PhD thesis

Power Relationships and Open Source Theatre

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Declaration

I certify that the work presented in this thesis is my own and that this thesis is the one upon which I expect to be examined.

Signed and dated:

Power Relationships and Open Source Theatre

ABSTRACT

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This research is based on practice and is the first academic investigation of the methodology of Open Source Theatre (OST). OST is a form of advocacy. It is built on the concerns, experiences and vision of the subject group with the cooperation of representatives from the range of stakeholders. New roles are identified: the Initiator, the Precipitator and in particular the Arbitrator, not dissimilar to the traditional role of Director but stripped of any power over content. Their collaboration, in the Integrated Team, protects the process from insidious dominances.

OST increases input from the subject group in the theatre-making process by altering the power balance. It is a response to the constraints and challenges of democracy. I will argue that it combats the habitual silences of apathy and fear and that it counters manipulation from the powerful. The immediate result is to disentangle fact and fiction in the surfeit of information surrounding us. This distillation then encourages the production of information-dense 'snapshots' (or dramatised sound-bites) that concentrate the audience's attention.

Definitions of applied theatre sideline OST, in part because the subject group is rarely the target audience. Responding to an often-frustrated desire among the disenfranchised to be given a hearing, OST typically seeks an audience in a wider sphere, albeit sometimes a smaller but more specific and, ideally, more influential one.

I will argue that OST processes are complementary to, though distinct from, those used in other forms of theatre for social change. The hypothesis is that impeding the devising team's freedom mobilises the subject group. It is the subject group who set the agenda, approve the critical analysis and validate the drama: they become creative agents rather than donors.

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Glossary of Terms

Arbitrator: the individual who facilitates ensuring that the structure of OST is adhered to by all participants.

CDA: Community Development Association, Dinajpur, Bangladesh.

DfID: Department for International Development, UK.

EU: European Union.

Image graph: a graph which shows in a pictorial form the key elements of the data.

Immediate Response: comments, suggestions and rating for personal views on progress every day or two, in what has been recorded as 'monitoring', the results of which have been shared with the participants the next day.

Initiator: the individual who makes the first contact on behalf of a Subject Group who have a social issue of concern.

Integrated Team: the assemblage of individuals undertaking the OST process.

Kesh land: abandoned land given to the common people after the war of liberation in 1971.

OST: open source theatre; the name reflects the way in which the theatrical material is built up from diverse responses and the way in which the authorship is collective.

Precipitator: the individual who brings together the participants of the Integrated Team and who becomes personally involved in the process.

Racosu: the evaluation sequence: rating, comment, suggestion used for audience evaluation.

Retrospective Reflection: which is the recorded exchange of views some time after the event.

Shomite: a form of local self-help club or committee, usually single-sex.

Stakeholder: people or groups who have some interest, however remote, in the social issue of concern.

Subject Group: the community (usually one that is disadvantaged) that is host to the social issue of concern.

TCSD: Theatre Centre for Social Development, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Validation: the way in which the performance is checked by the Subject Group before it is taken to a target audience.

Verification: the process by which questions are checked for comprehension and further questions may be added.

VP: vulnerable prisoner.

Appendices

Chapter One

Introduction

This study focuses on a theatre practice in which power relationships are negotiated between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. The aim of this theatre is to improve knowledge of issues of social concern. It experiments with an open source process and hence, early on in this research in 2001, I named it Open Source Theatre (hereinafter referred to as OST). At first glance it might be considered to be a form of applied theatre (Ackroyd 2000, Thompson 2005, Nicholson 2007). However, theatres grouped under that umbrella have in the main focussed on the participation and transformation of the vulnerable or oppressed. Etherton and Prentki point out that 'politicians, consultants and rapists' get far less of our attention (2006: 145) as do many other less manipulative but equally influential players. OST is designed to fairly represent more disadvantaged communities through a broader participation, equitably-managed.

Domenico Pietropaolo talks of drama requiring a laboratory where interpretive hypothesis can be tested and where research of a non-library nature can be carried out (Pietropaolo in Gallagher & Booth 2003: 60). Since the start of my PhD research, this laboratory of experimentation has been provided by a variety of theatre projects in which I have been either directly involved (with NGOs or in prisons) or indirectly involved (in schools). Three case studies will form the body of my study, two of which commenced prior to the start of this research. All of these are linked not only by my involvement - most of which has been with arts education charity Passe-Partout (described in the next section) - but also as an evolutionary series in which the learning has been cumulative.

As the one constant in these case studies and because this work is submitted to an examination, I shall start by identifying myself. 'One cannot avoid having to objectify the objectifying subject,' said the contentious sociologist Pierre Bourdieu whose observations about social studies will form one of my frames of reference (1988: xii). In order to achieve this I will refer to another of my frames of reference taken from the work of the influential thinker Michel Foucault whose own investigations into the techniques of power have ventured into 'those places where this kind of analysis is rarely done' (Rabinow 1984: 10). Three modes of objectification are identified in Foucault's schema and I shall begin by using these (Rabinow 1984: 8-11). I shall therefore classify, divide and subjectify myself. Classification will be made in terms of gender, nationality and education (social groups to which one belongs). Division, by means of opposition of constitutional elements in my

background. Subjectification, by dint of interpreting on behalf of the reader what might impact on my handling of the subject matter, in other words, what I think they might think is relevant. Furthermore, I shall go beyond Foucault to propose a fourth mode which could be called suppression rather than objectification; its mode of operation is omission. Omission can also be used as an instrument of power. It also can be used to counter power.

The 'I' is a half-English, half-French female practitioner, with the innumerable internalised conflicts that such a heritage brings. Additional to the conflicts of Protestant/Catholic, royalist/republican, pro-Jewish/pro-Palestinian, and the vestiges of blame and heroism surrounding a war against fascism in which one side collaborated and the other was allied to victory, is the difference of tongue: and may the winning side henceforth speak in their own tongue - globally. The difference of tongue cuts deep, into philosophies and traditions of thought and discourse. Writing about the power of language and languages in *Habermas and Foucault*, Yves Cusset illustrates the distinction by contrasting the dialogic model used by the English and Germans to that of the informed lecture or public presentation of the French (Cusset & Haber 2007: 137); a difference that can also be glimpsed in the legal arena between the adversarial and magisterial. A difference epitomised in the use of the single word 'I', with which views can be freely expressed and pitched against each other, in a horizontal power structure, as opposed to the more common use of the word '*on'* in spoken French. The word '*on'* in French that is used everywhere because it includes within it the conception of others like oneself; and, within the French epistemology, is considered less presumptious than the '*je'*.

In this thesis about power relationships and OST, the role of the 'I' will be very much in question. The 'I', according to Nagel, is the only way we can locate ourselves in the world (Davidson 2001: 86). Donald Davidson makes the point that the interpretation and truth value of all sentences containing indexicals depend on who utters them (2001: 86). Subjectivity is a key issue of this thesis. The asymmetry of power relationships will be explored both from the point of view of the factors that condition the emission of discourse and those that condition its reception. As Wittgenstein said, 'The problem of *understanding* language is connected with the problem of the Will' (in Bourdieu 1988: 35). Discourse will be used to describe that which is made possible through theatre, as well as that which is enabled through writing and the spoken word. It also includes the way in which numbers can be used as a form of memory marker.

In the twenty-five years of my professional work, I have moved from being defined as an 'educational fieldworker' in TIE, with true Marxian or Freirian overtones, to being an

Arbitrator in OST. The latter two terms being introduced in this thesis to demarcate respectively the particularity of the role and the peculiarity of the methodology. In Chapters Three and Nine the Arbitrator's role will be contrasted to that of the Joker in Forum Theatre. However, in the next section of this first Chapter, I shall set the scene by tracking the changes that have seen a progressive shift of power away from my role as script-writer, actor-teacher, director and facilitator, for which my formal university and professional training equipped me (end of Appendix I).

Now for the question of omission: the private. On the one hand, academic writing respects the private. On the other hand, there are those aspects of people's lives that we do not feel shy about visiting in drama, indeed in which much drama therapy specialises (to mention but one of the more obvious uses). Chapter Seven will focus on the role of the witness and testimonial drama: ethical questions and power implications around making the private public. Crossing the divide between the public and the private is highly risky as Bourdieu was to find out with the wrath he incurred on publishing *Homo Academicus* (1988). The ethic is that people's social milieu should not be made visible and the standard behaviour is as if, just as with a humanising multi-culturalism, there are no differences.

However, is a practitioner/author the same if single or married? If they have a child? Would the perception of the reader remain unchanged by knowledge of whether or not they had stopped working, how old they were when they had their first child, or their last child; how much they owned, or owed? I will argue that the values, sympathies and interests of the audience determine the reception of the work and override its intrinsic value. To state that I am not married, have never stopped working for more than three weeks and have three children is as relevant, or irrelevant, to my practice and my research as the rest of the information given - but stating it risks, by the prominence of its placing, obscuring the 'narratives of the field' (Amanda Coffey quoted in Babbage 2005: 5). Paul Heritage's writing of his encounter with homophobia at the American Embassy in London is a case in point: the baseness of the insult remains imprinted on the memory (in Balfour 2004a: 189). Publication of personal testimony is made possible by a cultural climate in performance studies that defends the right to choose sexual orientation. Publishing such testimony challenges discrimination and pushes for further change. It is in this meeting point between what is known and made visible and what is understood, expected or occluded that much of the learning of this thesis has taken place. This might appear as turning accepted wisdom on its head by asserting that it is not the subjectivity of the author that leads to problems of interpretation but the subjectivity of the reader.

Background pre-1991

This section comprises a brief outline of the work of Passe-Partout from its inception in 1986 building up to the work on road safety that took place in 1991 (next section). Passe-Partout is a not-for-profit organisation co-founded by a group of socially-minded professionals from different walks of life, of which I was one.[1] Registered Charity 296630, Company Ltd by Guarantee 2119686: its patron since 1987 has been Dame Judi Dench. All contracts have been project-based and there has only ever been one PAYE post: that of the Secretary to the Trustees.

The date 1991 is significant because the work that took place that year in Ghana,[2] on pedestrian road safety, has been chosen by me during the course of this research as the start of OST, even though it had much in common with the previous programme *Is the Price Right?* that took place in Kenya the previous year. At the end of the 80s and into the 90s, Ghana and Nigeria had the highest road death rates in the world; death on the roads was the second biggest killer in Africa. A brief resume of *In Roads to Safety* will follow this section as it puts into place many of the key concepts of OST.

Considerable changes took place from the mid 1980s when Passe-Partout's work consisted of international tours in schools, museums and community venues, carrying set and costumes, and showing original, unpublished work. The first play, *Around the World in 80 Minutes*, was performed 150 times in seven different countries over a period of two years:

Fig. 1i. The TES photo from the review by Hugh David, 16 January 1987.

1986/7 and 1987/8. This comic adaptation of the Jules Verne novel, that I wrote when studying directing at the Drama Studio in Berkeley, had gained an award at the Berkeley Theatre Festival in 1985 where it was first performed and was launched in the UK thanks to positive reviews from the Times Educational Supplement (TES, Fig. 1i) at the Royal Geographical Society in London in 1986.

Performances in Europe and Japan were followed by group workshops that focused discussion on Eurocentric world views and mechanisms of stereotyping.[3] This comedy had

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[1] These included a director for the BBC, an accountant, a scientist and guide naturalist, the founder of the Almeida Theatre Company, a teacher and a museums education officer.
[2] Ghana along with Nigeria at that time had the highest road death rate in the world.
[3] As well as racial stereotyping, issues of class and gender where introduced with Mr Fix the detective and the intrepid French valet, Passepartout, who closed the play proposing to his pedantic and

a social agenda, but followed a popular TIE model, with a sole author, single director and small cast (fresh out of drama school working towards their Equity cards). The Actor's Union rules contributed to a fairly frequent turn over of actors, including the now-famous comedian Bill Bailey, who helped script and song-write subsequent material.

In 1988 Passe-Partout was invited to tender for an unusual commission from the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE) to script a play for their annual Leonardo da Vinci Lecture Series aimed at sixth form students throughout the UK. Contact was established through a graduate student of Warwick University, an ardent admirer of the work of Augusto Boal, who had recently been employed by the charity Intermediate Technology (I.T.).[4] These IMechE lectures aimed to encourage young people to consider engineering as a career, with a particular emphasis on trying to recruit female students. The 1988 series was to focus on the overseas development work of I.T., promoting a vision of the world based on the philosophy of Fritz Schumacher author of *Small is Beautiful* (Schumacher 1973). This was the post-LiveAid era.

A more collective approach was underway. A semi-scripted, semi-devised show, eventually called *Design for Need*, came about after a period of research with the engineers and with the education officer. Shaped by the contributions of both professional actors and members of the charity, it was interdisciplinary. Statistics showing the global imbalances of resource distribution were made very clear by using the audience to represent populations, GNPs and patterns of consumption. A photo-montage was the back-drop to all sorts of interactive tasks that required the audience to solve small problems with ingenuity. *Question Time,* with a very convincing Robin Day, rounded up the hour. The success of the work ensured that the lecture series was extended; a first in the thirty years that the ImechE had toured the UK. Indeed, new funding appeared from the Irish ImechE so that a tour was extended not only to Northern Ireland but also to EIRE in 1989. Like the work of the charity at this time, *Design for Need* featured an all-white cast. This was, however, a period of change; organisations such as I.T. were opening regional country offices.

A move towards intercultural work occurred with the transfer of some of these approaches to Kenya. After a second London performance at the Connaught Hall, over one year after the launch at Birdcage Walk, a meeting with a member of the staff at the then Overseas

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financially disinterested master, Phileas Fogg. Passepartout in this version is a woman, who in the end 'comes out'; ambiguity of cross-dressing was well visited.
[4] I.T. went under the name of Intermediate Technology Development Group, ITDG, for some twenty-five years and has now been rebranded as Practical Action.

Development Administration was organised. This man, who had been very involved in the setting up of technical colleges in Kenya, organised finance for the transfer of some of these approaches to Kenya. The collaboration with I.T. was extended to include ActionAid which also had a new in-country desk.   That same year, 1989, *Is the Price Right?*[5] came into being. It looked at the setting up of small businesses in the production of alternative technologies. Researched and scripted in Kenya by Kenyan performers (all of whom had several different professions as it was not possible to earn enough from performing alone), this performance was designed to target Polytechnics around the country where technical training was still privileging large-scale production, even though the market did not provide many openings in this.

The methods that were employed in creating this performance were distinctively influenced by a collaboration that started in London with Susan Morris[6] and colleagues from the V&A Museum and from National Heritage. They had in common an interest in accessing the past and memory by considering the cross-over between performance, painting and artefacts. This culminated in a series of British-Council-funded museums' workshops in Zimbabwe in 1988 called *Making Objects Talk* in which I assisted Susan. This approach was very freeing because instead of the subject being the starting point it was the object.

The meetings in Bulawayo and Harare led to a desire to experiment further with the many activities that could get people talking, questioning and thinking in new ways. A whole line of questioning followed which had a closer relation to scientific enquiry and archaeological pursuits. This was a more open approach with less cultural baggage because it obliged the participants to create their own line of questioning that went beyond questions relating to the name of the object. Such a starting point lent itself well to theatre work concerned with the production of tools or objects that served a purpose. In Kenya the research was followed by improvisations, song writing (themed on working capital) and sketches using audience participation, for example to make a human oil-seed press (Young in Budgett-Meakin 1992: 150). It all built on the excitement of seeing how a combination of open and closed questions can enrich our understanding and our powers of story-telling.

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[5] *Is the Price Right?* was a direct borrowing from the UK gameshow of the same name; in Kenya it took on an extra meaning questioning the wisdom of following the western model of development. It was taken up with enthusiasm and although the format was very different there were elements of television satire.

[6] Susan Morris, an exceptional teacher and another founding member of Passe-Partout who became the administrator 1990-92, was at that time the Education Officer of the National Portrait Gallery.

The show *Is the Price Right?* was a long time in awaiting clearance from the Office of the President. Government controls were very tight and suspicion of all cultural activities was still very high: testified by the treatment of playwrights such as Ngugi wa Thiongo.[7] Eventually, after a year had passed and there seemed little hope, the performing team was granted permission to go live. An extensive tour of the country took place in 1991. Performers and extracts of this show also came to Europe once the immense difficulties in obtaining passports and visas had been overcome. These visits permitted tours of adapted work to be shown in Europe and in Japan and new work with mixed race casts to be developed such as *Women of the World* 1994 (Appendix II in which performances, location, partnerships and funders involved between 1991-2007 are tabulated). From 1991, the work had parted from other approaches and began to evolve in isolation. Key individuals that have influenced and/or helped steer this journey are described in Appendix I.

The departure towards a practice called OST
In Roads to Safety, Ghana, 1991-3

The terminology that will be used throughout this thesis will be explained and contextualised in the example of the Ghana road safety project. This is not a case study in this thesis but it is being treated as the first implementation of OST. Identifiable roles of players who help to bring about a production are listed in the Glossary of Terms and positioned schematically in Fig. 1ii. In the case of this Ghana road safety project they are:

the Initiator   (Toby Burton)

the Precipitator   (Justice Amageshi)

the Funders   Nine commercial companies

the Integrated Team:

- the Arbitrator   (myself and baby)

- the Subject Group   Pedestrians and passengers who are non-drivers

- the Stakeholders   Drivers, professional drivers, vehicle owners

- Pro-active groups   Firemen, policemen

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[7] After *I will Marry When I Want* (wa Thiongo & wa Mirii, 1977 published 1980) performed in Kikuyu showing strong political resistance, Vice President General Arap Moi ordered wa Thiongo's arrest. He was not reinstated to his university teaching job on his release. He went into self-imposed exile from 1982 -2002.

The Integrated Team is marked in Fig. 1ii. It comprises members who are internal to the partner organisations and also those who are external, including Subject Group members and, distinctive of OST, Stakeholders.
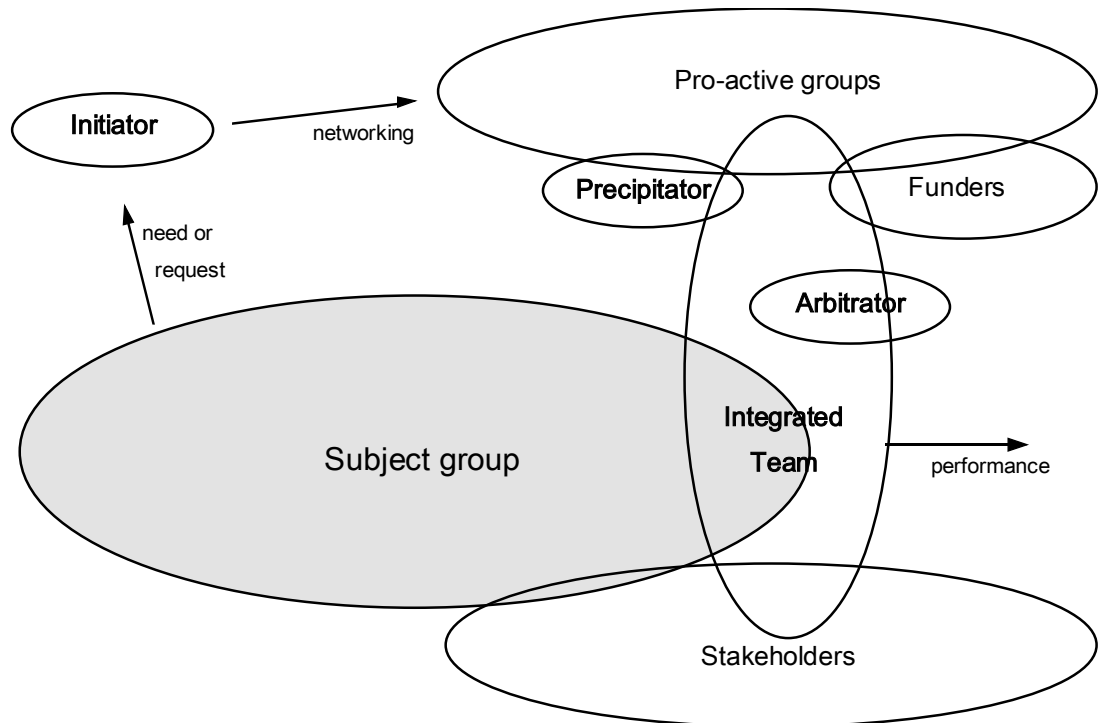
Fig. 1ii Relationship of groups in the production of OST, with schematic indication of the individual roles of Initiator, Precipitator and Arbitrator. The bubbles are not to scale: like the sun in diagrams of our solar system, the reality of the Subject Group, Pro-active Groups and Stakeholders is that they are much larger.

In 1990, Toby Burton,[8] at that time a consultant in Ghana for Coopers and Lybrand, having learnt about the work in Kenya through a mutual acquaintance, spoke of it to Justice Amageshi, the Director of the Ghana National Road Safety Committee steering committee (GNRSC) who every year ran a national road safety campaign. Toby Burton acted as the Initiator: making the key initial link that caused the whole project to come into exist. Justice Amageshi was the Precipitator: he obtained an invitation from 'The Castle' - part of the official protocol[9]- and secured airflights from Ghana Air to explore further the idea of a dramatised campaign. His group, the GNRSC, became the pro-active group who took the

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[8] Later, having seen the work in Ghana, Toby Burton became a Passe-Partout director.
[9] The government was under the military rule of Jerry John Rawlings, chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) after 1981 just prior to his election as president in the relatively peaceful transition to a democratically elected Fourth Republic.

initiative to pull together the necessary elements for the project to come to life: funding, personnel, facilities and contacts.

On my first visit to Ghana in 1990, as the potential Arbitrator of this project, Justice Amageshie deputised to me the unexpected task of requesting an interview with the managing directors of the nine major Ghanaian companies that he had identified as being most amenable to this project and asking them if they would support such a project by writing a cheque for £1,000. The urgency of the problem measured in the loss of lives and resources and the cost to these companies of losing just one vehicle seemed to make the sponsorship agreeable. This, combined with the kudos of being seen to support alongside other respected giants such an initiative, meant that of the nine all but two agreed on first meeting.

One year later the performance, *Safe Driving for Life,* came into being. The Integrated Team, represented by the box on the far right in Fig. 1ii, included both drivers and non-drivers, and comprised a mixture of policemen, firemen, a student from the Faculty of Law Accra University, a housewife and various artists: three from the Committee for the Defence of the Revolution (a performance troupe in Accra), two from the Cultural Centre in Kumasi (CCK) and a performer from the musical seafront minstrelsy. Within this group there was quite a hierarchy of social status useful to the work. The group came together with the Precipitator and the Arbitrator after auditions (the selection process will be discussed in Chapter Nine) to work for one month on researching and preparing the show and then for a further six months of tour (initially planned as a three month tour).

This course of events has since become quite typical, with the Initiator actively aware of a need by the Subject Group making the first link (often the Initiator's only involvement with the process) with a pro-active group who later go on to 'host' the work and from whom a person (the Precipitator) brings together the Integrated Team, funding and facilities. The idea of an Integrated Team has remained one in which it is presupposed that the people involved will be new for each project, unless work continues in the particular field area. They will be specific to that project and they comprise Subject Group members and Stakeholder representatives (Fig 1ii). All of the terms introduced in Fig. 1ii will be further elaborated in the context of the case studies alongside the terms used in the three-stage process (Fig. 1iii). Fieldwork, collation and snapshots (initially theatrical but sometimes used as a synonym with recorded 'extracts') are fairly self-explanatory, when read as alternatives to: investigation, analysis and articulation.
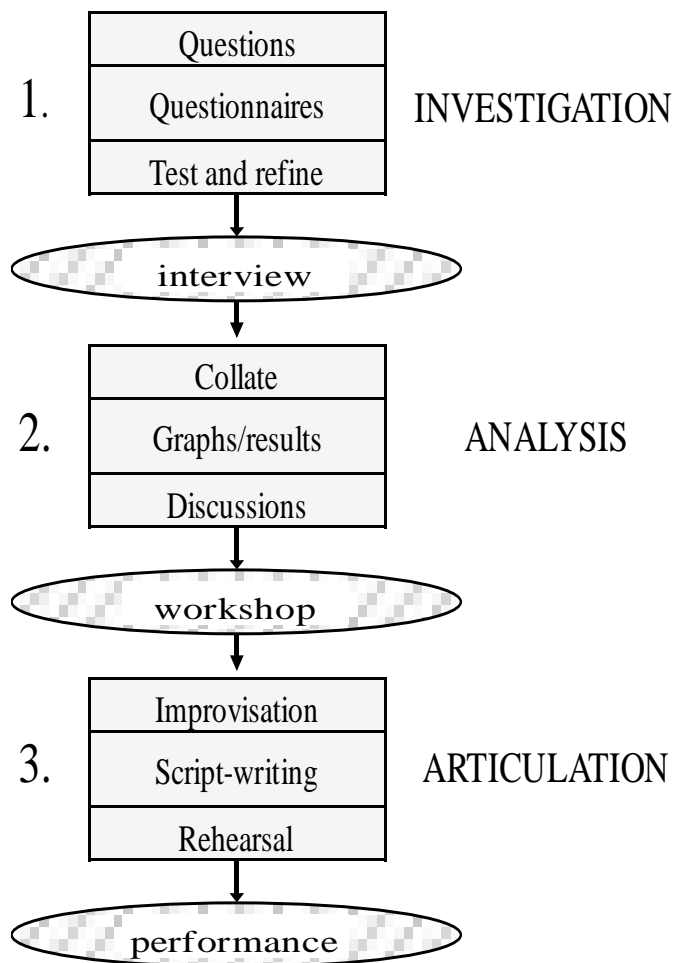
Fig. 1iii   Three-stage structure of OST.

In stage one the Integrated Team draws up questions and carries out the research. In stage two they make an analysis and agree on aims. In stage three they create and rehearse an interactive performance. The model in Fig. 1iii has similarities to the five-part model that was produced and is still the main methodological tool used in the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA): subject, research methodology, findings, test findings and application of findings (Watson in Pavis 1998: 225). Designed in the 1980s almost in parallel, albeit autonomously, this three-part model of OST practice focuses on the investigation of socio-cultural issues in what Barba describes as the other side of theatre anthropology (the psychological aspects of performance) studied in the ISTA. The imposition of this cyclical methodology will be shown to increase the input of specifically targeted communities (the Subject Group) who may, throughout the social investigation, provide 'ordinary knowledge', as opposed to 'scholarly knowledge', within certain frontiers (Bourdieu 1988: 3).

In Ghana, after stage one, the team met up again with Justice Amageshie, the Precipitator, to discuss another cycle of research. It became clear that although the Subject Group (the largest of the two central bubbles in Fig. 1ii) for which the play was in theory going to be designed were pedestrians and passengers (75% of all road deaths in Ghana were pedestrians whereas in developed countries the rate was only 15%), the other group of road users, the Stakeholders (shown as the smaller central bubble in Fig. 1ii), comprising drivers and those with vested interests in road transport, were all implicated in the issue. This then revealed that the field of Stakeholders stretched out to include the management of manufacturing and transport companies, the funders who were sponsoring this work (such as Ashanti Goldfields, Guinness Ghana, Asahi Beer, GPRTU – Ghana Private Road Transport Union, Ghana Bus Company). Further contact was made with our sponsors to target their fleets of drivers: at first as primary sources and at a later stage, although this was not known in advance, as end users of the output - the interactive theatre show and workshop. A type of feedback at information-collecting stage was developed.

The realisation of the necessity of canvassing and including the viewpoints of Stakeholders (professional taxi, bus and lorry drivers, those in vehicle sales and repair) beyond the Subject Group led to two new ideas.

1.   Initially the Subject Group and the Target Audience was assumed to be one and the same. This is the model in much Community Theatre. In this instance they would be the pedestrians and passengers, especially children, who suffered the casualties (more than half of all pedestrian deaths being children). This group could be accessed through schools (similar to the UK schools programme: *Tufty Squirrel Road Safety*) and in bus parks where large numbers of people gather. The option of targeting specific audiences, different to the ones initially assumed (*a priori* target audiences), would come to be seen as a decision that it was fitting to make once the source material had been analysed (stage two Fig. 1iii). The formal term Target Audience within OST came to be associated with a later stage of identification, once aims and objectives had been set.
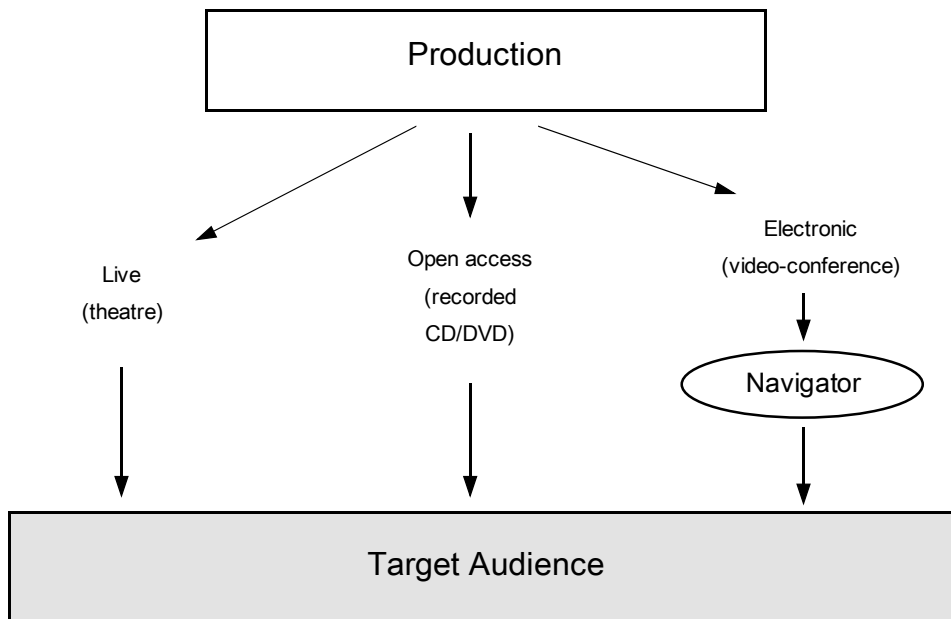
Fig. 1iv The production shown to the Target Audience may take different forms: live, recorded or electronic.

The Target Audience became both on the one hand the bus, taxi and mammie[10] wagon drivers, their passengers and the pedestrians found at the bus parks and on the other the fleets of drivers in the large companies. There was a further, later subdivision into two touring areas between northern and southern Ghana because of the different mother-tongues. The logistics fell to the Precipitator who reserved his involvement to the organisation of tour venues and tour extensions (this was subsequently found to be rather unusual because in general, the Precipitator has become an equal member of the Integrated Team). Toby Burton, the Initiator, who had already had no contact for a year since his discussion with the GNRSC, was no longer directly involved in any way. This has continued to be the pattern of involvement for Initiators.

2.   Another innovation was that of building each performance with the same Integrated Team who had carried out the investigation: that is to say including those who had never performed before such as the police officers, firemen and one university student, all of whom assumed that the research would be the only part of their remit. Their inclusion in certain roles within the performance alongside the professional performers, who in turn ably assisted in the research, was a source of some surprise and enjoyment. The tour was eventually carried out by two teams of six with only three experienced performers in each.

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[10] Variously spelt as mammie. Usually the size of a minibus, sometimes open; a means of public transport that was often overcrowded.

Conversely a certain gain in status and confidence was felt by the performers because they had contributed to the entire process. The whole Integrated Team, made up of twelve individuals, had built up familiarity with the complexities of the issue and its multiple expressions through both the survey work and by contact with one or two invited experts in the field of vehicle maintenance. I had also prepared for the task of Arbitration by taking a ten-day professional bus driver's licence in London so that we could have confirmation of recommended road conduct. The increase in confidence came from the combination of a strong sense of being part of a team, forged both by the many warm-ups, songs and dances practiced in order to focus the work session and by the intellectual challenge of the intensely concentrated work carried out together.

The perception of the group from the outside, that is from the point of view of the audiences, also changed because of the status of some of the performers. Coming from an institutional setting such as the police or university and a foreign NGO gave the group more authority and perceived status. The Integrated Team included older members which was another form of respectability. It was not just seen as a performance group but an affiliated, authenticated one who could be relied on and whose source material was drawn up from a study in which a wide range of professional drivers had been involved.

Because of the repositioning from the practical use of OST as an instrument of analysis, to this current research in which OST is the object of the analysis, the problem of 'the subject' has gradually surfaced as has the issue of power relationships and authenication. This was accompanied by a growing understanding that 'the "will to knowledge" in our culture is simultaneously part of the danger and a tool to combat that danger' (Foucault quoted in Rabinow 1991: 7). This danger Rabinow explains as the knowledge/power fusion that Foucault refused to separate out (1991: 7).

Interrogating the word power

In order to investigate the power-knowledge-subject triangle I will start by interrogating the word power. Etymologically it derives from the Latin *posse* 'be able' (Oxford University Press 2002: 1122), whose own derivative 'enable' is more closely in keeping with the spirit

of OST work than the word 'empower' that is particularly popular in work with a rights-based agenda.[11]

The word power is commonly prefixed by adjectives such as political, administrative or institutional, and suffixed by bodies of mass influence, in expressions, for instance: 'the power of propaganda', 'the power of the media' or that of an elite. In nearly all these set phrases there is an inbuilt concept of power accrued by the group. In Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), oppression is defined, in part, as a power dynamic based on monologue rather than dialogue; a relation of domination.[12] Only in expressions such as to be power-mad or power-hungry is there a sense of imbalance: the individual stands alone, like Napoleon, wanting omnipotence (Orwell 1945). Words of the same family include the opposites: powerful and powerless. By contrast with being powerful, being powerless is frequently associated with the individual, isolation or the minority. Even in *What is Enlightenment?* published in 1784, Kant uses the term minority as opposed to majority to signify the individual who chooses this condition (Kant 1983: 41), one who only thinks along the lines dictated by others, one who is rated by Kant as docile, bovine, lazy and cowardly and who stays locked in their ignorance (Kant 1983: 42-43).

The verb to enable lends itself well to concepts of collective engagement and social solidarity. This sense of conscious application being consistent with Durkheim's vision that profound change is the result of long-term social evolution (Giddens 1978: 17). Specifically that exploration of existing power relationships enables a group to strive towards understanding them. They are then in a position, if not always to defuse them, to circumvent them. Perhaps also to gain access to platforms by which they can expose them in order that they might be modified. This enabling is associated with a collective approach that draws strength the reciprocal self-enrichment of the cooperation that it engenders.

In this thesis, power will be located in two spheres of interaction: one within the theatre process and the other pertaining to the social issue of concern. Foucault warns against the tendency in the West to persist in only seeing exercised power 'as juridical and negative rather than as technical and positive' (in Rabinow 1984: 62). The thesis title, *Power Relationships and Open Source Theatre,* is intended to be devoid of implicit affirmations. Positive aspects have been identified that enable for instance material and technical

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[11] The Subject Group is assisted in finding ways to overturn oppression through theatre. Thus the theatre is viewed as fulfilling a political function by sounding a call to 'mobilisation and revolution' (Gunawardana in Schechter, 2003: 247) in a more Marxist tradition.

[12] www.toplab.org/whatis.htm 7.7.08.

improvements. But there are also negative associations of power, in the Machiavellian sense. Power can be abused in a unilateral, constraining, subordinating and inhibiting manner (Neitzsche 1887: 254). This inevitably draws the argument into the thick of 'the status of truth' and 'the essential political problem' of attempting to constitute 'a new politics of truth' (Foucault 1984: 74) because wrestling with the question of why changes to our practices are necessary and then critically assessing the effect of those changes leads us to the frontier of what we know. And then obliges us to commit to the ideological direction we will pursue.

Frames of reference

As a result of this research, through critical analysis, certain links to social theory have appeared that I will anchor to the work of Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. The former because he writes about power and because his method of historical analysis he considers to be 'the genealogy of the modern subject' (Foucault 1977: 3).[13] And the latter because he is critical of certain research paradigms that the OST method also challenges. A further issue under critical scrutiny in the case studies is collective enterprise, and with respect to this issue Bourdieu describes himself as 'the man who has most tried and most failed' (2005: 339). This frank admission enables areas of progress to be detected, even if cooperative practices remain complicated.

Publications concerning individual theatre practices and their relationship to the institutional background of their authors will be referenced. The intention is not to assess their achievements nor their impact, but to explore the Foucauldian triangle of subject, knowledge and power (Rabinow 1984: 7). This will establish the baseline for my investigations of the extent to which the case studies reveal a shift in the ownership of the theatre. I will try to make correlations between the alterations to this triangular relationship and the causal modifications to method between different case studies. I will also examine what resistances these have encountered. This will serve to situate historically the applied theatre practices that have been documented, and OST alongside them, taking the standpoint that history is both the task of seeking 'the solid and concrete' (Bloch 1940: 27) and 'the science of change' (Bloch 1940: 117).

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[13] A system that, according to Gary Gutting, Foucault only ever really applied consistently in his own work in *Discipline and Punish* (Gutting 2005: 44).

Art and Critical Theory have not been subjected to the same critical analysis as other constituent features of Western civilization by either the Frankfurt School or later in the related work of Habermas (Smart 1985: 140). In the 1990s practitioners and theoreticians such as Abbs and Bolton, using supporting notions from both theories, duelled over the function of theatre in the Anglophone drama classroom. Philip Taylor re-opens these debates recasting them as neo-positivist and constructionist (Taylor 1996: 16). Taylor, who sees himself as a constructionist, considers practice and theory to be inseparable for 'reflective practitioners' (Taylor 1996: 17) many of whom are advocates of Process Drama: Heathcote, Bolton, O'Neill, Neelands (Taylor 1996: 6). Taylor writes contemptuously of 'scientism' (1996: 7) thereby providing for me the ideal foil to tickle out reticences and external pressures. Barry Smart points out that Foucault was less ambitious than Habermas and restricted his area of research to the concrete working of institutions such as prisons and asylums; never proposing any form of global theory (1985: 141). I hope that my research follows this example and, for instance in Chapter Four through five case studies in European schools, confines itself to rationalities in the discrete field of this experimental theatre.

Lastly, my keystone is Karl Popper.[14] For Popper all knowledge is human and is therefore mixed with our errors, our prejudices, our dreams and our hopes (Popper 1963: 39). However, paralleling Sartre's reasoning that existentialism is preferable to nihilism, Popper argues that we have a responsibility to use our enquiring minds to try to solve problems (1963: 90). That the relationship between statement and facts is not clear-cut in any areas of human endeavour is a point stressed by Popper's student George Soros in his article *Capital Crimes* (1997). Soros defines the term 'reflexivity' as a two-way connection that acts as a feedback mechanism between thinking and events (1997: 3). He draws attention to social and political affairs as being an area in which participants' perceptions help determine reality whilst at the same time constituting unreliable criteria for judging the truth of statements (1997: 3).

The struggle in OST is to get close to the truth by including a diversity of input whilst simultaneously preserving each individual's input. This is a reaction, as demanded by James Thompson (2006: 27), against the relativism that pervades society. The same structural malaise is attacked by Popper, 'belief in the possibility of a rule of law, of justice and of freedom can hardly survive the acceptance of an epistemology which teaches that there are no objective facts' (Popper 1963: 6). This is the ignition point between the subject and the

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[14] The Austrian philosopher Karl Popper in his book *The Open Society and its Enemies* (1945) gave greater currency to the term 'open society' originally coined by Henri Bergson in his book *The Two sources of Morality and Religion* (1932) (Soros 1997: 3).

articulation of knowledge, where theatrical discourse resides as a 'speech act' (Cusset 2007: 138). It belies the main questions of this thesis.

Research questions

My research is concerned with participation. Relationships of power govern participation. Contemporary academic and practical Arts and social science research increasingly aims to be participative. If we look at two examples of practitioners in these fields we see how their work inevitably addresses the role of professionals and intellectuals. Homi K. Bhabha uses his most recent book, *The Urgency of Theory* (2008), to explore the unprecedented roles that intellectuals must play in involving citizens in confronting the crises that face mankind. His view is that their position enables cross-cultural negotiations and their alternative understandings of the processes of artistic creation enable dialogue. In his studies of social capital, John Field[15] identifies the importance of enabling people working on community development and anti-poverty strategies to 'leverage resources, ideas and information from contacts <u>outside</u> their own social milieu' (Field 2003: 66). Both are arguing that cross-fertilisation allows for more diverse approaches to tackling problems.

For communication channels in theatre to be opened up vertically, in the way outlined by Field, the monologic must be avoided. OST develops the idea of a two-way process that can provide a safe environment. It allows for the exchange of ideas and information and for the articulation of conflicting interests: 'to extrapolate on what our fictional work has to do with the broader context of the "real" world(s) we inhabit' (Grady 2000: xiv). Simultaneously we learn how the "real" world can be fictionalised to better understand it. Balancing the participation of the advantaged with that of the disadvantaged is dependant upon equity within the theatre-making process, however in researching this practice I have encountered 'the problem of the subject' identified by Foucault (Rabinow 1984: 7).

Participation is a coat and intersubjectivity[16] is the cloth from which it would be woven but as yet it has not found a thread strong enough to hold it together. That there is a need to

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[15] John Field is the Director of the Division of Academic Innovation and Continuing Education at the University of Stirling.

[16] In *Subjective, Intersubjective, Objective,* Donald Davidson also writes about the 'interpersonal' (2001). He describes the way in which the acquisition of knowledge emerges from a shared world of objects in a shared space and time. 'All propositional thought, … requires possession of the concept of objective truth, and this concept is accessible only to those creatures in communication with others' (2001: xvii). He uses the image of the triangle composed of a person, his society and the shared environment.

arrive at 'a model of situated subjectivity' and that 'we are a long way off any such model' has been recognised by Seán Burke in his scholarly work on poststructuralist literary critical theory, but why should 'the spectre of the inconceivable … deter us from its adventure' (1992: xi). Exploring this problematic in theatrical creation, I will repeatedly pursue three questions:

- What can intersubjectivity bring to a theatre-making process?
- How do questions function as an instrument of power?
- By foregrounding common interests, can solidarity be built on a basis of equality?

Certain concerns spring from these three questions. One in particular is thrown up by contrasting the production of published work in theatre studies to a theatrical writing that is collective and which is designed for performance as an interactive live event. I shall use it to locate concerns about the death of the author (Barthes 1977). This in turn permits an exploration of whether 'Orality stresses group learning, cooperation, and a sense of social responsibility (whilst) … Print stresses individualised learning, competition, and personal autonomy' (Postman quoted in Hornbrook, 1998: 156).

The structure

The first three chapters plot the theoretical groundwork for the thesis. The methodology of study is explained in Chapter Two along with an explanation of the original idea of creating a DVD of the practice. That chapter also carries a discussion of the literature. The theoretical and philosophical basis of my arguments is discussed in depth in Chapter Three, Five and Seven. Chapter Three will establish the subject, power, knowledge triangle and how we might perceive changes to this in the light of the process of collective enquiry that is integral to OST and that allies the Subject Group to members of the Stakeholder Groups. Chapter Five deals with paradigms and evaluation. Chapter Seven contrasts testimonial witness with that of the expert witness: its form, its reproduction and at times its failure.

Chapters Four, Six and Eight are the case study chapters. There are three sectors of case study: schools, NGOs and prisons, respectively with the themes: performance, questioning and integration. In Fig. 1v I have attempted to visualise the relationship between the case studies by classifying them on the basis of the evolution of their method of accessing information about the issue of concern. Their initial form, their roots, are in TIE as evidenced by the 1988-9 performance entitled *Design for Need* (discussed in the section *Background pre-1991* above, and located at the lower left of Fig. 1v).

Surveying the Subject Group

Comenius S.I.M.
1995-2007

Four Corners Make a World
1999

Mama Rosa gets a stove
1997

Family Matters
1995-6

Women of the World
1994-5

Everything you ever wanted to know about Mother but were afraid to ask
1993-4

Is the Price Right?
1989-90

Design for Need
1988-9

Respondent-led question generation

Women Deserve It
2001

Song of the Farming People
2000

Breaking the Chains
1999

Story of Land
1998-9

In Roads to Safety
1991-2

Participation of the advantaged

Trabalhadores
2006

Streets Ahead
2004

Joint Production
2003

Bully Boys Out
2002

The Weakest Link
2000

Fig. 1v. Schematic relationship based on source data access routes for selected performances mentioned in this thesis (see also Appendix II).

The schools sector is case studied first (Chapter Four) because it offers 'a continuum' (Ackroyd 2000) between TIE work and classroom-led performance. It has contributed to and benefited from the development of a methodology for social investigation that retains many of the features of the original form of pre-1991 proscribed accumulation of source material (Fig. 1v). The inter-disciplinary production process is carried out by the students. The schools are linked together through a European network. The graphed results of their enquiries with partner schools are transformed into theatre in which commonalities have a place. It runs up to the present day in a evolving process originating in the build up to 1995 and the European Year Against Racism.

As discussed above, the Ghana road safety project of 1991 marked a considerable learning about prioritising source material. In order '… to change or transform human behaviour … and help communities deal with issues' (Taylor in Ackroyd 2007), this work required a move 'beyond the classroom' (Ackroyd 2007). In Bangladesh, under the influence of partnerships with NGOs, consultation increased. The function of the question became extended; this is explored in Chapter Six.

The prisons' sector is case studied in Chapter Eight. It documents the most recent evolution, one which in many ways is the most complex because it cuts across all aspects of power relationships. Chapter Eight deals with the emergence of the Integrated Team as a tool for accessing the advantaged, and contrasts the effect of checking subjectivity through a collaborating team's reading of survey results to that of a single-authored audit or one run by a team of interdisciplinary experts.

The interlaced chapters of theoretical analysis each take a particular optic through which to dissect the case studies. Chapter Five follows the theme of evaluation. It takes evaluation in the broadest sense from its beginnings at the end of projects in the strict sense of project evaluation for funders, and its being moved progressively earlier in the theatre-making process to that which it became: an editing, directing and planning tool. This work is considered with reference to the on-going debate around applied theatre (Ackroyd 2000; 2007, Nicholson 2005, Thompson 2005; 2006, McDonnell 2005, Taylor 2003). The last two other chapters offer theoretical analysis and conclude this research. Chapter Nine presents the findings that concern power relationships within the theatre-making process of OST. Chapter Ten presents the conclusions that relate to the outside forces over which it has not exerted any control.

Ultimately, this research is concerned with the following question: Can barriers erected by reifying difference be overcome by a theatre that uses intersubjectivity[17] to foreground common interests?

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[17] The sharing of two or more subjectivities and how they fuse together.

Chapter Two

Methodology & Literature Review

In 1999 when I was considering undertaking a PhD, the first question was to which department I should apply: Education, Sociology or Drama? How would a move in the direction of theatre be viewed by the Sociology or Education departments or vice versa? The deciding factor in doing a PhD at all, was that Goldsmiths offered the possibility of doing practice as research in Drama. A very strong appeal of practice as research was that it promised to be compatible with on-going work. What I set out to do was a task to which I could bring the skills that I had developed in my professional life. OST was in an area of practice that I knew intimately and hence, in the absence of objectivity, a selective but informed gaze would guide the interrogation.

Part of the work of this thesis is to strengthen the OST practice. One of the aims is to develop the theory that underpins it and, by facilitating a deeper understanding of it, help others gain access to this discrete and previously undocumented practice. Originally the method was to be through a digital route. Had the research presented itself as a purely theoretical or written task, there are two good reasons that I would not at the time have embarked on it. The first is that I did not have the skills, nor passion, in this area. The second is that I was not setting out from the academic community, nor did I intend joining it.

Initially, my PhD sought to document OST practice presenting it though the DVD with context and guidance in the written part of the PhD. However, the focus of the thesis shifted from re-presenting OST practice to considering the issues raised *by* the practice about power relationships and how these are interrogated through OST and what they reveal of the wider context within which it is taking place. Research is about the articulation of new understandings, and performance practice is one of the research methodologies I have used to develop new understandings. Performance practice is now presented through three case studies. This reconstituted history benefits from the existence of documentation: much of which was drawn from reports, evaluations, videos, scripts, past manuals and minutes taken from annual or bi-annual teachers' meetings. They are supplemented by my memory of events which is offered as a first-hand account.

By understanding what has taken place and by referring to extracts of the DVD that was originally going to present the practice (samples of which have been uploaded to the

worldwide web,[18] a more resilient and flexible storage medium), it is possible to better understand the transition point that OST practice has reached regarding the transferral from the theatrical medium to its use in a digital one. The discussion of using pre-recorded material, as discussed by Auslander in the 'ontologically live event' of the courtroom hearing (1999: 113), in drama research (including the development of a DVD and a subsequent web page for this research) and in witnessing is taken up in Chapter Eight.

As this doctoral research has changed from 'practice as research' to become 'research based on practice', the aim of the research has also undergone change. The principle function was originally to understand and expose a professional practice that would have to be presented as having, by dint of the research being based on aspects of its history, a static method. The research now focuses on power relationships, and I have undertaken this task by critically analysing a professional practice that is evolving. The philosophical approach to the research (and, as I will attempt to show later, of the OST method) is 'relational' (Corcuff 2007: 112).[19] As with the critical theory paradigm explained by John Carroll 'reality is neither objective as claimed by positivism nor subjective as claimed by interpretivism but a complex combination of both perspectives' (in Taylor 1996: 76). Notions of 'reality' and 'truth' feature only by means of displacing the view; Carroll postulates a state of tension and contradiction in which reality lies between what 'appears to be', and that which is but which could also be 'based on illusion and exploitation' (1996: 76). This relational quality allows both the individual and the collective to enter into the frame. It also offers a changed relationship to time, one of 'continuance' in the same way that Homi Bhabha evokes 'the time of the day-to-day… as it turns into a political or ethical affect that situates the subjects' agency' (in Read 1996: 190). Lastly, it prefigures a constantly changing relationship. The research has become, similar to the practice itself, always at the limits of one's knowledge of it:

> The philosophical self is not the human being, not the human body, or the human soul, with which psychology deals, but rather the metaphysical subject, the limit of the world – not a part of it.
>
> (Wittgenstein 1962: 58)

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[18] www.tenmt.com/maoyoung password: 7ujm8i

[19] Corcuff is one of the 'new sociologists' who advocate a sociological methodology that is distinct both from the holistic methodology proposed by Durkheim (that understanding can only be sought by investigating society as a entity that exists independently of its members and that cannot be broken down into the sum of its parts) and from the individualist methodology in which an understanding of society should be approached by investigating the motivations of each individual and then adding these together, for instance the neo-classical market economy. Relational methodology requires us to consider the relations between the elements to be of paramount importance and therefore, even though the members of a society might not change, changing a relation will change the society (2007: 7-12).

Methodology

The three case studies of this thesis are starkly different in personnel, theme and location. The first, in Chapter Four, takes the work into a schools setting with themes of social problems in Europe (1995-2008). Chapter Six will look at issues around women's cooperatives, land rights and micro-credit schemes in Bangladesh. It is situated in Dinajpur Province and follows the work that was carried out between 1996-2000 in rural communities sharing similar economic and geographic circumstances to those that Ganguly describes as having worked with over the past twenty years (Boon & Plastow 2004: 222). Chapter Eight will focus on work around bullying in two UK prisons from 2000 - 2003. All share the OST methodology although they are different in time scales and funding (Table Appendix II). A concern for the disadvantaged runs through them all but they increasingly move towards negotiating the participation of the advantaged.

Critics of the case study approach point to 'selective reporting' and the attendant distortion (Denscombe in Bell 2005: 11). The practice will not be used to report but as a vehicle within which some experimental techniques can be examined. Confirming OST's exact topography is not the design. Selectivity is intentional. It is being used to stake out the boundaries of an uncharted theoretical ground; it therefore requires explicit examples. The selected examples contrast work that has only gone part of the way to a more assiduous and original handling of source material by the Integrated Teams. Exploration comes about through a critical gaze at some of the areas where this practice's potential has been located and through a growing understanding of its social architecture.

Individual instances have been identified that reveal the nature of power in certain situations, but in each case these are single events, therefore there is no claim that they will be consistent nor identical in future implementations. Recording and analysing the examples simply creates the basis for certain parameters that enable us to establish, by means of a single model, what can occur or take place. This allows a projection to be made about what might be expected in similar circumstances, informed by past practice. These testimonials of work are not being used to substantiate any hypothesis about the strength of the foundations of the edifice. That this field remains precarious is understood by its status as an experimental method.

Emphasis throughout this research will be given to the question of what power relationships are inherent within OST - the experimental theatre of the case studies. These are often different from other theatre practices that have evolved with similar aims of social change

but an analysis of these other forms is not part of the scope of the research, although at times some specific aspect provides useful comparison. In carrying out this examination, ultimately, I question whether or not a more equitable power balance has creative consequences that are worth considering.

Criticism is also made of how new model instrumentalities rooted in contemporary institutions have co-opted the language of participation or collective endeavour in order to justify their own, top-down approaches. There are no hidden reasons for choosing the November 2003 World Bank survey on social capital: it simply provides numerous illustrations of the many common abuses, particularly pertinent in the field of development work, with serious consequences that will be discussed. It repeatedly illustrates how the process of appropriating language functions as a form of Orwellian disinformation that becomes very hard to counter. Without an example to dissect it would not be possible to gauge the disabling effect that is caused to other work that uses the same vocabulary: not only are the difficulties to those attempting to innovate in this field multiplied but so are the difficulties in dissemination. The very idea of a prototype questionnaire, or the drawing up of a set of questions entirely by foreign professionals who claim knowledge of what questions need to be asked, will be argued to be an abuse of power.

Conversely the idea that the oppressed have within themselves knowledge of what questions need to be asked, implicit in Paulo Freire's philosophy (1972), is a central tenet of this thesis. Over the intervening years, new layers of understanding have been built on top of Freire's foundation to the point where the same stones used in different ways has meant that his episteme is being replaced by an episteme in which the perceptions and perspicacity of the oppressed cannot be disentangled from those of the oppressor. The new episteme does not devalue Freire but instead establishes his philosophy as the cornerstone of a more extensive edifice.

Foucault has pointed out that new epistemes must be treated independently of their precursors because, excepting when undertaking epistemological studies, a person living in the new episteme cannot possibly be operating in the old episteme in which the things they now know were not known (Gutting 2003: 41). Ten years after *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* Ihab Hassan presented a table contrasting modernism and postmodernism shown in Fig. 2i in an abridged version (Hassan in Farrell Fox 2003: 150). This gives as a series of oppositions theoretical markings that suggest the distance that can exist in epistemes. The location of OST however exhibits clear signs of how these transitions are rarely as independent or total as those the theory might suggest.

Modernist	Postmodernist
purpose	play
presence	absence
transcendence	immanence
centring	dispersal
synthesis	antithesis
finished work	process
design	chance
hierarchy	anarchy
distance	participation

Fig. 2i The shift of theoretical markings from modernism to postmodernism (after Hassan in Farrell Fox 2003: 150).

In Chapter Five I will discuss the situation of applied theatre and in particular Taylor's constructionism (1996: 16), a category into which it is not easy to slide the Jekyll and Hyde of OST which evidences modernist aspects such as centring and finished work and postmodernist aspects such as antithesis and participation.

Similarly the methodology of this thesis employs, for instance in the <u>observation</u> of subordination, the modernist argument that the problems of that position, which is comparable to one of oppression, is something that exists and can be accessed, separated out and labelled by the oppressed; and employs, for instance in the <u>analysis</u> of subordination, the postmodernist argument in which we understand that the problems of oppression are tangible only as much as they are manifest in the interactions between oppressed and oppressor.

Field graphs, artwork and cartoons are included in my thesis alongside a number of photographs drawn from performances, fieldwork or rehearsals. The decision to give to the concrete a visual representation is an attempt to contextualise and flesh out the experiences that are being drawn on. 'In the case of the propositional attitudes we use our sentences or utterances' (Davidson 2001: 83). In order to communicate conceptual aspects that relate to the work, I have also made a number of graphical illustrations of the sort that can be found more frequently in the sciences than in humanities. In doing so I acknowledge that there are risks. Undeniably these figures do have a schematic quality and are consequently stark and uncompromising. However, despite necessarily presenting a simplified picture by selecting aspects of the complexity on which to focus the reader's gaze, 'graphic representations can outline the structure of an idea or process … with brevity and precision' (O'Neill 1996: 142).

Literature review

Paralleling the practice, the literature is interdisciplinary. As Maria Shevtsova points out:

> Theatre semiotics has relegated categories external to its framework to other approaches: "art" to aesthetics, "society" to sociology, "culture" to anthropology, and the list could go on, each item ensuring a plurality of methodologies applicable to the study of theatre (1993: 5).

In contrast to the works on theatrical expression that focus principally on the empirical and visible, other disciplines facilitate the exploration of concepts such as the implicit and the invisible and enable their application in the study of theatre. This wide field of literature, stretching as far as the scientific method of study, is necessary because of the experimental nature of the subject of my study. Bruno Latour, a philosopher of science, introduces what he calls the two-culture debate. One camp deems the sciences accurate when they have been purged of any subjectivity, politics, or passion, the other deems humanity, morality, subjectivity or rights worthwhile only when they have been protected from any contact with science, technology and objectivity (Latour 1999: 22). He finds himself, in his line of work, fighting against both purges and is perceived as a traitor to both camps. Part of my methodology will be to slide between the discourses of these two camps feeling out the boundaries to see how fixed or how pervious they are or can be.

Shevtsova also observed that theatre theory was undergoing a veritable transformation from the time when theatre practitioners, of which she names Brecht and Brook, were the authorities:

> The way in which the academy has become the major source of theorizing about theatre indicates an important slide (or perhaps shift of power?) away from the site of theatre practice to institutions whose experts do not necessarily have a working expertise in the theatre or a special sensitivity towards it as a living, breathing art.
>
> <div align="right">(Shevtsova 1993: 3)</div>

In the main, academics in modern and contemporary theatre and performance practices have dominated the literature that has allowed me to situate historically some of the changes over last twenty years and that has provided the evidence for occasional comparison.

The literary style varies. There is the single author, single subject such as with Dorothy Knowles' biography of Armand Gatti (1989). The individual scholar who writes about a number of practices, for instance Baz Kershaw (1999) or Eugene van Erven (2001). Co-edited works on practices of renowned theatre practitioners obtained through interview, such as Maria Delgado and Paul Heritage, eds. (1996) or Gabriella Giannachi and Mary

Luckhurst, eds. (1999). A variation of which is publications of collected 'conversations' such as *Trans-global Readings,* many of which were 'interviews conducted by e.mail', in which Svich describes her dizzying style of publication as moving closer still to an authentic rendering of the 'polyphonic discourse of artists' (2003: 3-4). The majority of texts however employ the increasingly popular style for which a collection is drawn up from contributing authors each taking a chapter to describe different practices, most commonly ones to which the authors have been party, among which are Richard Boon and Jane Plastow, eds. (1998; 2004) Tim Prentki and Jan Selman, eds. (2000), Lizbeth Goodman and Jane de Gay, eds. (2000), Kathleen Gallagher and David Booth, eds. (2003), Michael Balfour, ed. (2004) and Helen Nicholson, ed. (2005). Kuppers & Robertson, eds. (2007). This style has the effect of being more journalistic as each section is comparatively cursory compared to a whole book about an individual's on-going practice. Within each publication authors change from chapter to chapter, as do the contexts and the perspective from which the practices are described. Rather than any unifying attempt at analysis, there is a greater reliance on the available diversity in the variety of views it gathers together, rich experiences, styles and voices.

My literature review could start with the comprehensive and elegantly expressed research by Dorothy Knowles from Goldsmiths about Armand Gatti's experimental work, *Wild Duck Against the Wind*: *Armand Gatti in the Theatre* (1989)*,* at the historical moment that Shevtsova notes the slide over from writing by practitioners to academic writing, but because of its relationship to Boal's work I will reserve this until last.

Scanning quickly through the literature from the 1990s there is a transformation of nomenclature at around 2000 so that practices comparable to OST become increasingly known under the term applied theatre. This regroups all the diverse practices of: Popular and Community Theatre, Theatre for Development, Theatre-In-Education, and the Theatres of Resistance and Liberation (McDonnell 2005: 137). These are typically semi-professional, project-funded and hence sporadic. Unified by a common sense of purpose and a struggle for a theatre that educates, as distinct from one that teaches (Davis 1981: 164-5), there is a sense of an emerging theatre community that brings together professional artists, scholars, educators, activists and advocates and even 'self-confessed theatre addicts' (Gallagher & Booth 2003: 13).   The vitality, loose cohesion, or at least gregariousness of this community is reflected in the above-mentioned 'collections drawn up from contributing authors'. The point of many of these collections is that the editor has a sense of the pedagogic necessity and drive of the publication and consequently makes choices about whom to feature, whom to commission and how to present the texts: these categorisations and divisions are reflective

of, and are integral to, the current theatrical episteme. This aspect will be discussed at some length in Chapter Three in the light of power relationships and the difficulty for the subjects (of the drama or theatre) to accede to publication, because it is a realm where to be differently-able in a literary sense leads to near total exclusion.

In her first article about applied theatre, Judith Ackroyd lists the essential components as: intention, a variety of viewpoints allowing distance and reflection, and the engaging of an audience as active participants who perform (2000: 3). The last part of this definition is somewhat problematic for OST as are some of the shared values and ethics that have been claimed as common to this community by McDonnell (2004). OST's disempowered Arbitrator in particular differs from other facilitators and will be the focus of reflection in Chapter Nine.

In the literature about participative approaches, 'participation' is for the most part presented as synonymous with empowerment:

> Empowerment is to do not with the amelioration of oppression and poverty *per se*, but with the liberation of the human mind and spirit, and with the transformation of participants.
>
> (Boon & Plastow 2004: 7)

It is also becoming, as Ackroyd and O'Toole suggest, increasingly accompanied by a profession to an ideological ethical commitment (O'Toole in Ackroyd 2007: 6-8) and one which has a radical political agenda:

> I have been arguing that drama and theatre can significantly contribute to the collective and individual creation of autonomous subjects, especially through an engagement with systems of formalised power in an effort to create radical freedom.
>
> Postmodernism usually has great difficulty in conceiving of this type of radical freedom, whereas drama and theatre which deliberately and critically engages in the power structures of its particular context has the potential, I think, actually to produce it.
>
> (Kershaw 2004: 49-50)

The emphasis is on a learning that is bound inextricably to the doing, and that which can be achieved through the performing (Gallagher & Booth 2003): a pedagogic theatre. But whilst the sense of enrichment attained through collaborative creativity is seen to benefit professional work, and is celebrated in the literature by practitioners who are known for their predilection for cooperative work in which devising and improvisation feature strongly, for

example Susan Yankowitz[20] in the Open Theatre or Tim Etchells[21] in Forced Entertainment (in correspondence via e-mail with Svich 2003: 130-135; 31-35), in non-professional theatre or applied theatre it is seen principally as enriching to the participants. In these situations the highly collaborative activity of theatre- or drama-making functions as 'a change agent' through the 'praxis: action-reflection-transformation' (Taylor 2003 : 9).

Ensembles that become known for their collective work tend to become attached to someone who is a known name, and for whom it is their preferred way of working. This individualising of collective activity is part of the cult of the theatre director that dominates in Britain (Giannachi & Luckhurst 1999: 5). When these professionals are interviewed there is frequent generous recognition that much of the quality is dependant on mutual enrichment: those who talk of a place where 'we dream communally' acknowledge that theatre is not the result of one person's effort (Ormerod in Giannachi & Luckhurst 1999: 67; Leigh in Shevtsova 1993; Lepage in Charest 1995; Brook and Mnouchkine[22] in Delgado and Heritage 1996). The difficulty of transferring collective work using the single voice, is addressed in Chapter Three as will also the problem of collective ownership and copyright.

Even though it could be argued that much of the most exciting work of the last two decades has originated from *ensemble*: Cheek by Jowl (Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod), DV8 (Lloyd Newson), The David Glass Ensemble (David Glass), Maly Teatr (Lev Dodin), Théâtre du Soleil (Ariane Mnouchkine) and Théâtre de Complicité (Simon McBurney), its absence, for instance in *Changing Stages, a View of British Theatre in the Twentieth Century* (Eyre & Wright 2001) can be viewed as indicative of the invisibility and low status that it suffers in the cultural market place. Richard Eyre and Nicholas Wright delight in what they claim is a 'partial, personal and unscholarly view of the century's theatre' in which nearly no mention is made of collaborative work (2001: 205). Short shrift is given to the 'religious piety' or 'cocky buoyancy' of those who hold that ' "text-based theatre" is inert and outmoded', a phrase that is used twice within eight pages (2001: 205-213). *Changing Stages* (Eyre & Wright 2001) is a potent reminder that although this thesis raises questions regarding power relationships, it is doing so in what until recently has been one of the most marginalised realms of theatrical practice: one in which even the use of the term theatre

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[20] Yankowitz speaks of where chronology, characters, psychology, narratives were all thrown open to investigation (Svich 2003: 130). This is clearly the kind of investigation that has more in common with Barba's theatrical anthropology than other forms of social investigations.

[21] For Etchells themes and ideas that 'emerge from objects, spaces or events that happen in improvisation' guide the theatre (Svich 2003: 31).

[22] Peter Brook and Ariane Mnouchkine both recognise the impact on their productions of the collective endeavour (Delgado and Heritage, 1996: 186).

would to some be open to question. Similarly Guevara, who provides a useful discussion and referential framework of power studies in theatre (Guevara 2004: 7-24), relates exclusively to textually based material and does not take the scalpel to the devising of theatre work. The central position of language, articulacy and the English language as tools of dominance will also be viewed in relation to the writings of Fanon (1952, 1963) and Freire (1970).

Numerous journals and the recent boom in compendium publications, where multiple practices are reviewed, open up the field of popular and utilitarian art forms, publicising new departures such as psychosocial theatre with refugees (Schininà 2004: 32) or prison theatre (Thompson 1998; Balfour 2004). Although these specific practices are not the immediate concern of this thesis, they will be touched on throughout and more specifically in Chapter Five where I tackle the art-versus-process debate reminiscent of Abbs and Bolton (Abbs 1992: 2-3) and revived by Taylor writing about Hornbrook and Abbs (Taylor 1996: 4-6). This debate, as mentioned in Chapter One (section - *Frames of reference*), will be used to frame anticipated criticism against OST from both camps.

As a result of academic writing over the past two decades, there is an increased visibility that documents and celebrates the colour and variety of theatrical expression to be found around the globe deeply rooted like briars of wild rose that won't disappear however much they are cut back: 'from the national to the local, from middle-class elites to the economically disposed, in countries such as Brazil and Argentina, Nigeria, Eritrea and South Africa and India and the Caribbean countries' (Boon & Plastow 1998). Among such scholarly writings, few as yet go deeply into the issue of power relationships within collaborative theatre and drama making, although this is changing.

James Thompson, with a candour that commands respect, takes his own practice to task, in a host of different situations affected by war and exclusion in Sri Lanka (2005). Because he is the single subject that joins all these practices, that are for the most part workshops which take place over a day or two, he is able to link transversally in an ongoing exploration, providing a critical analysis based on 'ongoing reflection' (Taylor 1996: 28), one that is sometimes lacking in more fragmented works. He asks questions about the ethics of such work but he is only able to do so with the distance of time and place: his dialectic approach if staged would nonetheless be a monologue as it is still a stream of conscious questioning to which he refers to himself for the answers: 'documenting and understanding the tacit and known knowledge base which enables reflection-in-action to occur' (Taylor 1996: 28). Of particular interest is what Thompson has to say about the difficulty of negotiating cultural

practices and repressive practices in 'all development initiatives … when the practice is introduced by a person from outside' (Thompson 2005: 147). He leads by example in this area: he even admits to making mistakes (2005: 148), which like failures are 'one of the rare unmentionables' (Osmerod 2005: 4).

There are occasions in which the imposition of dominant discourses are denounced, or where the swings of influence that empower one group compromise the function of another. *The Wedding* project (1999), Belfast, is an example. Geri Moriarty highlights the script-writer's autonomy and agency in this collaboratively researched piece (Moriarty in Boon & Plastow 2004: 13 - 30). Power struggles are deliberately mentioned in Bruce McConachie's exposition of the intricacies (but ultimately the irrelevance) of the disputes in Pittsburg between white directors and black advisors regarding issues of cross-casting (McConachie in Haedicke & Nellhaus 2001: 30-35). Tensions and power games are anecdotally commented on by McElvany, the workshop leader in Mostar, whose writing causes one to question how, in international settings, we come to collaborate and the ways in which content and artistic development are negotiated (McElvany in Haedicke & Nellhaus 2001: 205).

It is not uncommon to find suspicion of the sentiments and relationships in partnership work, 'Beware of false claims to represent an act of solidarity' (Illich in Rahnema & Bawtree 1997: 107). The balance of power between 'altruists and recipients' is being challenged (Miller and Badwar in Nicholson 2005: 30), where certain drama practices may be suspect because of the altruists' assumption, as 'cultural missionaries', that certain societies need to be transformed (Ahmed in Nicholson 2005: 28).

The lack of literature that documents systematic evaluation suggests a somewhat fallow area. In *Community Theatre, Global Perspectives* documenting six theatre projects in six different countries, Eugene Van Erven includes a concluding section on evaluation for five of the six case studies, but this is little more than vague concluding remarks (for instance 2001: 236-7);[23] these sections are also only between one to three pages long. In no instance does it bring to light any of the recorded shortcomings of the projects. Absence of critical analysis might reflect the difficulty of being perceived as unsympathetic or too critical when criticising from the outside. This dilemma is particularly pertinent when an outside observer provides the only form of evaluation. 'A coalition of reflections from people directly

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[23] The most critical relating to the Australian case study in which the designer is recorded as having been a bit disappointed that there was not more community participation and one of the directors, John Baylis, felt he needed to accelerate the pace of the creative process finding that the participants did not give him as much back as he'd have hoped – only ever what he had asked for.

involved in a project will be as useful as the long distance objectivity of an outside evaluator' (Thompson in Heritage & Cordeiro 2000: 50) does raise the question, useful for whom? There is the issue of evaluation as a requirement to fulfil an obligation to a funding body and there is the issue of evaluation as a tool to improve practice; this is explored in Chapter Five.   Also although the vast question of evaluation is not the central concern of this study, in the discussion of reflexivity in Chapter Three will be discussed relating to it as a tool of power redistribution when it is placed, not solely in the hands of the practitioner, but in the hands of the participants or audience.

Van Erven operates as a fly-on-the-wall, notwithstanding his acknowledgement that his presence as a visitor from an overseas academic institution does affect certain of the situations (he attends the work in progress with a colleague from the Netherlands and locally hired sound and technical crew). Notably in the Philippines and in Costa Rica the projects were re-staged for him to document. In both these cases, older more-experienced actor-teachers were involved and the overall effect is one of a play within the play where they can be seen performing the act of leading a workshop. It is difficult not to notice the facilitator sympathetically editing/selecting how they want their work to be reported. In particular the replaying of a scene in a disused penitentiary (2001: 144) leaves the vivid impression of actors looking at themselves acting. It could be argued that this is a culturally specific acting style, however one suspects that the effect of ham acting is in part due to the presence of the camera for which they are performing. This interaction between live and recorded performance is not dealt with in this thesis but the issue of the subject being actively involved in their own objectification is central.

It is difficult to predict the gap that can exist between theatre practices that purport to work in similar ways. The 'comprehensive way of devising issue-based theatre' in *Making a Leap Theatre of Empowerment* (Clifford & Herrmann 1999) proposes a very different model of group work and training, devising and rehearsing than that of the theatre practice in which sit the case studies of this thesis. The two most astonishing aspects are firstly, the allocation of time to different jobs within a similar overall time period and secondly, how the terminology that has been espoused by practitioners masks all manner of different meanings. A multitude of baseline factors differ and the two end products are as different as witnessing and testimony. Where the power resides in these two models will form part of the focus of Chapter Seven when the idea of the witness will be introduced.

An overview of the specific area of devised theatre in Britain in the late 20th century is to be found in Alison Oddey's *Devising Theatre* (Oddey 1994). It extols devising for its potential

to collaboratively explore ideas and creativity and 'being involved with a group of individuals wanting to assert their particular view of the world' (Oddey 1994: 200). Oddey illustrates her arguments with a wealth of examples some of which involve the use of devising as a route to expressing ideas about the community. Her definition of devising is based on perceptions and interpretations from within the devising group. Reconstituting memory collectively is what Reminiscence theatre does (Kershaw 1999: 176-186). From fragments of memory, a coherent whole is shaped - 'so much bigger than the sum of its parts' (Schweitzer quoted in Oddey 1994: 73). Memory in postmodernity has been described as the ability to lose the distinction between fiction and contemporary history in a perpetual present (Schechner 1985: 167-9). There is no problem with selective amnesia in Reminiscence theatre since the audience that they perform to is the same community as that which they have researched (their Subject Group). The effect of this is that if something has been left unsaid, it is either known by the onlookers, if they remember it or if they don't remember it, they can still share the memory markers of others because they are familiar with the context: 'For individuals, as for communities, it may be said that memory is identity' (Mack 2003: 8). The act of attending such a performance can therefore confirm this particular audience's individual and collective identity. In OST, because the community is not always the Target Audience, it is necessary to be concerned about who is allowed to do the selecting and who is doing the forgetting.

Oddey's case studies are described and discussed sequentially, rather like a narrative story line that might be told chronologically in a play. The reader is required to read the whole in order to make comparisons. This linear approach would be interesting to collate transversely so that relevant aspects of different examples could be shown side-by-side in order that we might understand some of the connections and make comparisons rather than simply reading a statement of the potential benefits. This is perhaps an easier task to do with visual media than in the written word. This was the idea behind what I failed to achieve in the digital accompaniment to the thesis, for reasons that will be discussed in Chapter Four, which deals with the power of the witness.

Kadi Purri looks at practices that started to offer non-linear forms of theatre in the early 1970s, now named 'collective documentary' (Purri in Prentki and Selman 2000). These are often celebrations of a particular community's way of life. Purri's terminology, that includes 'a multiplicity' of theatrical styles conveyed by 'a multi-voiced' image of a community, reflects how the varying viewpoints were sometimes expressed side-by-side. This grew into film and video-making by assisting a community to present a view of itself. One of Purri's conclusions is that this impressionistic approach remains largely descriptive. In her analysis

of the partnerships with agencies that influenced her work, reminiscent of those in the OST case studies, she locates the introduction of checking-back mechanisms and the development of ethical relationships with the communities of the kind that Michael Etherton talks about with the children's digital film making project in Nepal (Boon & Plastow 2004: 212- 214).

The editors of *Power, Process and Participation – Tools for Change*, Rachel Slocum, Lori Wichhart, Dianne Rocheleau, Barbara Thomas-Slayter are candid in identifying (1995: 15) the gap in coverage of conventional participatory processes, the best known of which is participatory rural appraisal (PRA),[24] which is that they rarely tackle tough issues. This book is their proposal for filling this gap with numerous different awareness-raising techniques (among which are legal rights and body-mapping) and information-gathering techniques (they cover division of labour and landscape mapping), plus two sections of advice on influence (called advocacy planning and communicating with officials and outsiders). These are all essentially stand-alone investigative techniques which include a range of suggested questions that I will argue almost always pre-determine the boundaries of response. Similarly, many of their awareness-raising techniques risk imposing cultural perspectives which are not necessarily those of the culture under investigation (such as body-mapping). Such activities might facilitate the collection of specific information from a community or impart specific information to it, but none of them, and no two of them spliced together, completes the investigate-articulate bridge as understood in the philosophy of this thesis. Furthermore they do not as a body offer either a method or a methodology.

Power, Process and Participation, by its very cursory nature, reveals the readiness with which non-practitioners, in government and development work, relegated Community Theatre in the 1990s to a niche activity. The book's assessment of the potential of theatre is woefully inadequate: two and a half pages (Slocum et al 1995: 72-75) adapted from *When People Play People* (Mda 1993). In addition to these two and a half pages, there are three pages on conflict resolution for which the sole technique described is role-play. Hot-seating also gets two mentions as a technique for communicating with officials and outsiders (a total of seven pages referring to theatre out of 251). This book, with its promising title and four co-editors and twenty six contributors, that describes theatre/drama as 'being able to challenge conventional thinking and introduce new ideas' (Slocum et al 1995: 71), which gives drama only 3% of the space, is useful to me not because of its description of role play but because of the inadequacy of its analysis. Many other publications from the mid 1990s

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[24] Others that they list are: Participatory Action Research (PAR), Methods for Active Participation (MAP), Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA), Training for Transformation (TFT), Productivity Systems Assessment and Planning (PSAP) and Participation and Learning Methods (PLM).

featuring participation, amongst which Robert Chambers was a leading exponent (1997, 1998, 2002), restricted theatrical techniques to the status of a footnote. I will argue that this silence constituted an institutional barrier that was only finally being surmounted when the comparatively low academic visibility and low standing of social change theatre practice from the 1980s to the late 1990s was overthrown by an explosion of writing about this genre. A phenomenon accelerated by the requirement for a 'more mechanistic' agenda, new careers and new courses (providing new sources of income) in the context of higher education (Ackroyd 2007: 6). The sea change was in full swing in 2004 when we find Chambers writing the foreword to *Enacting Participatory Development: Theatre-based Techniques* (McCarthy & Galvão 2004), a publication in which theatre is presented as a viable route to social change.

The framework to this thesis I have built on the work of Foucault, Bourdieu and Popper as previously discussed in frames of reference in Chapter One. The largest body of work did however come from mining a critical field in Foucault's work by pursuing the seams of subjectivity (1963, 1966, 1975; Rabinow 1991, 1997; Smart 2002; Faubion 1994; Gutting 2005). Now I would like to consider the wider picture and some of what has contributed towards these choices. But rather than simply slipping away from the literature of theatre and performance practice as if this was a natural departure, I would like to comment on the choice to foray elsewhere.

In Chapters Four and Nine I will develop the idea that the body of writing described above is derived from a mainly Anglophone academic tradition. Consequently, its guiding principles do not fully engage with those privileged by the geographically removed, developing field of practice at issue in this thesis. Consequently using this literature alone to structure my analysis was too restrictive. In seeking out other disciplines I found myself going to the sources that were being referred to in the theatrical literature that in turn lead to other sources. In doing so I increasingly found myself gravitating towards a body of literature that was of Francophone origin.

Chapter Three deals with the question of subjectivity and reflexivity, I will therefore simply acknowledge, in passing, that my literary education has been influenced by the French canon and mention on a practical note that where a quote is taken from the original and that original is in French then, unless otherwise stated, any translation into English is my own. In trying to narrow down this investigation I have cut a chapter relating to issues of theatre in the mother tongue and the effect of the dominance of the English language because it is the subject of whole new research project. However, given the rather lightweight image that has

been identified as surrounding the body of French literature (Graeber 2002a)[25], and given the assumptions that, because of my origins, could be made of my partiality, I feel some constructive and analytical explanation should be given. Even if my interpretation is speculative, there appears to be a seminal role played by French literature in the field of sociology and philosophy of which I was quite unaware previous to starting this research. I shall therefore make some introductory remarks about this body of complementary French writing, but its detailed discussion I have relegated to Appendix III as it includes 'material which examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish' (University of London Regulations Note f).

In the early 1960s Rodney Needham acknowledged the debt that social anthropology owed to the singular theoretical influence of earlier French sociologists, amongst whom he places in the forefront Durkheim, Mauss and Lévi-Strauss (Durkheim & Mauss 1963: xxxiv). They introduced such notions as 'transition', 'polarity' (opposition), 'exchange', solidarity', 'structure', 'classification'…. which are essentially social anthropology's 'theoretical capital' (1963: xlii). Some forty years later the American sociologist David Graeber observed that there was a veritable flood of French intellectuals in the late '70s and early '80s that include: Derrida, Foucault, Baudrillard, Kristeva, Lyotard, de Certeau, Deleuze and Guattari (2002b). Why this important body of theory and what of it?

When Needham thanks his university, Oxford, for generously giving him dispensation from statutory duties that permitted him, with a fellowship from Stanford, to research and translate from the French and to publish through the University of Chicago Press (Durkheim & Mauss 1963), perhaps we can glimpse one side of the coin. We can note that as well as the European centres of learning having produced and payed for these professionals whilst the American universities provided the opportunity to have work published through them, there is a further significant factor or difference. In the Franco-phone systems of higher education the more one is qualified (and subsequently published and promoted) - the more one is officially relieved of teaching and other duties and the more time one has to dedicate to research and publication. That this is then reflected both in the sheer volume and by a quality of writing, in which the constant practice becomes almost its own art form, is not so

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[25] 'What American academics expect from France is an intellectual high, the ability to feel one is participating in wild, radical ideas – demonstrating the inherent violence within Western conceptions of truth or humanity, that sort of thing – but in ways that do not imply any program of political action; or, usually, any responsibility to act at all. It's easy to see how a class of people who are considered almost entirely irrelevant both by political elites and by 99 percent of the general population might feel this way. In other words, while the U.S. media represent France as silly, U.S. academics seek out those French thinkers who seem to fit the bill.' (Graeber, 2002a: 3)

surprising. It is not more surprising than the other side of the coin. Philosophy[26], has fathered Sociologists such as Bourdieu (Dubois et al. 2005:334), but its theoreticians on the whole, observes Philippe Corcuff, rarely put their hands to the tarmac of the work on the ground[27] (2007: 116). He calls attention to the hands-off approach and opines that the empirical side or practical application is lost. Corcuff argues a strong case for the importance of keeping the disciplines of philosophy and sociology in dialogue with each other in an applied field. He also recognises the recent cross cultural impact on French sociology of more or less modern foreign works; so we see a reversal in the flow of influence as the field grows. His analysis shows how intersubjectivity feeds on the interdisciplinary, the international but also the joining of the pure and the applied. In classical surveys this last point can be interpreted as the need for pilot work at every stage, as often stressed by A.N. Oppenheim (1992: 47 – 55)[28].

Questionnaire Design, Interviewing and Attitude (Oppenheim 1992), first published in 1966, is a classic in the field of quantitative research. It introduces a recurrent theme of objectification. Oppenheim's book brings together all the common techniques (for instance factor analysis, coding frames) and presents them ready for practical application. It is perhaps an odd choice as a key text for a research project in the field of theatre because the arts[29] and indeed many in social sciences distance themselves from what they see as the susceptibility of statistics to misrepresent[30]. Only maybe one third of the book (interspersed evenly amongst the rest) clearly and comprehensively defines the quantitative approach to surveying which can complement and extend qualitative investigations; the rest is either too pedantic about validity and reliability to be relevant, or too broad in its requirement to be a definitive text: designed for would-be social science researchers.

Oppenheim discusses exploratory interviews and standardised interviews at length. I am proposing to argue that the former directly define the latter along the lines that 'a sample's

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[26] In France doctoral research in Philosophy was published until the beginning of the last century in Latin, for instance Henri Bergson in 1910 (http://www.harikunzru.com/hari/serres.htm). As well as an insight into the level of study required for academics this speaks of the reluctance to embrace change within French academia: a handicap in a fast changing world and a possible reason for the reversal of the trend of influence mentioned by Corcuff in an increasingly Anglophone world (2007: 117).

[27] This is an extended metaphor from the idea of the difficulty of involvement in direct action and engagement derived from the cultural canon *Les Mains Sales* (Sartre's *Dirty Hands* 1992).

[28] Oppenheim has run methodology seminars at the London School of Economics for twenty five years.

[29] Martin Esslin was most critical of 'the severely "factual" and "scientific" sociological, statistical, semiotic and other studies that are usually conducted in a jargon that seems impenetrable but soon reveals itself as merely a pretentious smoke screen masking banalities.' (Esslin 1980*:* 211).

[30] James Thompson does not use the term misrepresent but manipulated: 'Numbers I believe are easily manipulated (a sign of softness), comforting to government officials (a comforter must be soft) and open to multiple interpretations (nothing hard in that)' (in Heritage & Cordeiro eds. 2000: 51).

accuracy is more important that its size' (1992: 43) whereas his approach has its roots firmly in a tradition of the statistical significance of group differences. Indeed, I will be arguing that one person's knowledge makes us more knowledgeable than having no knowledge at all, but I need Oppenheim's boundaries in order to situate the discussion. I will suggest that the investigative method of OST uses exploratory interviews merely to outline a range of feelings and thoughts that exist and that relate to topics of concern, in order that the researcher can then identify a reduced set of questions. This set calls for an order to help the respondent understand the logic of the questions. I will argue that the questions will be enriched and more focussed as a result of these exploratory interviews. Furthermore I will consider how repeating this step, in other words running an iterative process, refines our understanding. It is a cutting back process as opposed to one in which size is prized.

Oppenheim's discussions of conduct (hidden agenda, traffic management, rapport) brings another dimension that supplements other (drama) texts looking at participatory activities and techniques for script research during Verification, interviews and Validation of the performance. Furthermore, I suggest that his discussions of participation can help guide all questioning, stretching as far as including interactive theatre that uses questions in the performance. He provides discussion of, for instance; projective questions, directive and non-directive questions, factual and non-factual questions and last but not least open and closed questions.

To bring this literature review to a close and situate the historical context of this research I will now return to works directly concerned with the process of using theatre in the search for truth. Gatti's experimental work is chronicled by Dorothy Knowles who disappears as a person on behalf of the vision she delivers in this book: that of an exceptional man who dedicated his life to an intensely social theatre (1989: 17). Gatti's positions were not reached by 'a priori abstract theorising' (Knowles 1989: 1). His experience of resistance, internment and subsequent journalism developed his awareness of distortions. His efforts were directed at finding a method of reliving: 'to help people "speak for themselves": invent their own form of expression, their "own language"' (Knowles 1989: 15). In the early 1970s he introduced the *pieces-enquêtes* 'survey plays' (Knowles 1989: 208), and teams of actors and students collectively researched plays that he scripted. With disenfranchised members of the community for his *stage de réinsertion sociale* 'workshops to assist social re-insertion' (Knowles 1989: 276), Gatti had two start points, the first "Who am I?" and the second "To whom do I address myself?" (Knowles 1989: 278). These questions, the actor and the audience, and their bond, are the double helix of theatre. They go from the particular to the general and vice versa.

Amongst the experiments in the late 1960s and early 70s, Knowles mentions an attempt to integrate, without synthesis by a single author, many different viewpoints in *une écriture plurielle,* 'multi-authored work' (1989: 211). This has become common practice in community theatre but rarely have recent dramas produced work as contentious as Gatti's, for instance, the New Year's Eve 'show' on the rooftops at Stammheim prison (Knowles 1989: 216). The defiance is on a spectacular scale, on a par with protests such as the Goddess of Democracy and Freedom or the solitary man confronting the tanks in Beijing 1989 (Kershaw 1999: 115-116). Gatti's dramas trod a dangerous line, in this case with everyone from the prisoners to the actors, public, and forces of law caught up in the event. For Gatti it was important to work towards presenting the situation so that it could be considered by an audience unfettered in their deliberations.

Gatti's aim was to burrow beneath these multifarious views so that the theatre became a reliving of the 'act' (Knowles 1989: 2). My interest is to try to establish to what extent one can fairly represent the different viewpoints by selection processes that are not entirely dependent on their dramatic appeal whilst not losing their complexity and their impact. The cycle of testing and reworking in front of the Subject Group as audience is a device to help approach this quality of representation. Testing and reworking, 'work in progress', was frequently used by Gatti, and has come back into common usage, for instance Robert Lepage's "people know it's just a step but we feel it's interesting even if it's not ready" (Delgado & Heritage 1996: 142).

As well as being a pioneer in people's theatre, Gatti was a leading political playwright (in continental Europe) throughout the core of the twentieth century. His aim was that the people should be represented through a theatre that was not didactic. He wanted to leave his audience 'not united in a reassuring unified image, but divided' (Knowles 1989: 13):

> I am not interested in writing plays, in becoming a professional PLAYWRIGHT in capital letters. I am not interested in having people make studies of my plays and decorticate them as they would a lobster. Theatre is a medium; its business is not to provide answers or say 'this is what you must do when you leave the theatre'. **Its business is to put the issues squarely before the spectator for him to question, because when a man starts asking questions he is beginning to change, and he could one day want to change the world.**
> (Programme note '*Grenier de Toulouse*' No 4, February 1967, the emphasis is mine)

The emphasised text expressing the desire to get others to question brings to mind the inversion of this sentiment found in Frantz Fanon's closing words in *Peau noire, masques blancs* (1952) Black Skin, White Masks:

> *Mon ultime prière*
> *O mon corps, fais de moi toujours un homme qui interroge.*
>
> <div align="right">(Fanon 1952: 188)</div>
>
> My final prayer
> O in my being, make me always a man who questions.

In the former the desire for the collective and the exteriority of the spectacle, in the latter the individual desire and the interiority of the process form a doubly 'paired concept' at the heart of a 'relational methodology' (Corcuff 2007: 7-11). There is, in the practice being studied in this thesis, a similarity with these statements of intent to the commitment to the act of questioning: interrogation goes as far as it can starting from what is thought of as known, natural, necessary and established. After this disassembling through the act of questioning there comes a process of questioning to collectively reassemble and articulate the new understanding. In this it also finds an echo with what Gatti has to say about his theatre, it is one in which the product is a medium for the articulation of ideas rather than an artefact that is looking to become of intrinsic value in its own right: here the similarity ends.

In a number of other respects there is a more direct lineage from Gatti's work in the 1960s with 'spectator-actors' (Knowles 1989: 216) to the Theatre of the Oppressed and how the 'spectactor, invading the stage, transforms himself … into the citizen!' (Boal 2006: 118). Gatti's Subject Group were the audience and the intention was that his theatre should become a step in real life and ultimately indistinguishable: theatre itself is the transformative tool. Boal's own *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979) and *Legislative Theatre: using performance to make politics* (1998) centre-stages workshop participants who 'make their theatre around their own problems trying their own solutions' (1998: 48). Starkly in contrast to this, my research points strongly towards a tightly structured method that constrains the workshop participants (the *Integrated Team*) to make the theatre according to the cross-section of the community who are not available or not able to be part of the workshop. Boal is proposing that it is the process which seeds new laws but the information presented by him would also support the hypothesis that new laws emerge from the 'creativity, reflection and comprehension stimulated' (1998: 93) by theatricalisation of the issues. Sanjoy Ganguly, founder of the thirty strong theatre groups, Jana Sanskriti, a most dedicated proponent of Theatre of the Oppressed techniques who has shown exceptional loyalty to local communities in West Bengal, India, argues that 'it is through interaction and dialogue that ideas evolve' and hence such theatre is effective as a stimulator (Boon & Plastow 2004: 223)

and 'humaniser' (2004: 246). He too talks of the creation of a political space in which people can question their own social reality and culture (2004: 256). In this thesis, the relationship to questioning is stretched to see if it can function beyond the Subject Group's own community, and to see in what ways representatives from the Subject Group's community can be involved in the questioning and what are the effects of this.

Chapter Three

The Subject, Power and Knowledge

Foucault focused his political and intellectual work on what he saw as 'the greatest threat – that strange, somewhat unlikely, mixing of social science and social practices developed around subjectivity' (Rabinow 1991: 7). The triangle of subject, knowledge and power frames this chapter and provides the foundation stones on which the research will build. It has come to the fore because the object under investigation in this study, namely OST,[31] which is itself a method of research - specifically to research a social issue in a community - has at its core a methodology that does not approach the social issue of concern by directly trying to benefit the disadvantaged but, as became clear during the research, by promoting and yet containing the participation of the advantaged.

The dangers and the potential for change in the knowledge/power equations apply equally on a personal level as on an institutional level. By undertaking research, asking questions, reading, analysing and writing and developing new understandings and knowledge in a specific field, I am putting myself in a position of power (or one of advantage), which is paradoxical given the central tenet of the methodology that I am researching, namely that the individual voice of the advantaged should not take precedence over that of others. This problem is inextricably linked to that of subjectivity, on which this chapter will focus.

The execution of OST theatre is very strongly structured on feedback loops therefore my involvement affects the practice on two counts. My position as Arbitrator and catalyst/participant in my on-going practice has enabled a continuity and a holding of the learning that has taken place and, through reflection, played a part in influencing certain developments. As a researcher my ability to recall, my interpretation of events and of archive material, my reading, my understanding and my continuing practice all contribute to the promotion and dissemination of knowledge of the practice of OST as a method and of the outcomes of this research. When Bourdieu returned to his own community in Bearn during the late 1950s (Reed-Danahay 2004: 87), he said of his own work of 'auto-socio-analysis' that like so much of what sociologists write, 'everything is objectification of the subject of the objectification' (Bourdieu, 2005: 330). That the observer affects the observed is a problem that has been identified in ethnography (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983; Gardner,

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[31] Or, more exactly, power relationships in three specific areas (Question Generation, Integrated Team and Target Audience) should be the object for which OST is simply the context.

1997); this parallels a whole movement in the twentieth century of consideration of the interplay, as highlighted for instance in quantum physics, between the observer and the observed. The crucial importance of this symbiosis has been found to affect nearly every aspect of this research. Of the many interdependencies, three will be tackled:

1. the researched and the researcher as author,
2. the original documentation of OST on DVD (its time and its audience),
3. the researcher and the examiner: using Thompson to beacon the reflection.

These are structured as follows. In the first, reasons for the exclusion of the Subject Group from the process of preparing a doctoral thesis will be explained and the positioning (the proximity/distance) of the single author examined. In the second, the intention, method and failure of an initial articulation and dissemination of OST through the preparation of a DVD will be discussed in the light of open source work more generally. In the third, the researcher's relationship to the research will be the focus; particular attention will be given to the shifting balance between the practitioner as researcher and the researcher as practitioner and how this is presented to the examiners. The role of the outsider will be considered both within theatrical practice and within the research.

These are important questions to tackle. They have immediate and direct repercussions for the understanding of the relationship between the performer and his audience. The one being the presenter who has worked long and hard to study and rehearse, the other being labelled observer, but by dint of their observing having no option but to view the show through the prism of their own episteme.

Academic Writing

The ability to write and publish and to trade in the knowledge economy is not given to everyone; it must be acquired through work and is itself a process which requires the investment of time. Dance and music are skills that, unlike acting, must be learnt (Thompson 2005: 111); reading and writing are even less intuitive. Writing must be practiced; it gains in the exercise. For an academic it is a requirement of their work; it can become a habit or for some a pleasure. Academic writing is itself its own discipline, to which few practitioners of social theatre have been able (through economic or mobility constraints) to devote themselves.

Nor is the desire to write and publish held by everyone. It would be an assumption to suppose that many theatre practitioners would chose to devote themselves to academic research even if they could. The adjoining question of the gatekeepers to the publication of research is dealt with in Chapter Nine. Although experience and the exchange of practice has in recent years been sought after in this field it has traditionally taken place through involvement rather than through academia. There is no evident causal link between how theorising of practice will be of direct benefit to those involved or even have any direct relevance to them, even if a wider research community of students and artists may develop their practices by study in this field. Far more practitioners, even if less candid in their recognition of their indebtedness, have experiences akin to that described by Donald Winnicott to the British Psychoanalytical Society in 1945:

> I shall not first give an historical survey and show the development of my ideas from the theories of others, because my mind does not work that way. What happens is that I gather this and that, here and there, settle down to clinical experience, form my own theories, and then, last of all, interest myself to see where I stole what. Perhaps this is as good a method as any.
>
> (in Phillips 1988: 16)

Furthermore, the theorising of practice is not typically expressed in terms that would be conducive to being seen, read or heard by those who have been involved, which might explain why so few ever have access to the results of the research.

As a consequence of a shift in the value and positioning of theoretical knowledge, an increasing body of literature is becoming based on understandings developed through practice. The names on the covers of the books in the field of participatory theatre practice are still, for the most part, reflective of the growth of interest in academia in these previously neglected areas. This is not to say that other categories of practitioners are excluded (such as White or Hassine[32] in Thompson 1998) but they are exceptions. Within academia, certain changes are also being rung. For the first time, teacher-practitioners have been given a university chair: Jonothan Neelands at Warwick University (McNaughton 2007: 3) and there are those who are in academic posts because they are practitioners such as the freelance director, animator and theatre artist Ali Campbell who lectures at Queen Mary's and those who were firstly practitioners who have taught in academia and have been repositioned as academics, including Thompson and Heritage. Professors and lecturers have been able, by broadening the field into the realm of application, to both use their knowledge in practice and use their practice to widen knowledge of the field. Indeed, in the last ten years it has

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[32] Not withstanding this, Victor Hassine who, unlike Joe White, has published on prison life under his own name (as a sole author), has succeeded in obtaining a doctorate whilst in prison, admittedly starting as a law graduate (1999).

been possible in some universities to develop research based on practice. The debates, around how this should be carried out, have seen the introduction of a number of terms including: research based on practice, practice-based research, practice as research and practice-led research. But these changes, although they make it possible to participate in the development and articulation of research for those who have been functioning on the outside (neither facilitators nor beneficiaries are technically excluded), do not necessarily make it easier to do so. What has become easier is a greater freedom of manoeuvre for those on the inside to include these practices as valid subjects of research: to claim these specialisations. This structural change is evidenced by a noticeable shift of activity within academia towards this previously undervalued area of study. Concern about marginalisation of this potentially valuable approach has spawned for instance the Centre for Applied Theatre Research and the, already superseded TiPP Centre. However, this move by professional academics could potentially ignite debate about the participation of the advantaged. There is no doubt that growth in this field engenders its own change: it has become a fruitful field not only providing new raw material but also opening up new techniques of study and new courses of study (http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/drama/programmes/ma-applied-drama.php).

The claiming of specialisations in these areas and their proliferation leads to a normalisation: an integration which by a process of absorption no longer makes it a marginal activity. At times it may even risk establishing 'a new orthodoxy' (Thompson 2005: 44). James Thompson writes about this taking place within another institutional setting: prisons, where the discourse on offending-behaviour group work in prisons in the UK impacts/influences on theatre practices within the institution. This, he perceives, is a risk that is run when uncertainties are lost (2005: 45). A much harsher interpretation could be made of 'the co-opting of the cultural resource by cultural collaborators' (Petras in Rahnema & Bawtree 1997: 187) if a more extreme political reading was made of these colonised intermediaries through whom, Petras argues, cultural imperialism functions best and hegemony is preserved. When practices become institutionalised it is very difficult for 'the invisibility of the object and the agent' not to require those involved to concentrate on the mechanisms of the process (Thompson 2005: 21).

Rustom Bharucha, introducing *Theatre and the World*, reproaches the lack of reciprocity implicit in so much of the way in which theatre is produced (Pavis 1996: 196). Sterile: a dead end as opposed to a two-way street. He describes the borrowings from Asian culture as yet another example of a form of cultural exploitation, naming certain practitioners as advocates of cultural tourism (Bharucha 1993: 2). As we hasten to forget our colonial past, he reinforces this by the fact that exposure to other cultures has not always been one of

choice. Historically this statement is indisputable but now the question is whether it becomes possible for us to go beyond; to work towards a greater reciprocity?

For Bharucha there is no doubt that the 'pursuit of "cultures of choice"' is a mark of power and one that we cannot deny in cross-cultural work (in Pavis 1996: 207). But his overriding conclusion is that it is not possible to dispense with a theory of social and aesthetic interaction. As facilitators or Arbitrators we are often outsiders who can choose where to situate ourselves in relation to those with whom we work. This is still a power vector, one to which Rustom Bharucha draws our attention. He uses the term catalytic:[33]

> My own role in an intracultural encounter is predominantly catalytic, insofar as I do not attempt to 'indigenize' or 'nativize' myself. For all my affinities, I remain a 'foreign element'. I interact through my difference, constituted as it is through my own social and cultural specificities, angularities, quirks, imperfections, and limitations.
>
> (Bharucha 1996: 128)

In his description we can see that the idea of precipitating change by introducing a foreign body (as in a chemical reaction) is fundamental. This is very helpful because it conveys accurately a number of ideas beyond the 'grit in the oyster' role. He takes some trouble to emphasis the need he feels in work of this kind to remain foreign, he even uses the word 'element' which is suggestive of something pure, this is reinforced by his comments about refusing to seek acceptance by mimicry or by superficial identification that would imply a loss of personal identity. He warns that we must not 'in our search for a common platform speak in one voice', and to achieve this he talks of 'the mediation of other languages' (Bharucha in Pavis 1996: 210). It is in the possibility of the fusion of difference that transformation becomes possible.

Martin Esslin also refers to his literal foreignness as enabling him to inhabit the in-between, or enabling him to navigate between with the purpose of clarification,[34] understanding even perhaps reconciliation in some instances.

> Moreover, it is through the often almost miraculously lucky accidents of my "translations" from one country to another that I came to occupy a position between different cultural spheres, the German, the French, and the Anglo-Saxon, which made it possible for me to see myself as a sort of mediator between them.
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> (Esslin 1980: 3)

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[33] The Compact Oxford English Dictionary defines **catalysis** as the noun that is used for the acceleration of a chemical reaction by a catalyst; of which **catalytic** is the adjective (Soanes 2003: 163).

[34] The status conferred on the Arbitrator by coming from the outside means the possibility of more impartiality that if it was someone from within. This has proved particularly important within the prison situation in OST; the collaboration between staff and inmates would in all probability not be possible without this independent status.

The status of the foreigner is not so dissimilar to the status that one has as a visitor working in a prison or that which one has stepping into someone's classroom: which sometimes challenges our own stereotypes of cultures of difference and inter/intra-cultural work. It is interesting to interrogate this role with a view to possibly accepting its inevitability in this inequitable practice if it is to function as research: part of the burden and yet part of the privilege of those who seek to cross boundaries.

Bourdieu supplements the case that can be made for the value of our foreignness in the work we carry out within our practices, when he refers to two illustrious 'outsiders': Barthes and Derrida (1988: xxii and xiiiv). Although it is not stated in *Homo Academicus*, he would appear to regard himself also in this category as a result of both his social milieu and the hostility that he so feared (in being accused of betraying his profession in his work). Barthes, the professional essayist who communicated through the written word despite remaining on the outside of the university system, he describes as 'a freelance intellectual' (Bourdieu 1988: xix). Derrida is quoted describing himself as being 'encamped on the margins'[35] and as being perceived as being 'part of the barbarian invasion' (in Bourdieu 1988: xix). Bourdieu's explanation is that Derrida felt this way because despite being within the university system he was, tellingly, not given much responsibility, in particular he was not allowed to supervise research (1988: xviii). Whatever the reasons, these men appear as being on the margins of French intellectual institutions/hothouses even if they have found a place in the centre of wider academic discourses. From this position one cannot deny the legacy that it has been possible for them to bring in their capacity as 'foreigners/outsiders'.

Bourdieu however presents this situation as a condition that results from rejection from the centre. He interprets this as provoking feelings of revenge in those who are left on the outside (1988: xxi). This interpretation is in all probability likely to be viewed as such because he views this situation from his own habitus[36] (Bourdieu 1988: 3). Without this element of revenge, the status of outsider or foreigner, as we have seen when Rustom Bharucha talks about his foreignness in intra-cultural meetings can be freely chosen: a status that can maybe bring with it not only, as he thinks, its angularities and its peculiarities (Bharucha 1996: 129) but other interesting and beneficial angles. In this equation we see a

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[35] An oblique reference, one suspects, to his own North African roots. He would not have been the first to regard himself as discriminated against by the establishment in France: Fanon in *Les Damnées de la Terre* (1963) writes about the humiliation at the time of his Viva in the use of the form of address 'tu'.

[36] Habitus is a system of shared social dispositions and cognitive structures which generates perceptions, appreciations and actions. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge, 1978.* [Tr.]

two-way dynamic that must also take into account how the outsider views themselves and where they sit and what their motivations are. What is of importance is that the communication still takes place and is made more productive than otherwise. Resistances may be fierce but the invasion is not happening in anything more than the metaphor.

Thompson explores the need to assume new vantage points, to move outside any one 'restrictive field' in which the possibilities offered by others are lost (2005: 44). This idea of mobility is crucial, as it is here that some philosophers have located freedom (Bergson 1910: 77). Given the inability we have in effecting a profound and rapid redistribution of chances of mobility,[37] is our own physical and intellectual mobility not the one thing we are answerable for? The freedom we have, in giving critical attention and actively choosing where and how we give our attention, support, effort, time can enable us to mobilise ourselves on behalf of others who lack this. This lack of mobility affects every aspect of the lives of those imprisoned within situations of intense poverty that prevent them from having the chance to expose, to those who could assist in bringing about redress, some of the imbalances. Or else as Bharucha points out we risk consolidating it through our own complicity (in Pavis 1996: 199): through our silence.

The DVD

Earlier in my research I sought to develop a new vantage point through the making of a DVD to support this thesis. The aim of this was to articulate and evidence OST as a collaborative/participatory research methodology. The idea of making practice visible had a number of triggers as well as a number of problems. In the absence of any prediction of what these difficulties might be, I struck out over new[38] technological ground in an attempt to communicate more comprehensively the architecture of OST. As Noam Chomsky says, 'You become aware through doing things … there's an interaction between awareness and action' (2003: 187). In this section I will explain this interaction with digital video and its relationship to an awareness of audience autonomy and conditioning. There are also lessons relevant to power relationships to be learnt from my subsequent transferral of part of the original DVD material to the web. It opens up a new area of methodology that was not

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[37] Epitomised for many women by the total lack of security in having no papers proving identity or belonging and in the intellectual and physical obligation to keep to the confines of their own homes, or the homes of those who own them. Or in the worst cases of men, women or children trapped within the confines of their own bodies that have themselves been the site of invasion.

[38] By new I am referring to both my unfamiliarity with what are quite recent, affordable cameras and editing programmes.

discussed in Chapter Two, however, I am including discussion of these technology-related matters here for three reasons:

- they have a historical relevance to the development of this research,

- they are a harbinger of future avenues of application of OST,

- they provide an additional testing-ground for the method of analysis based on power relationships being developed in this thesis.

As far as the technological discussion is concerned, the research is based on a practice that follows closely Chomsky's advice: 'To make social change, since we're dealing with complex systems nobody understands very much, the sensible move I think is to make changes and then see what happens - and if they work, make further changes' (Chomsky 2003: 201). In other words what he describes as 'a step at a time' (2003: 223). The process of trial and error adopted in this thesis, also adopted in OST, is a slight alteration of this: - and if things don't work, make changes. Acknowledging failures means trying alternatives where something has been identified as not working. I will therefore attempt to address the technical problems encountered.

Rather than completely turning away from the original intention and conception of the DVD, writing it to the web will, I hope, at least enable some participants to be present in a form that communicates more than is possible through the word or through a photograph. For instance hearing an inmate of HMP Lewes read a poem written by two other inmates as their interpretation of the views that emerged from answers to questions on the wing about bullying and seeing a full screen photograph of an inmate with a brown paper bag on his head with slits for the eyes (which was the inmates' specific stage direction as to how it would be performed) is a physical experience of what took place that is quite different from my description of it. It is a more faithful replica. In the one minute of recording on web the viewer comes closer to the original situation, to the original intention of those who wrote the poem, than is possible through text (Appendix IV). It passes through the 'reader's' ears and eyes, and is accessed in a way that is not open to ideas conveyed on paper.

The initial vision/mirage was to create a visually-appealing and easy-to-navigate DVD/site in a move away from word-based output. The means of transmission was to be an image and ideated one: closer to theatre than the written word. Through this retrospective and on-going montage, an historical perspective would give an overview in which subject and object would operate reciprocally. Similar to an OST performance, it would be made up from partial details, each illustrating different aspects, that would cumulatively build up a

conception of the whole. By the diversity of its locations it would be suggestive of its flexibility and the contingency on context. Design choices in the editing and transferral onto CD of archive material would ensure a creative contribution of a previously undocumented practice. Before looking at the requirement to use the web rather than a CD, I will identify the methodologies I used to attempt the initial transfer of theatrical footage into digital form.

Recorded material (mainly VHS and SVHS) of performances, interviews and rehearsals, mainly from the Passe-Partout archives, were used help locate the experimentation and the development of the OST method. I augmented this with recordings on digital video (Sony DCR-PC110E PAL) of work in two UK prisons (virgin territory for OST), a new project on domestic violence in Jamaica[39] and another on street children in Kenya,[40] a week-end workshop organised by Strasbourg University[41] *Ville et Conflits* and an on-going European schools' programme (Table 1i, 2000-2003). Many of the performances from which the latter extracts were taken were originally short dramatic snapshots of two to five minutes duration whilst earlier material was often of a narrative kind that had a fuller storyline or several short stories and was therefore longer, from ten minutes to one and a half hours. These particular extracts showed aspects that were pertinent to the specificity of OST or its development, or permitted incisive observations to be heard directly from the participants, Precipitators and audience. These extracts were edited down so that they lasted on average under one minute and were captured and rough-cut (with DV Gate Motion and Adobe Premiere) and then edited using web-editing software (Macromedia Dreamweaver, Flash, and Photoshop). The whole CD was organised like a series of chapters with material referring to the written thesis.

The idea of presenting material through a web constructed in Hypertext Markup Language (html) was that files, pictures and videos would be interlinked yet navigable by the viewer simply by clicking. This presented certain advantages for a research project, for instance that recordings of performances could be much more quickly compared than in the linear narrative of video, and the 'reader' had much greater control (in the case of wanting to replay an extract or referring back to a sector or to data). The sequence of navigation, in other words the presentation, was to be in the reader's hands. Html also accommodates text or commentary alongside video. Towards the end it was possible to introduce, on one or two extracts, a form of subtitling if the sound was especially poor.[42] And lastly graphical data, that is such an essential element in OST, could be displayed, animated and linked both to its

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[39] With camera work from Don Donald (Blacka Productions).
[40] With camera work from a Cuban video student in training (Esteban Benvenides).
[41] With camera work from Rapsode Productions (Marianna Guilianni).
[42] Recordings were hardly ever broadcast quality as the camera and microphone, unless drawn from television reporting of work that had toured, was not of that calibre.

source and to the performance to which it gave rise. It would provide a window for the transposition from numbers to theatre: showing how quantitative research could be merged with qualitative aspects by association in a theatrical reinterpretation of data.

The making of this DVD spanning over a period of five years, alternating with the writing of the thesis, similar to an OST performance, gave no indication of this investment in the end result. It had involved changing many of the original formats that were not compatible with the digital medium; there were many mistakes, lost work and time lost in negotiating a steep learning curve. This was not an area of previous specialisation and being self-taught made the progress slow. However, the potential, if it succeeded in making the transition from theatre to a digital format, would mean opening up new avenues,[43] even potentially ones that had been closed down since 9/11.

The reasons for needing to transfer the DVD in a more modest form onto the web rather than pursue the original vision were multiple. Amongst the technical problems was the question of the compatibility of hardware and software as well as the requirement to handle the medium and transfer the content onto the hard disk so that it would run faster. There were other more intractable problems to do with the 'reading' of the work and the unpredictability that occurs when the navigation is in the hands of the reader. The downside of this unprecedented freedom of navigation was that it made it impossible to establish a sequential flow that would ensure that the reader would not lose the thread. A progression is essential for an argument to build up in the mind of the reader: one that, even if it were not in accord with the author, would at least be built on a mutual understanding of the same essential material. This problem, when it was first identified, led to the design of a second DVD that was intended to give a quick overview of the area of work to be covered (named The Triangle because it had three points of entry under each of the words: Open, Source, Theatre).

But the biggest difficulty was that there was no technical link between the written and digital format. At present, screen imagery is not commonly used in the articulation of more complex ideas: the visual tends to follow a narrative form, which only requires a simple reading. This means that currently two aspects complicate further the submission of digital material. First the quality which is rarely broadcast quality to which most viewers have become accustomed with film and television. Second there is, especially for generations brought up on the printed word, the comfort and familiarity of the written word. This

situation may be undergoing change; future generations[44] who have not been weaned in the same way are likely to seek out less linear forms. Also younger generations, brought up with computer screens, increasingly view user-generated-content (UGC) on programmes such as YouTube[45] are also more likely to be less demanding where quality of reproduction is concerned.[46] Other areas of rapid expansion have been alternative news and free online music and publications. Both the accessibility of knowledge and the possibility of production stand to change access to the knowledge economy for socially disenfranchised groups.

However, to conform to the requirements of the university examination the requirement for at least 60,000 words was ineluctable. The problem was then how could the text dialogue with the digital footage. Although a DVD can carry virtually unlimited text, reading so much text on a screen does not have the ease or comfort of a book. The repeated ruptures in reading that were required when the image was referred to in the written text, and then requirement then for the mouse to be clicked, was rather like a clumsy scene change encroaching on the flow of the action or argument. The problem was neither the image-based argument nor the text-based argument but the hurdle between. Initially I was keenly pursuing the idea of touch-sensitive paper thinking that if it was available in the way that whiteboard monitor screens are, that the problem might be solved. Since I had no success in that direction I have come to settle for a modest web presence[18] that will at least overcome the technical difficulties and give a context to the work even if it is far less ambitious in terms of support material to enrich each chapter.

Although the vast subject of open source knowledge is ancillary to the subject of this thesis, the aspect that concerns the politics of knowledge finds an echo in this chapter about power and knowledge. This does not only concern gaining access to knowledge, as in facts and information available freely and instantly[47] to everyone, something prophesized by H. G. Wells at the beginning of the last century, but also acquiring the right to contribute to this.

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[44] Max Planck, surveying his own career in his scientific autobiography remarked 'A new scientific truth does not triumph by convincing its opponents and making them see the light, but rather because its opponents eventually die, and a new generation grows up that is familiar with it' (Planck 1968: 33-34).

[45] YouTube (worth US$1.65 billion), a website where you upload your own videos for everyone to see, was named "Invention of the year 2006" by TIME magazine.

[46] Reliance on media professionals currently, 2007, writes out this usage by disadvantaged groups because of the very high cost involved.

[47] Google has dominated the world in less than ten years. What started off as a research project by two 23 year old students has become a worldwide company with a staff of more than 2500 employees. It has done this faster than any other multi-national company. Whatever the question, Google has an answer, going through literally billions of web pages in often less than half a second. This speed and quantity defines the information age, in which knowledge is the keystone.

Jimmy Wales: the 'Henry Ford' of knowledge[48] has made science, literature, maths, art, and history available on sites such as Wikipedia that have overshadowed any of its predecessors. To parody the situation we could suggest that a knowledge revolution is taking place, in which knowledge is becoming a democratic, as opposed to an aristocratic, commodity. This raises certain questions which cannot be answered here but that impact massively on the following case studies. The first is what is done with the knowledge/commodity? The second is the issue of Verification. Is freely exchanged knowledge, submitted by members of the general public and edited, or in a sense voted for, by people who are not specialists, one day to become recognised knowledge? What authority and validity can such sources be seen to have if they do not have the validity conferred by 'education and training, qualifications and status …' that provides 'an opportunity for conscious neutralisation of the probabilities of error' (Bourdieu 1988: xiii).

The complement that Bourdieu talks about being:

> … the posture of the scholar feeling free to withdraw from the game in order to conceptualise it, and assuming the objective, which attracts social recognition as being scientific, of arriving at a sweeping overview of the world, drafted by an external and superior point of view.
>
> (1988: xiii)

In the making of a DVD and in the writing of a thesis, the postgraduate research student learns that they must not be seen posturing to 'detached scrutiny' (Bourdieu 1988: xii); as though they have the power to be objective and therefore not answerable to their own analysis. Negotiating this tightrope has not been easy between 'practical knowledge' and 'scholarly knowledge' (Bourdieu 1988: 1), and between the perspective of the practitioner and that of the researcher.

Undoubtedly, this feeling of walking a knife-edge has been compounded because the subject of the writing is collective creation and this has meant the transposition of collaborative work into the single voice. Where this occurs there is the inevitable ownership and authority that the act of writing confers on the individual.[49] It automatically transforms the process by

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[48] Ford was himself disinclined to scholarly subjects such as history, saying that "The only history worth a tinker's damn is the history we make today" (in an interview with Charles Wheeler published in the *Chicago Tribune* in May 1916). A battle of values is fuelled by such relativist perspectives.
[49] I first became aware of this when working in Jamaica in 2001. The fact that the work of the collective Sistren had been published not just in their name but with that of the original Artistic Director's name, Honor Ford Smith, appearing on the cover was, despite her long-standing personal involvement, a cause of some comment. Because she had left the country and was undertaking a doctorate in Canada, 'her' book was a reminder of the reality of her mobility that had in part been enabled by their collective experiences. The book is a very valuable record of the personal stories recounted and performed by the group. Yet, because access to education is the prerogative of the

shifting the epicentre. However, this brings me to the third and last part of this chapter which concerns itself with where the practitioner/researcher(s) chooses to position themselves.

Examining the researcher

In answer to the question, what does the research give you?, I would like to use the convention of labelling as a metaphor. In the contemporary naming convention, giving someone a title, there is a form of "classification" between the sexes (Foucault in Rabinow 1991: 8). Where women are concerned there operates a "dividing practice" (1991: 8) according to marital status. The title or group to which one belongs, that of Miss, Mrs or Ms, has various associations or prejudices attached according to age and user. The possibility of a legitimated name change through intellectual endeavour could be described as falling into Foucault's third mode of objectification through active "subjectification" (1991: 11). Through opportunity, choice and effort, research work allows for a move into a classification, that of Dr., that is not defined by sex or marital status. The prejudices that accompany the labels Mrs. Miss or Ms. are not spoken, any more than those attached to social class, but the attendant discrimination is altered with the change of label; there is a shift from a position of traditional disadvantage to one of comparative advantage. This research, which has centred on the participation of the advantaged, has through my own participation in this study confirmed mine as a position of advantage. This is a position in which the question remains how best to use this advantage.

Publicly, tracing the work I have been party to, and the works of others that I have engaged with, gives a different existence to that which has occurred. Interactions that until 2000 had been part of an on-going, ever-fleeting present have been given a retrievable form. What until previously had only been individual memory, perhaps itself formed as Maurice Halbwachs[50] believed 'within the concrete spaces of a public social world, […] by the verbal conventions, traditions of thought , and sited stimuli of the collective,' has been reconfigured, through "shifting social frames" to emerge in the present (in Malkin 1999: 23). After years making theatre with a social agenda[51] and investing in a totally transient product, there exists an analysis of new techniques and new understandings that appears in the form

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privileged, when the subject of the writing relates to those whose lives are in poverty there is a conundrum that is simply absent when the parties have the same opportunities.

[50] French sociologist, originally a student of Henri Bergson.

[51] Which I regard as a form of 'social theatre' in perhaps more of a continental mould than that which is associated with applied theatre in the Anglo-phone world (Thompson & Schechner 2004: 11).

of a written testimony; to be approved, or not approved, as fit for public consumption. Reports or archive material do not have the same status, unless they in turn are discovered and interpreted as source material from which knowledge can be extracted. The PhD examination is a Validation that what has stimulated one's own interest and intellect may have the capacity to do so for others.

Privately, there is a personal enrichment in the skills learnt in the act of carrying out research, for that transient part of life whilst memory remains. There is also a gain in confidence in having completed a task and in daring to have opinions that you practice putting into words. George Poulet neatly describes the interconnected relationship between language and thought 'Nearly every time you use the word *language,* I could replace it with the word *thought* almost without incongruity' (Poulet in Burke 2003: 110). Articulating one's thoughts is a way of resisting the crushing suffocation of what I can only describe as feeling-thoughts, by replacing these with word-thought. It is like opening a door into a space in which it is possible to organise thoughts, and so overcome an emotional claustrophobia.

Paradoxically it also has almost the opposite effect. By effecting a process of withdrawal into a space in which the communication does not take place through the body, where the material world is only evoked and is not physically present, affords a security that is absent in theatre. To have been able to do this at a time in which my own body is in decline (I am conscious that talk of older bodies is culturally taboo, but I rest my point on the near total absence of older women visible in the public domain) offers a public space in which I could be productive in a different way, in a way that depends more on the mind than the body. There is in writing a security from exposure that is not possible in the raw of theatre or the live meeting: albeit mitigated by the fact of it being its own battleground.

There is however a gaze that must be met: that of the examiner. As with the research, the researcher during the period of their study is also in the process of 'becoming'. By the same token that he or she objectifies the area of research, in other words comes to acquire a partial knowledge and present this for examination, it could also be said of them, the researcher, that they are being subjected to a process of 'objectification'. This is particularly true when a researcher writes about their own practice: there is the effect of a hall of mirrors, especially if they are analysing their own role within the practice. They (the researchers) are looking at themselves (the practitioners) looking at others (the actors) for the research community (who are, as yet, not visible).

In some countries, the oral examination of a doctoral thesis is an open event that the general public can attend: it is visible (this might explain the absence of any reference to this in either Bourdieu's or Foucault's writing). In Britain this convention has not been adopted and the viva happens *in camera*. Because no part of the research can be published before the research process is complete, overarching control is given to the examiners by dint of no one being allowed access to the knowledge that must first be validated by them. In the extreme it is possible to imagine that in the case of highly controversial theories, such as explored in Brecht's play *Life of Galileo* (1986), unorthodox views would not survive this process. Anything with a large political imperative can be undermined or censored by the power that is invested in the examiners and the institutions they represent. This raises the delicate issue of those who 'objectify without being objectified' (Bourdieu 1988: 5).

This lack of visibility and answerability on the side of the examiners and its opposite on the side of the examined defines the exam situation. Modalities and conventions change, but it is usual that 'The explanation of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it' (Barthes 1977: 80). As a researcher, it is increasingly regarded as imperative in non-scientific research to declare oneself. This requires 'auto-socio-analysis'(Bourdieu, 2005: 330) on the part of the researcher. Attempting to objectify oneself has many consequences which confirm what Foucault had to say about power relationships. Let us consider further the visibility of the researcher.

Creswell suggests in his guidebook to sociological fieldwork that, in 'positioning oneself', field researchers using immersion methods should include statements of personal reflection in their proposals and/or reports (Cresswell 2003: 182). The conventions of academic writing also demand this reflexivity. Because the researcher is alone in their research, they alone are responsible and accountable for distilling the findings into new knowledge. This is an interpretative act that involves their subjectivity consequently it is of concern and should be acknowledged accordingly. Without making any claims that it is possible to be neutral, or that work can be drafted from an external and superior point of view, there are reasons to remain ambivalent about personal reflexivity as a point of departure.

Negative aspects in the demand for practitioner reflexivity might be considered to fall into two categories: the effect on the research and the effect on those we research. This latter aspect, intertwined with how we see ourselves and hence how we see others, I will consider below in the section entitled *Reflexivity*. The former responds to the relationship between the researcher and the examiners. My contention is that the overall effect of being responsible for one's own reflexivity is that, despite the apparent individualising involved in all research

being original and leading into new areas of knowledge, ultimately the process, when it is occurs through academic writing for an examination or through the route of publication, results in homogenising the field. I will expand my reasoning in the section immediately below entitled *The examination*. The chapter is counterbalanced with a concluding section that presents a considered view.

The examination

Foucault observes that hierarchical observation, normative behaviour and examination are the three main ways of effectuating discipline; acquiring academic discipline fits within this (Smart 2002: 87). Examinations enable classification and judgement: the invisible process which allows the research and researcher to be defined. According to Foucault, it is this that provides the means by which individuals become 'a case', in regimes of sovereign power in which only the famous (to which could be added, in the case of academia, the published) are 'individualised'; it involves:

> a lowering of the threshold of description and the construction of a new modality of power which effectively constituted 'the individual as effect and object of power, and effect and object of knowledge'
> (Foucault quoted in Smart 2002: 87)

This has parallels with what Smart names 'the technology of the confession' (2002: 98). In the social sciences he says this operates on the assumption that the interpreter or examiner, chosen to examine the research because it is the area of their specialisation, gains knowledge independent of relations of power, or:

> Where critical reflection and analysis has developed it has taken the form of a pursuit either of the deeper or hidden meaning lying behind or beneath individuals' self-interpretations, or alternatively of the fundamental background practices and structures on which objectification and social theory are themselves predicated.
> (Smart 2002: 137)

Smart argues that it represents problems that are 'a necessary feature of the epistemological and historical conditions of possibility of the human sciences' (2002: 138). For Foucault on the other hand it constitutes a pursuit of the origin which is fated to remain 'unrealized and unrealisable' (Smart 2002: 137). The arguments that I make below are in support of this view.

'Criticism is power' (Féral 2000: 312). Josette Féral writes about the unequal forces between the artist and the theatre critic, 'the artist translates into art his vision of the world'

and 'the critic translates into words his vision of art' and the artist (2000: 312). A similar imbalance exists between the researcher and the examiner. If the researcher, involved in their work for several years, translates into words his vision of practice: the examiner translates into words his vision of the researched and the researcher. The researcher has little comeback given that an examiner is endowed, as is the critic, with a comparative 'immunity' (2000: 313). Such an imbalance might result in ambitious researchers avoiding the hot and spicy, to enable as swift a digestion as possible and, exactly what theatre demands that we shouldn't do, avoid risk (Etchells 1999: 48-49).

Risk aversion in dealing with the subject of study is, at the most basic level, a closure for the reader. Ever the realist, Bourdieu taught his students risk avoidance or prudence '*surtout pas de vagues*' 'not to make waves'– at least not until they are in a position to do so, '*il faut se donner les moyens de cette volonté*' 'one has to assure oneself of having the means to make such a choice' (2005: 336). The individual who wishes to give satisfaction, avoids confrontation, even where it is needed, in order to find favour. Hence researchers in seeking approval may succumb to presenting what is likely to find approval and also defining themselves in a pragmatic manner.

This is part of Foucault's third mode of objectification, the process of self-formation in which the person is active (Rabinow 1991: 11). It individualises by cultivating difference in the name of identity. James Petras writes about the multitude of ways in which cultural penetration takes hold through a process of privatising and individualising, which ultimately distracts from power relations. Images radiate from everywhere of 'individual mobility, the "self-made person", the emphasis of "self-centred existence"' and 'new cultural norms – the private over the public, the individual over the social' (Rahnema & Bawtree 1997: 188). For a practitioner to be reflexive requires 'an isolating operation that is difficult to resist, involving a "process of self-understanding"' (Rabinow 1991: 11).

Which rejoins Barthes idea that the author, 'when believed in, is always conceived of as the past of his own book … divided into a before and after' (Barthes 1977: 80). To illustrate this I would ask you to imagine that on the next page I have attached my photo and in it my paternity to my Jamaican grandfather is written into my genes. Few readers would not interpret everything from then on from a black woman's perspective; they would have difficulty not doing so and the text would be viewed/received accordingly. Those arguing for a declaration of the author would state that my life and work experience could not have been the same had I not been white. In the 1997 BBC Reith Lectures delivered by Professor Patricia Williams, she made the point that in our culture 'whiteness is rarely marked in the

indicative', and she quoted John Fiske referring to 'the ex-nomination of whiteness as racial identity', this point conceded, it does not detract from the equally valid notion that: being 'of colour' or being 'white' are both racial constructs from which we have difficulty freeing ourselves, either as the observer or as the observed. By declaring myself, I feel trapped into a socially determined role.

This role, where one is assumed to be something known, is a trap for the reader also in that it imposes certain limits. It is exactly what Barthes wanted to get away from by asking of his readers to judge the object as its own entity; the type of ideational creation that Raymond Roussel struggled towards in which the meaning of the story depends wholly on the language rather than existing in relation to its author (Foucault 1963: 125). Barthes captured it in relation to Mallarmé as the importance of restoring the place of the reader by 'suppressing the author in the interests of writing' (1977: 80). Collective authorship changes this relationship. But as discussed at the start of this chapter, writing excludes the disadvantaged. This thesis will question whether theatre can offer an opening in this direction?

Before moving on to the case studies that explore this question, this chapter will close by taxing further the idea of how the research itself is presented. I shall look at the choice of methods of argument and the ethics involved in researching where others are involved.

Reflexivity

To avoid both 'an untenable subjectivist interpretation' (Popper 1963: 574) and a '"disinterested contemplation"' which is 'a rank absurdity' (Nietzsche 1887: 255) we shall consider what Nietzsche suggests as objectivity: 'an ability to have one's pros and cons within one's command and to use them or not, as one chooses' (1887: 255). The advantage here is that it suggests an essential dialectic which avoids polemics: opposing views feature – they are acknowledged. Having 'one's pros and cons within one's command' (Nietzsche 1887: 255) and making them evident offers distinct advantages because as Popper was to point out, if we fail to criticise our own theories, there may be others who will do it for us (1963: 34). Critical rationalism, is how Popper named this approach, demonstrated when Einstein extended Kant's *principle of autonomy*, by introducing 'a critical search for error' (1963: 35). This theory is clearly more manageable in science than it is in the social sciences or theatre studies because, in the former, facts are examined rather than the sources of our information.

Can anything resemble scientific objectivity in the study of life in society? The emergence of social realities/facts of life as objects of study has been relatively recent: Durkheim's *Primitive Classification* written with Marcel Mauss in 1912 marks a departure point (translated by Needham 1963). Methods of study have been developing progressively including qualitative and quantitative techniques. These aim at providing a synthetic view that attempts to reduce distortions and inevitable deformations. These modifications occur because representations are not dissociable from a personal vision nor from one's affective relationship to the subject. The distance between observer and observed has been termed as an 'emic/etic distinction' in sociology, with its own origins in linguistics, when it contrasts the social actors reality with that of the observer's perception of that reality (Gardener & Lewis 1996: 114).

I will refer to James Thompson's work, and in particular *Digging Up Stories*, to guide me through the research/practice split that is, as he says, so unstable (Thompson 2005: 9). Baz Kershaw goes further than Thompson's grey areas between practice and research and between private and public (Thompson 2005: 146), for him even private lives and public issues are not separate forms of social engagement as they are complexly and intimately interwoven (Nicholson 2005: 20).

In Sri Lanka, where Thompson was engaged in giving a series of workshops, he talks about being introduced as a practitioner and not a researcher (2005: 11). His work he describes as being about research as well as being a result of research (Thompson 2005: 9). In this I find an echo. This shift requires negotiation, especially when the practice has been about research (into a social issue) which requires oneself, as Arbitrator, to write oneself out as much as possible from the research (of the social issue) whilst at the same time being bound by a academic code to write oneself back in when taking up the solitary voice of the researcher, who must for institutional reasons research alone.

Being introduced as a practitioner not as a researcher has several effects. Although Thompson does not go into the effect on the listener, in his situation in Sri Lanka, one could safely assume that given the 'distrust and cynicism' reserved for those coming in to carry out yet another survey, that Thompson will have met with a much warmer reception as a fellow practitioner than he would have done if he had been introduced as someone carrying out research who was employed by a university (2005: 11).

Thompson's comment that he is the first person in many years to do more in this region than 'survey and leave' implies that people in moments of crisis do not like being researched, this is compounded by the fact that these same people never see what is produced (Thompson 2005:11). There are two pertinent aspects here. The first concerns the assumptions made around the liberties commonly taken by researchers and the second is about undertaking research through a practice in which there is equal participation by those concerned.

It is not just in the 'intellectual and artistic milieux' (Bourdieu 1988: 39) that the sociologist with his "filing cards" is met with accusations of establishing a sectarian and inquisitorial police file. Bourdieu observed when he was drawing up his prosopography[52] that the questions he asked were met with 'dissimulations and misrepresentations' at the same time as suspicion. Thompson also notes the change of tone and body posture in the people he met if ever he took out a note book (2005: 11). Being objectified by research, in a process in which questions are asked only in one direction, lacks the essential quality of human exchange and 'mutual discovery' (Thompson 2005:11) that makes the meeting of a stranger comfortable for any group.

An analogy can be drawn with the researcher being examined, with the crucial difference that the researcher is paying for this privilege. The hostility of those who are researched to those who research them, is relevant because assumptions are frequently made by institutions carrying out research[53] about how the disadvantaged are expected to participate and also about how the advantaged see themselves as entitled to carry out their role as researchers. The origin of the hostility encountered by Bourdieu from the top echelons, 'the professionals', to being identified and accountable for their views, their origins and their affiliations could well have been due to a profound belief that requesting such information is an infringement of their liberty or their rights to privacy. This is not itself unreasonable, but it becomes so if this same respect is not extended to others.

In *Participation: The New Tyranny,* Cooke and Kothari leave no doubt about their concerns regarding this imbalance when the possibility of trespassing is not taken into account for others (2001: 143). They go as far as accusing those who earn their living and reputation by carrying out such research work of transferring project costs onto the beneficiaries: they are

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[52] This is a possible explanation for why the 'prosopography' of the university professors, is drawn up from data mostly collected in 1968, twenty years prior to publication. He explains that this surprisingly unscholarly practice of using data that is distant by one whole generation, rather than his own more recent material, is that the 1968 data which had been sought for other purposes gave access to factual information that it was not possible for him to obtain during in-depth telephone interviews.
[53] In Chapter Eight HMP services and the World Bank will be taken as examples.

the ones to actually 'pay for it'[54] by losing work time and providing free labour. Cooke and Kothari draw our attention to the political co-option, and the legitimization of development, which hides and perpetuates certain sets of power relations by reinforcing the awesome divide between those in power and those who have their lowly-status reinforced because that is why they were chosen as subjects. Cooke and Kothari's concern is not one that can be dismissed lightly because ultimately it will have a bearing on how far-reaching such research will be and how successful it will be in bringing about much needed change.

Enmeshed in this is the second point, about making research through a practice in which there is equal participation by those concerned. Can there ever be any equality between participants when, among the many circumstances in which practitioners find themselves, the sliding scale of security that affects their mobility, outlook, proliferation of writing and availability is so vastly different?

Between my life and most of those in situations of disadvantage with whom I have worked there is a chasm of difference in that, after a limited period of time working in their more challenging locations, I have been able to return to my family home in a peaceful country in which I have always been without worry about the next meal or clean water, with access to books and to study, to get medical care and walk or cycle the streets without fear. Likewise, there is a distinction between practitioner/researchers like James Thompson and those like myself who are, in the long-term, more vulnerable[55] being without: regular salary, pension scheme, recognised professional standing, ready access to publication and advantages such as connections into networks with other universities or other institutional partnerships, all of which facilitate a certain form of exploratory practice and writing.

However, to rule out the possibility of collaboration purely on materialistic grounds is unsatisfactory. Economic disparity need not prevent shared experience. The two later case

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[54] This is substantiated in the special thanks that is given to 'enumerators and families who gave their time to participate' (World Bank, 2003: 20) in the pilot testing of a questionnaire in Albania and Nigeria: in what is stated elsewhere as averaging 45 minutes and one and a half hours respectively per interview; in what must have been a sizeable sample of families per interviewer. This will be in contrast to the author of the report who will have been a salaried World Bank employee.

[55] The differences that relate to where one is situated when starting out on research is a delicate issue because of the circumstances in which I write this, within an academic institutional setting in which this work will be judged, but because power relationships are the subject of this study they inform it. I am professionally outside of the academy, with a career path that has strayed nomadically in pursuit of a type of theatre for social change, and the research to which I refer here, this study, is formal research that will be examined about which there is nothing published. It is at this point that the researcher is confronted with the situation in which they are no longer master of their own choice, as it is the examiner who will determine their mobility and where they are to be positioned. In this respect they stand alongside the Subject Group who do not operate reciprocally nor are they free.

studies will show efforts that have been made to make collaboration possible and how the hiatus in the daily lives experienced by those who have worked together, has been found mutually enriching (Chapter Eight). A sense of value and respect, for the duration of the work has created bonds between participants. In some cases these have been lasting and have repeatedly led to other work.

This is not to say financial reward can or should be overlooked.[56] Complications persist in this area, for instance the simple rule of equal pay is not always possible: proving especially difficult in prison situations and countries with a great disparity between the cost of living. There is no pretence to work that can physically open prison doors and let inmates walk free but what can occur is work in which, for some for the first time, a sense of human dignity is experienced: an extended exchange with the Subject Group and other Stakeholders that affects the perceptions of self and 'the Other' (Bharucha in Pavis 1996: 211). What is fundamental to this is parity of influence; equal input into the research and the creative process. It is this increased participation and the idea of a more reciprocal partnership that will be scrutinised.

Concluding remarks

In writing this chapter I have not failed to realise that my method may be viewed as bold. Firstly, I am opening out on suppositions regarding the effect of not having the Subject Group themselves writing about the practice in which they are the principal actors. The complement being that literature in the field of drama and theatre is the almost exclusive domain of those within higher education. Secondly, I am writing about my own failure to represent in digital form those who have participated in the development of OST. And thirdly, I am submitting research for examination whilst self-consciously commenting on the act of being examined and its effect.

The selection of angle of study was not arrived at immediately. It was in wrestling with some of the concepts around power, what it meant to be alone to carry out this research, that my perceptions started to change and continued to do so. There came a point in my understanding, that felt like a revelation, that it didn't really mean being alone. Gradually I came to regard the authors of the literature in this and other fields as being there to dialogue with: personal observations and conclusions, if taken in isolation, are too subjective to be

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[56] For instance inmates were remunerated when working in the Integrated Teams in both prisons the same as they would have been had they been doing other work activities such as sewing mail bags.

scholarly. Belonging to a community of thought meant coming to better understand that of others and using it to further my own. I came to see that in this form of research, as opposed to professionally commissioned research, there is a performative quality: in both the writing and the examination. The result will be viewed, received and measured against certain criteria and the researcher must be able, following certain conventions, to present the findings in a live meeting. I also came to understand more exactly the function of the dialogue with my tutor as preparation for this: the invaluable outside eye.

During this time, that I regard rather like a taming of all the ideas I was ready to go chasing, an analogy emerged with OST itself. It reinforced, because of my personal baggage and work experience, the inescapable subjectivity under which we labour. The concept of the OST Integrated Team as an interface between different sectors is paralleled by my interaction with other practitioners made possible through the literature. The tutor, who is not there to edit, but use their skill and knowledge to push forward the work whilst unobtrusively ensuring that the efforts to write it up stay on course, engages in an activity not dissimilar to that of the Arbitrator. And lastly the targeting of an audience, the research community, whose evaluation is the feed back required to help identify to which aspects attention should continue to be given.

Only the Subject Group is missing.

It is this critical absence that OST attempts to address in the way it carries out its research and produces theatre. The way in which it handles the power relationships within this negotiation will be viewed in the case studies that follow in Chapters: Four, Six and Eight.

Chapter Four

Power, Knowledge and Cultural Production

The context and theoretical framework provided in Chapters One to Three have set the groundwork for an interplay of case studies and theory. In each of the three sectors (schools, partnerships with NGOs and prisons) a different particularity of OST will be explored in relation to the effect it has on power dynamics. This chapter will look at the process of transforming graphical data into theatre. It is sequentially the last of the three stages in the method of OST theatre (Fig. 1iii - the three stage structure) but it is tackled first because the specific aspect of each of the other two stages that I will examine in their respective chapters, the Integrated Team and the generation of respondent-driven questionnaires, are not wholly applicable[57] in schools. Furthermore, chronologically, in the main, these latter two aspects are more recent development in the history of OST (Fig. 1v).

The case studies considered in this chapter took place in schools of the European Community through the years 1995-2007. Schools are the sector with the most long-standing experimentation[58] and partnerships in OST, some of which have continued throughout to the present. The European Community provided funding for these partnership projects[59] (originally under the programme title of The 3Rs: Rights, Race and Responsibilities). Schools in different countries worked on different aspects of the same theme. Each class of students made and tested their own questions, they then exchanged questionnaires with partner schools who carried out a survey locally then returned the results after which an analysis and drama would lead to performance. Where possible this took the form of a presentation of the drama: live, by video-conference or on CD (Fig. 1iv). The overall project, scheduled differently over the course of a whole school year according to the country, was spread over about a dozen lessons. Reference will be made in this chapter to the six projects which are tabulated below (Table 4i). Five were selected because they illustrate aspects of the learning that emerged at the time and a sixth is included because it is

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[57] A school classroom group is not an example of an Integrated Team because, for most subjects of their social study, there are no representatives from any Stakeholder groups except teenage school students, and similarly regarding respondent-derived questionnaires because the intended subject group, perhaps their family members or 'people in the community' are not party to question formation.

[58] Touring work, undertaken by Passe-Partout since 1986, gave a strong contact base to the partnership work which followed after the European Year Against Racism in 1985.

[59] The teachers had either chosen this methodological approach from the Comenius Catalogue or were nominated by schools who had worked in this way previously or, on the suggestion of INSET Coordinators, who contacted the Coordinating Teacher.

referred to in Chapter Nine: *Findings*. They will not be dealt with in chronological order. The first three case studies will look at examples of work that took place in certain English-language-learning[60] classrooms, whilst the last two will deal with examples of work in the UK: the first in an interdisciplinary drama/PSHE class and the second in English lessons with an English teacher of Bangladeshi origin and a maths teacher.

DATE	PLACE	AGE GROUP	THEME	PERFORMANCE
Jan-Mar 1994	Hove, UK	14-15 years	Disability	√√ (video – rehearsal)
Oct-May 1998-	Diest, BE	16-17 years	Asylum Seekers	X
Nov-Apr 1999-	Pucioasa, RO	15-16 years	Gender Issues	√√ (video)
Oct-Apr 2000-2007	Uckfield, UK	12-13 years	Hunger & Eating Disorders	√√ (video - rehearsal)
Oct-Apr 2003-	Vilnius, LI	15-16 years	Terrorism	√ (video) X
Oct-May 2005-	Vals-Les-Bains, FR	14-15 years	Media	√ (video)
		√ = performance(s) presented beyond the classroom video = video material exists X = no stage three (Fig. 1i)		

Table 4i Chronology of classroom-based OST work on social issues funded by European Year Against Racism (1995), European Community Socrates Programme (1997-2000) and Comenius Programme (2003-2006). Country symbols: BE – Belgium, DK – Denmark, FR – France, LI – Lithuania, RO – Romania.

Belgium (Diest)

Bourdieu and Rancière identified a lack of awareness of how dispossession is perpetuated (Nordmann 2006: 151). Schools are one of the main culprits where this is played out, through the imposition and monopoly of knowledge, although this area is not confronted readily by either of these two men (Nordmann 2006: 153). Dispossession includes 'everything that detracts from autonomy of thought' (2006: 152), the concern of much of the literature surrounding applied theatre practices. It also includes 'everything that detracts from the autonomy of our collective power of thought' (2006:152), that which concerns this research most directly. I am going to use the Belgium case study to investigate how the OST

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[60] Activities in OST theatre have, in the main, been fitted into the language-learning curriculum in European classrooms outside the UK. Other curriculum areas that have hosted OST are maths and psychology but never exclusively, only as part of a project taking place under the auspices of the language department. This is because nearly all the projects have been initiated as partner projects. The common language of interchange in Europe is English.

method can open out on an alternative experience of learning, one which privileges 'the autonomy of our collective power of thought' (2006: 152) by a wider appropriation of knowledge than is commonly found in the top-down model of the language-learning classroom.[61]

The case study work that took place in Diest (in Flemish-speaking Belgium) from October 1998 to May 1999. This class, adopting the OST methodology for the second time, did not reach the stage of performing to a live audience. The students, in small groups, only improvised performances for the rest of the class. This pattern of stopping short of a wider public performance on a first time of implementing the methodology has been observed in other schools (Helene Harn in Aarhus DK, Joel Sebelon in Lyon FR, Marie Doyen in Auxerre FR and Paris FR and Nigel Jackson in Seaford UK). It is possible that this truncation of the methodology after the first two stages, investigation and analysis (Fig. 1iii), happens because the teacher in charge, and typically newly introduced to the OST methodology, feels unprepared for the unknown directions that the work might take, especially if this is to be made public. If this is a correct interpretation then it would be compatible with the idea that in OST there is a prising of control away from the teacher, who needs to assist but cannot control.

However, it should also be observed that some schools have succeeded in reaching performance on their first time of trying (cases studies two and three below). 'Outside' audiences, in a classroom context, have included audiences comprising other classes in their own school[62] and in other schools (either live Bucharest RO, Stenlille DK, Copenhagen DK, London UK, Bexhill UK or through video-conference in Varndean Sixth Form College, Brighton UK, Alden Bisen BE, UCC UK, Vallon in Grospierre FR, Vals-les-Bains FR) as well as the school community, including parents and teachers, or conferences for teachers and advisory teachers (Hove High School UK, Pucioasa RO).

In Diest in 1998/99 the subject of investigation, social justice, was chosen by the teacher under the remit of 'the 3Rs' as one that would be of interest to her students who were 16-17 years old. She ran the project with two classes. One of these chose to focus, in part, on the question of refugees within their own society. When starting the OST project the students

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[61] Drama is not taught as part of the curriculum in any of the participating countries except the UK and Denmark.
[62] This audience adolescents dread more than any other because they know their peer group whose critical judgement they fear as they will have to face them repeatedly, whilst an unknown audience has the draw of being a one-off.

had considered refugees as forming a homogenous group; in refining the questions there emerged a need to distinguish between different causes for seeking asylum. The students identified three categories: refugees from wars, political exiles and those escaping economic hardship. The answers that they obtained from the mini-survey that they ran in their own community revealed that people's tolerances varied according to which group was spoken about: war refugees (Fig. 4i issue 3a), political refugees (Fig. 4i issue 3b), and economic refugees (Fig. 4i issue 3c).
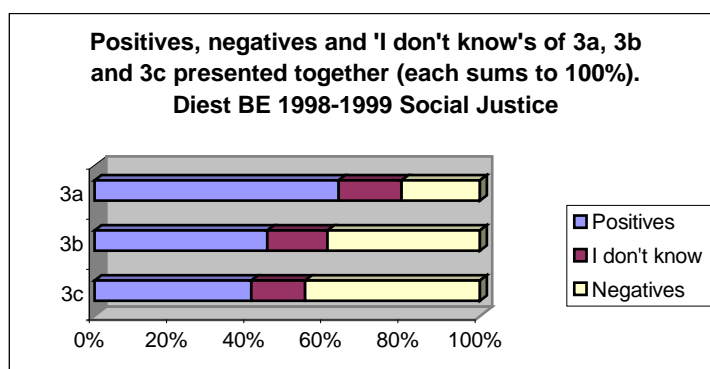
Fig. 4i "Would you help a ... ?" Positives, negatives and 'I don't know's of 3a "... war refugee", 3b "... political refugee" and 3c "... economic refugee" presented together (each sums to 100%). Diest BE 1998-1999 Social Justice.

This was not evident initially from the simple plotting of all their data (see Appendix V for the first set of graphs produced from the data), it only emerged when they set about synthesising the findings further by means of a human graph. The inverse proportions, that have been compressed into a single graph (Fig. 4i), show an equivalence to the graph they presented using their bodies (Fig. 4i has been drawn for the sake of this study, it is not the students' original graph). The synthesis enabled the information to be seen much more clearly than the original Excel graph, which was however a necessary stage in getting there. The visible swing in 'intention to assist' that emerged where a war refugee was concerned, and whose status was viewed with considerably more sympathy than an economic refugee, gave rise to discussions about the evident fear that fuelled, and on which thrive, such extreme right wing groups as Vlaams Blok. The debate centred on how the condition of refugees would be likely to progressively get worst if the popularity of such fascist groups continued increasing. Students also argued that this might happen if Belgium was not more

hostile to immigration[63] because of the ease with which the extreme right could raise the spectre of the loss of jobs, existing social benefits, comforts and rights. Classroom discussions also led on to the genocide of the second world war, still within living memory of a good many of their interviewees (grandparents were a small percentage of the sample survey in the local community but on the whole had provided fuller answers to open questions).

In this class, the contemporary reality of highly political issues was being dealt with in a new way, for two quite different reasons. Firstly, they were being handled inside a language-learning class;[64] language was being used as a tool of communication rather than the object of study itself.[65] Secondly, political issues were being discussed through a cross-correlation of social facts based on the students' own analysis of their own data. The crossing of disciplines, that included history and politics, was an unanticipated result that had come about from the exploration of community attitudes within the context of providing debate about social justice. The teacher in charge, with thirty years teaching experience, later celebrated this:

> I have learnt that when my students' theatre work (in school) is preceded by a structured study of the issue then they discover, for themselves, links between what up until then had been disparate issues and aspects of society. The requirement to produce theatre gives a purpose to untangling society's knots and adds an ethical dimension to my teaching.
> Greet Swinnen (July 2002 evaluation meeting)

The other class that year, still under the direction of Greet Swinnen in the same school, went further and succeeded in making performances on social justice that they showed to a class in a partner school through video conferencing. In later years her students presented to larger audiences in her own school: a far harder challenge. She also involved a teacher of psychology and a maths teacher respectively in each of the first two stages (Fig. 1iii). To create these performances they drew on source material obtained from interviews through residential centres and drop-in centres as well as in their own and partner communities. The partner communities' project brought together six countries within Europe; Swinnen coordinated these with the support of the European Commission Comenius Programmes 2003-2007.

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[63] Fresh in the news at the time were images of Turkish immigrants' apartments being torched in Germany and families coming out from smoking buildings.

[64] Diest BE was the first place where the traditional, didactic method of language teaching was abandoned in order to experiment with an early form of the method that in this thesis is called OST. The year was 1998.

[65] It is still common practice in both Belgium and France that formal language classes focus largely on specific points of grammar.

Romania (Pucioasa)

Theatre fulfils, within OST, a number of functions and one of these is to provide a means of continuing or extending dialogue. In order to see how this occurs I would like to take the example of work that took place in Pucioasa, Romania in 2001-2002 after a summer training course for teachers in this methodology that was organised by Passe-Partout in Brighton (with financial support from the European Commission). The questionnaire that the class of 15 – 16 year old students developed was on leisure activities, which at first glance did not look particularly likely to inspire much more than an elaborate answer to the question: what is your hobby? However, again quite unforeseen results emerged. When answers were drawn up according to gender, the difference in time available for leisure activities afforded to men was three times as high on average than for women (Fig. 4ii).

The x-axis (Fig. 4ii) is in units of time in blocks of 30 or more minutes, and two columns, one male (blue) the other female (red), are shown for each time block. In total on the graph there are eight columns therefore four time blocks: less than 30 minutes free time per day, 30 to 60 minutes free time, one hour to two hours, and more than two hours free time per day. In the first block, 30 minutes free time maximum in the day, there are almost twice as many women as men. In the last one, more than two hours, there are many more men than women. The results were presented in the first act as though they had been 'zapped' off a TV documentary and then in the second act in the format of a participative chat show.

Fig. 4ii How much leisure time have you got during a day?

Furthermore, the breakdown of how people liked to spend their spare-time was informative about the central role of the family, the role played in the society by television and the access that men, as opposed to women, had to travel. This underlying information, about family, television and travel, was conveyed by the students as actors in a human graph that stood to represent the proportions in the fashion of a bar chart (as in Fig. 4ii) that talked: each person announcing what they represented. The important learning from this case study is that something that had started out as a simple survey on a subject of interest to the class of 15 –

16 year old students had turned into a form of sociological study with considerable depth. My analysis is that this is linked to the fact that the questions are not drawn up using deductive reasoning. They are drawn up in an inductive manner. Because there is no initial hypothesis, and no initial aim beyond sharing the findings once analysed, there is considerable freedom in question generation. Identifying features which facilitate this include:

- the questions are about the everyday and about people's own experience,
- they are developed in a non-linear, non-logically planned order and are cut or kept exclusively on merit of what they reveal once empirically tested,
- they are formulated by multiple authors who all have variations in their way of appreciating reality,
- they are collectively improved through brief discussion once tested,
- the variety in authorship ensures a wider linguistic range and more variation in structure than would be possible for a single author or even that offered in a small team working together through discussion.

This approach can also be described in evolutionary terms. It proceeds by a process of elimination that is based on empirical observation of which questions fail to give interesting results. On this ground the questions are culled. What is seen to work is kept and is used to seek out the observations, behaviours, attitudes and views of communities to see what can be learnt by erecting a social model.

In Pucioasa, once the data emerged, the aim of their theatre became immediately clear: they wanted to show the evidence of what they considered to reveal deep-rooted social injustice of which they had previously perhaps only been subconsciously aware. This created in the group, as it has with others, a sense of ownership and self-value which stimulated a particular sense of pride in the creation of the performance. Students were enthusiastic to show their results because of the conviction that they had something of interest to say. This came to be matched by the quality of their presentation.

The intention in their theatre work as it developed went further than originally planned. Rather than simply wanting to show the injustice, the students wanted to ask the audience if this picture was one that they recognised in their own lives. They wanted to hear from them as to why this should be the case and to engage in a discussion about the reasons and the possibilities for change. The performance was shown to visiting inspectors and was also taken to Bucharest, the capital city, to a national teachers' conference on language teaching. These audiences had not been planned in advance so it cannot be said that they were motivated to produce good work because of the opportunity to meet with such an audience, especially as any such foreknowledge of this kind would only have been counterproductive by placing the class or group under undue pressure to produce something deemed to be good

or perceptive.   The response of both audiences was enthusiastic but the students found an extraordinary reception to the second performance, from the group of 40 teachers in Bucharest, perhaps because they were predominantly female and recognised this reality. One teacher went as far as saying:

> As a teacher of English in Bucharest, I felt humiliated. How could it be possible for a school in the countryside to get such wonderful results. Really it is amazing.
>
> <div align="right">(unnamed teacher, Bucharest, April 2002)</div>

Whether this comment was about how the students had both investigated and staged complex social realities or the quality of language learning or both is uncertain, but what is evident in her remark is the prejudice regarding the low expectations of schools in the provinces as opposed to those in Bucharest, and it was satisfying seeing this challenged.

Other audience members commented on the exemplary teamwork and the 'self-respect' that was felt to result from such a group exercise. In order to contextualise such high levels of enthusiasm it is worth noting that in 2002 Romania was beginning to move away from the centralised education curriculum of its Communist Regime that had been very much under the influence of the Russian system. In this context, drama was restricted to being a club or a competitive activity, evidence of which was in plentiful supply at the conference with large numbers of fully-costumed, staged productions of full-length Shakespeare plays in English, starring students aged nine to fifteen, for the teachers' entertainment between workshops and plenaries. Therefore, staging work that was authored by the students themselves, as a result of their own enquiry, had considerable novelty value.

Lithuania (Vilnius)

The following year, 2003, in Lithuania, another ex-communist country, an OST project was led by a Belorussian teacher of English. It succeeded in reaching performance as video, essentially completing all three stages of the OST methodology. Again, unexpected results emerged from a set of simple questions that the students had generated and tested in their home community before sending out, by email, to their five[66] partner schools in other European countries. All of the partner schools were themselves generating their own questionnaires, on their own chosen aspects, under the umbrella theme of social health, and reciprocating by sending theirs to each other. The chosen subject for the Lithuanian students

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[66] Although there were five other countries involved, often, because of the lateness of replies or other complications, analysis would only be made of a part of these. In this particular case, there were sets of replies from three countries.

was terrorism, and it was the answers from their British partner schools that provided the most striking differences (Fig. 4iii).
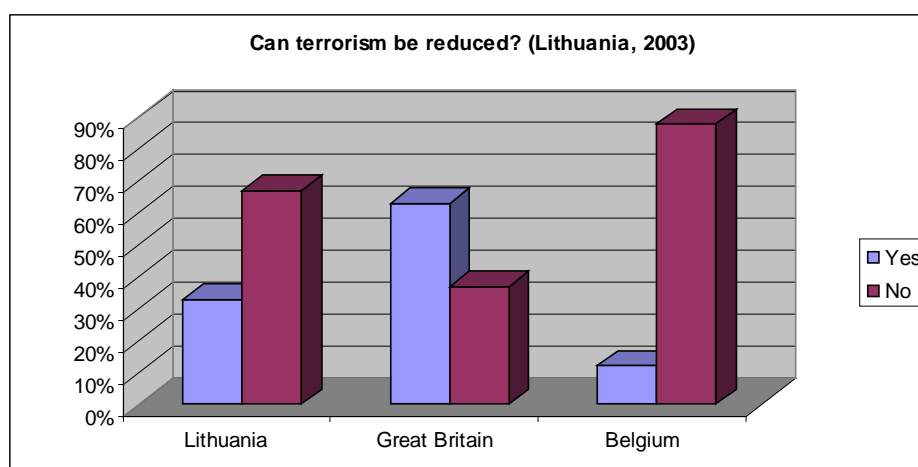
Can terrorism be reduced? (Lithuania, 2003)

Fig. 4iii Graph produced by students at 'Santaros' Secondary School, Vilnius, Lithuania (2003) of the sets of answers from their own community and from the surveys carried out remotely for them by peer group students in partner schools in the UK and Belgium.

The continental response contrasted to the British view (as in Fig. 4iii among others) suggesting that a firm approach was seen as more likely to be successful in what came to be called 'the war against terror'. Perhaps the influence of the media and its leaning towards supporting the American decision to invade Iraq was taking effect on public opinion even among the younger generation, who not yet of an age to vote, might be thought to be less politicized. The class made a pseudo-news clip in which television reporters were seen to stop the man-in-the-street for his answer to the same question: the group views from the different countries were put in one person's mouth to represent the majority views for or against authoritarian action. This was done by the students filming themselves in role against the backdrop of snow-covered Vilnius in different locations and in different styles of dress to suggest the national differences, for instance by a bridge (representing London because there is the Thames), the entrance to a shop (because Belgians are seen to be affluent) and outside their school (immediately recognisable to their own viewers). Post-projection discussions focussed on the difference in what might be viewed as continental agreement and the conflicting British view on countering terrorism. A question that was raised was whether a country's views were possibly linked to their having fought war, within living memory, on their own soil.

Student's evaluations have mentioned how uncommon an approach like this is to language learning, a subject in which there is usually very little oral participation, 'In class we barely

speak English because it is not necessary' (Anneliza Maes, 2003). Here it was happening without the teacher telling them to talk. Repeatedly the words 'surprised' and 'amazed' were used to describe their reactions when the answers from partner schools were analysed. Both because they were their own questions that were being answered and because they didn't anticipate such a variety of views. One member of an Integrated Team in Kingston, Jamaica, albeit in a non-formal education setting, summarised this as, 'The answers that I would have given is totally different from that which I've gotten' (Jamaica 2000). Answers to questions about out-of-school work in which young people are involved varied from house-building and selling at market to looking after children, likewise the amount of homework varied per country from 30 minutes per night to two and a half hours for the same age group, or the amount of alcohol consumed, in which the British consumption was double that of any of the other five countries, or what they considered to be the most important human right. The set of answers received to the last question showed that for British respondees the most important human right was freedom to say what you think. This contrasts[67] with continental response: the right to education.

Many pictures emerged of the differences but also the similarities of values or behaviours. The reprobation regarding suicide or the similarity between television viewing between communities will both be detailed later on. None of the classes working on the subjects had any conception of what the answers would be and what connections they could give rise to or what the drama might be like. This case study confirms the learning of the previous (Pucioasa) case study concerning the way in which seemingly uninspiring questions can open up intriguing avenues of understanding if the questions are allowed to develop organically. These avenues then become the seeds of the theatre. The Vilnius case study operates in a different way. It shows how an initial local question set, being reworked through field-testing and feedback, can quickly pick up on contemporary international developments - the invasion of Iraq happened in the following weeks. The role of the media became an issue within the drama. All have been dramatised in a wide variety of ways and pride has been expressed: 'it were all our ideas and we had made the performances ourselves' (Ela Thienfort, 2003). Building up a picture of the situation using new information, the answers not being previously known, suggests that the Subject Group (young European people) have built up their own reflection on subjects of social concern.

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[67] Applying Tukey's technique of exploratory data analysis (Tukey, 1977), this finding, albeit from a small non-random sample, points us in the direction of a similar analysis later in this chapter, concerning the relative impenetrability of the UK classroom to OST methodology, that there is a contrast between Anglophone and continental education: the former encouraging individual creativity whereas the latter is more concerned with rigour and rote-learning plays an important part in the language learning classroom.

The attempt to share this by the further step to interpret the results through drama gives the students space to interpret for others and respond.   The next example will make a link between two more distant worlds: Britain and Bangladesh.

UK (Uckfield)

Year 8 students aged 12-13 in Uckfield Community College (UCC) in 2000/01 tackled the ambitious subject of food and hunger. This young group started out with some very didactic questions about the rights and wrongs of abundance and famine (Appendix VI: Fig. VIi). Because they jumped the step of testing the questions they ended up with a page of almost rhetorical questions. In the end, by working through in stages and in cycles which allowed the questions to be returned to after they were sent abroad to partner schools, this group went well beyond the original improvised sketches which had only shown stereotypes concerning the helplessness of those victims of hunger in the third world. It came to challenge not only the students, who started off quite adamant that they knew all about these things because "We've seen it on telly", but also teachers. That the Head of English, of Bangladeshi descent, ate with all his family the last meal of the day at 11.00 pm was, according to two teachers, a surprise that challenged all their assumptions.

When the answers were analysed, the lack of information to which their first questions (Appendix VI: Fig. VIi) gave rise provided very little to go on with regards the situation or experience of hunger. The quality of the raw material will only ever be as good as the questions asked, as this is what determines the material available for dramatisation. Because so little progress had been made in furthering the group's knowledge in this area, the idea came up of sending them to the real Subject Group, which their English teacher thought would be very interesting. The thought of sending their original questions to be answered by people overseas, for instance in Bangladesh where there were known to be cases of extreme poverty, made the group realise how many of their questions were directive and inappropriate in their original formulation. In the light of this, the questions were reworked and new questions drawn up (Appendix VI: Fig. VIii). These were then sent to the Theatre Centre for Social Development in Dhaka, several of whose members had in previous years been in the UK on tour including performing to UCC. TCSD received the questionnaires, translated (Fig. VIii) and organised interviews of two groups: one from a socially comfortable set and one from a more deprived group. The raw data was posted back to UCC where it was analysed with the help of the maths teacher.

What emerged was of particular interest when meal sizes, frequency and times were collated and then cross-correlated with those from the Uckfield community. The homogeneity of the Bangladeshi community with regards to meal times and quantities was striking by comparison to the very much more dispersed and varied English times and quantities.

Through this simple contrast it was possible to understand the social function played in Bangladesh by all three meals being taken together. It was also noted that those who were on a minimum subsistence would all report very similar meals: a biscuit and a cup of tea would be one meal, rice and a little sauce another, and then the last meal of the day, rice and a spoon of vegetables, was always the largest meal and was taken at 11 o'clock at night by all the family (Fig. 4iv).

Fig. 4iv Graph showing the distribution and proportional meal size in Bangladesh. This graph was drawn from the answers from two economically contrasting communities in Bangladesh.

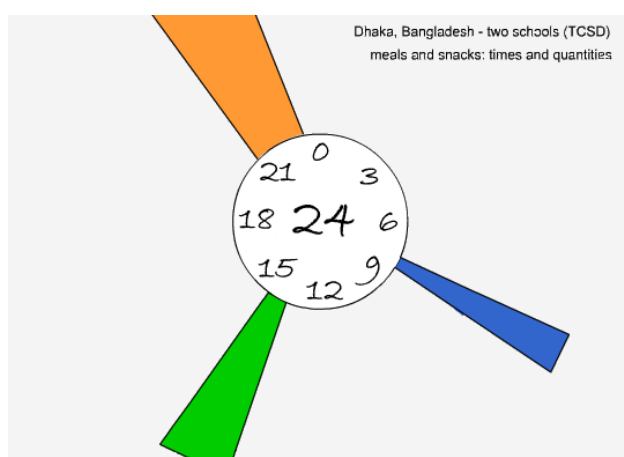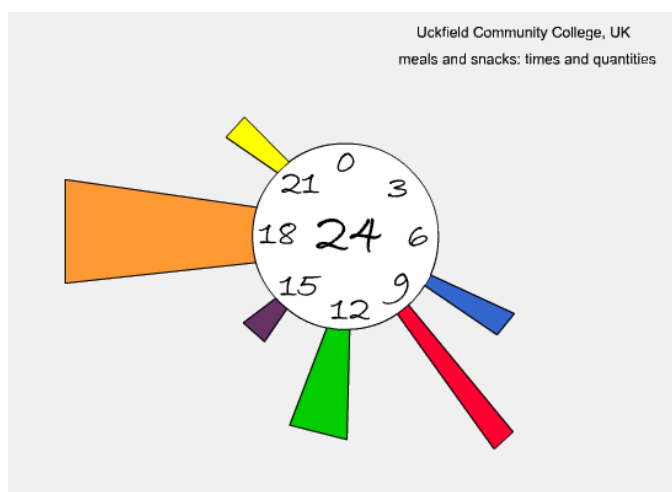**Fig. 4v** Graph showing the distribution and proportional meal size in the UK. The graph was drawn from the answers from a community survey of eating patterns in Uckfield.

For the young students in Uckfield the solid factual information revealed by these graphs gave them access to aspects of life in other parts of the world that they had not thought about

previously: a different organisation of time and the established day as we know it, the communal space in which food is shared with everyone seated at floor level, the function of food - not only feeding bodily (albeit barely in some cases) but also feeding social interaction. A picture of a society had come through numbers, not only theirs with their uniformly regular habits but ours and us with our grazing. It was this contrast that they then set about showing through their theatre and this which again in turn gave rise to more questions. It was another vision of a principally Muslim society, seen through a lens they had been instrumental in making. It had little to do with any of the images of Bangladesh that they had assimilated from the media. And having discovered it for themselves, it will be remembered differently.

This case study from UCC is given in some detail because it shows a conjunction between OST's rigorous method and the excitement of discovering unexpected perceptions. This contrasts to the more commonly employed discursive methods. Conventional theory suggests that the more time and freedom we give to a group then the broader and deeper is their reflection, though Donald Bligh, a pioneer in personal management, would temper this:

> Groups are not superior in their efficiency as measured in man hours spent to obtain a successful solution. In other words, a group has more resources and spends them. With increasing group size, the law of diminishing returns applies …

(2000: 12)

It is not clear how to theorise the apparent contradiction between applying rigour and generating unexpected learning. James Thompson introduces a quote from the playwright Noel Grieg, 'from limitation to stimulation' (2005: 173) He, Thompson, has employed a Foucauldian analysis of discipline to broach the issue (Thompson 2005: 173). I will pick up this issue in much more depth in the next Chapter in the section entitled Scientism.

The UCC case study was continued up until the performance and reveals, in the scripting stage, another facet of the careful management of feedback. The video recording of the first improvisations had given rise to feedback from the Subject Group who had made some corrections about cultural inaccuracies that arose from unfamiliarity with life in Bangladesh. Rustom Bharucha describes, in inter- or intra-cultural work, 'the theatrical process itself is constantly interrupted, reversed, questioned from multiple angles' introducing the possibility of collective scrutiny (Bharucha 1996: 125). This scrutiny was itself theatricalised in the final version by European students. These students were in the UK on an exchange visit in July 2001. They spent one week at Uckfield College developing this material further with guidance from some of the class members who had generated the initial questions and been involved in the earlier improvisations. Cultural misinterpretations were used in the drama

creating a stop/start effect that mimicked Commedia dell'arte's *slittamento* device made famous by Ettore Petrolini (Hart et al 1997: 109). The interruptions to the drama were orchestrated by two French students of north African descent from Lycée Doisneau, Vaulx-en-Velin: one dressed as Lara Croft forcing the action to stop – outraged at the actor's incomprehension, the other dressed in a *salur kamise* and who made helpful suggestions to the actors for making corrections to their roles. By using these techniques the theatre could be said to give access to a composite social truth, if nonetheless one that is time-bound.

What is clear in these two examples is that theatre as a medium affords the possibility to narrate the stories of others beyond ourselves, but that in so doing, we have a responsibility to afford them the respect that we would ourselves wish for. This point was particularly in evidence with the energetic self-casting of the young women from Lyons who, being Muslim and of Maghreb origin, felt a certain empathy with their new roles due to their personal experience of having to face social situations in which there were assumptions made about them, that they are not always able to challenge.

Drama can be accurate, but at the same time the act of transferring results into a performed aesthetic entity is a self-acknowledged fusion of fact and fiction, which is both freeing, as we see in the above examples where students can embody other realities, and limiting because the theatrical rendering does make the interpretation of a social reality decidedly more fixed. When a production reaches the rehearsal stage rather than when it is in the improvisation stage, it is well on its way to becoming an object, albeit still a relatively flexible one, given that it can withstand changes within its interpretation and can re-invent itself through careful management of feedback more readily than a film or text in response to post-performance critique. However, it is bound by time, space and energy and ultimately history with its specificity of context and place, unlike the reality it attempts to echo which does not stop but continues in its implacable process of change. Despite this elusive quality of the reality it attempts to reflect, the theatre can nonetheless contribute to knowledge production from its particular subject/object fusion vantage point.

UK (Hove)

I would like to use here an example of community consultation for which the community in question is their own. A group of UK students between the ages of 13 -15 years, promoted by PSHE Advisory teachers for East Sussex County Council, had the chance to work on the subject of discrimination, with a focus on disability, providing a case study for the manual *A*

School with a View (Young 1997: 58, 60). Year 10 students in Hove Park secondary school in 1995-6, drew up questions that the group sent out to two local social clubs for the physically impaired asking if they could be distributed among their members. By comparison to large surveys there was a comparatively small number of returns but it was rich in what it taught the group.

The answers that shocked them most were those from respondees who said that they found disability a source of amusement. This led them to create, as their first improvisation, a scene in which two boys mocked a young girl in a wheel chair. The scene lacked believability. Following the embryonic OST method they returned to their collected survey material in order to verify their improvisation. It was only when they probed the answers that they were able to link comments that the Subject Group had made about the humiliation they felt when they encountered attitudes such as 'they think I eat with a bib', 'they think I need my mum to do everything for me'. They looked at the returns drawn up as statistics. The majority group were the 70% who said they met with sympathy (Fig 4vi). They were forced to start thinking about what it meant to be subjected to attitudes of 'sympathy'. The decision was taken to create a new scene which would focus on the majority. As this new improvisation began to develop, there was a growing consciousness of how difficult it must be to encounter constantly, not the reaction of amusement that they had initially taken as principal, but the reaction of sympathy. This gave rise to a very moving scene that they called *Does he take sugar?* inspired by the title of the poem[68] by Michael W. Williams.[69]
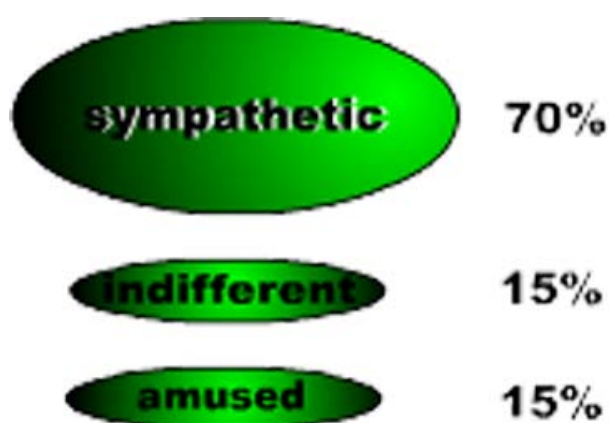
Fig. 4vi Bubble graph of responses to disability (1995).

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[68] "Does he take sugar in his tea?"
Hello; why not ask me?
I might have a disability,
But to answer for myself I still have the ability.
Just because I'm in a wheelchair!
It's not that people don't care.
That much I know,
But it's a problem wherever I go!
[69] Flintshire Disability Forum 2001, http://www.fda.dial.pipex.com/flintshi.htm, 2.7.08.

For those of us who were fortunate enough to see this performance it opened up an empathetic understanding of the frequent humiliations that the disabled club members experienced. In this ten-minute performance the class joker, who until this point had not been highly motivated, suddenly stepped into the role of a paraplegic man going for a coffee with his carer and encountering endless, overly helpful, sympathetic people: he had the class and at a later date a gathering of advisory teachers, spell-bound by his performance. Being invited to share the intimacy of intense pain and anger of this fictitious character, that was not conveyed autobiographically but by a perfectly able-bodied young adolescent, intensified the experience. The acting made evident the empathy and solidarity of this adolescent. Because it was not a first-hand experience there was no intrusion on the reception of a sense of accompanying social embarrassment or guilt, for any such reactions that one might have had as able-bodied audience to someone in the part with a disability. To borrow a phrase from Syed Jamil Ahmed, it was theatre 'plain and simple' (Nicholson 2005: 135).

One deduction from this case study is that a key activity in OST is to stay truthful to the respondees in their collective entity. It is important to show what consensus has to say: not the more extreme views but the more widely shared. This is not the typical approach of theatre. Social studies tend to accord:

> … greater epistemological attention to "politically salient" and "ontologically uncommon" features of social life. Although the "unmarked" comprises the vast majority of social life, the "marked" commands a disproportionate share of attention.
>
> (Brekhus 1998:34)

The play in OST might therefore suffer from giving as much weight to the ordinary as to the extraordinary. This problem, that of theatricalising the normal, will not be examined directly but will be scrutinised later on in the light of whether or not this failing is counteracted by its ability to set an agenda.

For OST to succeed in communicating with its audience depends on two complementary aspects: the quality of the questions because these determine the content that will be distilled from the quantitative data, and the quality of the artistic, qualitative, imaginative and theatrical vocabulary of members of the Integrated Team . Acting, unlike music or dance, is closer to our everyday oral communication and so a talent that is accompanied by courage and observational skills can, if supported by the work of the group and the fluency and sensitivity of the Arbitrator (in this case a drama student on teaching practice), make for very powerful performance.

Considerations of theatre - students' passion and purpose

Over the years, the quality of the theatre has varied but apprehending the creative task, assisted by the knowledge that the material is both original and verifiable, has made for substantially more security in facing the idea of performance. This has been particularly true for those whose mother tongue is not English and where the tradition of school drama is not strong. This does not apply to the monolingual who rarely conceives of the extent of the difficulties or the disadvantages of someone speaking in a second language. However, working on ideas that are not your own, in a language that is not your own, can be freeing by comparison to the usual focus on personal identity, likes and dislikes and daily life which it is sometimes difficult to go beyond in situations of international exchange. The reduction in self-consciousness and concern about being held accountable for the views expressed is linked to the fact that theirs is not an assumed authority: it is one that originates with the Subject Group. It is therefore clearly not their 'fault' if this has become political or raises moral questions. By similar reasoning, the fear of failure that can be paralysing, particularly when exposing oneself to public view, is reduced.

There are also time-related and stylistic aspects that should not be overlooked. As the case studies above have shown, these are a direct consequence of the improvisations firstly not emerging from individual passion but from material that does not relate directly to oneself and secondly being made on behalf of another group. The time needed to prepare different performance genres varies considerably from a very immediate improvised result through to a rehearsed and polished performance: OST would be situated somewhere in the centre. Hornbrook is very critical of process drama that such a long time is spent for so little to result (1989: 134). It is a comment that could be applied to all drama, when results are mediocre and the 'extremely difficult processes of getting there' are lost from view (1989: 134).

Likewise there is an appreciable shift in the personal imaginative response that is required by the constructionists in forms of process drama as opposed to an emphasis on performance and techniques demanded by the neo-positivists when they work towards a public performance for their communities. Here again OST could be seen to be balancing both and satisfying neither. It lies somewhere between the two practices. It stresses the responsibility to be true to the findings of the enquiry and so requires an imaginative interpretation to be rehearsed and given to the audience. It is on a sliding scale depending on the time allocation that it is given. This might protect it from the accusation that the paucity of experience and passion results in 'the most appallingly self-indulgent acts of improvised

"creativity"' (Hornbrook 1989: 132) but on occasion a lack of commitment to the subject matter or in the will to communicate with others 'live' has deadened the performance quality. There is truth in the observation that those who suffer, whether through exploitation, hardship or discrimination to mention but a few, are the ones who often speak with a passion that resonates. Man can be very creative when operating against certain constraints (Klaic in Delgado & Svich 2002: 144-160; Maguire 2006: 21-60). Within the school classrooms to which we refer, such first-hand knowledge is the exception rather than the rule, although there have been moments when great depth of feeling has been tapped.

That the source of answers is outside the class who are then bound to speak about the results leads me to consider the idea of the 'truth' of what one says: the central problem Foucault identifies and one he felt he never succeeded in answering (Faubion 1994: 242). It is not that what the Subject Group says is necessarily true but that it is certain that they have said it, therefore it can be analysed and reconstituted for what it is. These dramatic statements, of what has been observed, do not make what is observed right or wrong: it is for the audience or the players to engage with this aspect. No authority is ascribed to the source beyond speaking about what it understands and believes, how it behaves, or indeed how it would like to behave or how it would like to be seen to behave. This corresponds to Karl Popper's view that all knowledge is human and is therefore mixed with our errors, our prejudices, our dreams and our hopes (Popper 1963: 39). He does however counterbalance using Bertrand Russell's, '… no man's authority can establish truth by decree; … we should submit to truth and … truth is above human authority', stressing how essential it is for us to retain the idea of truth being beyond human authority (Popper 1963: 39). The deduction is that without such a vision of truth there can be no objective standards of inquiry, no groping for the unknown and no quest for knowledge (Russell in Popper 1963: 39).

Pure observation cannot exist because all observation is selective. In summary: 'Theatre is not a disseminator of truth but a provider of versions' (Barker, C. 1993: 40). The participants, in this case the students, together go to considerable lengths in seeking answers to their questions, and in being true to their findings. It is this that gives rise to insights that are rarely predictable and these insights have been accompanied by a sense of responsibility in creating the theatrical form to share them. This sense of responsibility is closely associated with the fact that issues often touch on the lives of those that are trapped within a social reality that they, being alone, are not able to fully apprehend, address or change and which too often does not enter our line of vision.

Considerations of theatre – teachers' passion and purpose

Lastly, Plotkin ascribes the emergence of certain initiatives in applied theatre to 'dissatisfaction with commercial, academic, and even most avant-garde production' (Plotkin quoted in Ackroyd 2000: 4). It would be claiming too much for such initiatives, and here I would include OST, to suggest that they are initiated out of a dissatisfaction on the part of the youth. The work is introduced by their teachers. On the other hand it may not be far from the truth to suggest that such work is embarked on by the adults who teach them because of such a dissatisfaction. The reach and hold of commercial production has also been the subject of inquiries that have led to concern when looking at the sample of answers. When classes have plotted, as one rural school in France did in 2006, simply the amount of television watched daily by the students in the six partner schools in Europe they were shocked by the results. In the drama the fact that if the average viewing was watched as non-stop viewing, it would be equivalent to a 16 hour day each week made quite an impact; not just on the parents and teachers in the audience, who were perhaps the most receptive.

Ackroyd also refers to Plotkin's concern for a personal need for spiritual, moral, and ethical purpose in focusing his limited vision and energy. Meeting this need in teaching would seem to have increasingly become a restricted area not to say an anathema. Such words as spiritual and moral are frankly seen as dangerous, although ethical has kept more currency and has a popular appeal. The closest that teaching comes to this is perhaps in civic education but even here many differences were discussed between the teachers from previously Marxist regimes whose curriculum in such areas enshrined other values than those which are taught in the liberal democracies of western Europe (not that these were found to be at all homogenous with regards the recognition that must be given to the plurality within schools and their communities). Such enforced abdication of all but the conscious, rational aspects of existence does nothing to diminish needs that pertain to being rather than existing and to answering ontological questions such as 'what should we do?'

Bakhtine's analysis is that such demands of teaching mean that the active formation of the subject, in this case the student, as part of the body of humanity is neglected (Guattari, 2005: 28). He goes as far as implying that the development of the student as a responsible individual within the community of man, cognisant of the fullness of being human, is shunned by the modern education system. Bakhtine then argues that the complement is that the subject is reduced to only a part of itself, to one which can exist in a dormant state. This consequently diminishes our humanity to the cognito. At best the student becomes one who is capable of 'co-creation' only in the act of consumption (Guattari, 2005: 28). Such

existence may satisfy the need to belong but not one to create. Supporting this view, Daniel Pennac, an author and a teacher for 25 years in schools in deprived areas of France, considers that on our planet there are five sorts of children:

> *L'enfant client chez nous, l'enfant producteur sous d'autres cieux, ailleurs l'enfant soldat, l'enfant prostitue, et sur les panneaux uncurvés du métro, l'enfant mourant, dont l'image , périodiquement, penche sur notre lassitude le regard de la faim et de l'abandon. Ce sont des enfants, tous les cinq. Instrumentalisés, tous les cinq.*

<div align="right">(Pennac, 2007: 286)</div>

> Child clients at home, child labour under other skies, elsewhere child soldiers, child prostitutes and on the billboards in the tube, child starvation, whose image, periodically, rests on our fatigue with its gaze of hunger and abandonment. All five: children. All five preyed upon.

Pennac places the responsibility for this on the success of the consumer society and points out that it is against this systematic absorption within this huge hungry stomach that many teachers still struggle, in their different ways, to save students: especially those on whom the full effects of this digestion means a dissipation of their humanity: those who are lost in the isolation of fear or failure. It is an easy fall into alienation, reminiscent of Baudrillard's bleak description of nihilism and the isolation of the subject (1988: 39), or a simple step into a sense of virtual belonging to a mediated community in whose fabrication we have nothing but a tokenistic say.

The notion of struggle for the teachers involved in this daily battle also applies to those who have undertaken to work on social issues using OST, whether it has been just one time or repeated over a period of several years. It would be quite wrong to give the impression that they have not for the most part felt alone in attempting this task, unsupported by the administrators in their schools or suffering from a lack of moral support or interest from the majority of their colleagues. A task which culminates in theatre has a startlingly low profile and one which engages with large social ills of our time, 'some fatality one can avoid by not looking at' (Klaic in Delgado & Svich 2002: 155), simply spells extra work and as a matter of choice is not to the taste of many. This last undercurrent is particularly dismissive for teachers who do undertake such work because of both the suggestion that the extra work is of their own making and the implication that it is in somewhat bad taste to chose to dwell on social ills. This makes those 70 or so teachers all the more heroic in their acts of resistance, recompensed only to my knowledge on the exceptional occasion that an old student has met with them and remembered with fondness what they built together over the course of a year. In the words of one student, Victoria Pouchon, to her headteacher Mme Baudement from Vals-les-Bains on returning to her old school two years later to see the performance of

younger students, 'it was the best thing we ever did at school' (Baudement, personal communication, 28 April 2006).

Replication

The attempt to create change to the central curriculum or to introduce the methodology to other teachers through a teacher-led initiative, having few forerunners, has not proved easy. Where the practice of OST pedagogy continues it is still localised and on a small scale. A few opportunities have been organised to share the practice and disseminate the teacher's collaborative manual (www.opensourcetheatre.com, click the item labelled Social Investigation Methodology to see the response to the presentation of this in the National English Teachers' Conference in Timisoara, West of Romania, 27th October 2007, Appendix VII).[70] These dissemination opportunities however have not had prior investment from the advisory bodies that they would have needed and their impact is likely to again remain very small scale. Conversely in 1995 the manual *A School with a View* (Young, 1997), the original manual produced by East Sussex County Council PSHE Advisory Teachers, was created with too little reference to teachers and their classroom practice. As things stand, without this essential vertical collaboration, wider dissemination of OST is improbable.

Because I am submitting this thesis to a Drama Department in a British university, the case studies of this chapter, taken from the schools sector, could be found wanting if it did not deal with the reserved reception OST has encountered in the UK. This will be considered in the first half of the next chapter.

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[70] Other conferences include: 31st May 2007, Alden Bisen, Belgium; two Vilnius English Teachers' conferences; a 15 minute presentation 5th February 2008; one six-hour seminar for teachers in spring 2006; and the 17TH National BETA-IATEFL Conference, Sofia, 10 - 11 May 2008 at Sofia University, Department of Information and In-Service Training of Teachers.

Chapter Five

Critique, Review and Evaluation

In any attempt to undertake interdisciplinary work, there are obvious difficulties. In schools this is made considerably more complicated when the work requires exchange beyond the classroom and is reliant on knowledge that is not coming from the teachers or from established sources. I would like to look beyond the general to specific critiques of OST in the classroom.   First, because some of the negative aspects of the critiques are justified. Second, two schools of thought have been very prominent in drama and/or theatre work in educational establishments since the 1970s, neither of which bear much resemblance to OST. Identifying these has helped to locate more exactly past and potential difficulties. This critique is subdivided into three sections: Paradigms, Scientism and Measurement obsession made manifest. Later the chapter will open out into a more general discussion of the power shifts that occur in drama and theatre work, in the section titled Review and Evaluation.

Paradigms

Who are the drama or theatre practitioners and theoreticians who have dominated since Peter Slade in the 1970s described the world of drama for children as one of 'mystic secrecy' (Klaic in Delgado & Svich 2002: 155)? They could be said to fall into two camps. Philip Talyor uses the terms <u>neo-positivists</u> and <u>constructionists</u> which he borrows from categories identified by Guba, that also include positivist and critical theory (Taylor 1996: 16). However, as Guba and Lincoln point out, 'no final agreements have been reached even among … [each paradigm's] proponents about their definitions, meaning or implications' (Guba & Lincoln 1994: 109) so these somewhat fluid categories will be rather symbolically used to stake out oppositions.

Taylor talks of neo-positivist trends and design when he refers to Abbs and Hornbrook's views on the teaching and evaluation of drama in the classroom (1996: 12, 19). Their rhetoric defines them, alongside the traditional intellegentsia and 'outside agents', as a class apart (Taylor 1996: 5)[71] as they endeavour to introduce measurable criteria to inform current understandings within arts education. In this he is close to Neelands who establishes a

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[71] Hornbrook was a Staff Inspector for drama and Abbs a lecturer at Sussex University at the time of their writing.

dichotomy between practitioners and the state – in their battle for and against 'a narrow diet of literacy and numeracy' (Neelands 2007: 3). We see in these views a strong suspicion of anything that has not evolved from within the drama classroom and, since this is the case for OST, there is a strong probability that it would be perceived as having been seeded by 'outside agents' (2007: 3).

Taylor situates himself alongside the 'reflective practitioners' many of whom are advocates of 'process drama' (O'Neill 1995: 48): Heathcote, Bolton, O'Neill, Neelands (Taylor 1996: 6) who assume a constructionist stance (1996: 19). He considers Hornbrook, and others who share his neo-positivist views, to be remote from the thinking groups that every class produces from its own ranks organically, and for whom practice and theory are inseparable (Taylor 1996: 17). Yet this interpretation ignores Hornbrook's own view that *Education and Dramatic Art* 'start where teachers are, in the everyday experiences of their classes and out-of-school drama activities' (1989: xi). This last statement suggests that the neo-positivists might also dismiss OST for similar reasons to the constructionists. Even if drama practitioners have occasionally been among the teams of teachers involved in developing OST practice, they have not been the driving force. The most implicated have been teachers of English as a foreign language, and drama has been a means to that end.

In the years since Slade, there have existed differences, not infrequently expressed as hostilities, which have wounded those deeply invested in their work (the Abbs/Bolton debate). Peter Abbs argued that drama as an art form is 'the articulation of imagination in which aesthetic considerations are intrinsic'; expressing a certain distrust/distaste of drama that is designed principally as 'instrumental to our learning' (1992: 2-6). His thesis appeared in the first publication of Drama Review as part of an ongoing conflict with Gavin Bolton. Coming more than ten years later Etherton and Prentki observe that the field is still 'competitive' (2006: 154), although they write about the wider field of applied theatre in which drama in the classroom increasingly feels marginalised (Ackroyd 2007: 6-8). However, the existing tensions and positions that are expressed as being diametrically opposed to each other within the classroom setting are not independent of views and attitudes that can be found beyond the classroom. It is possible to envisage with reasonable certainty what the objections are likely to be, within the anglo-phone world more generally, to the non-dramatic aspects of OST and the confines of its structure.

The neo-positivists argue for reference to history and the opportunity to develop an understanding of the human condition that comes through a close appreciation of theatrical literature and its contemporary expression through drama. Hornbrook recognises the

influence in his own thinking of '… the late Raymond Williams committed to active democracy and a good common culture, together with his refusal to regard as anything but extremely difficult the processes of getting there.' (1989: xi) OST would be felt to miss out on offering the nourishment from the past classics by limiting the scope of the outcome to one that is purely contemporary. In this the critics would be right.

If OST was the mainstay of an educational menu it would handicap the class by not allowing the students to build up the canon of a shared heritage and all that this can offer in terms of the creation of shared values and understandings. Consequently, whilst the neo-positivist method could be compulsory throughout a drama curriculum, it would be inappropriate for the OST methodology to be so. This in itself does not preclude or invalidate its occasional use in cross-curricular work where the skills acquired, through the exposure and the practice of more traditional theatre studies, could be used. It is an additional technique that can be used in drama rather than a mainstream technique.

For the second group - the constructionists (similarly psychoanalysts, a comparison to which I will return) - what is valued in their teaching is the ability to create knowledge through self-reflection. This could be seen to have its roots in the Kantian categorical imperative, that reduces through personal autonomy the possibility of entrapment in systems or relationships of domination and dependence (1784). Therefore the excision of self-reflective knowledge from OST is grounds for objection. This is a major issue. OST works towards promoting collective-reflective knowledge. This is dealt with in-depth in the next case study (Chapter Six) and at this stage this objection is best answered by the suggestion that the two approaches are not incompatible and are perhaps complementary. Here I will limit myself to two other reservations that could be made by this same group: the fear that liberty of expression would suffer from scientism (Taylor 1996: 1) and the use of quantitative data, albeit alongside qualitative data, as being yet another manifestation of an obsession with the measurable.

Scientism

The limitation of personal artistic freedom is undeniable and deliberate in OST. Let us look first at the limitation of personal freedom and then at the limitation of artistic freedom. Personal freedom is limited by obliging every member present to contribute equally and share the workload equally. Everyone is obliged to carry out certain tasks and make specific demands of others with whom they have to come into contact. This contrasts more in

appearance than in reality with other approaches because what is perhaps less obvious in many other seemingly free approaches is how this freedom allows the group or class leader, with whom they must cooperate, to take control. The effect of limiting personal freedom in OST goes beyond maximising participation, it replaces the authority that in other methods is ascribed to the leader by the discipline required of the whole group.

Chapter Six will argue that the direction of research is determined by the manner in which the questions are formulated. Research frequently functions according to a top-down model. Irrespective of whatever claims are being made about integration and interdisciplinarity, the power is firmly in the hands of the questioner(s). The result of this is that even when research is considered to be exploratory, it invisibly functions as confirmatory. This is perhaps masked because questions, as opposed to answers, seem to be intrinsically neutral. In the drama classroom, where the issue is either determined by the author being studied or steered by the teacher-in-role, the mechanism of control is firmly in place even if the methods are interactive. The effect of the education and socio-linguistic *habitus* that guides/informs the researcher, teacher, facilitator or joker, when they are free to apply their logic to question development, exerts remarkable control over the inquiry. It sets the agenda.

Innovations in the development of trial-and-error questioning in OST are illustrated and resumed in a set of bullet points in Chapter Four (section: Romania) by the school in Pucioasa that came to focus on gender differences in leisure. Attention is given to the necessity of having valid consultation. This only becomes possible once the questions have been empirically tested by the class and field-tested in the local community: the complementary position of both constructionists and neo-positivists is enquiry structured by logic. Also explored in the schools case study (Chapter Four, section: UK Uckfield, themed around food and hunger) are the rewards evident in theatre work based on the findings of reworked questions, in this instance those that had been sent to the Subject Group in Bangladesh. The risk of leading questions is reduced. As a result, erroneous interpretations are diminished and prejudices concerning social situations are sometimes exposed and shown to be localised.

So too, the limitation of artistic freedom is undeniable and deliberate in OST. It is neither theatre as pure fantasy nor theatre as pure art form. This is a direct consequence of the requirement to produce theatre that is reflective of the findings of the enquiry. Limiting freedom, in this case that of the students to interpret results, has to be a deliberate choice. It is a convention to which everyone must adhere in order for it to work. If this is not taken into account then students will naturally enough improvise from first impressions and

produce the same dramas as they might have improvised before the enquiry was carried out (as evidenced by the analysis of the case study in section UK Hove of Chapter Four).

This limitation of one group's artistic freedom is justified by a desire to increase another group's freedom of expression (the Subject Group). Giving more power to those whose views are represented, places more emphasis on a collective vision in the final outcome. The theatre, at least in theory, moves one step closer to Maxine Greene's 'impossible dream of neutrality' or of being value-free (Greene in Taylor 1996: xvi). Not because no values will necessarily emerge but because it will not foreground the values of the actors, director or author. The contributors (the Subject Group) are therefore placed on a more equal footing because their collective subjectivising takes focus. The direct result should give more visibility to the views and experiences of the Subject Group, irrespective of who they are or what they are.

Furthermore, the Integrated Team do not simply describe social life in accordance with scientific rules, they come to articulate, through the language of culture/theatre, through metaphor and image, through the dramatic medium, the feelings and experiences, views and behaviours which the Subject Group would not normally be in a position to express for themselves. At another level, the situation and behaviour of the Subject Group is often commented on by the Integrated Team and this enables a extra layer to be added to the drama. Eventually, the audience, either at dress rehearsal stage or during the performance stage, feed their interpretations back into the drama and yet a further layer might then be added. However these layers will be overlays to the main body of the work which remains faithful to the Subject Group.

Phillip Taylor's assertion that when experience is 'construed only in terms of the identifiable and reducible parts, the possibilities open to people as they interact with art works are diminished' (Taylor 1996: 8) can be understood as a narrowing down of an infinite number of possibilities, and therefore no narrowing down at all: the options in every direction remain infinite. OST is a hybrid that places drama at the service of representation of a factual nature and in so doing challenges the imagination. Its intention is to stir the viewer to deeper reflection about the probabilities and possibilities in areas in which there is doubt. This is not sought through a purely dramatic interpretation of information, nor a purely numerical one, as with statistics, but rather through the transformation of these numbers back into a human dimension. This is achieved by both its embodiment through the Integrated Team and by the use of the imagination in the service of this.

Measurement Obsession made Manifest

Cecily O'Neill talks of becoming 'trapped in the "toils of measurement"' (in Taylor 1996: 139). She also asks 'What is this urge to pin down creativity with numbers?' (1995: 142). There is a strong sense of fear at the idea of a loss of liberty, the metaphors she uses evoke incarceration or punishment. Yet, as I mentioned in Chapter Two, Section: Methodology, she also advocates utilising all available techniques, 'The advantage of constructing models and diagrams is that they are simple graphic representations of the structure of an idea or process… and have the advantage of brevity and precision' (1996: 142). There are good reasons for using numbers - to evidence a point, to clarify or to give immediate access to complexity or to a changing situation (Appendix III).

Within the first few pages of Philip Taylor's chapter on Reflective Practitioner Research he tells us 'there were only three [people out of thirty-two], two high school teachers and one principal of an elementary school' (1996: 5)[72] invited to be present on the US teaching committee of Standards. In enumerating the ridiculously small number of school practitioners who were involved in this decision-making committee, the author, Taylor, who objects to 'reducing the arts to a measurable cohort of scientific experiences' (1996: 7), illustrates the loss that would be felt if we were to exclude the use of numbers from our discourses. Numbers are an extra tool in the toolbox, an extra dimension, when we are interpreting and thinking creatively. They do not replace rational thought, they assist it. Taylor's blanket reduction of all quantitative operations to the sterility of measurement is a damaging generality (Taylor 1996: 2).[73]

This attitude is picked up again in Kincheloe's suggestion that 'positivists argue that the only way to avoid mistakes is through the application of a rigorous research methodology […where] the basis of rigorous research is, of course, quantification' (in Taylor 1996: 13). It is the use of the word 'only' that threatens the exclusion of the qualitative that is distorting. Cohabitation is an option. Accusations do not stop there. To the frequently-heard slight, parodied by Darrell Huff in his incisive book *How to Lie with Statistics* (1954), and picked up and reiterated in all earnest by Taylor, that deliberate and frequent distortion emerges in approaches which use quantifiable data (Taylor 1996: 10), a two-fold answer can be made.

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[72] This occurs within the first five pages of his chapter, that follows Maxine Greene's rallying call in the Foreword to: 'challenge', 'expose' and 'resist' the terrible falsifications and distortions embedded in notions of the measurable (Greene in Taylor, 2007: xvi).

[73] In this he is not alone: at the 'Approaches and Techniques for People-Oriented Field Projects' seminar at the Royal Geographical Society on the 28-29th April 2001 one of the other four guest speakers, who like many of the delegates was undertaking doctoral social sciences research overseas, stated that the only numbers in her research were going to be 'the numbers at the bottom of the page'.

First, first-hand experience in drawing up and manipulating statistical data (extracted in a contemporary social setting) can be helpful in a general sense, or indeed in the same project, in comprehending misuses and dangers. Playing with one's group data, to make composite or comparative graphs by grouping it in different ways, is an activity that makes real the concept of statistical manipulation. Ultimately this activity will require a selection to be made to show what has been found to be most representative. This selection is an ethical choice, one that relates to being true to the Subject Group.

Second, without plotting the data there are certain revelations that would not be evident in any other way. In Chapter Four three of the six case studies show plotting data to have been useful in different ways. In the first, in Belgium, we can see how collections of data about the issue (reactions in the community regarding asylum seekers) can be summarised, reformatted and transformed into a human graph in order to explore 'underlying linkages' (Tukey 1977: 120). In the second, in Romania, we see how collecting the data according to gender suddenly opened up new vistas. In the third, in Lithuania, the students also observed differences between British views about how to deal with terrorists and that in other European countries: this would not have been possible without categorising results according to nationalities. Such manipulations allow insights. Supplementing the group's own insights in this way can enrich material for the theatre and increase the students' confidence in what they are doing.

Julia Kristeva writes:

> The theory of meaning now stands at a cross-roads: either it will remain an attempt at formalising meaning-systems by increasing sophistication of the logico-mathematical tools which enable it to formulate models on the basis of a conception (already rather dated) of meaning as the act of a transcendental ego, cut off from its body, its unconscious, and also its history; or else it will attune itself to the theory of the speaking subject as a divided subject (conscious/unconscious).
>
> (Burke 1992: 105)

This again introduces the idea of the either/or which OST challenges. Art is not incompatible with the rigour of a collective enquiry and the ensuing mathematical analysis. An analogy could be drawn between the use of numbers to describe something and the use of music: witness books with titles such as *The Music of the Primes* (Du Sautoy 2003). Both are 'languages' used to communicate ideas and understandings, even if one might be viewed as appealing to ones conscious and the other to our unconscious. It is harder to imagine anyone arguing that music is an invalid communication medium, or one that cannot

complement dramatic action. Also in the same way that communication through words improves with practice, so too does our ability to use numbers in more ways and to use them in conjunction with the imagination. Indeed Schön points out that the moments where artistry arises need not necessarily be placed in direct opposition to logic (Bolton 1996: 190), they can equally belong to the level of personal investment in the subject, to the precipitous act of taking risks and to our power of imagination which can be triggered as much by a number, that has meaning, as it can from anything else. Use of the logico-mathematical may be in Kristeva's opinion 'dated', but it can service qualitative models by making them more bountiful and penetrating. Putting the conscious and the unconscious in conversation with each other as we unveil different ways of seeing, as evidenced by, for instance, the Terrorism Graph (Fig. 4iii) or the interpretation of eating habits in Britain (Fig. 4v) possibly reflecting social, in particular familial, fragmentation. Our fears of, and our reticence in, using numbers perishes the artistic far more than the numbers themselves.

Review

In the very institutions that are socially licensed to lay claim to objectivity and universality, Bourdieu denounces as a particularly unacceptable abuse of power the inconsistency of refusing to undergo public scrutiny (Bourdieu 1988: xxvii). I shall link this to Thompson's comments on necessary evaluation (in Heritage & Cordeiro eds. 2000: 50-55) but I will question whether making qualitative evaluation fulfils its promise. I will also attempt to show how numerical analysis can play a useful role in evaluation because it can ensure broad participation and an opportunity for review by those who have made it. It is a role that seems to have been somewhat cast aside: 'Our strength lies in the art form not in our ability to create scientific criteria for judging its impact' (Thompson in Heritage & Cordeiro eds. 2000: 50-55). Such comments rather dismiss the possibilities.

According to Bourdieu, auto-evaluation (1988: xii) is never made public by institutes of research. He does not give the impression that auto-evaluation is necessarily a group activity: given the way he worked, it is more likely that he had in mind a single-authored approach on behalf of the group. It is twenty years since Bourdieu wrote this critique and things have had time to change, for instance an example of open criticism can be seen, published on the web, dating from 1996, when the University of Nebraska held a conference on Pedagogy of the Oppressed at Omaha, and made accessible a list of delegate's comments covering four pages. Such bold recognition of criticism could only happen in a climate in which transparency is valued (Appendix VIII). It does however lack synthesis.

Evaluation in theatre workshops is now widely, if badly, practiced: Thompson, in many different countries, has been shown 'cupboards with piles of sad-looking transcripts' (in Heritage & Cordeiro eds. 2000: 53). But when he writes about the relevance of evaluation to all of us involved in arts projects he stresses that it 'must be found by making it active, physical, communal, participatory' and the emphasis is very much on involvement: 'It must be about taking part, looking and then taking part again.' (Thompson 2000: 53). But the point that he does not make is that most qualitative methods of evaluation lack analysis.

Beyond the participation is the less popular but equally essential task of distillation. Without this, the patterns and correlations remain hidden. Not only is individual analysis fallible, but memory is notoriously unreliable so we need to extract the essence otherwise the lessons learnt or key points have no holding mechanism. When he talks about the 500 participants filling in four pages of questionnaires he clearly does this to show the near impossibility of the task this arts project had set itself in making sense of this participant feed-back. This point is beyond doubt. The issue still remains unanswered as to how we can make an evaluation and turn raw data into an understanding that has a recorded and visible form. That is, one whose analysis can be transcribed into communicable form: one that gives us useable feedback and can be remembered accurately and shared with others.

The OST approach does not resolve all problems of monitoring or of post-show evaluation, but it does have certain merits that are worth considering because they can be placed at the service of democratising the process. OST did not develop its evaluation methods exclusively in the schools sector; its principal concern at the start was to evaluate the reception of the theatre it toured. Because of this it first went to its audience to ask members for their appreciation, critiques and understandings (Appendix IX: 1,758 audience questionnaires regrouping shows from Belgium, Denmark, France and UK *Family Matters* 1995-6). Necessity dictated that given the number of audiences involved, the number of questions over time became reduced to a number that would not, by the volume of answers, discourage an analysis from being made. Three questions have emerged as the most useful:

Rate the work 1-5 (5 high),

Make a **co**mment or question, and

Make a **su**ggestion. This sequence has the acronym: Racosu.

The first task, rating, is a numeric evaluation similar to taking the temperature of the piece. It is straightforward to analyse. The second, comments, produces a collection of responses that typically would first be divided into negative and positive, and then each group broken

up into categories, totalled and graphed so that at a glance an assessment could be made of what was and was not working. The third, suggestions, would be tallied/collated to find out which were the most commonly occurring. This work was carried out by the Integrated Team , usually in pairs on a rotating basis after each performance and used for reworking as the need occurred. Of most relevance to us as practitioners were the changes that were needed in view of this evidence; it enriched our understanding of the possibility and direction for improvement. By systematically calling into question our work, constant changes, although small, were underway.

If OST's form of evaluation appears so simple as to be certain to confirm Thompson's fears about reduction down to 'numerical values [that] will lose the flavour and conceal as much about a programme as it reveals' (in Heritage & Cordeiro eds. 2000: 51) then this did not prove to be the case. It rather covered some of the distance between the participative approach outlined by Thompson and the survey approach that Bourdieu used.

Unprocessed evaluation is enormously time-consuming to trawl through, reading every sentence in turn or listening to all feedback in its raw state. Distillation enables all the results to be shared with the whole group. By dint of being more rapid to execute than longer evaluation formats, the three-part evaluation (Racosu) is more likely to take place and not to get squeezed out because of lack of time. As with all quantifiable analysis, it is relatively slow to process at the less interactive and less interesting stage of the collation of data. The most important point about this form of evaluation is that it is representative. It throws a net over the whole group which it makes simultaneously visible and durable.

An additional difficulty with open evaluation is that our imperfect minds cannot take in more than an impression when comments become too numerous. Davidson writes that 'numbers, like the objects we apply them to, lie, as it were, halfway between ourselves and others. … It cannot be this way with our sentences' (2001: 83). When comments are simply collected together and juxtaposed the series of remarks that participants make will create an overall impression in the reader but there is no way to gauge the accuracy of this impression or any reason to assume it is the same for everyone who hears or reads it, particularly if we concede that our reception can be influenced by what we are looking for, and who is saying it. To allow the results of an evaluation to remain individualised is to limit its effectiveness: its potential to guide change. By allowing each comment to be presented in isolation reduces the possibility of objective force as it can only ever carry the weight of that particular subjectivity. This is especially true when comments that are made twice are not represented

separately, or even deliberately not repeated by those doing the analysing in order to avoid repetition.

By contrast, categorising, counting and rating or graphing remarks more comprehensively reveals areas of consensus and of divergence. The effect is that all remarks are linked together and their relationship to each other is known: the viewer may even find the location of their own views either stated or prompted by the summary. Because the capacity to group is not matched by the human eye nor our memory's ability to qualify it, it is possible to say, as claimed by Philip Ball, that a numerical analysis produces a situation in which the information coming out is more than that which is put in (2004: 160). Furthermore, making a numerical breakdown in no way prevents anyone being given access to the full and raw information should they wish - as long as there is room in the cupboards or offices.

Evaluation

The above section was subtitled Review as it dealt with methods of making changes to our practice by looking at our assessment, our monitoring and our evaluation. Somewhat confusingly this section is subtitled Evaluation. This is because of the difference between 'formative' evaluation, all that supports the project development and implementation, and 'summative' evaluation, whose primary purpose is to demonstrate the effectiveness of a programme (Bourn 2001: 8).

This section will deal with the journey that OST has taken in pursuit of the holy grail: summative evaluation. It will show why OST has failed in reaching this goal. This form of evaluation aims to show the extent to which an activity achieves its long-term goals. Its indicators are able to convey to non-specialists, or just those with no experience in this field, the power of the medium to change attitudes, values, skills and behaviour.

First, to situate the need for this evaluation, it is necessary to return to the assertion that self-reflective knowledge reduces the probability of entrapment in systems of domination and dependence (Taylor 1996). This is a claim made for constructionist pedagogy. It has not been proved nor, indeed, disproved. Similar to psychoanalysis, and the political economic doctrine of Marx, there is no possibility of disproving the claims that are made (Popper 1968: 24). The possibility of disproving science is what establishes the difference in disciplines between it and others, such as history (Popper 1968: 25). It is precisely this infallibility on which the constructionists rest their case, 'it became almost impossible to

challenge the premises on which the practice was built' (Hornbrook 1989: 28) to which Hornbrook reacts when he stresses 'the requirement for suitable evaluative criteria has become increasingly recognised' (1989: 23). To this *impasse* he adds a further complication, that of a popular tendency to elevate practitioners to a revered status through the 'cult of personality' (1989: 20). That this hero worship is a cause of stagnation, is a view echoed in the 1996 evaluation of the Nebraska workshops attended by Freire and Boal (Appendix VIII).

How the positive consequences of our craft can be shown to work, is one of the on-going difficulties with which conscientious practitioners wrestle. When attempting to empirically demonstrate that drama promotes positive change, a number of methods have been proposed from attainment standards (Hornbrook 1991: 134) to self-reflective knowledge (Taylor 1996: 25-55). These place a quite different emphasis on what is perceived to be working and how it is shown to do so. All have been carried out in dramatic and theatrical practices designed to increase autonomy (of the individual or the group) in the face of a hegemony produced by means of ideological apparatuses: expansion in technological communications and the media. The evaluations themselves continue to work in this direction of developing people's critical and conceptual abilities, and what was put in place after OST performances in order to evaluate the work is no exception.

It would be wrong to give the impression that evaluating work was ever entered into with a comprehensively planned strategy or at all willingly. Evaluating work had to be done to appease funders. At the start it was designed to be summative evaluation. As the process got underway with various forms of questionnaires to our audience and became more routine the results themselves became increasingly interesting to those of us involved in the delivery of the performances. Questions that identified problems, difficulties and misunderstandings were the ones that became interesting to us because they enabled refinements to improve the performance and its effectiveness. What had been designed to communicate something that we felt intuitively to those with whom we were obliged to dialogue, put us into contact with those with whom we were communicating. The process had become formative evaluation. The alteration came about by requesting communication with those we had been addressing. We had found a way of giving, to those for whom the work was designed, a say in improving our performance.

As far as the funders were concerned, our number count served to confirm where and when and how many had seen the work. It testified to the appreciation of the quality of the exchange. We even tried to measure retroactively what had and hadn't taken place for our

audiences by questions before and after the performance, but it did not help us to make predictions of what the work might achieve over time for them, nor did it help us measure the overall effect. It was almost ironic that what had been designed to prove our success became of use because it showed us our failures.

This means of helping verify what was taking place has in part lead to further experimentation that conformed to Saldana and Wright's claim that research has the potential to reveal new insights and to improve our practice (in Taylor 1996: 129). From the practice of questioning came the germ of an idea for developing more exchange: during performance and before it.

- Shows with live questions had been possible in *Design for Need* 1988-9, as we had toured with a different professional engineer in the cast at every venue.
- We looked to dialogue with the potential audiences and the experts on the ground by visiting small-scale artisans during the research for *Is the Price Right?* 1990-91. Subsequently, in 1991-2, we asked the audiences to answer questions about road signs during the show in the part called 'reading the road' and judge the best overtaking practice of audience members showing how to overtake, before an actor demonstrated the recommended practice (*In Roads to Safety*).
- Then pre-scripted questions were tried out to see if the audience involvement, even when it was artificial would make the audience more curious, draw them in; give another rhythm, other voices (*Everything you ever wanted to know about Mother but were afraid to ask,* 1993-4).
- We started asking questions to the audiences before we arrived (*Family Matters* 1996 Appendix X).
- We asked ourselves why we should be the ones to ask questions and not the audience and so in the European Year Against Racism it was the classes themselves who took on the role of researchers finding out about discriminating attitudes among their own peer group towards race, gender, and disability (*A School with a View* 1995-7).

Until, eventually, we had moved the questioning process right forwards until, as will be explained in the next chapter, it took place before the subject matter itself was decided (*Story of Land* 1998-99). Thereafter the question has continued to function as a tool of dialogue with the Subject Group in a series of cycles that will also be explained. Furthermore since *Design for Need*, 1988-9, the group had been functioning in an almost exclusively responsive manner and not a pro-active way, with approaches being made from Initiators of projects.

Questioning therefore gave rise to all manner of exchanges and altered the relationship we had with those with whom we worked. Racosu evaluation was also used for monitoring during workshops or within the Integrated Team to become aware of problems or tensions as they occurred. The Nebraska organisers towards the end of the workshop invited participants to comment under the heading 'Suggestions for the Future'. It is clear that the majority of these remarks were in fact about the current session of working together but were canvassed too late for any positive change to be made from which those same people would benefit (Appendix VIII: Suggestions for the Future).

What we did not gain was the power to prove the strength of our work '– to show decision makers that drama and theatre for youth "works"' (Saldana & Wright in Taylor 1996: 129). This statement about evaluation's value successfully operating as an 'agent for advocacy', remains one of desire, rather than one that has been proven. What has proved more successful is interrogating the power of the question. The augmented interest in the dialogic function of the question, prompted by the curiosity about the reciprocity that it enabled is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Six

Bangladesh case study – Questioning questions

I have mentioned Bourdieu's critical, if somewhat dated, account of the institutions to which he belonged. Their reluctance to implement evaluation was just one of the recurrent failings that he denounces when he turns the tables and submits his colleagues to a sociological study of the sort that they usually carry out on others (1988: xi-xxvi). Despite the introduction of new methods in sociological research: models based on cognitive associations or ones using inductive reasoning (Moliner, Rateau & Cohen-Scali 2002: 123-134), some of which resemble those used in the field of drama, a number of Bourdieu's criticisms of professional practice are still pertinent today. The next case study, that looks at questioning, will be interspersed with discussion of these.

Questions can be used as a creative tool. In OST they are used to enable an on-going dialogue between the Integrated Team and the Subject Group. This process is both reflective and cyclical. The case study presents a project on land rights that took place in 1998 - 1999 in Bangladesh. After a brief background a photograph will introduce each step in the process and a brief description of what took place (issue selection, respondent-driven questioning, Verification and Validation) is mostly followed by discussion of how certain innovations sidestep shortcomings identified by Bourdieu.

Background

The cycle of work in Bangladesh lasted from 1996 – 2001 (Table 6i). With a remit of developing the drama-based technical skills of community workers, the 1996 training course 'Effective Presentation and Communications Techniques' was attended by representatives from four different NGOs and two different cultural groups. Like the mechanisms of a clock with many cogs where each turn of a wheel brings about another set of turns, the success of this pilot resulted in future work in 1998, 1999 and 2000 and this took a more outward-looking focus.

DATE	TITLE OF WORK and SOCIAL ISSUE	LOCATION
1996	Effective Presentation and Communications Techniques (workshop theme: security)	Dinajpur
1996	*Family Matters* (Population and Consumerism)	Europe/Japan
1998	*Four Corners* (globalisation)	Dinajpur
1998	*Four Corners* (sustainable development)	Europe/Japan
1998-9	*Story of Land* (Land Rights)	Dinajpur/Dhaka
1999	*Breaking the Chains* (International Debt)	Europe
2000-01	Song of the Farming People (micro-credit)	Dinajpur

Table 6i Workshops and performances from 1996 – 2001 taking place in Northern Bangladesh and in the capital city of Dhaka, touring in Europe and in Japan.

In 1994, Shah-I-Mobin Jinnah, the chief executive of the Community Development Association (CDA) in Dinajpur, enquired, through the contact made via OXFAM,[74] about the possibility of a training workshop that his organisation might host. Fellow NGOs from the region and Dhaka could be invited. He was what I have called an *Initiator*. His request was prompted by the fact that drama was already being used by a large number of 'cultural activist groups', through a repertoire of adapted historical plays or folk tales, to popularise development messages (Charanji 2002: 11). In her article, 'Street Theatre comes of age: Social issues to the fore', in the Dhaka journal *Advocacy,* Kavita Charanji writes that since liberation in 1971 the use of popular theatre programmes has continued to increase. NGOs such as BRAC[75] have made much use of such groups: since 1988 when their drama programme began up until October 2001, performers had created 333 dramas and staged 8,032 performances. With estimated audiences between 500-1000 each time this is reaching audiences by the million.

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[74] CDA in 1994 was a partner of OXFAM who had invited Muthoni Kirubi (see paragraph two Appendix I) on returning from the United Nations *International Conference on Population and Development* held in Cairo to perform the one-woman show *Everything you ever wanted to know about mother but were afraid to ask* to their overseas partners attending the national assembly. I was also invited along to talk about how using 200 interviews of women in Nairobi about motherhood had given rise to this play and how Passe-Partout had helped make the necessary steps to get it to Eygpt and to Beijing the following year for the International Women's Conference. Following this performance delegates were hosted by Passe-Partout at a workshop that Muthoni and I facilitated in Brighton.

[75] BRAC is the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee.

Shah-I-Mobin's interest lay in looking at other drama-based approaches. More particularly, the possibility of engaging with audiences beyond his client group. The beneficiaries of his NGO he called 'the poorest of the poor'. They were trapped in situations which could be ameliorated precisely through structural change, but not of the sort that was being imposed - that penalised this group more than any. Rather than a theatre for the education of the Subject Group, it would be designed for the decision makers: to help them learn about subjects of which they had no first-hand experience and very limited or filtered exposure. The subject matter, language and mode of theatrical presentation were clearly going to be key conditions for this work to succeed in bridging cultural and linguistic barriers.

For Shah-I-Mobin to wish to pursue the idea of piloting such an approach in Bangladesh, the theatre that he had seen Muthoni perform must have communicated effectively across an African/Asian cultural divide, where certain lived realities had sufficient context for him to feel that the debate concerning population and development had been furthered.

On arrival in Dinajpur in 1996, after the long journey north, I was welcomed with three hours of a performance about a rich land owner who cheats an illiterate peasant of his land: this was just an extract from the play. In the rural areas, cultural activists were nearly always men (Charanji 2002: 11). This play had an all-male cast of twelve. As an art form it came from a strong oral tradition: the body was a channel that amplified the spoken word and little else. Being from a struggling rural community, their costumes were far from lavish, unlike the ones I later saw in Jatra performances in the cities. This dramatic tradition did not lend itself easily to crossing cultural or linguistic barriers, not least of all because of its duration. Much of the play was declaimed and although the voices did modulate in tone to show emotion this was stylised: for instance destitution gave rise to 'lament'. The cast stood up throughout and there were just two actions: a man (the illiterate peasant) thumb-printing a document, at which point he knelt on the ground and later the same man being dragged away after a quarrel. The absence of action certainly highlighted these events. To me, as someone from outside Bangladesh, outside the culture, outside the language, Mukandhapur Jubo Vumihin Shomite's play succeeded over a long period of time in communicating very little. Since the new departure in theatre for CDA[76] and their partners was to look at the possibility

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[76] In 1996 both CDA and Passe-Partout had been in existence for ten years. CDA worked through a network of village collectives in its immediate vicinity. Passe-Partout was responsive and not locality specific. With prior involvement in developing programmes or campaigns with an educational or development focus in nationally and internationally, the two organisations had experience that could complement each other.

of communicating with audiences beyond their own communities, it was clear that presenting priorities and concerns using exclusively the traditional performance style was not an option.

Before moving on to the 1998-99 case study there is one other person who must be mentioned, Kiron Chondra Roy. He became the Precipitator. This senior member of our team, and Associate Coordinator in Education of CDA, had musical talents and a gift for the comic that enlivened the work in 1996. He also had a combination of local knowledge and patience which made him invaluable, as did his dedication because, unlike many of the younger men, he stayed with CDA.[77] Over the five years of exchanges he ensured continuation in the OST work. For work of this kind to succeed, it has become apparent when doing this research that it is essential that a Precipitator stays within the community.[78]

The first meeting

In order to select the specific issues on which the group would focus, and to help draft the questions that would form the questionnaire, four women leaders of local women's groups

Fig. 6i The four leaders of the women's groups attending the first day of question generation. From left to right: Punima, Boucoul, Rashida and Rebecca.

joined the Integrated Team (Fig. 6i). Several issues emerged: problems with dowry repayments, land rights, the negative influence of foreigners in child-trafficking and excessively violent and sexually explicit films. Land rights was identified as the one they could do least about. Questions were then generated for the enquiry in part by these representative community members. It was them and their own community who would be the respondees to the questions. However, as will become apparent in the examination of in this case study, before the questionnaire was ready there were several cycles of testing the questions. The community that would be the respondees provided the feedback to rework the questions. This respondent-driven question generation led to a set of questions that reflected both their direct

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[77] Small NGOs suffer from a rapid turn over of junior staff: a more secure work environment in many southern NGOs would greatly assist long-term loyalty (Mawdsley et al. 2002: 145).

[78] In a project in Kenya on Street Children, a break down in coordination between UN Habitat, Nairobi Police and several hostel organisations coincided with the departure of the Precipitator (Passe-Partout internal report: Street Children, Nairobi, 2004).

influence on issue selection and their contribution to providing the questions that they wanted asked.

Much as everyone would have liked to keep all four women with us throughout the whole process as part of the working team, this was not possible and two other members of the Subject Group were invited to join us: a younger woman, Debam, and a musically talented man, Chondra Roy. The inability of our women's *shomite* member leaders to free themselves from their family obligations, excepting one, Rebeka Kisku, was because their economic situations afforded them very limited freedom of movement owing to the necessity of maintaining their daily tasks of subsistence. The problem that time excludes the poorest from involvement in 'development' activities is recognised (Rutherford 1998: 9).

Shortcomings: subject identification

Bourdieu draws attention to the seemingly obvious and unproblematic original identification of the subject to be studied by the researcher and how this can appear innocently selected. He suggests that the manner in which problems are elected to be studied exhibits a lack of rigour: often on grounds of being the latest social problems, as if there was a 'flavour of the month' factor impacting on such important decisions (Bourdieu 1988: xiii). When the onus for study is at the initiative of the researcher or when those responsible for making such decisions are detached from the problems themselves, it is difficult to imagine alternatives to this model.

A method that proposes a collective approach will necessarily have to establish that all members of the working group are clear and in agreement about the central issue(s). If this is to be equitably decided then the group will need to find a system which allows this choice to be made freely rather than in response to a directive from elsewhere. Since 1999 OST work has started with issue identification or issue refinement by using a voting-in activity (Appendix XI: Concentric Circles). Given that the composition of the team usually has a minimum of one third Subject Group members, they are the only 'set' within the work and consequently would be the most likely to hold sway. But although group-think or concepts of 'social forces' (Lewin quoted in Ball 2003: 163) can predispose behaviours or stifle people's unaffected range of views, the main reasons for avoiding group discussion as a selective or defining process is that it is susceptible to being hijacked. The most articulate, or those with strong personalities, habitually take centre stage and will frequently steer proceedings or alternatively succeed in persuading the group of the urgency of following

their pre-determined agendas (for example see Appendix XI: footnote 6). This is not necessarily conscious behaviour.

The reverse interaction is also in play, namely that the least articulate and those with the weakest personalities, are responsive (intentionally/unintentionally), choosing a path of supportive agreement or at most guarded opposition to the perceived leaders. Ultimately their aim, that of the less articulate, often being to be accepted into the group rather than a more long-term intention to contribute to the outcome of the process.

Making questions

The process of making good questions is not just a straight forward matter of invention and clarity. Whose questions are being asked to whom, from the inception, has a determining

Fig. 6ii Harun writes down the questions that the village women want asked.

effect on the direction of all that follows. The effects of generating questions from an Integrated Team will be studied in greater depth in the prison case study in Chapter Eight. Everyone in the Integrated Team makes up their own questions, which they then put to a partner. The direction of the enquiry is also determined by which questions are kept and how they are developed.

In OST the question of how to decide on which questions to keep is an almost mechanical process which does not depend on value judgment so much as on empirical testing. Feelings of direct ownership of the questions are severed early on by the device of moving them onto new editors; the aim is to produce a collectively-owned research tool elaborated by the team. (For a more complete explanation of the method used at the time see Appendix XII: The Snake.) An initial selection of questions is simply made on the basis of what gave rise to material for discussion when the new editors ask the questions of each other.

From this selection, a number of questions remain. Those will be written out on large sheets of paper (Fig. 6ii) and each one will be briefly checked by group discussion. The questions are then answered, individually, by the everyone in the Team. Testing the questions means analysing the results. When answers are plotted, it is possible to know whether or not the

question should be kept. This is decided by considering whether the results provide interesting evidence. If this is not the case the wording is reviewed to see if it has affected the outcome and needs to be changed or whether that question should be cut. Question development took place in Bangla.

Shortcomings: a procedure based on commonsense and logic

Bourdieu in his desire to move towards transparency mentions that thinking of the category first can help think of the question, referring to this as 'a semi-intuitive system' or as a more or less verifiable form of 'pre-scientific knowledge' of the situation (1988: 6). This is a design change from within. It is an attempt to avoiding constructing from 'cold' and developing from logic. Given that we are schooled in a Cartesian logic in which grouping things appears evident, as if it is all just common sense, his innovation only seems to affect a reversal. He places the category heading under which questions can be developed first rather than a more linear progression, in which the questions are categorized later. Neither eschew common sense: 'the foundation of the bourgeois statement of fact' (Barthes 1957: 155): it is an unacknowledged guiding principle of reason.

A more 'semi-intuitive system' might be to double the number of intuitions and half the number of questions. In OST as well as having diverse questioners coming from, not just different disciplines, but different social backgrounds, the subjectivities are not simply added - they are multiplied. By contrast, question elaboration is similar to distillation. It results in a reduction. In this case study, 16 participants each on average created five initial questions. These 80 questions were then reduced, through immediate testing, to 17 questions. These were Verified in the field (Section: Verification) and a working draft produced. This draft questionnaire had nine questions (other case studies produced from seven to 15 at this stage). Proceeding by paring down questions is a considerable departure from the more orthodox expanding process, questions being written under different headings or categories designed to comprehensively tackle the subject. If the remaining questions have been felt to be insufficient then, when time has allowed, a second set of questions or a further three or four questions have been drafted as a second volley (land rights Chonkali,1998, Micro-credit 2000, Bangladesh and domestic violence, Jamaica 2001, anti-bullying, HMP Lewes 2000).

That social phenomena are more complex than natural ones is a moot point. By constructing comparatively simple models of man's actions and interactions and using these models as approximations is a possible way forward, even if it does not allow us to 'propound historical prophecies' (Popper 1963: 452). The human ability to make approximations and

then discuss the margins of error is fundamental to OST. This is how the data is created and used in an exploratory capacity, as well as diagrammatic representations, and eventually theatrical ones. It is what Karl Popper argued for: a genuinely iterative process in which, if it is not possible to get it right the first time or to make a model to which there are no exceptions, as is attempted in confirmatory data analysis in science, then in the effort of doing so, its visibility is improved.

Verification

It was on the Precipitator's instigation, in 1999, that the Verification of questionnaires was first introduced. The idea of a preliminary consultation with the groups before the interviews

Fig. 6iii Verification of the questions and arranging for the interview times in one of the villages near Birgonj just before dusk.

took place was to avoid any misunderstandings of the questions and any omissions (Fig. 6iii). It was the first field meeting with a *shomite*. When the introductions had taken place, each question was read at least twice, so that everyone could hear and have time to think. Certain words were queried and one or two substituted or added. Further questions were suggested both to the whole group and to individuals informally afterwards (because of the embarrassment of making suggestions publicly). This editing by the Subject Group served to hold the team's work up to a form of quality control. But perhaps more importantly it also made the groups, rightly, feel some ownership of these. Furthermore, it made it easy for the community to ask questions about the intentions of the work and importantly, it served to help organise a suitable day and time in advance for the interviews.

One last thing was pledged by the Integrated Team before leaving the villages: a time and a date was agreed for their return to perform their findings to the community for their comments. It was also agreed that the drama would be performed twice in the same day allowing children and mothers to come in the afternoon and then, before dark, at the end of the day, for the men to attend when their work in the fields had come to an end. The fact that the results of the research would be dramatised was seen as a clear commitment that something was going to be done with their answers. It would also fulfil their own curiosity about the summary of answers and conclusions.

Bourdieu's experience shows that it is not easy to overcome the obstacles to collective working, '*je suis sans doute celui qui a le plus essayé de faire du collectif, et celui qui a le plus échoué*' 'I am without doubt the one who has most tried and most failed to make collective work succeed' (in Dubois, Durand, & Winkin 2005: 340). By following established practice down the one-way road of a single discipline, the changes that the OST method of question generation have brought about empirically through trial and error would have been unlikely. The critical difference is that by contrast to professionals creating and elaborating questionnaires then submitting their work to expert consideration for improvement, OST work benefits from the expertise of the Subject Group through consultation in:

- subject identification,
- question generation, and
- question Verification.

These simple changes have far-reaching effects. The formation of questions by respondents ensures their local applicability and eliminates the number of provisos that often accompany surveys that stress the need to be adapted for local use. It also illuminates questions that are inappropriate.

Shortcomings: *a priori* categorisation and *habitus*

The mandarins, Bourdieu's term for those who set the standards, never subject to analysis the forms of classification they employ (1988: 39). He reproaches them with never seeking to question the sources of the categories of their professional understanding. This suggests that the categories that are used are established *a priori* either by replicating pre-existing ones (particularly those that pertain to affiliation), or by inventing new ones that appear causally linked or logically derived from the subject. In a social study, for instance, this might translate as a category relating to social origins, or what are made to look like 'universal truths … in naïve criteria such as sex, age' (Bourdieu 2005: 35). His own questions, that he is candid in critiquing, when he came to ask them in his own community included ones that relate to the educational background or to the profession of parents (1988: 50, 196). They proved to be taboo. In this instance, taboo because of the way they were experienced by the respondent: insulting because he was deemed to already know the answer (Dubois, Durand, & Winkin 2005: 329).

In other contexts, similar questions would be taboo: questions about literacy or ethnic group[79] in the villages in the field area around Dinajpur. Similarly, in prisons, because of the status of sex offenders, a questionnaire starting with a question related to someone's offence is not one which everyone will feel equally able or willing to answer. In Chapter Six: *Prisons and Integration,* an example is quoted where this is the first question in an audit fashioned by professionals within the prison service: it can easily colour what is to come for both the person answering and the person analysing.

Being obliged to identify ourselves reinforces a certain way of being seen (see Chapter Three: The Subject, Power and Knowledge). It is perhaps essential in market research[80] because the expressed aim is to target a particular *clientele*, but in many other types of analysis where this auto-categorisation is routinely asked, cross-correlation is often irrelevant. When it is indispensable, alternatives may well exist. The data could be obtained for instance from government or public records. That this procedure is rarely resorted to might be explained by the unsatisfactory time demands of having to consult other sources rather then gather all the information in the same way at the same time.

The interview
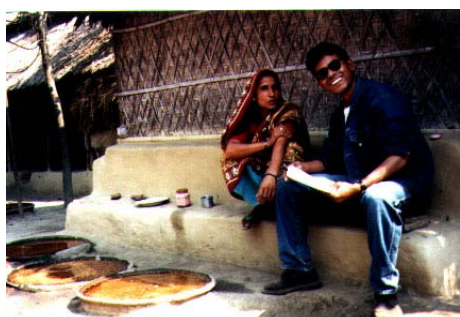
Fig. 6iv Shahinur Rahman (Hira) interviewing a *shomite* member outside her home.

On the day agreed the interviews about land rights were carried out in an atmosphere of excitement and good humour. Because the arrival of the interviewers was expected, and the reasons for the visit explained in advance, there was no more the 'feeling of having fired a gun'[81]. Each interview ran for twenty to thirty minutes, once customary greetings had been exchanged. Good interview techniques, that were dramatised by the team before

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[79] Some of the tribal people who inhabit this area are the most discriminated against.

[80] Market research is a different category of research from academic research: the aim of the former being to 'improve' something, whereas the latter lies behind the window of truth, the aim being to 'concretise' something. One is about changing something in the future, the other is about identifying what it has been in the past.

[81] During the pilot visit in 1996, at the lunch time during the field-test of the questionnaire, it was noticed that, as someone colourfully described, simply finding and asking people questions directly had 'a similar effect to firing a gun', it made everyone run away. This was especially found to be the case when answers were written down, somehow this made them seem irrevocable and officially recorded. It was concluded that the afternoon would be carried out less formally and simple oral interviews would be attempted, obliging those interviewing to make notes afterwards from memory.

setting out (summarised by Brick as 'interview no-nos', Appendix XIII) were not always respected on the day (Fig. 6iv - the interviewer is wearing sunglasses: a status symbol). Field warns that the interviewer needs 'to be acutely sensitive to the emotional, transferential and power dynamics of the interviewer/interviewee relationship' (Field, 2003: 63).

Since each interviewer is only one out of a team of interviewers not all results undergo the same influences. Thus the overall effect of the occasional lack of tact is diminished. Similarly there is a dilution because of the large number of interviewees in the case that one or two of the respondents fabricate or falsify information because some interviewees 'construct memories and myths in order to cope with their emotional experiences of the past and present' (Field, 2003: 63).

Shortcomings: hidden agendas

Schuman observes that individuals who have a hidden agenda ask the questions during the interviews in such a manner (either the way in which they introduce the question or their emphasis in the way in which it is delivered) as to influence the answer (Schuman & Kalton in Lindzey & Aronson, 1985: 697). This cannot be entirely guarded against but the fact that there has publicly been a collective combing through of the questions during Verification reduces this risk; the number of other interviewers dilutes its impact; and the manner that it is visibly tallied can reveal the case of someone who is consistently getting answers that differ from the rest of the group (this can be challenged or pointed out to the Arbitrator to take into account).

Cooke and Kothari, have gone so far as to say that the interviewer is tantamount to an author – collecting raw material, selecting and discarding, then presenting according to their own agenda (2001: 143). I hope to show that the OST method uses a process of rationalisation and objectification which, because it is collective and involves those on whom the objectification is usually carried out (the Subject Group) and those on whom it is not (the Stakeholders) it prevents this from happening. One of the mechanisms of prevention is the publicly visible cycles of reworking.

Number crunching

On return to the CDA offices there was a feeling of exhaustion after the long dusty rides and the series of interviews that had taken place. Collating the results either had to be done by one individual or processed by the whole group. If we were not careful this could set us back a whole half day. The group had little idea of what it represented but the general feeling was that they should learn how to do this step or else they would never be able to replicate the method.
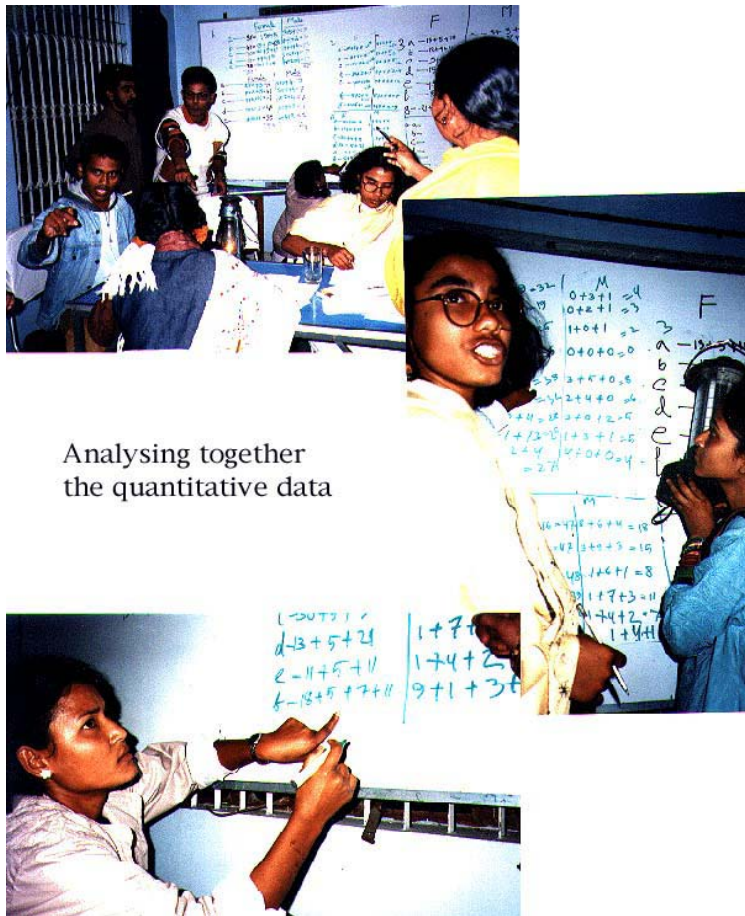
Analysing together
the quantitative data

Fig. 6v The Integrated Team analyse the field-trip results in CDA offices, Dinajpur: a mechanical task that takes time. The recent memory of the context from the field trip, just hours away as the content emerged, was accompanied by a sense of breaking new ground.

The group set about the task that same evening in small groups of about four people and everyone contributed their own totals. They had returned from the field trip at about 5pm and then, after some tea, started collating at 5.30pm; they were only finishing at around 9.30pm (Fig. 6v). No one could be persuaded to leave this job half finished and go home;

there was a sense of urgency. The team wanted to know what would result. Although this is a somewhat mechanical task, an accompanying sense of excitement filled the room. It has since been experienced in other contexts when this activity is shared, for instance in the work in prisons. It would seem to be linked to a sense of discovery and ownership, because those contributing to the 'translation' of answers from words into numbers are doing it from their own questions and they are involved in building their own representative statistics.

The problem of interviewers being a source of influence (Schuman & Kalton in Lindzey & Aronson, 1985: 635) surfaced when one member of the team appeared to have three times more interviews than anyone else. It soon emerged that he was counting three answers rather than one because his interviews were not carried out on a one-to-one basis. He argued that he was noting down each time the two other women were in agreement with the one he interviewed. In terms of what any single woman had said this young man tripled it by the power of a nod[82] and for each of his interviews this was the case. Separate interviewers each feeding in their data to a computer would not have thrown up this anomaly, even a single person doing it on behalf of the group, with no one to ask, might have let it pass. It is not always easy to show how findings can be, unintentionally, falsified and six answers become eighteen. A checking mechanism such as tallying the findings as a group helps increase vigilance in these areas, particularly when members of the team are inexperienced, as is inevitably the case in a team that integrates people with very different backgrounds and experiences.

By comparison with the 1996 much looser, impressionistic oral method of collecting the answers to the questions, the 1999 collective method made it possible to hold onto the results and rescue them from the random manner in which they were received and hitherto retrieved. The answers became not only solid and manageable but also, through a different means of conceptualising through translation into another language of sorts, more compact. We had at our disposal the means to situate and contextualise consensus or dissent and extreme views. Concepts, attitudes and behaviours could be articulated as existing in more than memories founded on impressions of what had been said.

Shortcomings: shallow learning

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[82] In most of south Asia a shake of the head is equivalent to what westerners call a nod.

One risk that Saldaňa & Wright warn us about in experimental studies is that their tight focus can result in a '"narrow" knowledge gain' (in Taylor 1996: 117). This I argue is more likely when questions are developed using logic and commonsense. There is one last clarification that should be made about the observation that relates to the advantages of there being a limited number of questions. Some questionnaires have a very small number of questions indeed and these 'questionnaires' do not work in the same manner; indeed they serve a quite other function. An example of this survey type is the UK DEFRA 2007 survey of public attitudes and behaviours towards the environment (Economic and Social Research Council, Cultures of Consumption Research Programme).[83] This survey, that made much of the fact of being the largest-ever survey on green issues, asks only three questions: What do you do to reduce global warming? What could you do? What is stopping you? The answers themselves are not what is of interest to DEFRA; it is not part of a process in which something will be done with the answers to these questions. The questions function as a form of interactive publicity campaign. It would appear that this is more of a campaign to promote the idea of individual economy: which taken on a big scale becomes environmentally-meaningful. It is a commendable approach to the climate change problem and a nice example of an alternative use of a questionnaire. It alerts us to the potential for agenda to be hidden within our own attempts at investigation.

In theatre there is yet another use of the single question on which whole shows are built up from the answers. These 'appetite-wetting' questions and their purpose are stripped down in Chapter Seven: The Witness and Reproduction. So between the extremes of the single question and a large number of questions in a study that will provide huge amounts of generalised data,[84] there is the option of a smaller numbers of honed questions. Open exploration in specific areas, especially when steered by the Subject Group, stands to cut much deeper.

Honed questions, in this context, are understood to be questions that have been tested and have proved their interest; this is not the same as Saldaňa & Wright's interpretation when they talk of pre-tests and post-tests in the design (1996: 118). They use these terms to contrast the before and after in people's perceptions, after what they call having or not having received 'treatment' in a certain way (1996: 118). How useful this is to help identify objectives against which the efficacy of the work may be measured has not in trials of this

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[83] Peter Shield www.naturalchoices.co.uk/2007-DEFRA-environment-survey?id_mot=10 (Jan 2008)

[84] By a large number I refer to questionnaires that are top down like the World Bank survey on social capital (Nov 2003) which runs onto 38 pages of questions and took between 45 minutes and one and a half hours per interview in Albania and Nigeria respectively.

kind in which Passe-Partout has been involved shown any proof (Shehnaaz Kanji 2001: 16). Such terms are of more value applied to our question-making, something which is often overlooked.

Should this idea be taken up it might more accurately be called pre-testing and field-testing of questions. Which again is very different from simply getting confirmation or suggestions from a reliable outside eye. Saldaňa & Wright strongly advise 'asking adults to review your written questionnaires or surveys before you administer them to young people' (1996: 126). This sounds like a school doctor's version of the World Bank proviso to make sure that only well-trained research teams should be used, with the addendum that language and questions should be adapted to local conditions. When too much is dependent on external changes being made at the last minute it is perhaps a sign that it is the research methods that should be questioned. If we look more critically at the nature of the problems that were identified in the field, a serious doubt is cast on the validity of their approach. Improving the methods stands to make an important qualitative difference, for both researcher(s) and the Subject Group. Upholding the status quo rests entirely on keeping the power relationships unchanged.

Validation

Fig. 6vi The afternoon performance in Chonkali village.

These examination performances later came to be called Validation.

Another evolution that took place between 1996 and 1999 was that Subject Group feed-back was sought in the later work. Whilst the first shorter period, conceived of as a training course and pilot, led up a performance about security issues that was only shown to an audience of local NGO staff and cultural activists, the later work was first taken back to the Subject Group for Validation before being shown to urban audiences.

In 1999, before the performance to the local decision-makers in the town hall of Dinajpur and the performance in Dhaka at the Russian Cultural Centre, there were performances for the Subject Group both through trips out to the villages (Fig. 6vi) and in the town hall where groups of village women (300) were brought in by bus to rehearsals. Although criticism was not easily solicited, a particularly perceptive comment made independently by two people, one a village Chief, was that the voice of the 'influential people' be more represented. When the receptivity of future audiences matters, audiences reveal themselves sophisticated critics: a balanced view was susceptible to being thought of as more truthful than a didactic one.

The performance underwent some quite considerable modifications after the audiences had made their comments and suggestions but the Chief's comment turned out to cause the most controversy among the team. They argued hard about introducing a new scene showing the journalistic reporting at the start of the campaign of harassment and violence in the village of Chonkali,[85] where a dispute had erupted about the *Khas*[86] land and the small *Khas* pond in which there were fish. This scene was intended to allow both sides of the story to be told through the journalist's attempt at impartiality. In rehearsal this scene took on a peculiar dynamic of its own. The journalist was a go-between caught between an eavesdropping member of the Young Merchants' Club and the mother who had been made homeless by the setting alight of her house while she and her daughter slept.[87] The interpretation given by the male character seemed to become ever more emphatic and passionate, in part due to the fact that the staging of the scene forced him, on account of his proximity to the women gathered to talk to the journalist, to overhear what the mother had to say. The women's story on the other hand was delivered in an increasingly restrained manner by the mother; this was felt most appropriate to a woman with only this one chance of being heard and where each word counted. There was a sense in which the audience were being made to strain to hear the account that the actors themselves believed to be true.

Shortcomings: reading results

For the Integrated Team, the certainty that they would be returning the results of the survey to the community for approval and correction, sharpened a desire for accuracy. At the same

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[85] A settlement which numbered about 20 families in an area of 15 hectares including four *Khas* ponds.
[86] In 1983 under the Ershad government a Land Reform Commission recommended the distribution of *Khas* or crown lands. In 1987 some lands had been distributed.
[87] Several houses had been set alight by men hired by the local *Jominders* - land owners, to intimidate the villagers into fear and submission. Villagers had been injured.

time it trawled out the inaccuracy by again returning the control of the information to the group that was agreeing to share their knowledge of the subject material. In summary, this form of cyclicity in reporting back to the Subject Group serves to guard against misunderstandings and misappropriations and to give the Subject Group the power to push for a better understanding of issues within their own community and beyond.

Fact and fiction

After the discussion, which took place in little clusters, between members of the cast and audience in between the two shows (Fig. 6vii), where the audience were asked questions about what could be improved in the performance, a misunderstanding was brought to the

Fig. 6vii Audience Validation. Conducted in one of the two performances in the actual village of Chonkali where the disputed Khas land had lead to violence - this feed-back took the theatre into a new dimension.

Team's attention concerning the way in which one of the village girls had been ducked in the fish pond by a trespassing fisherman. In the performance the scene had mimed her as being held by the ankles which the audience had thought was very funny: 'the girl was not held by her ankles but by her hair'.[88] This explanation was accompanied by a demonstration on one of the young girls standing by who, since circumstances demanded it, did not seem to mind. This seemingly inconsequential detail of what had taken place made the moment disturbingly real.

It was at this point that we also discovered how the women of the village had taken this fisherman 'hostage' by tying him up with a sari. This level of detail had not emerged previously in the telling of the story. In the second performance that day it was decided that this hostage-taking would be improvised. The results, especially for the actor playing the fisherman, crossed the fact/fiction border in a number of ways. One of the women spontaneously joined the action to assist the actors in taking the fisherman hostage. It is not clear whether this woman, who had been present at the time of the attack, was moved into reliving the moment - incensed by the memory or whether she was helping with recapturing the event in the performance. This hostage taking was a very unusual act of defiance. The women worked together against a man, dominating him through the combined use of force. The impact of this act was heightened by the visually strong use of the sari to bind him up.

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[88] This incident had resulted in eye infection causing eight months of blindness.

The sari is worn by all married women and as such was a powerful symbol of womanhood. Her participation caused a huge uproar of approval from the rest of the audience.

Hilary Bell says that good writing for the theatre is a lot about detail (Bell & Wallace in Svich, 2003: 112) and if that is the case then the above-cited incident in the Bangladesh case study is a good example. The event was subsequently remade with greater accuracy. In a society very different from the one that Wallace finds in the USA, where people can think in terms of 'the power of the individual to make themselves' (2003:114), the Bangladesh case study was an example of theatre enabling a 'conversation between the play and the audience' (2003: 115). Those inside a situation were able to give those outside it a much fuller understanding. Within this relived moment, that surfaced despite the horror, the passion, the violence even the humour, was the experience of the audience who were educating the players. At times like this, whether it is this attention to detail that enables us to link specific issues to others, such as recognising the survival instinct, by 'connecting on the level of "common humanity"' (2003:115), or whether it quite simply facilitated good story-telling of a shared history by meeting the demands of theatrical representation, depends on our reading of the interaction. One thing it certainly succeeded in providing was a very unexpected challenge to the usual helpless female victim stereotype, in a society where 'the marginalisation and containment of women within the wider society' is extreme (Maguire, 2006: 102).[89]

The woman did not travel with us to the next show but the situation and the force of the motivation, that had been read by all present, stayed in the performance. A piece of theatre that had not previously existed, a living testimonial to an incident that had taken place, was created by the subject. There was a sense of optimism for the villagers in knowing that their story, as it was remembered by them, was going to be told. Somewhere there might also have been the hope that this might help influence the forthcoming battles in trying to reclaim land to which they had a claim.[90] As we left, we also felt pleased that they all shared the knowledge of how their struggle would be told to future audiences. In the evaluation made after the second show, it was very clear that the performance was seen by the villagers and the actors to be telling the villager's own story. The analysis of the answers given to one of the Dinajpur performances found 20% of the audience saying that they had never seen this style of drama before and, in the comments recorded, there were five who spoke of having

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[89] Tom Maguire writes in the quite different context of Northern Ireland.
[90] The dispute was about *Khas* land which was land that had belonged to Hindus who fled or were killed during the war of liberation (land that no one had returned to claim) that was given by the government to the commons for collective exploitation: 12 plots had been taken.

been moved or feeling strong emotions to see their own stories performed. The discourse about representations of people's stories will be taken up in Chapters Seven and Nine in which the topics of concern are: how, who and for whom we witness.

Shortcomings: statistical nonsense[91]

Distrust surrounds the use of numbers. This is perhaps exactly because they give a very clear power base to those who can shape, edit and handle them. The activities involved in making an analysis of answers to questions parallel Foucault's modes of objectification: categorisation, distribution and, replacing the subjectification of which an animate being is capable, an individually-tailored manner of presenting them (Rabinow 1991: 7-11).

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[91] This was the term used by Colin Hodgetts in a lecture sponsored by the Human Scale Education and the Schumacher Society in 1995.

Performance
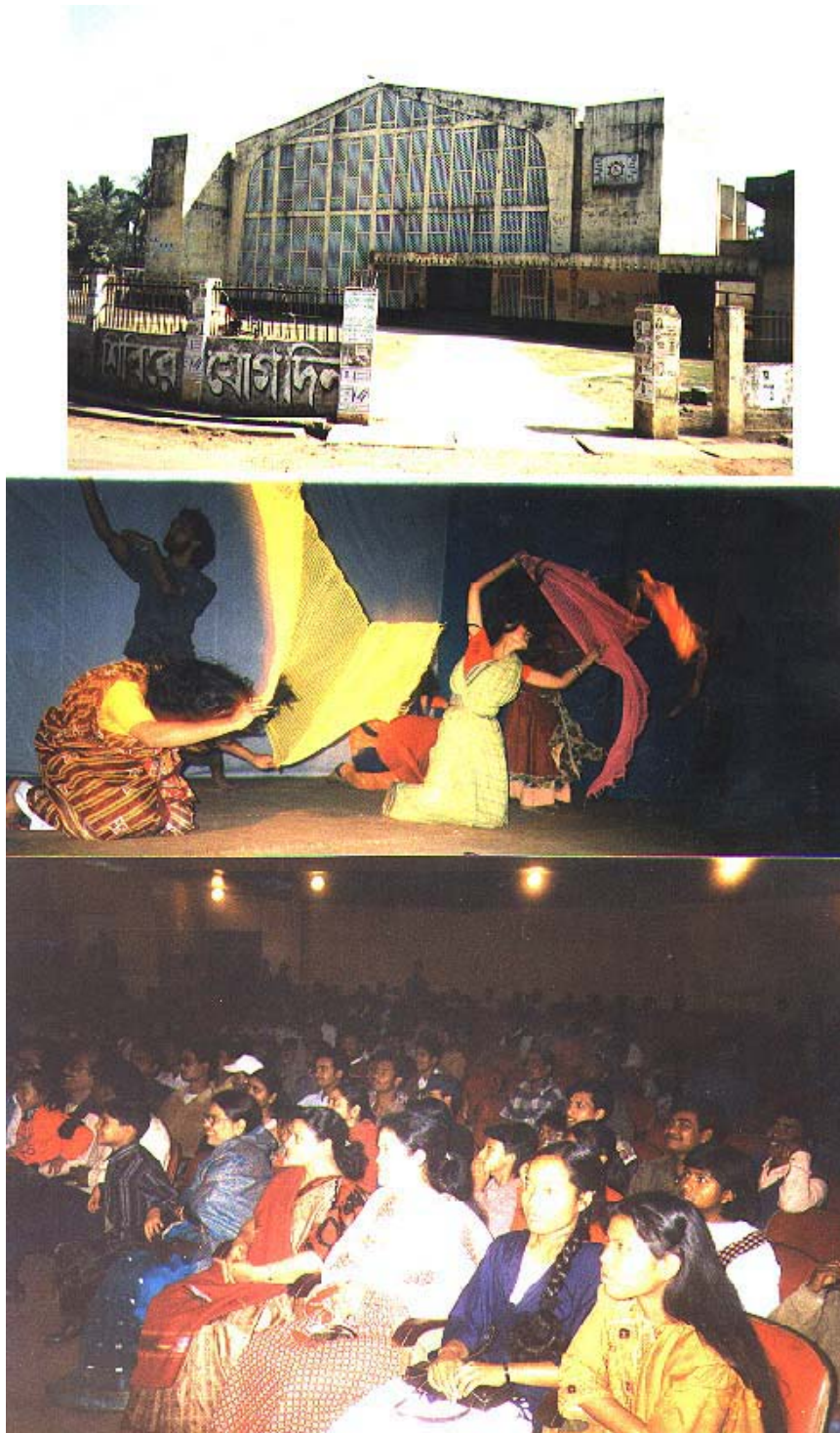
Fig. 6viii Performances were held in Dinajpur Town Hall (top photo). The middle photo shows the scene of the houses being burnt. The bottom photo is of an affluent audience attending an evening performance.

Feedback from an audience can be facilitated with the whole group present in a form of post-performance discussion. This is limited by the time constraint of every person participating having to speak in turn and usually a member of the team responding in order to show that the remark has been understood and noted. It favours the most confident. Many of the more timid, or younger audience members remain silent. Many audience members who will not speak, because the forum is too big to dare make suggestions or criticisms in front of the visiting cast and in front of all the audience, are more ready to do so in a restrained group or one to one.

When we used post-performance discussion in the village of Birganj, the limitations and problems in this approach caused great gales of laughter. Prompted by the memory of the moment under scrutiny; the audacity of correcting or directing others (maybe showing how a fisherman would cast his net) or, in a more unusual occurrence, someone they knew taking on a performance voice (as in giving a demonstration of how a line should be delivered to show the intention), all would trigger so much heckling and laughter that it added considerably to the difficulty of managing to stay on course.

To overcome these difficulties Racosu evaluation was used in the indoor venues as a means of gathering audience views. It was carried out by the cast aided by those members who were assisting back-stage. All went into the audience immediately after the performance. This had the advantage of collecting in written form a range of responses that could later be analysed alongside the few we had that were verbal. Where literacy is high, written questionnaires have proved more time-efficient because most people can be relied on to answer if not much comment is required. Giving the respondents five minutes to reflect so that they 'self-edit' their own responses and write one or two sentences has been found to provide a wider range of responses: it has the advantage of anonymity and therefore people are less likely to say things to please. This is important because, as previously noted, it is the critical contributions that are the most useful. The team scattered themselves among the audience in order for each to interview at least three individuals. This time they were inseparably in groups of twos or threes.

Shortcomings: impact assessment

It has already been acknowledged that OST has not found how questions can cast a net wide enough to capture and model long-term impacts. However this failure will be considered here in the light of what took place the following year. In order to fulfil the contract that had

been signed with the UK Community Fund,[92] Richard Crane went to Bangladesh in 2000 to evaluate the project. He interviewed members from the organisations that had participated, team members and *shomite* members. The most encouraging findings related to the disputed land: the Chief of the village had eventually succeeded in regaining eight of the twelve *Khas* lands for the villagers of Chonkali, with another four pending trial.

It is highly debateable whether anything in drama can ever be accurately measured in terms of direct results. Firstly, it is most unusual for there to be any concrete correlation that can be made following a theatrical performance. Even if *Story of Land* was presented to Crane in those terms, to what degree it played a part cannot be known. Evidently, the intensity of the welcome extended to him would suggest that the villagers and especially the village Chief saw a causal effect. He was also told, with some amusement and pride, that the village children still made their own versions of the play and that these had been performed many times. As with myths and legends, because they are preserved in peoples' memories by the retelling of the stories or their replaying, there is a more direct correlation of cause and effect than can be ascribed to by simply quantifying the number of *Khas* lands regained. Where there is something visibly linked it is a sure indication that events have not been forgotten, as has been sense with the original play - proof that the retelling of this history had withstood the passage of time in a changed theatrical form. But the idea of transforming the transient, unrecorded play of children into quantitative data verges on a form of experimental research that 'negates the "heart and soul"' of the experience (Saldaňa & Wright in Taylor 1996: 117).

David Graeber's evaluation of ethnographers, who in the best circumstances will only capture 2% of a situation (Graeber 2006: 10), is probably close to what took place with *Story of Land.* The difference is that in this theatre of 2%, the people themselves felt that it had been made possible through their telling. They had not acted as victims. If the drama succeeded, it did so because the Subject Group were core to the process of reconstitution.

Re-evaluation

To conclude, OST as a research methodology, by its structure and ethical imperative, questions knowledge bases by defining and exposing some of the experience and expertise of the Subject Group. This chapter has shown how it forces a re-evaluation of what should be

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[92] The Community Fund distributes the profits of the UK Lottery to educational, cultural, and social development projects in the UK and abroad.

reflected on and <u>how</u> we should reflect upon it. But this too needs a mechanism by which it is fed back into the work and that is where the individual practitioner who continues the experimentation has a part to play and where theory and written material must also feature. This has been the value of doing this research, 'perhaps', to use Beckett's favourite word (Eagleton: 2008: 9).

And so in the production of OST, if not in its research, 'the epitome and culmination of capitalist ideology … which has attached the greatest importance to the "person" of the author' (Barthes 1977: 80) is avoided, by the combined efforts of those who have invested at every turn and maintain a strong feeling of joint ownership.

The prison case studies in Chapter Eight will look at how modifying who carries out the research affects other very profound changes in the reach of the work. Difficulties remain however, with its final form. These difficulties will be introduced in the next chapter, Chapter Seven, that looks at testimony and witnessing.

Chapter Seven

The Witness and Reproduction

Primo Levi was probably the most influential witness of the 20th century. I have summarised the three things he says in *If This is a Man* and *The Truce* about witnessing:

1. the witness should not make judgements,
2. the witness should talk as objectively as possible to let others judge,
3. the witness should actually witness something in order for them to be a witness.

(1987: 382, 391)

These tenets throw an interesting light on the theatre forms discussed so far. In the case of OST it could be argued that the first two are adhered to, but the third one is not. This is clearly in opposition to testimonial drama, that will be considered first and for whom the third is certainly true but not necessarily the other two.   Further on in this chapter the effect of non-adherence to these tenets will be considered.   If mistakes are read as 'failures' then a helpful subtitle to this chapter would be Brecht's 'Impact lies in the vicinity of mistakes' (quoted in von Henning 1995: vii). Attention will be given to defensive behaviour that has been encountered regarding the potential of OST to create audiences as witness, using the example of the 2001 work in Bangladesh. The fragility of the OST investigation methodology will also be exposed by tracking the effect, on two occasions, of encountering outside agendas and institutional blocks.

The function of testimonial in theatre

For whom do we witness? Levi refers to his readers as the judges for whom he wrote (1987: 382). The audience who will view the reproduction has an effect as does its method of presentation. Karine Schaefer, researching modern oral histories, warns that the transfer of narratives to communities other than one's own can be problematic, even when it is the Subject Group themselves that are initiating the transfer (2003: 5-20).

Schaefer situates testimonial drama at the intersection of the 'spectator-as-witness' and the 'character-as-witness' (2003: 7). Her principle concern is first-hand auto-biographical performances. First, Schaefer looks at clarifying how testimonial drama positions its spectators. She argues that one of the aspects that complicates the positioning of the spectator is the common witness' desire for self-empowerment (2003: 8). Such an argument

could also be extended to incorporate the positioning of an actor who works on behalf of a victim: they too might be suspected of desires that could be termed as 'self-empowerment' albeit more specifically linked to the thirst for professional recognition.

Schaefer takes the example of *Binlids* (1997 Dubbeljoint Productions/JustUs Theatre Company) a play in which the characters on stage are 'real' witnesses of actual political events in Belfast. The women construct their agency around the idea of a spectator who will listen and learn; a play in which 'I am able to make a difference just by knowing this important information and telling you' (2003: 13). She delineates testimonial drama as those in which frequent short choppy scenes frame narrative reminiscences and recreations of local events, such as those seen in this oral history project: 'a personal and intimate window onto an out-of-the-ordinary event' (2003: 18). First-hand reminiscences and recreations often use mimesis or the notion of realist representation in the desire for authenticity. That there are very real benefits for the individual(s) most involved in the creative process should not be underestimated, especially when this extends to community members. Peggy Phelan describes the potential of percolating into their consciousness as being able to effect a profound change that is 'enduring' (in Etchells 1999: 13). The problem that Schaefer identifies is that while the work has currency in some communities (the audiences from their own community in West Belfast were particularly moved) for others it is problematic (2003: 18).

The point that Schaefer makes is that testimonial drama can be one-sided and can impede the formation of a witnessing community. Firstly because of the implicit search, not for questions, but for answers and secondly because of the unabashed political subjectivity displayed by individual characters. The latter 'forecloses part of the range of possible spectator responses' (Schaefer 2003: 18). With auto-performance someone is seen to have taken responsibility for a historical event, they have made an ethical decision to remember the past so it actually diminishes the requirement for others to do so. This effect could be called a closure.

The cause for closure in OST appears to be rather the opposite. It is more a fear of exposure. Whilst individual testimony is seen as excluding others, the collaborative approach of OST evokes fear of denunciation. In this respect collaboration still carries a tar. There is no intention to seek to blame but failures are the 'rare unmentionables' (Osmerod 2002: 5) and that there might be in the performances evidence of injustice in the situations being explored has been met on occasion with defensive reactions.

Whose questions guide the witness?

Looking back at the end of the cycle of OST work with CDA, the 2001 project on micro-credit, it was fear of the possible outcome that closed everything down. The next few pages will resume what took place in an effort to lay bare all that contributed to this closure in order to show why it points to this conclusion.

Micro-credit with its very different approach to debt was, at the time, a subject of much international interest. It had been one of a number of issues mentioned by the women during issue selection in 1999. It had not however figured at the top of their list of pressing social needs. Dowry problems, repeated acts of extreme violence against them and child marriage preoccupied their daily lives above all else.[93] The priority was in this instance, exceptionally, determined by the funders – DfID. [94] CDA were very keen to be recommended to DfID, and thought that accepting this condition would find favour. Despite knowing that the Subject Group would have no say in issue selection, faced with the choice of continuing or not, Passe-Partout complied.

In 1998-99 a range of different professional, educational, economic, geographic and religious backgrounds were integrated into the Team: 7 Muslims, 3 Hindus, 1 Christian and 1 atheist. These people were: four leaders of different local women's groups; two university-educated young men - an economist and an environmentalist; four local and national cultural activists and two non-Bangladeshis giving an international presence.[95] By contrast, when the team for the third phase was formed in 2001, it showed an almost total lack of representation of Stakeholder Groups. This was contradictory to all that had been spoken about and agreed. The effect of changing the composition of the Integrated Team was quite far reaching. First I shall consider the short-term effect of this, second the reason and third the long-term effect.

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[93] Surviving the brutality preoccupied them more than the tragedy of the gradual desertification caused by the Farakka Dam, which was channelling to Calcutta by the installation of a 26 mile barrage, all the Himalyan snow melt that previously fed the Ganges whose delta had made Bangladesh such a fertile country. However, the interlinking of these problems would bear inquiry: whether such extreme forms of violence from men in their own communities does not result from the intensified poverty that this far-from-natural disaster has caused.

[94] The 2001 funding from DfID for rural development work with the condition that the subject had to be micro-credit was an unusual situation of tied funding. It came about through an unexpected visit that CDA had had two years ealier from a high-ranking official from the British High Commission. This lady, an advisor for DfID, was not at all impressed with the patriarchal manner in which she had been left in no doubt that CDA was run. She had been hosted and the CDA Director had done all the talking, wherever they visited.

[95] Ruth James assisted me in an administrative capacity and Til Dellers, the Director of Interkunst Theatre Company, Berlin visited the project with a view to establishing further partnership work.

The Integrated Team had been deliberately weighted. The very obvious difference in composition of the Integrated Team in 2001 was a near total absence of members of the community with any influence. In lieu of other NGOs, some of whom in previous years had sent senior management (in 1996 and 1998 Table 6i), this imbalance was brought about by increasing the numbers of the host organisation's junior staff: all women (NGOs provide a more receptive employment sector for women by their adherence to equal opportunity policies, particularly since 1976 and the formation of the Equal Opportunities Commission).

The ratio of men to women was as agreed. Female staff members comprised half of the team, matched by the same number of local cultural activists, who were all male. That no women came from groups of cultural activists was to be expected because at this time in the rural areas, they were always men. Nasiruddin Yousuff, director of Dhaka Theatre, was critical of this lack of women actresses in street theatre, 'A male performer may have sympathy for women but lacks understanding of women's issues' (Charanji 2002: 11). In Charanji's list (2002), seven of the eight issues relate to women.[96] Women are not a minority group among either the Subject Group, which was to be the NGO's local communities accessed through the *shomites* (see glossary), nor would they be in a minority among more middle-class audiences that might be targeted through the NGO network of donors and decision-makers. Therefore normalising power relationships within the synthetics of performance partly explains why the male:female ratio was considered important, but moreover there was pressure from countries supporting aid programmes for gender equity; to whom CDA would have to report about this work.

Previously, the invitation process to join the Integrated Team had been managed by the hosting organisations CDA and TCSD, excepting in 1996 when, thanks to the late Nasreen Huq,[97] contact with TCSD initially took place.[98] This contact heavily influenced the

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[96] In 1993 the literacy rate in Bangladesh was 33% for men and 19% for women (Population Data Sheet 1993, Population Concern).

[97] Nasreen was an ardent campaigner for human rights and took part in many of the movements for social justice and struggles to establish the rights of oppressed people irrespective of their religion, gender or ethnicity (Bangladesh National Women Lawyers Association, Bangladesh Human Rights Commission, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust, Bangladesh Parliament Members' Support Group on Prevention of HIV/AIDS and Human Trafficking, National Alliance of Disabled People's Organisations, and People's Empowerment Trust).

[98] I had originally met Nasreen at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in September 1995 (Action for Equality, Development and Peace) where she was attending as the representative of the Bangladesh Parliamentary Caucus on Education, and was very grateful to be able to involve a woman in the setting up of the work in Bangladesh.

recruitment of female participants with performance skills in the 1996 Dinajpur training course, 'Effective Presentation and Communications Techniques', as it included women cultural activists (two from Dhaka, both members of TCSD, and one from Dinajpur, a member of Nabarupee).

In 2000 a preliminary visit was planned to be carried out to potential interest groups: NGO groups, cultural activist groups and a video recording of *Breaking the Chains* was to be projected in order to help explain the style of work to a small core of people before they were requested to submit a letter explaining who they would like to send and why.   The imbalance in the team had not come about by a failure of the recruitment process that had been agreed, but rather by the preliminary visits to recruit never having taken place.

The reasons for this is that funding had been tied to dealing with micro-credit - an aspect that the host organisation was not entirely easy about having investigated. Consequently representation was limited to local cultural activists alongside the newly-recruited female staff members and just one associate member of the hosting organisation. Subject Group representation was limited to two people (excepting on the first day when six were involved).

However, working with these six women on the first day and sharing the arbitration with Rehana Samdani, a woman from TCSD Dhaka (Appendix I) tipped the balance sufficiently away from an internal process to one in which safeguarded the vital presence of outsiders. Vital to the possibility of some degree of impartiality.

When members of the Subject Group ask questions, a change in the power relationship is effected by turning the usual survey process around. Instead of the Subject Group only providing answers, they are also placed in a position in which it is their questions that start the inquiry process. In 2000 a very real difference was effected by asking representatives of the Subject Group what questions they would wish to ask. The direct effect of inviting these six women from different *shomites* to meet with the Integrated Team and contribute to question production, meant that CDA were the ones who had certain questions to answer about the conditions of the loans. The women were assisted in writing down their questions. Of the small number of questions they had, the two most pressing would, during the course of the week, nail the whole process to the women's group concerns. These questions read:

- Will we establish by ourselves for the future by taking a loan from CDA?
- Is it right that CDA gives us loan, but we have to give the interest 150 Tk about 1000 Tk: it is very much for us?

The full truth of what these questions referred to was not understood immediately by the Integrated Team. During the course of the week's investigations, a realisation of what a travesty of a loan system were being offered to these illiterate and innumerate people would come to light. Quite simply these two questions contained within them the abuses that were being propagated in the name of development but that the Subject Group did not have the ability to prove nor did the concerned NGO wish to reveal. Only one person in our team, from senior management, already knew the terms under which loans were organised, and he was not in at liberty to explain until he was asked directly.[99] The direct questioning by members of the Integrated Team only took place on day five, already half way through, which supports the view of it being a gradual process of discovery.

As the data built up and a picture emerged of the size of loans and their uses and the difficulties that could occur (as extreme as suicide), those two questions started to make sense. The percentage of interest that was being charged (a minimum of 15% compound interest, whilst interest on savings ran at 6% annually) was eventually deduced from the answer to one of the questions after some calculation. The first of the two questions above related to the promise that had been made to the *shomites* that they were being educated to run by themselves – autonomously and hence would become free of interest payments. The interest was being presented as payment for the managing of the scheme and the education that the groups were being given. However, over the last nine years, of the 945 *shomites* registered with CDA (each with 20 – 45 members) nearly all had taken out loans and not a single one had been made independent.

Some comments that were made by some of the participants drawn from the verbatim report of the third day also throw some light on the way in which the team's involvement and understanding was developing. These were statements about personal observations made after the interviews:

> I learnt that for us development workers, we must ask what do we mean by development? Some people are taking loans from one organisation to pay for a loan from another organisation. Where are they being lead? What is development doing for them?

> Shocked by the story of (woman's name not recorded). Shocked because it has happened rather than being shocked by the fact that the women can talk about it. In many countries subjects like this are kept closed. (A mother had

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[99] These are not local problems with micro-credit they are general problems, of the sort discussed by Rutherford (1998).

committed suicide as a result of not being able to face up to her repayments.)[100]

Surprised at the solidarity of the *shomite* in cases of defaulting when the *shomite* pulls together to pull back the situation.

Surprised that one woman should be so ashamed as not to utter her name[101] but as the field visit went forward she became able to answer questions.

Kiron remarked to Shah-I-Mobin, the CDA Director who visited on the fourth day, when it came to his turn to comment on what he had learned:

Last time I was involved with several different issues, but this year it is one issue and several different questionnaires. We also evaluate ourselves in this work which is something that an external evaluator cannot do.

The questioning process lead its own path, along which transformations in people and their perceptions were affected: the process towards the theatre was changing us. Shah-I-Mobin said at that meeting that, 'we would learn how to protest through this workshop … It is participatory, research-based and a revolution.' Neither he nor the participants at that stage suspected it would lead to such direct protest at what his own organisation was involved in.

Collectively the Integrated Team with its mixture of Subject Groups members and Stakeholder representatives had unpicked, not only as expected some perspectives on the role of micro-credit in the lives of the poor, but also the role of micro-credit in the survival of a Stakeholder Group. The NGOs are stakeholders in the plight of the poor: the two, and other stakeholders, are intertwined. The NGOs are comparatively advantaged, and yet underneath it might be said that they depend more on the poor for survival than the poor do on them. Another case in point is the inter-relationship between street children in Nairobi and the more than 100 hostels and care centres for street children.

What it came to collectively witness did not reflect CDA to advantage. And so that a stone is not cast as a result of this written witness, it is important to stress the impossibility for such organisations to charge for their most needed services, including delivering assistance with land recovery both in terms of rights abuse and ecological farming as well as education programmes for youth and adults. Their client group struggle for survival. Such non-sustainable activities need financial support and whilst seeking these they had been caused to resort to methods that their senior staff member described as 'sharing out the costs'. Viewed

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[100]As well as suicide and illegal second loans, there was coercion to join groups and social exclusion when defaulting.

[101] During Validation of the questions when the group introduced themselves in the traditional manner, each in turn would tell us their names. When the Team returned for the interviews the women was less intimidated.

in context, this extortion as we came to realise was not anywhere near the same magnitude as many others.[102] The money, or interest, from the micro-credit schemes was needed in order to help pay for other aspects of the work that these most impoverished communities could not afford. The organisation was itself victim to a system in which they would survive only if they could prove to funders and donors their own sustainability.

Looking back at this last experience, there are three preconceptions about OST that the management of CDA are likely to have held, and hence had to check against before allowing such a project to go ahead:

1   Fear of the power that an Integrated Team might have had if it had been composed of the range of Stakeholders that was anticipated and if it had been allowed contact beyond the Subject Group and hosts.

2   A low regard for cultural activists[103] and young female members of staff: they were deemed either incapable of uncovering the truth, with regard the dependence in which the villagers were being kept, or unable to do anything with this truth.

3   Lastly, that the visiting partners would not tumble the edifice if ever they chanced upon the weakness in the foundations.

Their gamble was not proved entirely wrong. This experience proved both the weaknesses and the strengths of such work. Sadly, the performance was not toured: our hosts did not organise a campaign to stimulate public concern or to help organisations like their own engage in redressing exploitative aspects of their loan schemes. In the circumstances it was predictable that the performance would only be shown to a restrained audience (a fraction of that for Story of Land) despite evidence that other NGOs function as 'micro-credit institutions' (MCIs) in the same way as '*lenders* rather than as financial intermediaries' (Rutherford 1998: 7).[104] Since this time it has come to light that it is not uncommon for MCIs to take up to 50% interest because it is still such an immense improvement over the money lenders who had been in place prior to their arrival (Hannam 2008: 55), which in retrospect makes CDA's practices look altogether less exploitative.

Less predictable was the positive side. The process achieved extraordinary dedication from the participants, who worked several days well into the night, and a high level of cooperation

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[102] According to Muhammad Yunus, predatory money lenders could charge up to 400% on a loan (Hannam 2008: 55) and often demanded repayment in land (*Story of Land* 1998).
[103] These male *shomite* members had all been invited from small urban localities at some distance from the rural ones with which we would work.
[104] Stuart Rutherford provides a useful analysis of some of the problems of the micro-credit paradigm and he suggests some ways forward (1998).

from the *shomite* members. The closed circle of CDA members appeared to form a very solid front in support of the arguments made in the drama for a move towards more moderate interest rates and a more rapid weaning process. The revelations that were shown in the drama were seen by the management of the organisation that was involved even if it chose not to share this knowledge beyond their own group.

The OST approach is not built on any certainties. The output is not known in advance, neither is the Target Audience nor the outcome. Interest is maintained to see what way the work will stride out. Uncovering certain truths, despite the limited representation, is not a negative outcome. In this instance, it substantiates the view that a gain in power could be effected using this approach when OST is allowed to function with a properly Integrated Team: one that brings together different Stakeholders with vertical and sectoral integration. It is credit to the method that, due to the fact of having the Subject Group represented at the very start and having caused them to produce their questions as part of the basis to build on, the work succeeded in laying bare many of the shortcomings of the system.

The difficulty then became knowing what to do with this information. As we seemed unable to convince CDA of the wisdom of presenting these shortcomings in a theatre show that could be seen by other NGOs equally involved in such schemes, so that they could set a new forward-looking agenda and table a sharper critique of these practices, we were in a situation that risked us becoming informants to potential funders. As ours was not a partnership entered into where we were requested to make an outsider's evaluation of CDA's work, we did not make it our business to change our function at this stage. We chose to leave quietly, with CDA in the knowledge that both their good and their bad practices had been observed and criticised by their community groups. We reported to our funders on what had taken place by producing the scripts, written materials and the 'formative evaluation' (Bourne 2001: 8) in comment form but we did not process it further. The raw materials were there to draw conclusions from for anyone to read should they have the investment to do so.

For the first time in carrying out this sort of work the requirement for 'summative evaluation' made itself unmistakably apparent. Not evaluation that would function in relation to measuring the effectiveness of the work, as Doug Bourne suggests, but one in which the research itself would increase its effectiveness. That is to say in the theatre itself being staged in the offices in Dhaka and in London or at international conferences. Not where the victim organisation (in this case CDA) would be held up as an example of abuse and bad practice to be publicly lynched, but to give a concise contextualised analysis of what

the problems were and feed a debate concerning alternatives that might improve the situation. A study that would allow the agenda to be set from the ground.

The question I have used at the beginning of this section holds some ambiguity: *For whom do we witness?* Perhaps it would be better to rephrase it taking inspiration from a set of questions designed by Wilson and Heeks to evaluate development projects:

> 'On behalf of whom?' and
> 'What is done with the result of the activity, and by whom?'
>
> (2000: 403)

The witnessing in OST is on behalf of a group who cannot be present, who, trapped in the situation of survival that they find themselves in, are usually invisible. Similarity exists between the role in the law courts of the 'expert witness' - a person asked to give their opinion or analysis based on the results of their research - and that of the Integrated Team in OST. Both witnesses hold knowledge about a case without being personally implicated. An expert witness who has knowledge or practical experience of a particular subject is usually seen to be accompanied by a degree of impartiality because they are not originally members of the subject community nor members of Stakeholder Groups that have a vested interest. The philosopher of science Michel Serres in his book *Angels*, written for people working in both the arts and sciences[105], holds that an angel must disappear as a person on behalf of the message they have to deliver (1999: 59). Levi attempts a similar invisibility in *If this is a man* (1987). For Serres, the ethics of the messenger is that they disappear in order to give way to the message itself. This problem of how something can be said without the author's presence being foremost was Raymond Roussel's[106] *leitmotif* and consequently Foucault's entry into the world of power (Foucault, 1963). In some cases, where it suits the purposes of the prosecution, the partiality of expert witnesses is invoked by reference to the prolonged time and exposure they have had to the individuals involved (Zimbardo 2007).[107] However, usually their professional status gives the credibility to their account. In OST it is the spread of Stakeholders working together in partnership as the *Integrated Team* that ensures a checking mechanism on inherent biases.

But, what is done with the result of the activity and by whom? (Wilson & Heeks 2000: 403)

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[105] In the intellectual tradition of Britain and America there is a division between the two that means that a specific type of writing is acceptable to the scientific community, and anything which is suggestive of the poetic is antagonistic to their idea of truth. Similarly the contrary is true: numbers for instance are highly suspect to the artistic community.

[106] Raymond Roussel (1877 - 1933): a French poet, novelist, playwright, musician, chess enthusiast, neurasthenic, and drug addict.

[107] Phillip Zimbardo, who was the expert witness at the trial of Ivan 'Chip' Fredrick at the abuses in the Abu Ghraib jail case (2007).

There is an essential difference in the forms of witnessing: the Target Audience of an OST performance has never been, as yet and is unlikely to ever be, a court of law. Regrettably, methods with the potential for looking at the systems that produce situational forces and their influence on individual behaviour are desperately lacking. Phillip Zimbardo regrets that our legal systems '… demand that individuals and not situations or systems be tried for wrong doings' (Zimbardo 2007: xiii). In the court, 'the standard individualism conception that is shared by most people in our culture will find faults that are "dispositional"' (Zimbardo 2007: x). Human Rights Watch pointed out in April 2005 that it is only the lower chain of command that have been brought to justice; none of those who created the policy, the ideology and provided the permission ever were (Zimbardo 2007: 403). However, OST is not a dialectic designed to prove guilt or innocence, rights or wrongs: it functions to increase the visibility around areas of injustice or to increase communication where lack of information hinders progress. This remit is much closer therefore to one of reporting on research. Albeit with an intention of stimulating debate and action rather than just being read. But for this to be considered as valid its methods need to be found to be acceptable to the research community.

Of the most forceful objections to this methodology being accepted as a legitimate form of research, I have listed five (some of which share aspects that apply to other theatre forms):

1. Lack of rigour.
2. The standoff between the cultures of the arts and the sciences and the open hostility towards hybridity (Saler 2008: 3).
3. A reaction of discomfort at being cast as a witness and the accompanying mental difficulty of contesting information which is embodied and passes through the body as opposed to that retained in the precision and immutability of the written word and its apprehension through the mind (Nicholson 2005: 57).
4. The unpopularity of empirical research that is quantitative (Esslin 1987).
5. The assumption that the work is testimonial.

I shall not tackle all of these. I shall limit myself to the first and last because the others have, as indicated above, been written about elsewhere.

The first objection is that it lacks rigour

Before looking at the disquiet concerning the use of imaginative constructions in the service of the interpretation of social phenomenon, I shall very briefly touch on having a limited

number of questions and a limited sample size. There is one general point about questioning that has validity that could usefully be reiterated. The function of the enquiry is exploratory, which is very different from social surveys that are confirmatory or prescriptive. Because the intention is to open up viewpoints, there is no advantage to having more exactness or precision than the problem demands. In social situations, estimation has its place in an iterative process: it provides a useful starting point. The cycles of review function as physical exercise that fights the flab as well as building the muscle of the inquiry.

Sample size is a very large topic indeed. Too large to do justice to here. I will limit myself to one observation made by Bourdieu when he was referring to his own '*petite invention technique qui me semble importante*' 'small but significant technical innovation' (in Dubois et al 2005: 335). He explains how, when working with fellow statisticians in Algeria, he tried to take one tenth of the sample size that they were working on and make a comparative study: contrasting the detail of the small with the trends of the large. '*Et ce que j'ai trouvé à petite échelle s'est vérifié massivement à l'échelle du gros échantillon*' 'And what I found on the small scale was repeatedly proven in the large scale sample' (2005 : 335). It is not altogether surprising that small samples for the most part echo the large. However, in investigative work small samples serve to turn the soil and more precision is not pertinent for this purpose.

Whilst OST makes every effort in its theatrical reproduction to respect the reality it has uncovered, Helen Nicholson, in 'Fiction as Reality', talks about the deliberate blurring between the two: the imagined and the real (2005: 66-70). Fictional and autobiographical narratives are shown to be able to blend to allow us to 'play with alternative constructions of selfhood, to frame experiences in order to view life from different places and perspectives' (2005: 66). Such fictitious narratives have a place to play, 'illuminating lived experiences' in drama as therapy for instance in the work of Sally Stamp (2005: 66). The inverse situation is however more complicated, where the real is to be expressed through a fiction, not so much because of the impossibility of doing so but because of the difficulty of crossing disciplinary and cultural boundaries. This is further compounded by the audience expectations or assumptions that currently surround theatrical performance. If much applied drama comes about as Nicholson describes, by a blurring of boundaries so that the real event and the constructed event become indistinguishable, then the use of drama to support a wider claim, as in the case of OST where the constructed event is specifically designed to shed light on the real event, is not only problematic but it is so in a number of different ways.

The problems identified are largely to do with receptivity. The failure to cross the arts science cultural divide in this instance and therefore the failure to fulfil the promise of the work in terms of a power shift towards those that are being represented is not to do with the inability to work together, or the impossibility to tell a collective story but much more to do with the conditioning of the audience. If the audience are conditioned to receiving their research as a report on the desk and their entertainment as a drama serial on the television it is very difficult to suggest that a drama could ever have the authority of the report on their desk.

What has been the repeated pattern is that the OST dramas have been found to be full and accurate by the subject communities but once the story goes to another community there is no control over the reception. They may at times be viewed as being informed but partial because of the involvement of the subject community. Because so many dramas use impromptu improvisation, work that is not constructed in this way is wrongly assumed to have been so. Therefore the expectation that it is a wholly improvised interpretation implies bias; lacking in objectivity.

To state that the play 'bears testimony' to a situation, is to suggest that the evidence gathered is based on something that has happened or is true. The converse 'to bear false witness' would be to lie. Again the relationship to the truth is part of the ethics involved. Within the OST methodology, being true to the findings is a foundational principle, or what could be metaphorically called a 'topological rule' (as it maps the priorities of the terrain to bring focus to these at the negotiating table). This rule must be observed by the Integrated Team. The Arbitrator makes sure of this.

This does not preclude attempts within the theatre to take an audience beyond its existing understanding. On the contrary for instance the inclusion of explanations that might be made to appear mythogenic have worked well (Diest 2008 work on suicides that cast the different countries' reactions to this social taboo as gnomes on a quest), so long as these are drawn from or reflect without distortion the answers to the questions that have been posed. Myth can have an important social function when it is used with intention, for instance to provide interesting psychological suggestion (Popper 1963: 50) which results from observation. Jane Plastow writes 'myth is often as important as, if not more important than, more conventional history in articulating states of consciousness, possibly because myth, as in the work of Osofisan and Highway, can often be invoked dynamically, re-imagined and re-worked to create a bridge between past and future' (Boon & Plastow 1998: 8). Avoiding superficial psychology and reason with a more associative method can speak to the psychology of the

spectator rather than to their politics or their ethics: raising questions more than answers. That interpretations will be partial or theory-laden can never be entirely avoided.

If this style of theatre concludes with any conjectures, then these are there as a result of a collective reflection on the data. Because it is a collective act of witness, there is a sense in which it is easier for the individuals involved to feel more detached than if it was their personal responsibility: despite the sense of ownership that the group might feel, there is nonetheless a diminished sense of possessiveness. This can make things easier in the face of harsh judgement because it removes the feelings of victimisation if the views expressed are contested. The process gives to the team a sense of honesty that strengthens their position.

However, what is of key importance, and the strongest refutation of the accusation of lack of rigour is that, unlike other more elaborate and tried and tested methodologies, preconceived ideas have been prevented from steering a predetermined course through the enquiry and cannot steam-roll through to the performance.

The assumption that the work is testimonial

OST is an approach that makes visible a previously unconscious/unknown group-summary. In doing so there is also a significant difference that relates to the way in which ownership of the material is apprehended. Anonymity is preserved and the quality of intense intimacy is reduced, as is its capacity to shock. Working as a group has the effect of blunting sharp edges because there is more reserve than emerges from work penned in private, which can indulge more savage desires. Intimate conversations can be preserved intact by the sole researcher; this not so easy in OST. Although making personal stories public can be perceived as liberating or potentially cleansing or cathartic (Schaefer 2003: 6), when intimate stories are either embodied by someone other than the real protagonist or are directly testimonial, their production remains open to question on an ethical front.

Furthermore, this individual transferral of narrative to someone, whether directly to the audience or to the audience via an actor, entails the giving away of their own story. For the audience, there is an unacknowledged confusion because the two testimonies, one the original and unseen, the other being the same but re-presented, appear indistinguishable and yet they are not identical. The text may be the same but the context has changed. It could even be said that the derivative, with all the authenticity of the original, as if in Damien

Hirst's formaldehyde, can misleadingly appear more real than the first-hand testimony, giving as it does access to a new unobscured view.

The testimonial is never more than one person's memory of events or one person's interpretation which does not give it factual veracity. Karine Schaefer talks of an ambivalent response to the presentation of evidence in this form (Schaefer 2003: 10) and this can be readily understood on the grounds that there is neither conscious nor unconscious effort to explore, or reveal truth; there is only reproduction.

Reception by their own community of such a performance if it is found to be accurate can be experienced as a bonding force against the injustice that has been denounced. However, when it is removed from the subject community, an attendant sense of exposure or of amputation may result. Rustom Bharucha, writing on cultural recycling, considers these losses: the loss of privacy, of exclusive bond or of resonance, to be 'the very product of a post-capitalist, post-modern condition' (in Pavis 1996: 207). He is taking issue with the westerner's self-appointed right to simultaneously choose and conveniently forget the fact that many of those ethnic groups from which they pick and mix have not, for historical reasons, even got the choice of feeding their families (1996: 207).

There is a fundamental point at stake here. I would argue that OST negotiates concepts and interpretations which include indigenous modes of expertise but does so 'through the creation of new narratives with shared responsibility, if not a shared history' (Bharucha in Pavis 1996: 208). Consequently although OST has constantly crossed cultural barriers in its practice and hence frequently produced multi-racial work, any accusation of cultural appropriation, in the manner that has been leveled at Brook,[108] would be an overestimation of the personal influence of the Arbitrator. In OST not only are content choices for the most part out of the Arbitrator's control, but also the integration of culturally specific art forms is a choice of those interpreting the findings. It is natural for the integrated production team to frame the findings in a dramatic style familiar to them. As Wole Soyinka reminds us, and in order not to overstate the political correctness of evident ethnic imprints, drama like any art form, is created and executed within a specific physical environment; it interacts with that environment, is influenced by it, influences that environment in turn and 'acts together with the environment in the larger and far more complex history of society' (in Huxley and Witts

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[108] In his chapter 'Disorientations in the Cultural Politics of our Times' Bharucha argues that the multi-cultural choices in the *Mahabarata* were born out of a certain *ennui,* and talks about 'a mindless euphoria of pluralism' (Pavis et al. 1996: 207). Brook, who abhors putting on plays for "cultural reasons" talks about his desire to change something profound in each spectator, as promised in the first lines of this ancient Indian poem (Brook 1988: 151). Two irreconcilable cultural perspectives.

1996: 372). Furthermore, the cycles of evaluation during preparations and rehearsals ensure that content and form obtain the approbation of the Subject Group: criticisms, suggestions, cuts and approval are sought through consultation and feedback during rehearsals (and field tests). Thus if the subject is, for instance, injustices within existing systems of exploitation of impoverished women's groups in Bangladesh and if a link is being made with

Fig. 7i The sari graph

international debt, then it is unimaginable for the actors not to be wearing saris and for the accompanying instruments and music not to be Bangla (Fig. 7i). This does not become cultural appropriation suddenly when it is performed in Europe: it is still owned and performed by those who are from this culture and who have been instrumental in designing the piece with a very specific intention in showing it with the support of those on whose behalf they show it.

It is not however pure testimonial drama and herein lies the difference. The end result of collaborative creation in OST is a theatrical patchwork that rejoins Brook in his long-argued view against formal consistency in the theatre and allows the possibility of performances that fluctuate between conventions. Mitter himself re-evaluates any apparent lack of original creativity by an appreciation of Brook's commitment to the view that:

> If theatre is to reflect the manner in which life makes discordant elements cohere, it must tell its stories in as many ways as possible – for each style gives access to certain truths but inevitably excludes others.

(Mitter 1992: 5)

The crossover for example between western scientific and Asian artistic cultural registers is illustrated in the line graph in Fig. 7i showing the increase in international debt over the last two decades being represented by the cast holding up two saris.[109]

Interculturalism is a most vexed subject. Accusations of cultural exploitation are easy enough to make. It is easy to offer up everything on the politically-correct sacrificial altar by invoking 'a newly globalised "theatre"' in 'the hierarchical and divisive ethics of the international cultural market-place' (Kershaw 1999: 203). *Breaking the Chains* was

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[109] The sari as an object speaks of that which is specifically female, it is geographically specific and age specific, in that it is only for women of marriageable age and therefore those entitled to membership to a women's group, the Subject Group of the drama. The line graph on the other hand is very much what those with financial responsibility are used to reading. OST attempts to combine the cultural specificity symbolized by the sari with the globally shared academic register of the statistical line graph.

subjected to this in 1999. What took place (described below) was a direct result of the work being assumed to be testimonial, as if it had been plucked ready-made by a white theatrical agent and appropriated.

After countless difficulties obtaining passports, visas and flights, the Integrated Team shown in Fig. 7ii performed *Breaking the Chains* (which built on the collaboration that was case studied in Chapter Six - *Story of Land*). The audience comprised 150 delegates from all parts of Europe at the Université d'Été in Marly le Roi on the outskirts of Paris, as part of an EC-sponsored week dedicated to tackling international debt. After a most enthusiastic response from the audience to the evening show, the next day a workshop was held in which the issues were going to be discussed. The organisers had employed two professional consultants, university-educated and extremely articulate Anglo-Indian 'spoilers', to drop in on the different workshops and single-handedly challenge the validity of the work. This was to help workshop

Fig. 7ii *Breaking the Chains*, derived from *Story of Land*, exposed the effect of debt from the micro to the macro. This scene is named Working for Rice (Lamden 2000: 53).

participants to learn about defending their case and understand the way in which their own organisations functioned. On that day a visit was paid to our workshop. The 'spoiler' had not seen the performance on the previous evening, which had been warmly received by an audience of some 110 people (Appendix XIV), nor had they seen the show that afternoon to the workshop group of 40.

Josette Fèral brings into play the role of the critic which she locates in the mass media:

> which has seized upon dramatic works as if they were consumer goods – urges us to accomplish such work in a search for cultural events which parallels the search for sociological or political events, thus turning everything into a spectacle. The critical function has been taken over as a function of the spectacular, becoming itself a spectacle.
>
> (2000: 313)

The spoiler gave a memorable spectacle.

The manner in which the individual can be manipulated and caused to appear to be saying something quite other than what he would have wished, was reminiscent of the trial in which Baz Kershaw describes giving evidence that was quite other than he was expecting (Kershaw 1999: 157-159). It fully illustrates the dangers of closed questioning and the ease with which this disempowering is effected. All that is required is for the questioning to be concentrated

into single hands or in the hands of those who have an agenda they are intent on pursuing. In this example a similar process took place when the collective was called to task for witnessing alongside the ex-coloniser. The questioner did not really enter into dialogue yet appeared to do so by applying directed questioning.

It is a lot easier to destroy something than it is to build it. Causing things to fail is not the same as learning from failure. The overall aim of this gathering, to which we had been invited, was to focus on situations of exploitation and on international debt. It was a subject that meant a great deal to the members of the Integrated Team who were concerned to generate ideas about how to strengthen the lobbying of the G8 and build networks. It came as a shock to have this long-awaited opportunity to meet and reflect with so many campaigners taken away by the very people whose rhetoric was promoting solidarity.

Another agenda, to do with race relations, was unexpectedly introduced. This staged trial was all too real and highlighted how easily such work can be made totally futile, or worst still made to appear manipulative and corrupt. The participants from Bangladesh, with so little English, were forced into a situation where they had no choice but to offer themselves up as passive objects for discussion. The session was spent in long attempts to translate what the 'spoiler' was saying about the evident exploitation of their being at this meeting in the first place. With so little possibility of reply because of inexperience, the bewilderment[110] and disbelief as to what was happening (as well as six of the eight people present not possessing the language in which they were being accused) a skilful public humiliation was easy. Every partner involved in producing the theatre was pronounced guilty: either because of cupidity or exploitative collaboration.

This experience reinforced the difficulty of working across barriers of culture, class, language and economic realities. Collaborations are always complicated. These complications must be faced and they should not be avoided in this study. The value of creating further difficulties, however, must be weighed against the very high risk of sabotaging the whole endeavour. Regrettably no suggestions were offered to fill the void as to how civic participation could have involved those same people. This 'trial' was carried out in the name of challenging power relationships, yet its method and its discourse simply reinforced what it sought to address. The destruction of the most fragile elements in such

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[110] Appendix XV is a diary entry revealing the incomprehension of what had taken place/ what had been done wrong, written by Anondi who had the best command of English and hence had been during the event the person challenged with translating.

circumstances does little more than consolidate the positions of power of those who are active in the destruction. It reduces to lip service the commitment to participation and dialogue.

Difficulties can be anticipated, as has previously been noted, once the story goes to another community where there is no control over the reception. On occasions audiences have received performances as simply multi-cultural or multi-disciplinary entertainment, or simply a curio: a local artwork or craft which could be found if one travelled to this country and which requires no more commitment nor comment than to be paid for. This has occasionally been mitigated when the Stakeholders participating in the Integrated Team have included someone from the group who are targeted as audience. That person or persons have helped tailor the work, or prepare the audience. For the members of the Integrated Team who are from the Subject Group, at times the knowledge that their plight had been made visible has motivated them and given them confidence, but equally at other times it has proved difficult and disappointing to have the work misinterpreted.

Institutional power: making matters worse

Not only has OST been assumed to reproduce the model of more known theatre practices but the effect of this is to progressively compound its marginalisation. This occurs as the more known theatre and drama practices, being defined and archived, take on the mantle of an establishment theatre type and acquire an identifiable history. Victor Ukaegbu reminds us that 'definitions create new discourses but that they also generate … hierarchical relationships' (quoted in Ackroyd 2007: 10). This idea is expanded by Foucault, for whom, according to Yves Cusset, discourse should be evaluated first and foremost in its structural context before enshrining it in its own external social and historical reality:

> *Il ne s'agit pas de rappeler la relativité du contexte social d'un discours, mais plutôt de souligner que la possibilité pour un certain discours de produire du sens est directement liée à la manière dont il s'insère dans un emplacement et dans un réseau d'énoncés déjà existants desquels il s'autorise et qu'il travaille en même temps à reproduire et à transformer.*
>
> (Cusset 2007 : 140)

> It is not important to be reminded that discourse is relative to its social context but to highlight that the probability of producing meaning, for a given discourse, directly rests on the manner in which it slots itself into a designated area and into a network of agreed premises from which its authority is derived and on which it works simultaneously to reproduce and transform.

So whilst Judith Ackroyd rails against the usurpation of the term applied theatre to designate a favoured form of theatre and an ethically-driven practice which has become exclusive and excluding; one that relegates drama in education to the ranks of the staid, the vocational and not high on transformative powers, she only makes passing mention that the practice and the literature (therefore the discourse) has passed into the hands of academics in higher education.[111] It is likely that the dominant discourse that she laments is a reflection of practitioners no longer being the teachers she finds so absent in Taylor's writing 'in or out of role' (Ackroyd 2007: 9) or those no longer in post such as Geoff Davis, whose post as drama advisory teacher she tells us was axed. The power to publish is now with the 'new generation … creating careers' (2007: 5). It is in this emergent higher education context that the current authority, which according to Ackroyd is strongly influenced by 'Marxist Freire and progressive educational practices', works at 'its reproduction and transformation' (Cusset 2007: 140) from within the academy. Its insularity, and yet profound commitment, can be compared to that of the teachers of process drama against whom Hornbrook reacted (1989: 132-134). The problem for certain practices, Ackroyd says, is that they are marginalised and this results in a lower status. What has come to light in reflecting on the witnessing that has been attempted in OST, is that, because it occupies such a peripheral position, like the communities it has tried to serve, it has been obliged to remain invisible.

One last example of impotence in face of the establishment will be discussed before the chapter about how integrating teams effect an appreciable difference on power relationships. In 2001, the Director of CDA, Jinnah Shah-I-Mobin approached Richard Crane to support his application for a place at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) conference on participation. In so doing Crane came to be asked if he knew of any other Bangladeshi organisations with innovative participative approaches. On my suggestion he gave the name of Samdani, affectionately known as Kona, the little bird (Appendix I). He put the University in touch with TCSD. This conference complicated Passe-Partout's own collaboration with TCSD. First, it was to be exclusively for 'organisations from the south'. Second, in retrospect, the benefit to IDS (the hosting organisation) of having a cultural activist from Bangladesh was, according to Kona, literally nominal: an extra name, country and additional discipline on a list of people in attendance. TCSD felt no benefit having lost one of its key active members for a whole week. Because we had made the introduction we were implicated.

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[111] Of which she is now herself one: Judith Ackroyd is the Dean of Regent's College London.

From the start it was difficult to explain to Kona that, although we hoped that the conference (all fees and travel expenses paid) would be of benefit to her and her organisation, there would be no one in attendance from Passe-Partout. Bourdieu showing a young American visitor around his French university in the early 70s talks about the astonishment that the social organisation provoked, because the names known to him at home were absent; this was a similar situation.

It is possible to reconstruct a number of points of view: Kona's on behalf of her organisation TCSD, IDS's and my own, regarding the work of Passe-Partout. Cultural participation, Kona told me, was been talked about at the start of the IDS week-long workshop as a possibility, in terms of producing, with others, some street theatre, Kona's speciality, as part of the Brighton Theatre Festival that was taking place on the streets that Saturday. For her this was a way in which she knew she could contribute. She waited patiently for it to be discussed again. The idea was never spoken about again. The silence she lived through was an indictment of theatre for social change.[112]

In the literature around participative approaches in development work there has, until recently, been remarkably little about theatre and what it might offer in terms of results or methodologies. The problem that Kona faced in this week-long workshop labelled Participation, when she was so deeply disappointed about the complete absence of curiosity about using drama or about trying out any of TCSD's working methods, was the apparent lack of interest on behalf of the tutors of the course. Although at the time little had been written in this area and one could deduce little was known about it, there might well have also been, on the part of the organisers, a fear at the welcome that might await cultural activists from overseas on the streets of Brighton. If they didn't meet with indifference or cultural tourism, worst perhaps, there might be hostility from some.

It is also possible that those responsible might have felt that in less than one week the performance standards might not do justice to the commitment to the social causes that those directly involved would feel. These reasons, alone or combined, are perhaps what in part led to the decision of those responsible to leave the audiences to be found on the streets of Brighton that Saturday comfortable in their own "compassion fatigue" (Adam Smith in Graeber 2006: 8), to enjoy bolder, more polished and less serious entertainment.

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[112] A feeling of having been humiliated accompanied her departure and I quietly regretted having been the person to provide the link. I had lent her a crimson silk sari to brighten up a display that was being made, it had been a present on leaving Bangladesh on my last visit. When she returned to collect it, the sari had been taken: an apt metaphor for the whole experience.

By being excluded from this workshop because Passe-Partout was local and not from 'a country of the South', we felt the effects of a policy of positive discrimination. Crane organised hospitality for our colleagues, but there was a feeling of frustration in not being able to join forces or contribute in any way. Rather like the Gardener Arts theatre[113] at Sussex University that has gone dark, so with something that exists and is located in the same community - it can also be decommissioned.

Fighting failures

This chapter carries the risk of giving a negative impression which I hope will have been and will continue to be countered by other examples in which the work has been shown to have positive effects. The examples have all related to work with partners in Bangladesh which spanned a five-year period, during which time inevitably there have been problems along the way. Also all cycles of work in which there is outside facilitation must come to an end point. What has been discussed here is not the catastrophic nor the exceptional, but rather the sort of difficulties that in most cases, in the desire to prove the success of the work, will rarely be presented for dissection.

One impetus to carrying out this post-mortem has been a wish to better understand the nature of the failings. Power relationships remain unaffected when the work fails. When practice is underway, particularly when this is accompanied by the energy and drive that commitment and involvement brings, there is little time for reflection or the deepening of an understanding of the social context in which the work takes place and the reasons that might lie behind an *impasse*. If insight is gained from the ability to develop as great a scepticism about our hypothesis as about those of others (O'Neill 1996: 141) it is also salutary to submit our failures to critical scrutiny. It may also be an antidote to the invisible, cumulative corrosion that risks wearing through the will to resist.

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[113] Gardener Arts theatre at Sussex University that hosted many fringe performances was closed in April 2007 because the cost of providing disabled access was prohibitively high.

Chapter Eight

Prison case studies on Integrated Teams

'Theatre has never had an easy time within any prison system, yet is seems very appropriate to prison' does not surprise the reader in the same way as the equally true observation that prisons are 'natural sites for theatre interventions' (Heritage in Thompson & Schechner eds. 2004b: 97). Pragmatically, there are reasons why theatre is 'appropriate to prison' (2004b: 97). As Heritage points out, prisons are themselves performative sites in which punishment is played out but, by their very routine, they are places in which it is possible to house and replicate structured activities, which can include theatrical initiatives. Furthermore, they also have a special commodity that is in such short supply outside namely an excess of man power, that has on its hands an excess of time. This also offers the rich possibility of assembling audiences, the composition of which would be unthinkable outside.

These difficult, if prolific, sites will be investigated in this chapter through four prison theatre interventions in which I was involved at the beginning of my research into power relationships (Table 8i).

PRISON	DATE	PRECIPITATOR	TITLE	DURATION	TARGET AUDIENCE
HMP Lewes (Youth Custody)	January and February 2001	PO Hammersley	*Weakest Link*	Two days contact per week for five weeks	Initiation video for new prisoners
HMP Lewes (VPs)	18 – 23 July plus Oct '02 extra days	Governor Orr	*Bully Boys Out*	Ten days in two blocks	Board of Visitors (BoV)
HMP Lewes (A+C wings, lifers and other extended sentence)	October 2002	Governor Orr	*Joint Ownership*	Seven days contact spread over two weeks	In-service training and staff meetings
HMP Highdown (High security)	May 2003	PO Rees	*Good Practice*	Seven days consecutive	Whole prison staff meeting

Table 8i Prison theatre case studies 2000-2003 (all southeast England).

These case studies document a practice in which both sides of the prison community came together in a negotiated truce to carry out an inquiry into the life of the prison to address the question of safer custody. The question that I will pursue is how the Integrated Team,

constructed during an OST production, modifies the subject-actor-audience relationship through its collective approach to the subject.

Foucault demands that we make a critical analysis of our world in order to liberate ourselves from the individualising and totalizing forms of power to which we are subjected (Faubion 1994: 332). The history of theatres that concern themselves with social change is that of social struggles against forms of power that subjugate communities and individuals. Nowhere is this subjugation more clear than in prisons, as Foucault himself was to explore, and bullying within prisons is in the thick of this. According to Touraine, community (or certainly communitarianism) seeks only integration, homogeneity and consensus, rejecting democratic debate (1995: 304, 311-312). Inside prison, where order must prevail at all costs, this is manifest institutionally as an extreme sense of equality between prisoners: each is treated exactly the same as the next. Their own interactions between themselves are their own business. An unspoken discourse propagates 'individual solutions for private problems' (Petras in Rahnema 1997: 184). In other words, victims of bullying are seen as being, not insubstantially, to blame for their own destiny. James Petras draws a parallel with what he observes happening continuously in the media; all the consumers appear to have equal access to all the information and opportunities and the channels of response are open, but alienation results (Petras in Rahnema 1997: 183).

Refusing this kind of individuality that is forced upon us, Foucault urges his readers to find new forms of subjectivity (Faubion 1994: 336). Rabinow argues that since there is no essential subject, then we should accept Foucault's conclusion that, 'there is only one practical consequence: we have to create ourselves as a work of art' (1991: 321). However, this is not necessarily the only way. I will explore, in this chapter, an alternative to this conception of self-development as an individual in separation from other people; a counterpoint to Baudrillard's postmodernism that leads to a hopeless nihilism because all agency has been dissolved into 'a form of individual passivity and collective disability' (Farrell Fox 2003: 32). Faced with our fractured identity and exploded operational systems, there is cause to desire a more Sartrean vision in which the subject is not just a thinking consciousness which gives meaning to things but is also engaged as an actor immersed in the world of things (Farrell Fox 2003: 35). Since this state of innocence cannot be returned to in the twenty-first century, then we might succeed in escaping from inertia or stunted political communities[114] by turning to alternative conceptions of the idea of community, of the kind

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[114] Of the kind that Chomsky refers to in his chapter on the military-industrial complex, in which a passive political community only see spending as having 'benefits' in terms of economic stimulation and would not therefore risk threatening the monopoly of power by popular involvement (Chomsky,

that Corlett outlines, the only sort possible in his view of postmodernity: a community existing only on the condition of 'community without unity' (Corlett 1989: 6-7 quoted in Farrell Fox 2003: 34).

Background

Vivian Stern traces the shift from the 18th century morality that crime should be punished by inflicting pain or untimely death, to the more contemporary position that crime is rather like an illness in which the imposition of prolonged periods of sobriety, chastity and fasting, or possibly treatment by isolation, will restore moral rectitude (Stern 1998: 16). Isolation however does not lean towards the theatrical. For theatre to happen there is a need for an audience. The social shift during this two hundred year period towards incarceration, transiting through a period of deportation, echoes the move from a rural society to an urban one. Each individual becomes simultaneously more emotionally isolated from their neighbour and more physically closely packed: a social phenomenon repeated outside prisons. Paralleling this transition, cultural expression, in our case theatre, shifts away from the authority of religion towards a more stated, social purpose. During this turning point, at around the time of the French Revolution, Heritage identifies prisons starting to offer a recalcitrant yet adept site for theatre: hinged around the days of the Marquis de Sade's theatrical provocations (2004b: 97). A process assisted by the unavoidable tension on which prisons depend, between what is deliberately made visible and that which, on the contrary, is kept in obscurity.

Theatre today, in the age of public demands and media presence, has emerged with a new role in prisons. It can respond to the increased need for prisons to be seen to be run and managed fairly and to seek the design of programmes that will promote increased faith in the existing penal system (HM Prison Service 2008, PSO 0050: para 1.4). Theatre within prisons is now not only possible, it is at times approved. Stern explains how a small number of prisons are run in ways where: 'The prisoners are treated as individuals. Their eventual return to society becomes the focus' (1998: 10). This rationale that theatre work not only benefits the prisoners directly but can feed back into modifications of the system is described by Thompson when he refers to the early years of what later became 'the cognitive behavioural group work programmes' developed over a five-year period in the UK (2004:

2003: 71). Hardly a murmur occurred when Bush augmented the US military budget by US $80 billion in December 2007.

37). The progressive aspect of applying theatre to the problem of public understanding within the social system in which the prisons find themselves, comes to the fore in the AIDS/HIV education workshops in Brazil leading to the 'Staging Human Rights' programme designed not to denounce, condone or blame but to stimulate debate on rights issues and encourage action (Heritage 2004b: 100).

Human rights includes the treatment of prisoners, although many inmates' basic rights will be negated by the act of incarceration. According to the Woolf report, if prisoners are not treated justly: 'they will react against their circumstances and both security and control will be threatened' (Stern 1998: 259). Lord Woolf, a respected lawyer, set out a philosophy for prisons which requires them to keep three elements in balance: security, control and justice (1996). Security so that the prisoners do not escape, control so that they do not riot and justice to guard against abuses of human rights. The Woolf Report builds on earlier understanding for instance that of the Royal Commission of New South Wales in 1974 that prison should be used as a last resort: 'loss of liberty is the punishment' (Stern 1998: 260).[115]

What is socially acceptable in terms of retribution for crimes also creates a tension between whether treatment is seen as too harsh or too liberal Loss of liberty has the incumbent risk of being too desirable because of all the opportunities (for those abusing the system) that it offers; this is particularly true in less economically well-off countries where meeting basic needs for the 'free' is a struggle. Those fighting for penal reform within the system have to overcome opposition from their colleagues as well as from politicians, but for those who fight for rights from the outside, it is even more difficult (Stern 2006: 165).

The current trend towards harsher sentences, especially with the introduction and rapid growth of privately run prisons, has seen an increase in the prison population worldwide of 12 % in the past six years (Stern 2006: 154).[116] These 'human warehouses designed to manage "untouchable toxic waste"' (Lynch quoted in Jewkes 2007: 193) bring in their wake vast problems. Yet it has been found to be politically expedient to be seen to 'get tough on crime'.[117] After 9/11 this is the most wide-spread rhetoric in response to increasing juvenile crime, urban gang rampages and the threat of terrorism. All are reflections of a system in collapse, as was the "mega rebellion" described by Heritage in these terms (2004b: 97): a

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[115] This same line was quoted by Officer Green in one of the improvised snapshot about appropriate induction for new prisoners in Lewes in 2002, before he corpsing as the scene was being recorded.
[116] By 2002 the prison population in the US had grown at an average 3.6 percent annually since 1995 (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 'Prisoners in 2002'). This is equivalent to nearly 1000 more prisoners every week throughout this period.
[117] A phrase used by the British Labour party in the 1990's.

bleak reminder of the Woolf Report prophecy. In the state of São Paulo early in 2001 organised gangs, both outside and within the prisons, coordinated riots and outbreaks in which there were 19 deaths and 7000 hostages taken including 2,250 civilians (families inside on visits). This dangerous state of affairs is one that every regime wishes to avoid. Such failures of the system to keep control and ensure security will often put paid to any initiatives of a more humanitarian ilk.[118]

On a minute scale by comparison the four case studies in this chapter, all within the British prison system, also deal with the problem of providing safe custody. They were set in motion following the occurrence of two suicides in HMP Lewes in 1999. Stern refers to the British prison service's euphemism 'bullying' which is used to mean violence between prisoners (1998: 161). The case studies all focus on this issue (Table 8i).   Stern quotes the prison service definition of bullying: 'conduct motivated by a desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone' (1998: 161). This 'bullying' can of course be extended to behaviour between prisoners and their captors, as in the extreme case of the São Paulo example above, or as in countless other examples that she gives of brutal behaviour by captors to their prisoners. The incarceral system constantly endangers and dehumanises the lives of both captives and captors (Heritage 2004b: 99 & Stern 1998).

Four case studies

Turning my attention now to the four case studies of this chapter, in HMP Lewes and HMP Highdown from 2001 to 2003, the first observation is that prisons are not communities which can be reduced to an underlying unity because of the binary opposition of those serving sentences and those servicing that community. In Kuppers and Robertson's analysis of Touraine's work this opens up, in the closed institutional setting, 'diversity and communicative possibilities' (2007: 31). These opportunities are the central interest of the case studies in this chapter. The case studies can be seen as small experiments in creating new intersubjectivities through temporary communities nourished by individualism. They tried to work with the system rather than being set against it, in a way that nonetheless allowed democracy a social space.

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[118] The riots of 1980, some twenty years earlier, blatantly used the theatre work of Ruth Escobar as a scapegoat for being compelled to resort to the brutal application of 'naked power… that is so often the rule of law' (Heritage 2004b: 104).

Data presented by Stern that concern suicides, self-harm and assaults give some context to this work. Between 1990 and 1996, twenty-six young prisoners in England and Wales succeeded in killing themselves, and a further 650 made unsuccessful attempts. In 1996 there were three suicides and 108 attempted suicides. At the same time there were 879 assaults on young prisoners (1998: 157).

At a *Safer Custody* conference in 1999, shortly after two suicides on the Young Offenders block in HMP Lewes, Principal Officer, P.O. Mark Hammersley, reacting against the frustration caused by the difficulty in helping those needing increased security, talked to the Police Community Liaison Officer David Simmons. Sussex Police Authority had previously matched European Union funds to support a national *Schools Against Racism* conference in Eastbourne which launched the manual *A School with a View* (Young 1997). Hammersley (who was to become the *Precipitator*) was told by Simmons (the *Initiator*) to contact Crane in order to discuss the possibility of designing an anti-bullying programme through theatre. He indicated that the Community fund could again be approached to support a prison project because many of the young people that were in and out of temporary custody in HMP Lewes were also the concern of the probation service. This gave rise to what was to become a series of four workshops over the next three years in both HMP Lewes and the high security prison HMP Highdown.

The early expectations of the programme of work were that it would focus on the bully and on challenging bullying behaviour (for instance anger management training or 'offending behaviour courses'), or would focus on the victim by providing support and strategies to deal with bullies (for instance 'groupwork programmes'). What emerged was not directed at either bullies or victims in any of the four cases. Each time the focus would be a different part of the prison community. It is in this area, that which Heritage calls 'the social ties', that this theatre was making its forays across the borders between the 'private and public, individual and collective and the psychological and social' (in Balfour 2004a: 195). It was operating in the tide marks between individual and institutional change. The focus of each was never determined in advance of the work but came to be decided during its course. Who the work targeted will become clear later on. The differences stem from the four different Subject Group communities: young offenders (YOs were considered the worst offenders[119]

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[119] 'There's more bullying on F wing than anywhere else' (Hammersley, pers comm., January 2001). The interpretation, subjective, at the time was that bullying is more frequent and implicates more individuals on F wing, even though, perhaps, the severity is lower than on other wings. F wing, originally Females wing, is, now that HMP Lewes is single-sex, the youth wing.

in this respect) , vulnerable prisoners (VPs who are mostly sex offenders), long-term, lifers or remand prisoners (A & C wing) and high security prisoners.

Many interdependent functions are activated by the Integrated Team who are motivated by the overall OST objective to cast a balanced light across salient factors. I have constructed a diagram (Fig. 8i), rather like an OST performance with its multiple component snapshots, that gives the key points. In order to avoid creating a web so dense that its fundamentals are obscured, I have refrained from showing all the inter-relationships between 'stars'. This exploded view conveys some of the distinctive ways in which OST controls the power balance centred on the Integrated Team .

Input to project
design

Options for
change

Identify
target audience

High degree of
commitment

Embrace
diverse
skills

Understand
vested interests

Difficulty to
dovetail with
daily activities

Appreciate
concerns

**Access to
stakeholders**

Specific to issue

**Access to
subject group**

Observe props,
costumes,
gestures,
vernacular

Freshness,
vitality

Critique
1st performance

Not conducive to
forming
long-term theatre
troupe

the integrated team
comprising members of the subject group
and representatives of other stakeholders
(typically twelve in number)

Careful
management

Increased
objectivity

Arbitrator

Graphs
stimulate
ideas

Impartiality

Use of numbers

Empower
less-able

Gives
non-personalised
handle
for debate

**Target audience
not known at
outset**

**Structured,
paced**

Avoids focus on
extremes or
trivia

Style and con-
tent of perform-
ance not known
at outset

Defuse
rhetoric

Embrace
diverse
skills

Difficult to find
funders or
promoters

No agenda,
no social politics,
no ideology

Fig. 8i Constellation illustrating diverse functions of the Integrated Team.

The six principal devices split into three areas of technique: communication (access to
Subject Group access to Stakeholders), focus (identification of issue and identification of
Target Audience) and execution (use of numbers and use of pacing). Each device opens the
flood gates to abuse of power and yet simultaneously provides a stepping stone to diverting

or damming this threat. For instance, whilst the difficulty of dovetailing with daily activities curtails Integrated Team involvement by certain sectors, it does enable access to that sector at interview time because they can be visited at, or immediately after, their daily activity. Many elements cross-relate between the three areas of technique. For instance, techniques for integrating the less-fluent and less literate (Chapter Six: Question-generation) are deployed particularly when securing a critique of the questions or of the first performance (for instance verbal informal interview, and short question set) and using graphs to stimulate ideas (such as analysis in pairs and collaboratively).

Rather than looking at OST from the position of its 'internal rationality' I will follow Foucault's methodology of establishing 'antagonism of strategies' (Faubion 1994: 329). For example, what closures exist in top-down research that are opened up by an integrated approach? Finding useful examples of other integrated approaches has not been easy. In November 2003 the World Bank published a social survey *Integrated Questionnaire Measuring Social Capital* (acronym IQMSC) which purported, as its name suggests, to being integrated. Despite its rather misleading name, such survey work is typical of the end-of-twentieth-century anglophone top-down approach to development and echoes very closely what took place in British prisons. In 1999 HM Prison Service sent out national directives about a biennial self-auditing process of bullying (Order Ref No. 1702) to assist in the review of practices for HM Chief Inspector of Prisons' inspections: the survey, findings and strategy were to be sent to Order & Control Unit for monitoring and evaluation. I shall contrast the mindset inbuilt into the prototypes of these two examples, to that which is confounded with a blank slate in OST. Foucault describes his antagonistic way of working, by contrast to Enlightenment rationalisation, as 'more empirical, more related to our present situation and implying more relations between theory and practice' (in Faubion 1994: 329). By following a similar strategy as Foucault's, the discussion will contrast theory in the first part (section – *Theory: locked in*) with practice in the second (section – *Practice: opened up*). It will cast light on power relations: locate their position, seek their point of application and identify the methods used in maintaining these imbalances of power.

Theory: locked in

The World Bank example is mentioned here so as not to make the prison self-audit seem anything other than a traditional model. Both surveys are the products of a style of social study that is taught at tertiary level; the IQMSC shows the minimal extent to which the limits have been pushed in terms of modernising this approach, despite the promise of its name. It

is also a reminder of the wide applications that these empirical tools have; whose limitations, sadly, have such little effect on those they claim or are paid to serve.

The integration to which the World Bank refers is purely inter-disciplinary, as testified by the qualifications of the authors.[120] This expert team comprising economists with social scientists and research analysts would be rather like the prison services deciding to make a working group of a governor, an education officer, a psychologist and the chaplain (all of whom, in this country, are likely to have university educations). Looking at the names of the IQMSC authors, the term integrated is also subliminally suggestive of multi-racial.[121] This might be seen more as a reflection of the ethnic mix in American society and its political commitment to reflecting this, rather than a deliberate mix selected on the grounds of knowledge of the geographic sectors identified for instance for the piloting (this would have supposed including representation from Nigerians and Albanians). Consequently, we can eliminate sectoral integration, vertical integration and geographic integration.

By giving the impression that different cultural perspectives are represented, the deceptive terminology obscures the fact that certain sectors are excluded. This 'integration' offers scarcely more diversity of cultural perspective than the prison's audit, as UK prisons operate a mildly decentralized approach in which they are allowed a certain autonomy. Given that the audits are not prescribed as such, and each prison appoints its own member of staff to draft their own version of the questionnaire, they will undergo local variations that can be compared and contrasted nationally by the monitoring board. Only if there was a fusion of questions from the various questionnaires in order to make an improved standardized version might it makes claims to integration of the modest kind found in the World Bank questionnaire.

The integration that is referred to in the OST approach was based on a partnership not only between those within the system but that also included those from outside it. The two outsiders facilitating (Richard Crane and myself) offered a measure of impartiality in what can only be described as a bold departure from the normal segregated existence of those inside. The Initiator, David Simmons of Sussex Police, established the contact between HMP Lewes and Passe-Partout and also secured funds from the outside.

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[120] Lead Economist in the Social Development Department, Senior Advisor in the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, Senior Social Scientist in the Development Research Group, all at the World Bank and Research Analyst at the World Bank Institute.
[121] Christiaan Grootaert, Deepa Narayan, Veronica Nyhan Jones, Michael Woolcock.

Inside the prison structure, the production team was vertically integrated with management, senior officers, officers and inmates. The integration of this team was based on a provisional and temporary pact, where bullies and victims and 'screws'[122] and outsiders rubbed shoulders together. It was negotiated by the Precipitator, PO Mark Hammersley, who informed prisoners on his wing that he was looking for volunteers to join this activity. It was billed as a training course, worth both work and good behaviour credits. He informed his wing officers and similarly invited volunteers. In the first case study, he represented senior officers, and was the access point to governors (once-removed from the first case study) and joined by one other officer.[123]

Certain dangers do lie in such projects. James Thompson writes about his disenchantment with the second round of prison theatre, that was concerned with anger management, after all that the Blagg offending behaviour workshop had succeeded in achieving in the first years with the Tipp Centre (Thompson 1995: 199a). He states how difficult it had proved not getting sucked into a distorted logic of cognitive behaviouralism (Thompson, 2006: 45). Post-modernist pessimism of the sort of which Baudrillard is an exponent warns that such experimentations with collective agency are liable to become congealed and absorbed by the dominant power structures (Baudrillard 1983: 3-4). To such melancholic views Foucault has an answer, that 'where there is power there is resistance' (Smart 2002: 132) which was borne out in the 'micro-politics' (Guattari and Negri 1990: 122) of those three years. There is a big difference between revolution and resistance. Revolution presupposes an upturning of the ruling power, whilst resistance can be a healthy on-going process within a process in which failures are admitted and can guide revisions.

The four experiments were resistant in a number of ways. Perhaps because they were motivated by a collective gain – ultimately that of creating a safer environment in which to live and work (which did not exclude the possibility of, or interest in, personal gain). They could be described as resistant in the sense of being militant and wanting change, which entailed agreeing to try something new and breaking the taboo of crossing sides. It also proved, as will be shown throughout this chapter, that with its strength in numbers, it was resistant to manipulation by individual agendas (there were usually about 12 members in each team, comprising: two to four staff, six to eight inmates and two outsiders). Additionally, perhaps through searching together towards an unknown outcome, the

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[122] The slang term generally used by staff and inmates alike when informally referring to the officers.
[123] In the three subsequent case studies the pattern of negotiation for the structure of the Integratd Team was similar excepting that in each of those three case studies a Governor was directly involved in the team

workshops catalysed a sense of mutual support offered by the group: the unknown always holding some fear.

Although the term prototype is not used by the IQMSC, it does offer itself up as this. In the abstract it claims to provide:

> … a set of empirical tools to help measure and create better empirical information on **social capital**, in order to increase dialogue between researchers, policymakers, task managers, and **poor people** themselves, as a result of which it is hoped that more effective **poverty** reduction strategies will be designed and implemented.
>
> (World Bank 2003: 3)

Likewise in the 1999 Anti-bullying Strategy document (order number 1702), the 'Victimisation Survey', Annex A, is there as a sample or a guide which could have been prefaced with the self same aim as the IQMSC save for three minor modifications (the substituted words are in bold):

> … to help measure and create better empirical information on **bullying**, in order to increase dialogue between researchers, policymakers, task managers, and **prisoners** themselves, as a result of which it is hoped that more effective **bullying** reduction strategies will be designed and implemented.

The ease with which one set of aims can be adapted to fit an altogether other survey in a completely different setting tempts supposition. Two conjectures are probable. It could be a reflection that this consultative genre is indiscriminatingly generalisable. It could be that the results are not expected to lead to much analysis and direct action: there is intense activity and effort in the making yet very little in synthesis and critical reflection.

The rigidity of this top-down approach and the poverty to which it is prone, should be denounced because they are not only detrimental but also common to this style of survey. James Thompson writes about demonstrating problems of application, in the offending behavioural workshops, not because a lot was not achieved in the cognitive-behavioural programmes and anger management programmes using theatre, but because its discourse and practice had become a new orthodoxy (2003: 44-49). Similarly I shall critique the use of surveys, not because of what they must necessarily be, but because of what they can become. However, my process of investigation is somewhat different. I am suggesting that the OST method can increase the efficacy of participatory research because of the way that through its development it has departed from conventional workings. This methodology is not suggested as a substitute for institutional self-audits which now form part of the prison system and reflect an ongoing commitment to vigilance within British prisons: they offer

ideas for areas of revision in the existing format as well as complementary activities, capable of in-depth investigation and opening up different possible routes for change.

If we look at the 1999 prison self-audit survey format we see the following structure. After personal details, the two questions that start the survey concern active intervention first from other prisoners and second from officers. Then there are single questions about: minor bullying (verbal), violence, theft of food or property and lastly whether prisoners feel more safe inside than outside prison. A section on location of incidents is followed by a numerical breakdown of the minor to serious bullying offences, first from the experience of the victim and second of the bully. All answers are tick box questions. For greater clarity I have listed these categories

      a.   personal details

      b.   minor bullying (verbal or being prevented from joining in)

      c.   violence

      d.   theft of food or property

      e.   definition of bullying

In the self-audit made by the prison I noted two modifications. In one, every section had an additional open question with around three lines of space, for those literate enough and keen enough to expand on their answers. There was also an extra final question asking them to make suggestions to improve the bullying situation. The second innovation introduced questions which extended to experience of staff bullying. In 1999 the mandatory and advisory aspects of the original order described anti-bullying strategy **specifically** from the point of view of 'bullying behaviour by prisoners of other prisoners' (1.2.2. Order Ref. No. 1702). Its only reference to staff was in the two questions about **how often** do staff try to stop bullying and **how helpful** are the officers when prisoners are getting picked on. The alteration is therefore quite bold. Staff are implicated in every aspect of the investigation from victimisation to bullying: quite a departure from the initial remit. Otherwise, excepting a different lay-out with more pages, larger font and the repetition of questions b to d from the point of view firstly of the victim and secondly of the bully (reinforcing the binary opposition talked about below), only the ordering of 'theft of property' has been moved. It comes before violence: thus following a logic of seriousness of offence to the person. In the rest of the survey, content, language, structure and logic remain unchanged.

The fact that the local self-audit was so close to the original proposed survey format is an extremely important observation with far-reaching consequences. Language is a constraint of which we cannot begin to understand the limits (Foucault 1984: 388); the same can be

said of thought structures. Rather than considering these as tools that allow **us** mastery, we would do better to recognise **them** 'as masters' (Howell 1992: 2). When the existing survey is the starting point and one looks to make improvements to it, these tend to be accessorising. In short, a sample format is always difficult to modify.

Looked at more closely we can see that the perspectives under consideration are only either those of the bully or those of the victim.[124] This is exactly the sort of binary logic of which Nietzsche is critical; it is all-pervasive in our western thought: that opposition, of subject and object, that distorts our thinking (Nietzsche 1966: 2). In any prison service operating within HM Inspector of Prisons' jurisdiction there is likely to be limited manoeuvrability in the re-designing of the so-called self-audits. Nietzsche's claim that individuals are produced through the influence of social, historical and linguistic forces is upheld (Nietzsche 1967: 13).

The risk of obtaining a deterministic outcome is further illustrated in the consistent positioning of the question about the definition of bullying that occurs at the end. This question, to which only 23% answered in the self-audit carried out in 2002, comes after all the others that deal exclusively with victimisation and bullying. It is rather like a product competition that might be found on a cereal packet providing two lines for entrants to come up with the neatest summary. Following on from 23 pages investigating bullying it is difficult to imagine how the answers could be anything other than normalised by a form of remote groupthink.[125]

It is also of relevance to the difficulty of introducing change that the most significant innovation, that of focusing on staff, did not in the synthesis of results play a very prominent role. The interpretation of answers, even more than the preparation of questions, has similarities with the work of the anthropologist who, as Evans-Pritchard argued, faces the issue of translation: translating one's own thoughts into the world of another culture, and thereby managing to come to understand it, and then translating this understanding back so

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[124] Just as when I came to this work I had anticipated the work would target bullies or victims.

[125] Irving Janis's definition, the original definition, of groupthink is: A mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action (1972: 9). My intention here is to avoid using the idea of auto-suggestion, which refers to the wording of a single question, and try to capture the mind-numbing effect of following the directive leadership of a very long questionnaire that envelopes the respondent who perseveres to the end and thereby isolates them from their external viewpoint and homogenising their ideology with that of the questionnaire. Clark McCauley's three conditions under which groupthink occurs: directive leadership, homogeneity of members' social background and ideology, and isolation of the group from outside sources of information and analysis (1989: 250).

as to explain it to people of one's own culture (1965: 13*).* This last point is the sticking point.

This will be illustrated here by looking at the transcription of certain results. One of the questions in the survey was: Who was involved? This was part of Question 3.3 (a) Insulting remarks. It relates to the perpetrators of insulting remarks. The categories of response indicating staff are separated into two rows, one for 'a member of staff' and one for 'more than one member of staff': the data respectively read 33% and 13%. The difficulty arises from the interpretation of these rsults. In the 'Discussion of results' the author reports that staff are seen as being only 33% of the perpetrators. This mis-reading of data would not have easily have slipped through the net of a presentation being prepared collectively (for instance the identification of influence and multiplication of responses in Chapter Six, section *Number crunching*). The mis-reading of the data does perhaps in this instance stem partly from the mis-leading ambiguity of the question. I am compelled to a second contention: that this type of ambiguity in questions is eliminated when questions are collaboratively generated and when a pilot test within a group is implemented.

This example is not an exception that is simply a slip up. It was not alone. Human error can be found to be the cause but the errors all tend one way: they present a favourable picture regarding the staff. 'How often do prison officers try to put a stop to bullying?' was answered: 9% never, 52% sometimes, 39% always.[126] In 'Discussion of the results' this becomes 'it was encouraging to note that in the opinion of prisoners, prison officers would intervene 91% of the time' (2002: 4.2). Sometimes here has been read as always rather than sometimes they do and sometimes they don't. Alternatively, if human error is in fact the cause then, even in that situation, there is a greater chance of it being spotted when a team check is in place.

Imposing value judgements is another issue. Consider the phrase 'a high percentage of prisoners (50%) appeared to regard Prison Officers as "helpful" in some way if the case arose that a prisoner was being picked on'. This value judgement is debatable: is one out of two, really a high proportion? It is possible that the fact that the results will be exclusively presented to fellow staff is a source of subconscious influence.

This is only possible because of the tendency to interpret each piece of data singly as reflective of wider concerns. This can be seen to be somewhat misleading in the opposite

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[126] 'Never' means 0% intervention, 'always' means 100% intervention, 'sometimes' in the absence of any more specific data means 50% intervention. $0\% \times 9 + 100\% \times 39 + 50\% \times 52 = 65\%$.

way. Summarising the data regarding stolen or damaged property, the author reported that 13% of prisoners responded that more than one member of staff has been responsible for this type of bullying within the last month. This is described as 'of concern'. However, when these answers are read alongside the locations, the reader's interpretation is altered: the removal of property at reception or indeed delays or confusions possible for instance with laundry or with post could also be interpreted by prisoners, feeling vulnerable, as deliberate acts of theft. Rather than drawing a conclusion from each single question's data in isolation, it can be valuable to take the time to plot results, analyse them, summarise them then supplement the results with people's qualitative judgements, thereby augmenting an interpretation and assisting in the process of distilling what is of essential concern. The single author can move quickly over these steps, essentially amalgamating them, whereas the collaborative team progresses at a more deliberate pace and will pause when a challenge is made before moving on. The repetition of the analyse-share cycle embodies a form of reviewing at each step.

Practice: opened up

The 2000 – 2003 OST experiments, with no blueprint, had more of what Robert Lepage might have called necessary chaos, or an order which is creative because it is 'a living, organic, changing one' (Charest 1995: 88). People, who had never worked together before, without specialist training, battled out and assembled from first principles a questionnaire in a deterritorialised, no-man's land. Everyone in the Integrated Team contributed questions according to what they thought were priorities or that stemmed from their own concerns. The group came from different backgrounds so there was a range of perspectives nourished with first hand experience. No question was regarded as too simple. Although the building of the inquiries was carried out in a structured manner, the content had no imposed structure.

Questions were fused, developed and cut as they made their way round the small groups of two or three within the working team. After being tested by the team only those that threw some light on the issue remained. When this empirical testing had taken place a logic of sorts was given in order to assist the comprehension of the inmates on the wing: questions relating to a particular area were grouped and consideration was given to which question should start and finish the questionnaire. The absence of any formal structure to the content at the start ensured that it was free from the agenda of any one sector.

The logic that the questions were given could even be called somewhat illogical, because certain questions remained that might have seemed rather similar or indeed contradictory but if they were shown in the testing stage to be interesting in terms of the data they provided, particularly when this provided conflicting answers, they were kept. For example, the 15% of YOs who responded to one question that there was no bullying on the wing, were still able to contribute answers to another question whose results showed that taxing was the commonest form of bullying, followed by verbal abuse, that there were far fewer incidents of physical abuse and only passing mention of drugs related incidents.[127]

Thompson talks about concentrating on the mechanics of the process when both the object and the agent are invisible and this resonates here at a number of levels (Thompson 2006: 21). There were an estimated 6 bullies out of 60 inmates on the YO wing. Recent incidents were recalled as taking place during 'association' (social time out of the cell), around the pool table and in the education room, as well as through banging on pipes although answers to another question showed that no one had been bullied in the last year ... Clearly such data reveals the extent to which the culture of silence has a hold. This led to further questions being developed for interview that included one about whether victims deserved it, to which 63% answered 'some'. This contrasted to the answers given by officers to the officer questionnaire[128] (9 out of 12 officers answered, a 75% return rate) in which all answered in the negative excepting one of their number who answered 'yes and no'. The numbers of non-returned questionnaires by both inmates and staff provided part of the patchwork: rather like the missing pieces of a jigsaw puzzle they still had a shape that could inform: even if only speculatively of the level of commitment to addressing such issues or indeed levels of reticence and non-participation.

No-one admitted to having been bullied, excepting one person who was also one of the only two claiming to be bullies themselves. In this one instance it could easily have been taken as a case of someone spoofing the questionnaire and consequently could have been a cause for dismissing that questionnaire. Yet all questionnaires combine to reflect the prevalent culture. That no-one should admit to bullying was to be expected but, given the range of

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[127] This was not taken as any form of indication that drugs were not one of the commonest forms of 'currency' simply because there was only one mention of it. Since drugs are the offence that carry the heaviest penalty it is the least talked about openly. Off the record references to drugs increased as time went on.

[128] Even small samples are rich in terms of the canvas they paint, as in the case of the staff questionnaire for the wing. Initially viewed with considerable hostility on the first pilot but rapidly becoming part of what was expected of them when the work was seen to take place with governor involvement. The results of officer answers when graphed, enabled a very quick reading of how different officers react to both the subject of bullying and the way in which the work was taking place.

bullying incidents described, it was interesting that no-one wrote of having been bullied. More than simply a culture of silence this was indicative of a culture of shame.

The non-dismissal of the self-confessed bully questionnaires led on to discussion of what interpretations were possible. Someone raised the possibility that it was a reference to being a victim of institutional bullying, or being pushed into bullying? James Thompson observes that 'those who had unquestioningly used a variety of positions of power to inflict pain' and 'those that had been damaged by their personal history and social prejudice' are sometimes the same (Thompson 2006: 31). A causal link, reproducing learnt behaviour, could well have been at play. The absence of certainty was enriching. Acknowledging it led to suppositions fed from what they knew of the situation. When team members explained away contradictions, a lot of biographical subtext became available in a non-implicating way.

The choice when a person alone is faced with a decision about dismissing or keeping questionnaires is not complicated by such discussion. Furthermore, when there are hundreds of questionnaires and each one is over 10 pages long it is possible that expediency plays a part.[129] It is worth noting that in the self-audits there were high numbers of questionnaires dismissed as 'spoilt', indeed the two self-confessed bully questionnaires discussed above would quite likely have ended in this pile as they were both the only ones in which the word 'fuck' occurred. In the work in Highdown, one group had decided that bad language and 'rude bits' that refer to female officers[130] would be criteria for dismissal. This was later challenged by the others and reversed (Appendix XVI). The 'spoiled' questionnaire was kept (the group that had had the other self-confessed bully questionnaire had already decided that theirs was a response and therefore should be included alongside the rest). When considered more closely the rather more obscene references of the questionnaire that had been excluded looked like being an elaborate joking metaphor: I am as likely to grass as a female officer is to make advances to me … Discussion amongst the Integrated Team usually made available a range of interpretations fed by different perspectives, thus avoiding any one person's individual agenda or value system steering the process. Spoilt questionnaires and how they reflect on the respondee and questionner would warrant a full research project.

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[129] Six hundred and fifty questionnaires were handed out in one self-audit in 2002. Although 475 were returned, 165 of these were discarded as 'spoilt'. There is no discussion of the criteria that constitutes 'spoilt'.
[130] In Lewes only one female officer had been involved whilst in Highdown there were three and the attitude of the inmates was governed by their own code that was polite and protective towards them. The term 'Miss' was frequently used similar to a school room.

OST questionnaires, developed in response to testing, contrast to the self-audits derived from the 1999 survey prototype. The questions of the latter assumed the respondee would answer about their personal first-hand experience from the times when they had been either a victim or a bully. The questions produced by the OST process were more impersonal and broader for example: Why does bullying go unseen? What is the commonest form of bullying on the wing? What is the worst form of bullying? What was the last bullying incident you heard of? Even if you haven't been a bully or a victim, what effect has bullying had on you in prison? These questions, furthermore, reflected very directly the prison communities that were gathered together in the Integrated Teams: in the same way the answers also reflected variations in the perspectives depending on the Subject Groups questioned. Those of young offenders showed concern about the detection and the recognition of bullying. The Vulnerable Prisoners (the majority of this group being sex offenders) were more concerned with the way in which bullying situations were dealt with; in their experience, because victims are easier to identify than bullies, they, the victims, were often dealt with more harshly by the institutional responses than the bullies (for instance they were the ones to be moved, which was always terribly apprehended, especially moves involving going to another prison, further from their families). It was this group that had the idea for the 'Bully-boys

Fig. 8ii HMP Lewes 2002

out' poster (Fig. 8ii) in a strange reversal of the situation. The questions of the A & C wings, not surprisingly because they were long-term prisoners, were to do with the establishment of 'informal' systems that would not themselves be prey to domination, systems with more flexibly than those offered by the ones in place. They recognised the need for a modulated approach to the subject that would not bracket all incidents together as if they were of a type. Lastly the high security prisoners (many of whom are involved in serious drug related offences) had a question concerning possible work with families:[131] this group had a wider awareness of the effects of bullying that extended beyond the confines of the prison. Vulnerable individuals can find greater security when they have been removed from more exposed environments because the threat of violence is not just within the security of the prison. It is the accumulation of the fragments which build up a more comprehensive picture of the whole rather like a collage.

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[131] The notice in the waiting room of prisons has a reminder to all visitors that anyone bringing in substances or illegal item would be prosecuted and imprisoned. An article about a mother with children found guilty was also pinned up as a deterrent.

This stands in contrast to the traditional empirical approach in which neat parcels are each considered to prove something which cumulatively are expected to build up to a clearly drawn plan of the architecture of bullying in the different establishments.

Applied social science research methods, deployed by those whose methodology is based on empirical evidence, attach considerable importance to sampling method (representative validity) and sample size (statistical significance) as well as in-depth questioning (Henry 1990 in Oppenheim 1992: 38-46). Because of the importance ascribed to size in confirmatory data analysis it is worth seeing how this compares to the handling of exploratory data in OST. From a seven page document in the 1999 survey (Annex A) that I am suggesting is being used as a prototype which prisons are free to modify in their self-audit, one such modified questionnaire extended to twelve pages. In a prison of 650 inmates this is 7200 photocopied sheets and 650 envelopes (to encourage responses, an idea that had come from HMP Bullingdon, where it had significantly increased the number of returns, was to provide response envelopes and all those returned, irrespective of contents, would be entered for a prize draw). There was approximately a 75% return rate but one third of these were discarded.[129] Houseblock One returned nearly twice as many questionnaires as Houseblock Two but in the report this is explained by the latter having two spurs populated by foreign nationals. Comprehension and literacy problems certainly provides a likely explanation: no one took up the chance to complete the questionnaire during 'education' time (ie in classroom) that was offered to anyone having difficulty in doing so, which suggests that it was an inadequate option. A substantial and vulnerable part of the prison population is written out before the start.

In the OST report of the first prison pilot (Jan/Feb 2001) there is a note that during the preparation of questions in the first session it was observed that more than half the group had extreme difficulty with writing. This guided the manner in which the survey was carried out. Firstly, as with all ensuing work, the questionnaire distributed to inmates was only one sheet of A4 paper with between 7 – 19 questions. Another sheet of questions was asked through one-to-one interviews at a later stage. This was more helpful for the inmates with limited English as they tended to choose as their interviewers the officers among the Integrated Team. They could take time talking through the meaning of questions when it was obvious that comprehension was a problem. Of significance here is that ethnic minorities or individuals with issues around literacy were not singled out. Everyone was free to choose who they went to be interviewed by.   Few people chose to stay in their cells: this provided the opportunity for a walk about during lock up.

Methods of encouraging participation in the OST work varied according to whether it was 'warm' as in the interview situation or 'cold' contact/mailing as in the written questionnaires. The most successful methods were the offer of a biscuit in thanks for coming to the interview, and the 'Melvin[132] method' invented in Highdown. Inmates where told on receiving the questionnaire in their cells that he'd be back to collect it completed in ten minutes. He had almost 100% returns.

The attention span of anyone filling in a written questionnaire and the amount of time it will require are considerations when trying to understand what is the best way to increase the percentage of returns and perhaps these factors account for the high level of returns to the Integrated Teams. Curiosity regarding questions for which inmates had played a part in the construction is also likely. On F wing, 67% of the questionnaires were returned, that is 40 of the 60 handed out. And 65% came to interview, or 39 of the 60 inmates. This was in keeping with the other groups in Lewes although the VPs had somewhat less returns and the A&C wings slightly more. The A&C wings also decided to go to the more remote locations to interview prisoners rather than have the 'chaps' from their wing come to them. This meant that only 19 interviews were carried out. However, these did reach the broader community in the workshops, the 'seg' (segregation block), the hospital block and the 'carrots' (the cooks). In HMP Highdown of the three blocks from which we had inmates working with the team, 115 questionnaires were returned on the third day, a 25.5% return rate (due to an unexpected lock-up which accounted for a number that came in later and could not be counted in because on the fourth day of the workshop the team had to prepare results for the presentation the next, and final, day).

The five days duration made this the shortest of the OST case studies. This was due to the cost and difficulty of liberating the staff for longer. Ten days was taken with the YO work. It was much more manageable for all involved. There are distinct advantages in staggering the contact days, allowing time for ideas to percolate, and for script- and report-writing and analysis of daily monitoring to take place. Where security and timetables are not such a big issue, for instance partnership work with development agencies, four weeks has given the best results in terms of preparation time, whilst in schools teachers have chosen to vary between double lessons over one term or single lessons over the course of a year allowing some time to be given for feedback to questions at the field-testing stage and then full answers to the final questionnaire to come from abroad.

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[132] In case this could be interpreted that this was coercive; accompanied by some implicit threat, it is worth noting that he was not a particularly fearsome individual appearing mostly affable if somewhat withdrawn.

In summary

The number of returns in the OST work compares favourably to the self-audits. The self-audits have a significantly lower the response rate to open questions - above 50% for open questions on the OST questionnaires. The highest response to an open question on the OST 2003 questionnaire was in Highdown with 73 out of 115 responding to the question concerning family liaison. One can speculate that the contrastingly high levels of response to such a question might be due to the fact that the question comes directly from the concern of the group, which in turn resulted from the agenda having been set by the whole group, rather than a theoretically-designed question. Indeed families did not feature in the 1999 prototype.

In one of the self-audits, of the 310 returned questionnaires that were accepted for analysis, between 7% to 35% answers were secured to open questions. The fewest answers to any of these questions was two. This question concerned people having experienced being excluded. Perhaps this question was not understood as intended (relating to mental bullying according to the notes in 1999 survey) or perhaps it was seen as so minor an example of bullying as to appear insignificant. Or perhaps the people who experienced exclusion were already excluded? A sample test might have established this as a redundant question.

If we return momentarily to the World Bank questionnaire we will find testimony to the flow of meaning being obstructed, in the same way as with the self-audit, by the way the linguistic, semiotic and cultural codes determine it. In a section called 'lessons learnt' after the pilot, the World Bank authors note three distinct and fundamental problems that could be argued to cast serious doubt about the validity of their questionnaire as it stands:

- not all listed questions are likely to be useful in all places;
- not every phrasing of a particular question is likely to be appropriate in every context, and/or to translate easily into other languages; and
- several locally-important issues may need to be added.

Given the extent of the difficulties that the authors identify in establishing the transferability of the 'survey tool' presented in their publication, it is surprising that as such, it has been made available for use 'primarily for incorporation into household surveys of poverty' (World Bank 2003: 2). It suffers from wanting to catch all. Furthermore, certain recommendations having serious financial implications are made in that document, for

instance that it should only be used by experienced researchers and that the questionnaire should first be translated into the local language and in order to make sure that nothing has gone amiss, it should then be translated back into English. Given the time and budgetary constraints in the target countries, of which the authors should be aware, it appears even more unrealistic to expect an uptake that will follow the recommended procedures, especially given the length of the questionnaire (38 pages).

The sheer number of addendums or provisos to take into account in order that the survey is carried out well, in order to cover all eventualities, could have been avoided by developing the questionnaire *in situ*, with input from the target community so that they are an integral part of the conceptual and linguistic formation of the questions in a cyclical methodology which allows the results to be fed back into the development. As it stands the limitations/problems of application that the field test results showed, most notably the need for training an already experienced and multilingual research team in order to rethink, rework, translate etc. makes the whole enterprise impractical; the consequence of this is that it is likely to invalidate the entire project however worthwhile. To have redundancy in-built into a system through its inefficiency, its unwieldy size and the sheer cost of its operation is to sign the death warrant for all work of this kind. Trying to modify a social science survey so that it fits a community rather than designing a new survey that is respondent-driven, endangers the very concept of participative and consultative work. An Integrated Team and certain structural requirements that have been established by empirical means and in which an equal power balance is maintained throughout as well as the consistent differences in the quality and quantity of replies, qualifies OST methods as offering a new point of departure.

In conclusion it is not easy to make changes to a proposed model or prototype: once the path is set it is usually followed with minor vagaries. There is a requirement to decide on the real purpose of the work. If it is to justify the salaries of those involved, the single authored approach is at a distinct advantage. Minimum disruption and time-saving can be used as a criteria of merit. If the results are expected to lead to serious analysis and responsive action then it warrants intense activity and effort in the making, in the synthesis and in the critical reflection. One which stands to gain by maximum visibility.

Chapter Nine

Findings

There are two main findings of this thesis. Power relationships are affected beneficially within the production process of OST through its peculiarities, but relationships beyond the Integrated Team and the Subject Group have been less affected. The former issue concerns power relationships internal to the process of OST; they will be tackled in this chapter. The latter relationships are situational, they will form the study of my concluding chapter.

In previous chapters I have shown how the mechanisms and structure of OST bring about an equalising of influence within the work itself. These key observations I have collected together here in the first section entitled *The method*. Then in the rest of this chapter, in an effort to sharpen the detail of the internal power relationships, I will look at aspects that affect these as evidenced in the case studies. This will be done in reverse order of the three-stage production process (Fig. 1iii). Taking a flower as an analogy, the most visible part is the flower itself (Fig. 9i). Then I shall focus on the less visible aspects, the stem of the plant, or the structure that puts the theatre in place, and lastly the roots, where the raw materials are collected together.
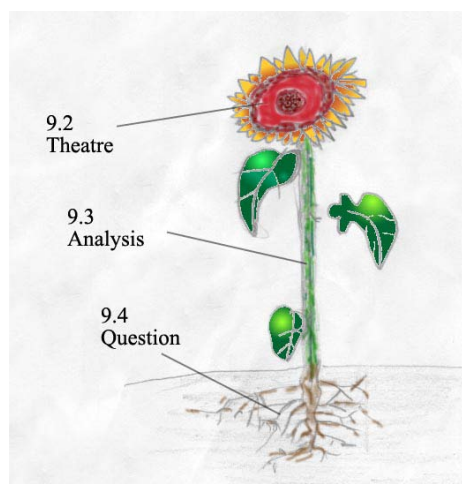
Fig. 9i The flower represents the theatre; the stem, the analysis; and the roots, the questions.

The method

Writing and publication excludes participation in its production, ownership and exposure. When the written word is the medium of communication, the disenfranchised can participate but they do so as objects of study or at best they assist in the process of 'subjectification' (Rabinow 1991: 11) contributing their knowledge only through others. Problems of patent and copyright notwithstanding, this knowledge then carries the name of the person who has written it down.

Necessity is a powerful assistant to enquiry. To carry out an enquiry, those who are disadvantaged do not need to have it done for them if it does not take a written form. Following the Freirean logic that they have special knowledge to contribute about the social realities they face, the Subject Group may wish to present their findings to more than just their own community. Adversity creates its own motivation.

To carry out collaborative research there is considerable advantage in placing certain known techniques at the service of those carrying out the enquiry. The process is assisted by working alongside individuals more exposed to and familiar with formal education. Techniques of enquiry and analysis can be easily picked up by demonstration. Assistance can be given where poor literacy skills would otherwise discourage participation.

Frances Babbage writes about research being an 'object of curiosity' for all involved and the obligation to pursue 'the endless possibility for experiment'(2005: 7). This is an invigorating way of regarding the potential for change. As well as helping to establish a supportive environment, the presence of Stakeholders from diverse backgrounds presents different curiosities in an area in which there is an agreed need to investigate, in which the Subject Group are a determining force. All parties stand to learn.

An external individual or organised research team under the direction of a responsible researcher could not alone hope to enrich the enquiry, or ease its execution, in the same manner. Other Stakeholders stand to gain because the enquiry, by having the presence of Subject Group members from/at the start, will incorporate not only their perspectives but also their language: both familiar and comprehensible to them. It facilitates and enriches the consultative part of the investigation. Subject Group members do not always have the availability to join the Integrated Team throughout, like Stakeholders with very heavy work responsibilities, and so it has sometimes proved necessary to consult them at key moments after the first day; thus relieving them of the more time-consuming duties within the OST process.

Verification by experts in the theory of what is applied will cause modest adjustments to the specifics of the research. Verification made by the Subject Group modifies the structure of the research by shifting the decision-making power. This allows critical reflection on the questions that will be asked by those with a vested interest in the questions being asked: those for whom the subject does matter in practice and who stand to gain by it being well executed.

To be valued as contributing to knowledge with the distance to which scholarly study aspires, an Integrated Team of researchers needs to be known to be doing more than carrying out a protest or making an elaborate political statement. Validation of the process takes place in two ways. Once by the Subject Group, who approves or improves or takes issue with the performance: the step in the OST process called Validation. Checking-back with the Subject Group in this way has similarities to that described by Pam Schweitzer in the *Many Happy Retirements* workshops in London, also running in 1991 quite independently (in Schutzman and Cohen-Cruz 1994: 70). At a later stage, Validation also takes place in performance, when those in positions of advantage assess the ongoing work. Racosu in recent years has been carried out to ensure that this quality control is carried out.

The power to command, whether or not a performance ever reaches its Target Audience, is not dependent on the Integrated Team and this can be problematic. There is perhaps a vital step in which the work that has been produced is vindicated, rather like the way in which an examination in research is a gateway through which the results must pass for the performance to be considered acceptable. It has not until now been named. 'Vindication' would be an appropriate name. This last expression of power affects the acceptance of the witness and will be returned to in the next chapter.

The OST research methodology proposes theatre as its final form of communication. By doing so it can offer a more equitable and sustained participation. The case studies reveal various motives for this theatre. In formal education an ethical dimension is brought to lessons, sometimes prompted by the dissatisfaction with the comfort of simply consuming. In development work, advocacy has been designed for those in situations of destitution and discrimination. In prisons, it has been policy reform in anti-bullying strategies. David Wiles describes an increased desire for collective activity as a revolt against the old individualism, 'living in virtual reality breeds a desire for the opposite: the eventness, the here-and-now-ness, the sense of the physically real in live performance' (2000: 208). Taking each sector in turn we can see how the theatrical discourse has reflected the concerns or views of the Subject Group, whether or not they take part in the final performance.

The flower - theatre

Schools

By moving away from the idea of student-centred learning, OST provides a structure that enables classes to tackle difficult and contested questions through meaningful exchange with other groups. This interaction culminates with the students taking the stage and making their work public. Examples detailed in Chapter Four from Belgium, Lithuania, Romania, France and the UK have introduced a broad range of issues: refugees, terrorism, gender imbalances, hunger and eating disorders and disability. This co-creation is made possible by the whole being a sum of its parts, as each group of students will usually only present a short, well-worked snapshot to convey one aspect that has emerged.

Active citizenship through discussion of serious contemporary issues is increasingly being promoted through debating. A popular debating model in Europe follows the American model[133] for which there are rules and conventions and competitions. Skills in argumentation are developed. This adversarial model concludes with a consensual vote for or against a motion. This has little more in common with OST than has, for instance, Process Drama (Bowell & Heap, 2004), a familiar practice, also often aimed at increasing citizenship in the English-speaking world. Both models are based on individual opinion being made available for group consideration.

OST proceeds by building up collective autonomy, an area according to Charlotte Nordmann of some neglect particularly in schools (2006: 192). Although inter-European exchange situations occasionally introduce interdisciplinary aspects, usually the focus of discussion is the students themselves and their own lives. Personal identity is deliberately subsumed in the collaborative aspects required of OST work. Students carry out their own research into views, attitudes, behaviours, through their own questions from first-hand sources most often about issues of collective significance. It is by producing their own data, analysing this and creating theatre from it, that the group creates its own identity: in the clarity, imagination, observation of detail, humour and humanity, or inhumanity, it offers.

Two pre-requisites mean that embarking on OST is not for the faint-hearted: time and what James Thompson refers to as the 'graft' or application to a difficult set of negotiations and 'discursive' elements (Thompson e-debate about applied theatre 2004). The authority gained by a group has been noted by teachers in the schools' case studies to be proportional to what

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[133] As expounded by the International Debate Education Association (IDEA).

the students have put in. Daniel Barenboim refers in the Reith lectures of 2006 to the crucial importance of time and content, not just in music but, and here he surprises his audience, with reference to the Oslo talks. This contrasting example he uses to illustrate the typical weakness he finds in many contemporary approaches: lack of rigour, effort and application evident in preparations that are too short and outputs that are, as a result, both protracted and interrupted. If anything the converse must be guarded against in OST: it is not always easy over the course of a school term, or in some cases intermittently over one year, to keep the pressure and pace. Languor kills the interest offered by the constant variety of tasks and the interest in the discovery and creativity of working as a team. Saler talks about deadlines being a 'quickening force' on an artist's imagination (2008:5); likewise in the class not every task in the case studies was completed by waiting for everyone to do so. Timing and pace are always vital in theatre, for OST this is also the case in production.

The dominant discourses, of which I will remind the reader of three unearthed in the schools' case studies (Chapter Four), are listed here because an overview of what has been taking place points to a previously unobserved conclusion: such small theatre productions can help challenge dominant discourse.

1. Nationalism, racist right wing discourse regarding immigration and some of the distinctions in people's perception have lead to discussion of the links between war refugees, political refugees and economic refugees. Innovations such as making contact with local centres, for instance one year, when a Psychology teacher became involved, a meeting with some refugees was organised and interviews became part of the enquiry.

2. Propaganda regarding terrorism was suspected just before the Iraq invasion. Views from classes in a British school were contrasted to those in two continental European schools (both in countries that had within living memory been invaded). The effect of the media on perceptions was observed. This was reinforced by the statistic that on average students have two hours twenty minutes of television viewing per night, a figure that was later found to correspond to other surveys.

3. The reality, learnt through the media, that some people are starving was modified by the simple knowledge that, in countries like Bangladesh, only a biscuit and cup of tea may be a meal because they can afford nothing more, but that whatever little there is, is shared and taken together. Coupled with the knowledge that people, with so little to eat, may be a long way off but on receiving the questions still bothered answering and returning their answers.

These three examples, are all from the 'them' and 'they' who are frequently regarded in discourse as <u>other</u>. They appear to me now, grouped in this way, to have one common

characteristic: they would appear for the most part to refer to people who are Muslim.[134] The reality of the social situations of these people would usually be regarded as all quite independent of each other, either taken geographically or in terms of social issues. To call such an observation a conclusion is perhaps an over statement, it does however illustrate the manner in which a gradual progression through cycles of work throws up new possibilities of interpretation or of the nature of a hypothesis that warrants reflection.

The flower - theatre

NGOs

In Bangladesh, the Validation performances of Story of Land in 1998 - 1999 took place in the village of Chonkali, where the houses had been burned and a child temporarily blinded. The village people came to see and correct, redirecting certain moments to be more authentic and making requests for 'the influential people's voice to be more present' so that it was not so one-sided. This directing of their own story, made possible by sieving all the post-show remarks, was realisable because they could see their houses being burnt, their ponds being fished in, themselves being taken hostage (all by symbolic evocation with their saris as water, bonds or flames – see the middle photo in Fig. 6viii) and hear their songs being sung and their language being spoken. The success spoken about with pride by the village chairman, in getting eight acres of Kesh land returned of the 12 taken, with the other 4 pending through the local courts one year later (Lamden, 2000: 58), was regarded as a triumph over the 'powerful people'. Whether in part due to the story being staged and made public, or the villagers knowledge that this was the case, is not something which can be proved. The Subject Group's relationship to their victimisation was changed by the knowledge that their plight was not invisible nor forgotten: it was known and still existed in the form of a theatre play.

David Graeber talks about 'interpretive labour' (Graeber 2006: 8) as the ability to work from what has been told of a situation to how things might look from a Subject Group's point of view. Whilst he refers to the work of individual ethnographers, this term can well be borrowed and applied for a collective approach that leads to a performance of results.   A transposition of qualitative material through theatre has the advantage that it is clearly an interpretive act; it does not pretend to any other claim. It offers a reflection of a lived

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[134] In Lithuania and Belgium the immigration comes mainly from Turkey. Terrorism and the war on Iraq have been justified in response the a fanatical Islamist faction. 80% of Bangladesh is Muslim.

everyday reality through an imagined one. It is not experienced as having 'scientific veracity' as in the reporting of empirical surveys and journalistic reportage: a potential danger where the single-author refracts multiple voices (Conley 1998: 54).

The flower - theatre

Prison

The only real conclusion that seems possible for me to draw from the theatre work in prisons is that, unlikely as it may seem, it happened. The circumstances in which it took place, that I will briefly resume, opening up new avenues by transcending the norms and deep-rooted traditions that usually lock out all possibility of such things happening, are testimony to the unexpected nature of such encounters. Seemingly incongruous and temporary, therein lies the source of their vitality. Unsolicited on five occasions, it took place in four. Staff and inmates performed plays together, that they had scripted together, as a result of consultation with a whole prison wing and staff or the whole prison. This happened out of an understanding that such a collaboration was beneficial to both parties. No one was coerced into taking part. Along with two unknown practitioners from outside the prison service, prisoners, both suspected victims of bullying and perpetrators, sex offenders, high security inmates, senior staff and officers took part at varying times (the vulnerable prisoners never worked alongside the other prisoners and would not entertain any possible performance for them, but one inmate from the youth wing did take the video of work to the VP wing - such barriers are never normally crossed). Everybody worked hard and took risks.

Funding came, with no complication, from both the Sussex Police Community Fund and the prison service. Each time a different audience was targeted: new inmates, education, the anti-bullying committee, staff training, and the whole staff monthly meeting. Audiences ranged from two to two hundred. Performances touched on witnessing, rights and their corollary responsibilities (Appendix IV – 'The Weakest Link'), meet and greet, baroning and trafficking, officer practice, punishments, fear and dominance and informal systems prior to being put on the bully register. No drama was ever made of how family members are drawn into the circle of exploitation, even though this did emerge once in the questioning: certain taboos remained uncrossed.

In situations of such power imbalance as that experienced between prisoners and their guards, working alongside each other would seem an unquestionable levelling in terms of status, so much so that it quite shocked audience members who, on entering the chapel on

one occasion and the auditorium on the other, made their reticence about such a collaboration known through their mutterings. This scepticism was not manifest in the after-show Racosu evaluations: a desire for more collaborations of this kind was.

Piaget said that it is necessary to succeed to understand.[135] In each case the Integrated Team did succeed in making 'a bit of art that will speak to their particular cultures' (Delgado & Svich, 2002: 3). One can deduce that what took place was part of a climate of change at the time that was challenging the culture of silence. Part of that change will have, thanks to this work, involved a better understanding of the forms that bullying takes and some possible responses that are open to the whole community to, in the words of an inmate, 'Front it'.

The stem - reading results

Certain situations of expediency demand estimation (more often based on qualitative value judgement or data) rather than proof. It is possible to summarise results by internalising them on our first reading and drawing conclusions in an impressionistic manner. There is however no reason to suggest that such an exercise should be instituted as the norm. To do so would be to favour shortcuts: an excuse for laziness.

Rejecting quantitative approaches in research work is not uncommon, and it is rarely advocated for open questions. This rejection is simply like emptying our tool kit of its hammer and replacing it with a stone. A hammer has its uses: it can break things but equally, it is necessary to sculpt a human face out of marble. Between the two uses, there is a difference of time, care and an apprenticeship that means that we improve with practice. For those who want things ready-made it is problematic, but within a working group that is not homogenous there are often those who find playing with numbers, images and ideas more to their liking than playing on stage (Appendix XVII - Highdown Tabulation).

Graphics are irreplaceable in the economy that they afford. To get a "feel" for the data, it is not enough to know what is in it; observation of what is <u>not</u> in it, for instance, only becomes possible by drawing on our own human pattern-recognition abilities (NIST/SEMATECH 2005: 1_1_4_What are the EDA goals.htm).

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[135] Much of his own research took the shape of close examination of the child's powers of logic and organisational processes prior to the development of language acquistion.

Insight implies detecting and uncovering underlying structure or being able to make comparisons; this goes beyond the "feel" for the data. Bruno Latour suggests that one should never speak of 'data' – what is given – but rather of 'sublata', that is, of 'achievements' (1999: 42). The hard-won information from the enquiry can so easily be forgotten or subconsciously modified if no mechanism is in place to record it. This has been shown to be the case in the system of self-audits in which certain answers were presented as representative, and if no recording mechanisms are in place as a restraint, this can remain unchallenged; no verification is possible. It also denies the opportunity for consensus, or alternatively exceptions, to be contextualised.

A negative view of numbers is shared by many in the arts among whom Martin Esslin has been one of the most critical, dismissing all 'the severely "factual" and "scientific" sociological, statistical, semiotic and other studies that are usually conducted in a jargon that seems impenetrable but soon reveals itself as merely a pretentious smoke screen masking banalities.' (Esslin 1980: 211) It is appropriate to find a term that will serve our purposes, such as an 'enriched graph' to suggest its attributes, as distinct from an embellished or distorted one.

Two points of clarification are called for. First, the sort of study to which Esslin refers owes much of its poverty to the way in which many surveys are initiated and the way in which they are constructed. The survey that is being used as proof is based on the premise of something already known and the intention of giving authority to its findings: dangerous processes when applied to social situations, as they may, misleadingly, seem democratic. One needs only think back to this process in a court of law to know that the skill of the questioner is paramount.

The second is that graphs should not be allowed just to tell us things, they need questioning. This requires creative thinking which can only take place if the graphs exist to be plotted differently and played with. 'Creative' is another term that can have negative associations, as in 'creative accounting'; indeed the phrase 'playing with numbers' also suggests tampering with the truth. Rather than adding things that are not there or hiding things that are, 'creative' can have other meanings, for instance in adding value by being able to show layers of meaning. An example of this takes place when human graphs are created, because the addition of sound and movement gives a dynamic which not only enlivens the information, it can also make it fluid. Mobility in a graph adds a dimension; it can assist in illustrating shifts and communicating ideas around change. Change in perception, in trends, in ways of representing different realities are all useful in a dialogic situation either with the

graph itself or with an audience. One of the uses can even be to show how data could be presented that would, if undetected, be misleading.

Quantification is not in itself a solution to a problem. The danger is that it can pose as such. A numerical answer can easily counterfeit as a fact. A graph presents a fixed form that is difficult to eschew. Transformations are much talked about as part of the aim of applied theatre. The transformation that is guaranteed in OST is that which happens to the data. Turning graphs into theatre has the effect of subtracting from them their dogmatic quality and reintroducing the otherwise lacking qualitative aspects that are drawn from observation and form an equally valid part of the analysis.

This rigid quality is particularly true of the 'simple graph'. The simple graph is that which first surfaces when results to an enquiry are fed into a programme like Excel, after the first categorisation and tally has taken place. Graphs can be churned out by the dozen, but these are not end points they are merely re-presentations of the raw data. Results become legible and transparent once reflected on and manipulated. Manipulation is also a dangerous word. In this instance it can mean reducing the number of categories or making a visual colour difference between positive or negative answers, or again juxtaposing two sets of graphs within the one. It does not imply any falsification for the sake of proving a theory, of the kind that does occur and has given statistics its bad name. It is about developing our analytical and imaginative skills by giving graphs a face which can be interrogated.

Roots - Integrated Teams

Although OST may seem similar to methods that subscribe to the prevalent late-twentieth century philosophy of 'Putting the last first' (after Chambers 1983), designed to correct the top-down approach by going to the people, it does not subscribe to this doctrine fully. It offers an alternative approach to the top-down and the bottom-up, because an upturning of the power may have some of the same draw-backs as the inverse power imbalance, for instance just as the experts do not necessarily know from their objective standpoint what questions will be the most pertinent, neither do the people in the community from their subjective nexus.

PRA (Participative Rural Appraisal) and related methodologies aim to illuminate problems, bond activists and develop participants (Holland & Blackburn, 1998: 4) as do activities in Community Theatre (Clifford & Herrmann 1999, Haedicke & Nellhaus 2001) and many

applied theatre forms. Phillip Woodhouse goes on to point out that considerable barriers exist in the public arena for the expression of the views of groups; he gives the example of women in India whose views would neither be expected in any formal public encounter nor would they be at ease, unaccustomed as they are to expressing themselves 'in terms suitable for a public audience' (1998: 144). Applied theatre has a better track record in this respect where such shynesses are overcome but if 'the very structure of the PRA sessions – group activities leading to plenary presentations – assumes and encourages the expression of consensus' (Mosse quoted in Woodhouse 1998: 144) so too do many of the applied theatre forms.

Social reality is so complicated and social issues are impacted by so many different Stakeholders that no single party can have direct access to the multitude of realities which comprise an issue. The solution which OST adopts is not simply mix and shake in the hope that the variety of Stakeholders will do the job. It proceeds through cycles based on trial and error. It selects from basic 'random' questions that necessarily relate to the preoccupations or priorities of their authors. There is a weeding-out and a slimming-down of questions. These questions can then be empirically improved by being taken to the Subject Group. Because an Integrated Team is necessarily limited in number, so too will become the number of questions: making for a workable total. Workable means a number that will not make the analysis protracted and laborious. Analysis is manageable in a team effort. In an age 'awash in information' (Gibbons et al 1999: 131) there are very real benefits to a system which enables <u>theoretical reduction</u>; that functions in a way similar to structural analysis in 'simplifying and schematizing complex material' (Graeber 2006: 10).

OST bases its approach on working towards the portrayal of how a situation exists rather than why things are the way they are. Its objective is to advance an audience's appreciation of the complex existence of a situation in the present. Its aim is that they, the audience, are better positioned to consider options for change for the future. Just as Galileo held that in addition to thinking about <u>why</u> things functioned as they did it was necessary to observe <u>how</u> they behaved, so OST makes every attempt to observe how things are and great efforts are taken to eliminate the subjective interpretation of the collected social enquiry data. Although the truth about a situation can never fully be known, if every effort is made to strive towards accurate information then a reproduction based on multiple perceptions can help access the complexity and layer the findings.

In summary the aim is to present a denuded appreciation of a social issue without colouring the picture through the lens of any single individual team member and without the conscious

or unconscious selective inclusion or dismissal of any aspects of the situation. Value judgements of the team are not the selection tool for the content of the drama. The Integrated Team actively subjectify the issue of concern, isolating it and presenting it as theatre, with the assistance of the Arbitrator (as the confessor or psychoanalyst helps the individual tell their truth).

Foucault identified models of operation used by the powerful to maintain their dominance: classification, dividing practices and subjectification (Rabinow 1991: 7-11). This research has found that OST can be said to use these same models of operation, and in so doing the operators of this dominance can achieve a similar result: one of acquiring knowledge. In short by carrying out even a modest scientific classification there is a form of dominance of the information that ensues.

OST was not designed as a way of analysing power but it has the capacity to be used as a tool for uncovering influences and conflicting interests that may otherwise remain obscured or compounded by the silence that surrounds them. On occasions the workings of institutions have been unmasked (for instance micro-credit and CDA, or the Street Children project in Nairobi 2004). The symbiotic relationship has been found to have gone unnoticed because it is obscured by the apparent neutrality, independence or even the support they, the NGOs, endeavour to bring: they are after all a service sector industry dependent on their beneficiaries for their own existence.

This knowledge is not however synonymous with power gain *per se*, even if it can be viewed as threatening the existent power structures. Research can be used to define, categorise and subjectivise only as long as it is ratified or Vindicated. If those that hold the power to vindicate fear their position is jeopardised then they can close the door. The simple expedient of occlusion obliterates any evidence. This is because theatre's form is epistemologically transient. It cannot re-emerge - unlike the written word.

However, working collectively as an Integrated Team means resisting the isolating or dividing practices to which we are daily subjected, albeit temporarily. This poses a challenge to established practices as it promotes a form of autonomy of thinking in which the known does not simply depend on what we are told. This is not an insignificant departure from the norm when it is within an established and highly stratified environment, such as those in the case studies: institutions for secondary education, especially those emerging from totalitarian systems (Romania, Lithuania), prisons or the highly-gendered social structure of rural Bangladesh.

Roots - the Arbitrator

Quite apart from the Integrated Team there is the role of the Arbitrator. In this section the conclusion that I will consider relates to the influence of the facilitator in comparison to that of the Arbitrator. It is easy to understand why a joker in TO, who proceeds through the posing of questions, or a researcher or research team who elaborates their multiple sets of questions, tends to produce what Denzin & Lincoln call 'activist-oriented research' (1994: 11). This tendency is curbed in OST. The constant requirement to take equally from all contributors, to synthesis and to empirically test to see what works, does not leave the Arbitrator much freedom, or at least not more freedom than the other members of the team, to press forward their particular perspective. This means that the Arbitrator is submissive to the dictates of the methodology in the same way that the others are required to be. This has serious power implications.

In OST the Arbitrator, present as an external presence, rarely comes with first hand or specialist knowledge about the situations of difficulty that might be addressed, and this is in no way a pre-requisite. In their capacity as Arbitrators they are not there to suggest what is best for the disenfranchised from any knowledge, training or beliefs gained previously. OST rests on the philosophical tenet that no single individual or group has full access to such information.

We are told that by definition applied theatre is a political act (Etherton & Prentki 2006: 150). The explanation given as to why it is political is because it is involved in the changing of power relationships: between individuals and in our societies. As a practice that has been developing with concerns of equality and the inclusion of previously excluded groups at its core, there is so far, no contradiction for OST. However, there is a rapid parting of ways when this idea is developed by describing and prescribing the behaviours of facilitators. Facilitators are presented as unanimously working 'towards a set of aims related to social transformation' which they must <u>state</u>, as this ideology might clash with the aspirations of the participants (Etherton & Prentki 2006: 150). A warning is issued: if these ideals for instance of social transformation through self-empowerment are not admitted to and freely discussed, it might 'fudge the purpose' and dissipate the impact (2006: 150). This suggests an image of scales in which a power balance can be arrived at with the facilitator on one side and the beneficiaries on the other and the fulcrum half-way between the two. Clearly if this is the case then the agency of the facilitator is far in excess of that which is sometimes

claimed: it would indeed seem at odds with the description for instance of a joker being 'merely a facilitator' allowing the 'spectactors' the liberty to be the authors and directors of their own dramas (Brubacher 2004: 15).

Etherton and Prentki's conclusion about the political stance of the facilitators leads the authors to make suggestions that verge on the contradictory. The redundancy of the outside facilitator and the validity of the work almost exclusively in terms of its sustainability may seem logical but in terms of the examples they give are not consistent. Even if many development projects can be gauged in terms of the 'the redundancy of the external facilitator' (Etherton and Prentki 2006: 152), so that community initiatives do not fold when that person leaves, this does not necessarily apply in theatre, partly as has been said previously because of theatre's own transience. On-going theatre work might not always be part of the intention that the group aspires to. A theatre campaign for instance might have more similarities with a military campaign and the facilitator's role could be seen to resemble that of a leader in the proverb by Lao Tzu: 'A poor leader is reviled by his troops. A good leader is admired. But when the work of the best leader is done, the troops will say, "We did it ourselves."' (4000 BC). Without talking about the manipulations that the term 'leader' might bring to mind, or the devastation left by an army, certainly accepting anonymity is desirable for the Arbitrator. All too easily otherwise people misinterpret what role the Arbitrator has played: ascribing them too much control or not enough artistic skill.

The insider/outsider dichotomy is oversimplified when Thompson's metaphor of the visitor is taken up and the idea of the brevity of their stay is found to be the evident reason for the lack of impact assessment (Etherton & Prentki 2007: 141). It is only the longevity of Heritage or Bromley's work, both outsiders in some sense of the word, and that of Pompeo's, an insider - again in some senses only, that is presented as a mark of their success; no impact is measured. Time and numbers participating can be counted but not impact.

In this editorial, Bharucha's image of the facilitator as a catalyst is reversed so that it appears to imply that the facilitator and their methods stay unchanged. This, as we see in the example given by Haddon, is far from the case. In my research, it is the investigation of the evolution of the specific method of OST which has brought to light the place and value that monitoring and evaluation can have in modifying the theatrical process. These methods, adapted from those in the NGO sector and the social sciences that are according to Etherton and Prentki so resisted by arts workers, have been found in this research to have a most profound impact in democratising the power relationships that affect the production of the

theatre in this practice. These accompanying changes have also changed the role of the Arbitrator.

Finally, the lightness with which the suggestion is made that facilitators, rather than knowing what is best for the disenfranchised, are in a position to make those voices 'heard and listened to' (Etherton & Prentki 2006: 153), is dealt with so superficially that it risks not being noticed at all. It is substantiated with a passing mention of a success story in the shape of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA).[136] Advocacy work of this kind does not have an important body of writing evidencing its existence, unlike documentary film and video making in community initiatives (for instance Selman et al. 1998). Multi-agency work seems to be a somewhat neglected area amongst theatre scholars as is reaching more influential audiences. [137]

Roots - the question

Questions have been found to be a 'technique of power' (Foucault quoted in Faubion 1994: xiv). The act of making questions is typically and erroneously viewed as innocent: neutral by opposition to answers. The question is not named as an instrument of power because its function, to discover or verify, is associated with the learner. Perceiving a question only as an instrument of instruction, to inform, it is to ignore its other functions. Questions are vectors. They have a direction, given by someone, that affects the direction of the enquiry; therefore ultimately they steer the course of what will be presented. One of the conclusions of this thesis is that there is a requirement for the questioning process itself to be given serious attention. This attention has caused structural changes in OST.

Because the person or people who formulate questions for an enquiry have been found to become the selectors (consciously or inadvertently) of the routes of the enquiry, who they are matters. If they are members of the set of people who will be the repondees, in other words the Subject Group, then their personal experiences and preoccupations will drive the enquiry in directions that cannot be predicted: not by empathy, not by logic and not even by vast

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[136] It is difficult to understand this example as anything other than video reportage. The film crew comprised six professionals who worked with four market women throughout and three others who had partial involvement. Five minute videos were designed to show instances when officials exhibited violence and aggression towards a group of non-unionised market women and their livelihoods in Gujarat, India.

[137] As exemplified by Helen Nicholson who, despite her enthusiasm, gives scant details covering just one page to the campaign against family violence organised between 'PETA, the National Family Violence Prevention Programme (NFVPP) and the Women's Crisis Centre' (2005: 147). She references a book on the subject *Breaking Silence*.

numbers of expert questions designed to catch the whole field. The direction need not be decided ahead of time, although for organisational reasons the area of social concern will sometimes be named. In OST even when the subject of enquiry has been predetermined and has stayed constant, as with bullying in prison, the routes of enquiry have never been the same. Of the four audits, carried out using OST, the preoccupations of the different groups can be observed only in retrospect: rights and responsibilities, institutional victimisation of the victims, informal responses and staff conduct in situations of bullying.

Foucault identified dividing practices as one of the methods of making humans into subjects. This is frequently implemented by dint of questioning. It requires subject identification to take place. This involves deciding who will be interviewed: who will be isolated from others in order to help define the problem. To use the familiar expression, it is putting the cart before the horse. There are two flaws in this. It assumes sufficient knowledge of the issue is already to hand and it will frequently settle for the most easily-located groups (Young 2004: 39).

OST rests on the premise that there is little point trying to be logical about analysing a situation until you have learnt something about it. Thinking logically about the subject is of more use when some of the givens are known. In other words until one has acquired some quantity of knowledge about the subject there is no advantage in trying to deduce things, or to create logically-designed questions. In doing so there is a great risk of prescription. Conversely, the potential for useful (rational) deduction about a subject increases in proportion to the quantity and quality of raw material – how much we know – about a subject. The study carried out through the theatre in OST will be a more useful if it begins *a posteriori*.

Integrating the Subject Group's questions into an enquiry has revealed that these have not always been designed for their own group. They often involve questions to other Stakeholders, for instance the work with the Young Offenders in HMP Lewes in 2001, where officers were also asked to complete a slightly amended set of questions for comparison with the answers provided by the inmates. In HMP Highdown in 2003 the whole staff were also asked to vote on their feet in the performance - estimating the staff response to a given situation.

No question is sacred whatever its source. If questions are subjected to empirical testing then this panning process serves to: check individual influences, preserve diversity and make efficient use of time. A question stands to remain, or be cut, on its own merit. This last

point is relevant because although testing questions takes an hour or two, the eventual benefit of having few questions is important for reasons of expediency. In OST part of the effect of having few, yet probing, targeted, questions is that the available time can then be spent on analysis and subsequent reinterpretation of this information as theatre. Lengthy investigation will not necessarily throw up more than a well-targeted assault; it can on the other hand have the effect of making later work tedious and pedantic. Because an exploratory approach to the subjects is being made, rather than a confirmatory one, it is to this theatrical purpose that the analysis through basic statistics and graphics is made. 'The construction of questions against common sense' (Bourdieu quoted in Dubois, Durand, & Winkin 2005: 7) is an accurate description of this process.

Lastly, to minimise the problem that one can never altogether escape subjectivity, the Integrated Team have to be checked. This is effected by an ethical obligation to stay true to the findings: a requirement to be honest in sharing what has been uncovered that will be checked by the Subject Group during Validation. Protest or further questioning can always be invited at a later stage, but this is done in the light of what has been shown to exist in terms of views, attitudes, situations, behaviours. Faithful representation might not show aspects of which one ethically approves, but it counters individual agendas.

The soil in which the flower of Fig. 9i grows, the climate and unexpected storms that hit it will be presented as conclusions in the next chapter and will complete the investigation.

Chapter Ten

Conclusions

I will continue with the metaphor of the flower that I used in Chapter Nine. However, in that chapter I used it to separate out different findings of this thesis by virtue of their visibility to the outside observer. Here I will consider the environment, somewhat hostile, in which OST has survived: the stony soil and the vagaries of the prevailing climate, over which it has no control.

Soil - 'the interpretive crisis'

Two key assumptions of qualitative research, summarised as 'the interpretive crisis' and 'the legitamation crisis', have been recognised by Denzin & Lincoln as problematic (1994: 11). These will each be dealt with in turn as a way of summarising a number points, in particular those in Chapter Five: Critique, Review and Evaluation. The first crisis is to do with interpretation; it asks whether theatre arising out of qualitative research, rather than a social text written by the researcher, can directly capture lived experience.

Theatre captures lived experience in a way that the written text cannot. James Thompson makes the case for 'a shift in the way we conceive of applying theatre' and asks for it 'to be understood as a social research method' (2006: 147). He contends that many of the practices and definitions relating to action research are strongly connected to the practice of applied theatre, especially participatory workshops based on theatre processes with communities (2006: 149). The most obvious way applied drama breaks the direct and problematic link between the experience and the text is to replace a social text with theatre. Here I would like to go beyond the difficult relationship we all have to truth, that Foucault brings to our attention: he makes clear that a book in what it says needs to be true in terms of academic, historically verifiable truth and he draws a distinction between these findings and that which the book makes possible (Faubion 1994: 243). Clearly theatre is not more true nor false in the experience that it makes possible; it is still a fiction but there are important differences to factor into our considerations when we take into account the material difference between a sensory recreation and a mental one, such as that conjured in our minds by the author.

Theatre has the effect of capturing lived experience in a medium that, although it is not the same as the lived experience, has nonetheless many of its attributes. Notably, it is made manifest by the one attribute that we share globally: the human body. Culturally specific forms of conceptualising are minimised as opposed to those reliant purely on linguistic or graphic representations as sole mechanisms of communicating the research findings. This age-old art form is flexible as well as being able to incorporate others. In the case for example of Australian aboriginal artists, theatre would have no difficulty to accommodate, and make visible in its fiction, the mythical - identified by Heiko Henkel and Roderick Stirrat as problematic for the activity of mapping, the corner stone of PRA (Cook & Kothari 2001: 181).

Additionally, by the simple fact of being lived, albeit in a different way, the investment of the audience is altered. A text, read in solitude is more prone to different readings depending on the reader's familiarity with the context, whilst material that visualises it for the audience, and is also created auditatively, provides much of that milieu. This 'lived' aspect has also been noted to cause different responses to similar material when on film. Martin Barker compared audience responses to *Crash* the movie and *Crash* the theatre show; he observed what he terms as 'no particular involvement' with the film in contrast to the feeling of obligation that the stage goers felt to 'do some hard work of interpretation' (2003: 25).

The 'interpretive crisis' is further addressed in OST by replacing the 'biographically-situated researcher' (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 11). The description of biographical situation applies equally to: the single researcher, a team of experts (horizontally linked such as the team of four interdisciplinary World Bank experts, Chapter Eight), or a team under the tutelage of a responsible and named researcher (as in the case of Jane Harrison, the researcher and script writer for Ilbijerri's *Stolen*[138] published in *2002*, and the four aboriginal researchers who worked alongside her). OST substitutes these with a comparatively large and heterogeneous research team, which includes, but is not entirely comprised of, representatives from the Subject Group.

By 'comparatively large' the average number involved usually settles in the region of twelve, bringing together representatives of 'multiple interpretive communities' (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 15). It may not be coincidental that the number twelve is also what has been settled on to form a jury. Reliant on the observations that have been made in repeated experimentation with OST, it could be that this number has been chosen for jury size

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[138] This play tells of the Australian government policy from 1827-70 under which aboriginal children were forcibly removed from their homes (www.hreoc.gov.au, 03.07.08).

because it has been found to be the smallest number for a workable sample with some representation from different social groups. Richard Dawkins' point, that twelve jurors are preferred to one judge only because they are more numerous and not because they are likely to act very differently (Dawkins 2003: 39), does not apply to the Integrated Team because they are endowed with the power to question. The jury in a trial do not carry out the enquiry, they are cast in the role of audience.

Biographically-situated can be replaced by *Groupthink* but in the case of OST this, I have argued, is diminished if not totally avoided. If we consider process drama, forum and other improvisational methods, in the main they proceed through multiple contributions made live during which time commentaries are voiced, 'the *Curinga* should accept the diversity of points of views without necessarily being neutral' (Santos in Heritage & Cordeiro 2000: 73).[139] A collective and coordinated enquiry separately carried out, by the same team, prior to starting the elaboration of the drama is radically different.

OST causes a rupture in the process because it does not attempt to capture lived experience directly. It obliges those involved to refer to the totality of the answers they have received. This new departure point is synthetic of the voices of others. Even if, when the OST process enters the third stage (Fig. 1iii) it also uses improvisational methods, this will not give the same result as if the work had started with the process of devising drama on this same theme. It resists the tendency of allowing the more dramatic to take focus. A distance is imposed by the analysis. Aspects of lived experience are captured that are not the most extreme and a wealth remains to be discovered in what is less striking.

This difference is a significant finding of this research. Despite being significant it is not making a very big claim for OST. Both models provide a partial recreation of lived reality, designed to draw attention to areas of neglect or abuse. They differ in that one offers a vision that relates to separate individual interpretations that build on each other[140] that is visibly exposed to external pressures whilst the other shapes something that protects individual identity and protects the overall vision. They are complementary.

Neuropsychologist Chris Frith at University of London, whose research into the neuroscience of social interaction has thrown light on the capacity of working memory,

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[139] The *Curinga* is the joker in TO and Barbara Santos speaks as a trainer of *Curingas* based in CTO-Rio.
[140] Kadi Purri mentions that critical analysis is not sought so much as 'the multiple stories which in some way add up to an impression of "the story" of a community' (Prentki & Selman 2000: 75).

problems with translation and how sharing minds 'create cultures', wrote about the models our minds make and how 'in the mental world our behaviour is changed by knowledge' and 'how we can use knowledge to change the behaviour of others' (Frith 2007: 176). An example relates to the increase in youth suicide[141] rates, where for example in Bridgend in Wales there have been 17 suicides by young people in 2007 as opposed to three each year in 2005 and 2006.[142] The normalization of extreme behaviour was thought to be having an effect. He lamented how regrettable it was that all our visible models block from view the majority. This is a huge topic not for this thesis, but it does support the aspiration of developing varying models of practice which can access different truths and which allow a place for those that are not made visible.

Soil - 'the legitamation crisis'

The second of the assumptions referred to by Denzin & Lincoln, 're-theorized in postpositivist, constructionist-naturalistic discourse', refers to how representation legitimises itself (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 35). It involves rethinking terms such as 'validity', 'generalizability' and 'reliability' as there is 'no single interpretative truth' (Denzin & Lincoln 1994:11). Whilst applied theatre might justify itself most often, as Micheal Etherton and Tim Prentki surmise in their editorial that I will refer to several times in this chapter, in terms of the gain in self-confidence and improved understanding in the participants, it will very occasionally go beyond behavioural modification into the attitudinal and the structural (2006: 145). They also indicate that the profound change to which much applied theatre aspires, and even sometimes builds into its rhetoric, remains unproven in an ongoing debate about impact assessment (2006: 154).

The only set of criteria outside of itself that OST has found to give validity to its work remains firmly within the bounds of the theatre it produces, and not on the impact of this in the long-term. Regarding how the representation legitimises itself, it does this by reference to the people it represents by asking them to reject the connections between the theatre and the world it dramatises that are inaccurate, biased or unrepresentative. This process has been labelled Validation. This theatre, created with a specific audience in mind which has rarely been the Subject Group, is examined by them, the Subject Group, before it is submitted to

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[141] The subject of suicide is the 2007-2008 selected social issue of two classes of 16-17year old students in Diest Belgium working through the OST methodology. That it has proved harder than for any other subject to get teachers in other schools to distribute the students questionnaires would support the view that this is a taboo subject which teachers instinctively feel they wish to protect their classes from contemplating in any form.

[142] www.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7252732.stm, 11.02.08.

other viewing. This process of critiquing, by the groups who are most concerned by the social issue and those who are being represented, is similar to Kadi Purri's *checking back* with the community in Canadian Popular Theatre (Prentki & Selman 2000: 75). The aim is to give the power to critique, to redress errors and give more ownership to the Subject Group but this too is checked or anchored by the extensive process that has preceded this encounter.

Exit polls are taken from all performances, in the form of Immediate Response Questionnaires, systematically as a form of evaluation (Racosu). These may appear banal by comparison to the long-term impact assessment that Etherton and Prentki seek, and are somewhat derided as being 'caught up entirely in the moment of the process' in the introduction of RIDE (2006: 144). These have nonetheless enabled reworking as a means of quality control effected by the audience. Both the Validation and the Evaluation require consultation, even if this is at a basic level, the information that has come in has always testified to the audience's keen critical sense and has been a most helpful guide to the Integrated Team . The essential step, without which the consultation would be nearly useless, is quantitative analysis and synthesis so that they can be used to help the reworking: questions therefore must not be too numerous. It is not that this makes the Arbitrator redundant in the process of reworking the drama, even if redundancy is ultimately desirable. It is a form of extending the vision of what needs further attention and of reliably sorting an order of priority to guide the re-rehearsal. Being theatre it has, for the time of its duration, the advantage of being a flexible and responsive medium that responds to and acts upon there being 'no single interpretative truth' (Denzin and Lincoln 1994:15).

There are two other aspects that throw into focus other conclusions. One relates to sustainability, the other to the influence of the 'biographically-situated researcher' (Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 11).

Sustainability

The benefits of on-going applied theatre work should not be undervalued and in the few examples which are written about, such as Bongani Linda in South Africa and Sanjoy Ganguly in India, it is admirable and there is much to be learnt (respectively Marlin-Curiel and Ganguly in Boon & Plastow 2004). These practices command deep respect. However, that work should be measured for the contribution it has made in terms of its longevity is not the counter side of this argument.

When facilitators track the evolution of a longstanding practice and document it they give it a prolonged existence by making it known, without this the lessons cannot be shared. In this same editorial Haddon's chapter is talked about as testifying that impact is connected to sustainability (beyond the evident statement of fact that it cannot have impact if it does not exist), he describes having pondered the effect of the groups on the *Blahs*. This is reflection about formative evaluation and not summative. We are told that even he does not risk an impact assessment of the various groups with whom he had worked (Etherton & Prentki 2006: 152).[143]

Theatre is notoriously hard to fund and judging by the number of practitioners who sustain their practice through their situation within universities, there is insufficient money to be made in applied theatre to attract much long-term professional commitment. The net result of this is a piecemeal approach, in which a lot of practices, albeit many short-lived, emerge because of a desire from those involved to effect social change. This is testified by the closing statement of Etherton & Prentki's editorial which expresses hope and belief but nothing more concrete to substantiate its claim that 'applied theatre can contribute significantly to making lasting social change' (2006: 154). This claim should not be dismissed too hastily in case the advantages, difficult to measure as they are, outweigh the few examples of 'unintended impact' (2006: 148) and undesirable outcomes that can be measured more easily. The transitory nature of theatre is part of its ontology. That people continue to use it suggests that it can, and sometimes does, function as an agent of change because of its short-term high impact, but to measure its effect as if it were a chemical substance, that once discovered could serve to cure others, is at present unrealistic.

Unforeseen storms – the power of discourse and how power circumvents discourse

In these two closing sections I will substitute theatrical representation with the notion of discourse because OST creates its own and aims to stimulate it further. Of interest is the point at which the micro-systems of social interaction that propel the initiative and define it, largely in the controlling/commanding hands of the Subject Group, topple over into those of its Target Audience: the 'inter', the discourse as 'act', where the body and the life of the theatrical work become no more than its surface appearance.

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[143] When one sees what is required in order to establish the credibility of cause and effect in a scientific experiment, with control groups and controlled conditions, it is difficult to imagine any sound replication of such methods in social or economic terms.

The outward similitude between OST and many popular forms of applied theatre has been shown to be somewhat problematic (Chapter Seven). As a result, the authority of its research into a social issue, a large component of the process of which could potentially be a means of empowerment, is reduced. This is apparent because the OST method is not perceived as having any more objectivity than other processes, and to state the reverse side of this, it is consequently thought to be equally subjective: which it is not (Chapter Nine). On occasion the assumption of subjectivity has even lead to the drama being interpreted as being a first-hand testimonial, as if the performance was made locally, for a local audience by people showing their lived experience. This means that little credit is given to the quality of the research and what it shows, nor to the acting. The lines between fiction and reality become detrimentally blurred and the audience think that the actors, acting the carefully-scripted fiction, are in fact people recounting their own stories. According to Una Chaudhuri, the performance-as-mirror emphasizes theatre's split subjectivity since it occupies two spaces – the fictive and the referential – and would no longer exist if this spatial duality were broken (Chaudhuri 1986, 46). It is this area of fusion which prevents OST from being accorded the authority it might otherwise deserve.

These closures are due to the fact that the OST discourse is not presented to the audience in written form. The presentation of findings is understood to be a well-presented drama but a drama nonetheless. This objection can be understood but it could, one would imagine, be overcome by the explanation that OST has a degree of objectivity in its methods that allow it to contribute a form of 'knowledge' about the social issue that would permit it to be discussed and that might even inform action. Attempts to communicate this have, even when coming from influential sources informed about OST, failed and have, at times, met with a detrimental silence (for instance the passing over without comment of the report of one of the governors at HMP Lewes discussed below). Occlusion used as a tool of power (Chapter Nine, Section: Roots – Integrated Team). Similar to what John Gledhill identifies during the colonial period as a problem 'precisely because of its silences, the reduction of questions of power to a neutral domain of "administration" kept at arm's length' (1994: 208).

OST's weakness in not being able to secure its Target Audience is therefore also a conclusion. It, the theatre produced, cannot always pass through the sieving process to which it is submitted. The mesh used to hold it back is quite other than that which has been used in the process of producing the theatre. The gauge of this mesh is not of a predictable nature. It has offered resistance before the performance, as in the case of the work on micro-credit in Bangladesh which was only shown to a reduced local audience rather than to any other NGOs. Or erected prior to the performance, as in the refusal of the Vulnerable

Prisoners to allow the other Integrated Team comprising members from A & C wings (lifers and long-term inmate) to join their performance because of fear for their reception; preferring to perform alone to a token representation of the board of visitors (HMP Lewes 2002). This example shows that the mesh is not always imposed by external factors. It has been encountered during the workshop of *Breaking the Chains* in Marly-le-Roi 1998 preventing the possibility of 'organising overseas support groups to help mobilize international pressure' (Gledhill 1996: 220).[144] And lastly, it has been found to affect the continuation of the work in the reactions solicited after the performance, evidenced by the complete silence and non-response from the Order & Control Unit for monitoring and evaluation.

The last example bears a little more reflection because it throws more light on the power of the written word. When the governor submitted the three reports of the independent OST activities and their integrated research, he had anticipated a very positive reaction to the active pursuit of an effective anti-bullying strategy (especially given that it met with the difficult requirements of being cross-disciplinary and other criteria, such as operating through a partnership, that were being encouraged at the time). He had even hoped that the work would qualify for one of their awards as an example of good-practice or get published in the inter-service news sheet. Instead, the work met with complete silence, as if it had never taken place. The complete absence of any response from the Order & Control Unit contributed to its transience. Only the unanticipated impact of an article that I sent to the prison for permission to publish, had the effect of renewing interest in the process and shortly after permission had been granted an approach was made from HMP Highdown to Passe-Partout to run another such OST audit and performance (Young 2004). The written word here shows its importance in the existence of such work.

The exact nature of reservations is not always made known, indeed non-response is the ultimate locked door. Five of the most obvious objections have been suggested in Chapter Nine but there are undoubtedly less evident ones present: notably the oxymoron to which Foucault has drawn attention:

> *Ce qui parle dans le discours et se trouve du même coup occulte en son*
> *principe est le discours lui-même comme trait d'union du savoir et du pouvoir.*
> (Foucault quoted in Cusset, 2006 : 137)

> What is active in discourse and yet finds itself obscured through its own
> axioms is the discourse itself as the hyphen between knowledge and power.

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[144] The anthropologist John Gledhill suggests that the advantaged can do more in their engagement than just assume the untenable position of the detached expert 'whose testimony corresponds to what can be defended as academic knowledge' (1994: 208).

His main centre of interest was in how this discourse is constituted and what it constitutes. His own sites of enquiry were mainly the top-down lecture format that follows the asymmetrical French tradition of public formal presentation. This contrasts to Habermas' vision, for whom discourse constitutes the accord that is sought though interested parties, discussing on an apparently equal playing field, in conditions of symmetry and liberty along Anglo-German lines.

Power and discourse cannot, according to Foucault, be separated nor can they be grafted onto one another. They are independent but inextricably interlinked and interdependent. The classification of discourse is forged internally, following its own rules of production, but at the same time it is imposed from the outside as a mechanism of control - of examination or of Vindication. The latter conjuring up, as Yves Cusset calls it, the 'chance reception', which includes the limitations put on accessing it and on its distribution: '*Le discours ne traduit pas le pouvoir, il l'actualise*.' 'Discourse is not the medium of transmission of power, it is its manifestation' (Cusset 2007: 142). So too the reverse is found to be true: powerlessness can be enabled if a discourse can be established. This discourse, if it can avoid the policing by resistances, can open up a relationship between dominances, not one imposed by the more powerful, but one which depends on obtaining cooperation or credibility from the few targeted individuals.

So despite having found in writing this thesis that the internal struggles in OST go towards ensuring proportional and fair representation in many relationships, there is a form of policing that is external and independent of all prior efforts which affect the social reception of all work and its social appropriation or exclusion.

Vindication – the climate

Anthropologists, if one subscribes to John Gledhill's synthesis of Gough's Enlightenment agenda, have the possibility to go beyond academic writing to become key witnesses in legal proceedings, and to strengthen local struggles by fund raising, or, as hoped for in *Breaking the Chains*, to organise overseas support groups (1996: 220). One of my conclusions in this thesis is that the individual anthropologist, if they pursue these ends, may not necessarily meet with the same restrained response as OST.

Similar to the many expressions of applied theatre, the anthropologist writes or performs for their own community (that is they come from an academic community and write for it). Furthermore, the two approaches have in common the ease of a fast-flowing individual discourse. The voice is singular. Indeed, in the popular polyphonic delivery, utilised to offer opposing experiences or views, those voices are usually consecutive and each speaks with apparent independence from the other.

By contrast, this research into OST does not evidence the same coming and going of discourse or the evident changing tides of dialogue 'idealised by Habermas' (Cusset 2007: 143). On the contrary, OST attempts an interlinked discourse that fuses a range of views. Using Arun Agrawal's 'systems of knowledge' framework as an analogy, in the one we can perceive the distinguishing characteristics of western knowledge, that both believes in individualist values and creates a subject/object dichotomy, which he contrasts to indigenous knowledge (1995: 418) with which OST bears more affinity. This reveals the non-European influences on OST's evolution.

Solidarity, in which the advantaged are mobilised, is all too easily shaken when it encounters forces reluctant to admit the possibility of uniting in social purpose. The fragility of such discourse can only be surmounted if the cultural climate, which is the locus of all potential Target Audiences, can be brought to understand, vindicate and participate in the advantages of an open approach. Climate change looks unlikely.

The seed

Summarising the findings and conclusions so far, the flower itself is of a new variety but it finds itself in an unstable environment. In other words this research has identified OST as an internally-consistent, hybrid form of theatre. In common with many theatre forms, it is rewarding to participants, as they gain self-confidence. Importantly OST is a good tool for investigating a social issue: its output faithfully reflects its input. However it erratically reaches its intended Target Audience.

These results combined together suggest there would be value in investigating alternative routes for accessing the audience. A development is needed in which OST can preserve certain of its qualities and yet contribute a viable approach to social change: beyond a purely theatrical output that is too dependent on the environment for its survival. If this thesis has served in its own way to allow time for reflection on the 'formative evaluation' (Bourne

2004: 8) that has transformed the OST practice over a period of seventeen years, perhaps it can also contribute to its evolution. Resulting from the improved understanding of OST's strengths and weaknesses, the findings of this research point to a need to adapt its practices in order to resist. The seed of a more resilient strain may lie in the last failure: the DVD and my attempt to capture the diversity of sources. Not that the future might lie in the concrete form of the DVD designed to share past practice, but on the site-less ground of the web.[145]

Many of the attributes that have been identified in this research as strengths could combine and proliferate in this form. A temporary community able to produce a respondent-generated site (the technology is widely available as a form of freeware through sites such as YouTube and Facebook). The Subject Group would be represented with neither the imprint of the single author nor the stamp of the professional. The content would comprise snapshots derived from theatre that would have first been edited/guided by Validation by the Subject Group: heightening the accuracy of synthesised, easy-to-read images/narratives.

Using the almost infinite interconnectivity of electronic media, individual or collective viewing becomes possible when and where it suits the targeted audiences, with no risks to their security. Web pages with embedded response tags enable direct real-time response, blogs provide an open forum for the written word, the refresh button provides the opportunity for reflection, and counters give proof of viewing. Web sites can become composite, offering a layered complexity through which the audience can navigate their own route. Furthermore, a web site can have a traceable evolution, being updated as diverse groups contribute their own research findings on issues with a common core. With the new media, undermining some of the dominance of the media becomes a possibility, like small mammals eating dinosaur eggs, establishing a less voracious species.

New effort in the study of how theatre accesses its audiences could be a valuable asset in the labour for equality. Rather than concerning ourselves with measuring impact or 'summative evaluation' and finding ways to prove we are not being ineffectual whilst at the same time 'we try to persuade ourselves we are "doing some good"' (Etherton & Prentki 2006: 143); rather than seeking the preservation or continuation of our practices in a divided field, in which 'applied theatre practices seem to be uncoordinated and competitive as opposed to collaborative' (2006: 154); rather than plays in which telling one's own story plays such an

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[145] Remote performance could also include structured video-conference, for instance that piloted by teachers and pupils as part of the European Schools SIM project (Chapter Four) that comprised rehearsed snapshots and ensuing dialogue between performers and audience.

important part: surpassing notions of immediate community, which Anthony Cohen points out is problematic because it excludes as much as it includes (in Cohen-Cruz 2000: 366); rather than methodological rules coming down like country borders, where:

> to sink is the easiest of matters… and single and broad is the path to perdition,
> … (but) the paths to salvation are many, difficult and improbable.
>
> (Levi 1987: 96);

rather than any of these, we could engage with a Darwinian model of seeking and supporting multiple approaches.

Popper considers that it is all 'comparatively simple' if one but takes as a generalisable rule that change is called for when 'those that suffer can judge for themselves and the others can hardly deny that they would not like to change places' (1945: 159). A departure beckons in which, combining our diverse approaches, attention could also be turned to the actions of the advantaged to investigate how social responsibilities are being played out.

> Although only a few originate a policy, we are all able to judge it.
>
> (Pericles quoted in Popper 1945: 7).

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