, and through, contexts and practices.

The analysis demonstrated that intention in applied theatre is sometimes closer to Merleau-Ponty's unarticulated motivations than it is a set of articulated goals or outcomes. In the *Driftwood* project, the artists were emotionally affected by the images they saw of the refugee crisis, moved to effect the situation in return. Drawing from Cox, Wake and Zaroulia, I argued that the refugee crisis, as it saturated the British media and public imagination, moved artists to make interventions, as they felt compelled to 'do something' (Cox & Wake, 2018: 140; Zaroulia, 2018: 187). Snyder-Young also writes about this process, arguing that it is emotion that often underpins the desire to make social change:

I want to channel that emotion into action to make the world a little more just. I do

not think I am alone in this reaction; many theatre artists respond in similar ways

to news of contemporary events, wanting to channel these emotions into making

theatre that will make social change.

(Snyder-Young, 2013: 119)

Other intentions like these were articulated and attended to across the case study projects,

such as placing participants in positions of creative control, or facilitating a convivial space.

Generally, however, intentions were a medley of articulated and attentive goals, an

embodied need to 'do something', and emotional connections to the people and subjects

at hand. In the second analysis chapter, I argued that intention is not something that is

confined to the outset of a project, but involves an ongoing renegotiation of power and

reflective vigilance; intention is practiced. This is something that is also core to the way in

which Merleau-Ponty writes about motivations, as ongoing and embodied (Merleau-Ponty,

1945: 58). A motivation follows an antecedent, but that motivation also becomes an

antecedent for the next (Merleau-Ponty, 1945: 301). In the moment to moment

movements of practice, this is also ongoing, as is evident through the ways in which the

artists in *Extending the Welcome* looked to facilitate an ongoing renegotiation of power.

This is really a complex web of movements, antecedents and motivations, and motivations

as antecedents. Intention, or motivation, is not a named set of goals at the outset of

practice, but active and embodied in practice, from moment to moment, in these

negotiations.

The intentions that underpinned *Driftwood* developed through an *affective* response to

contexts of migration. I argued that a practice built from affective responses could find

intentions lurching from crisis to crisis, social intervention to social intervention. These

interventions also risk perpetuating the figure of the refugee as an emotional commodity

(Marschall, 2018: 161). This was not the case for *Driftwood* as networks developed and

artists continued to work more closely in the local through *Extending the Welcome,*

demonstrating a commitment to community (Bradley, 2017: 3). Long term commitments

with no response to circumstance can also be problematic, resulting in non-performative

commitments to change that appear transformative but that are not followed with any real

action (Marschall, 2018: 160). The double bind that emerges here is between 'responding

to circumstance' and 'commitments to community'.

In the case study analysis, I explored the difference between applied theatre practices with

refugees that look to respond to crisis, as in *Driftwood,* and those that are embedded in

constellations of people and place, with commitment to community, as in *Extending the*

Welcome. In both the analysis of *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome,* I argued that

intention is an active part of practice. For *Driftwood,* this centred around intervening in a

crisis, but for *Extending the Welcome,* this was evident through an ongoing renegotiation of

power. In this way, the core duality at the heart of intention becomes about responsivity to

circumstance in the moment as well as at the outset of the project, as intention is

practiced.

Spivak argues that it is not possible to remain in the double bind, and that instead, it must

be crossed. The double bind itself offers the burden of decision making (Spivak, 2013: 104-

105). By settling on either side of the double bind, the aporia is crossed but also

constructed. As a dislocal knot, the double bind cannot be settled on, but the threads

leading up to it can. In this discussion then, as I seek to unravel and work through this knot,

I look to the ways that it might be settled on either side, and continue to cross the border that the double bind presents.

Crossing over the double bind, and settling on the intention that orbits commitments to community, might align with what Anika Marschall calls a non-performative commitment. She argues that it is necessary to "ask and interrogate what cultural institutions actually do 'do' and whether their commitment to asylum issues in their programmes might be 'non-performative'" (Marschall, 2018: 160). For Marschall, a non-performative commitment is one that is not followed through with action. She draws from Ahmed who argues that commitments are sometimes made precisely because they are not doable, a commitment is an enticing route to an institution to appear to do things that they cannot, and as a way of actually not doing anything at all (Ahmed, 2016 cited in Marschall, 2018: 160). This outlines a risk of this part of the double bind. A commitment to community with no response to circumstance could lead to inaction, whether this is because an organisation or practitioner does not intend to do anything, or as Ahmed outlines, simply cannot.

Ahmed's argument centres around the refusal of institutions to change when challenged, particularly around questions of diversity. She argues that non-performative commitments act as walls within institutions, and drawing from the metaphor of "banging" one's head against a brick wall, argues that the wall is something that others do not see or are invested in seeing. It is only a practical effort to bring about action or transformation within an institution that makes the wall apparent to others (Ahmed, 2016). A non-performative commitment is a point where this action and transformation is not happening. Ahmed argues that those working toward diversity should demand that institutions provide evidence of action when making commitments. For applied theatre, evidence of commitments made, whether to diversity or to any other intention, can be seen through

response to circumstance. This response to circumstance pulls the practice away from this part of the double bind, and toward a committed response, where a commitment has been made, and that commitment is evidenced through active responses to changes to circumstance.

A further point that Ahmed makes that is significant to this project, is that it not simply always an institutional *decision* to present the reproduction of society as it is, as transformative. By this, she means that institutions often keep things the same, using a commitment as a way of feigning action, but that this is not always a choice (Ahmed, 2016). She argues:

> The non-performative: it is not the end of the story. Individuals within the institution must act as if the decision has been made for it to be made. If they do not, it has not. A decision made in the present about the future, a decision that is willed, that operates under the promissory sign "we will," is overridden by the momentum of the past.

> (Ahmed, 2016)

Ahmed's comments are specifically directed at issues of diversity in the academy, however the underlying point, that individuals within institutions are responsible for the commitments made, is applicable to other areas. In the field of applied theatre, the momentous context of austerity might override the efforts made by those within organisations to fulfil promised commitments to change. In Chapter 1 I argued that austerity has been figured as operating on multiple levels on and within applied theatre practice. Donor agendas influenced by austerity or the big society as a force of

governmentality might be the past momentums that Ahmed speaks of. I have earlier explored how these might govern and influence practices from within applied theatre, as a flatter and dislocal context, particularly as through complex networks and diffuse chains of power, practice finds it is co-opted into the Big Society. Chapters 3 and 4 developed a notion of applied theatre as woven into and through these shifting constellations of people, place and practice, and as such into the momentum that Ahmed describes. For applied theatre practice to move out of this pitfall of woven through the intention thread, look toward an impossible balance in the double bind, a practitioner can look within their own organisation, collective or network to enact the commitments made, but also outside the boundaries of those local points to recognise their role in producing those contexts that form the momentum of the past Ahmed speaks of.

Taking the knotty double bind of intention then, and crossing the aporia to the other side, leads us to practice a high level of response to circumstance. Multiple examples of this come from the refugee crisis in Europe, with artists and companies producing work about an emergent problem, then moving on to other interventions. This point however, is also the point where a new intervention might start, and then develop into an ongoing commitment, with the case studies offering an example of this journey.

Spivak opens her 2004 essay, *Righting Wrongs,* with a discussion around Doctors without Borders. She argues that unlike primary health care providers, this group cannot "learn all the local languages, dialects, and idioms of the places where they provide help" but by necessity must use a local interpreter (Spivak, 2004: 524). Doctors without Borders travel from place to place, responding to crisis. For Spivak, those primary care givers, who do not move from place to place but stay in one place, must work in idiom. She argues that failure to do so creates a class of pseudo-doctors, as interpreters themselves are trained "into

imperfect yet creative imitations of the doctors" (Spivak, 2004: 524). This provides a
metaphor of class formation through education, colonialism, and territorial imperialism.
Spivak sees this pseudo doctor interpreter, formed by medical practitioners who stay in
one place but do not work in idiom, as an example of the colonial subject. This discussion
around Doctors without Borders demonstrates both the risks across the double bind
explored in this section, but also the ways in those risks might be necessary to take, which I
explore soon through the journeys the case study made across and toward the aporia.
Those that stay moving from crisis to crisis, run the risk of developing a practice that
lurches from one social intervention to another, whist remaining committed to one
community without working in idiom can operate as a system analogous to colonialism.

Whilst a practice that responds to circumstance without any commitment to community
might involve risk, as seen through through case studies this point along the thread where
to commitment to community might actually develop. *Driftwood* began as a new
intervention to an emergent crisis, but as constellations of people, place, and practice,
became more closely embedded, the practice moved along the thread, as it developed a
commitment to community and continued to respond to circumstance through *Extending
the Welcome*. Whilst this might represent a reflexive and balanced intention, this does not
represent a "good" or "right" intention, nor are the other parts of the thread "wrong" or
"bad". This way of working provides an analytic lens through which researchers, or
practitioners, can analyse and explore the relationship a practice has to context, but not to
moralise. As Spivak's colonial primary care givers sit in this balanced section of the frame; it
too has risks. This journey across the thread is an example of how this way of working
might offer strategies to develop practice, and functions as a reflective and theoretical tool.
In the next chapter, I explore how this analysis works, as I look for evidence of both
responses to circumstance and commitment to community in case study material.

Another example of theatre with refugees that has moved across this thread, beginning as

a response to circumstance and developing a commitment to community through that, is

The Good Chance Theatre, which is briefly introduced in Chapter 1*. The Good Chance*

Theatre began as a large geodesic dome tent erected in the Calais refugee camp, serving as

a theatre and arts space for those living in the camp. The theatre was set up by two writers

who travelled to Calais, and then returned with the tent having raised money from the

British "theatre world" (The Stage: 2016). Joseph Robertson, one of the writers responsible

for starting and running the theatre, echoes the sentiments at the start of this section

around intention, the need to 'do something' as he outlines the origins of their work:

> At that moment, everybody in theatre and the arts was thinking: 'How do we
>
> respond to this mammoth crisis?' […] And we just touched it, that sentiment, and
>
> everyone said: 'Right, let's do it.'"

> (The Stage, 2016).

The Good Chance Theatre begins in a similar space on the thread as *Driftwood,* responding

to a crisis. Much like the practitioners working on *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome,* a

long term commitment to the community developed, and the theatre remained in Calais

for over a year until the French authorities began dismantling the whole camp. Two years

later, the two founders of *The Good Chance Theatre* have written a play, *The Jungle,* about

their experience in the Calais refugee camp, and working with refugees they met there.

Some of these refugees have been involved in the development and performance of this

play. As I mention briefly in Chapter 1, the two writers and founders of the theatre explain

that they now ask if their work in the camp may have been damaging, a theme they explore

in the play:

> "Did the fact that loads of people went over and set up these places to help – did
>
> that preserve this jungle? Did it in a way not help? Would the government have
>
> had to intervene much earlier if people hadn't have gone to help? We can't write a
>
> play that doesn't ask that question. We don't want to present something that is
>
> singular."

> (Ross: 2017)

The move across the thread, to a more balanced position between response to

circumstance, and commitment to community, requires an ongoing reflexivity. This

reflexivity reflects the fact that it is impossible for practice to remain at the centre of the

double bind. There is a constant indecidability, and balance can only be something that is

continually worked toward rather than achieved. This is an ongoing "experience" rather

than a fixed aim or goal (Spivak, 2012: 104). For the case study examples, this process is

evident as practitioners changed core intentions to place participants in positions of

creative control, rather than make the theatre without the people it is about. For *The Good*

Chance Theatre, deeper questions emerge about their unintended role in the brutal

clearings of the camp in Calais, that resonate closely with Thompson's detailed account in

Incidents of Cutting and Chopping (2009)*.* For both *The Good Chance Theatre* and for

Thompson, the theatre practice brought unwanted attention to the site of their work and

their participants from those with ideologies who oppose it. For Thompson, a massacre

later took place at that site, and for *The Good Chance Theatre,* the camp was violently

cleared by French police leading to the displacement of hundreds of vulnerable refugees.

Both calamities involved the disappearances, or deaths, of children. For both, it is unclear how much, if it all, their work actually led to those events, or contributed in anyway. But both accept that their initial response to circumstance may have played some role in the unfolding of disastrous outcomes. As argued above, commitment to community requires practice that works in idiom, in the local, and in little 'contexts', and for the case studies, *The Good Chance Theatre,* and Thompson, this is where the development of work led.

A limitation of this way of working becomes clear through this discussion around intention, particularly with reference to *The Good Chance Theatre.* I initially applied the four threads of analysis to the case study material, viewing them as lines of connectivity between and through practice and context. This analysis illuminated the double binds within these connections. In this section I have engaged with the knotty double bind that has emerged from discussions around intention. However, as I have applied this model of intention, briefly, to the work of *The Good Chance Theatre,* I have relied on secondary information. The case study material for this research was collected over a period of more than one year, with access to rehearsals, planning meetings, informal conversations, reflections, workshops, performances etc. For this method of analysis to be worked through by a third party in a meaningful way, this same level of information might also be required. Interviews and online publications about a project do not nearly provide the same level of insight as a yearlong ethnographic process. This theory, as a new contribution to the field of applied theatre, becomes a useful tool for those who are able to engage with practice in this level of depth, and so is particularly suited for further research, or potentially as a reflective tool for practitioners. It has further advantages and limits as a tool for practitioner reflection, with an added vantage point of being "inside" the data, but even more subject to the beliefs and biases of that practitioner (Anderson, 2006: 389). The moves across the knotty double bind of intention is an example of how researchers might

look to trace the ways that practices shift and change, but also how practitioners might be able to use it as a strategy for reflection and articulate how they would look to develop their practice.

5.3   Representation: Radical Voice.

In this section, I move away from intention and return again to representation. I take a similar approach, drawing out key findings from the analysis to unravel points and double binds on the thread of representation. I continue to work through Spivak's definition of representation, with the double bind of aesthetic restagings of the world and political re-presentations of the self and other. A key finding through the analysis was the notion of confrontation, as the imagining of the other through the self, brought up questions about the role individuals played in marginalisation's of the other, and extended that confrontation to audiences. I argue that debates in applied theatre that look to interrogate, deconstruct, and subvert the binary of utility and aesthetic, might be extended through this discussion.

As outlined throughout the thesis, for Spivak, representation is always an enacting of both meanings of the word: a practice of representation is always active in an aesthetic restaging of the world, and always active in proxy political re-presentations of the self and other, the other through the self. The core of Spivak's thinking around this is that a radical practice is one that attends to the double meaning. There is awareness of both practices at play as representation happens, and intentionality in it. In working through the double bind of representation, the two contradictory positions do not point just to the double meaning and dislocation of the practice, but offer a strategy for practice, asking how attentive a practice is to each position. For Spivak, this attentiveness points towards 'radical practice'.

This is a contentious term for applied theatre, as questions about the relationship between theatre and its ability to make change continually arise. Balfour, for example, argues that a truly radical gesture might be to break the assumption that this is an "obvious partnership" in the first place (Balfour, 2009: 355). For Spivak, this attention to the double practice of representation is what defines radical practice, as it works to deny the reintroduction of the subject of the West into discourse.

In the second analysis chapter I argued the importance of representation that attends to this double definition, as representation, participation, and identity work in a mutually formative relationship. Recognising the connections that identity has to place, amongst local converging lines of dislocal social relations that remain connected to wider structures, the participants of *Extending the Welcome* entered into different moments of history making. Representation, the combination of the political and the aesthetic, is the way in which this history making takes place. For Spivak, this is the radical nature of representation, that does not create a subaltern removed from the lines of social mobility, but facilitates participation in the creation of history. I argued that by working in idiom, attentive to constellations of people, place and practice, that are textured with changing relationships of power, Spivak's notion of radical representation can be practiced.

However, the notion of a knotty double bind does not seek to locate radical versions of applied theatre practice; instead, it offers a strategy for radical practices of representation that might work from within, or as part of, applied theatre practice. These practices of representation might be considered radical as they fundamentally affect dominant discourse by dislocating the subject of the West as I outline in Chapter 1, however this radical nature does not necessarily tie into the other threads of analysis. For example, in discussing intention I invoke the metaphor that Spivak uses, as she writes about Doctors

Without Borders. Whilst their work is vital, it only responds to crisis, and does not affect

any larger change or address the causes of the crisis. I outlined some of the risks and

benefits of responsiveness to circumstance without commitment to community. I therefore

limit the notion of radical practice to practices of representation, and look to avoid calling

for an applied theatre practice that maintains claims to sudden significant social change.

A debate that has continued to play out in applied theatre is located across the double bind

of representation, as the parts of the thread where practice attends to its aesthetic

qualities but not to its political re-presentations of the self and other, and the parts where

practice prioritises its role as a practice of political representation and does not attend to

its aesthetic restaging of the world. These opposing parts of the thread resonate with

Thompson's work on effect, affect, and aesthetics (Thompson, 2009). This will be revisited

in more detail in the final two sections of this chapter, focusing first on effect, and then

affect. For representation however, Thompson's work outlines the risks that are present in

a practice that is only attentive to the political re-presentation of the self and other, and

not the aesthetic restaging of the world. He argues that a great knowledge of the stories of

participants, and the problems that they are faced with, can lead to a field dominated by

practitioners who have little capacity to "unite a group in joy" (2008: 118). He goes on to

say that this can reduce the way practitioners view participants as the outcomes that they

may achieve, with a focus on their future behaviours, and how the work of the practitioner

has changed the participant's life. Ignoring the aesthetic, and its affective potential, means

a concentration on utility, potentially "draining" the work of its sense of fun, celebration,

inspiration or joy (Thompson, 2008: 118). White outlines a similar argument, that whilst

applied theatre is always bound to its material and artistic process, work that focuses

uniquely on the social change that it might achieve can struggle to identify the value of the

work beyond instrumental outcomes (White, 2015: 3), as evident in discussions in Part 1

around the influence of policy and donor agendas that progressively instrumentalise practice.

The thread of representation as traced through this thesis affirms contemporary debates around aesthetics and applied theatre, as it requires an attentiveness to the aesthetic restaging of the world. However, it does not position the binary of aesthetic value verses social value that Thompson, White and others look to challenge, interrogate and deconstruct. Instead, it focuses on the people involved in practice, and their re-presentation alongside aesthetic restagings. The journey of those practices involved in the case studies demonstrates this, and further illuminates how this double bind might open possibility for future anlysis. To demonstrate and illuminate this, I return to the findings of the case study analysis and plot the journey taken across the representation thread.

The case study material began with attention paid to the aesthetic restaging of the world but not the political proxy re-presentation of the other. Rather, as argued in the analysis, for *Driftwood* the political proxy re-presentation taking place was of the performers, the audience, and the subject of the well intentioned Westerner. The aesthetic re-staging of the world that took place was of the overseas crisis. Those it sought to represent were absent from the creation of the piece, and the subjects it actually represented were those present. In the analysis I argued that there is value in this, through the confrontation of the imagining of the other that this facilitates to those involved and to audiences. For representation however, practice located on this part of the thread also holds a risk that I explore in Chapter 1 when outlining questions of 'context within', place, identity, and exclusion. I return to an extract from bell hooks:

Often this speech about the "Other" annihilates, erases: "No need to hear your

voice when I can talk about you better that you can speak about yourself. No need

to hear your voice. Only tell me about your pain. I want to know your story. And

then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it

has become mine, my own. Re-writing you, I write myself anew. I am still author,

authority. I am still the colonizer, the speaking subject, and you are now at the

centre of my talk"

(hooks: 2009: 84)

Whilst for *Driftwood,* the focus on the aesthetic restaging of the world facilitated on a

productive confrontation of the West as Subject, displacing it in the way that Spivak rallies

for in some ways, it ran the risk of colonizing the stories of those it sought to represent, as

hooks describes, hearing the pain of the other and retelling it back in a way that

appropriates, and ultimately colonises it. This risk emerges as *Driftwood* focuses on the

aesthetic re-staging of the refugee crisis and those involved, but was not as attentive to the

proxy political re-presentations of the self and other. The risk here is as hooks outlines,

annihilation and erasure of the other, with an authority assumed to speak on behalf of that

other in their perceived absence. For *Driftwood,* this question became more complex, as

those it sought to re-present are absent in other ways, in David Sibley's "no-where" (Sibley,

1999: 45), Spivak's "subaltern" (Spivak, 1977), or Marc Auges "Non-place" (Auge, 1995: 80).

This facilitated a valuable confrontation of the role both audience and performer played in

the contexts of migration, and of the Subject of the West. The use of puppets to represent

refugees also foregrounds the invisibility of the refugees. The tension that arises during the

devising process of *Driftwood* is not just the way in which artists represent "culturally

specific yet unfamiliar worlds" (Dennis, 2008: 211), but how artists represent those beyond the margins of society, in that no-where, subaltern, or non-place.

As with intention, the work travelled along the representation thread toward the impossible centre of the double bind, with a balanced attentiveness to representation. In *Extending the Welcome,* artists worked in more local setting, looking to facilitate an atmosphere in which they worked shoulder to shoulder with participants (Jeffers, 2012: 162). The move across the thread toward a balanced attentiveness to both meanings of representation became evident in the analysis chapters, through the workshops and performance attached to *Extending the Welcome,* as participatory processes explored, rehearsed, performed, constituted and reconstituted identity. By specifically connecting identity to place through mapping exercises, amongst local converging lines of shifting social relations that remain connected to wider structures, the participants entered into different moments of history making, leaving behind any thought of subalternity or non-place. By working in idiom, in the local, the artists crafted a process that facilitated this connection, as representation, participation and identity combined in a mutually formative relationship.

5.4   Effect: Local Spaces of Refusal.

In this section, I return to questions of effect to unravel questions, possibilities, and strategies along the effect thread. As I have explored throughout this thesis so far, recent debates in applied theatre have seen theories of effect, and claims to large social and political change, interrogated and moved aside in favour of theories of affect, prioritising embodied, emotional responses to applied theatre practice. Thompson describes this moment in debate as the turn to affect, or the affective turn. He argues that it is actually

through this focus on affect that applied theatre can widen its political potential, as a

"generator of its radical intent" (Thompson, 2009: 118). Beyond the turn to affect, the

notion of applied theatre as an inherently transformative practice has been troubled by

questions of politics and power (Nicholson, 2005: 11). Nicholson, drawing from Syil Jamil

Ahmed, argues that a focus on the effects of applied theatre can create a practitioner who

views themselves as an invisible subject. They assume that a certain society or group of

people need "to be transformed", and working in communities and contexts they are

unfamiliar with, they become "cultural missionaries" (Nicholson, 2005: 28). An important

distinction that Thompson makes is that affect is not the binary opposite of effect, but

rather, a more expansive term, an "augmentation of what should be understood, hoped for

and considered in relation to any experience" (Thompson, 2009: 120). He asks us to do

away with simple or singular effects and to look toward a broader model for applied

theatre (Thompson, 2009: 46), resonating with the argument I made in Chapter 1, as I

argued that context must be more than just the arena of effect. In some ways, the tracing

of the threads of intention, representation, effect and affect work toward answering

Thompson's call for a broader model that is inclusive of effect but not uniquely focused

toward it. In this section, I focus on question of effect and outline the knotty double bind

that has emerged along it. I explore the links this has to affect, and I also explore findings

from the case study analysis that illuminate ways of constituting a theory of effect that

reconcile come of the critiques that prompted the turn to affect.

In the analysis chapters, working from Boal, I asked if the audiences for *Driftwood* become

spect-actors, rehearsing and exploring their role in real world interventions (Boal, 2008:

119-20). The problem that arose from this was one of effect, particularly when figuring

context as somethings that governs. In Chapter 3, I asked if those helping the refugee

puppets were enacting their role in The Big Society, where citizens and communities are

expected to fulfil the gaps left by the closing down of state provision. I complicated this by asking if their helping meant they were resisting a different state agenda, the deterrence paradigm, as animated through the hostile environment policy programme. I argued that the complexity of this is reconciled someway through John Holloway's concept of interstitial change (Holloway, 2010: 17). *Driftwood* functioned as one site of refusal, a crack in wider political systems. By taking up a space of refusal, however small or incomplete, *Driftwood* added to the wider pressure on larger systems as other cracks are also exploited. Effect interacts with governmentality, and in some ways, resists it. From this analysis emerges the first part of the double bind on the thread of effect, for applied theatre; occupying points of refusal.

The second part of the double bind of effect emerges throughout Chapter 4, *People, Place, Practice,* where I developed a continued call to work in the local, taking Masseys' definition of the local as a meeting and weaving together of social relations, an intersection of different lines, that are nonetheless still connected to wider systems through those lines (Massey, 2013: 154). It is through this focus on the imagined local, whilst recognising that the workshop or rehearsal space remains a social encounter and is not exempt from social narratives and processes of power (Nicholson, 2005: 82). The applied theatre space is still in constant interaction with the places beyond the coming together of the, both geographic and social, local (Van Kerkhoven, 1994). The workshop is spatially constructed, as is the society it interacts with beyond its outer circle (Massey, 1993: 146). Focusing attention on the local whilst continually recognising the ways in which applied theatre practice remains embedded in wider structures allows for a theory of effect that reconciles the abandonment of large social claims whilst retaining a social and political programme. At the heart of this is the double bind that emerges from the analysis, of working in the local, whilst occupying spaces of refusal.

This focus on working in the local clearly sits in contradiction to much of the theory used across the thesis, particularly the mobilisation of Latour as a key thinker. The orientation of practice and context, developed through the first half of the thesis and picked up throughout the second, as dislocal, runs in tension alongside calls to work in the local, even as that local is conceptualised as shifting, moving, and complex. This contradiction and tension illuminates the difference between theory and strategy as developed in Chapter 2, and the impossibility of working in the aporia of a double bind. Spivak writes, "a strategy suits a situation: a strategy is not a theory" (1993: 4). A strategy is something held up in response to a situation, but a theory might allow us to interrogate and describe that situation. In this way, the theory of 'context within' is a theory, that understands the dislocal nature of the social, or practice, and of context. In response to this, as a new situation for practice, a strategy emerges that looks toward context within, from the double binds on the threads explored. This call to the local, alongside a theatre of little contexts, is a strategy for practice, which works from this theory, but as a strategy, "freezes" into something that looks more like an essentialist position (Spivak, 1993: 4). I return to this question of strategy in the conclusions, following the next analysis chapter.

Lassiter, from whom I drew methodological approaches in Chapter 2, argues that working in the local does not mean focusing on a community at the expense of recognising global forces that link us all, but that by working in the local we can more readily recognize how practice is "uniquely situated to make a difference" (Lassiter, 2003: 13). Doreen Massey affirms this argument:

> If we really think space relationally, then it is the sum of all our connections, and in that sense utterly grounded, and those connections may go round the world.

(Massey, 2005: 185)

The knotty double bind of the effect thread is the interplay of these two points, of working in the local, and occupying points of refusal. To explore the different knots and points along this thread, I return to the example of *The Good Chance Theatre.* Earlier in this chapter I explored the journey of the intentions that underpin *The Good Chance Theatre*; whilst their work developed and became more committed to community, with a reflective attitude to the ways their early work may have caused more harm than good, they still make claim to look toward large social change, their website outlining the change they "want to see":

> A society which relies on cultural differences to move forward; a society in which people are treated according to personality, not as a label or symbol; a society in which all voices are required to tell the story; a society that emboldens different people to act within the world; a society in which the experience of living together is more exciting, deeper and more meaningful.

(Good Chance theatre, 2019)

Snyder-Young comments that the desire to change society itself is continually expressed in contemporary commitments like the above to the potential of theatre to make change, but argues that these large sweeping goals might actually be the obstacle preventing artists and practitioners from "making desired changes or realizing the goals of their projects" (Snyder-Young: 2013: 12). She argues instead that it is "the combination of 'heat' and extended engagement required of participants and/or spectators to participate in theatrical events can serve as a 'crucible' to make citizens want to take action outside the

theatre" (Snyder-Young, 2013: 12). She adds that it is through this that we can confront the limitations on applied theatre practice, and transform them into opportunities. Her call for heat alongside extended engagement resonates with the double bind explored above, of working to occupy spaces of refusal whilst working in the local.

The aporia of the effect double bind might be where Snyder-Young's "crucible" burns, where working in the local and occupying a space of resistance does not abandon effect, or programmes of social change, but allows artists and practitioners to craft ambitions of change that act as possibilities rather than obstacles. This crucible does away with the simple and singular effects that Thompson asks us to avoid (Thompson, 2009: 46). In the next section, I return to affect, to keep with Thompson's call to a broader model of applied theatre. I recognise too that effect is not the binary opposite of effect, but that invoking affects augments our understanding of the experience of applied theatre (Thompson, 2009: 12). The call to work in the local continues throughout the next section, also demonstrating one of the ways that effect and affect intersect.

5.5   Affect: Local Spaces of Potential.

In this section, I trace the final thread of analysis, affect. Questions of affect have developed through this chapter and become a significant point of discussion throughout the thesis. I have considered affect as moving and sliding between people and objects, as sticky, and a route to flatten context. The discussion around intention asks questions about the desire to make change that can emerge from an emotional connection to an issue (Snyder-Young, 2013: 119). The representation double bind asks for attentiveness to the aesthetic nature of representation, allowing for practice that does not only focus on the social utility of the work (White, 2015: 3). The effect thread affirmed the questions

generated by the turn to affect, and looked to do away with simple or singular effects and instead craft a broader model of applied theatre (Thompson, 2009: 46). In this section, as I trace threads of affect, I continue to invoke the call to the local that has developed through this thesis. To do so I explore affect as a characteristic of applied theatre. I also consider the ways that affect links with effect.

The turn to affect invokes new questions about the embodied, emotional responses that applied theatre practice generates, and to allow those responses an importance in how we talk about applied theatre practice and what it does (White, 2015). The *Extending the Welcome* workshops did this, and allowed for unplanned responses, facilitating spaces that centred around the affective, for example in exercises that explored the feeling of being welcome through turning away from, and then to face each other. This also developed in the final performance that offered narratives of hope for the refugees and asylum seekers in the audience, with one audience member feeling more positive about the problems they were facing. With *Driftwood,* the affective outcomes developed through the imagery of the work. The artists themselves were shocked and upset by the images of sinking ships and refugees in distress, the intention was that these same images might prompt audience members to feel the same way and also take action. As the artists became more closely embedded in the constellations of people, place and practice in this particular locality, their relationship to broader contexts changed. It moved from regarding the pain of others (Sontag, 2003: 97), to facilitating convivial spaces for participants (Gilroy, 2004: XI). As they became more imbricated in these constellations, their practices changed, and their focus shifted to the affective.

Whether in a participatory process, or performance, working shoulder to shoulder in the local, and engaging with little contexts, creates possibility for the affective realm to

produce the core impact of the work, as affect, alongside effect. For *Driftwood,* the affective orbited regarding the pain of others and trauma to rouse action. As constellations of people, place, and practice became more closely wedded, the affective moved through fun, welcome, belonging, and standing shoulder to shoulder, through the *Extending the Welcome* project. In the analysis I argued that this journey toward affect is ultimately facilitated by working in the local, allowing a space for little changes, with close focus on a unique these localities.

Sloan moves beyond Thompson's turn to affect and looks toward the applied theatre space as one of potentiality, through the liminality of collaborative theatre making (Sloan, 2018). She draws from theories of affect that centre around the connections between people, as an ecology of processes and being in the world (Sloan, 2018). Sloan does not locate affect in the results of practice, but instead as a characteristic woven into and through the practice. What I have called constellations of people, place and practice, meeting at the local, might be close to what Sloan calls a "human ecology of being alive in terms of how our bodies are attuned to relation with others" (Sloan, 2018). Sloan brings affect into the heart of these constellations. In working through threads of affect, I consider a double bind of 'working in the local' and 'allowing the unplanned'. Practices that work toward the aporia here might find Sloan's space of potentiality. It is also where we might situate Balfour's Theatre of Little Changes. As he sees it, by abandoning large claims to social change, and focusing on the affective:

> …applied theatre might more readily encounter the accidental, and acknowledge that what applied theatre does is not always linear, ration and conclusive in its outcomes, but is more often messy, incomplete, complex and tentative.

(Balfour, 2009: 357)

In analysis, I moved further from both of these positions, to argue toward a 'theatre of little contexts', as a strategy for working from a context within.

Another argument for the end of effect has been the damage that applied theatre project might cause, as practitioners unintentionally cause harm (Snyder-Young, 2009: 45). However, this risk is also present in processes that prioritise affect, with performances or processes that explore negative emotions holding the potential to traumatise audiences, performers or participants for example (Quoresimo, 2016: 333). The call to work in the local, in idiom and a small context, becomes vital to avoid this harm, as a practitioner becomes embedded in the local in which they work. The part of this thread where work allows the affective unplanned but does not work in the local, presents an element of risk. This risk becomes particularly acute as applied theatre practice is often done with those living on the margins, with participants who may be vulnerable or have experienced trauma as has been the case with refugees and asylum seekers. The call to work in the local runs through this thesis, and now through both the affect and effect threads, as a way to avoid this harm, but also to answer to the challenges of the turn to affect.

5.6   Conclusions: Constellations and Connectivities.

In this chapter, I have drawn out the key findings from the analysis, using them to unravel the threads that connect practice to context, and construct some of the knotty double binds that sit along them. This centres around the four key themes of analysis that were developed in Chapter 4, emerging from themes in the literature of Part 1, as lines that link practices to contexts. These threads and their double binds can be taken up in future

research, as a tool for critical analysis. They provide an analytic lens with which to situate the relationship that examples of applied theatre practice have to context.

This discussion has unfolded one of the key links between affect and effect. Through this thesis emerges a call to work in the local, which underpins both models of effect and affect, responding to ongoing reaffirmations of the smaller, embodied, lived responses and changes that applied theatre practice can facilitate. This call holds the risk of producing governed practice, if it is not both situated in an interstice, a point of refusal, and allows for the unplanned, looking for a space of potentiality. This demonstrates an intersection between effect and affect, and the ways in which these ideas both produce value through their divergence, looking toward larger change along constellations of power, in crucibles of change, whilst also foregrounding and prioritising smaller, embodied, and lived changes, in a theatre of little contexts.

The representation thread offers new knowledge for applied theatre, taking up the thinking of Spivak in new forms for applied theatre. Future research might continue to take forward her writing, invoking it across applied theatre debate. The representation thread also offers a grounding of how applied theatre might consider itself radical, whilst in conjunction with the effect and affect threads, still eschews claims to large social change. The discussion around intention also offers new knowledge, developing notions of what it might mean for intention to be practised, and different ways in which practice engages with crisis and points of intervention, as short term movements or long term commitments.

In the second analysis chapter, I argued toward an engagement with little contexts, working shoulder to shoulder in the local, allowing for a space of small changes, with a focus on unique constellations of people, place and practice, rather than the whole

universe. This discussion has engaged with the lines that connect those constellations, as intersecting points of context and practice, change and experience. These ideas, like critical notions of context within, are woven through people, place and practice. They offer new ways of conceptualising applied theatre, and allow for those specific lines, and localities, to be interrogated, and attended to. In the next chapter, I work with the third and final case study to develop strategies tor taking these ideas further.

6. Drawing the Line: Double Binds as Strategies.

6.1   Introduction: Drawing the Line.

In this chapter, I return to analyse an additional case study, *Drawing the Line*. The purpose

of this exercise is to explore how the double binds of the last chapter might be used in

further research and analysis, or as strategies for applied theatre practice. In a 2018

interview, Spivak offers a reflection on how this sort of critical work can be entered into

and conceptualised. She argues that she does not *apply* theory, but rather *practices* it;

"theorizing is a practice" (Paulson, 2019: 90). The way to access this way of working is to

not "accuse" that which is being analysed, but to "enter it" (Paulson, 2019: 90). In this

chapter, I take up the findings so far with these reflections, using the threads of analysis as

tools to enter into and theorise from the case study material as a cultural text, analysing,

not accusing, and critiquing, not criticising. Throughout the chapter, I develop further

strategies, exploring how the double binds can be used as theoretical tools to enter into

the complexities of applied theatre practice in its contexts.

This case study, as briefly introduced in Chapter 2, took place between May and August

2017. I attended workshops, rehearsals, and performances, as a part of a community

performance in Huddersfield develop by Chol Theatre to mark the 70th anniversary of the

partition of India and Pakistan as separate states. The performance, *Drawing the Line,* drew

loosely from the historical events of that period, and was devised by the community cast

alongside facilitators from Chol Theatre. The workshops and rehearsals took place in

various spaces around Huddersfield town centre, with the final performance taking place

on the 12th August 2017 as part of a wider event, *Huddersfield's Big Masala Tea Party,* in

the courtyard of the Lawrence Batley Theatre. The event saw the performance from the

community cast alongside a performance from a local bhangra company. The square also

hosted stalls selling samosas and chai, an installation from Mandeep Samra sharing

memories of partition, and Iqbal Hussein from the National Archives with maps and

photographs to answer historical questions about partition. There was also live Indian folk

music, with large elephant puppets moving through, and interacting with, the crowd

between performances.

In this chapter I focus specifically on the workshops and rehearsals in which members of

the community cast worked toward the event, devising and rehearsing their performance,

Drawing the Line. I observed five of these workshops, led by members of the Chol Theatre

team and freelance artists. The first workshops took place on the 20th of July and 18th of

May to raise interest in the project and develop initial ideas with participants. The final

rehearsals took place on the 8th, 9th and 10th of August in the run up to the event. The

workshops generally started with a series of warm up games, followed by more games and

activities intended to develop performance material, with intermittent discussions around

the themes explored. Usually there would be a tea and coffee break halfway through the

rehearsal, and some social time at the end.

As with *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome,* I attended the sessions and observed,

taking field notes. Whilst I volunteered to support *Driftwood*, and took on a project

management role as a part of *Extending the Welcome,* I had less practical involvement in

Drawing the Line. As explored in Chapter 2, this is largely due to the fact that I have

previously worked with Chol Theatre as a paid practitioner, and so initially the team

perceived me as entering the room in a different role. As the project developed, I found

ways to encounter and embrace the collaborative spirit I explore in Chapter 2, for example,

joining in games during the workshop, or boiling the kettle before a tea break. Having worked with Chol Theatre in the past, some of the participants were familiar to me, as were most of the team.

Looking to ensure that, as a critical ethnographer searching for a collaborative spirit, I did not fall foul of Conquergood's "Enthusiasts Infatuation" meant taking on a different, and perhaps slightly counter intuitive at first glance, strategy in the room. As outlined in the introduction to the thesis, I had previously worked for Chol Theatre as a freelance artist, facilitator and project assistant, although largely some years before this research. In entering this space, to maintain a critical distance, it would be important not to assume a role or perceived positionality as if I were joining them as a freelance artist again. Having already developed a closeness and identification to the people involved, looking for a critical distance meant initially pulling away from some of the collaborative strategies used in the previous case studies. In this setting, collaboration speaks to the understanding that the space and the activity within it is a collaborative effort of all those in that space. As an ethnographer, this is also true, and embracing a collaborative spirit means embracing this truth and allowing it. Recognising my role in creating the space and the activity within it as a person present, I would need to develop a way of separating myself in some ways from a meshwork that I had previously been embedded in in different capacities. This became almost as though I were playing the role of the disinterested ethnographer to assume this, sitting outside of the group, with a notebook or laptop for example. As the weeks progressed, I was able to move closer to the spirit of collaboration, holding conversation with participants, making cups of tea, and joining in some of the games. This process allowed me to steer clear of the risks that Counquergood outlines, as explored in Chapter 2.

These wider links between the people involved in this project become a part of the discussion below, particularly around notions of 'Commitment to Community' and 'Working in the Local'. For example, one of the facilitators working on this project also performed as a puppeteer for the *Driftwood* performances. This facilitator situates a thread of connection on the shifting constellations of people, place, and practice explored in Chapter 4, between this project and the case studies explored earlier. I use the same structure as the two analysis chapters in this discussion, starting with a section focused on intention, before moving through representation, effect and affect. In each section, I take up the knotty double binds from Chapter 5, looking for evidence in my field notes of the ways practice engaged with these threads.

6.2   Intention: Turning the Text Around.

In this section, as I begin with the intention thread, I look for evidence of 'Commitment to Community' and 'Response to Circumstance'. I begin with the first, looking at the broad commitments that Chol Theatre make in their public aims, before looking for more closely at the commitments more evident through their practices observed through this research. I then move to consider ways that they respond to circumstance, again through practices observed through this research, specifically how facilitators responded to the identities, bodies, and politics of the participants. I also develop further strategies for tracing the threads connecting practice to context, and I continue to draw from Spivak's reflections invoked in the introduction above.

Chol Theatre's publicly stated aims are broad, making commitments to communities in a generic fashion:

Our Aim: To create arts and culture projects that challenge discrimination and explore the positive values of diversity within society. Our artistic programme is driven by our desire to involve people in making art that responds to identity and locality. We create contemporary work that explores people's responses to where they live, to cultural works and creates opportunities people may not have previously encountered. In particular, we look at hidden stories, empowering ordinary people through the experience of making theatre, connecting people from different areas and different backgrounds to each other.

(Chol Theatre, accessed 2019).

The communities that this set of aims makes commitments towards are broadly defined, and in many ways are formed as vaguely figurative identities: "ordinary people", "people from different areas and different backgrounds". There are also specific commitments made toward these communities, to involve them in art making that responds to questions of identity and locality, to respond to the lives of these communities, creating opportunities that might not otherwise be available to them. Chol Theatre also looks to uncover hidden stories, and "empower" these communities through making theatre and connecting across difference. At first glance, it seems that the communities Chol Theatre makes commitments towards are so broad, that they could convincingly work with anyone, and mark that a fulfilment of the above aims. In the previous chapter, drawing from Ahmed, I argued that a commitment to community with no action risks becoming a non-performative commitment. Conversely, a commitment as broad as this holds a different risk, of functioning not as non-performative, but rather existing as too non-specific to be a commitment. What is committed to, is unclear. These broad aims might be representative of the economic shifts affecting the field, as a company that works from project based

funding, to have too specific a scope of aims might tie off certain sources of funding for example.

At the opening of this chapter, as I explained that this case study would be used as an example to develop strategies for using the double binds for practice, I drew from Spivak to explain that this is not a process of criticism and accusation, or a matter of applying theory to a text, but of entering into that text and the practice of theorising. Spivak argues toward a strategy to support this, "…you locate a moment where the text teaches you how to turn it around and use it" (Paulson, 2018). At this point in the analysis, rather than "accuse" this practice of lacking any commitment to community, the analysis requires a search of "the text" to locate a moment that turns this around. In some cases, this might not be possible, or the turn might be toward even less of an evident commitment. In this case, a commitment to community is demonstrated in the opening of my field notes and my own experience entering into the *cultural* text of the workshop space, which I now 'turn' to.

The first workshop took place on the evening of the 20th May 2017, in an upstairs rehearsal room at the Lawrence Batley Theatre. The workshop functioned as an introduction to the project, with some warm up games, movement and improvisation activities that develop a piece of writing sent in advance by a young member of the group, and discussions centred around identity, heritage and ethnicity. There were 5 participants taking part, with two facilitators, D and K, a photographer, and other staff members from Chol Theatre. One of the first observations that I make in my field notes at this first workshop is that I already knew three of the participants taking part *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*. This connection comes from a previous Chol Theatre community performance, *HD100*, that I had worked on in March 2016 in a professional capacity as a producer and actor. Later in this chapter I return to questions of 'Working in The Local', arguing that the return of these participants

signifies an ongoing practice that focuses on the local. However, this later discussion will

also explore how this process involves artists and practitioners, as a focus on a unique

constellation of people, place and practice, continues to develop through Chol Theatre's

work. At this point, the specific return of these three participants from *HD100* signifies a

commitment to community, specifically the community of Huddersfield.

HD100, directed by Amanda Huxtable, is described on Chol Theatre's website as:

> A snapshot of Huddersfield today made via interviews with 100 local people, [..] a
>
> surprising, funny and emotional take on living in Huddersfield […] HD100 celebrates
>
> our hometown's culture, residents, workers and visitors. Huddersfield – where
>
> people with or without local ties are at the centre of their own universe

> (Chol Theatre, accessed 2019).

The commitment here is to the town of Huddersfield, to share the stories of local people,

and the community surrounding the town. The script drew from 100 interviews with local

people, and was performed by members of the local community in the main auditorium at

the Lawrence Batley Theatre. Whilst *Drawing the Line* was not directly about Huddersfield,

it also drew participants from the town. The return of participants to the project from

HD100 might signify a commitment to the communities of Huddersfield, but it also signifies

the growth of a community around Chol Theatre itself, as participants return to a space and

group of people familiar to them.

Whilst there is a potential dissonance between the publicly stated aims of Chol Theatre and

the reality of the specific practice and projects involved, there is evidence of commitment

to community, as members of that community continue to encounter and engage with the work. This is an example of how the analysis requires the critical intimacy that Spivak talks of, and the value of the simple instruction she outlines; you do not accuse that which you are analysing, "you enter it" (Paulson, 2018). Through observing the opening workshop of this project, and my own personal connection to the communities involved, a commitment to community is evident. This part of the discussion has illuminated a way of mobilising the thinking from the previous chapters, that is to enter into a cultural text, and find points to turn this text around, rather than simply applying it to a practice. This entering into, and constant turning around of, the text, resonates with Massey's argument referenced earlier in the thesis. To take a slice through a practice and capture it to then 'apply' the double binds would leave the text "full of holes, of disconnections, of tentative half formed encounters", not recognising that there are "always connections yet to be made, juxtapositions yet to flower into interaction, or not, potential links which may ever be established" (Massey, 2005: 107). Entering into the theory, and looking for points to turn around, establishes that this process of analysis is not a tool for application, but a tool for theorising the complexities of practice in its contexts, and tracing its relationship to those contexts.

The next step, continuing in this same spirit, is to look for evidence of response to circumstance in the practice, again closely looking for points in the observations to 'turn' the argument. The project itself marked the 70th anniversary of the partition of India and Pakistan, and so could be framed as a response to that anniversary and event. However, at this point, as I continue to focus on the field notes describing the workshops, I look more specifically at the ways in which the practitioners responded to the identities and experiences of the participants in the room, viewing this circumstance that requires response in participatory practices. As I return to representation later, I ask broader

questions about what the political and aesthetic practices of representation worked from, looking in more detail at the theme of partition.

The process by which the performance was devised involved the participants in multiple ways, working through and with their politics, experiences, identities, and bodies. Much of this centred around games and playing. In my field notes I write: *"This really reminds me of Boalian processes… Training non-actors in their bodies, voices and space through playing" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* The element of Boal's work that I refer to in this field note, is his consideration of games and exercises as method of training non-actors in performance, specifically in performance generated on themes that they themselves put forward to a theatre of liberation. In *Games for Actors and Non Actors,* he outlines the ways in which exercises and games combine as "gamesercices":

> "The goal of exercises is a better awareness of the body and its mechanisms, its atrophies and hypertrophies, its capacities for recuperation, restructuring, reharmonisation. Each exercise is a 'physical reflection' on oneself. A monologue. An introversion. The games, on the other hand, deal with the expressivity of the body as emitter and receiver of messages. The games are a dialogue, they require an interlocutor. They are extroversion. In fact, the games and exercises I offer are mostly 'gamesercises' – there is a fair proportion of exercise in the games and a fair proportion of game in the exercises. The difference on the whole is one of didactic intent."

> (Boal, 1992: 48)

For Boal, a 'gamesercise' is the combination of an exercise and a game. The process that Boal follows in the passage above is arguably one of deconstruction, as he recognises that all his exercises have an element of game in them, and all his games have an element of exercise. He explores what each of these elements mean in turn, and sees them as running alongside each other throughout his practice, as a double bind.

The process followed by the facilitators working with participants to develop *Drawing the Line* worked from this double bind. For example, in a rehearsal leading up to the performance, K split the participants into pairs, and asked them to create short pieces of movement. He asked the pairs to stay connected at all times, and to move that point of connection. He offered an example with D, as they started with their palms touching before rolling their hands so that the backs of them were. They then continued to roll arms across, moving the point of contact up to their shoulders, their upper backs, down the opposite arm, to the backs of the other hand, and then finally the palms. The participants explored ways that they could move their bodies to 'roll' the points of connection. The exercise then switched to explore counterbalances and embraces, before K placed the pairs in a line, and the short pieces were shared in canon. A large white cloth the length of the room was then added to the line, with participants asked to explore different ways of moving with it together and individually. At one point, a participant laid down on the floor, with the others following suit, eventually each covering their faces and bodies with the long large cloth. The group discussed how this looks like corpses, reminiscent of the refugee crisis in Europe, and of the aftermath of partition.

In this exercise, the participants developed Boal's introversion, exploring movement, and the mechanics of their bodies. They also developed his extroversion, a dialogue with each other, dealing with "the expressivity of the body as emitter and receiver of messages"

(Boal, 1992: 48). From it, themes were offered by the participants of *"story, struggle, hope"* *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* This process was repeated throughout the workshops and rehearsals in different forms, with 'gamesercices' used to develop performance skills, as well as acting as mediums for discussions and explorations of identity, politics, experiences, and bodies.

This offers an example of how the practice observed responded to circumstance, working closely with the participants to respond to their ideas and themes for the performance, but also working with and through their bodies, voices, experiences and identities. Eventually, the pieces of performance generated through games and exercises were ascribed meaning and stories by the participants, and then crafted by the facilitators into longer ensemble performances with a narrative structure. The performance also eventually incorporated elements of writing that some participants developed in their own time as a response to their experiences in the workshops. This participatory practice is one that is responsive to circumstance in the room, and to the participants themselves.

This discussion that grows from the intention thread has looked for, and interrogated, evidence of the double bind at the heart of it, response to circumstance, and commitment to community. Through a close analysis of the practices observed, paying attention to each element of the double bind in turn, it has become evident that the process observed was one of committed response, working toward the aporia. The project demonstrated a commitment to community, not through the organisations broad public aims, but through the participants who return to the project and are a part of a community that has experienced a long term engagement with them. It also demonstrates a response to circumstance, working closely with those participants as it develops the performance. This discussion has also outlined some of the strategies that can be used to work through the

developed double binds. Throughout, I have worked from Spivak's reflection that theory is a practice, and that as such we should enter into a text rather than accuse it, looking for points to turn the text around.

6.3 Representation: Restaging Then, Re-presenting Now.

In this section, I move again from intention to representation, working through the double bind of representation. I have engaged at length with the double bind at the heart of this frame throughout this thesis. In this chapter, I look for evidence of each element of it, but I then move to use that analysis to trace the practice on the shifting thread of representation. I continue to focus on the participatory practices observed at workshops and rehearsals for *Chol Theatre's* community performance, *Drawing the Line.* The choices made by both participants and practitioners in creating this piece of theatre attend to both the political re-presentations of those subjects at the heart of it, and the aesthetic restaging of the world through historical events. These choices run side by side, and offer an example of how the double binds across the threads of analysis can be considered simultaneously, woven through each other, rather than discretely.

Throughout the workshops and rehearsals during this project, as outlined in the previous section, the practitioners used games and exercises to generate discussions, to act *as* discussions, and to create material for the final performance. In the final rehearsal on the 10th August 2017, I made notes describing some of the performance created from this process, which offers insight into how the practitioners and participants engaged with the double bind of representation.

I begin the notes:

This is the start of the piece, the large cloths are used to move audience and mark a

performance space. This leads into the 'cricket scene' […] People split across the

room to be in either side of the threshold. They step over and walk about as

characters, imagining preparing for a cricket scene

(Mckay, 2017: Field Notes).

There is a literal sense of the world being re-staged in this opening part of the rehearsal, as the group mark a performance space and begin to take up individual characters. The use of the word threshold in my field notes, rather than boundary or edge for example, signifies the ritualistic elements of the movement, particularly the use a large cloth to mark out a performance boundary. Victor Turner writes that a ritual begins with a "separation", demarcating space and time, constructing a "cultural realm" beyond or outside the normality of usual processes and routines (Turner, 1982: 24). He explains that this separation includes symbolic behaviour, representing the detachment of the participants of a ritual from their normal social status, and moving them into a period of transition that has few attributes of the previous social space (Turner, 1982: 24). In the opening of this performance in rehearsal, attention is paid to the way in which the participants move from the world, the usual process, routines, and social status, into a new cultural realm of a re-staged world, with symbolic behaviour detaching the space, time, and performers. The commencement of this piece of world re-staging was considered and attended to in detail, as ritual.

In these opening moments, the political re-presentation of the self and other is also considered. Before the performance in rehearsal moved into the cricket game that the

characters were preparing for, a single cast member walked through an imagined audience

asking if they had seen her husband. The rest of the cast continued to *"walk about the*

space looking lost and despondent" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes). In this moment, the

performers are re-presenting the people displaced by the partition of Pakistan. Spivak

recounts her own memories of this as a child:

> So the cries would go up, celebrating the divine in a Hindu or Muslim way. Even we
>
> children knew that each cry meant a knife blow, a machete blow. Those riots were not
>
> fought with guns. There was blood on the streets. It was the working class people, the
>
> underclass people who were mobilized because the British and the upper class folks
>
> had made a pact to separate the land. There was blood on the streets and I don't mean
>
> that metaphorically. These are my earliest memories: blood on the streets.

(Spivak, 2010: 77)

Spivak's memories of partition are of violence and bloodshed. In her recollection, violence

is not seen, rather the effects of it are. She does not see the blow of the machete, but

hears the cries celebrating that signify it. She does not detail bodies on the streets, but

blood. Those inflicting the violence, and those it is inflicted upon, are in some way absent.

This resonated with the opening of the piece above, as the cast members walk about

searching for people, with one specifically looking for her husband. The effects of the

event, displacement, are foregrounded in a way similar to the way Spivak foregrounds the

violent effects.

An effect core to the re-presentation of displaced and silenced people that emerged in the

analysis of *Driftwood*, and does so as this piece continues, is one of confrontation of the

self and other. The piece moves into a cricket game, and in the rehearsal observed, the

facilitators worked with the participants to carefully choreograph it:

A slow motion cricket game that bursts into life when the ball hits the bat (the ball is

carried through the air). This is now designed, but collaboratively, working through

problems together but with a specific final product in mind at this point. It ends with

pictures of victory and loss on opposing teams.

(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)

As the group work together toward the final performance, they work through practical

problems of proxemics and logistics, creating the images of a cricket game in slow motion.

At the centre of this is the victory and loss of opposing teams, which is steeped in

metaphor of partition:

The images are striking and described in the space as "rival mobs". There is a chant of

"we will act, fight, and win", which becomes louder and louder. Then "we will rock the

world" from the other team. In running it, these happen at the same time. It is very loud

and feels violent. It ends with the team captains facing each other, and the umpire

taking away the ball and bat.

(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)

As the cricket game is interwoven with loud chants of violence and division, it becomes

clear that the game is meant as both a narrative choice, and a symbolism for partition. The

selection of a game of cricket is also deeply political. Cricket as a sport was taken to India

and Pakistan by the colonial British forces, initially played amongst themselves, and then the "Parsees of Bombay, an educated, prosperous and Westernized group" (Guha, 1997: 175). Slowly taken up by other communities across the region, the sport of cricket became a tool of the British powers, to bring about friendly social relations, and to act as a "bulwark against social tension" (Guha, 1997: 176). Large tournaments developed over decades, but toward the era of partition, it became clear that these tournaments were organised on the lines of religious and social communities. Muslims living in what is now India felt excluded from much of the activity (Guha, 1997: 180). The existence of tournaments that excluded Muslims added to the argument that they deserved a separate state. The Bombay Pentangular in particular was abolished in 1944, after huge campaigns highlighting the divisions it caused (Guha, 1997: 183). As the Chol Theatre team use cricket as a metaphor for division and violence, they also draw directly from the history of the era, with a game used as a colonial tactic, an argument for independence, and a marker of community and difference preceding the violence of partition.

A vignette with a similar function follows, with a bride and groom separated the cloth as a screen, and whispers of division and violence spreading through the congregants. Both scenes rely on the division of two groups of people. They are followed by a monologue from a woman who talks about leaving in the middle of the night with only a suitcase and her brother. Throughout these elements of the performance, the aesthetic restaging of the world is considered alongside the political re-presentation of the self and other. The cricket game and a wedding draw on traditions of the place and time of partition, but they also centre around the division of two groups of people. There is attention paid to the aesthetic re-staging of the world, and the political re-presentation of people.

However, as with *Driftwood,* elements of the subject positioning within this piece raise deeper questions about how it acts as a proxy political re-presentation, not of those who lived through partition, but of the participants themselves. Whilst there is a confrontation of the self and other, as with *Driftwood,* there is little confrontation of the other within. During an earlier rehearsal, as the group worked with the large sheet to experiment and create imagery for the piece, they began to evoke images that not only speak to the period of partition, but also contemporary crises of forced migration:

> *People play with the big sheet to make moments. The sheet becomes a rope to guide journeys, then refugee camp tents. It is used to drop on people and create the image of bodies, a migrant route, single, pull and push.*

> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes).*

The piece marked the anniversary of the partition of India and Pakistan, but it did so in the same contexts within of migration explored throughout this thesis. Whilst the participants of the project represented a diverse set of heritages, none of them had lived through or experienced partition. The imagery of partition that is crafted through this rehearsal resonates with Brecht's notion of historicisation:

> "Imagine all that is going on around you, all those struggles
>
> Picturing them just like historical incidents
>
> For this is how you should go on to portray them on the stage."

> (Brecht, 2000: 237)

For Brecht, as outlined in the above poetry excerpt, historicisation is the taking of current events, and framing them as historical incidents. In this piece, contemporary imagery of displacement, division, and forced migration are framed through the partition of India and Pakistan. The performance in this way becomes as much about August 2017 and the politics of the participants, as it does about India and Pakistan in August 1947 and the politics of partition. The positionality of the participants, as mediums of the self and other, is not attended to in the workshops and rehearsals that craft this piece, and so on balance there is more attention paid to the aesthetic re-staging of the world than there is the political re-presentation of the self and other.

In this section I have considered closely the double bind of the representation thread and used that to trace it as connected to contexts. As I have done so, I have considered the double bind as linked rather than as separate points for analysis. I have also considered the way in which the representation double bind can offer different routes for analysis, first thinking about the performance itself and those it seeks to represent, and then thinking about the participants as representing agents. I have also considered representation as an ongoing process, looking at the turns and changes as the performance developed and moved through different elements, rather than only focusing on the final piece. In the next section I return to questions of effect, and engage with the double bind at the heart of that frame.

6.4   Effect: Under the Microscope.

In this section, I move to work through the double bind of the effect thread, 'Occupying Points of Refusal', and 'Working in the Local'. I argue that the piece itself did not act to occupy a point of refusal, but that the rehearsals and workshops did in some way, offering

a space for participants to explore questions of migration and displacement amidst broader

contexts of hostility and rising nationalism. I then ask how the project worked in the local,

as a part of constellations of people, place and practice. I argue that it maintained Massey's

call to "think space relationally" as a sum of all our connections, recognising that those

connections work outward as well as inward (Massey, 2005: 185). In the next chapter, I

extend this discussion as I consider 'Working in the Local' as a part of the affect thread also.

During rehearsals and workshops, facilitators K and D both expressed sentiments about the

"*intersectionality*" of the piece, explaining that it would work to acknowledge the role of

the British empire in the violence of partition *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* Many of the

exercises centred around the idea of displacement, and the quick movements of partition:

> *"D and a participant draw a line across the room with string and everyone rushes to*
>
> *pack their suitcase before they are trapped on the 'wrong side'"*

> *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*

Other exercises discussed what partition would have felt like, the cultural significance of it,

and the journeys made by those forced to migrate. Whilst these exercises and those like it

explored detailed aspects of partition, and whilst there were claims made by D and K that

the piece would foreground the role of the empire in the violence of partition, there was

little reference made to this in the actual making of the performance, in workshops or

rehearsal. Critiquing the role of the empire in partition might have been an opportunity to

occupy a point of refusal, however this did not translate into the shared creation of the

performance.

The activities in workshops and rehearsals did, however, occupy a different point of refusal, amidst haunting contexts of migration. In Chapter 1 I explored some of these contexts. I argued that the Spectres of the nation state, the nation thing, and the figure of the migrant, all haunt applied theatre practices, and are haunted by it in return, as affective exchanges that move between and stick to bodies and people. I explained, drawing from Cox and Holdsworth, that theatre can be a practice through which the nation is constructed, offering a space for collectivities and communities to be imagined, as well as a practice through which that can be placed under a microscope and critiqued. I argued that the dialogical processes of applied theatre can examine the "unexamined metaphors" that emerge from the figure of the migrant, allowing practitioners and participants to explore where they individually fit on the spectrum of the figure of the migrant, and resist the haunting of nationalisms that force us to name "home" (Cox, 2014: 76-7). These processes, rather than figured through distance and scale, are better understood as affective exchanges between people on dislocal networks and threads.

Throughout the rehearsals and workshops, the participants placed the idea of the nation state, and question of forced migration, under a microscope. These themes and questions were explored and interrogated, not only through discussions, but as outlined earlier in this chapter, through games and exercise acting *as* discussions. In a rehearsal on the 8th August 2017, an exercise mentioned above where small groups experimented with movement using the large cloth explored questions of identity and the experience of the forced migrant:

> "People play with the big sheet to make moments. The sheet becomes a rope to guide journeys, then refugee camp tents. It is used to drop on people and create the image of bodies, a migrant route, single, pull and push.

One group covers their faces and D observes that having faces covered is

"interesting", "it is like having no identity". Everybody agrees.

One group pushes their faces against the sheet and it is horrible. Discussions about

packed trains and claustrophobia follow"

(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)

This exercise and exploration is a discussion of the difficulties faced by the forced migrants

of partition, the claustrophobia of packed trains, and the way this intersects with notions of

identity and the self. In both the analysis of *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome,*

questions of identity also emerged. For *Driftwood* I drew from Spivak's article *Can the*

Subaltern Speak (1989) to examine the ways in which the puppet refugees re-presented

the forced migrants as having an identity that it is wholly contained in their difference, as

subaltern, located in a non-space, where there is a death of speech. For *Extending the*

Welcome, I argued that the participatory processes used explored, rehearsed, performed,

constituted and reconstituted identity. In the moment referenced above, *Drawing the Line*

does both of these jobs, exploring the ways in which the forced migrants might be pushed

into a place of non-identity, and also rehearsing, performing, and reconstituting the

identities of the participants through this 'gamesercise'. This moment, and others like it,

occupy a point of resistance, as they critically interrogate the figure of the forced migrant,

and examine those "unexamined metaphors" of the affective haunting context of

migration.

Whilst the participatory process observed clearly occupied a point of resistance, the next question to ask of the effect double bind, is if there is evidence of working in the local. I have already alluded to evidence of this earlier in this chapter, exploring how Chol Theatre maintain a commitment to the community that has formed around the company, focusing on participants returning to this project. In this discussion I move to examine the wider ways that this particular project looked to work in the local, engaging not only with returning participants, but searching for a place in constellations of people, place and practice.

In the previous chapter I took Massey's definition of the local as a meeting and weaving together of social relations, an intersection of different lines, that are nonetheless still connected to wider systems through those lines (Massey, 2013: 154). I argued that it is this focus on the local, whilst recognising that the workshop or rehearsal space remains a social encounter and is not exempt from social narratives and processes of power, that allow for a theory of effect that reconciles the abandonment of large social claims whilst retaining a social and political programme (Massey, 2005: 185; Nicholson, 2005: 82; Van Kerkhoven, 1994; Lassiter, 2003: 13). 'Working in the local' is a strategy of 'context within'. In looking for evidence of 'Working in the Local' then, there must be a focus toward local constellations of people, place and practice, whilst still looking outward to wider systems.

The links that Chol Theatre have maintained with people were briefly explored earlier in the chapter, with the return of participants from previous projects to this one. The return of participants signifies a focus on a unique constellation of people, whilst still looking outwards and welcoming new participants to that. At one point, a member of staff from the Chol Theatre core team remarked that the participants are not viewed as separate from the company, but that they are the company *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*. This signifies

a practice that has considered how it focuses on the local. Those involved in the project are considered as a part of the community that forms around it, as much as the artists and creatives involved.

This project also finds a place in the "meshwork made of multiple interwoven threads and traces" that I explored in the analysis of *Extending the Welcome* (Bradley, 2017: 3). One thread that links *Drawing the Line* with this meshwork is of course this research project. Another is practitioner K, who worked as a puppeteer for *Driftwood.* I move beyond meshwork's and networks and consider constellations, of place and practice too. As such an additional thread that links these projects are some similar choices about the practice that were made. In the *Extending the Welcome* analysis*,* I argued that the practitioners worked with a constant renegotiation of power and reflective vigilance to prioritise the voices, identities and creativity of the participants. *Drawing the Line* also worked in this way, constantly working with participants to generate material within an ongoing renegotiation of power and decision making. In one workshop, for example, participants created short pieces of movement using chairs and words to interpret, stand, sit, touch, for example. When performed back, the group were asked to assign meaning and narratives to these pieces, for example, *"two officials or guards, bow and arrow, prayer, looking after a baby" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* In a similar vein to *Extending the Welcome,* the practitioners shaped the exercises whilst the participants defined meaning and narrative.

Returning to Chol Theatre's publicly stated aims offers an example of how analysis can work across these threads of context, rather than only taking them in isolation. One section of the aims states:

"Our artistic programme is driven by our desire to involve people in making art that

responds to identity and locality. We create contemporary work that explores

people's responses to where they live, to cultural works and creates opportunities

people may not have previously encountered."

(Chol Theatre, Accessed 16 September 2019)

'Working in the Local' appears as central to their aims, alongside responding to identity.

These aims also offer some specificity as to how this might function, working with people's

responses to their area and cultural works through opportunities that may not otherwise

be available to them. In the first section of this chapter, working through the ways that

Chol Theatre holds commitments to community, I argued that the communities they

outlined were so broad that the commitment was not really a commitment at all, but that

other commitments were evident through the practice, in particular to work with the

community that centred around the company. Intersecting that analysis with the notion of

'Working in the Local' here, offers access to a deeper theorisation of their work, in that

working amongst local constellations of people, place and practice, is a core commitment

that *Chol Theatre* makes successfully. Working through both elements of the effect double

bind has found that the practices observed from *Drawing the Line* both occupy points of

refusal and work in the local.

6.5   Affect: Future Looking.

In this section I move to the final thread developed through this thesis, affect. The double

bind knotted through this thread is split between 'Working in the Local' and 'Allowing the

Unplanned'. In the previous section I explored some of the ways that analysis can reach

across interwoven threads rather than function only in isolation. This thread continues to work in this way, as the previous section has already worked through how the practices observed successfully worked in the local. In this section then, I focus in more detail on 'Allowing the Unplanned', exploring the ways in which the practitioners planned for the unplanned, in a way similar to *Extending the Welcome.* In that analysis, I argued that the practitioners worked to produce a creative scaffold that allowed for shared creativity and input to the work. A similar way of working is evident in the *Drawing the Line* workshops and rehearsals.

In an early workshop, facilitator K explained that they were, alongside D, looking to develop motifs that might eventually come together as a performance with some narrative structure *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes)*. The workshops and rehearsals that followed continued to centre around exercises and games, from which performance material might be generated. Some of these have been referenced already in this chapter, for example as the groups made movement with chairs, experimented with the large cloth, and collaboratively crafted the cricket scene. Whilst the practitioners outline the exercises and games, it is the space for playfulness that they facilitate that ultimately allows for the unplanned and unexpected to emerge.

This way of working is demonstrated through a number of exercises. In an early, workshop, K asked the group to break into pairs and pick an item from a suitcase. They were then asked to create a game using the object. Some participants thought and planned, whilst others invented rules as they experiment with the object, catching and throwing etc, *(McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* K then asked the groups to condense their games into five actions, creating a piece they can repeat, *"A game becomes a performance" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* He then asked them to make the pieces *"flow"* and to *"stylise them" (McKay,*

2017: Field Notes). The movements were then placed in a round and cascaded. This exercise then ended, with a tea and coffee break following, and a completely different set of activities in the second half of the workshop.

The above exercise did not hold any expectation to create a piece of performance, and was not picked up again to do so. Instead, it acted as a moment of creative experimentation, which could have contributed to the final piece but did not necessarily need to do so. For Sloan, a space of potentiality encourages new experiences and "experiences of active choice-making that allow things to 'become' whatever they will 'become'" (Sloan, 2018: 594). These exercises, and others like it used in the workshops, seem to fit this model. The games created, and the subsequent movement piece that emerges from the exercise, just becomes whatever it will become. However, Sloan goes further to argue that this potentiality must be future-orientated (Sloan, 2018: 586). She goes on to say that experiences of active choice making may:

> …may generate new potentialities from which those involved may move forward to a new or altered understanding of their way of being in the world. It, perhaps, allows an experience of choice, albeit through the temporary suspension of the usual hegemonic milieu, via a constellation of bodies-in-process that generate a different milieu in which different potentialities might be immanent.

> (Sloan, 2018: 594).

A space of potentiality does not only allow for the unplanned, but does so to generate new ways of thinking about the self, the other, and the world that participants find themselves in. It also suspends the "usual hegemonic milieu" by the ways that participants interact and

enter into a new milieu. Whilst this is not immediately evident through this exercise, these processes have become evident throughout this chapter. In the discussion around intention, I argued that the games and exercises worked through the bodies, voices, experiences and identities of participants to craft ideas and themes for the performance, but also to work toward the participants becoming performers, acting as performer training through play. In the discussion around representation, I argued that the performance itself, understood through the frame of ritual, suspended the normal social environment and allowed for a new, imagined one, perhaps moving into what Sloan describes as the suspension of the usual hegemonic milieu. In the discussion around effect, I moved to say that the exercises and games used also acted *as* discussion, allowing the participants to examine ideas around forced migration through the restaging of past events. Viewing the practice through these lenses, and as a whole practice, rather than as isolated sets of games and activities, demonstrates the ways in which the practitioners allowed for the unplanned, but did this in a way that moved forward to the space of potentiality that Sloan outlines.

In the previous section, looking at effect, I worked through questions of 'Working in the Local' and argued that there is evidence of a practice that does this in *Drawing the Line.* Viewing the practice as a whole, drawing from elements of the discussion across this chapter, leads to placing the practice observed is also working toward and crossing the aporia in the knot. There are other elements of the work that confirm this, returning to Balfour's original notion of a Theatre of Little Changes, where he argues for a more playful relationship between practitioners and participants, that prioritises the affective responses to aesthetics rather than objectives and outcomes (Balfour, 2009: 356). In my field notes taken during *Drawing the Line* workshops and rehearsals, I noted both that participants often reflected on the fun they had enjoyed, but also that enjoyment was a focus of the

practitioners in running the sessions. For example, at the close of one session, K led a game

of Zip, Zap, Boing, but adapted the actions to the dance moves of Beyoncé, and played

Single Ladies loud from a speaker during the game. My own enjoyment from the side-lines

as an observer is apparent in my scribbled notes at the end of that particular workshop as I

noted *"It is fun to end with, I love it" (McKay, 2017: Field Notes).* This enjoyment and fun

was not relegated to the end of sessions, but woven throughout with a keen focus on

playfulness. I noted that exercises were fun, enjoyable or playful on each page of the field

notes for *Drawing the Line,* demonstrating a Theatre of Little Changes at work.

6.6   Conclusions.

In this chapter I have worked through the threads and double binds developed through the

thesis to analyse an additional case study from Chol Theatre*, Drawing the Line.* This

discussion has opened up strategies for how these double binds might be used. The first of

these, drawing again from Spivak, was to consider ways to enter the text and a practice of

theorising, rather than a simple application of a model to a set of observations. Rather than

a criticism of practice, this allowed for theory to be produced from that practice. It also

allowed the writing to continue to engage with other thinking from the field of applied

theatre, and fields beyond. A key way of entering into the text and a practice of

theorisation using the double binds was to work with Spivak's call to look for ways to turn

the text and argument around. I have also considered how the double binds the heart of

each thread can be considered in isolation, alongside each other, or in the case of the

affect threads, woven through the others.

7. Conclusion: Tying Up the Threads.

The question at the core of this research has been:

- *What are the relationships between applied theatre practices and notions of context?*

To facilitate this ambitious line of enquiry, and refine its scope, the thesis has addressed four sub questions:

- *How is the relationship between applied theatre practice and contexts of austerity and migration already understood?*
- *How can context be developed as a critical concept for applied theatre?*
- *What is the relationship between recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, which developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, and contexts of austerity and migration?*
- *How does this relationship between practice and context function?*

In these conclusions, I return to each of these questions in turn, drawing from findings and thinking developed across the whole thesis. I highlight the original contributions this thesis, and the research it represents, has made to the field of applied theatre. I draw together the new ways of thinking developed, alongside the new strategies from practice that these ignite. Following this, I ask how this work might move forward, and what new movements and threads might be traced in the search for context. Firstly however, I explore some reflections on the methodologies used in this research.

7.1   Reflections on Methodologies.

Approaching this research, I explored a model of critical ethnography that would also look to embrace a collaborative spirit. I argued that all ethnographies are collaborative in some way, and that by embracing this, ideas of invisibility or complete separation from that which is being observed can be done away with. In the analysis chapters, I outlined how this worked in practice. I drew from Conquergood's model of the ethnographer, to examine my own positionality in relation to these projects (Conquergood, 1985: 5). For the first case study project, *Driftwood,* I acted not only as an ethnographer, but as a volunteer on the project. This meant I could join conversations around the development of the piece, and travel with it to different parts of the country. Through this I developed a level of identification with those artists involved. For *Extending the Welcome,* I took a project management role. At a risk of becoming too close to the work then, in the thesis I have looked for evidence that I was able to maintain a level of separation from this work, whilst still embracing the collaborative spirit. This became clear through the ways that artists spoke about my role, as distinct and focusing on different things *(McKay, 2016: Field Notes)*. For the final project, *Drawing the Line,* I had to engage more readily with the ways I already held relationships with the company involved, as having worked for them previously. As outlined in the introduction to the thesis, this personal connection to the field of applied theatre facilitates a research project that is not disinterested, but immensely connected to my own identity and experiences.

Across this critical ethnography, looking to embrace a collaborative spirit, there is a journey that develops different strategies of engagement. Initiating the relationship with the *Driftwood* team created a new set of connections for me as a researcher. I had not worked with this team or company before in any capacity, and was not known to them. Seeking a

collaborative spirit meant placing attention of how we could come to identify with each other. Moving into the *Extending the Welcome* project, I was now at the core of these networks, and so had to work to steady that identification, or risk Conquergood's "Enthusiasts Infatuation" (Conquergood, 1985: 5). For Chol Theatre, a different set of connections, embracing a collaborative spirit and maintaining a level of critical distance meant in some ways, playing the role of the disinterested ethnographer. Immediately joining a circle in a workshop, or taking a part in a game or group discussion, would place me in the role that I might usually take with Chol Theatre, and risk again the "Enthusiasts Infatuation". Instead, playing the role of the disinterested ethnographer, sitting outside of the action with a note book or a laptop for example, meant that the perception of my role by the artists and the groups was one of intentional difference. Moving through the process, I was able to move to embrace more collaboration with the room, playing games or making cups of tea for example, whilst remaining careful to not assume a role to close to the work. These complex ways of working offer an example of a theme emerging across this work, that is summarised shortly, that is, the difference between a theoretical position, and the strategies taken to work toward that in a particular situation. In this case, different situations called for different strategies to maintain a criticality, whilst embracing a collaborative spirit in the ethnographic process.

I also engaged with Spivak's notion of a double bind, to craft a method of analysis. Having traced some of the connecting threads between practice and context, I looked to engage the case study material to search for the shifting knotty double binds on them. These points of indecidability, aporias, open possibility and strategies for applied theatre. Rather than address this method specifically at this point, I draw on it throughout the rest of this chapter, as I move through each of the four sub research questions and track the overall argument.

7.2   Context Without.

How Is The Relationship Between Applied Theatre Practice and Contexts of Austerity and Migration Already Understood?

In Part 1 of the thesis I considered the ways that applied theatre thinkers discuss context, using migration and austerity as examples of context to formulate and work with and through. I brought together three different constellations of thinkers and writers at this stage. The first of these constellations was of applied theatre thinkers, particularly those working with questions of context, applied theatre with refugees, and applied theatre on economic landscapes of austerity. The second constellation brought together thinkers from the two working examples of context, with literature around questions of migration, nationalism and borders, and literature around austerity, the big society, and localism. The final constellation of thinkers brought together cultural thinkers, which I used to frame, and figure, the ways that applied theatre constructs context, so that these figures could then be flattened and considered as dislocal (Latour, 2005: 24).

Through this discussion I argued that conversations of context in applied theatre generally orbit notions of scale, distance, and effect. As an arena of effect, context is considered as that which offers meaning to practice, and is that arena in which practice looks to effect and change. The arena of effect locates context as outside of practice. This is complicated and interrupted through shifts in the field away from a focus on effect, doing away with large claims of social change and interventionist thinking, toward affect, and little changes. I argued that notions of context for applied theatre must move beyond arenas of effect because of this turn.

Working with the context of migration, keeping with questions of scale and distance, I considered the ways that context for applied theatre is conceptualised as always-already, illusive, exerting influence from an indiscernible location. I engaged with Derrida's notion of the spectre to frame this (Derrida, 1993: 91), and used this as a starting point to explore how questions of scale and distance can be undone, and develop context as a flatter concept which functions within practice rather than beyond it. In this way, "power, previously extensive and operating from without, becomes intensive and now works from within" (Lash, 2007: 59). I considered the ways in which the nation state, nationalisms, and questions of migration, haunt applied theatre practices in friction, and are haunted by it in return. I argued that, rather than haunt from an elusive nowhere, these hauntings are actually affective exchanges that take place through, and in, practice. Through this I introduced Ahmed's work on affect (Ahmed, 2004; 2010), where she describes affect as sticky, sliding between people and objects, forming worlds. I argued that one of the ways applied theatre engages with affective haunting contexts is to attempt to unstick the negative imagery of the hostile environment, brought in later.

I then moved to a different level of scale and distance, and engaged with the ways that context is described as governing force for applied theatre practice, working with the economic and political landscapes of austerity over the past decade to trace this. I examined the ways that donor agendas have influenced practice, alongside the ways that government policy has facilitated a practice orientated toward tangible and measureable outcomes. In many ways, this contradicts much of the struggles in the field to turn away from effect toward affect. I engaged with Foucault's work on governmentality and power (Foucault, 1991), again in a process of flattening context. Through this I argued that these

governing contexts are again working from within practice, rather than beyond it,

functioning as complex and shifting networks and chains.

7.3   Context Within.

How Can Context Be developed as a Critical Concept for Applied Theatre?

Moving then to consider context as something within practice, moving away from notions

of scale and distance, I worked to explore some of the ways context might be figured as

flat. I drew the concept of a flat context from Latour, who argues away from trying to

explain away social relationships, practices and situations as made up of a particular kind of

"social stuff" (Latour, 2005: 160), but rather looks toward carefully and slowly tracing

shifting movements and threads between actors, or people. Working toward this concept, I

continued to engage with the context of migration, and worked through arguments that

might bring context within practice, specifically, notions of the self, other, exclusion, space

and identity. These points of thought were further developed in the case study analysis.

Specifically, this centred around how identity, representation and participation worked in a

mutually formative relationship, and that a notion of 'context within' drew the focus to this

constitutive process.

Again, drawing from Latour, I asked how context and practice might be further considered

as dislocal. Through the discussions around self, other, and exclusion, it became clear that a

context within is not settled, but shifting, moving, and impossible to fix down. Latour's

argument moves to say that we should do away with context. Rather than do this, I looked

to reorientate notions of context to account for is dislocality. At this point, in developing

context as a critical concept for applied theatre, I began to ask what the emerging dislocal

and shifting threads that run through context and practice, weaving 'context within' together, might be. Drawing from the different constellations of thinkers, I argued toward four threads of intention, representation, effect and affect. These four threads are themes often discussed in applied theatre. In this research, I asked new questions about how they function as connecting practice to context.

7.4   Tracing the Threads.

What is the relationship between recent examples of applied theatre practice in Yorkshire, which developed in response to the refugee crisis in mainland Europe, and contexts of austerity and migration?

I specifically addressed this third question in the case study analysis, as I worked to search for the knotty double binds within the four threads of connectivity between practice and context. I developed the notion of knotty double binds from Spivak (Spivak, 2012: 104). Through this method, I continued to observe context and practice as dislocal. In seeking to trace and unravel the connecting threads and lines between context and practice then, I argued that the point where the threads cross from to another is unreachable and unlocatable, it is a shifting aporia between context and practice on those threads. This point of indecidability, as a border to be crossed, might illuminate the ways these threads function as weaving context and practice together in a 'context within'. Working with case study material, I worked to unravel these threads by searching for these knotty double binds.

In tracing and unravelling the thread of intention, I explored a double bind of 'commitment to community' and 'response to circumstance'. I considered intention as practiced, rather

than a set of ambitions or motives at the start of a process. Playfully considering intention as a verb then, I argued that the second case study engaged with ongoing renegotiations of power, and a level of reflective vigilance. Both of these ways of working brought the practice closer toward balance between the double of intention, although as a shifting aporia and dislocal point of indecidability, this can only be an ongoing process and ambition.

Keeping with Spivak's double bind of representation, between the political re-presentation of the self and other and aesthetic restagings of the world, I explored the ways that practitioners worked along the thread of representation with particular attention to contexts of migration and asylum. Focusing on the subject positionality of performers, I argued that a focus on contexts figured by practitioners as distant generated a confrontation of those representing agents, and the Subject of the West. As the second case study worked more closely with those it sought to represent, it paid more attention to the political re-presentation of the self and other. In this way, the practice also drew closer to the knotty double bind.

Moving to questions of effect, I argued toward a knotty double bind between occupying points of refusal, and working in the local. At this point, strategies for practice began to emerge from analysis alongside new ways of thinking. The call to work in the local seemed to contradict the previously developed positions of context and practice as *dis*local, whilst the call to take up positions of refusal in interstices seemed to contradict the previously developed positions of power as diffuse and complex chains and negotiations. This resonated with Spivak's acknowledgement that strategy undoes theory, and can work against it, whilst being a mobilising force for that theory in practice. These calls and positions emerge from theory of 'context within' as strategies for practice.

Finally I worked through the thread of affect. This is a theme that has been picked up throughout the thesis, first as one of the ways in which context can be flattened, as affective exchanges sliding between and sticking to bodies, and then as a connecting thread woven between practice and context. I argued toward a double bind for affect between allowing the unplanned and again working in the local. As practice continues to move away from effect driven models of work, perhaps as complex resistances to those economic changes explored in Chapter 1, the double bind of affect is significant for the field of applied theatre, offering focus for practice amidst this turn.

7.5   Theories and Strategies.

How does this relationship between practice and context function?

I developed an argument that the relationship between practice and context can be considered as threads that weave the two together. These threads are shifting and dislocal. To trace these, whilst acknowledging their movements, I have argued that researchers can look for the knotty double binds on those threads. These double binds contradict each other, forming an aporia that cannot be settling in, whilst tying together the strands of the thread in the first place. They act as borders between practice and context, and are constantly crossed.

I have also argued away from conversations and figures of context that rely on notions of scale and distance. Instead, I have developed a novel idea of 'context within'. Developing this in analysis, across the four threads, I have crafted a strategy from practice to work toward this, as a 'theatre of little contexts'. This strategy moves beyond Balfour's

discussion around intention and subsequent call to a theatre of little changes (Balfour, 2009), and invokes all the four threads of analysis, to look for a 'theatre of little contexts' across all elements of practice. In this work, this was seen through the difference between the focuses of *Driftwood* and *Extending the Welcome.* The first looked toward what it saw as a distant context, representing a crisis oversees as it looked to intervene in imagined localities closer to home. The second worked in an imagined local, taking a space in shifting global constellations or people, place and practice, embroidered with diffuse relationships of power, and used an aesthetic that matched this political activity. The 'theatre of little contexts' is a strategy for 'context within' for a field that might sometimes look too far beyond, immediate constellations to contexts imagined as governing or haunting from elsewhere.

The 'theatre of little contexts' is a strategy that has emerged from the thinking in this thesis alongside a similar call to 'work in the local'. This again works in friction and tension with the notion of context as dislocal, but works in this particular situation to draw practice closer to a context within. In the final section now, I explore more fully how these strategies for practice might change and shift in future research, and how these strategies are indeed only suited to particular situations.

7.6   New Threads to Trace.

To move this work forward, researchers can engage with the slow tracing of other dislocal threads that might move between practice and context. Engaging with different examples of context, and different examples of practice, might offer completely new threads to unravel, with knotty double binds and strategies for practice. Analysis might also take up the double binds developed through this thesis, as ways to enter into a practice and

theorise from it, as was the case with the final case study in Chapter 6. The notion of 'context within' can also be taken up as a new way of framing, figuring and describing practice in applied theatre research. The double binds and strategies developed also present as an opportunity for the training and development of applied theatre practitioners, as tools for attentiveness and reflection in practice. In my own development as a researcher, academic, and practitioner, I will look to develop the findings offered by this research as a pedagogical and reflexive strategy for critical practitioners.

Researchers might also develop new strategies for practice from notions of 'context within' that speak to different situations. Whilst this thesis has developed strategies for applied theatre that work from the notion of 'context within', these strategies cannot be frozen; strategies are not "good for all cases" (Spivak, 1993: 4). Strategies for applied theatre cannot always be "uncomplicatedly translated, like a recipe, into a new context and situation" (Preston, 2019: 35). The emphasis for strategy, and applied theatre more generally, must be continually shifted away from matching a "trick to [a] situation" and toward being able to "speak from one's own ground" (Spivak, 1993: 4). The strategies that have emerged from the case studies speak to the ways in which they could have, or did, work towards 'context within'.

Within the movements of the field as explored and traced through this thesis, the strategies of a 'theatre of little contexts' and of 'working in the local' hold temporary ground. However, as the field continues to shift and move over coming years, this ground will begin to fall away, construct new borders and margins to work on, imagine new forms and aesthetic practices, and find itself enmeshed in constantly renewed dislocal constellations of people and place. New strategies for practice that speak from these always shifting grounds of context within must be continually developed. It is only through

this constant search for a 'context within' that new dislocal threads can be found, new

shifting double binds and aporias traced, and new strategies ignited for the field.

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Appendix 1 – Example of Field Notes

An extract of field notes from an observation of a Migration and Settlement workshop:

We are upstairs in the big room. Music is playing. Participants slowly arrive. There seems to be some issues with people knowing what time the project begins. Q and B are here again, our regular participants. J from the doodle group brings up his participants. I make a joke about stealing his slow and group - "we all want the same thing though" he replies, which is true.

We work on the pictures of Leeds at first with not many people. Slowly people arrive, and finally we have 5 participants, J, C, G, Me, K, M. Once it is time to start we sort out the ethics forms which works quickly with sitting with individuals.

Sitting in the semicircle it's time to start singing again, with our song "Baro, Baro". As we sing, people join in and learn the song. Ian is sketching one of the participants. I am sitting opposite him writing about them. That's weird. We continue singing and move into singing in a round.

T asks us to sit opposite partners and look at them for 30 seconds, studying their face. Then we close our eyes and draw each other's faces. During this K brings in two more participants and their children. In sharing them we have a lot of fun.

We then move over to the map. G explains that last week we drew things on the map that were important to us. J is talking over it. G explains that we are going to add to the map, and draw more places that are important to us.

THE MAP

- The map is about connecting place with story

- People are answering questions about how they feel in different places, the different memories they have. Where they feel safe/unsafe, happy/happy.

- There are lots of very ordinary places, like Tesco, but this is attached for feelings like order and happiness.

- Standing on the map we talk about the memories people have in different places and the stories. We are recording this.

- People talk about their lives, sport seems to be a theme.

- People are identifying the journeys they have been on, making friends, new people, learning at RETAS. Settlement is unfolding on the map.

This is a really important moment and is something we have been working towards. Opening space for participants to share stories in meaningful ways. This moment is an open invitation. We are not pressing for specific stories or memories, but we are open to hear anything. The room is light, breezy, people feel relaxed sitting around the map. There is a sense of flow, respect. The room feels open and calm. There is no pressure to share stories, but people are sharing.

- The children join in.

- J is joining as a facilitator, contributing to C and G with decisions about the activities.

We then split into groups to focus on stories about settlement, and how we make share with the rest of the group to evoke emotions and feeling. These are stories about Leeds specifically. C explains to me that the two new women are actually from Leeds but are still contributing to the ideas and stories, as the mood changes nationally/locally.

We then come back together into our semi-circle to share and think about the different ways we can tell stories. There is tension with J chipping in and it being different to what we want to do, Q clearly doesn't want to tell his story to the whole group and J is pressuring him.

People are talking about their first days in the country. Our open invitation has been successful.

This is not really a child friendly workshop - and I'm worried about the ethics of it.

The woman born in Leeds lived in the Caribbean, and the carnival reminds her of that life. Having the element of home makes her feel settled.

C explains how we can share stories. Puppetry, animation, sculpture, shadow.

We end with a song.

(McKay, 2016; Field Notes)