Countercolonising the stage: a syncretic dramaturgy for devising

Volume I

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A thesis submitted for the degree of PhD
at the
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
&
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I, Flavia Domingues D'Avila, do hereby certify that this thesis, submitted for the degree of PhD, which is approximately 41,000 words in length, has been written by me, and that it is the record of work carried out by me, or principally by myself in collaboration with others as acknowledged, and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for any degree.

I was admitted as a research student at the University of St Andrews and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in November 2015.

I received funding from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and have acknowledged the funder in the full text of my thesis.

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✸ General acknowledgements

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I finished this thesis during a very strange global pandemic that will not be remembered fondly by most, but in a bizarre twist of events, helped me by allowing me the time and focus that I would not have managed otherwise. Thanking a deadly virus may seem odd, but the truth is I owe the strength for the final push to the lockdowns caused by COVID-19.

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Research Data/Digital Outputs access statement

Digital outputs underpinning this thesis are available at
https://syncretictheatre.wordpress.com/

✵ A Dedication

It was May 2007 and I was approaching the end of my first year as a Drama and Theatre Arts undergraduate student at Queen Margaret University, when I was invited by two of my lecturers, John Dean and Bianca Mastrominico, to participate in a week-long workshop on Afro-Brazilian dances at the Tobacco Factory, in Bristol. The workshop leader was Brazilian dancer/choreographer Augusto Omolù, who then worked in Denmark at the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA). Omolù was a native speaker of Portuguese and fluent in Danish and Italian, but could not speak English, so I was asked to be his interpreter. I had recently moved from southern South America to Scotland and had never heard of Augusto Omolù or the ISTA. It was during our first chat in the bar that Augusto asked me what kind of theatre I wanted to make, and I did not quite know what to say. I was only a first-year undergraduate student aiming to specialise in directing and that was the extent of the plan. He then asked me where I had come from in Brazil, why I ended up in Scotland, and how the two places compared in terms of culture, both in the wider sense and in the sense of the theatrical cultures of both countries. As I spoke about my hometown on the Brazil-Uruguay border, I began to feel increasingly excited and interested in explaining the uniqueness of the place in terms of how the two towns (and countries) merged, the use of language, the fusion of customs, the completely porous border, and started to realise the artistic potential of such hybridity. Augusto then introduced me to Eugenio Barba's work and Theatre Anthropology, which he expanded on as the week progressed, culminating with him showing an extract of his solo piece, *Orô de Othello* – a performance directed by Barba fusing the characters of William Shakespeare's *Othello* with the Afro-Brazilian orisha dances to the music of Giuseppe Verdi's opera intertwined with a live drummer. That week shaped my views on theatre and the kind of directing I wanted to pursue.

Augusto was brutally murdered in his home in Bahia, northeastern Brazil, in June 2013. I dedicate this thesis and my practice to him. *Atotô, Omolù.*

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✦ Abstract

(299 words)

This inquiry proposes a process for creating intercultural theatre collaboratively: a Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising (SDD), conceptualised by reviewing established frameworks and reflecting on my lived experience and praxis. This study and its outcomes expand understandings of extant scholarship and practice hitherto focused on text-based syncretic theatre. Additionally, it foregrounds a novel, countercolonial approach to researching contemporary New Intercultural Theatre made in a formerly colonising country.

This submission builds on Michel de Certeau's (1984) distinction between maps and itineraries, thus mapping the development of the SDD and providing a critical reflexive account of its realisation in practice. The SDD is the key outcome of this research and will be available as a tool for theatre makers with an interest in devising intercultural theatre that avoids theatrical exoticism. The Syncretic Theatre Lab (STL) constitutes a second key outcome of this research, comprising workshops held in Glasgow and Edinburgh between February and April 2018. The written thesis, Volume I, provides context, discusses how the SDD was developed, reflects on the practice, and contrapuntally evaluates the study in relation to extant literature and hegemonic theatre practices. Volume II is a website-portfolio documenting the practice component of the research, which can be read in a linear or non-linear way, in alignment with De Certeau's idea of different trajectories.

Anna Fenemore's (2012) four processes for devised performance practice are adapted into an original research apparatus facilitating the implementation of the hybrid methodology designed for this study: Practice-as-Research inflected with Autoethnography. Drawing on Christopher Balme's (1999) systematic analysis of syncretic plays, the actors' Cultural Texts were used as stimuli for devising in the STL. A narrative analysis details the formulation of the SDD, identifying the operations within the process and framing Syncretic Theatre as a dramaturgical form and theatremaking method as well as onstage representation.

Keywords: syncretic theatre, cultural hybridity, map, itinerary, countercolonialism, dramaturgy, devising, autoethnography, practice-as-research.

✧ Introduction – FROM MAPS TO ITINERARIES
(5,036 words)

You enter the devising room. There are other people there too, some chairs, a piano, a couple of windows, a door. I approach you with a bag containing several small balls of yarn of various colours and textures, and I invite you to pick one. I go around the room and invite everyone to do the same. Then, I tell you the room is a map of the world. Not the one we are used to seeing, that usually Eurocentric map printed on a sheet that renders a round planet flat. This room is *our* world map, which we will construct together. I ask you to choose a starting point, a fixed spot in the room, representing your place of birth. Once you have picked that spot, I ask you to unravel your ball of yarn and tie the loose end to that spot. After you have done that, I ask you to travel across the room, taking the yarn with you, to significant places you have visited for work or leisure, until you get to another fixed spot, representing where you are now, and tie the other loose end of your yarn to that spot. There is one more instruction: as you journey across the room-world, you are to stop when your thread intersects with someone else's, and you are to exchange stories or memories of those places you are weaving. Thus, the devising room turns into a three-dimensional map of shared stories and re-interpreted geographies, a lyrical and visual representation of these people's trajectories in time and space, a unique roadmap made by and for this group. I ask everyone to take a moment to appreciate this map from within, then step outside of it and appreciate it from afar. Next, I ask you all to think of the stories you have heard at the intersections and choose one to re-tell. I give you ownership over someone else's story. There are two conditions: you have to re-tell it without using words (but you may use sounds) and you have to use the map (though not necessarily as a map). The rest is up to you. I give you some time to work on this re-telling and then I invite you and all the others to show what you have created.

This would be your experience at one of my workshops on creating intercultural theatre, in a format that I have been developing since 2012. I have run this exercise with many groups in both industry and academic settings, in three different countries, and in the three languages I speak (Fig. 1). I usually ask two follow-up questions after the sharing of the material:

1. **How did you feel seeing your story re-interpreted by someone else?**

2. **What informed the choices you made when re-interpreting someone else's story?**

Despite the exciting discussions these questions have yielded, I never documented the answers. The only trace left behind after this experience is a ball of yarn made with the wool that was used to weave the map, now cut down and rolled up together, forming a new, multi-coloured and multi-textured ball. I normally gift this to one of the participants. And I always forget to bring scissors.

Fig. 1 – The Map. Clockwise, from top left: **Fronteiras Explorers** *project (Brazil-Uruguay 2013), Perimetral Festival de Teatro (Uruguay 2014), Royal Conservatoire of Scotland/University of St Andrews doctoral cohort research study day (Scotland 2018), International Federation for Theatre Research annual conference (Brazil 2017). All photos by the author.*

I testified in my Dedication that my interest in making theatre by fusing cultures was spurred at the start of my formal theatre training after an encounter with Augusto Omolù. I suffered from a certain anxiety regarding my theatre career stemming from my seemingly disadvantageous positioning as a Latina migrant in the United Kingdom, but Augusto proved to me that dual membership of so-called Western and non-Western theatrical cultures was possible. An Afro-Brazilian dancer working in Denmark and living in Italy, Augusto himself was an example of that. Additionally, he made me realise that due to my own heritage and upbringing as a border citizen, I already possessed some of the tools to make that duality work for me. He encouraged me to hone those tools and use them to craft my theatre. The exercise I described above was created four years after that encounter as I, now a graduate director, ventured out into professional theatremaking and established my own theatre company, Fronteiras Theatre Lab, rooted in the Brazil-Uruguay border that spawned me, but based in the Scottish home that nurtured me.

I discuss political tensions in Scotland in further detail in Chapter One, but first, expanding on the parallels between my place of birth and my place of residence is worthy of some consideration in the interest of contextualising my personal, academic and professional choices. I first moved to Edinburgh in 2006 to study drama, attracted by the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. The Fringe, as it is simply known, is a very good example of Scotland's duality within the performing arts. First held in 1947, organised by a small group of local theatre companies who had not been invited to the first Edinburgh International Festival, the name and history of the Edinburgh International Festival Fringe indicate its identity as a marginal event. However, it is currently the largest and arguably most important arts festival in the world. In 2018 alone, there were over 2.8 million tickets issued for 3,548 shows hailing from 55 different countries (Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, 2019). Ironically, the *Fringe* puts Scotland at the *core* of the performing arts world, shining bright like a beacon attracting creatives to the capital for a few weeks every year. At the same time, this pilgrimage to Edinburgh is a detour from the *actual* centre: London. Scotland may become the UK capital of performing arts every August, but year-round the title belongs to London, also one of the most important cultural metropoles of Europe

and the world. Edinburgh is the capital city of Scotland, but not its largest. Glasgow has the highest population of all Scottish councils (National Records of Scotland, 2020) and a more vibrant and diverse arts scene year-round. Therefore, although all roads lead to Edinburgh once a year, this migration path is also an escape route off the centre to a margin that in turn becomes the inside, populated by all sorts of experiences rendering it concurrently authentic and inauthentic, place and non-place.

Marc Augé claims that a 'frontier is not a wall, but a threshold' (2008, pxiv). I grew up in a Southern American frontier, inhabiting two countries, cultures and languages at the same time, which together created a third identity. Augé also describes 'our intellectual difficulty in thinking simultaneously about continuity and discontinuity, local and global, place and non-place' (2008, pxvii) and the 'unease and disarray of artists confronted with this situation' (2008, pxviii). I argue that my personal experience of growing up in a frontier which works as a passing place, simultaneously an inhabited space, according to Michel de Certeau's definition (1984), and a non-place in Augé's (2008) terms, and as a migrant who comes from the edge of the southern, colonised, underdeveloped hemisphere allows me to see the simultaneity of Edinburgh and therefore, Scotland, as centre and margin, outside and inside – as a liminal space or threshold. In terms of its identity as a place, it may be difficult to pinpoint Scotland's *genius loci* and find agreement. Canadian geographer Edward Relph (1976) considers the elements that compose the identity of a place as the combination of human intentions, experiences and activities plus physical setting (including buildings and landscapes), with attributed complex meanings which are likely to change and be transferred. This combination, for Relph, is 'an expression of the adaptation of assimilation, accommodation, and the socialisation of knowledge to each other. And for most purposes, it is "ultrastable" [therefore,] there are no places that have no identity' (1976, p59). This idea, however, contrasts with theatre scholar David Pattie's observation, upon discussing Scottish playwright David Greig's work, that 'Scotland is never fully present as a social, national or cultural formation' (2011, p55). Pattie positions Greig's writing in a heterogeneous Scotland which exists in relation to, and in constant dialogue with 'other narratives, other places, and other cultures [or a] kind of non-place' (2011, p64-65). Thus, there are some easily identifiable qualities, namely, dual identity

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and placelessness, that make me feel that I belong both to my borderly hometowns and to a somewhat fragmented Scotland.

Had I encountered Michel de Certeau when I first began doing the Map exercise described at the outset of this introductory chapter, I would have better articulated the difference between a flat map on a sheet, read from above or from a frontal view, and the three-dimensional representation of the itineraries in the room, physically realised with the wool and experienced from within. Using a brief history of cartography as a springboard, De Certeau discusses the role of stories as delimitation or boundary-makers, exposing the 'theoretical and practical problem of the frontier: to whom does it belong?' (1984, p127). Hence, the map-making process in the exercise unknowingly took De Certeau's concerns into consideration, shifting the focus to trajectories and the stories found within and outwith the frontiers built by the bodies together in the room. The result may still be called a map, yet it is not the kind of chart which raises suspicion in De Certeau, designed to be viewed from above and not inhabited. Instead, it is a structure built organically with colourful threads, three-dimensional, multi-layered and multi-sensorial.

In addition to the lack of a theoretical counterpoint to make the practice more solid, the fact that I never documented the discussions I had with all my workshop participants bothered me due to the difficulty of reflecting on experiences I could not remember in detail and to which I could not refer back in advancement of my practice, so I took this into consideration going forward. In 2013, I created a three-week research residency, flying a group of seven Scottish-based performers to my hometown to investigate ways of responding artistically to the border. This project, *Fronteiras Explorers*, culminated in the creation of a site-specific piece along the borderline between Brazil and Uruguay, and yielded a video documentary (see *Fronteiras Explorers Documentary*, 2014), a blog (see Fronteiras Theatre Lab, 2013), and a paper presented at the 2016 Transcultural Exchange Conference in Boston (see Domingues D'Avila, 2016). *Fronteiras Explorers* gave me a great sense of personal and professional accomplishment, being the largest-scale project I had ever done, which was a joy to

realise but also marked one of the most painful moments of my life: being denied a visa to return to my home in Scotland. I received the news in the third week of the project. Watching the rest of the company fly back while being forced to stay behind sent me right back to the way I felt before I met Augusto. It reminded me of my subaltern position, my Otherness, which denied my legitimate existence within a former colonial power. It shattered my dual membership illusion and made me detach the qualities I had previously put together to construct my hybrid Brazilian-Uruguayan-Scottish artistic identity. However, this combination of experiences whetted my appetite for further research into ways of merging cultures in theatremaking processes, displacing knowledge and subverting hegemonic thought, practices, and power dynamics.

You open this document. There are other people here too, some theories, a methodology, a couple of hunches, a challenge. I approach you with a bag containing several balls of yarn of various colours and textures. These threads have come from Theatre and Performance Studies, Translation Studies, Anthropology, Linguistics, Geography, Sociology, Postcolonialism, and Postmodernism, and we take them all. Then, I tell you this thesis is a map. Not the one we are used to seeing, that usually Eurocentric map printed on a sheet that renders a round planet flat. This study is *our* map of an inquiry, which we will construct together. We unravel our balls of yarn and tie the first loose ends here. We will soon journey across these pages, taking the yarn with us, to significant places for the research, until we get to where we need to go, tying some of the other loose ends. There is one more instruction: as we journey across this document-map, we are to pause when our theoretical threads intersect with practice, and, when prompted, we are to look away from the map, at a website containing the documentation of the practice component of this inquiry, weaving in and out of the written thesis, because the map is not enough. The map, according to De Certeau, 'colonises space; it eliminates little by little the pictural configurations of the practices that produce it' (1984, p121), so the website

illuminates these practices and turns this doctoral study into a collection of itineraries; a multi-modal representation of the trajectory of the research through time and space, a unique tour-map made by and for this purpose. I ask you to take the time to appreciate this map from within, with me, before you step outside of it and appreciate it from afar. The intersections are complex and rendering them in linear writing is akin to rendering a round world flat, but my attempt to do so follows in the next chapters. I am going to re-tell these stories here, where we meet. There are two conditions: I have to re-tell them with my own words in conversation with the words of others, images, videos, and sounds; and you have to use the tour-map consisting of this document and the website. I will ask one question:

How might existing strategies for *reading* text-based syncretic theatre be repurposed in a process for *making* syncretic theatre collaboratively?

Except, this time I have brought the scissors, kept the ball (Fig. 2) and documented the answers.

Fig. 2 – Ball of yarn left as a trace of the workshop audition to select participants for this research (2018). Photo by the author.

<u>The research apparatus</u>

Theatre scholar Leo Cabranes-Grant advocates in favour of 'a re-articulation of the intercultural, in which issues of representation and reception are expanded into a wider recognition of the relational webs that made them tangible' (2019, p32). In his study of intercultural performances in colonial Mexico, Cabranes-Grant proposes a shift from analysing results and reception to focusing on the labour that produces intercultural scenarios through dynamic relations as a way to fully apprehend intercultural transformations. This welcome proposition echoes Roland Barthes' invitation to consider 'the body as inscriber and not just transmitter, simple receiver' (1977, p149), inasmuch as Barthes' discussion of the practice of *playing* music as a different artform from *listening* to music is analogous to Cabranes-Grant's perception of creative processes as labour, as opposed to their outcomes. Considering 20th century practitioners' emphasis on aesthetic quality (see Schechner, 1993; Knowles, 2010; Lei,2011; and Sörgel, 2015), Cabranes-Grant can be seen as attending to an overlooked political dimension of intercultural theatre – the systematised management of physical and intellectual labour – in this broadening of critical scope. However, Cabranes-Grant's study is a historiographical one and by his own admission, inevitably reliant on 'archival materials over embodied manifestations […] based on someone else's accounts' and therefore, 'severely compromised from the start' (2019, p41). Hence, what this inquiry proposes to do, as per the research question raised above, is to build on Cabranes-Grant's proposition to focus on labour, but seeking first-person, embodied accounts of a theatremaking process. It should be noted that this does not require the creation of new and bespoke labour processes that rise to this political agenda; rather, a typical devised theatre praxis is reflected upon and interpreted from this enhanced perspective to offer original and contemporary insights to Intercultural Theatre[i] scholarship and practice.

As stated in the previous section, I set out to design a study based on my own practice, which is focused on devising, or making theatre collaboratively. Overlapping with terms such as co-creating, creating new work, collaborative practice, collective creation, devised theatre is usually understood as theatre

created by a team of people working together, contributing their different skills towards a shared end product. It could be argued that all theatre is a collaborative effort and not every devised piece is the result of a collective, so perhaps a better definition for the purposes of this inquiry is the one given by Cuban-American playwright Vanessa Garcia: 'it's theatre that begins without a script' (2013, no page), meaning the script is written during the rehearsal process. Garcia's definition is arguably rather flexible as far as the word *script* is concerned, used in this sense to differentiate between *devised theatre* and simply *theatre* or *drama*, which normally begins with a pre-written script (old or new) of a play. However, devised theatre does not always yield plays – more often than not, devising companies produce postdramatic pieces (see Lehmann, 2006) that do not fit the traditional act-structure, narrative and characterisation of what we class as a play. Dee Heddon & Jane Milling take this perspective into account, defining devised theatre as 'a mode of work in which no script – neither written play-text nor performance score – exists prior to the work's creation by the company' (2006, p3). Historically, devising is closely associated with physical theatre. Even though *devised theatre* became a term in the English language and achieved prominence in second half of the 20th century, the practice of developing a collaborative performance through improvisation stems from traditions such as Commedia dell'Arte, mime and clowning (Buenaventura, 1985; Heddon & Milling, 2006). Devising in the UK is also a practice linked to the rise of labour movements and the New Left from the 1960s onwards (Heddon & Milling, 2006), attesting to the politically engaged nature of this type of theatre due to its anti-hierarchical, horizontal structure that often results in shared authorship over the production. Like those political movements, devising and in particular, devised intercultural theatre, relies heavily on the power of collective organisation even when led by prominent directors such as Jerzy Grotowski, Eugenio Barba and Peter Brook (further discussed in the next chapter). Of course, not all devised theatre is a result from a collective or collaboration: solo theatre can be devised too. However, I would argue that even in such cases there is at least one democratic-socialist principle always present: freedom (from the tyranny of the pre-existing script).

While certain companies are famous for their devising methods, such as Frantic Assembly's *Frantic Method* (Graham & Hogget, 2014; Frantic Assembly, 2021), there is no specific set of rules or techniques to create a collaborative piece of theatre. Practitioners will usually experiment with a variety of tools over a long period of time to develop a working method that suits their ensemble and context. Additionally, established devising companies that have an archive, such as Frantic Assembly, Forced Entertainment and DV8, tend to write about their processes as part of their artistic practice, not necessarily as academic research, meaning the archive serves to document these companies' practices but not always to reflect upon and critically interrogate their work. Other examples, including staple international names such as Complicité, The Théâtre du Soleil, Goat Island and The Wooster Group, have had plenty of academic literature written about their work, but usually offering either an observer's perspective or *postfacto* reflections on the making of the work, years after those processes took place (see Savran, 1986; Williams, 1999; Bailes, 2001; Heathfield, 2001; Quick, 2007; Saunders, 2015), thus configuring historiographical accounts that, like Cabranes-Grant's, can be considered compromised and not completely reliable.

The only methodology that would allow me to analyse the practice synchronously and articulate the findings in a scholarly manner was Practice-as-Research (PaR), particularly in the way it is specifically applied to Theatre Studies as formulated by Robin Nelson (2013). Before the publication of Nelson's book, there had been some discourse around developing a specific PaR pedagogy for theatre, which gained traction with the establishment of the Performance-as-Research Working Group within the International Federation for Theatre Research in 2006 (IFTR, 2021). However, the practice-based doctoral studies I encountered at the start of my journey rooted the methodology elsewhere, in Social Sciences or Education, using, for example, Madeline Hunter's seven aspects of a lesson plan (Wampler, 2011), Donald Schön's theory of action research and reflective practice (Silberschatz, 2013) or Grounded Theory (Fletcher-Watson, 2016). This research is underpinned by an interplay between centre and margin, looking to destabilise hierarchies and colonial narratives, taking into account a group of collaborators that do not share the same background, perspective or experience. Because of

the positioning of the researcher as a figure of authority (teacher or theatre director) and other people involved in the research as participants or focus groups, the above frameworks were not suitable.

Moreover, the difference between PaR and artistic practice needed to be clear. This has been widely debated, but a common point of agreement is the emphasis on the *research* side of PaR as a point of distinction. Linda Candy & Ernest Edmonds highlight that research requires 'systematic investigation' (2018, p64), while Richard Winter et al state that PaR needs to be 'creative yet rigorous' (2000, p35), and Matthew B. Miles & A. Michael Huberman (1994) see *rigour* as a combination of objectivity, reliability and validity, the latter of which can be understood as either internal or external coherence of the study. In searching for a framework for this PaR project, I found the term *apparatus* in the unexpected field of quantum physics, in the sense used by Niels Bohr. In Bohr's conception,

> [...] apparatuses are macroscopic material arrangements through which particular concepts are given definition, to the exclusion of others, and through which particular phenomena with particular determinate physical properties are produced. [...] Apparatuses are not passive observing instruments; on the contrary, they are productive (and part of) phenomena.
>
> (Barad, 2007, p142)

Therefore, instead of a *framework*, I sought to design a novel research *apparatus* that could contain both the practice and the research and allow me to be inserted in the inquiry while at the same time affording the objectivity necessary to construe artistic practice as rigorous academic research. I needed to be present but de-centered as director-researcher, and find an analytical tool that would not impose interpretations, but allow the collaborators' stories to remain intact, in alignment with what syncretism represents. Additionally, as I would be gathering first-person accounts through embodied experiences, the research apparatus would have to accommodate a hybrid methodology including an autoethnographic study articulated as a fantasised devising process that would then be applied, documented and analysed in a theatre laboratory setting. Finally, the centrality of the narrative structure in the research proposal led me to look for the apparatus in the practice of theatre itself. This is how I arrived, via Nelson, at the work of Anna Fenemore.

Best known for her work on space and spectators, theatre director, performer and scholar Anna Fenemore articulates four creative processes of devising theatre, specifically when writing about her company Pigeon Theatre's development of their death-themed trilogy, *The Rehearsal*. Fenemore's processes are in and of themselves insufficient to provide rigour and clarify the distinction between artistic practice-as-usual and PaR. Furthermore, the specificity of their origins and Fenemore's own description of these processes as 'found in *much* devised performance' (2012, p5, my emphasis) and 'the *central* processes of artistic "rehearsal" in devised performance practice' (2012, p12, my emphasis) serve as acknowledgement that they represent but a fraction of a practice that involves many other processes. In this respect, however, Fenemore's four processes are not too dissimilar from what Alison Oddey, widely acknowledged as the first scholar to write a comprehensive tome on devising theatre, postulates as four essential components of devised theatre:

> […] process (finding the ways and means to share an artistic journey together), collaboration (working with others), multi-vision (integrating various views, beliefs, life experiences, and attitudes to changing world events), and the creation of an artistic product.

> (Oddey, 1994, p3)

Winter et al, upon discussing criteria for practice-based PhDs, argue that practice-based knowledge is '[…] context-bound, and in which the subjectivity of the producer of knowledge cannot be eliminated' (2000, p28), but also that practice-based doctorates aim to build a bridge between scholarship and professional practice. There is, therefore, a duality in Fenemore's processes between the specificity of context and generalisation of categorising, which makes her work suitably inspiring for a research apparatus that straddles both theatre academia and practice. There are other aspects of Fenemore's processes that serve as a springboard for this. Firstly, her perspective as director-researcher in a devised context, as opposed to a performer-researcher, was of value to me. The application of the process developed as part of this inquiry positions the actors as producers of knowledge, but I am the narrator of the thesis, so the apparatus had to accommodate my dual placement within and outwith the practice, ensuring I remained decentralised but present. Secondly, I planned to use autoethnographic tools to conduct the research, and having found that Fenemore's processes were

of personal relevance to her, serving as a way of reflecting on her own death and her father's, established the suitability of her work as a model upon which to base a research apparatus containing personal narratives. Finally, thematically speaking, Fenemore's trilogy and her processes are based on death, which Brazilian sociologist Fábio Régio Bento characterises as 'a border-crossing experience' (2012, p17, my translation)[ii]. Thus, a thematic connection is established between this study which, as mentioned in the opening section, involves borders and border-crossings, and Fenemore's work. The interplay between centre and margin and encounters between a heterogenous group of collaborators are analogous to the interweaving psychic perspectives that occupy the liminal space of death, which may represent the end of life, or its permutation.

Fenemore builds on Allan Kellehear's research on the 'four major challenges of dying' (Fenemore, 2012, p12; see also Kellehear, 2007). She further explains these processes are not mutually or chronologically exclusive and subject to bleeding into each other, considering the fluidity and uncertainty that usually characterises artistic practice. The four processes are:

1. **Anticipation, imagination and projection**

2. **Playing, pretense and pleasure**

3. **Direction, repetition and/or insistence**

4. **Editing, *mise-en-scène* and composition**
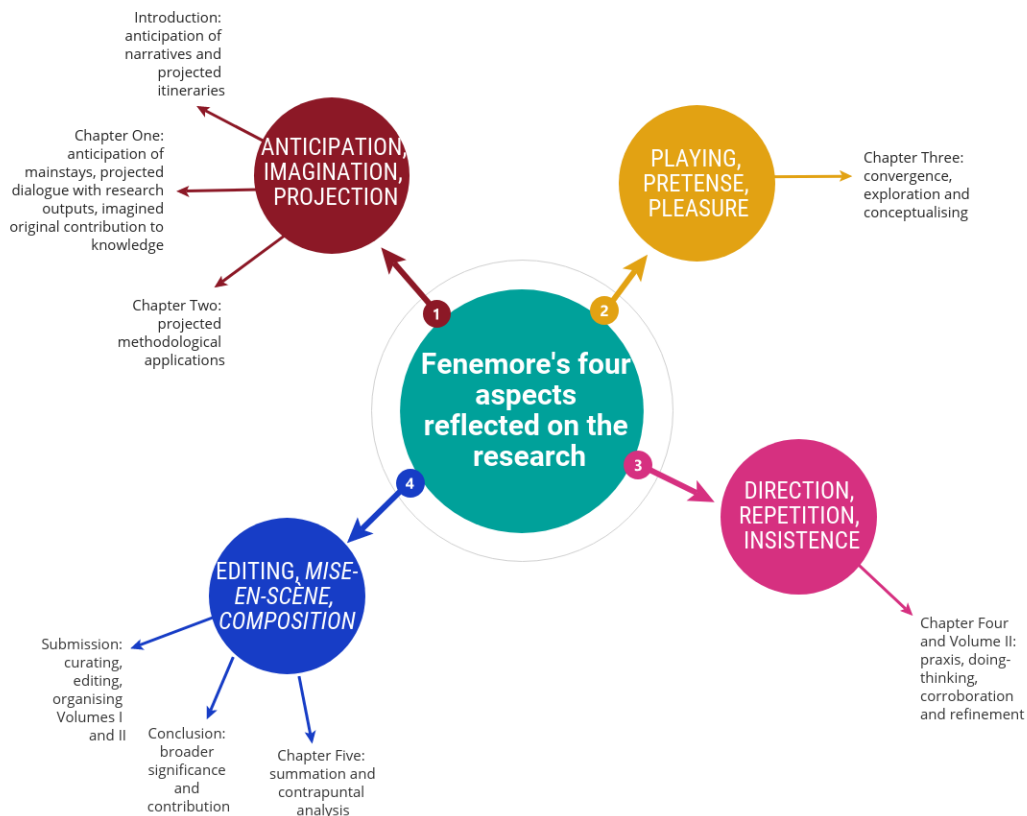
Fig. 3 – The four-arm research apparatus inspired by Anna Fenemore's (2012) four processes in devised performance practice.

Anticipation, Imagination and Projection usually marks the beginning of a creative process. This part of the process is mirrored in this Introduction, which employs personal narrative (see Ellis & Bochner, 2000) to reflect on how starting points were arrived at and projects the narrative of the inquiry to follow. The Introduction projects the research question and anticipates the itineraries of the inquiry and the contribution to knowledge yet to be developed throughout the submission. Chapter One anticipates how the inquiry will engage with the three mainstays guiding it, namely, Countercolonising, Intercultural Theatre, and Dramaturgy/Devising, by describing and discussing these perspectives before they are put in dialogue with the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising (SDD) in Chapter Five. Chapter One also imagines Syncretic Theatre as a three-part object of study: a dramaturgical form, a working method for making theatre, and a means of onstage representation.

The key concept of syncretism is examined by looking at how its meaning has shifted throughout the history of colonisation, and the potential of a broader understanding of Syncretic Theatre is imagined based on Christopher Balme's (1999) study of Cultural Texts and strategies employed by postcolonial playwrights. The methodological part is projected in Chapter Two, which justifies the use of what I call PaR *inflected* with Autoethnography as the appropriate methodology to conduct this inquiry, drawing mainly on the work of Robin Nelson (2013) and Carolyn Ellis & Arthur P. Bochner (2000).

Fenemore's second process, **Playing, Pretense and Pleasure**, reflects the act of preparing to try things out in performance-making, in a manner that is 'exploratory, improvisatory, open, unfixed' (2012, p18). Chapter Three is where this initial exploration happens, by means of converging three modes of knowing after Robin Nelson's (2013) pedagogical model (further detailed in Chapters Two and Three) integrated with reflexive native ethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2000) to design the initial concept of the SDD. I call this the *Pretend SDD*, echoing the second of Fenemore's processes which inspired this aspect of the research apparatus, referring playfully to something that is not (yet) real, like children do in make-believe. The Pretend SDD will later come to life through practice, bringing us to Fenemore's third process, **Direction, Repetition and/or Insistence**. Based on Kellehear's challenge of 'taming death, or making it manageable, and in particular bringing professionals […] to manage death for you' (Fenemore, 2012, p23), this process represents the coming together of actors and directors in a devising room to shape the ideas previously mooted in Playing, Pretense and Pleasure. As such, Chapter Four, in conjunction with Volume II (the website), demonstrates this process by presenting a narrative analysis of the doing-thinking employed in the context of a Syncretic Theatre Laboratory (STL). This part of the inquiry entailed practical workshops, inviting the collaborating actors to use five of their own Cultural Texts as stimuli for devising through the application of the SDD. The concept of Cultural Texts derives from Balme's (1999) study, in turn based on Yuri Lotman's (1990) semiotics and is teased out in Chapters One and Three. Reflexive actor journals, director notes, and unstructured conversations with the participating actors and invited observers were then used to fully

conceptualise the SDD, thus reflecting the process of Direction, Repetition and Insistence identified by Fenemore.

Finally, Fenemore's fourth process is **Editing, *Mise-en-Scène* and Composition**, which she defines as 'an artistic tactic for placing things in the right place and at the right time' (2012, p26). At the thesis level, this process happens in Chapter Five, which presents a contrapuntal evaluation of the inquiry that puts the SDD in conversation with the aforementioned conceptual frameworks, or mainstays; and in the Conclusion, which summarises and reiterates how the research question was answered, presenting final considerations and recommendations. At a meta level, this process inspires the curation of material for Volumes I and II and actual writing of the thesis (the story of the inquiry) and building of the website (the story of the SDD).

Thus, I have adapted Fenemore's devised performance processes into a four-arm research apparatus for PaR rooted in theatrical practice (illustrated in Fig. 3 above) that allows for rigour and critical reflection, establishing the different stages of the inquiry and the production of Volumes I and II. Now these starting points have been determined and we have tied the first loose ends of our threads to them, the journey begins. The next chapter reviews relevant conceptual frameworks that serve to inform the direction of the itinerary.

✦ Chapter One – SAILING DIRECTIONS

(10,328 words)

I have contended with the terms *Western* and *non-Western* since 2009, when the terminology was used as the title of a module in my undergraduate programme: *Non-Western Theatre*. Admittedly, the East-West split gained force during and after the Cold War, but spatially speaking, dividing a round planet into eastern and western hemispheres inevitably echoes the old-fashioned belief that the Earth is flat. While such belief is still found in contemporary societies (see Schadewald, 1980; Schadewald, 1995; The Flat Earth Society, 2016; TFES.org, 2018; *Behind the Curve*, 2018), it is widely accepted as untrue. Although the direction of the rotation of the Earth is east, which allows us to determine where the sun rises and sets, if a person travels along the horizontal axis of the planet, East and West are always going to be subjective points of reference. Taking the usually Eurocentric world maps printed on flat sheets of paper as reference, it sits uncomfortably with me that Europe represents The Western World, because it is *east* of South America, where I come from. It is a well-known fact that Christopher Columbus, Pedro Álvares Cabral and other explorers and *conquistadores* set their sails *west* in an attempt to find a new route to India, that 'non-Western' place. By accepting that the planet is round, a sailor can travel west to get to China and east to get to Portugal. Geographically and cartographically speaking, the Western and non-Western divide is rather peculiar. It reinforces the belief that the horizon can be reached, when in fact 'all horizons disappear in space' (Kappeler III, 2009, p129).

Ideologically, this is an even more challenging matter. The terms Eastern or Oriental are frequently used in reference to Asia or the Middle East but are not necessarily interchangeable with non-Western. Ironically, the latter tends to have a more global appeal, encompassing everything that hails from outside Europe or North America. This usage asserts the economic and cultural dominance of these places, rooted in imperialistic and colonising policies. It firmly positions Western as the norm, that which is *not* Western is defined against that standard instead of in its own terms, an example of the application of deferral of meaning, or *différance*, central to the work of Algerian semiotician Jacques Derrida (1997). I have on occasion used the terms Theatre from the Global South or North,

which sits a little better with my experience, given that those two cardinal points appear to be more fixed in a round world than east and west, considering the rotation of the Earth. Granted, it is understood that the magnetic poles shift sometimes (see NASA, 2017), but as far as geographic concepts go, north and south feel less movable. Most of the developed countries are located in the northern hemisphere (Human Development Index, 2018), including some eastern countries, but places with a high HDI like Australia and New Zealand are located in the southern hemisphere, and how does that then reflect the terminology for the theatrical expressions found there? Both countries have a dominant Western culture inherited from their colonisers, but they also have increasingly strong Maori, Polynesian, and Aboriginal cultures yielding theatre practices traditionally classified as non-Western or sometimes as World Theatre. Contemporary performance companies such as Briefs and Hot Brown Honey in Australia and Taki Rua and Tawata in New Zealand merge inherited colonial formats (theatrical plays, cabaret, and burlesque) with precolonial ritual dances and stories and muddle the waters even more.

I have come across the terms Euramerican or Euro-American replacing the dominant Western (see Leiter, 1996; Brandon & Banham, 1997; Chambers, 2006; Harrison, 2009; Saxon, 2011), but then I stumbled on another two problems: what would the equivalent to non-Western be in this usage, and what about the rest of the Americas? My Latin American self finds it difficult to reconcile with the fact that only citizens of the United States merit the nationality adjective 'American' in the English language, and that the country often gets called simply America, as if it were the only one. I confess I am ignorant as to how the nationals of Canada and the Caribbean feel about this, but most of the Spanish-speaking countries south of the wall have often made this into a political statement. Brazil is still undergoing a slow process of decolonisation of mind and language, but Spanish-speaking Latin Americans usually prefer to be acknowledged as part of the *continente americano* and use the word *estadunidense* to refer to US nationals instead. A good example of this is the popular folkloric song *Canción con Todos*, written in 1969 by Argentinian poet Armando Tejada Gómez and his compatriot composer César Isella, and considered by many the unofficial anthem of Latin America. The words in

Spanish paint a picture of a walking journey across the South American countries: 'Siento al caminar/Toda la piel de America en mi piel […]/Canta conmigo, canta/Hermano americano', translating as: 'As I walk, I can feel/The whole skin of America on my skin […]/Sing along with me, sing/My American brother' (Gómez, 1970, my translation). Thus, if we are all Americans from Cape Columbia to Tierra del Fuego, that complicates the use of Euramerican as a convincing enough term to define hegemonic theatre practices.

I observed in my Introduction that intercultural theatre is commonly associated with certain eminent directors of the 20th century, namely Jerzy Grotowski, Peter Brook, and Eugenio Barba. This group also includes other prominent names, such as Robert Wilson and Ariane Mnouchknine, but I will focus on the previous three due to my greater familiarity with their practice. Daphne Lei has given these directors' work the epithet HIT - Hegemonic Intercultural Theatre, which she defines as 'a specific artistic genre and state of mind that combines First World capital and brainpower with Third World raw material and labour, and Western classical text with Eastern performance' (2011, p571). Jerzy Grotowski set up his theatre laboratory in Poland in the 1950s and proceeded to do extensive artistic research into physical theatre and actor training, pushing the boundaries of the theatre form and becoming a strong influence on British director Peter Brook and Italian director Eugenio Barba. One of the features commonly found across their practices and methods is the exploration of performative elements in cultures and rituals from various parts of the world, which established their theatre as 'intercultural' (see McIvor, 2019a; Schechner, 2003; Watson, 1993). What should be noted is that the period during which Barba, Brook and Grotowski ascended to prominence was also the period during which many former European colonies gained independence and postcolonial theatre did likewise. With renewed interest in themselves, and now able to do so under postcolonial rule, newly independent countries re-discovered their own cultures and shared them with the world, and, in this process, the aforementioned directors proceeded to draw inspiration from these cultures for their theatre.

However, in the 80s and 90s, overall sentiment that these explorations tended toward neo-colonialism arose amongst theatre scholars and practitioners, upon realising that Grotowski (and to an even larger extent, Barba and Brook) simply cherry-picked items from foreign cultures to decorate his pieces, failing to engage meaningfully with, or get direct input from the people belonging to those cultures in the making of his theatre (Schechner, 1993). Although they all sought local and forgotten languages, rituals and songs, for the most part they also used classical European texts as a basis for their work, a recurring feature also observed in the practice of renowned Eastern intercultural theatre makers such as Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki and Singaporean director Ong Keng Sen, both of whom have created notorious productions of William Shakespeare's *King Lear*, for example (see Suzuki Company of Toga, 2009; Fischer-Lichte, 2010). Notable exceptions to this recurring feature are Peter Brook's *Mahabharata* and Jerzy Grotowksi's *Shakuntala*, criticised by Indian theatre director and scholar Rustom Bharucha (1984; 1988), who denounced both pieces as appropriative and orientalist.

Eugenio Barba's work has not escaped criticism. In his Theatre Anthropology, Barba traces 'transcultural, recurring principles' (1995, p10) of pre-expressivity, or in other words, the underlying procedures that actors employ to perform *before* performing. One of these principles is that which Barba calls Extra-Daily Techniques, or a distinction made between the way actors use their bodies for performance and in their everyday lives. Barba explains that while Daily Techniques are usually mechanical, unconscious actions that require minimum effort, Extra-Daily Techniques are intentional and aimed at 'the wasting of energy' (1995, p15) and displays of virtuosity. Bharucha is concerned with Barba's quest for the Pre-Expressive and Extra-Daily Techniques as universalist approaches that decontextualize non-Western bodies and accuses the Italian director of exhibiting a neo-colonial and condescending attitude (Bharucha, 1994; 2000). Nevertheless, compared to Grotowski and Brook, Barba is arguably the one that comes closest to 'actual multiculturalism' as proposed by Richard Schechner (1993, p257), given the ethnically diverse makeup of Barba's Odin Teatret and the devising processes developed by the company, relying heavily on material generated by the actors and use of their own languages (Barba, 2014; Odin Teatret, 2019). Barba's establishment of the Nordisk

Teaterlaboratorium to co-produce and support work from artists and companies around the world and the efforts of the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA) as an itinerant theatre research endeavour also contribute to his work being widely respected and perceived as politically positive in its approach to hybridising theatrical cultures.

Such respect and perception can be seen in the way the Odin Teatret is still received in Latin America. Whereas Grotowski and Brook focused mostly on India, which in turn made them easy targets for Bharucha's criticism, Barba has, particularly in the past three decades, turned his attention to the southern part of the American continent. Chilean theatre scholar Fernando de Toro remarks that, although Barba 'desperately avoids coming up with a system, it is also true that his writings, his constant barters and workshops have contributed to establish him as a paradigm' (1988, p94, my translation),[iii] which has resulted in the Odin Teatret's working processes being held up as a type of theatrical doctrine. De Toro, however, goes further to ask, 'when will the Odin Teatret be deconstructed in the same way it has deconstructed all the contemporary theatre practice?' (1988, p94, my translation),[iv] showing that there is space and willingness to critique Barba's work from a Latin American perspective too. More recently, Brazilian theatre researcher Ana Paula Justino dos Santos (2013) offered a critical reflection on the contributions and exchanges of the Odin Teatret in Latin America, acknowledging the company's positive impact in the advancement of theatrical practice, training and academia, as well as the role of Barba's concept of Third Theatre in validating marginal and unfunded types of theatre in that continent. Nevertheless, dos Santos also highlights a sentiment, mostly from the Spanish-speaking portion of Latin America, perceiving Barba's attitude as colonial, Othering and condescending.

The fact that these HIT artists became contested towards the end of the 20th century caused a shift in intercultural theatre that Ric Knowles identifies as New Interculturalism. This 21st century form, according to Knowles, is intercultural theatre 'approached "from below" rather than from the position of privilege' (2010, p6), and usually led by minority and migrant artists working at a smaller scale than

the HIT directors of the previous century. New Interculturalism allows for multidirectional, rhizomatic exchanges as opposed to the unidirectional top-down experiences of prior forms of intercultural theatre, and 'repeatedly reverse, redirect and/or complicate familiar networks or routes of intercultural exchange, exploding East/West and Global North/Global South binaries' (McIvor, 2019a, pp2-3)'. My work is therefore located among New Interculturalist theatre companies, most of whom are based in large multicultural metropoles. There are many examples of New Interculturalists all over the world, but I highlight three companies whose practices are either similar, inspiring or influential to my work and whose context places them at the intersection of various contested cultures: Modern Times Stage Company (Canada), Zen Zen Zo (Australia), and Grupo Caixa-Preta (Brazil).

Toronto prides itself in being one of the world's most diverse cities, so it comes as no surprise that it is home to many intercultural theatre companies who often work together and negotiate between English, French, and Indigenous cultures. Modern Times Stage Company is one of the best known among those, led by Iranian director Soheil Parsa, who emigrated to Canada in the 1980s. Like other New Interculturalist companies, Modern Times is concerned with extra-hierarchical, horizontal structures and identity politics, but their ideology verges on the same universalist perspective for which HIT artists have been criticised, with their declared goal to transcend cultures and find a 'human vocabulary that speaks across civilisations' (Farbridge, 2020, p6). Though Parsa openly acknowledges the influence of Peter Brook in his work, Ric Knowles sees Modern Times' practice as more 'even-handed' (2019, p184) in its approach of both Western and Iranian canonical work, which Knowles identifies as 'intercultural reappropriation' (2010, p67), a strategy through which the company reclaims the canon, even circumventing capitalist notions of ownership, like in their production *bloom*, an adaptation of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Co-artistic director Peter Farbridge has written about the company's rehearsal strategies and dynamics for recodifying signs in canonical texts, while highlighting that Parsa resists systematising these processes, stating that hybridisation is 'unconscious, unplanned and integral to the creative process' (Farbridge, 2020, p9).

Like Canada, Australia is part of the Commonwealth and as such, still very culturally close to the United Kingdom and its colonial past, but it also has an increasingly strong Aboriginal decolonial movement (see Burch et al, 2020; Jonas & Wessell, 2020) and has been seeking to officially deepen its ties within the Asia Pacific region (Holledge et al, 2019). Brisbane-based Zen Zen Zo is perhaps one of the performance companies that best represents these tensions in their work, which has been influenced by DV8, Anne Bogart and Butoh. Zen Zen Zo's marketing materials focus more on representing them as a physical theatre company (Zen Zen Zo, 2021), but their training methods and creative practices are based on a process of Cultural Translation 'to transpose practices from one cultural space to another' (Bradley, 2017, p79). Company director Lynne Bradley acknowledges this was an organic, spontaneous process for the first two decades of the company's existence, following which she set out to investigate their practice and bring this tacit knowledge to light through her practice-based PhD, analysing the exchanges between Zen Zen Zo and Japanese Butoh company Dairakudakan. Noting that 'the pedagogical and performance practices of Zen Zen Zo had mostly drawn criticism *only* when the innovative processes at their core were applied across cultures' (2017, p169, emphasis in the original), Bradley's findings did not result in one single method or process, but a set of guiding principles that allow the company (and other artists) to work ethically across cultures.

The first time I came across syncretism in a theatrical context predates my encounter with the work of Christopher Balme. It was through the play *Hamlet Sincrético*, by Grupo Caixa-Preta, an all-black theatre company based in the southern Brazilian city of Porto Alegre. Black people account for about half of the population of Brazil and although the highest concentration of this demographic is in the north and northeastern states of Amazonas, Bahia and Pará (SEADE, 2005), the 2010 Census showed that the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul has the highest number of people identifying as followers of Afro-Brazilian religions (IBGE, 2010). In spite of these statistics, because of a violent colonial heritage that still plagues the country, Brazil remains one of the most racist and inequal societies in the world. Homicides have reduced life expectancy of black men in Brazil by four years against only 3.5 months in other demographics (Cerqueira & Moura, 2013) and only 4.3% of elected

political leaders in the state and federal government elections of 2018 were black (Krüger, 2018). Grupo Caixa-Preta has, therefore, been a disruptive force in this context and their syncretic *Hamlet*, first produced in 2005 in the ruins of a decommissioned psychiatric hospital, reappropriated a text from the Western canon to interrogate racial segregation and pay tribute to the African cultures that, forcibly plucked from their original context, eventually made Brazil their home. *Hamlet Sincrético* was the first piece in the company's *Trilogia da Identidade* (Identity Trilogy), which also included *Antígona BR* and *Ori Oresteia*, merging Greek classics with Afro-Brazilian mythology. Like Modern Times' Soheil Parsa, Caixa-Preta's director Jessé Oliveira, too, briefly panders to HIT ideology by affirming these texts are 'universal' (Oliveira & Lopes, 2019, p27) and argues for a human connection that runs deeply across cultures. An example that demonstrates how utopian this sentiment can be is the account by American anthropologist Laura Bohannan of relaying the story of *Hamlet* to her host Tiv homestead in West Africa while on a field trip there. Bohannan states that before this experience, she was convinced *Hamlet* was 'universally obvious' (1966, p1), but changed her mind after hours of being challenged on several elements of the story, ranging from the problem of the ghost (for the Tiv do not have a concept of an afterlife) through their understanding that Laertes must have used witchcraft on Ophelia as she was 'damaged goods' and no longer fit for sale as a bride, to their complete lack of sympathy for Hamlet because in their society, if the chief dies, of course the widow marries his brother, and youth rebellion of this kind in unheard of and not tolerated. Bohannan concludes her account by quoting her host's final review of the story:

> "Sometime", concluded the old man, gathering his ragged toga about him, "you must tell us some more stories of your country. We, who are elders, will instruct you in their true meaning, so that when you return to your own land your elders will see that you have not been sitting in the bush, but among those who know things and who have taught you wisdom"

> (Bohannan, 1966, p4)

This utopian view, however, is mitigated in Oliveira's production. In her testament about her participation in the project, actress Glau Barros, who played Ophelia, states: '*Hamlet Sincrético* made me believe I could be universal. In our colonised society, we know universalism is a white privilege'

(quoted in Oliveira & Lopes, 2019, p42, my translation)[v]. Through his use of syncretism as a hybridising phenomenon resulting from not necessarily an amicable friction of cultures, Oliveira found a clever way of tackling tricky cultural and political tensions that ultimately subverts and reclaims even the universalist outlook.

The examples above all come from former colonies, which explains their placement within intricate webs consisting of postcolonial tensions between the hegemonic/colonising and native/colonised cultures and the interplay between these tensions and their neighbouring countries. New Interculturalism looks a little different in the context of a former colonising power. In the UK, London has an increasingly high concentration of minority and migrant-led theatre companies ranging from well-established ones like Tamasha, Tara Arts and Yellow Earth, to grassroots companies such as Global Voices, Foreign Affairs and LegalAliens. The latter are younger and lesser known but have been shaking the foundations of the sector with innovative work and by spearheading the emerging group Migrants in Theatre, set up in 2020 to advocate for cultural change and better representation for migrants in the British theatre industry (Masso, 2020b; Migrants in Theatre, 2020). The type of work done by these companies also varies along the intercultural spectrum: Foreign Affairs focuses on translating plays into English, Global Voices are an intersectional female and non-binary company involved in activism for underrepresented artists, LegalAliens does work with refugees and asylum seekers, Tamasha and Tara Arts produce British and South Asian work, and Yellow Earth creates British East Asian theatre.

I am, however, based in Scotland. As noted in the Introduction to this thesis, Scotland is enmeshed in its own tangle of cultural and political identity tensions in a somewhat similar manner to Canada, Australia and Brazil, which is worth understanding more deeply here. In 2012, influential Scottish writer Alasdair Gray published an essay titled *Settlers and Colonists*, arguing that the English had colonised Scottish art and culture (Gray, 2012). The essay was met with controversy, which caused Gray to eventually follow up with a formal apology and rewrite the text, but this notion that Scotland

has a colonised-coloniser relationship with England has become increasingly widespread since the 1980s. Trish Reid (2013) argues that Scottishness became a form of resistance to Thatcherism as a result of the loss of confidence in the Conservative party in Scotland in the decade leading up to the 1997 devolution referendum, which changed Scotland's relationship with England. After that vote, the new Scottish Parliament at Holyrood opened its doors in 1999 and since then, the Scottish National Party has gone from strength to strength and led an Independence Referendum in 2014. At the time, The Scotsman newspaper published an essay by Colin Kidd and Gregg McClymont about the need to abandon the colonial myth regarding that relationship with England, now reinforced by the nationalist sentiment perceived as driving the independence campaign. Kidd and McClymont see this as insensitive 'towards the freedoms won by the former colonies of European empires' (2014, no page) and brand it 'the Renton interpretation of history' (2014, no page), alluding to the character in Irvine Welsh's novel *Trainspotting* and his famous 'It's shite being Scottish' rant, in which Renton claims: 'we have been colonised by wankers' (Welsh, 2004, p78). In fact, tracing the relationship between the two nations back to the 1707 Act of Union, theatre historian Ian Brown highlights the paradox of Scotland's nationalism being enshrined within the Union and that Scottish Home Rule 'developed not so much out of resistance to the Union but out of insistence upon it' (Cairns Craig, quoted in Brown, 2013, p26). Regarding the formation of Scotland as a nation and therefore, what we call Scottish identity, Brown points out that 'alliance rather than conquest alone (…) formed this grouping, [so] there had to be a form of mutual tolerance within the Scottish body politic' (Brown, 2013, p30). Going even further, Brown admits that 'Scots were full participants in colonialism' and that the linguistic and cultural hybridity of Scots, Gaelic and English is 'not a result of colonialism but inherent in the structures of Scottish culture from early times' (Brown, 2013, p36).

In the foreword to Awan Amkpa's (2004) book *Theatre and Postcolonial Desires,* Kenyan writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (author of the seminal essay *Decolonising the Mind*) describes how colonialism has always been seen by the colonisers as *Other*. Thiong'o draws attention to the fact that the development of Western civilisation has been fairly linear and untouched by colonial encounters,

whereas the colonised cultures have had their histories violently interrupted by the forces of imperialism and the slave trade. A similar idea is advanced by Geography professor Doreen Massey's observation that the way we imagine space 'can lead us to conceive of other places, people, cultures simply as phenomena "on" this surface. It is not an innocent manoeuvre, for by this means they are deprived of histories […] they lie there, on space, in place, without their own trajectories' (Massey, 2005, p4). An example of how Scotland has played a part in interrupting another culture's trajectory can be seen in playwright Aileen Ritchie's writer's note published with the *The Juju Girl* playscript, describing her experience visiting Zimbabwe:

> Travelling in from Harare airport in the back of an open truck, I noticed a road sign – Kirkintilloch Avenue. Then an African bus – destination Glenview. […] In Bulawayo, McLeish the butcher sold fresh haggis.
>
> […]
>
> I went to discover Africa and found a different kind of Scotland. It made me think a lot about my own identity and history. It was the first time I had felt embarrassed about being Scottish.

<div align="right">(Ritchie, 1999, no page)</div>

Produced by the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh in 1999, Aileen Ritchie's play *The Juju Girl* connects Scotland and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe in parallel storylines, one during the colonial period and another in the present. This significant production premiered when the world was on the verge of the turn of the millennium, ten years after the fall of the Berlin Wall accelerated the process of globalisation which had begun at the end of the Cold War. 1999 also marks the opening of the newly devolved Scottish Parliament, as noted above. With delicately crafted writing that balances complex politics very well, the play received good reviews (Knowles, 2004) at that year's Edinburgh Festival Fringe, but has not been staged again since (or at least not on a main stage).

The Juju Girl was directed by John Tiffany, who then went on to direct what is perhaps the most commercially successful Scottish theatre production to date, the National Theatre of Scotland production of Gregory Burke's *Black Watch* in 2006. In a critique of *Black Watch*, Trish Reid highlights the focus on Scottish regiments within the context of the British Empire and regards that 'this martial tradition is figured as essentially and authentically Scottish, and the machismo inherent in its practice

is neither fully interrogated or problematised' (2013, p17). A few years later, in 2010, the Royal Shakespeare Company commissioned David Greig to write *Dunsinane*, billed as a revisionist sequel to William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. What is noteworthy about this production is that, according to Reid (2013), it was interpreted as a critique of current Western foreign policy when it played in England, but in Scotland it was received by critics as a play championing self-governance and independence from Westminster.

This split in interpretations is perhaps connected to what Awan Amkpa (2004) identifies as a fragmented postcolonial English identity. Amkpa singles out English playwrights John Arden, David Edgar and Caryl Churchill as advocates of anticolonial thought whose plays effectively confronted and dismantled English identity as something built on imperial power. I would argue that Aileen Ritchie succeeds in doing the same with Scottish identity in *The Juju Girl*, which invites consideration as to whether this is the reason why the play has not been staged again. After all, Scotland did not vote for independence in the 2014 referendum, but the obsession with building a strong, unified Scottish identity that can stand *against* the English and eventually get out of the Union has only heightened since, particularly in the aftermath of Brexit and how the COVID-19 pandemic has been handled by the UK Government (Curtice, 2020; Duffy, 2020; Soussi, 2021).

It is, therefore, suspicious that *The Juju Girl* disappeared into oblivion while plays like *Black Watch* and *Dunsinane* triumphed, and that we do not seem to have well-established intercultural theatre companies in Scotland, or at least none that have achieved the same level of notoriety and financial support as the aforementioned Modern Times, Zen Zen Zo, Grupo Caixa-Preta, and London-based Tamasha, Tara Arts and Yellow Earth. In addition to my own, Fronteiras Theatre Lab, there are other small migrant-led companies such as Theatre Sans Accents, whose main focus is teaching French through theatre, and Brite Theater, which is migrant-led and focuses on interactive and site-specific work that is not necessarily intercultural. Glasgow-based Bijli is an up-and-coming intercultural theatre company that has received greater support and recently struck partnerships with bigger players like

Stellar Quines theatre company and the National Theatre of Scotland, and there is growing funding support for Gaelic theatre, with Theatre Gu Lèor being included in Creative Scotland's Regularly Funded Organisations network for the 2018-2021 term (Creative Scotland, 2018a), though the latter has greater affinity with the Scottish nationalist project than with New Interculturalism. Perhaps the most widely successful contemporary New Interculturalist in Scotland is Kenyan-Scottish storyteller Mara Menzies. I first came across her work in 2013, when she staged the play *I Once Knew a Man Called Livingstone*, directed by Indian-born, Edinburgh-based Annie George. This two-hander performed by Menzies and her sister Isla told the story of Scottish explorer David Livingstone from his African servants' perspective and was met with lukewarm responses from critics (Dibdin, 2013; Black, 2013). The following year, Menzies wrote and performed *Nzinga, Warrior Queen* alongside Cuban dancer Yamil Ferrera, the second iteration of which I co-directed with Annie George at the Edinburgh Fringe in 2016. Based on the actual historical figure of Angolan queen Nzinga, the play told the story of a fierce woman who was willing to murder her own brother and nephew to take control over the politics of her tribe and resist colonialism. Historians believe it was due to Nzinga's rule that her region did not fall to the Portuguese Empire until after her death of natural causes in her 80s (Stapleton, 2012; Rahming & Cacuci, 2017). In 2017, Menzies and I staged her solo show, *The Illusion of Truth*, based on Yoruba Ifa mythology, telling the story of Ochosi, the hunter orisha. Both *Nzinga* and *The Illusion of Truth* received mixed reviews (Simmonds, 2016; Strachan, 2016; Shepherd, 2017; Moyes, 2017) and the latter was refused Creative Scotland funding on the grounds that Menzies' work did not have enough international appeal (Creative Scotland, 2018b).

Three shows spanning four years addressing African stories from varied and unusual perspectives and challenging colonial history went unnoticed or met with indifference from the industry. Then in 2019, Menzies, hitherto an advocate for portraying African characters as their own decision makers, in charge of their own narratives and not as perennial victims of violence who need to be saved by white people, created *Blood and Gold*, billed as 'a contemporary exploration of the legacy of colonialism and slavery' (Independent Arts Projects, 2019). Menzies was granted Made in Scotland funding and

showered with favourable reviews (Corr, 2019; Fischer, 2019; McMillan, 2019) for this show, which included a subtle critique of the UK Home Office's Hostile Environment and only a couple of lines linking Scotland to the slave trade, but this relationship was not interrogated in any depth. Awam Amkpa points out that 'the discourse of colonialism did indeed incorporate colonised subjects' (2004, p6) and that situations in which indigenous cultural practices were tolerated were those that did not challenge the nationalist project. Upon analysing how Scottish theatre has addressed colonialism and interculturalism in the past two decades since the devolution vote and opening of the Scottish Parliament, through one independence referendum and the ongoing Brexit challenges that could trigger yet another referendum, it is easy to wonder whether the survival of a Scottish national identity in this political turmoil is still contingent on its colonial past, afraid of being shattered and weakened. Having said that, perhaps this fragmentation is exactly what is necessary to embrace an actual multicultural Scotland that will not stand alone but resist together.

Like Soheil Parsa of Modern Times, I am a migrant director living and working in a country that is more privileged than my country of birth, and which has complex internal politics and fragmented cultural identities resulting from a relationship with colonialism. However, my practice and my research are not focused on reappropriating canonical texts, but rather on understanding the process of creating an intercultural theatrical piece from scratch, like Zen Zen Zo's Lynne Bradley. Where Bradley's scope is Cultural Translation as a strategy, however, my heritage and the productive effects of syncretism in Jessé Oliveira's work drove me to explore syncretic theatre as a theatremaking method. My proposition focuses on trajectories, as suggested by De Certeau (1984), and reflected in Thiong'o's (2004) and Massey's (2005) thought, to illuminate the labour that goes into creating syncretic theatre. This is my countercolonial effort to maintain the dialogue but destabilise a binary opposition, as suggested by Indian literary critic Aijaz Ahmad (Ahmad, 1994; see also Byrne, 2005), while developing an understanding of what New Intercultural Theatre looks like in the context of a former colonial power.

Wind Vane

German Egyptologist Jan Assmann's (1996) essay on the (un)translatability of culture offers an insight into the origins of syncretism as cultural fusion from the Religious and Translation Studies perspective, placing it at the centre of life during the Hellenistic period in Egypt. The word *synkretismos* (συνκρητισμός) is Greek in its etymology and its earliest record is found in a poem by Plutarch (46 AD–120 AD), referring to 'an archaic custom of the Cretan people to overcome local feuds and to form a sacred alliance to withstand foreign aggression' (Assmann, 1996, p34). It was during this period that Greek became a type of lingua franca for local people to express their different traditions and religions to each other. Assmann identifies the need for translation at the early stages of imperialism, in order to move diplomacy and trade forward, with multilingualism becoming a typical phenomenon in the age of the great empires. Syncretism, according to Assmann, emerges as a translation tool to communicate *culture* because *language* alone was not enough. Assmann emphasises that syncretism is not merely a fusion, but a 'kind of merging which coexists with the original distinct entities […] Syncretism requires or offers double membership: one in a native culture and one in a general culture. It does not mean at the expense of the other' (1996, pp33-34). Despite acknowledging it as utopian and identifying the recurring risk of neo-colonialism in contemporary transcultural media, Assmann believes that this process can provide a common language and promote a cosmopolitan consciousness.

Religious syncretism is a phenomenon that can easily be observed in the Americas. It is estimated that over 11 million people were transported from Africa and the West Indies to the New World during the Atlantic Slave Trade between the 16th and 19th centuries (National Archives, 2019). It was not in the colonisers' interest to respect the different tribes and ethnicities of those people, so often they were all confined together without a shared language or culture. Brazilian historians believe that religious syncretism was a survival strategy, conscious or not, that those people developed to overcome their differences in order to be able to communicate internally and resist their slave drivers by pretending

to convert to (mainly) Catholicism while preserving their original beliefs (Romão, 2018). Thus, Catholic saints were syncretised with African sacred entities and it is not uncommon even nowadays to walk into a Brazilian household and find a syncretic shrine in a corner, displaying a mélange of African and Catholic imagery. Perhaps the most illustrative example of this phenomenon is the syncretism between the Virgin Mary and Yemanjá, the orisha associated with the ocean in Yoruba culture. After centuries of being worshipped as the same entity, we now find representations of Yemanjá as a white woman and the Virgin Mary as a black woman. This version of the saint is known in Brazil as *Nossa Senhora Aparecida* (Our Lady Who Appeared) and is the official patron saint of the country (Fig. 4).

Fig. 4 – Syncretism of Yemanjá and the Virgin Mary, from L to R: Yoruba Yemanjá, White Yemanjá, Virgin Mary, Nossa Senhora Aparecida. Authors and dates unknown. (sources: Extra: Religião e Fé; O Arquivo: Religião, Cultos e Outros; Rainha Maria; Revista Atenção, all accessed 22/09/2019)

Hence, borrowing from Religious Studies, Christopher Balme defines theatrical syncretism as 'the process whereby culturally heterogeneous signs and codes are merged together' (1999, p1), and a 'conscious, programmatic strategy to fashion a new form of theatre in the light of colonial or postcolonial experience, [utilising] the performance forms of both European and indigenous cultures in a creative recombination of their respective elements, without slavish adherence to one tradition or the other' (1999, p2). Although Balme's definition stresses process and strategy, his analysis focuses on the aesthetics of Syncretic Theatre as an outcome, which is why for the purposes of this thesis, I define Syncretic Theatre beyond a means of onstage representation, but also as a dramaturgical form

and theatremaking method that hybridises cultural signs and codes. The common language suggested by Assmann therefore emerges from the dialectics of theatre practice; the cosmopolitan consciousness present in the rehearsal room as a function of creative labour and not merely a principle to be expounded on the stage.

Literature suggests that cultural hybridity in theatre can result from organic cultural clash, or it can be consciously sought for political and aesthetic effects (see Balme, 1999; Fischer-Lichte, 2010; Knowles, 2010; Sörgel, 2015; Oliveira & Lopes, 2019). Scholarly analyses of intercultural theatre usually focus on hybridised productions of hegemonic canonical texts such as those by William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Henrik Ibsen (1828-1906), and Anton Chekhov (1860-1904), and plays written by postcolonial playwrights such as Wole Soyinka (1934-), Ola Rotimi (1938-2000), Derek Walcott (1930-2017), Hone Tuwhare (1922-2008), to name a few. There are instances of academic writing about collectively created intercultural theatre mentioning verbatim or community engagement efforts in collaboration with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, like the work of Jumblies Theatre in Toronto (Cox, 2014) and Terra Nova in Belfast (McIvor, 2019b), or performance art works such as Brett Bailey's infamous 2012 piece *Exhibit B*, which generated controversy amongst scholars, critics and audiences due to its portrayal of slavery through a recreation of a human zoo (Hutchison, 2019; Singleton, 2019). However, not only do these studies not approach syncretism specifically as a form of intercultural theatre, but they also only attend to the reading of onstage representations, not occupying themselves with the processes employed by the artists in the making of such pieces.

To achieve a systematic analysis of postcolonial plays identified as syncretic, Christopher Balme (1999) draws heavily on semiotics and favours Yuri Lotman's concept of Cultural Texts as cultural components that carry integral meaning and can only be fully understood within the culture that generates them. Balme identifies Ritual and Liminality, Orality, Language, Body, Dance and Body Language, and Spaces and Spectators as umbrella categories of Cultural Texts to be analysed in syncretic theatre productions. Thus, Balme goes beyond textual analysis to a wider-encompassing performance analysis

not too dissimilar from the systems focusing on constituents of the *mise-en-scène* suggested by theatre scholars John Emigh (1996) and Patrice Pavis (2003). However, whereas Pavis' model of intercultural theatre is considered flawed by some New Intercultural scholars due to its binary and top-down nature (Bharucha, 2005; Knowles, 2010; Fisek, 2019), Balme's work is supported by a great awareness of the contingencies that allowed the emergence of syncretic theatre. Paying special attention to the shift in interculturalism and the direction of the postcolonial movement, Balme draws attention to the dangers of exoticising and generalising, outlining the main differences between Syncretic Theatre and Theatrical Exoticism (fig. 5), the latter likened to Edward W. Said's (1979) work on Orientalism, which criticises condescending representations of the Arab world in imperialist cultural production.

SYNCRETIC THEATRE	THEATRICAL EXOTICISM
Respect for the semantics of cultural texts	No heed to the original textuality of the elements it appropriates
Indigenous directors/dramatists	Baroque decoratism, Enlightenment idealism, 19th century orientalism
Consciously sought-after creative tension between traditional performative context & Western dramaturgical framework	Arbitrarily recoded and semanticised in an entirely Western aesthetic and ideological frame
Cultural texts retain their integrity as bearers of precisely defined cultural meaning	Mean little else than their alterity; signs, floating signifiers and otherness; foreign elements not used nor perceived as texts in their own right

Fig. 5 – Syncretic Theatre vs Theatrical Exoticism. Adapted from Christopher Balme (1999).

Balme acknowledges the fact that even the most experimental and aware intercultural theatre attempts by practitioners originating from hegemonic contexts are 'never entirely free of the scent of theatrical exoticism' (1999, p271), or 'bordering on rigidity to retain such texts in a state of Otherness' (1999, p274). Balme highlights the fact that in syncretic theatre, hybridity happens on a different political ground, or 'at the other end of the power continuum' (1999, p271), which is why he calls this process 'decolonising the stage'. While stating that the term *postcolonial* can be problematic for this discussion, Balme concludes that there has been a paradigmatic shift as far as the term *syncretic* is

concerned, from its pejorative use in medieval religious studies when there was a concern with purity in Europe, to having more favourable connotations such as mutual respect and sympathy.

Having said that, the level of political engagement and contextualising in Balme's work is rather light, for his main focus is on aesthetics. Additionally, he falls victim to the recurring issue of universalism. For example, in his study, Balme problematises the Savage Body, acknowledging its use mainly in touristic performances, meaning events usually held to showcase indigenous bodies and rituals in 'preserved' time and space for the entertainment of tourists. However, upon discussing a sub-category of the Body as Cultural Text, the Kinetic Body, Balme defines dance as 'an almost universal form of performative expression' (1999, pp202-3) that can be traced back to Greek dithyrambic performances from c. 600 b.c.: choral songs including dance, poetry, and music in honour of the god Dionysus. Balme's use of the term 'universal' here, firmly rooting the origins of dance in Ancient Greek theatre, invites the same level of criticism applied to the HIT directors branded as neo-colonial. Indian scholars have been particularly vocal against universalism, including Rustom Bharucha (1994), who decried universalism and globalism as harmfully homogenising and marginalising. Similarly, Homi Bhabha (1996; see also Leichtman & Schulz, 2017) wrote against universalism as a force relegating local ethnicities to marginality and historian Dipesh Chakrabarty (2000) takes issue with the homogenising effect of universalist history, documentation, and translation. The problem of such a homogenising effect is that it weakens Balme's analysis by rendering the representations qualified as 'universal' essentialist, which is the opposite of what syncretic theatre aims to achieve. It is also a reminder that Balme is 'a *pa heka* [sic][vi] (white, settler) New Zealander' (Knowles, 2010, p34), which echoes *Hamlet Sincrético*'s actress Glau Barros' remark that universalism is a form of white privilege.

Nevertheless, Balme's concept of Cultural Texts and his analysis of the strategies employed by a selection of postcolonial text-based theatre productions is overall coherent and therefore provide a good material arrangement through which a process of making syncretic theatre can be produced and understood, which is why they form part of the conceptualisation of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for

Devising (SDD). Before proceeding to discuss the methodology that made it possible to reframe Cultural Texts from signs to stimuli and syncretic theatre strategies from result to process, though, I shall consider the work of other relevant scholars in the field of Intercultural Theatre and attend to the intersection with Translation Studies that this inquiry proposes.

Current Meter

Postcolonial theatre and performance researcher Sabine Sörgel studies the use of dance and the body in theatre from 1948 to the present, covering a wide range of significant European and North American practitioners and productions that place dance at 'the centre of competing ideological battles on democracy, decolonisation and world citizenship during the Cold War era up to the present moment' (2015, pxiii). Sörgel's investigation makes use of online documentation of live work to identify recurring features such as embodiment, ritual, cultural identity, archetypes, and the collective unconscious in theatre and dance. Her final two chapters are the most relevant to this inquiry, in which she analyses dance pieces in contexts of decolonisation and globalisation, and in connection with Human Rights. As examples of successful postcolonial dance and theatre pieces, Sörgel highlights Wole Soyinka's play *Death and the King's Horseman*, first performed in Nigeria in 1975, emphasising its use of ritual dance and music; and US-based dance theatre company Alvin Ailey, whose choreographies evoke Afro-Christian religious syncretism and ushered in the Civil Rights Movement in the USA. Post-Civil Rights, Sörgel foregrounds the work of Bill T. Jones and Arnie Zane as responsible for the postmodern dance movement and interracial dance in that country. Finally, she analyses in detail the work of Akram Khan and Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui in their collaborative piece, *Zero Degrees*, dealing with border crossings in terms of passports and immigration issues between the UK, India, and Bangladesh, but also metaphorical border crossings between cultural identities and between life and death.

Despite providing intricate readings of these performances and insights into the use of strategies such as kinaesthetic memory, Sörgel's study is yet another example of scholarship focusing on the onstage

representations of intercultural theatre and dance pieces done through a historiographical lens, based on archival documentation and third-person accounts. Though Sörgel opines that Syncretic Theatre as coined by Balme refers 'more to the aesthetic implications of postcolonial theatre than its political effects' (2015, p151), indicating a gap in Balme's system, she often comes across as over-sentimental in her argument and crosses the line over to Theatrical Exoticism in her analyses. Sörgel's claim that dance led her back to 'the body, movement, space and time, as well as the much neglected soul in Western thought' (2015, p204) might ring true, particularly as she precedes this statement with a nod to the body-mind split resulting from the Enlightenment; however, there is a touch of the Noble Savage, understood as a 'romantic glorification of savage life' (Ellingson, 2001, p1; see also Rousseau, 1754), to her conclusions on the use of ritualistic dances, which renders those representations frozen in space and time, their Otherness intact.

Along similar lines to Balme's analysis and also following Victor Turner's legacy, theatre and performance researcher Erika Fischer-Lichte (2010) establishes liminal states as a characteristic of what she calls 'hybrid performances', which she traces back to ancient times. Patrice Pavis (2003) stresses the importance of both performers and audiences as features that compose the *mise-en-scène*, and John Emigh states that 'cultures don't create performances. Individuals living in complex and contested cultural circumstances do' (1996, pxix). Fischer-Lichte shares these views by emphasising that performances result from the encounter between performers and spectators in this liminal state whilst acknowledging the unpredictability of said interactions. She refrains from using the term Intercultural Theatre and uses the term 'hybrid' with some reservation, giving preference to the expression 'interweaving of cultures'. Although Fischer-Lichte never mentions Syncretic Theatre, her analysis system, like Balme's, focuses on staging, and her statement that the 'interweaving of cultures without erasing their differences' (2010, p17) is what creates new realities bears resemblance to Balme's definition of Syncretic Theatre. Fischer-Lichte does not go into as much detail as Balme regarding possible identifiable strategies to represent interwoven cultures on stage, but in her brief historical account of hybridity in theatre, she mentions examples happening in neighbouring

countries, two of which I highlight as illustrative of the different ways in which theatrical syncretism can occur: the exchange between English and German performers in the late sixteenth century, and Molière's (1622-1673) use of *commedia dell'arte* features. The former is an example of a spontaneous type of syncretism, resulting from the mere contact and possibly organic barters between those two cultures when English troupes travelled across the continent. The latter, on the other hand, exemplifies a deliberate use of fusion to make new theatre, which opens a window to studying Syncretic Theatre not only as representation (product), but also as a dramaturgical form and theatremaking method (labour).

Investigating this expanded potential of Syncretic Theatre beyond its obvious focus requires attention to process. Rustom Bharucha states that multiple cultural identities 'can only be represented meaningfully through a process of translation, which remains one of the most neglected areas of cultural research' (1994, p109), so I reach out to the field of Translation Studies and the work of Martha P. Y. Cheung (2014) on intercultural communication. Cheung differentiates between 'intercultural communication' and 'cross-cultural communication', acknowledging that while they overlap in meaning and constitute a shared interest of researchers, they are not synonymous. Cheung states that *cross-* suggests movement without contact, and *inter-* denotes contact and interaction, referring specifically to the 'complex interactions between members of different linguistic, cultural, and ethnic groups' (2014, p180). She also recognises the interdisciplinary potential of such a tool, which has been used to define guidelines and theories across different fields of research and practice. Cheung identifies the notion of translation as transfer of meaning, which is usually assumed to arrive at the other end intact. She emphasises equivalence or a focus on similarities, which can be likened to syncretism in practice, as accounted by Assmann's (1996) discussion of trade and communications in Hellenic Egypt, and the examples found in the syncretism of Afro-Brazilian religions. However, Cheung prefers to view translation through the lens of Intercultural Studies as the 'interactions that occur when cultures come into contact or conflict with one another' (2014, p181), which resonates with the idea of liminality favoured by Fischer-Lichte and Turner and with the work of intercultural companies

located at complex cultural intersections that I discussed in the previous section. Giving examples of the use of traditional Chinese discourse on the translation of Buddhist scriptures, Cheung identifies four types of interaction that are somewhat similar to Balme's strategies. Though Cheung's interactions are identified in translations of written texts, I will demonstrate how these and Balme's strategies compare and overlap in Chapter Three; and how the operations uncovered through the SDD align with and expand the list of Cheung's interactions and Balme's strategies in Chapter Five. Thus, Syncretic Theatre as the object of this inquiry is three-fold: as a dramaturgical form rooted in colonial history; as a theatremaking working method to communicate culture beyond language; and as a means of onstage representation resulting from postcolonialism. Contributions coming from various epistemic fields, namely, Theatre and Performance Studies, Semiotics, Postcolonialism, Anthropology, Translation Studies, Geography (the many threads I mentioned in the Introduction), are necessary to adequately navigate these turbulent waters, as well as a sturdy vessel. The SDD process is hereby presented as the metaphorical ship built to undertake this challenging journey to proposition an exchange with hegemonic practices, avoiding cultural insensitivity, Othering, and exoticism.

Stays

According to the *Dictionary of Nautical Words and Terms* compiled by C.W.T. Layton, a stay is 'a rope that steadies a mast in a fore and aft direction, more particularly when on fore side of mast. To 'stay' is to incline a mast correctly by adjustment of stays' (Layton, 1994, p332). Three mainstays steer this inquiry: Countercolonialism, Intercultural Theatre and Dramaturgy/Devising, encompassing the ideological, conceptual and practical frameworks that help with the design, application and analysis of the SDD. Reviewing the Intercultural Theatre framework in the previous sections revealed that the focus of extant theory and practice involving Syncretic Theatre is on text-based theatre, usually through studies approaching it from an outsider's, often historiographic, perspective. These analyse Syncretic Theatre as a product, or what I call onstage representation. In the Introduction, I discussed how the practice of Devising informed the research apparatus, and I shall explain in this section how

Dramaturgy is part of the same practical framework, which allows me to expand the boundaries of existing knowledge of Syncretic Theatre by researching it as a form and method, or in other words, a theatremaking process in itself, shifting the focus from product to labour.

Aristotelian characteristics of tragedy still dominate the dramatic form (a point to which I will return later in this section) but the art of theatre manifests in many forms. Though often equated with theatre itself, the dramatic form, or playwriting, is but one of the possible shapes in which theatre is expressed, alongside musicals, mimicry, farces, verbatim theatre, site-specific theatre and many others (see Kuritz, 1988; Hartnoll, 1989; Bratton, 2003). Theatre historian Stephen di Benedetto affirms that '[t]heatrical form is an expression of contemporary thought processes; the world changes, so do our ways of representing it' (2010, p1), which explains why theatrical forms keep growing and changing to reflect the time theatremakers live in. Hence, coming from a different direction, I propose that beyond the dramatic form, Syncretic Theatre can manifest as what I call a *dramaturgical form*. I coin this term to describe a theatrical form led by dramaturgy, a somewhat fragmented concept which enjoys a fluidity of meanings ranging from script editing to translating, adapting, researching, and simply making theatre (Romanska, 2016). In her introductory chapter to The Routledge Companion to Dramaturgy, Magda Romanska acknowledges that the 21st century is seeing theatremaking increasingly move towards devised and collaborative models, positioning dramaturgy as 'an essential interlink that translates and connects the vast and varied cultural paradigms' (2016, p7) and the dramaturg as 'the ultimate […] intercultural mediator' (2016, p14). Regarding how it fits into the research apparatus, dramaturgy is a lens through which the devising process can be analysed and deconstructed within the practice. It is also a suitable tool for making connections between theory and practice and moving beyond text-based theatre, as Duška Radosavljević (2009) asserts. When applied in a devising context, dramaturgy becomes a tool to strengthen the narrative structure of a piece and make the inner trajectories make sense (Domingues D'Avila, 2017; T-Hyland, 2017), ideas echoed in Radosavljević's reflection on what it means to be a dramaturg in 21st-century England,

availing of De Certeau's thoughts on maps and tours to claim that the 'domain of the dramaturg is […] the journey itself (which is an experience and therefore immaterial, speculative, personal as well as potentially shared)' (Radosavljević, 2009, p50).

In a broad understanding of what constitutes theatre within hegemonic practices, I argue that dramaturgy is what makes theatre theatre. Historically speaking, dramaturgy, like the dramatic form, is located in the lineage of performing arts descending from Ancient Greece and is considered to have been 'born' in 18th-century Germany (Stegemann, 2016; Lessing, 2018). The fields of Theatre and Performance Studies often take from, or overlap with, other fields of knowledge, such as Literature, Linguistics, Cultural Studies, Dance, and Cultural Anthropology, to name a few examples found in the studies reviewed in this chapter. As such, before dramaturgy was established as a practice, theatre was always affiliated with at least one other field and the text dominated the praxis. Indeed, in his account of the development of dramaturgy throughout time, Bernd Stegemann claims that it was only after the rise of the dramaturg that the theatre text became theatre, for it is not 'within a convention or a tradition of a play, but every performance becomes an original production which bestows upon the text its own form of presentation' (2016, p46). Dramaturgy, therefore, is a unique tool that emerged from and for Western theatre, and if we accept Balme's (1999) definition of Cultural Texts as cultural elements that can only be fully understood within the culture that generates them, it is then reasonable to state that Dramaturgy is a Cultural Text of Western theatre. However, Dramaturgy has now mutated, fragmented and spread to other fields of knowledge and artforms, such as dance and choreography, film, digital media, games, and even robotics (Romanska, 2016), which is why I propose it as a syncretic process in this countercolonial study, now bringing me to the last mainstay to be considered.

Postcolonialism is the name given to an indefinite period spanning the end of the 19th century until around the mid-20th century, when most European colonies in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the Americas gained their independence. In theatrical terms, these countries saw a movement of assimilation of

foreign canonical works into the local culture, either in content or in format. This is when adaptations of Shakespeare's plays spiced up with local flavours and a touch of defiance started appearing, such as the first time Othello was played by a black actor in South Africa, with some of the text translated into local languages (Hahn, 2017). In Brazil, my country of birth, the Modernist movement culminated on the publication of Oswald de Andrade's *Manifesto Antropofágico* (1928), a call to arms for artists all over the country to learn to cannibalise European art forms in a mission to find a true Brazilian artistic identity. During this period, postcolonial playwrights rose to prominence, like Wole Soyinka, who uses the classic five-act structure of Greek tragedy to tell local stories of the former colony, thus constituting a departure from the oral storytelling tradition that permeated Yoruba culture in favour of embracing the theatrical tradition of the colonising culture. Though it can be argued that theatre and storytelling are closely related, the Aristotelian definition of Tragedy makes a clear distinction, by affirming that it:

> is the imitation of an action that is admirable, complete and possesses magnitude; in language made pleasurable, each of its species separated in different parts; performed by actors, not through narration; effecting through pity and fear the purification of such emotions

(*Poetics*, section 4, lines 10-14)

These characteristics remain to this day the basis of the structure of theatrical plays in the so-called Western world. Therefore, Soyinka's masterpiece *Death and the King's Horseman*, written in exile in 1975, successfully shapes Yoruba ritual and oral traditions into a theatrical form familiar and palatable to the British context in which Soyinka was inserted at the time.

Once people settled into a postcolonial world, a new wave of opposition washed over the shores of former European colonies, now newly established yet still problematic democratic republics across the world. As observed at the outset of this chapter, most of the scholarly criticism of HIT theatremakers' work was published towards the last decade of the 20th century, when Postcolonial thought no longer sufficed as a tool of political resistance, giving way to Decolonial thought, with the General Assembly of the United Nations declaring 'the 1990s the international decade for the eradication of colonialism' (Betts, 2012, p26). Professor Sir Richard Evans (2012) provides a

comprehensive timeline of the events that led to the acceleration of the collapse of global European empires in the last quarter of the 20th century with particular focus on the consequences of violent conflict in former colonies. Decolonisation resulted from this process, marking a shift in political thought in the so-called Third World that has generated a kind of activism which gained popularity as a critical framework across a wide range of fields of study, including the arts. No longer was it enough to assimilate the former empires' theatrical expressions, these nations now needed to look back to precolonial times and search for the identities they had before their history was interrupted (see Thiong'o, 2004; Massey, 2005). This period then sees a surge in Maori, Aboriginal, and Native American theatre, the practical and theoretical study of ritual performances, and renewed interest in the intersection between Theatre and Anthropology, leading to current movements to decolonise academia and the canon, such as #RhodesMustFall in Cape Town in 2015 (The Rhodes Must Fall Movement, 2018) and Beyond the Canon, a project initiated by Simeilia Hodge-Dallaway at the Royal Dramatic Arts Academy in London in 2016 (RADA, 2019). Syncretic theatre made, documented and studied so far in this chapter spans this movement from postcolonialism to decolonisation.

I argue, however, that we are now entering yet another period, less oriented towards the outright rejection of colonial values, and more geared towards conversing with them, ushered in by the age of global migrations that has led many, like me, to move from former colonies to former coloniser countries. Therefore, I contend that the intercultural theatre practices 'from below' (Knowles, 2010; 2019) established within hegemonic contexts such as the United Kingdom are not decolonial, for these countries have not had their narratives interrupted, but rather were themselves the perpetrators of colonisation. I propound, therefore, that New Interculturalism at the site of a former colonial power is *countercolonial*, a term I borrow from artists Roshni Rustomji and Luz de la Rosa (2012), who do not feel inclined to use the term Decolonisation, giving preference to Countercolonisation, a concept in turn inspired by Edward W. Said. Said (1994) draws on the musical notion of counterpoint to describe different themes playing off one another, resulting in an orderly polyphony, to inform his contrapuntal analysis of classic English novels. Composer Kent Kennan defines the counterpoint as 'the art of

combining two or more melodic lines in a musically satisfying way [with] the assumption that each line is good in itself' (1999, p3), which resonates with the definitions of syncretism discussed above, such as Jan Assmann's: 'a kind of merging that coexists with the original distinct entities' (1996, p.33). Assmann also writes about the formation of 'counter-identities' and 'counterdistinctivety' as reactions from minorities when facing up to hegemonic cultures. Another parallel is Martha P. Y. Cheung's perspective of Otherness in intercultural communication, focusing on explaining the significant differences that 'allow the Other to remain Other, to retain its identity as a foreign system of thought, however hybridised that identity has become' (2014, p187). Additionally, the idea of 'countering' as a response in the opposite direction is present in Balme's chapters on the syncretic theatres of South Africa, Nigeria and the Caribbean, in which he talks about 'counter-discourses', 'counter-positions' and 'counter-aesthetics' (Balme, 1999). Furthermore, in his study of syncretic music in colonial Manila, ethnomusicologist David R.M. Irving concludes that although counterpoint itself was a weapon of colonialism that served to corroborate European exceptionalism, contrapuntal analysis 'becomes an indispensable tool for the discovery of lost identities that are erased from the record' (2010, p7), thus illuminating the other side of the dialogue.

Hence, whereas decolonial methods and strategies aim to undo and negate the legacy of colonialism, I argue that a countercolonial approach focuses on responding to colonial rhetoric, coming from an opposite direction. Rustomji & De La Rosa (2012) describe their strategy as working with various texts clustered around the same theme and its variations. They select and prepare the material together, but present it as either one or two voices, depending on the content. They use the system of question-response present in South Asian music to develop their collaborative narratives, giving special emphasis to the classic Indian concept of *dhvani*, a Sanskrit word meaning 'echo' or 'resonance', to work with meanings and nuances from words and sounds that arise and spread inwards and outwards. At this point, they visualise their narratives as spirals or ripples, in which they call an active contrapuntal pattern, as opposed to more traditional parallel narratives. The SDD emerges as a theatrical process that works in a similar way, in which the actors' Cultural Texts are clustered under

the same category, collaboratively explored and exchanged to generate complex intercultural material that is more likely to present contrapuntal patterns than straightforward, linear narratives. In the next chapter, I discuss the hybrid research methodology used to achieve that.

✴ Chapter Two – COMPASS AND SEXTANT
(4,311 words)

Having established how Michel de Certeau's (1984) thoughts regarding maps and itineraries have influenced this research project at the Introduction, the first thing to consider in this second chapter is the format of this submission, which combines data furnished by text-based academic research methods, such as the reviewing of relevant literature and its discussion in writing and the written expression of personal narratives, with data that came from research done through practice. De Certeau's negative view of maps stems from the absence of the vectoral movements and intersections that enable the creation of the map itself, maintaining that the map uses 'the same system of projection [to juxtapose] two very different elements: the data furnished by a tradition [...] and those that came from navigators' (1984, p121). Therefore, this submission comprises two volumes: the present written thesis (Volume I) and a website (Volume II), which respectively reflect the two DeCerteauian elements of tradition and navigators. For the same reasons, a hybrid methodology was necessary in order to answer the research question. Martha P. Y. Cheung (2014), reflecting on her work in translation, emphasises the need to choose between different working methodologies at different stages of the intercultural communication between a source and a target culture, stating that there is no *best* method and that often a combination of methods is required, depending on the positioning of the translation in the history of the interaction between the cultures concerned. I shall now proceed to explain how Practice-as-Research 'inflected' with Autoethnography has yielded a syncretic, multi-modal and interdisciplinary methodology.

Compass bearings

Brad Haseman, leading expert in Practice-as-Research (PaR) in the creative arts, positions PaR, which he calls Performative Research, outside the established traditions of quantitative and qualitative research, stating it is aligned with those methodologies but ultimately distinct from them, thus configuring a third methodological model (Haseman, 2006). Robin Nelson acknowledges that the

model has encountered resistance within academia, as it challenges 'the schism in the Western intellectual tradition between theory and practice' (2013, p5). This *thirdness* or *otherness* that characterises PaR resonates with the nature of Syncretic Theatre in that it is something that contains and merges elements from established and distinctive practices, which combined form a new approach. Additionally, PaR, according to Haseman and Nelson, shares with this research the ideological value of responding to hegemonic thought and traditions by coming from a different direction. Interweaving as many epistemological threads as Theatre Studies, Anthropology, Semiotics, Translation Studies, Geography, Sociology and Postcolonialism could be considered a flaw in the research due to an imperfect approach to these fields of study in equal depth. Nelson, however, claims that it is precisely the inherent syncretism of PaR which mitigates the potential risk of it being superficial:

> In my experience, PaR is likely to be interdisciplinary and to draw upon a range of sources in several fields; and while it is not possible for a PaR student to equal the specialist in all disciplines drawn upon, the shortfall does not amount to a lack of thoroughness. Rigour in this aspect of PaR lies elsewhere in syncretism, not in depth-mining.

(Nelson, 2013, p34)

Richard Gough's (2009) description of PaR confirms this methodology as interdisciplinary, gregarious and fluid in nature:

> Performance research is inclusive and intercultural, evolving and unsettled. It allows for new formulations and emphasises process rather than product. It does not enshrine cultural values and pronounce upon them with certainty; rather it contests them and offers a space/site for dynamic negotiation. It includes uncertainty and diffidence, promotes experiment, nurtures a sense of becoming and evolving, and encourages reflection. It emphasises the provisional, action with contingency, mutability – culture in a subjunctive world.

(2009, p28)

Gough's emphasis on the possibilities of dynamic spaces for negotiation and contestation afforded by this research methodology reflects the dynamism of vectoral trajectories found in De Certeau (1984) and Edward W. Said's (1994) contrapuntal analysis. Moreover, the focus on personal evolution and reflection demonstrates PaR's suitability for a study of a process borne out of personal narrative. There are, of course, valid concerns regarding the neo-colonial potential of practices and research

involving intercultural theatre, often accused of reinforcing hegemony as demonstrated in Chapter One. Baz Kershaw minimises these concerns by affirming that 'the *foundational principles* of practice-as-research work to a democratically deconstructive and decentring agenda [which tends to resist] incorporation into meta-schemes or systems of knowledge, especially those that aim to become hegemonic' (2009b, p15, emphasis in the original). Kershaw compares the practitioner-researcher to anthropologist Gregory Bateson's explorer and states that the 'dislocation of knowledge by action is characteristic of performance practice as research, especially in its more radical forms' (2009a, p4). Kershaw's observations on decentring and displacing knowledge also resonate with the countercolonial proposition of this inquiry.

Regarding a clear distinction between PaR and artistic practice-as-usual, Carole Gray and Julian Malins state that PaR needs to be 'accessible, transparent and transferable (in principle if not specifics)' (Gray & Malins, 2004, p104). Volume I renders the research transparent by exposing its foundations, context, methodology and mode of analysis, whereas Volume II provides transparency in the form of unedited video and audio documentation of the practice. I will discuss documentation in more detail in the next section, but it should be noted here that only a fraction of over 100 hours of video and audio clips recorded during the course of the research have been uploaded to Volume II. These clips were selected for being the most relevant in terms of answering the research question and clearly illustrating the application of the SDD analysed in Chapter Four, and are presented unedited, in real-time, though they have been cut into files of manageable sizes for easy upload. Accessibility and transferability are ensured by the submission format. Volume II, the website, is freely available to any other theatremakers and researchers who may wish to apply the SDD in their own practice and/or develop it further, which also attests to the democratic principle of PaR identified by Kershaw above.

The downside, of course, is that access to both the thesis and the website is still contingent on availability of technology (access to a computer device and internet connection), ability to operate said technology, and a high level of literacy and understanding of the English language. The Ecologist

collective raises concerns regarding the enclosure of knowledge by making it 'inaccessible to those who have not been to school or university, who do not have professional qualifications, who cannot operate computers' (1994, p121) and by redefining meaning through the use of English, claiming this leads to the ruin of local communities. The Ecologist argues that people at a socioeconomic disadvantage often need to debate in English, a language embedded in colonial history and which currently represents dominant economic power, but may not be suitable to express idiosyncrasies that are relevant for the debate. At present, I have no perfect solution for these issues, though I agree that they are worthy of consideration, along with other physical access needs that The Ecologist does not mention, but have increasingly been debated in contemporary society. By pursuing a doctoral degree in a Scottish institution, I chose to write the thesis in English, which is not my mother tongue. It is also a second language for my main supervisor and one of my examiners, so it works as an academic lingua franca between us and therefore this is a tacit agreement that I have willingly entered. There is scope for translating both the thesis and the website into other languages in future, however, it could also be argued that writing in English opens up the research to a wider public. Precisely because of its hegemonic positioning, it has become a reliable second language to a vast number of people worldwide, with a 2013 report by the British Council forecasting that by 2020, English would be spoken by 2 billion people, nearly a quarter of the world's population. As for matters of access to technology, I have tried to mitigate these by making the website in WordPress, a user-friendly platform which accounts for a third of the websites in existence and states its mission is 'to democratise publishing' (WordPress, n.d.). Therefore, access to the website and the research therein is not predicated on institutional or other type of membership or payment of any kind.

Robin Nelson establishes that using the PaR model is 'a matter of seeking resonances' (2013, p. ix) and therefore original contributions to knowledge resulting from PaR are situated at the intersection of three modes of knowing, which Nelson calls Know-What, Know-How and Know-That, as illustrated in Fig. 6:
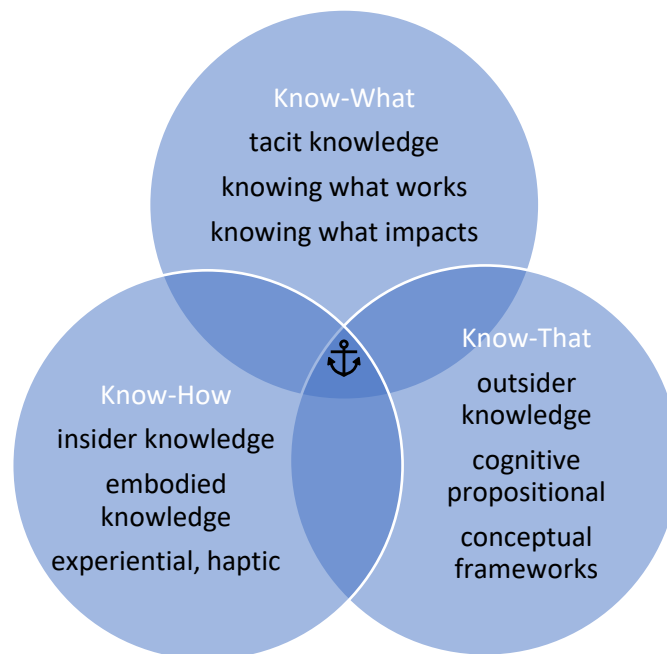
Fig. 6 – Nelson's multi-mode epistemological model for PaR. The anchor represents the original contribution to knowledge. Adapted from Robin Nelson (2013, p37).

This triad of interwoven modes of knowledge, Nelson argues, 'maximises the potential of [the] contribution to knowledge' (Nelson, 2013, p20), arguing that knowledge exists between extremes of tacit and explicit and as such, it is better to embrace all its possibilities. Nelson posits that Know-That represents explicit knowledge more traditionally associated with academic research: (often) factual knowledge acquired through engagement with establish conceptual frameworks (usually through reading) and objective analytical distancing (usually through scientific experiments). Know-How and Know-What, in Nelson's model, are closer to the tacit end of the knowledge spectrum and similar in nature. Both these modes of knowing include embodied knowledge, but the emphasis of Know-How is on experiential learning through practice; whereas Know-What denotes instinctive knowledge of the meaning and impact of concepts and what procedures work.

I have adapted Nelson's model of converging these three modes of knowing to conceptualise the SDD, as illustrated in Fig. 7 below:
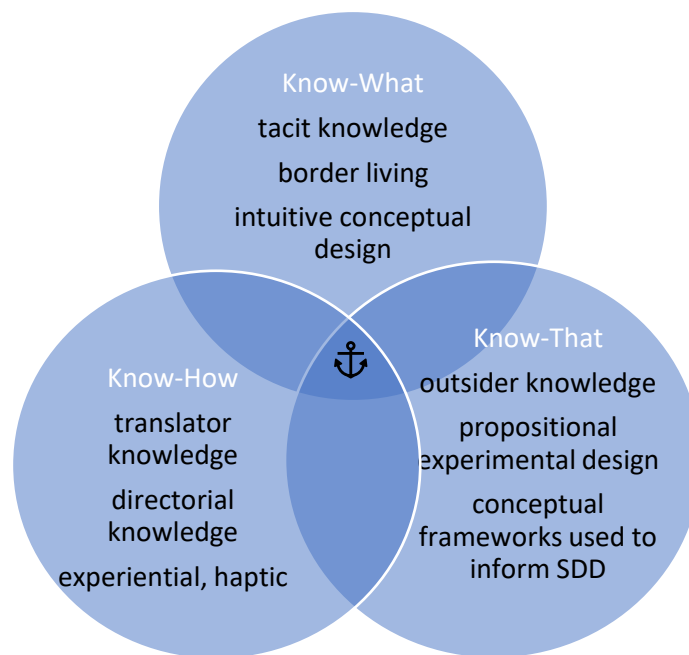
Fig. 7 – Multi-mode epistemological model for the SDD (represented by the anchor). Adapted from Robin Nelson (2013, p37).

Following this adapted model, I drew on my Know-What, my tacit and intuitive knowledge acquired from growing up in the Santana do Livramento-Rivera border and migrating to the UK to create the Pretend SDD design. According to Nelson (2013), what differentiates this mode of knowing from Know-How is critical reflection, but considering that I would be tapping on my personal lived experience, I turned to Autoethnography in order to find the most effective way of extracting information from my Know-What. American anthropologist George E. Marcus observed intersections between ethnographic work in art and anthropology, focusing on research that is experimental in nature, aiming at repurposing established theories and practices:

> This overlap of an artistic and scientific aesthetic of practice around the notion of experiment has been one of the more promising background conceptual environments for carrying out the refunctioning of ethnography at the intersection of art and anthropology [...]

> (2008, p42)

Marcus goes on to criticise artists Neil Cummings and Marisya Lewandowska for '[letting] theory do the work, [imposing] insights rather than [developing] sustained collaborations with found counterparts' (2008, p42-3), which indicates that artistic research solely based on outsider knowledge and established conceptual frameworks (Know-That) can be unsatisfactory. Carolyn Ellis and Arthur Bochner state that the goal of Autoethnography is 'to encourage compassion and promote dialogue' (2000, p748) and define this methodology in simple terms as authors delving reflexively into their own experiences within their culture, constantly moving between the personal and the cultural to the point where the boundaries between the two become blurred. Amongst the numerous methods of conducting autoethnographic research, Ellis identifies Native Ethnographies, usually conducted by

> researchers from the Third and Fourth worlds who share a history of colonialism or economic subordination, including subjugation by ethnographers who have made them subjects of their work. Now as bicultural insiders/outsiders, native ethnographers construct their own cultural stories […], raise serious questions about the interpretations of others who write about them, and use their dual positionality to problematise the distinction between observer and observed, insider and outsider […]

(Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p741)

Thus, a reflexive native ethnography has already been present from the outset of this thesis, in the personal narrative employed to introduce this document. I use native ethnography as a mode of reflection again to offer the insider perspective that informs the design of the Pretend SDD in Chapter Three. I therefore call this methodology PaR 'inflected' with Autoethnography, in the sense that the latter works as a modifier to the former, shaping it and arranging the order in which things happen in the development of the SDD, in a way that is comparable to what *inflection* means as a morphosyntactic feature in the field of Linguistics (Marzi et al, 2020). Autoethnography, therefore, only accounts for one third of the practices employed in the development of the SDD, alongside reflexive praxis and academic research. Christopher Balme's (1999) concept of Cultural Texts and the strategies he identifies for the staging of text-based syncretic theatre constitutes the Know-That in Nelson's model, followed by a discussion on how these conceptual frameworks feed into the Pretend SDD design. Finally, I turn to the empirical and technical knowledge I have developed through my theatre director and translator practices to extract the Know-How that can be converged with the

other two modes of knowing. I call this procedure the Ex-Genesis of the SDD, which is fully articulated in Chapter Three.

Sextant readings

The Syncretic Theatre Laboratory (STL) that served the application of the SDD process through practical exercises spanned three staggered weeks of workshops attended by three actors from different cultural backgrounds (Hungarian, French, and British-Zanzibari) selected through a casting call and audition process, the documentation of which can be found in the Appendix: Casting section in Volume II. A total of thirteen observers attended the workshops at specific days and times and contributed to unstructured group conversations with myself and the actors as part of the doing-thinking that configures Practice-as-Research. Due to administrative constraints regarding building access, observers were staff and students at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS), with the exception of three external observers who attended a Work Demonstration at the end of the STL. The Work Demonstration was held in the premises managed by Glasgow Theatre Arts Collective (GTAC) and therefore, did not have the same access restrictions as RCS buildings. An internal email was sent around the RCS inviting observers to attend the workshops at specific dates and times. Given the small size of the group of performers, only two observers were allocated per slot so as not to overwhelm the actors, and slots were distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Eight students requested slots, six of whom came from the School of Music, and two from the School of Drama. An observer slot in the workshops was also granted to one of the external colleagues who helped me with the casting process. An unspecified number of observer spots was offered to RCS staff and students for the Work Demonstration, but only one undergraduate student requested a place. Additionally, twenty-three observers external to the RCS received a personal invitation to the Work Demonstration, based on their research interests and artistic practice. Twelve of these were research fellows and lecturers at the University of Glasgow, Heriot-Watt University, Queen Margaret University, and the University of Edinburgh, working in Intercultural Studies, interdisciplinary practice, or devised theatre.

Four were doctoral students from the University of Glasgow, the University of Edinburgh, Heriot-Watt University and Abertay University, researching dramaturgical practices, intercultural theatre, bilingual theatre and collaborative theatre, respectively. The remaining seven invited observers were representatives of the theatre industry in Scotland, whose work focuses on collaborative creation, dramaturgy, mixed media and intercultural theatre. Only three of these external parties accepted the invitation and attended the Work Demonstration. All auditioning actors, participating actors and observers agreed in writing for their image, voice and real names to be used in the thesis and the website for the purposes of disseminating the research.

Deirdre Heddon & Jane Milling's (2006) historical account of devised theatre in the UK, the USA and Australia notes the lineage of Theatre Laboratory as a practice established by Constantin Stanislavski, relayed to Jerzy Grotowski through to Eugenio Barba and adopted by contemporary devising companies in the aforementioned countries. Moreover, the Theatre Laboratory is regarded as the 'contemporary crucible of creativity' (Pitches et al, 2011, p138), which offers a wide range of possibilities in terms of PaR, but which also poses the pitfall of being hard to distinguish from artistic practice-as-usual. To mitigate this effect and present robust research, the data gathered through the Syncretic Theatre Lab (STL) undergoes a journey of critical reflection from within, during the STL, in collaboration with the actors and observers, and critical reflection from outwith, through a *post facto* narrative analysis of the documentation. The STL was designed to reflect the first phase of a devising project, in which material is generated in the form of physical scores and short scenes that can then be expanded and refined through continuous work.

Devising theatre does not follow any fixed patterns, thus being a practice that is particular to each devising artist or company. Therefore, I followed what would be a typical devising journey in my own practice to structure the STL and used directorial notes and unstructured group conversations as data-gathering methods to obtain immediate insights from the practice, and reflexive actor journals to allow time for thinking between workshop weeks. In his PhD research on how to minimise actors'

divided consciousness and pre-agreed-upon performance structures, theatre director Marc Silberschatz (2013) employed what he called 'analysis-through-practice' as a method to evaluate the design of a rehearsal process in practice, adapted from Donald Schön's (2003) action research model. Though I deliberately avoided Schön's model in designing this research due to my concern with power dynamics between researcher and collaborators as explained in the Introduction, the data gathering methods applied here are not too dissimilar from those used by Silberschatz and therefore not unprecedented. In Silberschatz' method, analysis-through-practice is substantiated by footage, photographs, his own reflective journals and interviews and surveys with his actors, followed by a chapter containing *post facto* reflection and quantitative data analysis. I prefer Robin Nelson's (2013) notion of 'doing-thinking', which is similarly substantiated by footage, images, and my directorial notes from the workshops. The differences lie in the unstructured group conversations involving the participating actors and observers, which in my chosen method represent reflection within the practice, and fully conceptualising of the SDD process through a narrative analysis of the documentation, seeking to elucidate the operations employed by the actors to extract information and generate material from their Cultural Texts through the Realised SDD process.

Week 1 and 2 workshops were filmed with two static digital cameras, positioned in opposite corners of the devising room each day. Due to week 3 taking place outside of the RCS, a single static camcorder was used to record workshops and the Work Demonstration, and an audio recording device was used to record the workshop on Food as Cultural Text. The footage and audio recordings are presented unedited in Volume II, but clips were cut to manageable file sizes, isolating specific exercises or conversations and cutting out breaks during which the cameras were left on. Some clips from week 1 and 2 present cuts between the two cameras for greater clarity of sound or image. All workshop photographs were taken by me with my Samsung mobile phone, and illustrations or handwritten notes produced by the actors in the STL were digitised through a domestic printer-scanner. Actors' journals were hosted in private, password-protected Penzu pages and are therefore not retrievable by users without a Penzu account, so screenshots of the journal entries are provided under the

Appendix: Actors' Journals section in Volume II. Directorial notes were given during the workshops, either as observations of the exercises or during the unstructured conversations and are thus also recorded on video and audio.

The unstructured conversations happened in the devising room and were of two types:

> *** Launchings –** conversations held at the start of a day, before beginning a new set of exercises or introducing a Cultural Text.

> *** Landings –** conversations held at the end of a day or after realising a set of exercises.

The purpose of the Launchings was to gauge expectations and exchange relevant information necessary for the understanding and execution of the exercises. Landings served to unpack the work done, raise questions and offer feedback. This method of gathering data is based on postmodern interviewing, which seeks 'to "locate" meaning rather than to "discover" it, [offers] "readings" not "observations", "interpretations" not "findings"' (Rosenau, 1992, p8). This observation of Pauline Rosenau's regarding locating, reading, and interpreting meanings resonates with the experimental-exploratory character of this inquiry, in that a tentative devising process is propositioned and then tried out in practice, not to be tested for its efficiency, but to be understood through practice. Once again thinking of De Certeau's (1984) 'navigators', it was imperative that the participants and observers were activated as 'productive sources of knowledge' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003), able to articulate their itineraries for the purposes of understanding how the SDD operates. Therefore, control was relinquished by inviting the actors and observers to contribute their reflections in the context of unstructured group conversations held extra-hierarchically, meaning they were not necessarily steered or facilitated by me as director-researcher. Focusing on insights generated from unstructured conversations could be construed as biased, but to mitigate that risk, active interviewing proponents Jaber Gubrium and James Holstein (2003) reckon that no matter how structured and formalised interviewing methods may be, they always depend on the interaction between human beings, thus always being subject to different interpretations and cannot ever be completely pure or unbiased. The goal of the unstructured conversations is not to ascertain facts but to construct meaning

collaboratively, understanding and refining the SDD process so it can be propositioned as a theatremaking tool. These conversations, together with the Actors' Journals, represent the first layer of critical reflection applied to the SDD, from within the practice.

As indicated earlier in this section, however, in order to strengthen the research, a second layer of critical reflection, one step removed from the practice, was applied after the conclusion of the STL. Throughout a period of one year, the documentation was organised into the video and audio clips, transcriptions of conversations, journal screenshots, photographs and digitised images presented in Volumes I and II so a narrative analysis could be employed. This method of analysis focuses on 'what' is being said and done, 'reports of events and experiences' (Kohler-Riessman, 2008), not relying on conventional coding or systematic grouping of any sort, but on the 'ways [the respondents] construct aspects of reality in collaboration with the interviewer' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003, p79). Returning once again to De Certeau's (1984) and Massey's (2005) suggestions that itineraries, timelines and stories must be considered when constructing knowledge, narrative analysis presented itself as an apt method to conduct the reflection from outwith the practice and fully conceptualise the SDD, as it provides 'temporality and plot' (Floersch et al., 2010, p408) and accounts for human experiences. Like devising and dramaturgy, narrative analysis does not follow fixed procedures (Kohler-Riessman, 2008), but one important feature of this method that seems to be agreed upon is its focus on 'sequencing of storied experiences' (Floersch et al., 2010, p411). Thus, the analysis was realised by looking at the content of the documentation in relation to the practical exercises pertaining to each stage of the SDD process chronologically, to construct the story of the SDD. This reading located the particular operations of the SDD, which will be explained in detail in Chapter Four.

The level of efficacy of the SDD is not a concern of the inquiry, but *how* it works in conversation with the theories and practices pertaining to the mainstays of Countercolonialism, Intercultural Theatre and Dramaturgy/Devising established in Chapter One. For this reason, the SDD was then evaluated contrapuntally in Chapter Five. I have based the contrapuntal evaluation of the SDD on Edward W.

Said (1994)'s contrapuntal analysis, in turn inspired by the musical concept of counterpoint. Though recognisably a 'somewhat cryptic' (Toch, 1977, p133) term in musicology, definitions of counterpoint tend to identify it as variations of two or more dissonant musical lines playing against one another to create a third, consonant, melody. Musicologist Ernst Toch explains that etymologically, the term means 'note against note' (1977, p133) and the exact origins of its use have been lost to time. Toch, however, shifts the focus of the etymological interpretation from the 'point' or 'note' part to the 'counter', which 'makes counterpoint simply the *point of contrast* […] "healthy opposition" […] a means not of obscurantism but of clarification, not of obstruction but of propulsion' (Toch, 1977, p134). Knud Jeppesen echoes that interpretation, offering that 'in counterpoint and in harmony we strive for the same ideals and work through the same materials, but the approaches are from opposite directions' (1992, p4). When discussing the mainstay of Countercolonialism in Chapter One, I proposed that the countercolonial turn invites dialogue and responding to colonialism instead of an outright rejection of colonial values and legacy. Therefore, in view of the interpretations of counterpoint offered by Toch and Jeppesen as a point of contrast, clarification, propulsion and healthy opposition of different approaches towards a common goal, contrapuntal evaluation proved to be an appropriate framework to assess the findings of this inquiry. Devised theatre inhabits an interstitial space between theatre and performance, and the values underpinning this inquiry are reflected in the fact that performance is often seen as a mode of challenging homogeneity and hegemony, and unlike theatre, not 'weighed down by centuries of colonial evangelical or normalising activity' (Taylor, 2002, p49). Said explains that through contrapuntal analysis, 'the imperialist model is disassembled, its incorporative, universalising and totalising codes rendered ineffective and inapplicable, a particular type of research and knowledge begins to build up' (1994, p64). Thus, the contrapuntal evaluation complements the doing-thinking and narrative analysis to fully articulate the significance and value of this study in a broader sense.

✦ Chapter Three – THE HULL
(4,506 words)

As explained in the previous chapter, this thesis, Volume I, provides context and detailed critical reflection on the SDD and will be more directly relevant to those with a scholarly interest in the topic. The website, Volume II, contains material that illustrates the application of the process, contiguous documentation (Auditions, Appendixes, Transcripts, Conference Papers, and a Research Blog) that may not be fully present in the thesis but helped delineate the boundaries of the inquiry, and further information about me, the project and the cast, and will be more directly relevant to devising practitioners interested in trying the process for themselves when working on collaboratively created intercultural theatre. Additionally, like De Certeau's (1984) itineraries, Volume II affords readers-users the possibility to construct their own vectoral movements as it can be read either in a non-linear or linear way, unlike the written document of Volume I. Even though this is the case, specific directions for navigating Volume II as and when referenced in the thesis are provided in Chapter Four, which focuses on the realisation of the SDD through its practical application. The combination of methods that yielded the Pretend SDD also follows a somewhat linear pattern and therefore is presented on the homogenous plane of the thesis. The Pretend SDD is conceptualised by means of a procedure I call Ex-Genesis, to which I dedicate the present chapter.

The Deck: Ex-Genesis of the SDD, or In the Beginning, There Was Knowledge

The development of the SDD resulted from the convergence of three modes of knowing (Nelson, 2013): academic, empirical, and tacit. Now I shall unpack how each of these has contributed towards the Pretend SDD before I proceed to analysing its realisation through practice in the STL. I coin the term Ex-Genesis for this procedure that is similar to an exegesis in that it draws out the threads that explain how the SDD was brought forth, but instead of interpreting a text, the procedure offers an interpretation of experiences. The first part of the Ex-Genesis is the result of my reflexive native ethnographic approach and focuses on making explicit the tacit knowledge I have acquired from

growing up in a syncretic culture embedded in colonial legacy, and my experience as a migrant, unpacking how these embodiments have yielded the three stages of the SDD. The second part of the Ex-Genesis draws on my academic knowledge to explain how I have elicited from my reading the Cultural Texts used as stimuli for the devising process. Thirdly, the final part of the Ex-Genesis describes how I used the empirical knowledge stemming from my work as a professional translator and my directorial practice to design the STL.

Know-What: the border

I am a native of the bordering towns of Santana do Livramento (Brazil) and Rivera (Uruguay), located in the southern part of South America as illustrated in Fig. 9 below. The two towns merge together, joined as twin cities. There is no bridge, no river, or border control. They come together as one single town belonging to two different countries at once. Upon crossing the street, the currency changes, the language changes, the law changes, but in spite of all those differences, there are no financial or national tensions that debilitate people's everyday lives. Most families are binational and everybody is bilingual. It is not uncommon to hear a Brazilian person chatting in their native Portuguese to a Uruguayan friend responding in their native Spanish – they can understand each other without needing to shed their own linguistic identity for another. Fábio Régio Bento observes that individuals born and bred in this place,

> instead of a typical national ethos originating in the centre of a state, manifest a different ethos, a binational, borderly ethos of integration. This is a unique quasi-state parting from two other states, Brazil and Uruguay, with a larger number of inhabitants than the world's smallest city-state: the Vatican
>
> (Régio Bento, 2012, p23, my translation).[vii]

I am one of those individuals and as such, I carry within me this open space, this porous border, and this ethos of integration that Régio Bento describes, and which has aided me in my search for a process for devising syncretic theatre.

The main landmark along the borderline is Parque Internacional, the only public square in the world that officially belongs to and is managed by two countries simultaneously (Moreira, 2012). Shortly

after Christopher Columbus first happened upon the Americas, Spain and Portugal signed the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 to settle the dispute between the two colonising powers over the land. The Treaty, sanctioned by Pope Julius II in 1506, drew an imaginary line 1,185 miles west of Cape Verde slicing latitudinally through the Southern American continent (Fig. 8), giving Spain the right to explore all land west of the line, leaving the northeastern coast of what is now known as South America to Portugal. Throughout the next four centuries, this line was crossed over and over again, reshaped and eventually abandoned as a result of conflict and greed. Brazilian sociologist-turned-diplomat Fernando Cacciatore de Garcia (2010), in his book about the southern Brazilian borders, claims that the borderline between Santana do Livramento and Rivera, upon which sits Parque Internacional, is part of the colonial legacy of the Treaty of Tordesillas.

Fig. 8 – The Tordesillas Treaty. Encyclopaedia Britannica (2019). (Source: Treaty of Tordesillas accessed on 03/04/2020)

Fig. 9 – Map of present-day South America with dark blue star indicating the location of Santana do Livramento and Rivera (star added). Author unknown and n.d.. (Source: Geology.com, accessed 03/04/2020)

Fig. 10 – Aerial view of Parque Internacional. Santana do Livramento (Brazil) is east of the central line and Rivera (Uruguay) is west, compass rose added for orientation. Author unknown and n.d.. (Source: Viagens e Caminhos, accessed 03/04/2020)

The park was built in three phases and each of the three sections has a main feature and is connected to the next by a set of steps. The first section, featuring the obelisk and two flags, can be seen on the bottom of Fig. 10 and was the first part of Parque Internacional to open to the public in 1943. This is significant because, as mentioned above, the park is historically and geographically located in a colonial lineage descending from the Treaty of Tordesillas; however, its opening in 1943 as a public landmark to unite two countries in South America while European countries were tearing each other apart in the throes of World War II can be interpreted as a countercolonial effort, which gave the location its epithet, *Fronteira da Paz* (Peaceful Border). It is as if the Brazilian and Uruguayan natives of the time were looking at their former European overlords and asking, *who is uncivilised now?* Having grown up only two blocks away from this park, it is no wonder that I found a connection with Luz de la Rosa and Roshni Rustomji's (2013) countercolonial approach and fantasies of cannibalising the coloniser. Drawing on their upbringing in India and Mexico respectively, Rustomji & De La Rosa write about their personal experiences of coloniser and colonised discourses, one of which concerns cannibalism as a form of playing with the concept of assimilation 'without the sanction of the dominant group [leading to] the nourishment of the colonised peoples' (2012, pp35-36), which echoes Eugenio Barba's claim that 'the opposite of a colonised or seduced culture is not a culture which isolates itself but a culture which knows how to cook in its own way and to eat what it takes from or what arrives from the outside' (1995, p15). Thus, making the park a place of encounter built on a boundary historically meant as a place of division was another way of subverting the colonial legacy, akin to the way Brazilian modernist artists responded to the dominance of European art forms with the *Manifesto Antropofágico*, which states that 'only Anthropophagy will unite us' (Andrade, 1928, no page, my translation).[viii] Therefore, it was my experience of Parque Internacional that unlocked:

a) My understanding of <u>countercolonialism</u>; and

b) The realisation that elements of <u>cannibalism</u> and <u>counterpoint-as-encounter</u> would have to be present in the SDD.

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The space occupied by Parque Internacional also comprises the central, touristic and commercial area and, therefore, is the busiest spot of the two towns. The popular market, or as we natives call it, the *camelódromo*, is located in the vicinity of the park and this is where the clearest distinction can be observed between the twin towns: Rivera, due to the income generated by its duty-free shops, can invest a lot more in improving its appearance for tourists, whereas Santana do Livramento does not have access to similar resources. Although the GDP per capita in Santana do Livramento was higher than in Rivera in 2017 – approximately USD 5,900 vs USD 1,000 – in 2019 Uruguay ranked 22 positions ahead of Brazil in the United Nations' Human Development Index (IBGE, 2017; Intendencia Departamental de Rivera, 2017; UNDP Human Development Reports, 2019a and 2019b). Furthermore, Rivera is a department capital and connected to Montevideo, capital city of Uruguay, by one single 300-mile motorway, whereas Santana do Livramento is 1,460 miles away from Brasilia, federal capital of Brazil. The combination of these factors means the Santana do Livramento council has more difficulty in obtaining government support and attracting investment. Returning to the *camelódromo*, for locals, it is nothing other than the place where we go to purchase watch batteries, contraband, or all sorts of counterfeit goods and replica designer brands. For an external observer, however, this place represents the border between the organic (Brazilian stalls) and the artificial (Uruguayan shops), chaos on one side and organisation on the other, the legally imported goods in the duty-free shops and the smuggling in the *camelódromo* (*Fronteiras Explorers Documentary*, 2014). This is the transitional space between the two countries: no man's land. This is where Portuguese, Spanish and the fusion of both, *Portunhol*, are all spoken and the Brazilian Real, the Uruguayan Peso, US Dollars, and Barter are the currencies that circulate. The *camelódromo* is the place that unlocked two further realisations for the design of the SDD:

c) That there needed to be an element of <u>appreciating</u> individual characteristics wherein the Cultural Texts lie; and

d) That the liminal space where the <u>border-crossing</u> happens had to be recreated in the devising room to enable syncretism.

A border can mean many things: social reality (Durkheim, 2007), passing place, or place of transition (Spivak, 2000), location of adventure and violence (Turner, 1982), something which breaks with centric structures (Derrida, 2001), and world of possibilities and of construction (Chiappini et al, 2004). The border that had been the centre of my life shifted to something situated in the margins in my experience as a Southern American migrant in the United Kingdom, which also displaced my perception of borders as places of encounter to borders as places of impediment. My physical presence in this former colonial power's territory is contingent on my abiding by a set of strict rules (UKVI, 2020). This means that no matter how much effort I put into developing my knowledge of, and practice within, British theatre, and how fluent in the local language and culture I become, I will inevitably and forever be relegated to a lower class of citizenship for as long as I remain here. Even if I were eventually granted British Citizenship after passing a test, I could never deny my heritage as my name, the colour of my skin, my thick hair, full eyebrows, my evidently Latina features and body shape would always denounce me. I will always be marginal in this context. Or at least, this is how my 14 years' experience of the UK immigration system and border control has shaped my perception (see Domingues D'Avila, 2014). Therefore, my strategy for surviving and thriving in my sector has become not a matter of domesticating the exotic, but rather, of exoticising the domestic (Bourdieu, 1988), translating the organic syncretic processes and concepts that were familiar as components of my everyday life in my birthplace into a syncretic dramaturgical process to be explored in my devised performance practice in a foreign land. Thus, by delving into my native experience of my Brazilian-Uruguayan border and my migrant position at the site of former colonising power, I nudge the margin towards the centre, countercolonising the stage.

Know-That: Cultural Texts and syncretic dramaturgies

This study builds on Christopher Balme's seminal publication *Decolonising the Stage*, in which he identifies syncretism as a prominent feature that 'has become the hallmark of postcolonial theatre since the 1960s' (1999, pvii). Balme arranges his analysis of postcolonial theatrical texts under the

categories of Ritual, Language, Orality, Body, Dance, and Space and Spectators, which he designates as recurring elements of theatrical sign systems across cultures. Under each category, Balme indicates at least three strategies employed by the dramatists whose work he analyses to produce syncretic plays. These are summarised in the table shown in Fig. 11 below.

Thoroughly detailed as Balme's analysis may be, it presents two challenges: firstly, it is impractical to attempt to apply all these strategies in a single process, given that some of them are antithetical, such as the Space and Spectators strategies, which would likely result in an incoherent mess. Secondly, Balme's understanding of dramaturgy is equivalent to playwriting and as I indicated in Chapter One, this is only one of the possible meanings of this somewhat fragmented term. Balme's analysis is offered from the position of observer of written plays put on stage, the same position of De Certeau's (1984) map-reader. In fact, De Certeau finds a parallel with theatre and describes the map as 'a totalising stage on which elements of diverse origin are brought together to form the tableau of a "state" of geographical knowledge, [pushing] away […] into the wings, the operations of which it is the result' (1984, p121). The operations that De Certeau alludes to, in the context of the SDD, represent dramaturgy understood in this case as a theatremaking method, critical lens and context management tool. Therefore, I designed a process that would be more streamlined, combining fewer strategies for its own internal cohesion, and focus on labour instead of product, seeking to understand the operations leading to the collective creation of a theatrical event: a syncretic dramaturgy for devising.

Category	Strategies	Examples
Ritual	adopted and adapted into theatrical frame, thus resulting in a process of turning the theatrical event into a ritual	Maori marae-theatre
	incorporated into the traditional Western dramatic format	Wole Soyinka (Nigeria)
	present as theatrical and dramatic device, such as the use of possession	Derek Walcott (St. Lucia)
Language	undergoes a process of translation	Tomson Highway (Cree)
	undergoes a process of relexification, or a combination of Europhone vocabulary with indigenous structures and rhythms	J.P. Clark (Nigeria)
	manifests itself in multilingualism with many languages co-existing on stage	Ola Rotimi (Nigeria)
Orality	oral performances such as storytelling	Jack Davis (Australian Aboriginal)
	song and poetry	South African Township Theatre
	paralinguistic elements, such as call-and-response	Mbongeni Ngema (Xhosa)
Body	Effacement	Mbongeni Ngmea (Xhosa)
	Resemanticisation	Jack Davis (Australian Aboriginal)
	Mythologization	Rore Hapipi (Maori)
Dance	creating a dance-drama	Asif Currimbhoy (India)
	converging dancing and acting	Derek Walcott (St Lucia)
	used as a performative counter-discourse	Ngugi wa Thiong'o (Kenya)
	combined with mime, gesture, and sign language	South African Township Theatre
Spaces and spectators	creating different physical performance conditions	Credo Mutwa (Zulu)
	dramaturgically interfering with the Western stage	Girish Karnad (India)

*Fig. 11 – **Summary of strategies for producing syncretic theatrical texts identified by Christopher Balme (1999).***

I will return to Balme's strategies in the Know-How section below, but before that, in light of

realisation (c) as described under the Know-What section above regarding appreciation for Cultural

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Texts, I shall discuss Balme's categorisation of elements of the *mise-en-scène* as Cultural Texts. Heddon & Milling (2005), in their comprehensive historical account of devising performance, recognise the pitfalls of writing about devising processes and reject pinpointing specific models because of their inherent fluidity. That said, although each artist and company will follow distinct processes and models and leap into the unknown when devising, the need for starting points, impulses or stimuli to kick off the process is widely acknowledged by practitioners and academics (Bradley, 2017; Bruno & Dixon, 2015; Gómez-Peña & Sifuentes, 2011; Graham & Hogget, 2014; Mermikides & Smart, 2010; Oddey, 1994; Thorpe & Gore, 2019; Swale, 2012). Therefore, in order to try out the application of the SDD in the lab, the actors' own Cultural Texts were reframed from theatrical signs (product) into stimuli for devising (labour) as Body, Language, Object, Text, and Food. Some of these have been adapted from Balme's elements of the *mise-en-scène* categorised above as umbrella themes. Balme describes specific Cultural Texts within each category utilised in the examples listed in Fig. 11, but I have articulated the umbrella categories as Cultural Texts themselves due to the direction of the inquiry: whereas Balme analyses already-produced material, I was working with yet-to-be-produced material and therefore could not pinpoint the specific Cultural Texts that each actor was going to use. From Balme's categories, I have kept Body, Language, and Orality, which I have re-named Text. Though it still encompasses elements of oral performance (in the case of the STL, storytelling and poetry) as used in Balme's work, I have changed the term purely for pragmatic reasons to avoid confusion with Object when labelling the video clips in Volume II. The main reason I left Ritual and Dance out in this instance was to prevent actors from Othering themselves by reaching for cultural stereotypes with which they felt no strong connection, which I deemed a risk in such a short period of work. I replaced these two Cultural Texts with Food and Object instead. Objects tangentially relate to Balme's sub-category of the Visual Body and category of Dance as they carry theatrical potential in terms of visual meanings and kinaesthetic possibilities in relation to the actors' bodies. Objects in the form of stage properties are also recognised as an element of the theatrical sign system by established theatre semioticians (Aston & Savona, 1991; Pavis, 2003; Elam, 2002). From an anthropological perspective,

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objects configure the study of Material Culture, defined as 'how apparently inanimate things within the environment act on people, and are acted upon by people, for the purpose of carrying out social functions, regulating social relations and giving symbolic meaning to human activity' (Woodward, 2007, p3), which in turn aids a broader understanding of culture. Therefore, it is plausible to categorise Objects as Cultural Texts in this context. Food emerged from the unstructured conversations with the actors in the first week of the STL. There is no specific example of food used as a Cultural Text or an approximate category in Balme's study, only mentions of ritualistic alcohol consumption under the Ritual and Space and Spectators categories. Claude Lévi-Strauss, however, gives food the same importance as language as an essential component of culture, when he observes: 'if there is no society without a language, nor is there any which does not cook in some manner at least some of its food' (Lévi-Strauss, 2013, p40). As such, it is also plausible to categorise Food as a Cultural Text for the STL. I have also excluded Balme's category of Space and Spectators on a pragmatic basis, meaning the absence of a public performance at the end of the STL and the inquiry's focus on process instead of product. So although observers were invited into the room during the process and for a final Work Demonstration, they were not considered Cultural Texts within the scope of this research. Finally, a note on Music as a Cultural Text: while Balme does not single out music as a separate category in his study, it is mentioned under the Ritual, Orality, and Dance categories, particularly examples of drumming in various African theatres. Due mainly to time constraints, music was not explored as a Cultural Text in the STL. As an artistic decision, the actors incorporated songs to the Work Demonstration, but these were not subjected to the full SDD process and therefore should not be considered part of the research data. Music was also played in the background for some of the exercises. The tracks used were carefully curated to represent a range of different styles, cultures and languages, so as to maintain coherence with the ethos of the research, but they should not be considered part of the research methods or data either. The diagram below (Fig. 12) illustrates how Balme's categories were reframed into Cultural Texts used as stimuli for the STL.

Balme's Category > STL Cultural Text

Body	Body
Language	Language
Orality	Text
Ritual	Food
Dance	Object
Space and Spectators	N/A
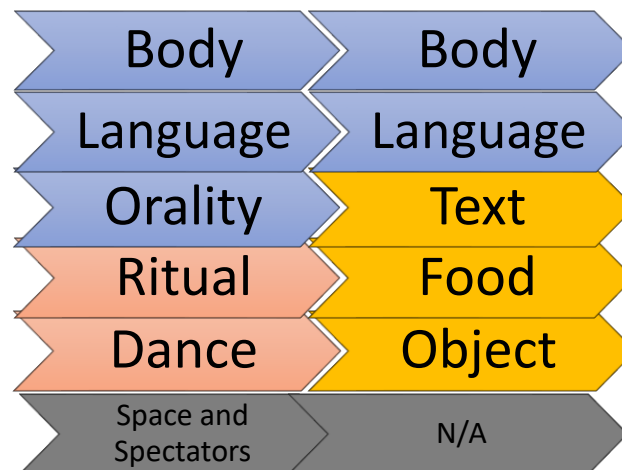
Fig. 12 – Balme's categories re-articulated as Cultural Texts for the STL. Categories in blue remained the same, categories in pink and orange were altered and categories in grey were not considered in this study.
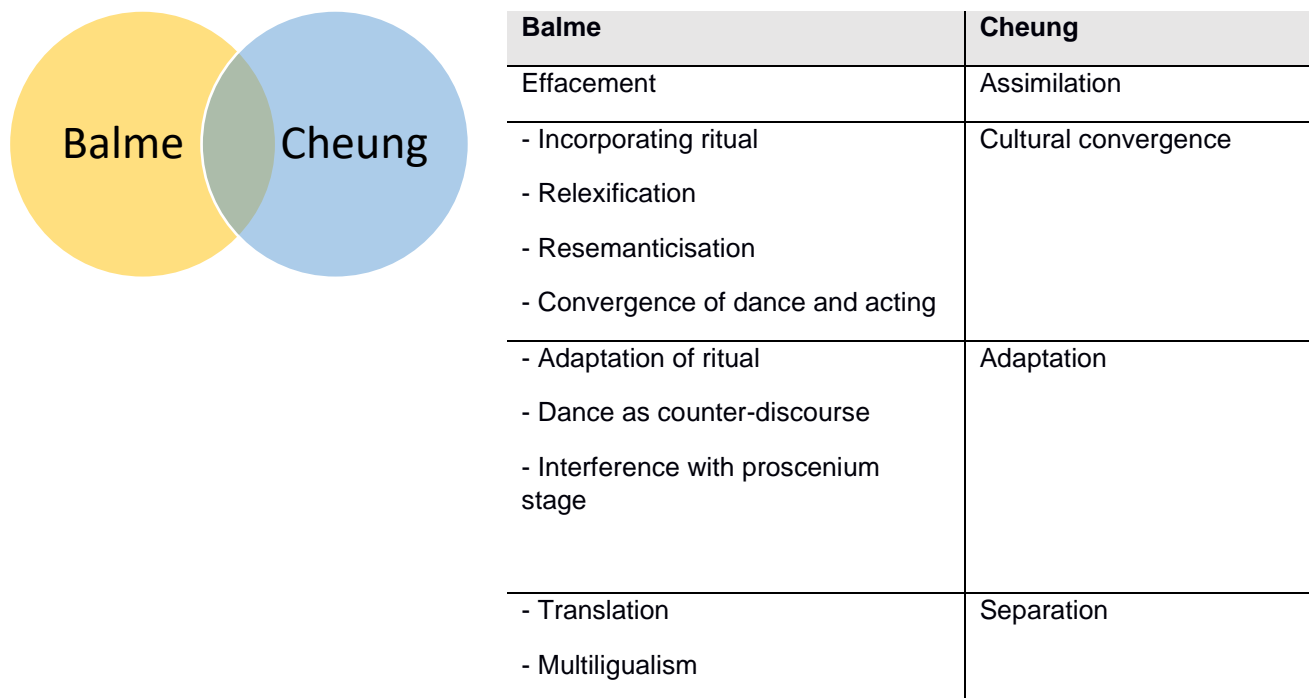
So far, I have explained how my tacit knowledge as a migrant and border citizen unlocked realisations that led me to conceptualise the three stages in the SDD process (Appreciation, Border-Crossing, and Cannibalism), and how my review of studies in devised theatre, theatrical syncretism, semiotics and anthropology led to the choice of Cultural Texts as stimuli for the STL. In the next section, I draw on my empirical knowledge as a professional translator and theatre director to demonstrate how the three stages of the SDD process are applied using these five Cultural Texts (Body, Language, Text, Object and Food) as starting points for devising.

Know-How: the SDD ready for practice

Having established that dramaturgy is understood as a devising tool and critical lens in the context of this inquiry that helps build intercultural communication, I now pull a thread from my other professional practice: that of a translator. For nearly a decade, I have worked as a translator between English, Portuguese and Spanish to supplement my income, and as such, have had to learn to negotiate context across cultures and strive for internal cohesion in each job, which is why I see parallels between the practices of translation and dramaturgy. Martha P. Y. Cheung's work on intercultural translation identifies four types of interaction that bear resemblance to Balme's strategies but are more synthesised under the labels of Assimilation, Cultural Convergence,

Adaptation, and Separation. Assimilation, according to Cheung, is the type of work that concerns itself with the erasure of difference and alignment with the host culture. This is similar to the strategy of effacement of Cultural Texts related to the Body as identified by Balme. Cheung explains that Cultural Convergence is a productive type of interaction, which results in 'enhanced cross-cultural understanding and the enrichment of (the language of) one culture by another' (2014, p181). This is akin to the strategies of incorporating ritual into a Western dramatic framework, relexification of language (combining vocabulary, structures and rhythms of different languages), resemanticisation of the body (detailed explanation of body imagery to an audience) and convergence of dance and acting in Balme. Adaptation, in Cheung's work, is a type of interaction that happens when power dynamics are unequal and changes to suit or subvert this relationship are employed. In Balme's strategies, similar interactions can be found in the adaptation of ritual to transform the theatrical event, the use of dance as a performative counter-discourse, and the interference with the proscenium stage to change it into a syncretic space. Finally, Cheung identifies Separation as an interaction that ultimately rejects common ground between cultures and renders works of translation that impose one culture over another, resulting in exoticising. Precisely because of this outcome, this is the one interaction that does not find a direct parallel in Balme. That said, Balme identifies translation and the co-existence of multiples languages on stage as linguistic strategies that keep Cultural Texts somewhat separated, so there is still a connection between the two studies in this respect, as illustrated in Fig. 13:

Balme	Cheung
Effacement	Assimilation
- Incorporating ritual - Relexification - Resemanticisation - Convergence of dance and acting	Cultural convergence
- Adaptation of ritual - Dance as counter-discourse - Interference with proscenium stage	Adaptation
- Translation - Multiligualism	Separation

Fig. 13 – Comparison between Balme's strategies and Cheung's interactions.

Using these two studies as a basis, combined with the realisations that emerged upon reflecting on my embodied knowledge as explained at the outset of this Ex-Genesis, I distilled Balme's strategies and Cheung's interactions into the three stages that comprise the SDD process, which I have called Appreciation, Border-Crossing and Cannibalism. Deliberately arranged in alphabetical order for easy remembering, the stages are described as follows:

- **Appreciation**: Appreciation of Cultural Texts emerged from my reflexive native ethnography and the opportunity it afforded me to explain the idiosyncrasies of my place of birth. Converging this information (Know-What) with Balme's assertion (Know-That) that theatrical syncretism, as opposed to exoticism, is rooted in integral understanding of the semantics of Cultural Texts in their own context (Balme, 1999) has therefore yielded the concept for this stage of the SDD. Appreciation entails a guided self-exploration for actors to identify and understand their own Cultural Texts, an awareness which is crucial before the actors choose to offer their respective Cultural Texts in an exchange;

- **Border-Crossing**: This SDD stage resulted from converging the information yielded from my tacit knowledge and reflection upon the border systems I have experienced: the one in which I grew up and the one I have been subjected to as a migrant (Know-What) with reflection upon my embodied knowledge of dramaturgical and translation processes (Know-How) of negotiating context and intercultural communication. Border-Crossing is similar to Cheung's (2014) Cultural Convergence strategy and is the point of intersection where the Cultural Texts meet, are exposed to one another, interfere with and influence each other;

- **Cannibalism**: Cannibalism came from converging the three modes of knowing to understand how my native culture (Know-What) can contribute to countercolonial discourse (Know-That) and subvert or respond to established practices (Know-How). This stage bears resemblance to Cheung's (2014) Adaptation and Assimilation. Syncretising happens at the Cannibalism stage, when the actors are invited to incorporate the foreign Cultural Texts into their own. Far from an arbitrary resemanticisation, this process ensures a 'consciously sought-after creative tension' (Balme, 1999, p5), which Balme holds up as a goal for Syncretic Theatre to achieve.

The SDD is a process and the three stages described above are sequential and accumulative, as will be seen in Chapter Four. There is a relationship of dependency between the stages, but after the process has been applied once, it can be folded back unto itself to generate more material or add layers of information to the material already generated. This will become clearer in the next chapter, when the process is described in greater detail with reference to its realisation through practice in the STL, illustrated by the materials in Volume II. This Pretend SDD model presented in this chapter is only imagined and incomplete. To fully understand how it works as a process and illuminate the labour efforts that result in the creation of Syncretic Theatre, the SDD needed to become Realised through practice, which is accounted for in the next chapter.

✦ Chapter Four – THE SAILS
(10,250 words)

Through the Ex-Genesis in Chapter Three, I explained the convergence of three modes of knowing that informed the design of a three-stage process that I called Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising (SDD), reflecting on my lived experience as a border citizen and migrant to extract the notions of Appreciation for one's own Cultural Texts, Border-Crossing as a way of exchanging Cultural Texts, and Cannibalism as a countercolonial approach for merging Cultural Texts. Now I present a narrative analysis of the SDD realised through practice by discussing each of the three stages with reference to documentation containing at least three of the following in each instance:

1. The exercises chosen for the application of each SDD stage using each Cultural Text, linked to Volume II as explained in the next section;

2. Director notes on the development and execution of the aforementioned exercises;

3. Unstructured group conversations with actors and observers preceding or following the aforementioned exercises;

4. Actors' reflective journal entries written before and during the STL.

As explained in Chapter Two, I conducted two types of group conversations with the participating actors and observers invited into the room: Launchings and Landings. Held in an unstructured, informal manner to invite questioning and contributions from the group, Launchings were conversations that happened at the start of each day, before a new Cultural Text was introduced or before a new stage was applied. Landings were also unstructured, informal conversations that happened after a cycle of exercises as a way of inviting reflection and feedback from the group. It should be noted that observers were only invited to specific days and times so they were not always in the room, hence the absence of observer comments on certain aspects of the practice, such as the exercises pertaining to the Body Cultural Text. Further reflection was sought in the usage of Actors' Journals, which the STL participants were invited to update either in writing or with video entries

throughout the duration of their period of engagement (February to April 2018), at no specified intervals. Keeping the interviews unstructured and journal contributions as open invitations rather than a requirement was a way of honouring the extra-hierarchical value of the research and encouraging contrapuntal discussion; however, it proved to be a pitfall regarding the journals, which did not yield much data due to the actors not taking the opportunity to write many entries. The Launchings and Landings, on the other hand, provided valuable reflective insights that served to construct the narrative analysis contained in this chapter. Conversations had within the exercises were largely focused on artistic decisions, not on the research question, and therefore were not considered a method of inquiry. Critical reflection within the practice was documented through footage, audio recordings and photographs, thus providing a first layer of analysis of the SDD during the STL. What follows is a narrative analysis of said documentation, read with the purpose of locating the specific ways in which each stage of the SDD works to extract information from the Cultural Texts and generate theatrical material, which I have called the *operations* pertaining to each stage. These operations effectively represent the conscious or unconscious procedures employed by the actors in the execution of the exercises within each stage of the SDD and are summarised at the end of each section and at the end of the chapter.

Halyard: hoisting the sails

This chapter discusses the SDD realised through practice by means of a written text with reference to a website, or online portfolio (Volume II). Both the thesis and the website together embody the contributions and outcomes of this practice-led inquiry. For this reason, this thesis is submitted in an electronic format with hyperlinks to the website and is incorporated to the website, from where it can be downloaded as a PDF document. Throughout this chapter, there are references to instances of the application of the SDD contained in Volume II, categorised under the Cultural Texts used as stimuli and applicable stage of the SDD process. The exercises referenced were documented through video and audio clips in the STL, which are organised within their respective categories in Volume II. Each

file has a title but also carries a label comprising two letters and a number for easy identification. The first letter (B, L, O, T or F) indicates which Cultural Text (Body, Language, Object, Text or Food) was used as stimulus for that exercise, the second letter (A, B or C) indicates at which stage of the SDD the exercise is applied (Appreciation, Border-Crossing or Cannibalism), and the number indicates the order in which the exercises were conducted when more than one exercise was used in a particular stage. The two tables below (Figs. 14 and 15) contain quick-reference lists and direct hyperlinks to the materials in Volume II. The first table lists the pages categorised by Cultural Text (found within the Cultural Texts section of the website), and the second table lists the pages categorised by SDD stage (found within the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising section on the website). The materials are the same in both categories, only differently grouped. The writing in Volume I follows the latter category due to it being the primary focus of the inquiry, but readers of Volume II may choose to see either grouping according to their main interest: the stimuli or the process. For easy navigation between Volume I and Volume II, the respective materials are also hyperlinked in every instance they are referenced in the written thesis.

FOCUS ON STIMULUS (CULTURAL TEXTS)				
Body	**Language**	**Object**	**Text**	**Food**
BA1. Feeling Self with Self	LA1. Rhythm of Language	OA1. Object appreciation	TA1. Poem reading	FA. Syncretic feast parts 1, 2, 3 and 4
BA2. Inside Out and Outside In	LB1. Rhythm barter	OB1. Object barter and score	TA2. Childhood tales storyboard	FB1. Syncretic food-inspired character
BB1. Cluster	LB2. Syncretic Sounds	OC1. Syncretic objects	TB1. Favourite words	FC1. Cooking a meal together
BB2. Marionettes	LC1. Syncretic rhythm and movement		TB2. Childhood tales interrupted	
BB3. Marionettes with balance	LC2. Four Gestures		TC1. Poem score	
BC1. Five Walks			TC2.Childhood tales cannibalised	
BC2 and BC3. Seven Syncretic Walks parts 1 and 2				

Fig. 14 – Quick reference table of STL exercises, categorised by Cultural Text

FOCUS ON THE PROCESS (SDD)		
Appreciation	**Border-Crossing**	**Cannibalism**
BA1. Feeling Self with Self	BB1. Cluster	BC1. Five Walks
		BC2 and BC3. Seven Syncretic Walks parts 1 and 2
BA2. Inside Out and Outside In	BB2. Marionettes	
LA1. Rhythm of Language	BB3. Marionettes with balance	LC1. Syncretic rhythm and movement
OA1. Object appreciation	LB1. Rhythm barter	LC2. Four Gestures
TA1. Poem reading	LB2. Syncretic Sounds	OC1. Syncretic objects
TA2. Childhood tales storyboard	OB1. Object barter and score	TC1. Poem score
FA. Syncretic feast parts 1, 2, 3 and 4	TB1. Favourite words	TC2.Childhood tales cannibalised
	TB2. Childhood tales interrupted	FC1. Cooking a meal together
	FB1. Syncretic food-inspired character	

Fig. 15 – Quick reference table of STL exercises, categorised by SDD Stage

Video and audio clips of the conversations are available under the Appendix: Conversations section in Volume II as well as PDF files containing their transcription. These are labelled LCH (Launching) or LDN (Landing), followed by the number of the exercise to which they are connected, as above. When the conversations are referenced, the citation carries a hyperlink to the respective video or audio clip and specific point in which the quoted insight happened.

Between the auditions and the Work Demonstration, the Syncretic Theatre Lab (STL) spanned a period of four months, held in Edinburgh and Glasgow between January and April 2018. The Work Demonstration was included in the plan for two reasons: to give the group a sense of direction, a common goal towards which to work, and as a means to structure and document the outcomes of the STL with future research in mind. Because the SDD pertains to the initial, generative phase of a devising project and because the inquiry did not aim to assess the product of the SDD process, this sharing was not considered a 'scratch performance' or a 'work-in-progress', but a Work Demonstration instead, showcasing the material generated through the SDD in the form of physical scores or short scenes. Fig. 16 below provides greater detail about the structure of the STL:

Stage	Length of time	Aims		Documentation
Workshop auditions (Jan 2018)	1 day	• Selecting a group composed of 3 actors from a varied cultural/linguistic background • Audition: individual interviews with the candidates and group workshop • Casting panel: 3 assessors, including researcher, main supervisor, and one other member of Fronteiras Theatre Lab • Looking for participants who: - Worked well as an ensemble - Demonstrated they could generate their own material - Were comfortable sharing parts of their own culture with others - Demonstrated a good understanding of physical work		Video, audition panel assessment forms
Week 1* (Feb 2018)	4 days	* Pre-lab reflection invited through journal. • Contextualising research and establishing conceptual frameworks • Extracting information from Body, Language, Object, and Text Cultural Texts (Appreciation and Border-Crossing) • Generating material from Body, Language, Object and Text Cultural Texts (Cannibalism) • Reflection within practice through unstructured group conversations with actors and observers		Video, actors' journals
Week 2 (Mar 2018)	4 days	* Between-weeks reflection invited through journal. • Revisiting material generated in Week 1 • Experimenting with non-linear process folding • Reflection on process through unstructured group conversations with actors and observers • Selection of material for Work Demonstration		Video, actors' journals
Week 3 (Apr 2018)	4 days	• Extracting information from Food Cultural Text (Appreciation and Border-Crossing) • Generating material from Food Cultural Text (Cannibalism) • Work Demonstration • Reflection on Work Demonstration through unstructured group conversations with actors and observers		Video, audio

Fig. 16 – Structure of the STL.

Finally, before moving on to the analysis, a note on the exercises that were used in the application of the SDD. The majority of these were adapted from existing practices inherited from the Odin Teatret practitioners; Viola Spolin; Grupo LUME; and Jessica Swale through workshops and reading; or developed throughout a decade of my own directorial practice, some in collaboration with Spanish actress Elizabeth Sogorb, who has worked with me since the inception of my company, Fronteiras Theatre Lab, in 2012. Most of the exercises have been in my devising repertoire for such a long time and have been through so many iterations that it is impossible to pinpoint their exact source. When

possible and pertinent, however, the source of specific exercises is made explicit in the thesis and in the descriptive text that accompanies each clip in Volume II. As such, theatremakers who wish to apply the SDD in their own practice may choose to use the same exercises, adopt and adapt others, or design their own following the purposes of each of the three SDD stages, as laid out in the next section. The important thing to grasp is *how the process works* to yield syncretic material in a devising context. The next section addresses this by unpacking the SDD process in detail attending to the labour that makes it realised through practice in the STL. It is also worth noting that in the STL, the whole process was applied to each Cultural Text in turn, which is why I suggest that practitioners interested in the SDD may wish to look at the footage organised by stimulus. Nevertheless, the Cultural Texts used as stimuli for this inquiry are not prescriptive and it is up to practitioners embarking on a new devising project using the SDD to decide which Cultural Texts are relevant for their application. The focus of this doctoral inquiry is the workings of the process itself, and therefore it is the order of the three stages of the process that the narrative analysis in the next section of this thesis follows.

Mizzensail: Appreciation

The first stage in the SDD is Appreciation, which, as the name suggests, aims at helping actors appreciate what their Cultural Texts have to offer in terms of theatrical creation. The exercises chosen (Fig. 17) to demonstrate the application of this step are guided by the director, who steers the actors' attention to specific aspects of the Cultural Texts and sensations to explore in relation to these, thereby facilitating the actors' awareness of their own Body, Language, Object, Text, and Food Cultural Texts before they can move on the next stage, Border-Crossing.

Appreciation
BA1. Feeling Self with Self
BA2. Inside Out and Outside In
LA1. Rhythm of Language
OA1. Object appreciation
TA1. Poem reading
TA2. Childhood tales storyboard
FA. Syncretic feast parts 1, 2, 3 and 4

Fig. 17 – Quick reference table to Appreciation exercises in Volume II

For the STL actors, this process began in their anticipation of the first workshop, as they were invited to think about their expectations ahead of starting the practical work. Ádám wrote a journal entry reflecting on what he would have to offer in the STL:

> After spending the whole day with the kids finally in my bed I have time to gather my thoughts and look up for *[sic]* the subject: syncretism. […] I make up melodies when rocking my baby children: that is my heritage. I dance in a peculiar style: those are my cultural roots. And the way of thinking or not thinking of speaking of moving of touching of… making my real self visible and approachable and movable.

<div align="right">

(Tompa, <u>actor's journal</u>, 18/02/2018)

</div>

Without knowing much about the work to be undertaken, as a full introduction to the research topic was only given in the first workshop, Ádám managed to capture much of the essence of the SDD in this *a priori* reflection, based on his lived experience and his own reading on syncretism: making his real self visible (Appreciation), approachable (Border-Crossing) and movable (Cannibalism). This initial journal entry demonstrates that Ádám instinctively employed a convergence of his own three modes of knowing, akin to the process leading to the design of the SDD as described in Chapter Three. His appreciation of his heritage and cultural roots reflects his tacit knowledge; his way of thinking, speaking, moving, touching reflect his empirical knowledge; his reading about syncretism reflects his academic knowledge. This indicates that, even if fed minimal information about the SDD process in advance, the Appreciation journey begins to take effect in actors' minds before it is applied in practice, which can be advantageous. Thinking about their Cultural Texts ahead of time afforded the actors the opportunity to come to the devising room having considered what Cultural Texts they would be willing to share and hybridise through the SDD process, which mitigates the risk of cultural insensitivity and theatrical exoticism.

Exercise BA1 is based on Viola Spolin's (1963) game, *Feeling Self with Self*, which invites actors to sharpen their perception of their own bodies. In the original, however, players are invited to expand their perception to the environment at the end of the game and in the STL, they were instructed to remain within their bodies, leading on to exercise BA2, adapted from an exercise by Carlos Simioni, director of Brazilian collective LUME Teatro. LUME is a theatre research collective based at the

University of Campinas (UNICAMP) in Brazil. One of their three lines of research is *Dança Pessoal* (Personal Dance), focusing on 'developing the presence of the actor, or in other words, their living, dilated body' (Simioni, 2012, p57, my translation).[ix] The BA2 exercise in the STL draws on a work demonstration on how to expand the actors' body by Simioni and the performers of Núcleo Patuanu, a group of Simioni's ex-students (Simioni, 2015). The focus here was to explore the relationship between the external and internal body, which combined with exercise BA1, served to provide the STL actors with an experience leading to the Appreciation of their own bodies as Cultural Texts.

Reflecting on their experience with these exercises, Marion stated she felt 'lighter from inside' (LDN.BA,00:32) and Sara 'felt more natural' (LDN.BA, 00:39), indicative of the openness afforded by reflection prior to the workshops. The three of them agreed that focusing on the outside-in movement was easier, but the opposite not so much. Ádám remarked that he felt he was in control of his external body exploration because he was well aware of all his dimensions and felt 'totally in, within the world' (LDN.BA, 06:42) when going inside, but although he was 'obsessed' with the discovery of his internal body, he was not happy with the artistry of his expression of it. This latter point was a recurring concern for Ádám, who asked for more direction at the end of the second day of workshops (LDN.LC2, 00:31) and often sought reassurance about his aesthetics throughout the lab. I stated at the outset of this chapter that the discussions regarding artistic decisions were not considered part of the research methodology or data, and as such, artistry was not deemed an operation of the SDD, but I shall return to this point in my concluding chapter. These insights suggest that sharpening their awareness of their internal and external body as Cultural Text had a moderate success, but the exercises helped with their 'focus and concentration' (Sara, LDN.BA, 07:51). Marion remarked the outside-in movement was easier because it had to do with introspection (LDN.BA, 08:20), which Ádám described as 'such a convincing feeling' (LDN.BA, 09:57). Given the actors' positive experience with the focus on the internal body and acknowledgement of their 'cultural baggage' as tools they can use in the devising room (Ádám, LDN.BA, 18:50), *introspection* was the first operation to be drawn out as an underlying procedure of the Appreciation stage.

Exercises [LA1](#) and [OA1](#) demonstrate the accumulative character of the SDD process, further detailed below. Both these exercises have come from my own directorial repertoire and though they might have been influenced by contact with other practitioners, it is impossible to determine an exact source for either. The Language exercise draws inspiration from my own experience better explained by an anecdote if the reader permits. I remember a distinct occasion when, after having lived in Scotland for six years and not visiting Brazil for three of those years, I went back for the Christmas holidays. Sitting at the dinner table with my family, I asked my sister to pass me the salt and she reacted as someone who had just experienced something uncomfortable. She then told me that she heard my words in perfect Portuguese but I sounded like a foreigner. The words were all the right ones and the accent was not the issue, my sister explained, but the rhythm was wrong. She said I spoke Portuguese with an English rhythm. The realisation that beyond grammar, syntax and lexicon, the identity of a language also resided in its rhythm was fascinating, and therefore was brought into the STL when it came to addressing Language as a Cultural Text. The objects used in the STL were personal items the actors were asked to bring, any items that bore cultural significance and they wished to explore in this context. Both the Language and the Object Appreciation exercises are rooted in a similar process as the Body Appreciation exercises described above: the actors were given some time to explore the rhythm of their own language and explore the texture, weight, colour, uses of the objects they brought into the devising room to extract as much information as possible from this appreciative journey. The difference here was this was the first time I realised that, unlike the original idea conceived with the Pretend SDD, the process did not need to always be linear and sequential, but could be *folded* into itself to help with the extraction of information and generation of material.

For clarity, the first time the SDD is applied, it should follow a linear progression of the three stages (A-B-C) so the ensemble understands how the process works. This means comprehending that there is an initial stage of becoming aware of the Cultural Texts, followed by an interstitial stage of exchanging Cultural Texts, and finally, creating new material based on the information extracted from the previous stages. In the STL, the first Cultural Text we worked with was the Body due to it being the

means by which the actors would explore all other Cultural Texts and therefore it was logical that it should be the initial Cultural Text to undergo the full process. Moving on to the next Cultural Text in the STL, Language, it emerged that there could be a cross-over of stages, meaning information extracted from the process applied to different Cultural Texts could be layered to aid the application of the process again. For example, in exercise LA1, the actors were instructed to explore the rhythms of their mother tongue. To add a kinaesthetic dimension to the exercise (see Balme, 1999; Sörgel, 2015) and facilitate the Appreciation of those rhythms, I suggested the actors should use one of the movements they had explored in the Body Border-Crossing exercise BB1, thereby crossing Cultural Texts and SDD stages over, which I have called *folding* the process. Folding became a recurring feature experienced throughout the STL, which will be discussed in more detail at the end of this chapter.

Appreciation of the rhythms of their languages had a noticeable impact on Marion and Ádám, who both surprised themselves with the discovery of their own rhythms. When asked what new rhythms of his language he had discovered, Ádám described 'almost slimy, long syllables with soft consonants and [...] staccato, short *tktktktktk*, like a gunfire' (LDN.LA, 00:09). Marion found the process useful to understand what her mother tongue sounds like to her Northern Irish partner's ears:

> I thought it was interesting when you asked me what French sounded like. My partner says that when he hears me on Skype or on the phone to my family, I sound like *glglglglglgl* and I always felt offended but when I did [the exercise] just now, I heard it!
>
> (LDN.LA, 07:11)

Marion was able to extract substantial information from her Appreciation work on Language as a Cultural Text, including enlightening discoveries about her displaced, bilingual self:

> It was fascinating to observe how each and every one of us perceives their own language/other's languages and how that translates physically and verbally. It was hard too to take a step back and analyse something as instinctive as your native tongue.
>
> I both love and hate French *[sic]* language. It's my default setting but somehow I relate more to English *[sic]* language than to French and I don't know why… when I speak French there's something missing, less appealing, yet it's a language that has strong emotional ties, i.e. family and friends and I can't imagine speaking to them in English. It's like two selves, voices trapped in one body sometimes… I realise that I apologise a lot for being French and when it came to embodying the sounds of our languages, I represented it like *un degueulis de mots* (a puke of words), something that comes out of my mouth physically, almost unconsciously, by accident and out of control because it's in there somewhere. English in comparison is a lot more contained, controlled and looked after, I appreciate it

and savour it each time it comes out of my mouth […] but I've noticed is the way my body moved differently in French and in English. […] It's like something is happening between the inner and the outer self, a reaction, a trigger that is determining our social self.

(Geoffray, actor's journal, 23/02/2018)

Marion's and Ádám's reflections on their experience with the Language Appreciation exercise unlocked the second operation of the Appreciation stage: understanding how one's own Cultural Texts engage with those outside their culture, or what I have called *extra-cultural others*, may lead to a better understanding of the Cultural Texts in their own right, which in turn opens up their theatrical potential. This operation was not present in Sara's experience with the Language Cultural Text, though. Sara wanted to work with her father's native Swahili, though she admitted she was not fluent in it. However, she remarked she had spent enough time with her family in Zanzibar to 'learn culture through language' (LCH.LA, 02:03) ready to delve deeper into appreciating this language and her family's 'confused cultural identity' (LCH.LA, 03:48), but perhaps as a result of Swahili not living in her body, she did not benefit from appreciating its rhythm as much as the other two actors. The operation of exploring the dialogue between her own Cultural Texts and extra-cultural others made itself clearer for Sara during her Appreciation of the Object Cultural Text (Fig. 18), as she observed: 'when I heard the history of the objects, then I couldn't separate it from the objects […] the history and the object went together' (LDN.OA, 00:20). This remark demonstrates that a fuller understanding of a Cultural Text can be gained from appreciating its context through thinking about it and relaying it to extra-cultural others, leading to greater cultural sensitivity.

Fig. 18 – Objects brought in by the actors. Sara's house keys, Ádám's son's toy boat and Marion's great-grandmother's wedding ring. Photo by the author.

The third Appreciation operation emerging from the practical application of the SDD was the engagement with Cultural Texts received from others inside the same culture, or what I call *intra-cultural others*; in this instance Text (poems and tales) and Food. The Text exercises TA1 and TA2 were based on Jessica Swale's game *Red Riding Hood and the Loaded Gun*, which helps 'players to cope with unexpected added factors within stories they know well' (Swale, 2012, p50). Swale's game was split into three parts, one for each stage of the SDD, and I established the format of the output, which I will detail further in the section about the Cannibalism stage. For the Appreciation stage, in the case of both Text exercises, the focus was on speaking since this is the Cultural Text derived from Balme's category of Orality. Actors were invited to share the poems and tales and talk about them, pick their favourite words (TA1) and render the tales visual with a storyboard (TA2), thus interpreting their own cultures for others. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Food as a Cultural Text was not included in the original STL design but was suggested by the participating actors in week two and incorporated to the work in week three of the STL. The best way to go about appreciating this Cultural Text would be by experiencing it, so we had a syncretic feast (FA) sharing food from our respective cultures and again, talking about it. The food itself, ingredients, ways of cooking, history, customs, memories were all laid on the table during this exercise.

Initially, I had considered the idea of having a theme around which to devise and I spoke to the actors about 'the other bank of the river' as a potential theme (LCH.TA). My rationale for this was that rivers might evoke ideas of border, journeys, and cultural life involving customs, rituals and food. I also thought of water as a universal component of culture, given all life depends on it, but this was before I abandoned universalist ideas as a result of reflection prompted by reviewing the counterpoints provided by Indian and Latin American theatre scholars and practitioners discussed in Chapter One. Arguably, the absence of a concrete theme to serve as inspiration for the work led the actors to choose Text and Food Cultural Texts connected with their childhood. Another possible reason for this is the fact that the whole group was displaced, i.e. not currently living within the culture in which they grew up, and very much immersed in their host culture. This was not necessarily a drawback as the Cultural

Texts could still undergo the process and yield material for devising, but it would be interesting to see the range of choices if the SDD were to be applied with a more diverse group of actors, including those native to the host culture, which was not the case in this instance (further information about the demographics of the group and the STL casting process can be found in the Appendix: Casting and Research Blog sections in Volume II).

Appreciating their Texts made Sara remember her amazement the first time she encountered William Blake's *The Tyger* (TA1) and how she enjoyed *Little Red Riding Hood* because it was scary and gruesome (TA2), whereas Ádám was reminded of his adventures with his step grandfather (TA2). Adventures were also present in Marion's memories, but differently from Ádám, away from her family and onto new places as in her chosen fairy tale, *The Little Mermaid* (TA2). The strong connection with his family was a recurring theme for Ádám, who had already brought it up with his Object Cultural Text – a wooden toy representing a Hungarian sailing boat given by his mother to his son (Fig. 18). In addition to his Text Appreciation, his grandparents also featured in Ádám's Food Appreciation exercise. This strong engagement with intra-cultural others in appreciating both the Text and Food Cultural Texts worked well as a generative technique for Ádám, inspiring him to craft the following as a scenario for devising:

> I'm the first to show down. A knife. My grandma had spread butter with it. And cut the bread. And the dry cured sausage. And the cucumber. I can see only her hands. Beautiful old wrinkled hand. Her feet in thick woolen *[sic]* socks. Never slippers. I'm speaking about my past and I'm dreaming. Very realistic dream. And in that dream I stop talking, now it's the others *[sic]* turn. The dream goes on: we're in *[sic]* bright open plan kitchen. The lights are familiar, but not the sounds. Not the movement. Not the arrangement. And it get *[sic]* even more twisted. Strange sharp fragrances appear in the air foreign spices. Fairytale *[sic]* food. Fairytale kitchen. Fairytale creatures.
>
> (Tompa, actor's journal, 25/04/2018)

Although this text resulted from the application of only the first stage of the SDD with the Food Cultural Text, the influences of other Cultural Texts and evidence of application of the full process can be seen in it. Not only is Ádám bringing the fairy tales into play here, but also his mention of 'sharp fragrances' (Marion's verbena in FA4) and 'foreign spices' (Sara's chevda in FA2) anticipate the Border-Crossing and Cannibalism stages, when Cultural Texts are exchanged and merged. Moreover, his

description of his grandmother's hands and feet echoes the work done on appreciating the Body

Cultural Text (BA1); his incorporation of the knife could have come from the Appreciation of the Object

Cultural Text (OA1); and his awareness of sounds and movements contains a hint of the work on the

Language Cultural Text (LA1). It should be noted that Ádám produced this piece of writing in the third

week of the STL, which demonstrates that the full SDD process indeed affected the actors' creative

output in this devised theatre context.

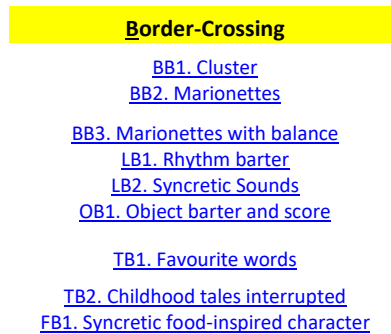| Operations of Appreciation (SDD stage 1)		
Element	**Recommended Cultural Text application**	**Example exercises**
Introspective self-discovery	Body	BA1 BA2
Engagement with extra-cultural others	Language Object	LA1 OA1
Engagement with intra-cultural others	Text Food	TA1 TA2 FA

Fig. 19 – Operations of the Appreciation stage of the SDD.

To summarise, the Appreciation stage of the SDD aims at helping actors to identify and understand

their own Cultural Texts and their potential to generate theatrical material. To achieve that, the actors

employed three operations in response to the exercises, which are the procedures to consider (Fig.

19) when designing or choosing practical exercises to conduct the first stage of the SDD. These are

introspective self-discovery (when exploring Cultural Texts such as the Body), a dialogue between the

Cultural Texts and extra-cultural others (when exploring Cultural Texts used to communicate such as

Language and Objects), and the engagement with Cultural Texts received from intra-cultural others

(such as poems, fairy or folk tales and food). In the next section, I analyse the application of the second

stage of the SDD: Border-Crossing.

Mainsail: Border-Crossing

The second stage of the process focuses on the encounter between the cultures in the room, taking

place after the actors have spent some time discovering their own Cultural Texts and are ready to

share them. The individual experience having been explored in the Appreciation stage of the SDD, what is needed for the Border-Crossing stage is a change of perception that occurs to de-centre the individual experience (see Friedson, 2005), and this is what the exercises selected for this stage (Fig. 20) set out to do.

<div align="center">

Border-Crossing

BB1. Cluster
BB2. Marionettes

BB3. Marionettes with balance
LB1. Rhythm barter
LB2. Syncretic Sounds
OB1. Object barter and score

TB1. Favourite words

TB2. Childhood tales interrupted
FB1. Syncretic food-inspired character

</div>

Fig. 20 – Quick reference table to Border-Crossing exercises in Volume II

Exercises BB1, BB2 and BB3 were developed in collaboration with Elizabeth Sogorb for the project *Fronteiras Explorers*, an artistic residency that took place in my border hometowns and culminated on a site-specific promenade piece along the borderline between Brazil and Uruguay (Fronteiras Theatre Lab, 2013; *Fronteiras Explorers Documentary*, 2014). Embedded in the context of the same border that inspired the design of the SDD, Sogorb and I strove to create ways of making the most of the actors' imagination to render 'art, rewarding and encouraging other ways of seeing and behaving' (Chiappini et al, 2004, p14). Thus, these exercises were chosen to develop actors' experience with interchanging control and leadership, negotiating personal space, and finding and challenging each other.

The application of this stage with the Body Cultural Text had some problems, as I observed the actors losing focus in exercise BB3. This might have happened because the Body Border-Crossing exercises were too close to trust games the actors had done before in drama school and the memories of them being fun, in Ádám's case (LDN.BB, 01:05), or worrying, in Sara's case (LDN.BB, 00:13), overrode the research-driven approach. Regarding her experience with exercises BB2 and BB3, Marion remarked

that it was 'really hard not to work against people manipulating your body, [which requires] a lot of letting go and concentration' (LDN.BB, 03:48), which challenges the nature and order of the exercises. Beginning the process with the Body Cultural Text, as explained in the previous section, seemed to be the right decision because it is the actors' main working tool, and as such, it would be used in the exploration of the remaining Cultural Texts and expression of the material generated thereby. Thus, appreciating the Body Cultural Text before the others was a sensible thing to do. However, the closeness required for the Border-Crossing exercises enabled the creation of *a borderly space* in which the actors came into physical contact with one another (Fig. 21), which perhaps was too soon for a new group that had not worked together before and therefore did not feel completely comfortable with the manipulation of the body involved in exercises BB2 and BB3. That said, the borderly space created between the actors was productive in exercise BB1, which yielded information regarding rhythm and movement that the actors kept returning to when working with other Cultural Texts at later stages in the STL. Additionally, though she did not feel comfortable with the manipulation of her balance in BB3, Sara was able to draw on the manipulation of her joints in exercise BB2 to create her score later on, in exercise TC1. Therefore, given the issue with manipulation and lack of concentration, exercise BB3 may not have been the best choice for this exchange, but a borderly space could be identified as an operation the actors employed to extract information from the Border-Crossing stage nonetheless.

Fig. 21 – STL actors doing exercise BB2.

Exercises LB1, LB2 and OB1 were quite straightforward in format, focusing on a simple exchange of Cultural Texts. The three actors conveyed their enjoyment of trying out each other's language rhythms in LB1. Describing what he discovered by exchanging rhythms, Ádám said, 'Swahili was very clean and straightforward. Hungarian was intangible to start with, but then you have the *pa-pa-pa*. French is difficult to catch' (LDN.LB, 01:40). With his latter remark, Ádám meant that the rhythm of French felt like the language running away from the speaker, which Marion found both amusing and inspiring, later incorporating this feeling into the material she created in the Cannibalism stage with her poem (TC1). This offering of Cultural Texts to each other and receiving feedback that can then be productive in the generation of devising material configures an operation of *barter*, an exchange of items deemed to be of similar worth, present in the Border-Crossing stage. This could also be seen with the actors' work in exercise LB2, in which they intertwined sounds with imagery from each other's cultural backgrounds and ran an improvisational exchange. This work was praised by one of the observers, who remarked she felt a difference between knowing very little about the actors when she first came into the room and feeling like she knew a lot about them after watching their barter:

> it was like the strangest thing to watch, but when I then had the context on top of it, of where those sounds were coming from, it locates your body as a representation of that place. And I think that's when it was at its richest. Because it's great to hear where it all comes from and it totally makes sense, you go "yeah, of course"

> (Observer 2, LDN.LB2, 08:03)

The same observer also remarked she had never worked with a director in her own performing practice and thought my input was valuable for the actors, but she was wondering where I was getting the ideas from, to which I replied they had come from observing the actors at work and feeding their material back to them, keeping the barter dynamic (LDN.LB2).

Due to having access to a material thing outside the Body, bartering the objects in exercise OB1 sparked the actors' imagination quickly. Ádám, when working with Marion's ring, observed he was transported to 'a past era' and felt a story emerging (LDN.OA, 01:30). A remarkable outcome of the Object Border-Crossing was the alignment of the work with the values of Syncretic Theatre as a distinct

form from Theatrical Exoticism. Due to the inevitable influence of Hegemonic Intercultural Theatre practices under which we had all been trained, there was a constant underlying concern with letting the work tip over to Othering or exoticising, but the bartering of the objects was reassuring in this respect. Through this operation, the actors acknowledged the cultural value of each other's objects, as demonstrated by Sara's reflection on working with Marion's ring: 'I didn't want to start doing crazy stuff with it, didn't want to throw it up in the air, so I focused on intricate movements' (LDN.OA, 00:30). Nevertheless, being respectful with the objects did not hinder the extraction of information to be used for generating theatrical material, as experienced by Marion, who said she 'could see a character emerging' (LDN.OA, 02:53) from Sara's keys.

Two other operations were identified in the Border-Crossing stage: *interference* and *influence*. Observer 4 remarked upon reflection on exercise OB1:

> I don't know how much your peripheral vision was affecting what you decided to do with the objects. Because there were times... definitely when someone decided to do something that was sonic, the other people could definitely hear it. So the person with the keys would jangle them and the person with the boat would hit it on the floor, so you had a kind of response that way. Also there was this really weird connection between putting the keys on the finger or the ring on the finger, so I was wondering it there was actually a peripheral understanding of that...

(LDN.OA, 05:59)

What was observed here was that the actors were influenced by each other in their creative explorations and proceeded to organically respond to these influences, thus activating a slightly intrusive but at the same time playful way of engaging with the exchanged Cultural Texts. In addition to influencing each other, exercise FB1 demonstrates how actors were influenced by the other Cultural Texts undergoing the SDD process. This exercise, too, is an example of the feature of folding the SDD for layering information accumulated from previous stages, in this case, the Food Appreciation stage. Building on Ádám's devising scenario written in his journal (actor's journal, 25/04/2018) after exercise FA, the actors decided to explore characters emerging from their Appreciation of Food as Cultural Text. In a similar manner that exercise BA1 was conducted to help actors discover their own bodies,

exercise FB1 invited them to discover their characters' bodies, also drawing on the memories, textures, smells, and flavours they extracted from FA.

The Text Border-Crossing exercises TB1 and TB2 revealed the less subtle operation of interference. In both exercises, the actors were asked to interfere with each other's Cultural Texts by selecting words they liked from the other actors' poems (in TB1) and by editing, adding or changing each other's childhood tales storyboards (in TB2). These actions, illustrated in Figs. 22 to 24 below, were then discussed within the group to clarify intentions and understanding, setting them up for the next stage. The Border-Crossing stage applied to the Text and Food Cultural Texts was a fairly quick and straightforward procedure, the results of which were only seen clearly in the Cannibalism stage, thus confirming the Border-Crossing as an interstitial space and corroborating the accumulative nature of the SDD and the relationship of dependency between the three stages.
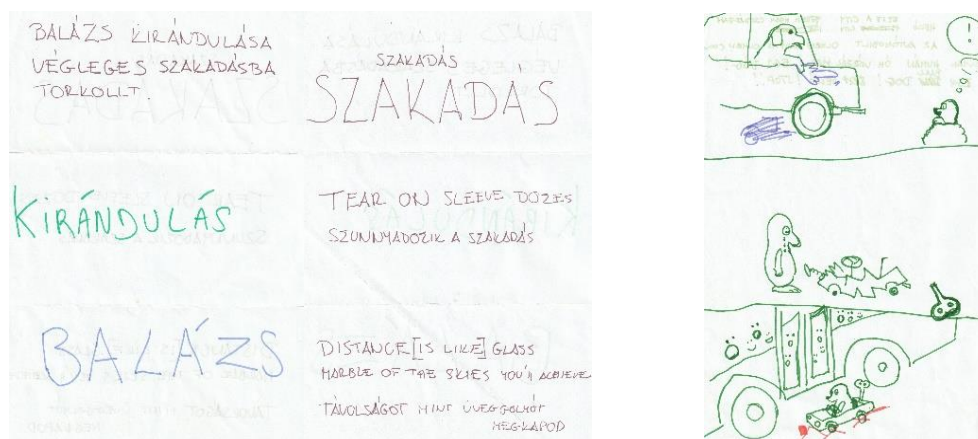
Fig. 22 – Ádám's TB1 and TB2 exercises. Interference with words in TB1: kirándulás, Balázs, szakadás (with notes from other exercises) and edited storyboard from TB2

Fig. 23 – Sara's TB1 and TB2 exercises. Interference with words from TB1: furnace, aspire, sinews (with notes from other exercises) and edited storyboard from TB2

Fig. 24 – Marion's TB1 and TB2 exercises. Interference with words from TB1: onde, nuit, courante and edited storyboard from TB2

There are, therefore, four operations (Fig. 25) to take into account when selecting or designing exercises to apply the Border-Crossing stage of the SDD: a borderly space that can facilitate the encounter of Cultural Texts, bartering of Cultural Texts, interference and influence between Cultural Texts that should add a level of challenge but also playfulness to the devising process, remembering that information extracted from the Cultural Texts in the Appreciation stage can be fed into the Border-Crossing stage. The next section further clarifies the workings of the SDD process through analysis of Cannibalism, the third stage of the SDD.

Operations of Border-Crossing (SDD stage 2)		
Element	**Recommended Cultural Text application**	**Example exercises**
Borderly space	Body	BB1 BB2 BB3*
Barter	Language Object	LB1 LB2 OB1
Influence	Object Food	OB1 FB1
Interference	Text	TB1 TB2
* exercise demonstrated issues and may not be adequate for this operation		

Fig. 25 – Operations of the Border-Crossing stage of the SDD.

Foresail: Cannibalism

The practice of humans consuming human flesh has been documented throughout history as an act of love and respect for the dead, as an act of revenge against enemies, as survival, as a criminal and moral offence (Cochran, 2012), and even as a sexual fetish (Agane, 2013; Lykins & Cantor, 2014; nagasaki, 2018). The exercises selected for the application of the third stage of the SDD (Fig. 26) aimed at reflecting this multifarious character of Cannibalism. This is the syncretising stage *per se*, in which the information gained from Appreciation and Border-Crossing is merged to create new material that can later be further developed into devised pieces of theatre, either by continuing to fold the SDD or by developing next stages for the process, an idea to which I shall return in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

Cannibalism

BC1. Five Walks
BC2 and BC3. Seven Syncretic Walks parts 1 and 2

LC1. Syncretic rhythm and movement
LC2. Four Gestures
OC1. Syncretic objects
TC1. Poem score

TC2.Fairy tales cannibalised
FC1. Cooking a meal together

Fig. 26 – Quick reference table to Cannibalism exercises in Volume II

Exercises BC1, BC2 and BC3, LC1, LC2 and FC1, in slightly different manners, demonstrated that there is a *nourishing* element to the stage of Cannibalism. In BC1, the actors were invited to use the movements they discovered together with their peers in the Body Border-Crossing exercises to create new ways of walking individually, which are then fed back to the group so they can create a collective walking score, as seen in BC2 and BC3. A similar procedure happens with the Language exercises, in that the rhythms and movements encountered in the previous stage were used to nourish the creation of new solo material in LC1 and a group improvisation in LC2. Lastly, the group improvisation seen in FC1 is nourished by information extracted through the application of previous stages of the SDD with other Cultural Texts (like exercise BA1, for example) and the Food Cultural Texts literally dined on in exercise FA. Thus, the actors used the sensations derived from experiencing the Food in exercise FA to nourish the characters they created for the improvised scene in FC1. Some of the observers invited into the STL noticed this operation of nourishing, even if they did not name it as such. During a Launching conversation about creative inspiration held between a warm-up and a set of exercises, Observer 2 asked the group: '[…] are those ways of moving learned over time like a tapestry of different movements that you've picked up from other people [?]' (LCH.TB, 10:19), to which Sara replied, 'it's in the exercises we've done for the past three days' (LCH.TB, 12:07). In the same session, Observer 1 asked the group whether they felt like they had to replicate something they had seen elsewhere (LCH.TB, 06:44), and Ádám responded by drawing a parallel with the observer's own art form, music, and saying the pleasure was in finding the connections and losing oneself (LCH.TB, 08:23). Observer 3, commenting on exercise LC2, admitted she could not recognise individual components of the improvisation, yet the whole made sense (LDN.LC, 01:38). Thus, observers clearly identified an operation involving learning over time, picking things up from other people, replicating, and bringing components together to form a new whole, thus nourishing the creative output of the actors.

After being appreciated and bartered, the Object Cultural Texts brought in by the actors were then *repurposed* for the development of solo material (in Sara's case) and for a duo (in Ádám and Marion's case), as seen in exercise OC1. For the solo, the object was removed and the material was performed

as a physical score, demonstrating the traces left by someone else's Cultural Text. For the duo, the objects were replaced with the actors, who then needed to find ways of repurposing their physical actions twice over, cannibalising each other's Object, Body and Language Cultural Texts in the process. It should be noted that my instruction to Marion and Ádám was simply to replace the object with each other; using the Body and Language Cultural Texts to do so was their decision. In the previous section, I highlighted the respect with which the actors treated each other's objects and praised it as an achievement of the values of Syncretic Theatre. After undergoing the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages with diligent care, it was evident that the actors felt they could be a little more transgressive by having the physical objects removed from the exercise. Being left with only the traces of actions created with the object, the actors were bolder with their material, particularly Ádám and Marion, who had to find ways of inserting themselves into each other's score. Both actors agreed that this challenge gave their work new dimensions and meanings (Ádám, LDN.OA, 03:57) and added playfulness (Marion, LDN.OA, 04:19), which was also an effect carried over from the Border-Crossing stage. Sara worked on a solo score and probably because of that, still retained a level of dutiful care even when the object was removed. She stayed with the history behind the toy boat as something passed down the generations and chose to maintain that quality on her solo score (LDN.OA, 09:52). Therefore, the operation of repurposing was more evident in the collective application of Cannibalism, when actors got to work together and negotiate their material.

Finally, the Text exercises unlocked the operation of *subverting* present in the Cannibalism stage. In TC1, the actors were invited to use images elicited from their poems in the Appreciation stage, combined with the words picked out of the poems in the Border-Crossing stage to create a physical score featuring one original line made up of fragments of the original poems, thus completing a procedure that can be likened to eating, digesting and regurgitating in the context of the concept, often viewed as taboo, that inspired this stage. Similarly, in TC2, the storyboards of their childhood tales after undergoing the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages, were consumed and transformed into original short scenes, all executed as solos in a first round. The playfulness that Marion

experienced on her work in exercise OC1 was also noted in the cannibalised poem that Ádám presented in TC1 (Marion, LDN.TC, 14:40), which accumulated from the operations of interference and influence in the Border-Crossing stage. Ádám's cannibalised poem also yielded comments on its autocannibalistic (Flavia, LDN.TC, 17:23) and self-reflective (Ádám, LDN.TC, 17:30) characteristics, thus demonstrating clear evidence of the presence of operations pertaining to the three stages of the SDD process. The operation of subverting was clearly observed in Marion and Sara's cannibalised poems, also in TC1, with Ádám remarking that Marion's use of her dissociated, bilingual body gave him a sense of change of perspective (Ádám, LDN.TC2, 08:43), which made him enjoy the cannibalised version of the poem more than its original, as he complimented Marion, saying 'this poem is much better with you' (Ádám, LDN.TC2, 11:34). Marion's use of the quality of her language as something that escapes or flows away from her, built on information she extracted from the previous two stages of the SDD in exercises LA1 and LB1, was highlighted by me (LDN.TC2, 07:50) and Sara (LDN.TC2, 09:52). Sara's cannibalised William Blake was described by her peers as 'strong' (Marion, LDN.TC2, 13:38) and 'edgy' (Ádám, LDN.TC2, 12:30), alongside the acknowledgement that her Zanzibari heritage could be clearly seen for the first time in her work in the STL (Ádám, LDN.TC2, 13:04). Ádám also remarked that he did not feel Sara connected to the original written text but that the cannibalised physical score 'was totally one' with her (LDN.TC2, 14:12), thus demonstrating that subverting established Cultural Texts can have a positive effect on the actors' output.

Once again illustrating the accumulative effect of the SDD, Ádám incorporated information extracted from the Language (LA1, LB1, LC1) and Body (BB1, BC1 and BC2 and BC3) Cultural Texts into his cannibalised fairy tale piece (TC2). This accumulation could also be seen in Sara's cannibalised fairy tale, with her used of syncretic rhythms and movements drawn from information extracted from the application of the SDD with other Cultural Texts (LB1, LC1, BB2), which received positive comments about how carefully the piece was put together (Marion, LDN.TC3, 14:23) and how believable the action was (Observer 7, LDN.TC3, 17:07). When Observer 6 praised Sara for her 'beautiful way of highlighting movement' (LDN.TC3, 21:31) and asked the group about their level of awareness,

decision-making process and ideas for their scores, Sara replied, 'from the past four days […] it accumulated over the week. If I'd been given this [task] on Tuesday, I'd have been like "whaaaat?"' (LDN.TC3, 22:47), a favourable testament to the SDD. On assessing the application and outputs of the Cannibalism stage, the same observer commented, 'although you three individual performers all have the same token, you've applied it very differently' (Observer 6, LDN.TC3, 23:33), to which Marion replied that the difference was brought about by their Cultural Texts (LDN.TC3, 24:16), thus demonstrating the actors achieved a clear understanding of the process.

The subversion of the fairy tales in TC2 introduced some welcome qualities to the storytelling, as Observer 6 remarked of the syncretic images and rhythms seen in Ádám's piece, 'you very much let the audience come with you on the journey, rather than chasing after you trying to follow what was happening. It was really beautiful work in that sense' (LDN.TC3, 06:30). Observer 7 offered a provocation by challenging the effect of the subversive element encountered in this stage, which she called an 'infection':

> Infection is my word for that [*points at storyboards, illustrated in Figs. 22-24 above*]. You've got this thing and everybody knows it, and everybody knows it's a story, tradition, fairy tale… and then it's infected by something that doesn't belong there. Like you and the dog. It's children's books and then there's this… impurity. How do you cope with it? Because as a composer, you've got this creative process, you've got this idea, you've got this… and suddenly you have to deal with this terrible thing that comes in from the outside, you've got to change it.

(LDN.TC3, 47:35)

Marion agreed to an extent, stating that it did not bother her when subversion happened as part of a process, but if someone had subverted one of her own plays that had already been performed, she would find it uncomfortable as she would have a stronger sense of ownership over a finished product (LDN.TC3, 53:18). Marion's response is interesting in that it suggests that she may be less likely to approach Syncretic Theatre as onstage representation of her text-based work, but is perfectly willing to employ Syncretic Theatre as a working method and dramaturgical form in her devising. Moreover, Ádám replied that he thought this was a great way of pushing himself harder creatively and invited the observer to try it herself in her own artistic practice (LDN.TC3, 48:36; 51:43), and Sara believed

music to be a more rigid art form, stating that theatre is more open to different interpretations (LDN.TC3, 50:37).

In spite of her challenge, the same observer, who had attended one of my workshops prior to the STL, said she was reminded of The Map exercise described in the Introduction of this thesis, and compared it to this stage of the SDD process as she witnessed it: 'I was thinking of that [...] map thing, when you just connected things and lines and when you look at it, you can see the totality' (Observer 7, LDN.TC3, 31:48), which shows how the Cannibalism stage brings together the information extracted from the previous SDD stages and varying Cultural Texts to generate material for devising. Three operations, nourishing, repurposing, and subverting, have been located through this analysis as the procedures employed by the actors to the information they extracted from the Cultural Texts in the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages to generate material in the Cannibalism stage, summarised below (Fig. 27). Therefore, these are the operations to be considered upon selecting or designing exercises for the third stage of the SDD.

Operations of Cannibalism (SDD stage 3)		
Element	**Recommended Cultural Text application**	**Example exercises**
Nourishing	Body Language Food	BC1 BC2 and BC3 LC1 LC2 FC1
Repurposing	Object	OC1
Subverting	Text	TC1 TC2

Fig. 27 – Operations of the Cannibalism stage of the SDD.

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To conclude this chapter, I summarise and consolidate the SDD, fully conceptualising after its realisation through practice and critical analysis not of the product generated by the SDD, but of the collective labour that went into creating this theatremaking tool from an experimental design. Overall feedback on the process was positive from both actors and observers, although the latter had a

stronger tendency to discuss the content of each score or short scene generated in the Cannibalism stage, or be curious about specific decisions made by the actors in response to my invitations, instead of discussing the process itself. This location of interest in specifics could stem from the fact that no observer experienced the full process, having been invited to different sections of the STL on determined days and times, a deliberate decision to avoid overwhelming the actors and to invite questions and comments from people who had not been immersed in the process, thereby reducing bias.

The actors felt challenged and liberated (Marion, LDN.TC3, 45:26) to different extents. Observer 6 asked the group whether they found the process 'constricting' in any way (LDN.TC3, 33:25), to which Sara replied:

> I think if we had done it in a different way, it wouldn't have been this rich. It has given me tools to expand with and create different imagery. I didn't think it was restrictive because we were never told, 'you have to use these tools'.
>
> (LDN.TC3, 33:54)

As it currently stands, the SDD is offered as a process pertaining to the initial, or generative, phase of a devising process. For the Pretend SDD model offered in Chapter Three, the stages were named alphabetically (A-B-C), so remembering their order of application is easy. In its Pretend iteration, the SDD was envisaged as a linear process to be applied to each Cultural Text in turn, thus establishing the SDD as a sequential and accumulative process, with a relationship of dependency between the three stages:

Stage (A) – Appreciation: serves to extract information from one's own Cultural Texts

Stage (B) – Border-Crossing: serves to shift perceptions, building on information gained from Stage (A) and adding new information gained from others' Cultural Texts
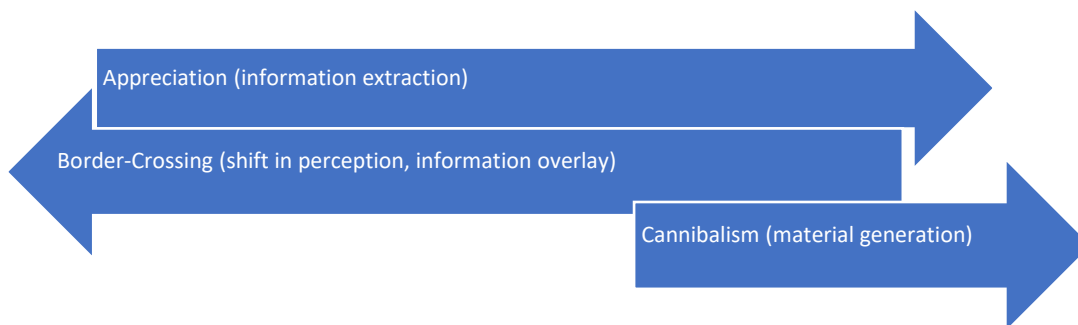
Stage (C) – Cannibalism: uses the information extracted from Stages (A) and (B) to generate material for devising theatre in the form of physical scores or short scenes

However, as evidenced when the SDD became realised through practice, there is a feature of folding the process for aiding the identification of the Cultural Texts, extracting more information from the Cultural Texts, or adding layers to existing material generated through the process, which also accounts for a crossover between Cultural Texts. For clear understanding of the operations of each stage, the first time the process is applied in a devising project, it should be followed as a linear, sequential process (Fig. 28). Once the ensemble has experienced the linear process with a single Cultural Text, though, they may take liberties with folding the stages and Cultural Texts to enrich their material. If applied in a linear way, the information extracted from, say, the Body Cultural Text in Stage (A) is exchanged with other Body Cultural Texts information in Stage (B) and then these pieces of information are merged to create new material pertaining to the Body Cultural Text in Stage (C). When folding, Body Cultural Text information exchanged in Stage (B) can be used to facilitate extraction of information from the Language Cultural Text in Stage (A), and the merger of these pieces of information can be used to nourish the creation of a Food Cultural Text-based new scene in Stage (C), as illustrated in Fig. 29. This is another reason why there are two modes of presentation in Volume II. By selecting each individual Cultural Text category on the website, the reader can follow the linear process. By selecting the SDD category on the website, the reader can jump between the stages and see how the process folds.

Appreciation (information extraction)

* introspection
* dialogue between CTs and extra-cultural others
* dialogue between CTs and intra-cultural others

Border-Crossing (shift in perception, information overlay)

* borderly space
* bartering
* interference
* influence

Cannibalism (material generation)

*nourishing
* repurposing
* subverting
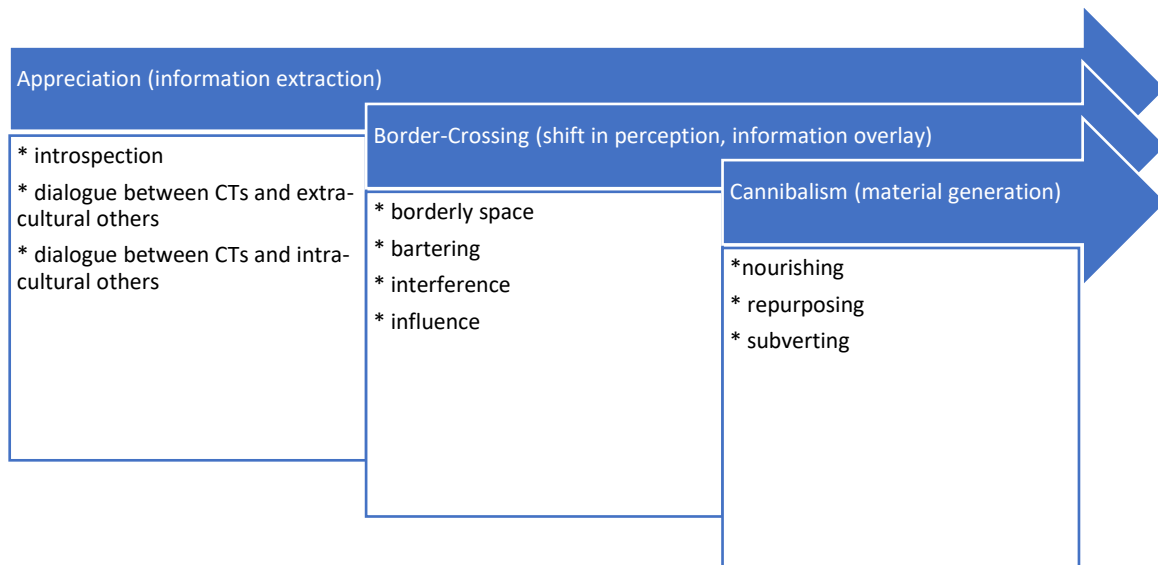
Fig. 28 – The linear SDD process and operations within each stage.

Appreciation (information extraction)

Border-Crossing (shift in perception, information overlay)

Cannibalism (material generation)

Fig. 29 – Example of the folded SDD process.

The full video of the Work Demonstration at the end of the STL can be found in the Appendixes: Work Demonstration section in Volume II, as well as audio files documenting the discussion that ensued with the observers. The workshop observers were often able to connect the SDD process to their own practice, but unlike them, the Work Demonstration observers were unsure about how or if they would apply the SDD in their own work (WD Conversation, 20:49). This was to be expected, considering that they did not witness the actual application of any of the SDD stages, but instead what they saw was an in-between and yet unexplored stage of what can be a longer process that eventually leads to a

finished piece fit for public performance. Whether the SDD can be employed to edit and refine the material generated in Stage (C) for production remains untested. This could be achieved by continuing to fold the process or expanding it with the creation of further stages, but I shall return to this point in the concluding chapter of the thesis, when recommendations for further research are discussed.

Finally, the operations identified through the analysis of the STL documentation and summarised in Fig. 28 above are an articulation of the labour employed at each SDD stage to extract, shift and overlay information from the Cultural Texts (in the cases of the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages) and generate material for devising based on this information (in the Cannibalism stage). The operations act as a guide for devising practitioners when selecting or designing exercises to apply the SDD. As mentioned previously, the exercises used in the STL are offered as examples in Volume II and can be adopted as they are or adapted to better suit each practitioner or ensemble style, or devising project needs. The SDD is offered as a plausible process for generating material in the initial phase of devising a piece of Syncretic Theatre, which may be expanded to encompass the whole devising process from starting points to finished production. The next chapter synthesises the research journey by connecting the SDD and its operations understood through this analysis to the three mainstays guiding the inquiry, providing a full picture of this study and the broader significance of the SDD.

✦ Chapter Five – THE RIGGING

(4,968 words)

The SDD is not representative of a final destination but a vessel (Fig. 30) with which to cross the open seas, and therefore the adjustment of the stays, the ropes, is what is now needed for the onward journey. The ideological values underpinning this research are:

- a search for horizontal, extra-hierarchical creative collaboration in theatre devising whilst avoiding Othering or exoticising the cultures brought together in the devising room;

- accounting for the itineraries and intersections that enable knowledge to become evident;

- democratising knowledge;

- shifting perceptions about centre and margin, looking at New Intercultural theatre in the context of a former colonial power; and

- enlarging understanding of Intercultural Theatre by analysing how it is made based on synchronous first-person accounts and embodied experiences.

'Staying' is what this evaluative chapter sets out to do, by tying together these values with the three mainstays guiding the research, Countercolonialism, Intercultural Theatre and Dramaturgy/Devising, analysing the broader implications of this contribution to theatre scholarship and practice.
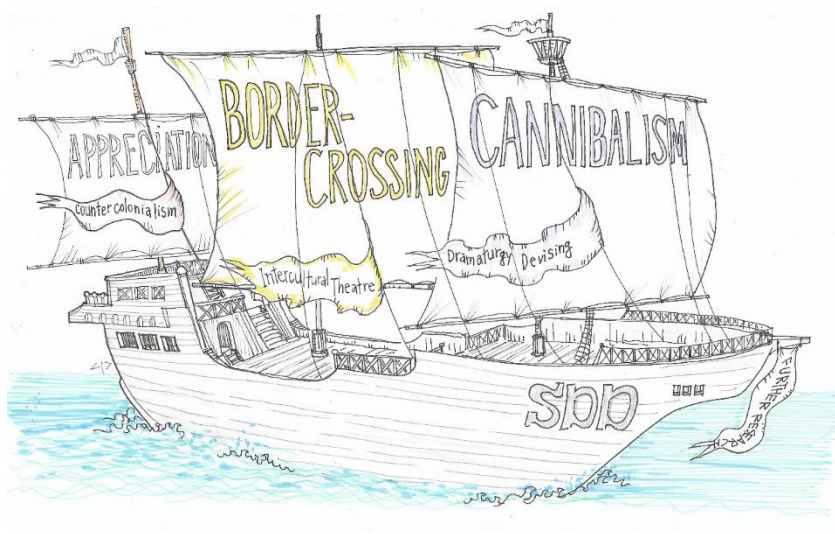
Fig. 30 – The research vessel. (Concept by the author, image execution by Cid D'Avila)

Countercolonialism: cannibalism and migration

One of the opening lines of the *Manifesto Antropofágico* is an outright provocation: 'Tupi or not Tupi – that is the question' (Andrade, 1928, no page, original in English). The reader will recognise the allusion to *Hamlet* right away, except that Andrade replaces the verb 'to be' with the name of the largest family of tribes inhabiting Brazil since precolonial times, the Tupi, thus cannibalising William Shakespeare's famous text. Andrade aimed for his manifesto to be a weapon of resistance against European dominance in the arts, and his proposed tactics for that was to consume, devour European art forms and regurgitate them in new formats, transformed by Brazilian aesthetics. Within the Tupi culture, cannibalism is also associated with nourishing and invigoration, as observed by essayist Michel de Montaigne, writing about a Tupi captive by an enemy tribe:

> I have a song made by one of these prisoners, wherein he bids them "come all, and dine upon him, and welcome, for they shall withal eat their own fathers and grandfathers, whose flesh has served to feed and nourish him […]

> (Montaigne, 1877, no page)

The relationship between the cannibalism of the Tupi, ancestry and the transference of strength to those who eat the flesh also features in the poem *I-Juca Pirama* by Brazilian writer Gonçalves Dias. In this short narrative poem, a Tupi warrior is made prisoner by Timbira rivals and is shamed both by his captors and by his father for crying when faced with his death, out of fear of leaving his elderly father alone in the world. The Timbira decide to let him go back to his father, but the Tupi warrior promises to return and meet his fate after his father dies, which the Timbira reject, by saying, 'we do not want/with vile flesh to weaken the strong' (I-Juca Pirama, Canto V, my translation).[x] The Tupi returns to his own village, but when his father learns that he was released by the Timbira, he takes his son back to his prisoners to undo his shame. The Timbira then reinforce the fact that they will not eat the young Tupi man because of his cowardice:

> I will do nothing that you ask:
> for your son is pusillanimous and weak!
> It would dishonour the triumph

> of the worthiest warrior tribes
>
> to shed his ignoble blood:
>
> he cried out of cowardice;
>
> we, the strong Timbiras,
>
> only make our meals out of heroes

(I-Juca Pirama, Canto VII, my translation)[xi]

Therefore, being eaten by an enemy is seen as a high honour and a testament to one's strength and valour by the precolonial societies of Brazil, which subverts the taboo of cannibalism as an immoral act. Moreover, the poem itself cannibalises the poetic traditions received from Europe by presenting its narrative in decasyllabic and alexandrine verses, but with a distinctive Tupi-song rhythm when read in the original Brazilian Portuguese. One more aspect of the Brazilian anthropophagous movement that is noteworthy here is its 'critique of capitalism and anthropocentric thinking' (Cisneros, 2011, p94). In her study on Ecocannibalism, Odile Cisneros reads the 'cannibal as a natural *recycler* devouring and reproducing cultural products, cultural compost' (Cisneros, 2011, p99, original emphasis), grounding her argument precisely on the way Oswald de Andrade and other Brazilian modernists repurposed the European canon.

Nourishing and *repurposing* emerge as operations of the Cannibalism (C) stage of the SDD. Metaphorical cannibalistic nourishment within the SDD is accomplished via inviting actors to feed on information they extracted from the two previous stages of the process to create something new, either collectively or individually, as applied with the Body, Language and Food Cultural Texts. The actors also used information extracted from the work done on one Cultural Text to nourish the work done on another and fed on each other's input, thus applying a procedure that echoes the precolonial Brazilian belief that consuming someone else's strength will make the person who eats it stronger. The SDD process applied to the Objects saw the actors repurposing each other's Cultural Texts in stage (C), retaining the essence of the objects as extracted from the Appreciation (A) and Border-Crossing (B) stages but finding new ways of using the objects in the creation of devising material that departed from their original purpose. The third operation identified in stage (C) of the SDD was subversion,

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which is imbued with political meaning and reflects the aspect of the SDD design drawn from my exploration of my tacit knowledge of border systems, seeing the transgressive and subversive character of borders, particularly in my experience as a migrant who has tussled with the UK immigration system for nearly a decade. Emma Cox (2014) defines 'migration' as an encounter with foreignness, an experience which can be either individual or collective. She also discusses the many different formal categories of migrants, or non-citizens, that have resulted from the rise of bureaucratic systems and that form what Cox refers to as the *mythopoetics of migration*: accumulated visions of foreignness in the bureaucratic present. At the time of writing this thesis, the world is being ravaged by an aggressive viral pandemic and as a result, countries all over the world are closing their borders. The United Kingdom is undergoing the process of leaving the European Union, pushing for a more exclusionary visa system, the end of free movement and an increasingly hostile environment (Swinford, 2020; Tawiah, 2020). It is an uncomfortable time to be a migrant and not only I, but the actors who collaborated with this research project were also displaced as first- or second-generation migrants. In a sense, it could be said that it was the mythopoetics of migration that brought the group together. That said, and considering the categories of migrants mentioned above, Cox acknowledges that 'those migrants for whom there is nothing to celebrate are probably less likely to make (or have the means to make) theatre' (2014, p27), which puts our group in a privileged position in comparison to destitute migrants such as refugees, for example.

This privileged position means that while the SDD is propositioned as a countercolonial response to hegemonic theatrical practices, researching it cannot be fully considered an act of political subversion, despite my best cannibalistic efforts. Gayatri Spivak argues that the 'postcolonial migrant investigator is touched by the colonial social formations' (2010, p2124), further remarking that 'simply by being postcolonial or the member of an ethnic minority, we are not "subaltern"' (2010, p2125) and, beyond, that 'the long road to hegemony […] is absolutely to be desired' (2010, p2125). In this light, had I set out to propose a decolonial approach to theatremaking, denying all contribution, legacy and frameworks of hegemonic discourse and practices, my research would always have failed. I, the

researcher, can never be subaltern. I have positioned myself and my participants as such because of our practical condition as migrants, but, as indicated above, we are privileged in that we all chose to migrate in contrast to those who were forced to flee war or persecution. Additionally, in the methodology discussion in Chapter Two, I argued that although my decision regarding the format of this submission attempts to democratise knowledge, a level of privilege will always be required to engage with this research, be it in terms of access to technology, language or education. This is what Spivak means when she asserts that the subaltern cannot speak: the moment an opportunity for contributing to knowledge is seized, we resign our subalternity. As Spivak herself points out, however, this is not necessarily a bad thing; in fact, it should be aimed for. How, then, to aim for inserting Syncretic Theatre into hegemonic epistemologies whilst avoiding the aforementioned pitfalls of neo-colonisation? There is no single, straightforward or perfect answer to this question, but the following are some ways in which the research methodology and the SDD seek to at least mitigate any shortcomings of my countercolonial contribution.

Sabine Sörgel states that postcolonial performances are those which feature an anti-imperialist agenda or a political subversive strategy to reverse power dynamics and highlights the fact that postcolonial work 'seeks to activate its audiences whether they are readers or theatre-goers' (2015, p152). Regarding this latter point, I argue in favour of using unstructured conversations as one of my data gathering methods to 'activate' (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003) my collaborating actors and observers so their input was more meaningful and productive. As for the former point, I note that subversion is an operation of the SDD process, to which I return now. Emma Cox (2014) affirms that migration disrupts a nation's identity, as this tends to be defined by what it is not as well as by what it is, adding that this confusion only tends to grow as people migrate to cities at an astonishing rate, demanding to be accepted as co-members of a community. Migrant desire for dual cultural membership and migrant theatre located in a fragmented former colonial power are drivers of this inquiry, which may also have influenced the actors' choices of Cultural Texts as suggested in Chapter Four. The application of the SDD process with the Text Cultural Text focused on mythical stories, fairy

tales and poems that the actors received from their cultures and shared in the STL, strongly connected with childhood memories. In her work, Cox focuses on stories, particularly those revolving around mythical/canonical material used in the theatrical performances she analyses, created by migrants, locals, or a combination of both. The reason for this preference, Cox claims, is that myth is what enables identification between communities, or that which 'has the power to (temporarily) transform "them" into "us" and "us" into "them"' (2014, p32). Similarly, philosopher Susanne K. Langer considers myth to be 'a recognition of natural conflicts, of human desire frustrated by non-human powers, hostile oppression, or contrary desires; it is a story of the birth, passion, and defeat by death which is man's common fate' (1954, p143).

The representation of 'exile' is also discussed by Cox, which she believes to be less about transnational or intercultural politics, and more about existential/spiritual quests, or relationships between self and societies, which is also reflected in stage (A) of the SDD. During this initial stage, actors are encouraged to understand their Cultural Texts in relation to themselves, their intra-cultural influences and the engagement with extra-cultural others. Had those stories been left at that stage and not undergone the whole process culminating in their subversive re-interpretation in stage (C), there would be no countercolonial response in the form of devising material. Subverting established poems and fairy tales had a positive impact for the actors, but it was met with some resistance from one of the observers. Perhaps because this person did not share the transgressive experience of being a migrant, she relished in preserving traditions rather than allowing them to encounter and absorb foreign influences. Perhaps because she was also a citizen of the host, dominant, colonising and rule-making culture, she felt a stronger sense of ownership over her artistic production and a concomitant concern about erasure or undermining of its cultural sources.

A group of migrants repurposing the practices of established theatremakers from hegemonic cultures, such as the format of the intercultural theatre laboratory that gained notoriety with Jerzy Grotowski and exercises developed by Eugenio Barba, Julia Varley and Viola Spolin, taking the lead at the site of

a colonising culture, is a countercolonial, cannibalistic act. The SDD and its analysis provide a shift of perspective in the politics of knowledge production by displacing notions that could be perceived as weaknesses or undesirable (i.e. the condition of migrant and the savagery of cannibalism), turning them into plausible and productive approaches to theatremaking that succeed in providing a counterpoint to hegemonic, neo-colonial practices.

Intercultural Theatre: non-essentialist border crossings

In line with the characteristics of Syncretic Theatre delineated by Christopher Balme, Jan Assmann believes syncretism can be used as 'a framework in which individual cultures can become transparent without losing their identities' (1996, p36). Assmann states that non-essentialist approaches of syncretism have not yet been tested since Hellenic times, which I have accepted as a challenge. I built on Balme's system of strategies and Cultural Texts to design the SDD process and analyse it to understand how New Intercultural Theatre can operate in the context of a former colonial power. Focusing on labour instead of product, I aimed at uncovering further complexities of Syncretic Theatre, exploring it as a dramaturgical form and theatremaking working method. I shall now discuss how this study illuminates innovative insights into practice by offering a non-essentialist, borderly outlook, which helps with the understanding of the simultaneous existence of two or more semiotic systems in a theatrical piece, thereby facilitating the creation of devised syncretic theatre. Gayatri Spivak argues that 'it is not possible to be non-essentialist [because] the subject is always centered' (1990, p109), but it is possible to aim for non-essentialist representations. Thus, the SDD makes use of the idea of the centered subject to displace essentialist representations of culture as I shall explicate.

Appreciation, the first stage of the SDD, is constructed as an autoethnographic means for the actors to extract information from their own Cultural Texts. The first operation of stage (A) is introspection, which reflects Carolyn Ellis' (1991) sociological interactive introspection technique in the sense that it encourages active thinking from the actors about their own experiences and responses in a process assisted by a dialogue with the director-researcher. There are, however, two main differences

between Ellis' technique and the way introspection is addressed in the application of stage (A) of the SDD: firstly, Ellis' work focuses on emotions, whereas stage (A) focuses on understanding the theatrical potential of the Cultural Texts. Secondly, the data generated from Ellis' application of introspection is usually 'represented in the form of fieldnotes, or narratives' (1991, p32), whereas the information extracted from the introspective journey in stage (A) is represented in the form of physical exploration through movement, like in the [Body], [Language] and [Object] Cultural Text exercises; a poetry reading and a storyboard, in the [Text] Cultural Text exercises; and an informal conversation over some shared food, in the [Food] Cultural Text exercise; or not even expressed at all and left in the realm of introspection, again with the Body Cultural Text exercises, as a kind of reservoir that the actors can dip into should it become necessary. This work, like the personal narrative and native ethnography tools I have employed to contextualise the study and inform the design of the SDD, draws on autobiographical experiences but becomes autoethnographic for it goes beyond an 'uncritical gathering of stories' (Trahar, 2009, no page) and connects 'the personal to the cultural' (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p739).

Theatre educator and director Viola Spolin, whose work on improvisational games has influenced theatremakers the world over since the 1960s, makes a strong case for physicalisation as a means of representation:

> A player can dissect, analyse, intellectualise, or develop a valuable case history for his part, but if he is unable to assimilate it and communicate it physically, it is useless within the theatre form. […] The theatre is not a clinic, nor should it be a place to gather statistics
>
> (Spolin, 1963, p16)

Though Spolin's work itself is in no way related to autoethnographic practice and in fact precedes the coining of the term Autoethnography by a decade, her focus on awakening actors' self-identity is congruent with the objective of facilitating the actors' introspective experience. Ellis (1991) also recognises the usefulness of introspection regarding responses to external stimuli, and Ellis & Bochner acknowledge the fact that autoethnographers 'use the "self" to learn about the other' (2000, p741).

These ideas find parallels in two other operations of stage (A): engagement with extra-cultural and intra-cultural others, serving the purpose of establishing a complex, layered understanding of the actors' own Cultural Texts, centering them as subjects of their own exploration.

Erika Fischer- Lichte's (2010) 'interweaving of cultures' recognises that, as citizens of a globalised world, our daily lives are progressively permeated with aesthetic and political experiences that create liminal, fluid spaces for theatrical performances. Fischer-Lichte follows the legacy of anthropologist Victor Turner (1982), who studied liminality in the threshold between ritual and performance in collaboration with Richard Schechner, establishing a paradigm in Performance and Theatre Studies. Whereas Turner's definition of liminality as the 'suspended existence of belonging neither here nor there [and] "between and betwixt"' (Panourgiá & Marcus, 2008, p2) may be reflected in a borderly space, it can be argued that Turner's, Schechner's and Fischer-Lichte's works have a hegemonic and culturally insensitive character, for they place emphasis on the exotic character of ritual performance. Thus, reclaiming and countercolonising the liminal space, reframing it as 'borderly' was necessary to facilitate the shift in perceptions and information overlay that displace essentialist ideas in stage (B), which in turn can yield non-essentialist representations in stage (C) of the SDD. Though without explicit references to liminality, Uruguayan literary critic Ángel Rama connects Latin American geographic borders with the rise of hybridity in literature as a result of an 'effort of spiritual decolonisation' (2008, p25, my translation).[xii] Rama elaborates further, writing about these borders as spaces which work

> simultaneously with both cultural sources that come into contact. There would be, therefore, losses, selections, rediscoveries, and incorporations. These four operations are concomitant and all happen within a general re-structuring of the cultural system […]

> (Rama, 2008, p. 47, my translation)[xiii]

These considerations about the syncretic process that happens in physical spaces where cultures come together attest to borderly spaces being an ideal working environment for developing syncretic theatre, which is why I turned to my place of birth for inspiration; according to Brazilian sociologist

Fábio Régio Bento, a place 'where differences are understood as possibilities of advantageous reciprocity' (2012, p23, my translation).[xiv] Régio Bento further discusses the utopian and romantic notion of a world without borders, arguing that this is impossible to achieve and that there is no evidence that such a world would necessarily be better than ours. Those of us displaced through choice or by force, are constantly in transition, which is why we feel attracted to the margins and seek mobile and mutable identities. By reframing a 'neutral' liminal space as an 'active' borderly space which unites and separates at the same time, the SDD process provides a means of encounter where actors and their Cultural Texts can simultaneously be recognised as equal and other, thereby challenging essentialist representations in devising.

Another stage (B) operation located through the STL analysis was bartering, a reasonably straightforward procedure that reflects one of the most ideologically complex concepts in this study. Bartering is one of the core practices of the Odin Teatret and the International School of Theatre Anthropology (ISTA), which originated during the Odin's travels in the 1970s when the company's performances were exchanged for local groups' cultural tokens and events (Ledger, 2012; Watson, 1993). Commentators have raised concerns about the potentially neo-colonial aspect of the barter due to the inevitably skewed power dynamics between Western observers and subaltern cultures (Barba & Watson, 2002; Arnold, 1996), and bartering is heavily associated with the colonisation of Brazil by the Portuguese, seen unfavourably as a primitive, low-value economic system (Serra, 2003) and as a gateway to slavery (Marchant, 1942) and corruption, likened to bribery (Barreto, 2017). In fact, considered to be the very first written document on Brazilian history, the letter written by Pero Vaz de Caminha to King Manuel I of Portugal about the first colonisers' arrival in the northeastern shores of Brazil contains a description of barters with the natives (Vaz de Caminha, 1500). Though this account serves to ground the aforementioned negative interpretations of bartering, I would like to offer a contrapuntally constructive outlook, by pointing out the intercultural communicative efficacy and friendly aspect of the barter as described by Vaz de Caminha:

> And the Captain-General sent Nicolau Coelho ashore on a barge to see that river. And as soon as he left to go there, some men came to the beach, first two, then three, in such a way that when the barge reached the river mouth, there were already eighteen or twenty men there. They were olive-skinned, all naked, with nothing to cover their shameful parts. In their hands, they held bows and arrows. They all came straight to the barge; and Nicolau Coelho signalled for them to lay down their bows. And so they did. There was no productive speech or understanding from them there because of the waves breaking on the coast. He simply gave them a red biretta and a linen cap from his head, plus a black hat. One of them gave him a hat made with long bird feathers with a small top of red and brown feathers such as those of a parrot; and another gave him a large bunch of small white beads that look like dew drops, which I believe the Captain has sent to Your Highness […]

(Vaz de Caminha, 1500, my translation)[xv]

The way the natives of Pindorama (the name by which the land was known to precolonial indigenous populations) peacefully agreed to lower their weapons, accept the items offered by the stranger on the boat, and retribute by offering some of their own wares indicates a level of mutual understanding based on finding common ground between their respective cultures. Though they could not communicate by speaking, the natives of both cultures recognised the act of the exchange, even if the significance of this act may have been different, in that the barter meant something of economic value to the Portuguese and a social convention to the Tupi, which remains an aspect of their culture to this day (Domingues D'Avila, 2010). Therefore, the focus on bartering as a peaceful exchange of Cultural Texts that happens willingly to facilitate intercultural communication, counters the negative connotations given to this practice in the colonial discourse.

Thus, the SDD offers an opportunity for centering actors as their own ethnographers through stage (A), which prevents Othering and Exoticism. Operations in stage (B) further mitigate the risk of romanticising their Cultural Texts and producing essentialist representations in their devising material. As a counterpoint to previously researched liminal spaces in terms of psychic trance-ritual performances, which offer invisible and individual experiences and limit the representations to what is perceived as exotic, a borderly space offers real, collective and concrete creative possibilities. Finally, the operation of bartering also present in stage (B) provides a paradigmatic shift similar to that which the term 'syncretism' underwent, from pejorative connotations linked to slavery and violence

in the colonial period to a positive means for cultural exchange based on effective intercultural communication and mutual respect.

Dramaturgy/Devising: cartographic translations

I have availed of Anna Fenemore's (2012) four processes of devised performance as inspiration for a research apparatus rooted in theatrical practice, whilst observing that there are no fixed procedures for devising as collective creation takes as many forms as there are ensembles working this way. There is, however, an overall idea of a timeline for a devised project, which, in general terms, is reflected in the Fenemore-inspired research apparatus. In this respect, I have noted that the SDD is a process to be used in the initial phase of a devising project, pertaining to the first and second arms of the research apparatus. These are (1) Anticipation, Imagination and Projection, and (2) Playing, Pretense and Pleasure. Stage (A) of the SDD works with arm (1) of the apparatus, in that the actors activate their imagination to explore their Cultural Texts and anticipate and project the theatrical potential of the information extracted through practical exercises that facilitate this exploration. Stages (B) and (C) work with arm (2), in that the actors get to play with each other's Cultural Texts in stage (B) and generate material such as physical scores or short scenes in stage (C) by combining the information extracted from stages (A) and (B). The SDD has a flexible feature that allows it to be folded, affording the actors the opportunity to cross-over Cultural Texts and information extracted from different stages, which, to some extent, can be argued as pertaining to arm (3) of the research apparatus: Direction, Repetition and Insistence. This fold can be used to aid the extraction of information, generate more material and add layers to what is being created through repetition and insistence, but it does not necessarily create an opportunity for directing, which should come in the next phase of the devising project. Arm (4) of the research apparatus, Editing, *Mise-en-scène* and Composition, also lies beyond the scope of the SDD as it currently stands. Though some decisions regarding the selection and arrangement of the information extracted from stages (A) and (B) into devising material in stage

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(C) must be made, a systematic approach to editing the generated material for public performance has not yet been researched.

In Chapter Three, I drew a parallel between the four types of interaction for intercultural communication identified by Cheung (2014) and the strategies used to incorporate Cultural Texts into syncretic plays identified by Balme (1999). Each of the SDD stages works through specific operations to yield information, in stages (A) and (B), and devising material in stage (C). The operations in stage (C) have parallels with Cheung's interactions and Balme's strategies as shown in Fig. 31, but the operations in stages (A) and (B) do not. This is because Cheung and Balme focus on product, whereas, as previously stated, this inquiry attends to labour in order to articulate Syncretic Theatre as a dramaturgical form and theatremaking method, which is reflected in stages (A) and (B) of the SDD, respectively. These unprecedented connections enlarge the theoretical understanding of Syncretic Theatre and the analysis of the operations of the SDD presents a new framework for the study of Intercultural Theatre through a lens of Dramaturgy.

SDD OPERATIONS		CHEUNG'S INTERACTIONS	BALME'S STRATEGIES
Appreciation (A)	Introspection	-	-
	Cultural Texts and extra-cultural others	-	-
	Cultural Texts and intra-cultural others	-	-
Border-Crossing (B)	Borderly space	-	-
	Barter	-	-
	Interference	-	-
	Influence	-	-
Cannibalism (C)	Nourishing	Assimilation	Effacement
	Repurposing	Adaptation	Adaptation of ritual
			Dance as counterdiscourse

			Interference with proscenium stage
	Subverting	Cultural Convergence	Incorporating ritual
			Relexification
			Resemanticisation
			Convergence of dance and acting

Fig. 31 – SDD operations compared to Cheung's interactions and Balme's strategies.

The other aspects I wish to consider are the metaphors of maps and itineraries that have permeated this thesis. I have explained the inspiration taken from Michel de Certeau's (1984) analysis of cartographic processes, suggesting a shift from representing flat, two-dimensional maps to finding ways of accounting for the trajectories that resulted in the knowledge that produces the map. The SDD achieves this thanks to its flexible character, as a process which can be applied sequentially, following the A-B-C order of the three stages, or cumulatively, by folding the process to layer the material. The fold was a recurring feature throughout the STL, as was evidence of the relationship of dependency between the three stages, such as the fact that the results from the provocative playfulness of the influence and interference operations of stage (B) could only be articulated through the work done in stage (C), as was the case with the [Text] Cultural Text exercises. Moreover, methodologically speaking, the active engagement of actors in critically debating the application of the SDD with the observers demonstrates that the process also yielded new epistemologies for the actors. In fact, it can be argued that the three stages of the SDD also find correspondence in Robin Nelson's (2013) three modes of knowing in terms of the actors' experience, which further accounts for the consideration of individual itineraries in a theatremaking process. Stage (A) invites reflection on the actors' embodied, tacit knowledge, stage (B) invites them to draw on their empirical, practical knowledge to find ways of interpreting their given and received Cultural Texts, and finally, stage (C) invites them to use the information extracted from their established frameworks to curate and create new material, as illustrated in Fig. 32 below:

Nelson's three modes of knowing	Actors' Experience	SDD stages
Know-what	Embodied experience Tacit knowledge	*Appreciation*
Know-how	Empirical knowledge Practice-based	*Border-Crossing*
Know-how	Academic knowledge Conceptual frameworks	*Cannibalism*

Fig. 32 – Nelson's modes of knowing, actors' experience and the SDD

The SDD as an outcome of this study is a transferable and replicable process, which other theatremakers interested in devising original pieces of syncretic theatre can use. It contributes to dramaturgical and devised theatre practice as a process that considers the collective journeys of the ensemble when creating a piece of theatre, introducing systematic operations for generating devised material through the translation of syncretism into theatrical technique. The following chapter concludes Volume I with final considerations and recommendations for further research.

✦ Conclusion: The Ball of Yarn

(1,934 words)

Here we are. I tied the first loose end of my thread of yarn to a dedication at the outset of this document, to Augusto Omolù, who first introduced me to the work of Eugenio Barba with the Odin Teatret and the International School of Theatre Anthropology, and showed me that I could draw on my experience growing up on a porous border to nourish my theatre work in Scotland, a foreign country with a fragmented identity that I could appreciate. As a Latin American theatre director living and working in Scotland, I wanted to take advantage of my positioning and understanding of the phenomenon of syncretism to embark on a research project expanding the understanding of Syncretic Theatre, encompassing devised as well as text-based work. The academic works and theatrical practices reviewed stem from Postcolonial and Decolonial movements throughout the second half of the 20th century, which is why I wondered what would come next after the turn of the millennium. An encounter with a conversation between Mexican artist Luz de la Rosa and Indian artist Roshni Rustomji (2012), a south-to-south exchange which gave me the term Countercolonial and made me think of ways to use my own heritage in unlocking new dramaturgical tools and processes to devise intercultural theatre, in a horizontal dialogue with current hegemonic practices while inserted in the context of a former colonising nation.

At the intersection between Practice-as-Research and autoethnographic inquiry, I turned to my citizenship of an already colonised nation growing up on the border between two countries to look for ways of harnessing the benefits of inhabiting an interstitial space to create a process that I have called Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising (SDD). My lived experience combined with my knowledge of established theory and the development of my own praxis have allowed me to find ways of creating adequate conditions for a syncretic cultural exchange to happen in the devising room. The Pretend SDD designed through the convergence of these three modes of knowing was then realised through practice in a Syncretic Theatre Laboratory (STL): three staggered weeks of workshops with actors from

different cultural backgrounds, involving exercises to try out the process, conversations between the actors and observers, and a Work Demonstration for an invited audience.

What the SDD process offers is a change of perspective. The particular exercises and techniques employed in the STL were not new. They were created or documented by Viola Spolin, Julia Varley, Carlos Simioni, Jessica Swale, or myself, sometimes in collaboration with actress Elizabeth Sogorb, but their application within the SDD process leveraged different aspects of these techniques to create novel patterns and promote a type of Gestalt shift. The latter is a switch in the way we see, perceive or interpret something 'now as one thing, now as another' (Wittgenstein, 1958, p193). Ludwig Wittgenstein explains this shift in his study of aspect perception by using a drawing that can be seen either as a rabbit or as a duck, depending on how the viewer focuses on different aspects, as seen in Fig. 33:
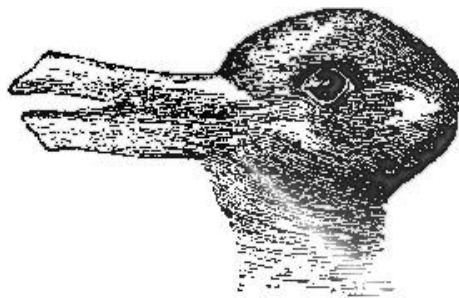
Fig. 33 – The 'duck-rabbit'. By Joseph Jastrow (1899), later adapted by Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953). (source: The duck rabbit illustration, accessed 23/09/2019)

Therefore, the existing theatre exercises employed in the STL were repositioned through their application within the SDD process and focused on extracting information with theatrical potential from the actors' Cultural Texts to enable different ways of perceiving, interpreting and creating – operations reflected in the three stages of the SDD, which also represents a shift in aspect perception from *reading* theatre to *making* theatre through culture.

The SDD is a plausible, replicable and transferable process that theatre practitioners and ensembles interested in devising their own pieces of Syncretic Theatre can use. It has three stages: Appreciation (A), Border-Crossing (B), and Cannibalism (C), each with specific operations that should be minded

when selecting or designing exercises to apply the process. Stage (A) works for extracting information from the actors' Cultural Texts by means of introspection and dialogue with extra-cultural and intra-cultural others. Stage (B) works for shifting perceptions and overlaying information by the creation of borderly spaces, opportunities for bartering, influencing and interfering with each others' Cultural Texts. Stage (C) works for generating devising material in the form of physical scores or short scenes, by using or repurposing the information yielded from stages (A) and (B) to nourish something new or to subvert something established. The three stages can be applied in linear progression to one Cultural Text at a time, or stages can be folded to facilitate the extraction of information, add layers to existing information, or generate more material.

The SDD pertains to the initial phase of a devising project, in which large amounts of unedited material are usually generated as starting points. This material then undergoes a second phase of editing, shaping and directing before it moves to a final phase of rehearsing for public performances. The choice of Cultural Texts (Body, Language, Object, Text and Food) used as stimuli in the STL was adapted from the categories identified by Christopher Balme (1999), which also included Ritual, Dance, and Space and Spectators, which I have not investigated in this inquiry. The reason I did not include Ritual and Dance in the STL was an anticipated risk of actors Othering themselves and succumbing to Theatrical Exoticism by reaching for stereotypes. Thus, more time and space are necessary to investigate how Ritual and Dance can be explored through the SDD without the danger of generating essentialist representations. Furthermore, I identified Music as a separate Cultural Text from Ritual and Dance to be explored in future applications of the SDD, since I only used it as background for the exercises in the STL. In addition, a point about actor training was raised at the Work Demonstration, when Observer 13 identified a clear distinction between Sara and 'the European actors'' ([WD Conversation, 13:54](#)) performance styles, which shows that there is scope for considering Training as a Cultural Text. As such, my first and second recommendations for further research are to investigate these untapped Cultural Text categories and explore how the SDD may be expanded to encompass a whole devising journey, which could be achieved by continuing to fold stages (A), (B) and (C) or adding

further stages to the process through to the finished product, incorporating Balme's category of Space and Spectators, which I also left out in this instance. In the event of further research to expand the SDD to the editing and performing phases of devising, I also recommend taking into account artistry and the assessment of its quality, perhaps as operations within the final stages of an expanded version of the SDD. I observed that Artistry was a recurring concern for Ádám throughout the STL, but given the focus of the SDD (as it currently stands) on generating material but not on refining it, articulating Artistry as a feature of the process was not appropriate. A final point regarding expanding the SDD is maintaining the Cultural Texts as stimuli but devising around a specific theme. In my narrative analysis, I observed that the [Food](#) and [Text](#) Cultural Texts the actors used were strongly connected to childhood memories, which was not considered a hindrance but it would be interesting to see how a defined theme impacts the choices of Cultural Texts the ensemble brings to share in the room.

I explained my issue with the terms Western and Non-Western theatre in Chapter One and I established the search for an extra-hierarchical devising room as one of the values underpinning the inquiry. Another word with which I have often wrestled while conducting this study is *empower*. The Cambridge Dictionary defines this verb as 'to give someone official authority or the freedom to do something' and lists *allowing* and *permitting* as synonyms (2020, online). There is nothing powerful about being in a position of needing to be given permission by someone else. *Empowering* has a direct translation to *empoderar* in my native Brazilian Portuguese, but I associate it more closely to the word *alforriar*: historically, when a slave owner freed a slave, usually by means of a financial settlement (Ramos, 2007). It sounds passive, subjugating, and hierarchical. Thus, *empowering* the actors did not suit the inquiry so I sought to *activate* them as collaborators by framing their participation as invitations, involving them in the decision-making process about their own Cultural Texts, and holding unstructured and unmediated group conversations in which the actors could debate horizontally with me and with the observers. This led to new epistemologies for the actors, who learned to articulate the SDD process through actively experiencing it and reflecting about it, not through being taught. This is also valuable in terms of proposing a new research apparatus that locates knowledge through

synchronous first-person accounts and embodied experiences, distinctive from conventional historiographic studies of Intercultural Theatre based on third-person accounts and archival documentation. I do not, however, offer any reflection on the director's experience throughout the inquiry, as per the decentering strategy to achieve extra-hierarchical dynamics in the STL and to keep in line with the countercolonial framework as a response to the director-led Hegemonic Intercultural Theatre initiatives of the 20th century. That said, Heddon & Milling (2006) highlight that most of those influential practitioners are white and male, and it should be noted that all the postcolonial playwrights whose work is analysed by Christopher Balme (1999) are also male. I discuss my contrapuntal position as a migrant, but there is scope for investigating gender as a counterpoint in the making of Syncretic Theatre too, which is my third recommendation for further research.

Acknowledging the difficulty of rejecting colonial legacies outright, and my context as a somewhat privileged migrant that cannot claim a legitimate subaltern position, I offer the SDD as a countercolonial process that cannibalises hegemonic theatre practices not to destroy them, but to use their strengths to nourish something new. My methodological choice and the format of this account for the erstwhile forgotten labour and itineraries of navigators, presenting the SDD as a map to be read in linear progression in Volume I and an installation of vectoral journeys that can be accessed in a non-linear way in Volume II, foregrounding Syncretic Theatre as a dramaturgical form and theatremaking working method, in addition to its conventional understanding as a form of onstage representation.

Coda: the bowsprit

I concluded this thesis during the global pandemic caused by COVID-19. At the time of writing, the UK has been intermittently in lockdown for over 12 months and although there is progress with vaccinations and some restrictions are being lifted, there is no indication that live theatre as we know it will return for some time (see Snow, 2020; Lewis, 2020) and long-established venues have been forced to make redundancies or go into administration (see Masso, 2020a; Bakare, 2020a; Bakare, 2020b). The Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising was developed with people together in a room, sharing stories, memories, touch and food. We may not be able to do that again in the near future, but I believe that the operations at the core of the SDD can still be applied for intercultural and intermedia artistic collaborations within this digital and socially distant present. We just need to allow ourselves moments of introspection to figure out how to dialogue with intra- and extra-cultural others to negotiate borderly spaces and bartering. Then we can see how we can influence and interfere with the media we currently have available, nourish ideas that can be repurposed in new formats and subvert the established concepts of what live theatre should be like.

✸ Glossary of key terms

Appreciation	Usually, the first stage of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising process, which focuses on helping actors locate and understand their Cultural Texts.
Border-Crossing	Usually, the second stage of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising process, which focuses on inviting actors to exchange Cultural Texts.
Cannibalism	Usually, the third stage of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising process, which focuses on encouraging actors to create new material or subvert existing material by combining Cultural Texts.
Cultural Text	Individual elements that form part of a culture and can only be fully understood within that culture.
Devising	An approach to creating theatre collaboratively, using stimuli or starting points but not necessarily beginning or ending with a text. Working methods vary greatly between devising artists and companies, but devising projects usually comprise at least three phases: generation of material, refining the material and rehearsing for performance.
Dramaturgy	A complex process and skill pertaining to theatremaking, which can be understood as researching, writing, editing, facilitating, translating, or shaping a theatrical piece, among others. It is commonly used to aid devising, playwriting and directing, increasingly so in the 21st century.
Information	Facts, stories, sensations, images extracted from applying the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising.
Interactions	In Martha P. Y. Cheung's work, the procedures employed by translators to render intercultural communications between source and target texts.
Mainstays	Three main fields of knowledge serving to guide the inquiry and to evaluate the SDD
Material	What results from applying the Cannibalism stage of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising, usually represented as a short scene or physical score.
Operations	In the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising, the procedures employed by the actors to extract information from the Appreciation and Border-Crossing stages, and generate material in the Cannibalism stage.
SDD Stage	Each of the three parts of the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising, which can be applied in a linear sequence or folded back and re-applied to generate more material or extra layers.
Strategies	In Christopher Balme's work, the procedures employed by postcolonial theatremakers to stage syncretic plays.
Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising	A three-stage process for devising syncretic theatre, pertaining to the generative phase of a devising project.
Syncretic Theatre	A dramaturgical form, a theatremaking working method and a means of onstage representation whereby culturally heterogenous signs and codes are merged together.
Syncretic Theatre Laboratory	A series of workshops designed to apply the Syncretic Dramaturgy for Devising in practice.
Syncretism	A type of fusion of cultures based on similarities and which allows each culture to retain its identity while also displaying elements from another culture.
Values	Ideological principles attached to the three mainstays that underpin the inquiry and steer the SDD towards its aims

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[i] I capitalise the term Intercultural Theatre when I refer to it as a field of knowledge, and use it in lower case (intercultural theatre) when I mean culturally hybrid theatre forms. The same applies to the term Syncretic Theatre, capitalised when referred to as an object of scholarly study, but written in lower case when it appears in the text as a theatrical practice.

[ii] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'A última experiência humana será, certamente, uma experiência de fronteira, entre a vida e a morte' (Régio Bento, 2012, p17)

[iii] Original citation in Chilean Spanish: '[…] a todo nivel evita desesperadamente la sistematización, también es cierto que sus escritos, sus constantes trueques y talleres, contribuyen a establecerlo como paradigma.' (De Toro, 1988, p94).

[iv] Original citation in Chilean Spanish: '¿cuándo el Odin Teatret será desconstruído a su vez, de la misma forma que éste viene descontruyendo toda la práctica teatral moderna?' (De Toro, 1988, p94).

[v] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: '[…] Hamlet Sincrético me fez acreditar que eu podia ser universal. Nesta nossa sociedade colonizada, sabemos que a universalização é um privilégio branco.' (Glau Barros quoted in Oliveira & Lopes, 2019, p42)

[vi] The correct Maori name for a white New Zealander is *pakeha*.

[vii] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'em vez de um ethos nacional típico do miolo dos Estados, manifestam um ethos diferente, binacional, ethos fronteiriço de fronteira integrada. Um quase Estado, peculiar, de dois Estados distintos, integrados aos seus dois Estados de partida, Brasil e Uruguai, e com uma população maior que a população do menos Estado do mundo, o Estado do Vaticano.' (Régio Bento, 2012, p23)

[viii] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'Só a Antropofagia nos une.' (Andrade, 1928, online)

[ix] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'desenvolver a presença do ator, ou seja, seu corpo vivo e dilatado.' (Simioni, 2012, p57)

[x] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: '[...] não queremos/com carne vil enfraquecer os fortes' (I-Juca Pirama, Canto V)

[xi] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'Nada farei do que dizes/É teu filho imbele e fraco!/Aviltaria o triunfo/da mais guerreira das tribos/derramar seu ignóbil sangue:/Ele chorou de cobarde;/nós outros, fortes Timbiras/só de heróis fazemos pasto' (I-Juca Pirama, Canto VII)

[xii] Original citation in Uruguayan Spanish: 'esfuerzo de descolonización espiritual' (Rama, 2008, p25)

[xiii] Original citation in Uruguayan Spanish: 'simultáneamente con las dos fuentes culturales puestas en contacto. Habría pues pérdidas, selecciones, redescubrimientos e incorporaciones. Estas cuatro operaciones son concomitantes y se resuelven todas dentro de uma reestructuración general del sistema cultural [...]' (Rama, 2008, p47)

[xiv] Original citation in Brazilian Portuguese: 'onde as diferenças são compreendidas como possibilidades de reciprocidade vantajosa' (Régio Bento,2012, p23)

xv Original citation in Portuguese: 'E o Capitão-mor mandou em terra no batel a Nicolau Coelho para ver aquele rio. E tanto que ele começou de ir para lá, acudiram pela praia homens, quando aos dois, quando aos três, de maneira que, ao chegar o batel à boca do rio, já ali havia dezoito ou vinte homens. Eram pardos, todos nus, sem coisa alguma que lhes cobrisse suas vergonhas. Nas mãos traziam arcos com suas setas. Vinham todos rijos sobre o batel; e Nicolau Coelho lhes fez sinal que pousassem os arcos. E eles os pousaram. Ali não pôde deles haver fala, nem entendimento de proveito, por o mar quebrar na costa. Somente deu-lhes um barrete vermelho e uma carapuça de linho que levava na cabeça e um sombreiro preto. Um deles deu-lhe um sombreiro de penas de ave, compridas, com uma copazinha de penas vermelhas e pardas como de papagaio; e outro deu-lhe um ramal grande de continhas brancas, miúdas, que querem parecer de aljaveira, as quais peças creio que o Capitão manda a Vossa Alteza [...]' (Vaz de Caminha, 1500, no page)