UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Globalisation in David Greig's Theatre

Space, Ethics and the Spectator

Verónica Rodríguez Morales

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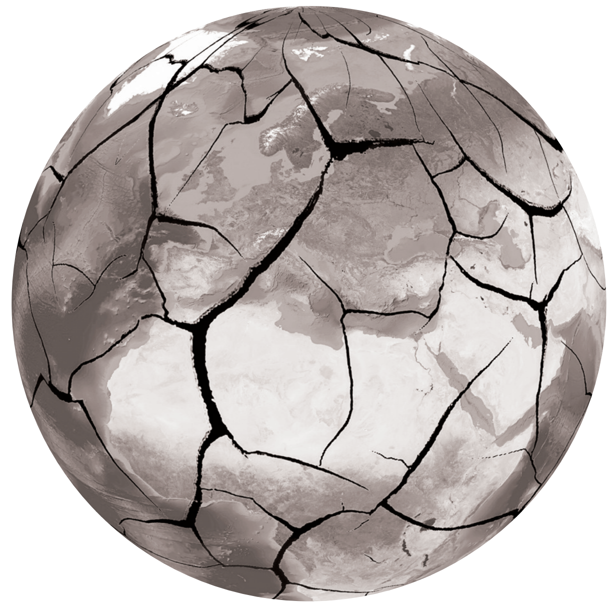
Globalisation in David Greig's Theatre:

Space, Ethics and the Spectator



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In loving memory of Mariano Rodríguez, my grandfather

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Abstract

The present PhD thesis, entitled “Globalisation in David Greig’s Theatre: Space, Ethics and the Spectator”, aims to contribute to the field of contemporary British drama and theatre studies in the form of an extended monographic study of Greig’s theatre and globalisation with a particular focus on a triad of elements: space, ethics and the spectator. The thesis’s corpus spans two decades, from the 1990s to the present time. It examines *Europe* (1994), *One Way Street* (1995) [both under “Europe Plays”], *The Architect* (1996), *The Cosmonaut’s Last Message to the Woman He once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (1999) [both under “Vertical Plays”], *Outlying Islands* (2002), *San Diego* (2003) [both under “Bird Plays”], *The American Pilot* (2005), *Damascus* (2007) [both under “Encounter Plays”], *Fragile* (2011) and *The Events* (2013) [both under “Here Plays”], all of which are seen as prominently responding to globalisation.

After articulating globalisation by drawing mainly on David Harvey, Zygmunt Bauman and Jean-Luc Nancy, the theoretical and methodological framework focuses on positioning Greig’s work in the context of contemporary British political theatre. Critical theories drawn from ethics (Emmanuel Levinas, Judith Butler), aesthetics (Nicolas Bourriaud, Claire Bishop, Jacques Rancière) and affect studies (Gilles Deleuze) are deployed in order to trace and attempt to explain the woundedness and porousness that characterises it. More specifically, the thesis lays out a theory of crosspollination between aesthetics, ethics and politics in order to address the co-work between world, playwright and play in Greig’s theatre, and uses affect theories in order to examine the transformative loop not just between world, playwright and plays, but also the spectator and the world-to-be-created (Nancy). It is claimed that by means of a complex experimentation with space, Greig’s plays represent all the above-named elements, including the spectator, as ‘holed’. This produces a sense of ‘aesthethic’ confounding and bleeding across that ultimately articulates the idea of an urgently interconnected ‘here’.

Thus, *Europe* blurs the borders between two Europes (old and new), immigrants and locals, financial elites and economic pariahs, among others. *One Way Street* focuses on walking and destabilises space-times in several multivalent ways. *The Architect* engages with architectures of power, which eventually explode to reveal, perhaps, a new spatial understanding. *Cosmonaut* ingrains urban and outer spaces in an above-below dialectics wherein characters, despite communication failures, are able to reach out of themselves horizontally. *Outlying Islands* continues delving into the idea of ‘here’ through bird

trajectories and the play's insistence on the pervasiveness of water and the fluidity of watching acts. *San Diego* stitches up the whole globe, so that impossible connections are disclosed between supposedly distant occurrences. *The American Pilot* probes the concept of 'here' further through an emphasis on the space of the stage, where the entire cast remain visible throughout the performance. Gaining confidence in the power of both story and theatricality, *Damascus* acknowledges the presence of both performers and spectators through the use of music on stage, story-telling devices and a character that, by always being 'here', connects the worlds of the play and the spectator and the one 'outside'. *Fragile* manages to render separate locations as one single space via Jack transcorporeally evoking all bodies and spaces and Caroline's/the audience's becoming part of that through the unusual conversation she/they establish(es) with Jack. Finally, *The Events* highlights 'here' via the highly a/effective strategy of having real local choirs participate in each performance so as to compellingly put forward the idea that events (albeit unevenly) always happen to all of us, in this cracked globe.

The thesis concludes by confirming that Greig's theatre does indeed respond to globalisation 'aesthethically', that is, by engaging with complex articulations of space that underline ethical questions by repeatedly and multifariously infusing the spectator with a sense of our irrepressible interconnectedness and co-responsibility.

And there were some called rich, who gathered to themselves the labour and the inventiveness of others, and kept them brutally in place

Victory, Howard Barker (1990: 170)

We cannot see that a bad man cannot move his good soul: but we should take it as the effect of a paralysis of the soul. And we have to struggle against it and subdue it. Such is the foundation of ethics

Corpus, Jean-Luc Nancy (2008: 151)

Somewhere our belonging particles
Believe in us. If we could only find them

“Implements in Their Places”, *Collected Poems*, W.S. Graham (1979: 236)

I. Introduction: A Shamanic Semionaut

In March 2013, I interviewed playwright David Greig in London in between rehearsals for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2013), a new musical directed by Sam Mendes. In the course of the conversation, Greig's talk about shamanism and shamans caught my attention. He said, for instance, "I'm interested in an exploration of traditional shamanic practice, by which I mean those circumstances when a community gets together in an enclosed space in order to heal someone", and then added, "I'm thinking of ritual enactions, like telling a story or exploring a theme using music, song, call and response, or rhythm in order to transform someone's body from sick to healed" (2016a: 96). Shamanism, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, refers to "[t]he primitive religion of the Ural-Altaic peoples of Siberia, in which all the good and evil of life are thought to be brought about by spirits who can be influenced only by shamans", and "also the beliefs, rituals, techniques, etc., associated with a shaman" (OED 1989: 160). A shaman is "a man or a woman who is regarded as having direct access to and influence in the spirit world which is usually manifested during a trance and empowers them to guide souls, cure illnesses" (OED 1989: 160).

At the time of the interview, Greig was working on *The Events* (2013; publ. 2013a and 2014a), a play that draws on Anders Breivik's bomb attack and mass shooting in Norway in 2011. When I eventually saw the play at the Young Vic in October 2013, the mention of shamanism and shamans in the interview became clearly connected for me to the reference in the play to a festival of spirituality and the enacting of a shamanic exercise. In addition, Greig's direct allusion to shamanism, I thought, might help me address a less obvious issue that had always been a methodological difficulty to the present thesis, namely, a sense of the spiritual across Greig's work.

Peter Nesteruk was one of the first, if not the first, to connect the notion of 'ritual' with Greig's work, by reference to several plays, including *Europe* (1994; publ. 2002a).[1] He argues that "[t]he tendency of ritual is […] to bring about the intensification of the 'now' experience. This experience is reality-forming for the audience, the implied readers, or witnesses, who in this light may be redefined as the non-acting participants of the play" (2000: 37). Dan Rebellato claims that "Greig's work displays a persistent thread of non-rationality, even of religious imagery" (2002a: 8; see also Inchley 2011: 68). In reference to *San Diego* (2003; publ. 2010a), Nadine Holdsworth states that "all the characters are yearning for a sense of self-worth […] that they try to fulfil through therapy, their careers or religious faith" (2013: 176). Greig himself told Skadi Riemer in relation to *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (1999; publ. 2002a) [hereafter *Cosmonaut*] that "the play is very much about the human relationship with god" (2003: 3), and talking about *Damascus* (2007; publ. 2007a), he claims that Elena, "the piano player, that's a bit like […] God or something" (2013b: 272). Other references include the name of the protagonist's estate in *The Architect* (1996; publ. 2002a), Eden Court; the religiosity of most characters in *The American Pilot* (2005; publ. 2010a); or Claire's job as a vicar in *The Events*.

This aspect of Greig's work may indeed be read within "a trend towards […] a yearning for spiritual meaning" (Sierz 2012a: 8). Like Nesteruk, Chris Megson has noted a recent "turn towards [a] metaphysical or 'spiritual' content" (2013: 48) in contemporary theatre, "grounded in the performative evocation of the moment, and […] constitutive of a reach for new values, new possibilities of living, beyond the grip of capitalism, religion and exhausted ideology" (2013: 34). In this context, spirituality is understood, in Ewan Fernie's terms, as "a structure of experience and possibility [whether god and/or religion are

[1] When two years are given following the title of one of Greig's plays, the first one refers to the premiere and the second to the publication date.

included in the equation or not], rather than a revelation of the one true dogma" (2005: 16). Megson perceptively opens his chapter with an example from Greig's *Pyrenees* (2005; publ. 2010a) since, indeed, Greig's theatre is pervaded by those performative moments of "temporal dissociation" (2013: 50) where the spiritual is evoked.

This turn towards spirituality should also be placed in a wider framework where, according to human geographer Nigel Thrift, "[o]ne of the most damaging ideas that has swept the social sciences and humanities has been the idea of a disenchanting modernity", whereby the "forces of magic, the sacred, ritual, affect, trance and so on" have been "consigned to oblivion" (2008: 65). However, Thrift argues that "the contemporary turn towards vitalist ways of thinking […] has made it much easier to see that the magic has not gone away" (2008: 65). This "magic" refers to "a set of practices which can be described as 'mystical'" (2008: 66), and which stand in a long Western tradition ranging from "Christian (both Anglican and Catholic)" beliefs and practices, "the nature mysticisms of Romanticism, as found in various forms of the sublime", "the numerous forms of Eastern thinking which have been imported into the West", "the cathartic elements of many types of performance" and "New Age religions […] contain[ing] an explicitly mystical component" (Thrift 2008: 66). To these, Thrift adds "the importance of ritual, understood as practices which offer a heightened sense of involvement", such as "music, dance, theatre, mime, art and so on" and "the rise of varying forms of bodily therapy" (2008: 66).

With these contexts in mind, then, in the present thesis shamanism is firstly a tool that is of help in addressing the spiritual in Greig's theatre. In addition, shamanism constitutes a resourceful concept to approach Greig's work at large. In accordance with the definitions offered above, Greig confirms that "[t]he more I read, the more I understand that I am not talking about shamans who are like earnest hippies in New York but, for instance, shamans like in Siberia" (2016a: 96). Yet, while "[t]he audience turns up for the experience

of healing, or witnessing the healing, or to see the ritual enacted" (Greig 2016a: 96), which is undoubtedly relevant to Greig's practice and his approach to the spectator, his reflections on shamans extend beyond a sense of spiritual restoration. "Siberian Shamans [sic]", he claims, "are theatrical people", and therefore shamanic practice is not just about healing, "it's also entertainment, in the way that, for example, music structures the ritual" (2016a: 96). Indeed, Greig's "understanding of traditional shamanic practice is that "it has connections with theatre, not just theatre in a solemn, spiritual sense but also in the silly, stupid, pure entertainment sense" (2016a: 96).

Thirdly, Greig claims that shamans "are very concerned about their performance, whether they're good or not, whether they are better than the shaman down the road" (2016a: 96). This 'performance' dimension brings to mind shamanism's connection with theatre and performance studies. For instance, Richard Schechner places shamanism within the framework of the wider term 'performance': "a 'broad spectrum' or 'continuum' of human actions ranging from ritual, play … the enactment of social, professional, gender, race, and class roles, and onto healing (from shamanism to surgery), the media, and the internet" (qtd. in Cull 2009: 2). Furthermore, one of the "three competing narratives of the history of performance art" identified by Peggy Phelan by reference to Thomas McEvilley includes shamans: "[p]erformance art represents a return to investigations of the body most fully explored by shamans and alternative practitioners of the healing arts (McEvilley 1998: 23-5)" (2005: 499).

Moving on to yet another sense of shamanism, Greig has also spoken of himself as being "the 'conduit'" for *Cosmonaut*, a play that was 'given' to him (2011b: 26). In his introduction to *Oedipus the Visionary* (2000; publ. 2005), Greig talks about the AIDS-ravaged Lesotho, where "[m]any people seek treatment from the local Mnagka or shaman" (2005: 3). An ill person in that context is described as "a victim of bad 'muti'", 'muti'

being “a multilayered word, which means medicine and luck, power and magic. It describes a force in the world which, although invisible and spiritual, is as real and powerful as electricity” (2005: 3-4). Furthermore, he has spoken about “this slightly shamanic thing that you need when you’re writing” (2013c: 174). During the creative process, Greig seems to push himself into states that are reminiscent of shamanic trances. As he puts it, “[y]ou need to be unselfconscious in the moment of writing […] Yet to be unselfconscious you have to trick yourself, it’s a constant effort, it’s an unbelievable effort to get into those states, so that’s the dance” (2013c: 174-5). Such a state, however, also involves pleasure; as Greig tells George Rodosthenous, “[w]hen I am writing and deep into a work there is a loss of selfhood and a concentration that is extremely intense and satisfying” (2011a: 4).

Pulling together the “shamanic thing” Greig sees as indispensable to writing with his comment as we walked towards a café – “I see words everywhere, don’t you see words everywhere?” (see also Greig 2013b: 277) – leads me on to the concept of the ‘semionaut’, which I borrow from art critic and curator Nicolas Bourriaud. Bourriaud defines semionauts as “inventors of pathways within the cultural landscape, nomadic sign gatherers” (2009: 39) who imagine “the links, the likely relations between disparate sites” (2002a: 18). The phrase ‘shamanic semionaut’, then, is meant to foreground the idea that Greig works as a sign gatherer who places himself as a conduit between the world and the work by transforming those signs into plays where links and likely relations between disparate sites are imagined. Why it might be urgent, paradoxically, to imagine links in a globalised, apparently hyper-connected scenario, and how Greig’s theatre painfully and beautifully articulates interconnectedness are the daunting questions the present thesis sets out to explore.

In the manner of Greig’s theatre itself: You are welcome.[2]

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[2] After this introduction had been written and revised, Greig published a lengthy post entitled “Butterfly Mind: An Adventure in Contemporary Shamanic Soul Retrieval…” in *Contemporary Theatre Review*’s online

1. 'Placing' David Greig[3]

Greig was born in Edinburgh in 1969. Shortly after, his family moved to Northern Nigeria, where his father worked in the construction of "the secretariats and parliament buildings and roads" of the country (Greig 2013d: 16). "Aged 13" (Greig 2007b: 55), and with an American accent which over the years has morphed into a fairly standard RP one, he went back to Scotland where he became involved with acting with the Edinburgh Youth Theatre (British Council n.d.), although he claims that he always knew he would be a writer (2010b). He studied drama and English at Bristol University. Right after the fall of the Berlin Wall (9 November 1989), Greig, Graham Eatough, Sarah Kane and Simon Pegg, among others, all students at Bristol University, were in the last days of rehearsals for a student production of Howard Barker's *Victory*: *Choices in Reaction* (1983) to be performed at the Students' Union on 16, 17 and 18 November. This is important not only because of the historical turning point, which has decisively shaped Greig's playwriting, but also because Barker left a deep imprint on Greig's theatrical sensibility.[4]

What could perhaps be termed the 'Bristol school' of theatre making includes not only Eatough, Greig, Kane and Pegg, but also pivotally Mark Ravenhill and Tim Crouch, among others.[5] As soon as Greig completed his degree, he returned to Scotland, where he

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"Interventions" section. It is "a performance-text adapted especially for the web" where he acknowledges shamanic processes as the source of his work as a playwright (Greig 2016b).

[3] 'Placing' appears in inverted commas because of Greig's uneasiness with 'being' unequivocally 'from' a 'place', possessing a definite sense of roots and unquestionably feeling at 'home'. "I don't really have anywhere that I'm from" (2011b: 15), he has claimed, or "[b]eing/not being Scottish is a matter of profound uncertainty for me" (2011a: 5). He has also talked about the paradox of "inhabit[ing] both ways of being: a powerful compulsive desire to be rooted and a powerful awareness that I'm not" (2011b: 15-6) and about the fact that "[t]he obviousness of not being at home makes me feel at home" (2011b: 29).

[4] As Eatough puts it, "Barker was a model for something that could still be radical, which I think was important for David" (2013: 9). Janelle Reinelt also refers to Barker as one of the strongest influences on Greig (see 2011: 216). On his part, Rebellato sees Barker's influence on Greig "in the abrupt shifts of register, the emphasis on imagination and possibility, and the contrapuntal style of clashing dialogue" (2002a: 1), to which could be added the rawness of emotion, the focus on violence, "the rotundity of language, a sense of the rhetorical – an understanding that what is to be spoken on stage is to be spoken out loud" (Greig 2007c: 75).

[5] Eatough notes some of the talents that Bristol University Drama Department has produced: "[i]t's interesting to think that in the space of only a few years that drama department at Bristol produced […] Ravenhill, […] Crouch, […] Kane, David Williams, […] Pegg, David Young, Myfanwy Moore, Suspect Culture, us…"

co-founded the theatre company Suspect Culture with Eatough (actor and artistic director) and Nick Powell (musician), which received funding from the Scottish Arts Council until 2009. When they produced their first show, based on Greig's *A Savage Reminiscence or How to Snare the Nimble Marmoset* (1991) [hereafter *Savage Reminiscence*], at Bristol University, they did not think they were starting a company (Eatough 2013: 10).

What led Greig to become a writer was his inability to become a director. Firstly, although "in the early Nineties, the fashionable thing to do was to direct radical versions of the classics" (Greig 2010b), he wanted to do something different. Secondly, he did not have enough money to buy the rights for new plays and soon realised that people wanted to pay him to write (see Greig 2010b). At that time, with "a friend" (2010d), "Greig took over […] the Roman Eagle Lodge, redesignating it 'Theatre Zoo'", where "his own play *Stalinland*, a devised show *The Garden*, *An Audience with Satan* […] and the second Suspect Culture show *And the Opera House Remained Unbuilt*" (Rebellato 2013a: 301) were performed. Since the early 1990s, he has written "performance texts" (Eatough and Rebellato 2013: 8) for and occasionally engaged in other kinds of artistic collaboration with Suspect Culture, and produced a vast variety of solo work, including his first main stage production, *Europe*, as well as plays for children, young people and adults, radio plays, adaptations, translations and a libretto for a musical. Greig's oeuvre also includes multifaceted collaborations, multi-author projects, curatorial projects, screenplays, television and visual art projects, and participation in Theatre Uncut, among others.[6]

(2013: 9). This is perhaps hardly surprising, since the link between Bristol University and drama goes back to the late 1940s: "Bristol University was the first to establish a drama department – in 1947 – and in 1960 it created the first professorship in drama" (Milling et al. 2005: 390).

[6] In Hannah Price's words, "Theatre Uncut is […] a politically motivated collective" (2011: 7), "a movement that began on March 19th [2011] […] made up of hundreds of theatre-makers joining voices" (2011: 8) against the cuts to welfare system spending by the Conservative-Liberal coalition government. Greig participated in Theatre Uncut with *Fragile* (2011; publ. 2011c) and *Dalgety* (2012a). For further information on Greig's work, see Clare Wallace's chronology (up to 2012) in her *The Theatre of David Greig* (2013: 235-38) and *The Suspect Culture Book* (2013), which includes detailed information about Suspect Culture's productions. For more information, see Greig's own website, <http://www.front-step.co.uk/>.

Greig's promiscuous, crosspollinating dedication to theatre has also taken him, for instance, to publishing academic essays, editing volumes, speaking at conferences and participating in other public events. He has also workshopped extensively from the early 2000s onwards as part of the Royal Court Theatre's international programme funded by the British Council, mainly in the Middle East and Northern Africa (see Aston and O'Thomas) and built artistic ties with a number of theatre makers in those regions over the years.[7] He has directed and acted in some of his own plays, and even featured as a 'character' in one of them, *San Diego*.[8] In June 2016, Greig became Artistic Director of the Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, whereby he continues to bridge the gap between being a playwright and other theatre-making jobs. He also has a passion for Scottish literature and for writing poetry. In his Twitter profile he describes himself as "[p]laywright, hill runner, ukulele player, amateur mycologist".

Although Greig notes that he feels he has not been "generally […] perceived as part of the new writing boom of the early 1990s" (2010b), he is indeed part of the stimulating effervescence in new writing for the theatre that spanned that decade. Greig clarifies, "[i]n fact, I debuted a couple of years before the 'in-yer-face' stuff and inherited my writing more from Martin Crimp or Caryl Churchill" (2007b: 57), and adds that "[a]t the time I felt sidelined, a little, particularly in Europe where they seemed very eager to stage blood and sperm plays" (2007b: 57).[9] Although Greig's plays do not fit the in-yer-face paradigm, his

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[7] These have led to his curating of 'New Work from the Arab World: One Day in Spring' (Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, and Òran Mór, Glasgow, 2012) and his crowd-funding campaign for the project *Welcome to the Fringe* (2015), whose aim was to allow a number of Palestinian and Israeli artists to showcase their work in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. For more information see, respectively, <https://www.nationaltheatrescotland.com/content/default.asp?page=home_OneDayinSpring> and <http://www.contemporarytheatrereview.org/2016/welcome-to-the-fringe/>.

[8] Greig's directing experience includes *Caledonia Dreaming* (1997), *Brewers Fayre* (2009; publ. 2010a) and *Midsummer* (2009; publ. 2009). He has also co-directed *San Diego* with Marisa Zanotti. Greig states: "I love directing. I used to direct at university and I became a writer partly in order to create work to direct" (2011a: 10). As to acting, he has played Ian in *Brewers Fayre*, for instance.

[9] As is well known, the controversial 'in-yer-face theatre' label was coined by Aleks Sierz in his seminal study *In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama Today* (2001). It refers to a particular 1990s sensibility that underpins extreme theatrical renderings of sex and violence.

critique of the excesses of neoliberal capitalism is something that he shares with several in-yer-face playwrights, such as Kane, Anthony Neilson, Joe Penhall, Ravenhill, Philip Ridley or Judy Upton, among others. Although moments of in-yer-face sensibility are woven into some of his plays (e.g. *San Diego*, among others), particularly in the sense of being "drawn to the depiction of psychological and emotional extremes" (Sierz 2012b: 57), he does perhaps fall more accurately into the broader category of 'new writing', characterised, among other features, by "the contemporary flavour of their language and themes" and "the provocative nature of its content or its experimentation with theatrical form" (Sierz 2012b: 54). Experimentation with theatrical form is pervasive throughout Greig's career. He has challenged 'traditional' theatrical form by experimenting, for instance, with theatre as ballad in *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* (2011; publ. 2011d), as farce in *The Monster in the Hall* (2011; publ. 2011e), as road movie in *Yellow Moon: The Ballad of Leila and Lee* (2006; publ. 2006a) [hereafter *Yellow Moon*], as protest in *Fragile*, and as tweets in his Twitter comedy *The Yes/No Plays* (2014), among others.[10]

At the same time, Greig should also be placed in the context of the contemporary "renaissance in Scottish playwriting" (Rebellato 2002b: ix), which includes playwrights Chris Hannan, Gregory Burke, Stephen Greenhorn, Zinnie Harris, David Harrower, Douglas Maxwell and Neilson, among others. In a section devoted to Scotland in *Modern British Playwriting: The 1990s*, Sierz states that "it was […] Greig who emerged as the country's most influential playwright" (2012b: 82). Scotland is a driving force in Greig's work, present through Scottish characters, evocations of the Scottish landscape, Scottish settings or in his fondness for Scottish audiences, among others. While Rebellato claims that "David's plays are always about Scotland" (2002b: xii), Greig states "I rarely write directly or recognizably about Scotland" (2007b: 55). This national side, especially in terms

[10] See Greig, *Yes/No Plays* <https://twitter.com/YesNoPlays> (accessed 15 December 2014) and Greig, 'David Greig: The Yes/No Plays', *National Collective*, 2 February 2014 <http://nationalcollective.com/2014/02/02/davidgreig-the-yesnoplays/> (accessed 15 December 2014).

of being part of the community of contemporary Scottish culture and politics – for he seems to feel he is one of its public spokespersons – is central to Greig. He was actively involved in the 1997 Scottish referendum, which his play *Caledonia Dreaming* was a response to, and he "campaign[ed] for a yes vote" (Carrell 2014: 1) for the 2014 referendum. As Greig explains, in the context of the 2014 referendum he wrote a "140-character comedy" (Carrell 2014: 2), which eventually became the above-mentioned Twitter project, *The Yes/No Plays*, in Rebellato's words a "cross-over creative-political live-digital piece" that is "delivered in miniature bursts on Twitter, mostly featuring two ungendered characters, a couple called Yes and No" (2016: 13). In the same context, he also co-curated, with David MacLennan, who died without seeing the project come to fruition, the *The Great Yes, No, Don't Know Five Minute: Created by Anyone, for an Audience of Everyone* (2014), a 24-hour-long theatre event formed by 180 5-minute pieces staged across Scotland, the UK, the world and the web, and produced by the National Theatre of Scotland, whose premiere took place on 23 June 2014.[11]

The fact that Greig is included in Methuen's *Modern British Playwriting 2000-2009* instead of the 1990s counterpart volume indicates that he has been canonised as a post-millennial playwright rather than a 1990s one. The present study sees Greig's 2000s canonisation as being saliently related to his north-of-the-border condition and his early 'problematic' relations with the Royal Court Theatre, which turned down some of his plays. Concerning northerliness, as Sierz puts it, "*Europe*, *The Architect*, *Caledonia Dreaming* and *The Speculator* – […] [were] clearly innovative and superbly written, yet failed to

[11] As Trish Reid puts it, "[a]t 5pm on 23 June 2014 the NTS, in collaboration with The Space, launched *The Great Yes No Don't Know 5 Minute Theatre Show*. [...] Over the next 24 hours around 840 participants, ranging in age from three months to 80, performed over 180 bite-size works inspired by the forthcoming referendum on Scottish independence. The show was multi-authored and explicitly intended to offer multiple perspectives on the referendum debate. Performances were streamed online and broadcast from various locations across Scotland and outside its borders: from East Timor, Los Angeles, Lancaster, Texas, Leeds, Istanbul, New Jersey, South Australia, Barcelona, New York, Mumbai and Paris" (2016a: 246). For more information on *The Great Yes, No, Don't Know Five Minute Theatre*: *Created by Anyone, for an Audience of Everyone*, see <http://fiveminutetheatre.com/full-schedule-and-live-theatre-hubs-announced/> (accessed 9 July 2014).

journey southwards" (2012b: 61). Sierz adds that "[o]nly occasionally, as with his *Cosmonaut* […], did metropolitan audiences get to see his plays" (2012b: 61). As for the Royal Court, in director Philip Howard's words, the institution "has consistently failed to support or estimate David" (2013: 211). The record goes from their rejecting *Europe* for the Theatre Downstairs (see Greig 2010b) to deciding not to stage *The American Pilot,* which eventually found a house with the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) in Stratford-upon-Avon. However, Greig has also had productive collaborations with the Royal Court, such as being "part of an extensive international programme of work pioneered by Elyse Dodgson […] that saw [him] helping to devise a comedy, *Mish Alla Ruman* (*Not About Pomegranates* [2001a]) with the director Rufus Norris and the Al Kasabah Theatre in Ramalla [sic] in 2001" (Holdsworth 2013: 183). His play *Ramallah* (2004; publ. 2010c), which premiered at the Royal Court, is also an offspring of this fruitful connection. Furthermore, under Vicky Featherstone's artistic direction, the Royal Court staged a highly successful production of *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* in 2013, at the London Welsh Centre's pub. Another crucial collaboration was Greig's participation as chair of a Syrian playwriting event in 2008 (see 2010b). 2016 has seen a workshop presentation of three plays under the rubric *Told from the Inside (New Plays from Syria and Lebanon)* led by Royal Court International Director Dodgson and playwrights Greig and Sam Holcroft.

Despite those off-border (Scotland and peripheral) and on-the-border (inside and outside Sloane Square) positionings, Greig has had an increasingly successful national and international career. In addition to the Royal Court, his award-winning work has been produced, among others, by the Traverse Theatre, the National Theatre of Scotland, 7:84, Paines Plough, the RSC, Donmar Warehouse, the Actors Touring Company (ATC), the Young Vic and the West End's Theatre Royal Drury Lane with a Warner Bros production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, for which Greig wrote the libretto. The National

Theatre of Scotland was founded in 2006 and Greig was its first dramaturg in residence in 2007.[12] He is still young enough to be able to produce much more, and the 2010s, represented in this study by *Fragile* and *The Events*, started auspiciously.

The texture of Greig's plays is intricate, including as it does intertextuality both with other and his own work and autobiographical detail.[13] Greig's characters are all to a certain extent wounded. Settings that unsettle critics due to their apparent unspecificity or ungraspable specificity include dispersed locales across the globe as well as resonant micro-locations. Topics that run through his work are the ideas of border, failure, violence, belonging and trauma. Recurrent themes are the pathological, the exposure of power abuse, the impact of the media, an engagement with characters on the move (for instance, through travelling or immigration), or the pervasiveness of global trade and technology and their impact on everyday life. His theatre is often described as political, which to Greig means "'left-wing theatre'" or "'theatre with a progressive agenda'" (Greig 2008a: 213), a theatre that "poses questions about society to which it does not already know the answer" (Greig 1999a: 66). He believes that "political theatre has at its very heart the possibility of change" (1999a: 66).

The imprint of geography is deeply ingrained in Greig's work. Many of his plays' titles bear the names of cities and towns – *San Diego, Damascus, Kyoto* (2009; publ. 2010a), *Dalgety* – continents – *Europe* – or (ex-)countries – the Soviet Union in

[12] Here, the definition of dramaturg coincides with "a resident dramaturg at a theatre", in this case the National Theatre of Scotland. His/her activities can range from "crafting educational materials, creating a marketing copy, facilitating conversations amongst the artistic team, and running […] post-show discussion[s]" (Green-Rogers and Blickers 2015). In other cases, 'dramaturg' can designate "a frequent collaborator of a playwright or director" (Green-Rogers and Blickers 2015). In mainland Europe, "it is increasingly common for production teams to feature writers, directors and dramaturgs" (Bolton 2016a), as is the case with Greig's *The Events*.

[13] In terms of allusion to cities, towns and places in the world, most, if not all locations cited in the plays, are places Greig has been to, which draws attention to the autobiographical dimension of his work. Africa, especially Nigeria, and also pivotally Scotland, almost always, not to say always, haunt his theatre, no matter where the plays are 'set'. Africa is evoked through biographical references – Toto's "Africa" in *Pyrenees* or blue scars from childhood in *San Diego* – explicit references – Eric's mentioning of a festival in Africa in *Cosmonaut* or the African setting of *Oedipus the Visionary* – and through various other configurations.

Cosmonaut. Others are related to physical geography – such as *Pyrenees* – indicate geographically-remote sites – *Outlying Islands* (2002; publ. 2002b) – relate to alternative urban geographies – *One Way Street* (1995; publ. 1998a) – or make reference to national identity – *Being Norwegian* (2007; publ. 2010a), *The American Pilot*. Geography-related occupations abound, including cosmonauts, a UFO observer and a Middle East negotiator (*Cosmonaut*). Besides, some characters are called like countries and cities – Morocco and Berlin (*Europe*). Greig's playwriting is obsessed, among other things, with pilots, astronauts, satellites, planes and birds; in short, any element that allows aerial views.

Place, a highly relevant category in Greig's work, is usually invested with high doses of transience, including means of transport (airplanes, cars, trucks, helicopters, space modules), everyday spaces (bars, toilets, homes), war-related settings (zones of conflict, checkpoints), places marked by consumerism (shopping malls, entertainment-related locations such as pubs) or other gathering places (conference halls, music rooms), structures that suggest crossing and interconnecting, both artificial (bridges, motorways) and natural (rivers, deserts), waiting and threshold areas (train stations, airports, borders, hospitals), places of passage (hotels, motels, carparks), or even semi-surreal spaces (characters' imaginations, dreams), among others.

The trope of lostness is central to Greig's work. Indeed, he claims, "I fear that all my work concerns lostness in some way or another" (2007b: 52), and Holdsworth opines that in his plays "characters are often lost" (2013: 170). In all the plays discussed in the present study, lostness, plays a central role and operates at different yet interconnecting levels. Thematically, for instance, *Europe* features two refugees who have just lost, among other things, the name of their hometown on the map, and with it, their hometown itself; in *One Way Street*, John has maps and yet is lost; *The Architect* features a lost man for whom life has lost meaning; in *Cosmonaut*, two cosmonauts are 'lost' in space; *Outlying Islands*

includes a lost man 'flying' in a storm; in *San Diego*, a lost woman ingests her self-mutilated flesh; *The American Pilot* includes an American pilot who is lost and a young woman who loses almost all her family in a fatal attack; in *Damascus*, a man who has lost hope commits suicide; *Fragile* depicts the increasing loss of the welfare state and the potential loss by self-immolation of a mental hospital patient; finally, *The Events* focuses on a woman who has lost her choir in a massacre as well as her soul. These examples involve one or more of three key aspects of lostness – "not quite knowing who one is" (Greig 2007b: 52), which, as already noted, also describes Greig's view of himself; loss of selfhood through immersion in a creative process or in an 'out-of-body' moment of ecstasy; and lostness coupled with an exploration of contemporary masculinities, which relates to Greig's claim, "lost men – I guess that's my neon sign. It's the story I have to tell" (2007b: 53). This third dimension to lostness is particularly disturbing, because usually lost men are involved in stories that include violence. Indeed, all plays under discussion feature violence – often entwined with a sense of masculinity in crisis.

Leaving aside Greig's own contribution to David Edgar's edited *State of Play: Playwrights on Playwritings* (1999), Nesteruk's article on ritual (2000), Rebellato's introduction to *Plays 1* (2002b), Holdsworth's articles on the ideas of borders and landscapes in contemporary Scottish theatre (2003 and 2007), Wallace's chapter on Greig in *Suspect Cultures: Narrative, Identity and Citation in 1990s New Drama* (2006) and Peter Billingham's material on Greig in his *At the Sharp End: Uncovering the Work of Five Leading Dramatists* (2007), critical assessment of Greig's work was scarce until well into the 2010s. Key publications since 2010 include Anja Müller and Wallace's edited collection *Cosmotopia: Transnational Identities in David Greig's Theatre* (2011a), Reinelt's chapter in Martin Middeke, Peter Paul Schnierer and Sierz's edited volume *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary British Playwrights* (2011), Wallace's *The*

Theatre of David Greig (2013), *The Suspect Culture Book* (2013) edited by Eatough and Rebellato, and Rebellato's edited collection *Modern British Playwriting 2000-2009: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations* (2013b), which includes a chapter on Greig by Holdsworth. Apart from being timely contributions to Greig scholarship, Wallace's 2013 book, *The Suspect Culture Book* and *Modern British Playwriting 2000-2009* include new voices (for instance, directors' voices in Wallace's book), new interviews with the playwright (for example, one by Holdsworth in Rebellato's edited collection), and contributions by members of the artistic team other than Greig (in *The Suspect Culture Book*). The 2010s have also seen the publication of earlier performance texts Greig wrote for Suspect Culture, such as *Timeless* (1997; publ. 2013e), *Mainstream* (1999; publ. 2013e) and *Lament* (2002; publ. 2013e). A special issue of *Contemporary Theatre Review* devoted to Greig's work, entitled *David Greig: Dramaturgies of Encounter and Engagement* – including my interview with the playwright – was published in early 2016, with Jacqueline Bolton as Guest Editor (2016b), confirming the relevance of his contribution to contemporary British playwriting.

Certain thematic hubs have emerged in Greig scholarship over recent decades. These include post-Wall Europe (Annette Pankratz, Reinelt, Jeffrey Willcocks, Peter Zenzinger), Brechtian aspects (Holdsworth, Reinelt, Dilek İnan and myself, Wallace), border-crossing and displacement (Holdsworth and Müller), postmodernity, globalisation and ethics (Wallace), global citizenship (Pamela McQueen), cosmopolitanism (Rebellato, Berthold Schoene, Marilena Zaroulia), Scotland and national debates (Ian Brown, Holdsworth, David Pattie, Michael Raab, Reid, Adrienne Scullion), links between Scotland and Europe and the popular, the poetic and the political (Jean-Pierre Simard), history plays (Paola Botham), the representation of 'other' Scottish voices (K.S. Morgan McKean), ritual (Nesteruk), representations of war in children's plays (Scullion), plays for young audiences

(Reid), place and identity (İnan), intercultural encounters (Mark Robson), transnational identities (Müller and Wallace and their contributors), global conflict (Kathleen Starck), travelling and belonging (Zaroulia), Suspect Culture (Eatough, Rebellato, Reid, myself, Wallace, Zaroulia), hostage drama (Markus Wessendorf), migration and materialism (Maggie Inchley) and questions of the gaze and voyeurism (Rodosthenous and Laurens de Vos), among others.[14] Rebellato, Wallace and Zaroulia have written overtly about aspects of globalisation in Greig's work. In this context, this thesis hopes to contribute an extended monographic study of Greig's theatre and globalisation with a particular focus on a triad of elements: space, ethics and the spectator.

2. Paving the Way

In this section, firstly, a theoretical articulation of globalisation is laid out by reference to some concepts and ideas derived from David Harvey's, Zygmunt Bauman's and Jean-Luc Nancy's vast work. Secondly, the links between globalisation and theatre, and globalisation and Greig's theatre, are explored in some detail. Finally, the topic of globalisation and Greig's theatre is examined in the light of his reading of some aspects of W.S. Graham's, Theodor W. Adorno's and Bertolt Brecht's work.

2.1. Articulating Globalisation

Globalisation may generally be described as "global neo-liberalism, the global extension of capitalism under neo-liberal policies" (Rebellato 2007: 250) and indeed as the very project and/or narrative that underpins that extension to every nook and corner of the globe. This thesis traces its impact by drawing on Harvey's brief geographical history of neoliberalism, frames its consequences within Bauman's notions of modern liquidity and

[14] This is not meant as a comprehensive list of the topics each scholar has worked on, but merely as an attempt to offer an overview. It is not a complete list of all critics who have published on Greig's theatre either.

negative globalisation, and examines the chances of its heading elsewhere by reference to Nancy's idea of *mondialisation*. As Susie O'Brien and Imre Szeman put it, "[w]hether one sees globalization as a contemporary phenomenon that defines the character of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, or merely as an extension of a process initiated millennia ago, there can be no doubt that the generation of narratives about globalization has assumed particular urgency over the last few decades" (2001: 604).

As conceived of in this thesis, globalisation in its contemporary shape has the fall of the Berlin Wall as a key political turning point. Since then, the world has seen the disintegration of the Soviet Union, "the expansion and acceleration of our global transport and communication networks" (Rebellato 2002b: xiii), the emergence into widespread use and the refinement of the internet and other digital technologies,[15] increasing environmental pollution, a widening gap between rich and poor, buoyant weapon and pharmaceutical industries, rampant consumerism, financial deregulation, continuing deindustrialisation of the West and relocation of manufacturing industries where cheap labour is available, the continued use of tax havens, privatisation of state-owned businesses, the War on Terror and waves of global terrorism, the 2008 economic crash, WikiLeaks, the social media revolution, financial squeezes to states conducted under the rubric of 'austerity', protest movements, the revelations on surveillance of US whistleblower Edward Snowden, the rise of far right-wing and left-wing parties, an increasing use of aerial war modes, and an unprecedented refugee crisis in Europe.[16]

At the same time, the historical genealogy of globalisation is also relevant to Greig's work. As Arjun Appadurai notes, "[g]lobalization is inextricably linked to current workings

[15] As Sierz reminds us, in 1990 "Englishman Tim Berners-Lee implements the first successful communication between a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) client and server via the internet at CERN (European Particle Physics Laboratory) in Switzerland […], leading to the launch of the World Wide Web in 1991" (2012a: 21). In addition, the "Global Positioning System (GPS) becomes fully active" in 1994 (Sierz 2012a: 21).

[16] This rather eclectic group of phenomena does not aim to be comprehensive; it merely offers a tentative picture of the contemporary globalised world.

of capital on a global basis [and] in this regard it extends the earlier logics of empire, trade, and political dominion in many parts of the world" (2000: 3). This extended logic has also been traced, for instance, by Jacques Derrida, who links "imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialisms, neo-imperialisms" to more recent "modes of domination that are more refined, trickier, more virtual" (2012: 124). Greig sometimes infuses his plays with echoes of colonialism, and he has also commented on how both Britain's imperial past and the globalised present impinge upon his work as a playwright:

> It is part of the business of the contemporary British playwright to travel about the world on behalf of the British Council doing workshops. For the playwright it is an interesting way to travel and for the British Council it's a way to parlay the good name of British theatre into small amounts of desperately needed political capital in those many parts of the world where our name is mud, or worse. (2006b: 161)

In this connection, Greig calls the people attending the workshops "subjects of globalization" (2006b: 162), thus highlighting the power imbalance involved.

In *After Globalization* (2011), Eric Cazdyn and Szeman argue that globalisation as ideology, as fiction – enabled by the invisibility of capitalism – came to an end with the 2008 crash, which made capitalism undeniably visible. At the same time, as they put it, "all of the things that happened as part of globalization were real enough" (2011: 1), and continue to be real enough – as it is hoped shall be appreciated in the section that follows. They are also worth reflecting upon given their relevance to Greig's theatre.

2.1.1. David Harvey: Neoliberalism and 'Space' as Key Word

According to Harvey, "the first great experiment" (2006: 12) in the implementation of neoliberal policies worldwide was the removal from office of Chile's prime minister Salvador Allende by Augusto Pinochet's coup "on the 'little September 11th' of 1973" (2006: 12), which was followed by a brutal dictatorship. Following the coup, a group of Chilean economists who had studied in Chicago, known as "'the Chicago boys'" (Harvey

2006: 12), were to supervise the implementation of a free-market economy based on "privatizing public assets, opening up natural resources to private exploitation and facilitating foreign direct investment and free trade" (Harvey 2006: 12). The neoliberal agenda was pushed to the fore with the dissolution of the Bretton Woods agreement in 1971 and the OPEC oil embargo in 1973.[17] Perhaps in order to help establish the legitimacy of neoliberalism, economists "[Friedrich] von Hayek in 1974 and Milton Friedman in 1976" were awarded the Nobel Prize and this "gradually began to exert practical influence" (Harvey 2006: 15).

These preparatory moves gained increased momentum with the Volcker Shock (1979),[18] a radical abandonment of Keynesianism in order to quell inflation at no matter what cost (see Harvey 2006: 17), and the Washington Consensus, whose aim was to postulate the USA and the UK as global models of neoliberalism and neoconservatism (see Harvey 2006: 31).[19] Rebellato summarises all this bluntly in *The Suspect Culture Book*: "[i]n the 1970s the World Bank and International Monetary Fund had been captured by free-market fundamentalists who used a debt crisis in the early 1980s to impose neo-liberalism on the developing world" (2013a: 303). Indeed, as a result of the Volcker Shock, many economies went bankrupt, which led states to accept so-called structural adjustments, "which meant what the US and UK where doing by choice would be imposed on these

[17] As Rebellato puts it, as a result of the international agreement reached in Bretton Woods in 1944, "[i]nternational currency stability was maintained by pegging all currencies to the dollar, and the dollar to the price of gold, which, as a uniformly scarce, durable, and identifiable commodity is pretty stable in value. However, in 1971, facing a massive trade deficit, US president Richard Nixon abandoned this system. This left world currencies to float freely against each other, causing widespread economic and social instability. In 1973, a further blow came with the oil crisis, when the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) announced a policy not to export oil to countries that supported Islam in the Yom Kippur War. The price of oil quadrupled in a year, causing enormous disruption to industrial production across the world" (2009: 24).

[18] Volcker refers to "Paul Volcker, Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Bank" (Harvey 2006: 17) and 'shock' to the fact that "[t]he nominal rate of interest was raised overnight […] to close to 20 per cent, deliberately plunging the US, and much of the rest of the world, into recession and unemployment. This shift, it was argued, was the only way out of the grumbling crisis of stagflation that had characterized the US and much of the global economy throughout the 1970s" (Harvey 2006: 17).

[19] According to Harvey, "[t]he effect [of the Washington Consensus] was to define the US and UK models of neoliberalism as the answer to global problems and thereby put considerable pressure even on Japan and Europe (to say nothing of the rest of the world) to take the neoliberal road" (2006: 33).

countries by economic force: widespread deregulation and privatization, reductions in government's spending, and the abandonment of protectionist barriers" (Rebellato 2009: 25).

This is therefore the point of origin of a practice of "imperialism without colonies" (Harvey 2006: 21) and a "financialization of everything" (Harvey 2006: 24) that continue to be exerted nowadays, thus connecting the extended and the contemporary understandings of globalisation sketched out above. In sum, what Ronald Reagan's (1981-1989) and Margaret Thatcher's (1979-1990) governments devoted their efforts to was the construction of the state as a member of a neoliberal "'executive committee of capitalist class interests'" (Harvey 2006: 106). This involved debunking trade union power, selling off public assets to private owners (privatisation), participating in the "barbaric dispossession" of earth, forest, water and air – considered "productive assets" (Harvey 2006: 45) – deregulating the market,[20] and enabling the best conditions for business via tax reduction, reducing the barriers to movement across borders, and collaborating with "large corporate capitalist interests" (Harvey 2006: 26) – all this to the detriment of "the right to a state pension, to welfare, to national health care" (Harvey 2006: 45). This resonates with the present, when most governments still work towards "[optimizing] conditions for capital accumulation no matter what the consequences for employment or social well-being" (Harvey 2006: 25), as well as towards ensuring the superiority of executive governance and judicial decision over parliamentary decision-making (see Harvey 2006: 27).[21]

The refinement and consolidation of this neoliberal system is accompanied by militarist policies, the creation of global financial institutions such as the World Trade

[20] According to Harvey, "[d]eregulation allowed the financial system to become one of the main centers of redistributive activity through speculation, predation, fraud and thievery", which more often than not "brought immense wealth to a few at the expense of the many" (2006: 45).
[21] It is crucial to remember that "[n]eoliberalism is marked by a shift from governing to governance or governmentality, which refigures the state and its institutions as the means by which to implement and negotiate neoliberal reforms" (Wickstrom 2012: 6).

Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), among others, which "concentrat[e] power" (Dean 2012: 86) and are "entirely outside of democratic influence" (Harvey 2006: 17; see also Rebellato 2002b: xii), and by a drive towards complete control of the media and the culture and technology industries. As Harvey argues, "[o]ne of the prime functions of state interventions and of international institutions is to orchestrate crises and devaluations in ways that permit accumulation by dispossession to occur without sparking a general collapse or popular revolt" (2006: 47). Since the 2008 crash, "the extreme capitalism of neoliberal state policy and desperate financialism [have become] visible, undeniable, and global" (Dean 2012: 46-7), thus making it palpable that "the support of financial institutions and the integrity of the financial system" still are "the central concern of the collectivity of neo-liberal states" (Harvey 2006: 24-5).

A recent development that confirms the ongoing unfolding of neoliberal globalisation is the current negotiation of TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership) and TISA (Trade in Services Agreement) between Western allies. The former, if signed as it stands at present, would mean that participant states and other partners would be ruled by a business-oriented, finance-ridden, supra-economic force that could even fine governments when it was deemed appropriate. The latter "touches on issues of crucial relevance including the regulation of energy, industrial development, workers' rights and the natural environment" (Wikileaks 2015) as well as the banking and transport services across member states.

The other concept put forward by Harvey that this study draws on so as to frame the complexities of the treatment of space in Greig's theatre is the tripartite typology of space he identifies in "Space as Key Word": absolute, relative and relational space.[22] Although it is important to bear in mind absolute and relative spaces, relational space is the most

[22] In all three cases, space and time are mutually dependent, which is why Harvey argues for a "shift of language from space *and* time to space-time or spatio-temporality" (2006: 122; emphasis original), which this thesis takes on board.

relevant of the three concepts in terms of Greig's work. For Harvey, absolute space is space fixed in a particular location, grounded, territorialised. As he puts it, "[a]bsolute space is fixed and we record or plan events within its frame" (2006: 122). Absolute space is "a pre-existing and immovable grid", "a primary space of individuation" and a "space of private property and other bounded territorial designations (such as states […])" (Harvey 2006: 121).

It seems clear that in a context where "global corporations and global currency traders […] accumulate [an] economic power that is rapidly overtaking that of states" (Rebellato 2007: 251), and where fast movement of information, people, goods and services and accelerated technological development shape our everyday lives, absolute space is an insufficient indicator of the experience of space. In relative space, "all forms of measurement depended upon the frame of reference of the observer" (Harvey 2006: 122). Therefore the unique location of absolute space becomes multilocational: "[t]he uniqueness of location and individuation defined by bounded territories in absolute space gives way to a multiplicity of locations" (Harvey 2006: 122). However, Greig's plays go beyond this sense of multi-locationality and multi-individuality; they encompass, arguably, what Harvey calls the relational experience of space.

Relational space is the most complex; it is the space wherein "[a]n event or a thing at a point in space cannot be understood by appeal to what exists only at that point. It depends upon everything else going on around it" (Harvey 2006: 124). Although "the relational terrain is an extremely challenging and difficult terrain upon which to work […] there are certain topics […] that can only be approached in this way" (Harvey 2006: 124-5). One of these topics, this thesis suggests, is Greig's theatre's complex articulation of space under globalisation, which, as shall be discussed throughout, erects a powerful sense of relationality. Of course, this presents this study with certain methodological complications,

but as Harvey points out, although “relationality is elusive if not impossible to pin down”, it is “non the less vitally important” (2006: 128). The least this thesis can do is try.

The notion of relational space has already gained some currency in theatre studies. For instance, it has already been applied in critical assessment of contemporary theatre by Mireia Aragay, who argues that “[o]ne of the key changes brought about by globalization is precisely a radical alteration of the way space is experienced” (2013: 73), which “seems to require a relational conceptualization” (2013: 74) that she brings to bear on Harold Pinter’s *Party Time* (1991), Kane’s *Blasted* (1995), Churchill’s *Far Away* (2000) and Crimp’s *Fewer Emergencies* (2005). Greig’s work, I would contend, confirms this sense of the necessarily relational conceptualisation of space in the context of globalisation.

The present thesis argues that Greig’s plays particularly address and foreground relational space but, like Harvey, it maintains that absolute, relative and relational spaces need to be kept simultaneously “in dialectical tension with each other” (Harvey 2006: 126) in order to apprehend the myriad forces at play. In fact, “[g]aining some sense of how space is and how different spatialities and spatio-temporalities work is crucial to the construction of a distinctively geographical imagination” (Harvey 2006: 148), which is, as Greig confirms (see 2016a: 88), the kind of imagination he has and celebrates throughout his work.

2.1.2. Zygmunt Bauman: Liquid Modernity and Negative Globalisation

Although geographer Harvey and sociologist Bauman might seem to stand far apart from each other, phrases such as “neoliberal *coup d’état*” (Bauman 2005: 152) and the acknowledgement of a “global space” (Bauman 2010: 114) suggest otherwise. Bauman is well known, among other things, for his theory of liquid modernity (2000), which subsequently branched out into liquid love (2003), life (2005) and fear (2006). This section,

apart from outlining Bauman's notion of liquidity, frames it in relation both to solidity and gas. It does so because that triple articulation arguably provides a richer, more nuanced ground in order to map out a more comprehensive picture of globalisation. In addition, this section also introduces Bauman's concept of negative globalisation.

Features attached to liquid modernity are "flexibility" (Bauman 2000: ix), "liquefaction, melting and smelting" (Bauman 2000: x), unevenness because it occurs at different stages in different places (see Bauman 2000: xii), fear, uncertainty (see Bauman 2000: xiv) and "the until-further-noticeness" (Bauman 2000: 14; see also 162) of "commitments" (Bauman 2006: 140), among others. Liquid modernity is characterised by a divorce between power and politics, or the ability to do things and the ability to decide about those things (see Bauman 2000: xiv). Although thinking modernity in terms of liquidity has proved instrumental to thinking the contemporary world, it might be crucial to keep liquid, solid and gaseous forces in a state of dialectical tension with each other so as to eventually grasp the connections between the forces at work.

Concerning liquids and gases, Bauman noted, as early as 2000, that "'[f]luidity' is the quality of liquids and gases" (2000: 1). In *Liquid Fear*, Bauman states that "[i]n the liquid modern world, the dangers and fears are also liquid-like – or are they rather gaseous? They flow, seep, leak, ooze..." (2006: 97). Claims like "[t]he once complete and integral sovereignty of the state-nation *evaporates* upwards into the anonymous realm of global forces evading territorial alliance and commitment" (Bauman 2005: 45; emphasis added) also use the lexicon of gas. Concerning solids, Bauman highlights 'bonding', "a term that signifies the stability of solids – the resistance they put up 'against separation of atoms'" (2000: 2). The previous stage of modernity was heavy, solid, condensed and systemic, in contrast to light, liquid, capillary, network-like present-day modernity (see Bauman 2000: 25).

This study attempts to identify and define the features of globalised modernity, which crucially include a gaseous component. This gaseous component, in contrast with the previous solid and liquid states of modernity, can be described as 'weightless-heavy', diffused and interconnected. The first characteristic, the 'weightless-heavy' aspect to gaseous modernity, refers to an interlaced sense of levity and weight; that is, while a sense of lifting emerges, something might be pulling down simultaneously. The second aspect, diffusion, refers to a combined sense of suspension and traversing, of being present in and across. The third feature is interconnectedness, whereby connections do not necessarily take place within a networked system but rather as a result of a freer and more complex interplay between different elements that transgress any kind of physical or mental barrier. Overall, gaseousness – in contrast to more tangible solidity and liquidity – conceptually allows a veering towards the ungraspable and the invisible in movement. The analysis of the gaseous element to modernity – which is inextricable from relational space – demands a tremendous critical effort, yet a (necessarily imperfect) sense of the whole might perhaps be inapprehensible without it. It is hoped that this kind of approach will prove useful in order to address the complex interplay of phenomena in Greig's theatre.

Moving on now to Bauman's concept of negative globalisation, it is the "*extraterritorial* class of symbol-makers and symbol-manipulators", he argues, "that stands at the forefront of 'globalization'" (2005: 145; emphasis original). Symbol-makers and manipulators are the agents of neoliberalism, "an ideology aspiring to become, in Pierre Bordieu's memorable warning, *la pensée unique* of the inhabitants of the planet Earth" (Bauman 2006: 146-7). This being so, Bauman puts forward the notion of negative globalisation, which he understands as "the highly selective globalization of trade and capital, surveillance and information, coercion and weapons, crime and terrorism, all now disdaining territorial sovereignty and respecting no state boundary" (2006: 96), in the

absence of "political and juridical institutions able to control them" (2006: 135). It is not that the positive side to globalisation does not exist: for instance, Rebellato mentions "progress, communication between peoples, the broadening effects of travel, the power of human technological endeavour" (2002b: xvi).[23] It is rather, that "[t]hus far, ours is a wholly *negative* globalization: unchecked, unsupplemented and uncompensated for by a 'positive' counterpart which is still a distant prospect at best" (Bauman 2006: 96; emphasis original).

This kind of globalisation generates vast numbers of 'disposable beings', where "the *mobile vulgus* – the inferior kind of people on the move" (Bauman 2000: 93), are not considered "'lives to be saved'" (Bauman 2000: 186). In Bauman's various formulations, "[t]he 'waste-disposal industry' for rejected human beings" (2005: 102) includes "those 'unfit to be us'" (2000: 176), "the *unwertes Leben* – the lives unworthy of living" (2006: 80), "millions of *sans papiers*, stateless, refugees, exiles, asylum or bread-and-water seekers of our times" (2005: 6), the "lesser, inferior people – the 'locals'" (2005: 29) and "the *homo sacer* (a person excepted from human as well as divine law)" (Bauman 2005: 100). Whatever the name given to "'human rejects'" (Bauman 2005: 102), "[t]he new and fast growing category of *homi sacri* […] is composed […] of 'flawed' or failed consumers" (Bauman 2005: 100-101). Whether 'failed' or not, consumers in general are consistently shown to be wounded by negative globalisation in Greig's plays, which subtly suggests connections between precarity and precariousness, the first a "politically induced condition" and the second a condition of vulnerability shared by all (Butler 2009: 25).

[23] For further discussion of the negative and positive aspects of globalisation, see the section on "Globalization: for and against" (Rebellato 2009: 30-39).

2.1.3. Jean-Luc Nancy: *Mondialisation* or 'To Create the World'

If for Bauman the "'positive' counterpart" of negative globalisation, that is, "the globalisation of political representation, law and jurisdiction, […] has not yet started in earnest" (2010: 114), Nancy explores whether it can do so at all in *The Creation of the World or Globalization* (2007), where he examines the difference between *mondialisation* – which to him is meaningfully "untranslatable" (Nancy 2007: 27) – and globalisation. The two broadly designate "a common assumption of the totality of the parts of the world in a general network (if not a system) of communication, commercial exchange, juridical or political reference points (if not values), and finally of practices, forms, and procedures of all kinds linked to many aspects of ordinary existence" (Nancy 2007: 27). However, while *mondialisation* "keep[s] the horizon of a 'world'", globalisation, designates "an integrated totality" or "unitotality" (2007: 28).

Nancy relates globalisation to "the conjunction of an indefinite growth of techno-science, of a correlative exponential growth of populations – economic, biological, and cultural – and of a dissipation of the certainties, images, and identities of what the world was with its parts and humanity with its characteristics" (2007: 34). To Nancy this coincides with the dissipation of "knowledge, ethics and social well-being" (2007: 34). He also explicates globalisation as "'un-world'" (2007: 34), which means that "[t]he world has lost its capacity to 'form a world'" (2007: 34). Therefore, Nancy understands globalisation "as the suppression of all world-forming of the world" (2007: 50). This study suggests that Greig's theatre aims at both exposing globalisation as 'un-world' and suggesting the need and the possibility of retrieving 'the world' through *mondialisation* or world-forming processes. *Mondialisation* or "world-forming" (Nancy 2007: 44) means that "[a] world is precisely that in which there is room for everyone: but a genuine place, one in which things can genuinely *take place* (in this world)" (Nancy 2007: 42; emphasis original).

A key component to world-forming is “meaning”, “not a given simplification” but a meaning that is “to be invented each time” (Nancy 2007: 52). He notes that “the creation of meaning, and with it the enjoyment of sense (which is not foreign, one should note, to the enjoyment of senses) requires its forms, its inventions of forms and the forms of its exchange” (2007: 52). Theatre seems a pertinent location for the creation of both new forms and meanings, a potentially productive site for the task of world-forming. In *Globalization: The Human Consequences*, Bauman defines globalisation as an “irreversible process […] which affects us all” (1998: 1) – one that may, nevertheless, be contested through world-forming practices such as theatre. Indeed, a theatre that fosters a heightened apprehension that the world is not given, but is to be freshly invented each time, that it can and probably should be created, can perhaps infuse spectators with a sense that they could be a vital part of that world-forming process. Nancy states that “[t]he moment has come to expose capital to the absence of reason” (2007: 53), and insists on the need for thought in the task of world-forming: the present “is a different kind of moment to which we must give thought” (2007: 53) in order to pursue “the infinite overflowing of meaning and therefore justice” (2007: 53).

2.2. Greig's Theatre and Globalisation

2.2.1. Theatre and Performance Studies and Globalisation

Rebellato's *Theatre & Globalization* (2009) and Patrick Lonergan's *Theatre and Globalisation: Irish Drama in the Celtic Tiger Era* (2009) stand as pivotal contributions to the intersection between theatre studies and globalisation. In his contribution to the *Theatre &* series, Rebellato suggests different ways in which we can think of theatre and globalisation – “the international festival”, “international hit plays being performed in different countries in rapid succession”, “the global scale of enormous transnational multi-

part performances", "plays that critically represent the workings of globalization", "the franchising of international 'megamusicals'" and "theatre [...] as [...] part of the 'branding' of world cities" (2009: 8-10). However, his discussion of theatre and globalisation transcends all these so as to focus on a kind of theatre that he associates with the concept of cosmopolitanism, which is addressed later in this thesis. Published in the same year as Rebellato's, Lonergan's monograph – quite in tune with Reballato's initial charting of the phenomenon – focuses on a discussion of "the emergence of a globalized theatre network" which he defines as "a conceptual framework that enables theatrical productions to travel and be received internationally" (2009: 216).

In 2005, *Theatre Journal* devoted one of its numbers to theatre and globalisation. In her "Editorial Comment: Theorizing Globalization through Theatre", Jean Graham-Jones interestingly begins referring to Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's four "models of globalization": "there is nothing new about it", "globalization [...] can be identified with the efforts at global governance", "its signature is urbanism" and "globalization is distinguished [by] the ascendancy of finance capital" (2005: xiii). In 2006, *Contemporary Theatre Review* published a special issue on globalisation, including Rebellato's "Playwriting and Globalisation: Towards a Site-Unspecific Theatre" (2006). The other item in this special issue that this study draws on recurrently are its "Backpages", an assemblage of short pieces that Rebellato co-edits with Jen Harvie (2006). Baz Kershaw's contribution notes that globalisation is worth paying attention to in the context of theatre and performance studies given its performative dimension (see 2006: 145). This is a similar idea to Maurya Wickstrom's argument that "capitalism and performance have been bound up in one another" since the rise of neoliberal capitalism in the 1980s (2006: 6-7), and Reinelt's observation that "we live in highly theatricalised times" (2006: 152). The backpages to the *Contemporary Theatre Review* issue on globalisation crucially include a

contribution by Greig entitled "Doing a Geographical", to which the thesis returns in due course.

In chapter one of *Modern British Playwriting: The 1990s* (2012), entitled "Theatre in the 1990s", Sierz tackles at least three aspects that are relevant to globalisation and theatre: sponsorship, global marketing and artistic responses. As regards the first, Sierz claims that "business sponsorship remained a vital ingredient of arts funding" across the decade (2012b: 33). Concerning the global marketisation of theatre, he states: "[b]y the end of the decade […] theatres rebranded themselves, acquired logos, learnt to use niche marketing, made sponsorship deals, redesigned their foyers and expanded their bar activities. Audiences became customers, and shows became product" (2012b: 34). As far as British theatrical responses to globalisation are concerned, he notes that "[t]his was also the time when the huge forces of globalisation, which expanded mental horizons as well as economic markets, made a powerful impact on Britain, while artistic responses to these new realities took many forms" including "a renewed criticism of consumer capitalism" (2012b: 31), which Greig's theatre is undoubtedly part of.

Other recent publications in the field of theatre and performance studies and globalisation include the already-quoted study by Wickstrom, *Performing Consumers: Global Capital and its Theatrical Seductions* (2006), and her later *Performance in the Blockades of Neoliberalism: Thinking the Political Anew* (2012); Patrick Anderson and Jisha Menon's edited collection *Violence Performed: Local Roots and Global Routes of Conflict* (2009); Lara Nielsen and Patricia Ybarra's *Neoliberalism and Global Theatres: Performance Permutations* (2012); and Harvie's *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism* (2013). In 2014, Barry Freeman and Catherine Graham edited a special issue of *Canadian Theatre Review* entitled "Imagining Alternative Globalizations through Performance", pertinently emphasising the possibility for theatre and performance to evoke

‘other’ globalisations. Also in 2014, *Theatre Research International* published an issue that “focuses on globalization, representation and translation” (Canning 2014: 81), whose editorial bears the title “The Global Will (Not) Be Represented” and where Charlotte Canning highlights “the complicated theoretical and political challenges of globalization” (2014: 81).

2.2.2. Globalisation, Cosmopolitanism and the Cosmos

One such theoretical challenge consists in identifying what globalisation stands for when thought of in tandem with theatre. The central argument of Rebellato’s book is that “globalization, as an economic phenomenon, is opposed by the counter-tradition of cosmopolitanism and that theatre and performance, for the most part, falls under the latter rather than the former” (2009: 11). Although Rebellato acknowledges connections between economic globalisation and “culture, politics, consciousness, and so on” (2009: 10), the main thrust of his argument is to separate globalisation and cosmopolitanism. And yet, it is worth asking whether cosmopolitanism – “one of the most frequently and fondly deployed concepts in academic discussions of globalization” (O’Brien and Szeman 2001: 613) – is really exempt from “economic implications” (O’Brien and Szeman 2001: 614).

While Rebellato understands globalisation as “a narrow and relatively recent wave of global neoliberalism”, he defines cosmopolitanism as “an historically unfolding consciousness of our universal connectedness” (2006: 113). In its contemporary manifestation, cosmopolitanism – “a belief that all human beings, regardless of their differences, are members of a single community and all worthy of equal moral regard” (Rebellato 2009: 60) – can be understood as “a means of potential resistance to globalisation” and “an ethically informed geopolitical discourse” (Byrne and Schoene 2013: 2). Rebellato has also defined cosmopolitanism as an “evolving ethical consciousness

of the obligations and rights that bind us all together" (2006: 113) and "a commitment to enriching and deepening that global ethical community" (2009: 60).

Without going as far as Timothy Brennan does in his critique of cosmopolitanism as "'veiled Americanism'" (qtd. in Byrne and Schoene 2013: 2), this thesis argues not only that the discourse of cosmopolitanism is not so easily detachable from (economic) globalisation as Rebellato seems to suggest, but also that cosmopolitanism is "limited precisely by reference to the political" (Derrida 1996), in the sense that cosmopolitanism seems an unfeasible project in a globe where there are peoples who have "yet to access even national recognition in an international arena" (Byrne and Schoene 2013: 2) and where, as Rebellato himself notes elsewhere, "the international institutions that might give contingent force to our developing cosmopolitan sense have not yet been built" (2007: 259).

Bearing in mind, then, the complexities inherent to the term 'cosmopolitanism', I now want to turn to Rebellato's reference, towards the end of *Theatre & Globalization*, to "formal modes [that] tend towards cosmopolitanism" (2009: 75). I would argue, firstly, that the use of 'tend' denotes that cosmopolitanism is eventually understood by Rebellato more as a utopian project than a credible model of global belonging as it stands at present. In this sense and taking into account the preceding discussion, there are reasons to suggest that cosmopolitanism as a future-oriented project is not totally divorced from Greig's work. References to cosmopolitanism in Greig scholarship include McQueen's analysis of *The Speculator* (1999; publ. in Greig and Cunillé 1999), when she observes "the characterisation of John Law as a global elite citizen, Lord Islay as a cosmopolitan, and the Beggars Chorus as the disenfranchised indigenous population" (2010: 92). On his part, Schoene opines that "Greig's cosmopolitan lehrstücke problematise the hardening of local and universal, national as well as global, perspectives into irreconcilable 'isms'" (2012:

208). In addition, Wallace's theoretical introduction to her section "East/West" in *The Theatre of David Greig* is entitled "Contact Zones and Cosmopolitanism".[24]

It is precisely at the crossroads between cosmopolitanism – taken on board as a problematic concept – and the utopian that I place the concept of cosmopolitanism as 'cosmos'. A definition of cosmopolitanism as cosmos that seems compatible with Greig's plays, as understood in this study, is that "[c]osmopolitanism is not the reduction of all difference to a single model of citizenship; it is, rather, an *Idea* of a polity […] that would not be that of this or that nation but of the cosmos" (Colebrook 2014: 97; emphasis original). Considering "people as a body" (2007: 16), Nancy writes of a "[c]osmic body" that "bit by bit […] touches on everything", including from "chair" and "keyboard" to the "shifting tectonic plates" and "the boundless limits of the universe" (2008: 154).

I would argue that by insisting on the interconnectedness of all bodies, Greig's theatre's formal strategies aim at conveying a sense of the world as cosmos, where the human, the ecological and even the astronomical are *jointly* at stake. The idea of cosmopolitanism and/or theatre operating outside globalisation seems too optimistic. Thus, instead of placing cosmopolitanism in opposition to globalisation, this thesis argues that there exist possibilities within the performative narrative of globalisation – where negative aspects have so far been dominant – to create the world or engage with *mondialisation*, to understand the world as cosmos, even if it is only tentatively and precariously, and certainly without turning 'cosmos' into a banal concept that "might be everywhere and nowhere" (Wallace 2016: 32).

[24] Zaroulia has also pointed out the relevance of cosmopolitanism in Greig's work, which I shall discuss in due course.

2.2.3. Globalisation in Greig's Theatre and This Thesis's Approach to It

Two aspects of Greig's theatre that relate to globalisation – internationalism and the local – have already been discussed by scholars. Both Reinelt (2011) and Holdsworth (2013) consider Greig's writing internationalist. Although Reinelt stated in 2006 that her "preferred term for the new interrelationships between capital and culture is actually the older term 'internationalism'" since "'[g]lobalisation' has a mixed genealogy that includes corporate and media strands of meaning and usage as well as strands tied to analysis and critique" (2006: 151), she gathers both internationalism and globalisation in her 2011 chapter on Greig: "his internationalism and critique of globalisation seem to me to be some of the most important aspects of his oeuvre" (2011: 205). Similarly, Holdsworth states that "[h]e is an internationalist, someone willing to address global concerns in his work" (2013: 189) and highlights "the passionate internationalism of Greig's writing" (2013: 170).

Rebellato has been examining Greig's work in relation to globalisation since the publication of his introduction to *Plays 1*: "[o]ne very striking thing about David's work, something that sets him apart from the majority of his contemporaries, is the conscious and artful way in which he is trying to come to terms with the immense changes being wrought across the world by globalisation" (2002b: xii). However, more recently, without wanting "to backpedal from this position" (2016: 9), Rebellato has emphasised the relevance of the local to Greig's work, signposting the idea of "localism under erasure" (2016: 14). From a piece entitled *Local* (1998b) for Suspect Culture to a recent keynote address at the David Greig Festival Symposium organised by the University of Lincoln, entitled "Local Hero: The Places of David Greig" (2014a), the idea of the local does indeed appear as a salient category in Greig's work, specifically in relation to the responses the plays articulate vis-à-vis globalisation. In the early 2000s, Rebellato defended "the local's inadequacy as a ground of resistance to globalisation" (2006: 104-105), but I would suggest that his recent

reflections on the local, instead of displacing the urgent global issues addressed in Greig's work, add nuance and refinement to the understanding of the global in Greig's plays. On their part, Müller and Wallace discuss Greig's theatre through the lens of "[t]ransnational identity", which "can be said to exist in the tension between the local and the global" (2011b: 7). My own take on this issue is that, without necessarily obliterating what both terms refer to, over the years Greig's theatre has driven the boundaries between the local and the global to extinction, collapsing them into a sense of one single space.

Despite the fresh light that such debates have thrown on Greig's work, the emphasis on globalisation continues to prevail in critical scholarship. Holdsworth claims that "[t]he workings and implications of globalization [are] a persistent seam running through all his plays" (2013: 170), and Wallace includes a section on "Globalization" in *The Theatre of David Greig*. Greig himself has also referred to globalisation in relation to his work and to theatre in general in myriad ways. One of his most straightforward comments is perhaps the following: "[g]lobalisation means that the biggest issues of the day are being played out in places like Shanghai, Darfur and Baghdad, and British audiences want to see these stories represented on stage" (2006b: 161). He has also argued that theatre "cannot be globally commodified" and that it is "one of the few remaining public spaces" (2008a: 219). Another relatively straightforward link between Greig's work and globalisation is the fact that the playwright sees himself as belonging to a global tradition facilitated by technology and mobility networks: "[t]he same play will be maybe put on in Cologne, Barcelona, Paris, or Oslo. That is the sense of the theatre of which I'm part, […] [i]t's Scottish, it's British, but it's also European" (2016a: 91).

Furthermore, Greig has been asked directly about globalisation in relation to his work. For example, Hilary Whitney asks, "[d]o you sit down and think, 'And now I'm going to write a play about globalization?'", to which Greig replies, "[n]o, I don't set out to

do that. My plays usually start life as a title, an image and some sort of emotional drive all coalescing around a question" (2010b). True, Greig does not write plays *about* globalisation. That, I believe, is as uncomfortable for him as describing what his plays 'say'.[25] Perhaps more accurately, then, the questions and/or images with which Greig's plays start off often seem to have been (indirectly) prompted by some issue tied in with changes, developments and phenomena brought about by globalisation, so that they eventually end up responding to some current global reality. Indeed, in his interview with Whitney Greig subsequently returns to the question whether he writes about globalisation: "[y]ou hit on something when you asked earlier if I sit down to write about big themes like globalization, because I don't mean to but obviously I do on some level, because that's how my plays end up" (2010b). Judging from the bleak endings of most plays analysed in this study, Greig does seem to highlight the negative aspects of globalisation. However, this is always combined with a powerful utopian impulse that points out the possibility of change. In any case, globalisation powerfully "batters on […] and will not be denied" (Gupta 2009: 6), either in Greig's theatre or in the corresponding scholarly analysis and discussion.

Even more so, perhaps, in a critical context where, as Rebellato concludes in *Theatre & Globalization*, "[s]urprisingly little has been written on theatre and globalization" (2009: 88). The present thesis aims to contribute to filling this gap by producing a monographic study of Greig's work and globalisation. It takes as a starting point his argument about a putative connection between aesthetic experiment and a concern with globalisation and/or cosmopolitanism – the 'formal modes' mentioned above – with plays such as Churchill's *Far Away* (2000), Crimp's *Advice to Iraqi Women* (2003) and debbie tucker green's *stoning mary* (2005) (see 2009: 79-80) discussed as examples, where Rebellato finds "a kind of de-territorialized ambiguity" (2009: 79).

[25] In this sense, he tells Caridad Svich: "I get so upset when critics ask me what I am trying to 'say' with my work. If I could 'say' it, I would 'say' it. I can't. That's why I write plays" (2007b: 54).

In line with this, Bourriaud opens *The Radicant* with a reference to the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and a request that more studies on globalisation and aesthetics be undertaken: "why is it that globalization has so often been discussed from sociological, political, and economic points of view, but almost never from an aesthetic perspective? How does this phenomenon affect the life of *form*?" (2009: 7; emphasis added). This question, in short, is the point of departure for the present thesis. And with "[a]esthetics [being] precisely about attending to the dynamics of form, to different material and immaterial ways of connecting" (Bennett 2012: 5), the thesis's triad of subthemes – space, ethics and spectatorship – immediately reveals itself as central, as the rest of this study hopes to demonstrate.

2.3. The Scenes from the World and Greig's Creative Orbit

Greig's aesthetic approach to globalisation is filtered through his own understanding of the world. Or, to put it differently, his work's aesthetics attempt to channel the world as the playwright understands and/or experiences it. In Greig's global outlook, it is not a contradiction to want the independence of Scotland, to be an internationalist and to have "a sense that the entire world is [his] society: [his] world, [his] country" (2016a: 91). This idea plausibly derives from Greig's defining experiences of life having taken place across the globe, including Africa, where he was brought up; New York where he worked for months in hotel rooms; the streets of Cairo and Tunis where he had extraordinary experiences with young Arab writers; Europe where his family lives; and Damascus, Cairo, Hong Kong and Africa, among others, where he has friends (see 2016a: 91).

The phrase "scenes from my world" (2016a: 91) is one Greig uses to convey "the material which [he] want[s] to write about" (2016a: 91). Those scenes from the world are experienced by Greig not just via his noted global background but also through the media –

"when I'm watching television and I see what I see" (2016a: 91) – through his awareness of the workings of the global economy – "when my goods are made in China" (2016a: 91) – and importantly through travelling – "the scenes that I see, are from all over the world because of the nature of modern life – we travel around the world, and so on" (2016a: 91). All of this being the case, he asks himself, "how can I not think that those are scenes from my world? They are in my imagination. How can I not write or try to write about it?" (2016a: 91) – a question that arguably intimates an ethico-political dimension to his way of inhabiting both the world and his role as a playwright. Thinking – an insistent demand of Nancy's too – and the thinking that comes with writing are combined with "a very deep desire and need to explore the lives of people in [the] world" (Greig 2016a: 91).[26]

Despite the possibility of failure, Greig sees it as an obligation to write about the scenes from the world, which, as already noted, foregrounds the ethico-political concerns that inform his task as a playwright: "I feel that there's an imperative to represent the world and yet it's impossible to do that in a correct way so every attempt to do it is a sort of failure" (2016a: 91). In spite of that, the attempt "to depict today's struggles in ethical and efficacious ways" (Canning 2014: 81) is consistently present in Greig's work. Since conjuring up the scenes from the world in a play is no easy task, his plays importantly resort to spatial experimentation among other formal devices, which in turn produce a demand on the spectator to experience the scenes from the world in unusual ways.

More specifically, Greig's plays incessantly present the spectator with scenarios that highlight interdependence through the use of spatial strategies that generate ethical resonances. In order to achieve this, his work engages in a creative dialogue with key notions, ideas and/or thoughts developed by poet Graham, theorist Adorno and theatre

[26] Svich and Schoene have suggested the labels "world dramatist" (Greig 2007b: 55) and "world theatre" (2012: 208) when referring to the playwright and his work.

maker Brecht, who conform part of what I call Greig's creative orbit.[27] The particular ideas Greig finds inspiration in and reworks in his own ways are mainly, and respectively, the aerial perspective, Adornian dialectics and the V-effect. Dialectics, a central tool in Greig's work, cuts across all of these ideas. What follows, then, is not about Graham, Adorno or Brecht, but rather about how some of their work productively feeds into Greig's theatre.

2.3.1. The Aerial Perspective, Maps and Mapping: In Dialogue with W.S. Graham

Greig has stated that "Graham is a writer whom I go back and back to these days. I think he contains everything" (2011a: 7). In "Hunting Kudu in Streatham" (2013d), he quotes one of Graham's poems, "The Constructed Space", practically in full. In a recent interview, he notes that "[a] lot of [his] work at the moment is a dialogue with the Scottish poet W.S. Graham" (2016a: 93). This section suggests that a particular trope that pervades Greig's work, the aerial perspective, engages in a creative dialogue with Graham's poetry. Judging from Greig's recurrent references to Graham, one might claim that Greig's geographical imagination (see Greig 1994a: 8-10) – which I define as his way of perceiving, experiencing and thinking the world imaginatively in spatial terms – has been fuelled by such creative conversation. The intense beauty of Graham's poetry foregrounds enigmatic aerial perspectives – "the fertile sky" (1979: 29), "Under the process of the flooding sky" (1979: 30) – and a sense that there is some kind of dialectical exchange and intimate connection between sky and ground – "High my bled ground" (1979: 29), "Good

[27] Other influences Greig has mentioned include "Milan Kundera, Kafka and Gabriel Garcia Márquez, [...] Alasdair Gray, [...] Scottish indie bands and [...] Bill Forsyth films" (2011b: 23). He also mentions "Adorno, […] Graham, […] Barker, Brecht, […] Hannan, […] Crimp, […] Churchill, Sylvia Plath, David Foster Wallace" (2011a: 7). In my interview, he specified Crimp's *The Treatment* and Churchill's *Top Girls* (2016a: 92). Hannan's *Shinning Souls* and Simon Donald's *The Life of Stuff* have also been noted (Raab, personal communication, 2012). Besides, Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* (1938) is behind *San Diego* (see Greig 2013b: 261, 2013c: 120 and 2016a: 93), Henrik Ibsen behind *The Architect* (see Greig 2016a: 93), Brecht behind *Europe* (see Greig 2016a: 93), among others, and D.H. Lawrence behind *Outlying Islands*. There is also Samuel Beckett, in the very sense in which Greig describes his relevance to Kane's oeuvre: "not unlike those moments in Beckett where the human impulse to connect is found surviving in the most bleak and crushing places" (2001b: x). "Michel Vinaver, […] Bernard-Marie Koltès [and] Harold Pinter" might be added to this list (Greig 2016a: 91).

stars above you, night pedestrian" (1979: 29) and "over your head the climbing blue / Sky observes your lonely foot" (1979: 167).

Greig's interest in the aerial perspective – his fascination, for instance, with cosmonauts – is probably not exclusively a result of this dialogue, but needs to be simultaneously seen as a response to the fact that contemporary everyday life and imaginings bear the imprint of living in an aerial age of planes, communications masts, satellite technology, space stations and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles or drones. Thinking of aerial perspectives and connections between 'the above' and 'the below' brings to mind Greig's interest in the notions of maps and mapping.

Firstly, to put it simply, the idea of a map and the aerial perspective are connected in Greig's definition of a map as "the world as seen from very, very, very high above" (2016a: 89). The process of looking down from above and 'generating' a map clearly emerges in Greig's first text for Suspect Culture, *Savage Reminiscence*: "[t]o see the island from above. To see its shape the way Ariel sees it" (1991: n.p). This is what Caliban imagines Ariel can do: Ariel can look down and see the island, he can see a map of the island. I am using this stripped-down definition of a map because it links up the aerial perspective with the capacity to map out, or engage with mapping. Indeed, Greig claims that "mapping […] reconnects with the aerial perspective" (2016a: 89).

So, secondly, the aerial perspective crucially involves the activity of looking at the world, of mapping out, of aiming to understand the world. Indeed, as Rebellato claims, "[t]he view from above […] is connected in some ways with [Greig's] interest in seeing the larger international context" (2002b: xvii).[28] In this sense, the aerial perspective becomes the writer/playwright/author's perspective.[29] Although Greig claims that god is absent (see

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[28] Rebellato also comments on aerial perspectives in Suspect Culture's work and in Greig's *California Dreaming* [sic], *The Architect* and *Cosmonaut* (see 2003: 77).

[29] I use the triad writer/playwright/author for reasons that will hopefully become clearer as the thesis progresses.

2016a: 89), it is also important to point out that he understands the aerial perspective as a spiritual perspective, "a kind of question, or a yearning" (Greig 2016a: 89). The centrality of the aerial perspective for Greig is by no means a reason to think of him as a totalitarian, omniscient narrator, or ubiquitous controller of his plays, but rather as a playwright who actively engages with the scenes from the world despite the risks involved in taking the aerial perspective. In sum, the aerial perspective is one of the pivotal mechanisms whereby Greig engages with the scenes from the world in his plays.

Rebellato was the first to identify that "[t]he view from above is a common motif in [Greig's] work" (2002b: xvii). However, the idea of the 'view from above' has grown in complexity throughout Greig's career. Experimentation with spatial perspectives, arrangements and structures morphs into original shapes across Greig's work, while simultaneously retaining the senses of aerial perspective, map and mapping noted above. The reason for this might be his relentless interest in experimentation as well as his possible desire to foreground and destabilise the sense of power of those who look, act and do business from above.

To begin with, Greig's theatre offers myriad moments of looking up in addition to moments of looking down – for instance, looking at the sky (*Cosmonaut*) and bird-watching (*Outlying Islands*). In order to perhaps facilitate those moments, Greig's theatre creates characters that engage with either or both perspectives. For instance, *Cosmonaut* includes two cosmonauts who constantly look down and, again, *Cosmonaut* and *Pyrenees* feature the daughter of one of the cosmonauts, who constantly looks up and yearns for her father, and a UFO observer who watches the sky, respectively. Pilots (*The American Pilot*, *San Diego*) are recurrent, as are birds (*Outlying Islands, San Diego*). This is juxtaposed to 'below' practices such as walking (*One Way Street*), train travelling (*Europe*), mycology

(*The Events*), wandering in Damascus's souk (*Damascus*), 'naked rumbling' (*Dalgety*) and running (*The Way*).[30]

Now, while looking down from roofs (*Europe*, *The Architect*) establishes an aerial perspective, Greig provides numerous instances where spatial shifts set up a dialectical relationship, sometimes leading to fatal events. For instance, there are cases of exploding high up (*The Architect*, *Cosmonaut* and *Brewers Fayre*) which usually involve others looking up from the ground. In *Outlying Islands* birds violently crash onto the ground from above, while in *The American Pilot* a massacre is performed from above and 'satellite death-registering' is alluded to. This spatial architecture is heightened and enlarged by further moments or gestures, including an above-below spatial interplay that takes over form itself (*Cosmonaut*), figurative flags of vomit that become a map of life (*One Way Street*), a sense of falling from above into orbit (*The Architect*), a seeming 'butterfly-effect' chain of events (*San Diego*), or bodily transpositions that transgress realistic spatial coordinates (*Fragile*), among others. This intricate spatial engagement is crucial in order to address the ethical and spectatorial dimensions of Greig's work.

2.3.2. Adornian Dialectics and Greig's Rough Theatre

A highly insistent feature in Greig's work is its use of dialectical theory and dialectical structures. Greig has stated that "[he] wanted to get away from theatre that proposed dialectical solutions in the old left-wing tradition and offer *a theatre that tore at the fabric of reality* and opened up the multiple possibilities of the imagination" (2008a: 212; emphasis added). It is particularly in relation to such 'tearing' that Greig's work engages with Adorno's understanding of dialectics, which veers away from a classical

[30] On his website, Greig states, "I am currently working on a long piece of non-fiction writing about running which will be called *The Way*. I have no idea when or how this will ever be finished but as it develops I will post bits of it in the blog". See <http://www.front-step.co.uk/running/> (accessed 4 March 2014).

approach to the term.[31] In *Lovesongs to the Auld Enemy* (2007d), a collection of essays on England edited by Greig, he states:

> [S]tandard dialectics advances an idea through thesis being opposed by antithesis until both are eventually resolved through synthesis. Adorno proposed, however, that thesis and antithesis could be held in the same thought until the tension between them became so great that they tore the fabric of rational reality. (2007d: 56)[32]

Adorno believed that "the distribution-mechanisms of large scale capital" (2005: 207) or "the system as a whole […] transform[s] every level of […] society in its image" (Rebellato 2003: 63). Those levels include "perception" (2005: 105), "[e]ach statement, each piece of news, each thought" (2005: 108), "every opinion", "every argument" and "all cultural products, even non-conformist ones" (2005: 207), "intimacy" (2005: 138) and "the apparently most neutral objects" (2005: 138), which end up conforming "a zone of paranoiac infection" (2005: 138), an enclosed system that Greig calls "the fabric of rational reality" (2007d: 56) or "narrative superstructure" (2008a: 214) – the single system of monetary value operated by capital within which we do, feel, think and even imagine at present.

Both Adorno and Greig sustain the idea that this frame that encapsulates all that exists needs to be torn (apart). This is why 'tension' becomes a key concept in Adornian dialectics, focused on the "banishing [of] harmony from the dialectical process" (Barnett 2013: 51). Despite "[t]he ubiquity of the system" (Adorno 2005: 205) or the pervasiveness of this "'sphere of consumption'" (2005: 15), Adorno argues that there can exist "opposition", which is "still not wholly encompassed by this order" (2005: 15). Likewise, Greig is of the opinion that although his theatre might not change anything, it can at least aim to tear the fabric of rational reality. One possible way to do so is through the

[31] Rebellato has drawn on Adorno on numerous occasions, particularly in relation to Suspect Culture's work (2003 and 2013a).

[32] In Greig's *The Letter of Last Resort* (2012; publ. 2012b), the female Prime Minister states, "[w]e pursue rationality until it creates a logical paradox so extreme that it *breaks through* the simple binary opposition of rational and irrational and it becomes something else – something beyond – something transcendent" (Greig 2012b: 226; emphasis added).

production of contradiction, namely, by holding thesis and antithesis "in the same thought", as noted above (Greig 2007d: 56). Contradiction is central to Adorno. In *Negative Dialectics* (1966), Adorno is alarmed that the absence of contradiction catastrophically grinds history to a halt and results in the effacing of "the dialectical movement that would drive society beyond capitalism" (Rebellato 2013a: 303). In Greig's plays, (Adornian) contradiction or other forms of tension become the conduit whereby the tearing of rational reality and the illumination of (utopian) possibilities might come about.

Indeed, the production of contradiction aims not only at disrupting the fabric of rational reality, but also at "allowing a transcendent glimpse of the world as it ought to be" (Greig 2007d: 56), which suggests a utopian drive. For Adorno, "the stronger the contradiction, the more likely the moment of transcendent glimpse" (Greig 2007d: 56). Without contradiction, there is no possibility of what Nancy calls "justice" (2007: 53) and "Adorno variously calls 'true society', 'utopia' or 'freedom'" (Rebellato 2013a: 303). One of the ways in which dialectics might open up a path towards more equal ways of being is through the possibility that it might convey or bring about interconnectedness. As Adorno explains, "[d]ialectical thought […] refuses to affirm individual things in their isolation and separateness" (2005: 71). That seems a key reason for Greig's interest in (Adornian) dialectics: it constitutes a method that allows an "opportunity to think beyond the system" (Rebellato 2003: 67) as it throws light on the interrelatedness of all things, and thus foregrounds the centrality of the ethical.

Greig's notion of 'narrative superstructure' and the pervasive presence in his plays of (Adornian) dialectical contradiction, then, not only aim at shattering the existing, but also at opening up new paths of understanding and being. Ultimately, the relentless pursuit and production of tension and dialectical contradiction might be seen as underpinning

Greig's use of the phrase 'rough theatre' in relation to his work.[33] Out of 'rough theatre' Greig develops a 'creative theme' which he calls 'rough writing' (2008a: 213):

> '[R]ough' – as in a 'rough draft' – something done quickly, a sketch. 'Rough' as in 'not smooth' – something with texture, a form whose joins and bolts are visible. […] 'Rough' as in 'rough approximation' – not exact or precise but near and useful. 'Rough' as in 'I'm feeling rough this morning' – emotionally fragile, discombobulated, dislocated from time and place, hung over. 'Rough' as in 'unfinished'. (2008a: 213-4)

By producing contradiction through 'rough writing' and consequently rough theatre, the world might be momentarily experienced by the spectator beyond the narrative superstructure.

2.3.3. A Constellation of Post-Brechtian Strategies

Holdsworth is not alone when she notes that "[Greig] cites […] Brecht as his primary artistic inspiration and several of his plays exhibit epic structures and features" (2013: 171). Rebellato states that Brecht is a "touchstone" to Greig's work (2002a: 1); Wallace has read *Europe* as a *Lehrstück* (2006) and more recently also included a number of plays under the rubric "Lesson Plays" in *The Theatre of David Greig* (2013; see also Wallace 2016); Reinelt (see 2001: 383), and İnan and myself, in a jointly written article (2012: 57), have also highlighted Brecht's influence on Greig's theatre. Yet the ways in which a recycling of Brecht has enriched some of the formal traits of Greig's theatre merits some further discussion. This thesis suggests an articulation of that recycling via David Barnett's term 'post-Brechtian' (see 2013).

A pivotal contribution by Barnett is his succinct explanation of Brechtian dialectics and its current developments. According to him, Brecht's is "a dialectical performance philosophy rather than […] a collection of formal components", which results in a

[33] Greig's "Rough Theatre", published in 2008, was originally delivered in 2002 as a paper at the conference 'In-Yer-Face Theatre: British Drama in the 1990s', University of the West of England, Bristol, 6-7 September. As noted by Wallace, the notion 'rough theatre' "[e]cho[es] Peter Brook's loose category" (2011: 197), as developed in his *The Empty Space* (1968).

"dialectical method of making theatre" (2013: 48). Because Brecht thinks reality itself is dialectical – as Barnett points out, he "sees individuals and society in a process of perpetual dialogue which, through contradiction, brings about change in perpetuity" (2013: 49) – it is possible to combine his dialectical performance philosophy and materialist dialectical worldview in a relatively straightforward way. Brecht puts a formal set of notions (including the V-effect, gestus and the epic) at work, which results in his "staging materialist dialectics" (Barnett 2013: 49).

However, because that set of notions reflects the "narrowness of the dialectic as Brecht interpreted it" (Barnett 2013: 51), a post-Brechtian dialectics characterised by openness seems a better option at present. That 'openness' constitutes a demand consequent upon the impact of "postmodern epistemology" and the "pressure by the conditions that brought about postdramatic theatre" (Barnett 2013: 48). In such a context, those Brechtian formal components, framed with a materialist lens, have often been found inadequate. As Hans-Thies Lehmann points out, "we have learnt that the Brechtian answer of presenting the political problem in epic distance to an audience is no longer sufficient" (2013: 108).

Greig's theatre in particular is pervaded by a post-Brechtian sense of an "uncomfortable, awkward dialectic" (Barnett 2013: 52) characterised by the aforementioned openness, which seems more suitable in a context shaped not only by postmodern uncertainty and the pressures exerted on text by postdramatic practices (see Barnett 2013), but also by globalisation, which requires new strategies if its narrative superstructure is to be torn at all. Greig's theatre's recycling of Brecht includes radical reworkings of classic Brechtian strategies: the use of episodic form (the snappy structure of scene division in *Europe*), gestus (characters' monologues reflecting their own perspective on events in *The American Pilot*), alienation effects produced by music (the defamiliarising use of choruses and choirs in many plays), or the use of self-reflexive commentary

(statements such as an electronic display announcing "*San Diego* – a play by David Greig" (Cavendish 2003).

In its search for a more nuanced sense of awkwardness that might articulate more complex responses to present contexts, Greig's theatre pushes its post-Brechtian strategies in many other ways. This amounts to a post-Brechtian "'rich' or 'unfiltered' dialectic" (Barnett 2013: 52), which Greig's theatre constructs via anti-naturalistic performance strategies that include characters speaking posthumously, characters/actors remaining on stage throughout the performance, anti-naturalistic uses of language in situations of transnational and/or multilingual encounter, or perplexing understandings of spectatorship conveyed via design and movement, among others. Ultimately, while Brecht is primarily interested in activating the rational, thinking capacity of spectators, Greig's recycling of Brecht seeks to bring about a 'tearing' of the fabric of reality triggered not only by rational elements, but also by affective components.

3. Thesis Overview

The present thesis's corpus spans a period of two decades ranging from *Europe* to *The Events*. Specifically, in chronological order,[34] the thesis examines *Europe* (Traverse, 1994), *One Way Street* (Traverse, 1995),[35] *The Architect* (Traverse, 1996), *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (Ustinov Studio, 1999), *Outlying Islands* (Traverse, 2002), *San Diego* (Royal Lyceum,

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[34] The chronological sequence was an unintended by-product of the research and writing processes.

[35] Of all Suspect Culture's shows, *One Way Street* was selected for various reasons. I previously worked on Greig's use of the monologue form in my MA dissertation, which focused on *Savage Reminiscence*. Both pieces display a concern with space, experiment with geography, include central female characters (Greta and Miranda respectively) but focus on the figure of the male loner, and share long subtitles – *Ten Short Walks in the Former East* and *How to Snare the Nimble Marmoset* respectively. In any case, including at least one piece Greig wrote for Suspect Culture seemed essential given that his engagement with the company has also shaped his solo work and is central to his career's ongoing experimental and collaborative spirit. This thesis does not devote a specific section to Suspect Culture's work in general. Scholars that have paid attention to Suspect Culture include Rebellato (2003 and 2013a), Wallace (2013 and 2015), Zaroulia (2013a and 2013b) and myself (forthcoming a and forthcoming b). The most notable contribution so far has been *The Suspect Culture Book* (2013).

2003), *The American Pilot* (The Other Place, 2005), *Damascus* (Traverse, 2007), *Fragile* (Southwark Playhouse, 2011) and *The Events* (Traverse, 2013), all of which are seen as prominently responding to globalisation. The thesis also draws on material produced or delivered by Greig other than his plays, including interviews, essays, articles, public talks, website material, and social media, among others, as well as on reviews of productions of his work. Three intersecting concerns – namely, questions of space, ethics and the spectator – are seen as constituting (some of) the principal preoccupations, and also define the thesis's domain.

As regards the scope of the analyses of specific plays, the thesis hinges on access to them both through reading and, whenever possible, through performance. I have seen productions of, enacted – I took the walks included in *One Way Street* – or listened to recordings of the majority of the plays included in this thesis, among others. Where this has not been possible, I have relied on moments when other scholars, critics and reviewers comment on aspects pertaining to productions of the plays. Without ever forgetting the perspectival positioning involved in individual critical practice, I have endeavoured to do my best to provide meaningful analyses of the plays in relation to the aims of the present study.

Although the specific approach to Greig's work put forward in this thesis is, I would contend, novel, there are scholars who have explored some of the interconnections between space, ethics and the spectator in relation to globalisation in other contexts. For instance, Helena Grehan's *Performance, Ethics and Spectatorship in a Global Age* (2009) connects performance to globalisation, ethics and spectatorship. This thesis's approach differs from Grehan partly because, as Wallace notes, "the performances she discusses are non-mimetic" (2012: 61). On its part, Rebellato's *Theatre & Globalization* suggests that "[t]here may be something distinctly ethical in the position of the audience" (2009: 72). Other recent

publications also examine the intersection between spectatorship and ethics, such as *Ethical Speculations in Contemporary British Theatre* (2014), edited by Aragay and Enric Monforte, particularly the section on "Spectatorial Ethics", and Emma Willis's *Theatricality, Dark Tourism and Ethical Spectatorship: Absent Others* (2014). An approximation that also chimes in with the intersecting concerns of this study is Wallace's remark about "the three main areas where the discourse of ethics might interact with theatre practice: content, form and audience response" (2012: 56). Aragay also reflects on the concerns of this study in her chapter "Globalisation, Space and the Ethics of Witnessing" (2012), where she discusses plays that "interpellate spectators as witnesses […] thus foregrounding […] the ethical dimension of globalization itself and the ethical function of theatre vis-à-vis globalization" (2012: 108).

Particularly in relation to Greig's work, Wallace has suggested "the issue of space and time in a globalised […] context" (2006: 280) and has insisted on the ethical dimension of Greig's theatre in her book on the playwright (2013). Wallace has also claimed that "there is a good deal more to be said about the role of the audience" (2013: 232) in Greig's oeuvre. In the wake of the work carried out by the above-mentioned scholars, this thesis emphasises the need for a *joint* understanding of the three key notions of space, ethics and the spectator, given the fact that they are closely intertwined in Greig's plays' responses to globalisation. The thesis's theoretical and methodological framework, therefore, also interlaces the three components. It should be emphasised that the thesis is not about what these three strands might appear to mean to/in Greig's theatre in isolated ways, nor does it pursue comprehensive genealogies of the terms and the traditions behind them, which would be in itself the subject of a different study.

The thesis's theoretical and methodological framework might be described as decentralised, relying as it does on an inventory of tools and methods and a range of

notions, ideas and terms by a series of commentators. That is, the 'items' the thesis has ended up using, after arduous research, writing and rewriting processes, conform a sort of toolbox that is used to navigate Greig's theatre in the hope that the final product may provide some stimulating insights into his imaginative, unusual, versatile, prolific work. Ultimately, the thesis aims to throw light on the ways in which Greig's theatre participates in the contemporary political theatre tradition by mapping out its renovation of the aesthetic and illuminating the interlaced (space, ethics, the spectator) response to globalisation it exhibits. Perhaps most important of all is the attempt to trace how Greig's work has engaged with aesthetic experimentation over the years, a phenomenon motivated by his constant search for provocative responses to globalisation or articulations of the scenes from the world. As a result of the obligation and desire to look at the scenes from the world and the experimentation required to bringing them forth, there emerges a sense that Greig's theatre-making processes spill across the plays into the world, without which they could have not started life. Although the plays are my main anchor as far as my claims are concerned, the consideration of Greig's work in this thesis is ingrained in a dynamic loop where the playwright, the plays, spectators and the world itself are seen as mutually and constantly interacting and interpenetrating.

In terms of structure, the present introduction ("I. Introduction: A Shamanic Semionaut") is followed by the main body of the thesis ("II. Theoretical Framework", "III. Europe Plays", "IV. Vertical Plays", "V. Bird Plays", "VI. Encounter Plays" and "VII. Here Plays") and a conclusion ("VIII. Conclusion: World-Forming Theatre"). Except for the introduction and the conclusion, the other six parts have two sections each – a symbolic dialectical structure to underline the centrality of dialectics to Greig's work.

The first section of "II. Theoretical Framework" defines globalisation plays by engaging with debates around questions of aesthetics, ethics and politics and eventually

formulating the concept of a ‘politics of aesthethics’. The second section attempts a theoretical articulation of the ideas of the ‘holed’ spectator, theatre and world through an approach that hinges on the Deleuzian notion of affect – which, according to Cull, “holds great promise for the analysis of how performance impacts upon an audience” (2009: 8) – and on Greig’s experience as a spectator to his own work (see Greig 2016a: 93-5).

“III. Europe Plays” examines *Europe* (section 1) and *One Way Street* (section 2). Greig’s “Europe Plays” have as backdrop the fall of the Berlin Wall and the ensuing atmosphere of fragmentation in post-Wall Europe, the Balkan Wars and their consequences, the de-industrialisation of Europe and, generally, questions of European identity. They engage in a critique of people’s and memory’s invisibility and marginality by becoming witnesses to unheard demands and largely unnoticed historical facts in experimental ways. They offer a heightened and nuanced sense of urban and social transformation and historical memory that fosters the value of the intangible and the materiality generated through walking, in an attempt to counteract Francis Fukuyama’s claim about the ‘end of history’ (1992). The present study is not the first to read *Europe* and *One Way Street* alongside each other – Zaroulia did so in “Geographies of the Imagination” (2013a) and Holdsworth has stated that in both these plays, “Greig was preoccupied by the political reorganization necessitated by the fall of the Berlin Wall and what character an emergent ‘new Europe’ might develop” (2013: 170).

“IV. Vertical Plays” focuses on *The Architect* (section 1) and *Cosmonaut* (section 2). While the “Europe Plays” display the horizontality of train travelling and city walking, these “Vertical Plays” vertebrate communicative exchanges entwined with space along an up-and-down axis. Both *The Architect* and *Cosmonaut* capture the heritage of rigidity from the pre- and post-Cold War world and the rapidly shifting scenarios in the wake of the collapse of the grand narratives of communism and socialism, including increasing

urbanisation, rapidly developing technologies, growing mobility, and the experience of class segregation and violence in urban environments. In both, breached communication is channelled through a vertical spatial dialectic. Verticality, however, is combined with a sense of 'reaching out' that paradoxically signals to a struggle for communication in an era of enhanced forms of connectivity.[36] As Sierz puts it, "Greig's characteristic themes – the struggle to communicate along with intersecting lives – were beautifully realised in both *The Architect* (1996) and *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union*" (2012b: 82). Although the often-cited non-places (Augé 1995), defined as functional and anonymous places of passage, abound in these plays and generally in Greig's work, their focus on relationships and connectedness and their interest in questions of identity and integrity destabilise Marc Augé's definition of the non-place.[37]

The two sections of "V. Bird Plays" are devoted to *Outlying Islands* and *San Diego* respectively. The "Bird Plays" are perhaps the most abstract ones. The motif of bird watching runs from Veronica in *Timeless* to the boy imagined by Claire in *The Events*, and is pivotal to *Outlying Islands* and *San Diego* – the former focusing on two ornithologists who visit a remote island in order to observe its rare bird habitat, and additionally including a poignant bird subtext, and the latter beautifully weaving interrelationships via reference to birds and air travel. At the same time, and perhaps non-coincidentally, in these plays

[36] Rebellato first emphasised the idea of 'reaching out' in his article "'And I Will Reach Out My Hand with a Kind of Infinite Slowness And Say The Perfect Thing': The Utopian Theatre of Suspect Culture" (2003), and again a decade later in his contribution to *The Suspect Culture Book* (2013a). I have also addressed it in a recent article on the concepts of ecstasy and bleeding across in Greig's and Suspect Culture's work (forthcoming a).

[37] Instead of talking about non-places, Müller, for instance, prefers the more ample notion of settings that "correspond to the overall sense of displacement" (2005: 153). Although referring to *San Diego,* Zaroulia's statement that "all the characters experience travelling in a more complex way that moves beyond Augé's critique of the non-place" (2010: 270) applies to Greig's theatre at large. In a later article, Zaroulia similarly states: "Suspect Culture's engagement with travel contests Augé's proposition that 'the traveller's space is the archetype of the non-place'" (2013b: 48). Fiona Wilkie also claims, in relation to Greig's work, that "these spaces often become more human than Augé's term would suggest" (2011: 152). Yet, Greig's theatre also highlights the pleasure of momentarily losing identity or being in places that in principle dilute the self, where one can feel 'alone' and that look the 'same' around the world, such as hotels and airports. Many scenes in his work, or even in some cases entire plays, are set in hotels – *Mainstream*, *Creditors* (2008; publ. 2008b), *San Diego*, *Damascus* – and he wrote a performance text for Suspect Culture entitled *Airport* (1996a).

Greig's dramaturgy takes a substantial step ahead in terms of experimentation. Placed in the middle of the thesis, they emerged out of a context that saw a drastic escalation of terrorism and the War on Terror. It is not by accident that Greig goes back to the summer before the Second World War in *Outlying Islands*, which at the same time has the anxieties surrounding the weapons-of-mass-destruction years as backdrop. *San Diego*'s obsession with aircrafts and the scene in the play where a hijack is being filmed were prescient, for the play was actually written before 9/11.

"VI. Encounter Plays" includes a first section on *The American Pilot* and a second one on *Damascus*. The "Encounter Plays" focus on a particular kind of West/East encounter: that between someone from a society that has actively promoted globalisation or has caught up with it, and people who belong to societies that have not, for various reasons. Wallace's chapter "East/West" in her *The Theatre of David Greig* includes these two plays, among others. In these plays, respectively, an American and a British character happens to find himself seemingly in Afghanistan and Syria, where he encounters local characters. In Holdsworth's words, *The American Pilot* is set "in the aftermath of 9/11, the 'war on terror' and in the run-up to the second Iraq War" (2013: 178). It focuses on the crash of an American pilot in a rural village mired in a civil war, who becomes a hostage to the locals and is eventually 'rescued' by his own troops. By telling the story of a Scottish man, Paul, who goes to Syria to sell an English textbook package to a local educationalist, *Damascus* asks whether the "alteration of the lenses by which cultures perceive one another" (Gunn 2001: 19) is possible. The receptionist at Paul's hotel (Zakaria), who embodies the feeling of humiliation experienced by many young Arabs under globalisation, commits suicide. The play weaves together colonisation processes, terrorism and war through Elena's, the hotel pianist, comments and a TV that shows images of 'the current situation', among others.

Finally, “VII. Here Plays” turns to *Fragile* (section 1) and *The Events* (section 2). The “Here Plays” have as background the recent increase in social unrest and protest movements as well as the spread of terrorist violence and right-wing ideologies. *Fragile*’s most immediate backdrop is the 2010 student protests against the austerity measures undertaken by the British coalition government in relation to public spending in education, health and other social services, and the Arab Spring (2011), which led to the overthrow of several dictators in Northern Africa and the Middle East. *The Events* draws on Anders Behring Breivik’s mass killings in Oslo and Utøya (2011), but does not scrutinise them as isolated occurrences. Rather, the play registers the increasing racist violence against immigrants and vulnerable people and the resurgence of far right-wing parties and movements in Europe, as well as the upsurge of violent acts committed by young men across the globe. *Fragile* and *The Events* are not labelled “Here Plays” because their setting is Britain; rather, as the thesis aspires to show, they are “Here Plays” because the ‘here’ and the ‘there’ gradually merge over the course of Greig’s theatrical journey into an in-between space that highlights “a form of global connectedness” (Butler 2011: 9), or the fact that in a globalised world, as Bauman succinctly puts it, “the difference between ‘far away’ and ‘down here’ is cancelled” (2000: 117). As Greig himself claims, “[i]n a globalised world we have to recognise that our lives are interconnected – there is nowhere that is not here” (2016a: 91).

II. Theoretical Framework

1. Globalisation Plays: The Politics of 'Aesthethics'

1.1. Defying Mimetic Representation

1.1.1. Aesthetic Experiment

Rebellato's central argument in "From the State of the Nation to Globalisation: Shifting Political Agendas in Contemporary British Playwriting" (2007) is that the agenda of political theatre has shifted from state-of-the-nation plays to what may be called 'globalisation plays', that is, plays that respond to globalisation: "where once playwrights proclaimed 'messages first' (Brenton and Hammond 1973), now aesthetic experiment may be the right means to achieve an effective political response to the challenges of a consumer culture and a marketized world" (2007: 259).[38] While this study agrees with Szeman that "[i]t is meaningless to insist on a global style or global form in architecture, art, or literature", it differs from his view that globalisation "has little relation to aesthetics" (2010: 69). Instead, the thesis seeks to show that paying attention to aesthetic innovation is paramount when addressing Greig's "political theatre for a globalising world" (Rebellato 2002b: xxi; see also Wallace 2013: 9).

In order to do so, it seems useful to begin by defining 'state' and 'nation', the two terms in the preceding paradigm of political theatre in Britain, namely the state-of-the-nation play: "[t]he state is a unit of public political organization and it bears responsibility for justice, reason and law; the nation […] binds people together through shared temperament, language, history, culture, landscape and so on" (Rebellato 2007: 248). Thematically preoccupied with the state of the nation, or rather the state of the nation-state, the state-of-the-nation play is "a model of theatre developed in the 1970s" (Rebellato 2007: 245), "in the context of the rise and fall of working-class militancy" (Rebellato 2007: 247).

[38] This does not imply that state-of-the-nation plays and globalisation plays are the only kinds of plays preoccupied with politics.

Its advocates famously "turned to agitprop, a form of theatre that developed in the 1920s as a means of disseminating a revolutionary analysis of society" (Rebellato 2007: 247).[39] In Howard Brenton's *Romans in Britain* (1980), when "Cassivellaunel tries to warn that the Romans are coming" (2007: 249), Rebellato finds a symptom that the state-of-the-nation remit was about to collapse: Cassivellaunel's "failure to find the right words", he claims, "suggests the unimaginable scale of this technology of destruction, this entirely new system of human organization […] the emergence of a new political phenomenon, also of unimaginable scale, involving a vast and growing totality of technology and people: globalization" (2007: 250). The scene was set, in other words, for a "global shift" (2007: 249) from state-of-the-nation plays towards what I call 'globalisation plays'.

In a section of his essay entitled "Beyond the state-of-the-nation play" (2007: 254), Rebellato describes a transitory stage where theatre began to attempt to capture the growing disconnection between state and nation by means of plays that "bypass the nation-state as such" (2007: 253) and address "the nation, isolated from the state" (2007: 254) – by being set in "an institution" or trying to "engage with the natural landscape", by focusing on "the lived experience of a particular city [without caring] to locate that city within a sense of wider state", or by "investigat[ing] the resources of local language, or tradition, or memory […] without seeming obliged to expand or contract its imaginative limits to anything resembling the boundaries of the territorial state" (2007: 254).[40] Rebellato's argument for the incapacity of the state-of-the-nation play to represent the contemporary globalised world is that now "patterns of power and injustice extend well beyond the boundaries of the nation" (2007: 254).

[39] For typical examples of the state-of-the-nation play and "a provisional list of attributes most of which are shared by these plays", see Rebellato (2007: 246-50). Such attributes include being large-cast plays, usually performed in large theatres with a national profile, and focusing on a direct representation of facts and values of concern to the nation-state. The ultimate aim of state-of-the-nation plays is to put forward a message.

[40] For examples of this type of play, see Rebellato (2007: 254).

A step further in this move away from the state-of-the-nation mould is constituted by plays that represent globalisation at a thematic level in an attempt to "com[e] to terms with the new world of multinational and global capital" (Rebellato 2009: 27).[41] Yet the decisive feature that inaugurates globalisation plays is to be found in aesthetic engagement. As Rebellato suggests, "it is at the level of aesthetic form" (2007: 257) that a response to globalisation may be most effective, as a sign that "in the era of globalization, nation and state do not map effectively onto one another" (2007: 257). These "plays of the globalization era" (2007: 258), or globalisation plays, which according to Rebellato include, at an early stage, Kane's *Blasted* (1995), Churchill's *This is a Chair* (1997) and Crimp's *Attempts on her Life* (1997), address globalisation in ways that are perhaps more indirect and crucially "contain deliberately clashing or contradictory elements" (2007: 256) – contradiction being a central element in Greig's work too, as noted in the introduction to this thesis.

One of Rebellato's concluding claims is, "[w]here realism seemed essential, now a kind of non-realism seems so" (2007: 259). Or, as he puts it elsewhere, "globalization's effects are so profound that they require – and have generated – wholly different forms to represent them" (2009: 29; see also Rebellato 2006: 97). Wallace concurs that "a new politics has emerged that presents writers with a complex puzzle of how to represent a world governed by the forces of globalisation" (2011: 197). It is this thesis's contention that Greig's plays importantly attempt to find those new forms by troubling "mimetic representation" (Tomlin 2013: 20), albeit without completely eschewing it – as noted in the introduction, Greig has spoken about the "imperative to represent the world" (2016a: 91). This defiance of mimetic representation can also be approached from the angle of ritual, given its "performative character" (Nesteruk 2000: 36). That is, ritual – an index of the

[41] For specific examples, see Rebellato (2009: 26-28).

interest in the spiritual in the work under discussion – is also a crucial way in which mimetic representation is troubled. It thus contributes to the creation of those "new cultural forms" (Wallace 2011: 197) that might both express and possibly enhance an understanding of globalisation, and perhaps suggest modes of resistance to it by critiquing its negative aspects. To wrap up this section, even though Greig has referred to some of his early plays as "the sort of State-of-the-Nation type stuff I was writing" (2016d: 244), in none of these cases do the plays seem intent on transmitting a specific political message. As noted, the politics, if anything, come from a heightened engagement with formal innovation.

1.1.2. Undone Time, Location and Character

Some of the particular ways in which Greig's globalisation plays disturb mimetic representation are connected to experimental treatments of time, location and character that, more often than not, produce contradiction. As regards time, while state-of-the-nation plays have "epic time-spans" (Rebellato 2007: 246) that are usually historically identifiable and solidly locatable, in Greig's globalisation plays, if time seems epic it is because it has been "dramatically altered by the perspectival shifts of globalization" (Rebellato 2009: 81). Although time in globalisation plays normally spans hours or days, in contrast to state-of-the-nation plays' years (see Rebellato 2007: 246), in Greig's theatre time becomes undone as a result of those perspectival shifts, which leads to a sense of atemporality or other unusual treatments of duration. Further, I want to suggest that confronting the spectator with such unusual renderings of time, including the spiritual, performative moments of "temporal dissociation" (Megson 2013: 50) discussed in the introduction, may be seen as an ethically-inflected gesture.

This shifting temporal logic extends to spatial location too. While state-of-the-nation plays display a "panoramic range of public (and sometimes private) settings"

(Rebellato 2007: 246), usually confined within the realm of one or more nation-states, in globalisation plays "the imaginative boundaries of the playwright sweep […] beyond the arbitrary boundaries of the outmoded nation-state" (Rebellato 2007: 258). Rebellato notes, for instance, that "*Cosmonaut* […] and *San Diego* […] display a globetrotting dramaturgy that sweeps us from continent to continent" (2007: 258). And it is not only that the settings imagined exist beyond the confines of the nation-state, but also that globalisation plays are characterised by a "deterritorializing quality" (Rebellato 2007: 258) that at times evokes a sense of "de-territorialized placelessness" (Rebellato 2009: 26). A paradigmatic example of this quality is the expensive hotel room in Kane's *Blasted*, which could be anywhere in the world (see Rebellato 2009: 26). Oftentimes, such deterritorialising involves a re-territorialising manoeuvre – thus in *Blasted*, the hole in the hotel room's wall brings 'close' the alleged 'elsewhere' of war. Similarly, Elisabeth Angel-Perez's "Deconstructing the Nation? British Theatre in the Age of Postmodernism" (2011) suggests that tucker green "uses Brechtian geographical distancing so as to illuminate close-to-us issues […] as globalization turns these apparently far-away problems into ethical questions that are our responsibility" (2011: 69). A fourth important characteristic of globalisation plays in connection with the idea of location, and an umbrella term for the preceding features, is that of unspecificity. Rebellato names several examples of globalisation plays where unspecificity is palpable (see 2007: 258-59), and observes, for instance, that "Greig does not mention Afghanistan in *The American Pilot*" (2007: 258), while critics such as Billington object to its "calculated geographical imprecision" (2005: 588).

A key question that emerges in this connection is how the dynamic spatial trespassing, the deterritorialising quality, the distancing manoeuvres and the unspecifity that seem to govern globalisation plays work in ethical terms. As regards the umbrella concept of unspecificity, Rebellato argues that "[t]he refusal of these writers always to

specify the location of their plays" may be seen as "a refusal to let ethical judgement stop at national boundaries" (2007: 258). A similar point may be made about the other intricate and closely connected ways of tackling space and its theatrical representation: from the ethical point of view, they all aim at fostering the spectator's embracing of a new spatial understanding in tune with the ethical imperatives of the global age. All in all, these mechanisms result in globalisation plays "not obey[ing] the causal logic that organizes the geography" (Rebellato 2007: 258). What threads through these four strategies is the suggestion that the location of globalisation plays is the whole world, despite the fact they are not necessarily set in the whole world.

According to Augé, "we live in a world that we have not yet learned to look at" and in order to change that "[w]e have to relearn to think about space" (2008: 29). In short, the present thesis argues that the aim of transgressing, deterritorialising, distancing and unspecifying gestures in Greig's globalisation plays is to contribute to this relearning by paradoxically re-territorialising – albeit not in the 'terrain' of the nation-state with demarcated geographical boundaries, but in the 'whole world' understood as one single space.[42] Aragay's article "Relational Spaces: From State of the Nation to Globalization in Contemporary British Theatre" (2013), which emphasises the relevance of space in the transition from the nation-state paradigm to globalisation, is worth noting in this context. By analysing particular moments in the theatrical situation, Aragay cogently demonstrates how *Party Time* (1991), *Blasted* (1995), *Far Away* (2000) and *Fewer Emergencies* (2002), foreground a relational understanding of space more pertinent to our times than the absolute space paradigm that underpins both the nation-state and state-of-the-nation plays. By doing so, these plays eventually "compel [spectators] to confront the violently divisive reality of

[42] This is not an argument for a world without nation-states: as Augé notes, "our ideal ought not to be a world without frontiers, but one where all frontiers are recognized, respected and permeable" (2008: xiv-xv).

globalization" (2013: 83) and trigger a heightened understanding that we all live in "one single global, relational space" (2013: 80).

Moving on to characterisation, state-of-the-nation plays foreground whole classes of people and characters that usually represent historical forces, social conflict or a governmental system (see Rebellato 2007: 246-48); more particularly, they are interested in "specific, fully realized individual characters" who are always set "against a greater sense of history in motion" (Rebellato 2007: 248). In contrast, such a sense of full individuality within an ordered sense of history as background is contested in globalisation plays via extensive experimentation with character, without necessarily negating individuality altogether or undermining the historical perspective and/or the articulation of a desire for social change. In globalisation plays, one tends to find "non-specific characters" (Rebellato 2009: 78) and, instead of being represented as a linear, teleological narrative, history filters in and disrupts linearity via sparse, fragmented historical reference and anachronistic moments, in the shape, for instance, of "figures from another time" (Ridout 2013: 31), among other configurations.[43] Sometimes past, present and future bleed into each other, so that history appears as an awkwardly connected continuum. Besides, minuscule forces often seem as effective as large ones. Rather than an escapist manoeuvre, the unspecificity and indeterminacy of character and history and the importance of the small and the marginal invite the spectator to recompose the fragments and perhaps create different knowledge about this one single space.

[43] For a reading of some of Greig's works as history plays, see Botham (2016). Scullion (see 2007: 69) and Wallace (see 2013: 74) also respectively read *The Speculator* and *Victoria* (2000; publ. 2000a) as history plays. A pertinent way to look at Greig's as history plays might be through Hans Ulrich Mohr's description of post-historical history plays. Although not all the features he suggests in relation to Edgar's work apply to Greig's theatre, the fact that "[t]he plays do not live through the individuality of one or more characters", that "what matters are structures and processes" and that they "show human interaction dealing with the problem" (2005: 245) are highly relevant aspects.

Focusing now on the unspecificity of character – albeit without forgetting the question of history – it is in this context that Rebellato's argument about the "evaporation of singularity" (2009: 76) should be placed:

> Beckett's dramatic characters became more and more abstracted: from the odd but proper names Vladimir, Estragon, and Pozzo in *Waiting for Godot* (Théâtre de Babylone, Paris, 1953), to the more formalized Winnie and Willie in *Happy Days* (Cherry Lane Theater, New York, 1961), through to the reduction of character to markers of gender – W1, W2, M – in *Play* (Ulmer Theater, Ulm-Donau, 1963) and the bodily truncation to 'Mouth' in *Not I* (Lincoln Center, 1972).
>
> This gradual evaporation of singularity has been particularly characteristic of playwriting in the era of globalization: Sarah Kane followed the Beckettian trajectory by moving from Ian and Cate in *Blasted* to A, B, C, and M in *Crave* (Paines Plough, 1998), and in her final play, *4.48 Psychosis* (Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, 2000), no characters are indicated at all. In this she was influenced by Martin Crimp's play *Attempts on Her Life* (Royal Court Theatre Upstairs, 1997). (2009: 76)

The seventeen scenarios in *Attempts on Her Life* "are made up of lines of dialogue unassigned to a character" (Rebellato 2009: 76), and the main 'character''s (Ann? Anne? Annie? Anya? Anny? Anushka?) fragmented, dislocated, unstable subjectivity has frequently been noted and discussed (see e.g. Zimmerman 2002; Angel-Perez 2011). Interestingly, in his introduction to Kane's *Complete Plays*, Greig identifies the feature of evaporation of character in *Crave*, where, according to him, "one can almost feel the intoxicating release of Kane's writing as the borderlines of character evaporate entirely" (2001b: xiv). Liz Tomlin also mentions the phenomenon of "evaporating characters" (2013: 105) in contemporary theatre, and Cristina Delgado-García defines character as "any figuration of subjectivity in theatre, regardless of how individuated or, conversely, how unmarked its contours might be" (2015: 14), a suitable description of how character operates in globalisation plays, where the boundaries of characters are often productively unloosened, thus permitting endless (un)doings.

This finds resonance in Greig's description of a character in *Damascus* (Elena) as fluid (see Greig 2013b): "I believe that character is ungraspable. […] I think that in theatre

– where ‘the character’ floats around the actor’s body, one cannot help but express or present that ungraspability” (2007b: 54). Interestingly, Greig locates character outside the body of the actor, floating around it in ghost-like, liquid terms. Such fluidity is expanded into the notion of context in the claim made by Mauricio Paroni de Castro, one of Suspect Culture’s longstanding international artistic collaborators:

> [T]he notion of *subtext* – character-related – must be replaced by the notion of *context* – action-related – in order to provide the actor with a proper role along the way. A context that draws on the imaginings, experiences and conflicts of the performers’ (and the audiences’) daily lives. (2013: 59; emphases original)

A view of character as something that floats around the actor’s body, combined with an emphasis on character bursting into context, productively blurs the boundary between character and actor or even audiences and their contexts, thus permitting the spectator, potentially, to envisage alternative senses of personhood.

Of course, such dissolution, evaporation or liquidity of character in globalisation plays manifests “the notion of poststructuralist subjectivity that no longer recognises an ‘authentic’ or ‘essential’ self” (Tomlin 2013: 14) or a “normative ‘I’” (Cavarero 2011a: 1). Given that in a postructuralist/postmodern context, “the subject is no longer seen as a unified, self-contained, self-mastered and rational individual ‘I’ defined by the hierarchical dichotomy of mind and body” (Delgado-García 2015: 20), it might be more useful to describe “[b]odies”, characters or actors, as “[f]orces” (Nancy 2008: 152). At the same time – and crucially, in the context of this thesis – this evaporated, undone, dynamically fluid, porous approach to character critiques the sense of self that is prevalent in neoliberal globalised societies, where “[the] market […] encourages a certain kind of individualism” (Rebellato 2008: 202) that may be described as vertical (Cavarero 2011a; 2001b), rigid and strictly self-contained. Since “[t]he boundary between the body and the world outside is among the most vigilantly policed of contemporary frontiers” (Bauman 2000: 184), characters (trying to) transgress this boundary and reach out constitute forces of resistance

against neoliberal globalisation's policing of the borders of the self, the body, the skin. Rebellato's comment on spatial unspecificity (see 2007: 258), quoted above, may be adapted to describe characterisation in globalisation plays – namely, the refusal to present fully realised, contained or rounded characters does not jettison a sense of individual responsibility, but may entail a refusal to let ethical considerations stop at the boundary of one's skin.

In sum, Greig's aesthetic experimentation with time, space/location and character produces unusual perceptions and experiences of time, expanded senses of place, and evaporated, porous 'character-forces' that trouble mimetic representation, stretch the possibilities of playwriting and the staging of plays, and, crucially, foreground both the interconnections and the interdependencies between human beings, and between them and the environment, thus pointing to a renovated sense of ethics. Towards the end of his article on the transition from state-of-the-nation to globalisation plays, Rebellato reads the uncoupling of nation and state in the era of globalisation as the grounds for the current ethical disorientation: "the nation-state was a way of coordinating and realizing our fundamental ethical commitments" (2007: 256). As globalisation continues to place the nation-state under increasing pressure and the perception that "politics has failed us" (Rebellato 2007: 257) becomes widespread, globalisation plays might be instruments that precariously articulate, through aesthetic experimentation, a renewed sense of the ethical that is both compatible with, and essential to, our times.

1.2. The 'Ethical Turn' in Theatre Studies and Some Levinasian (Dis)contents

While the 'ethical turn' in the humanities, particularly in (continental) philosophy and in literary studies, can be traced back to the mid-1980s (see Aragay 2014: 3; Wallace

2012: 55), its presence in theatre studies only became clearly perceptible in the late 2000s.[44] In all cases, the 'ethical turn' has been informed by the philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas, whose work is generally agreed to have made a crucial contribution to the rethinking of ethics in the wake of the Holocaust, away from a set of prescribed moral principles, and towards what is nowadays referred to as post-Levinasian ethics. Levinas's ethics, which hinges on a turn to the Other, can be summarised by reference to the – hopefully not excessively reductive – following points. Firstly, Levinasian ethics is pre-ontological, meaning that ethical obligations precede us and outlive us, as is concisely indicated by the phrase 'being for the Other'. Secondly, 'being' for Levinas involves a non-sovereign vision of the subject – a non-sufficient, vulnerable, dependent subject that differs radically from the Cartesian 'knowing being'. Thirdly, Levinasian ethics is an ethics of the 'face', an ethics of proximity, and it is based on non-intentional consciousness, meaning that ethical obligations are grounded in the random/anarchic encounter between the Self and 'the face of the Other', the 'face' of the first individual to come along.

While acknowledging that, as Aragay puts it, "the Levinasian reconfiguration of ethics has shaped recent work in theatre and performance studies" (2014: 5), the present thesis now turns to exploring some of the shortcomings of Levinasian ethics. In order to do so, it highlights four ideas, namely, its suspicion of aesthetics, the emphasis it places on the

[44] Aragay notes that "[t]he publication in 1983 of a pioneering special issue of *New Literary History* on 'Literature and/as Moral Philosophy' was followed by a spate of monographs and essay collections, not to mention scholarly articles, focusing on explorations of the interface of ethics with fiction and, to a lesser extent, poetry" (2014: 3). Perhaps the best-known examination of the 'ethical turn' in theatre studies is Nicholas Ridout's *Theatre & Ethics* (2009). Other contributions include Alan Read's *Theatre and Everyday Life: An Ethics of Performance* (1993); Grehan's *Performance, Ethics, and Spectatorship in a Global Age* (2010); *Ethical Encounters: Boundaries of Theatre, Performance and Philosophy* (2010), edited by Daniel Meyer-Dinkgräfe and Daniel Watt; the international journal *Performing Ethos*, launched in 2010; and *A Life of Ethics and Performance* (2011), edited by John Matthews and David Torevell. Also proof of the growing body of scholarship on theatre and ethics are *Ethical Debates in Contemporary Theatre and Drama* (2012), edited by Mark Berninger and Bernhard Reitz and based on the proceedings of the 19th annual conference of the German Society for Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English (CDE); Katharina Pewny's *Das Drama der Prekären: Über die Wiederkehr der Ethik in Theater und Performance* (2011); the special 2012 issue of *The Drama Review* on "Precarity and Performance", edited by Ridout and Rebecca Schneider; and Aragay and Monforte's edited collection *Ethical Speculations in Contemporary British Theatre* (2014), the first volume to focus on text-based contemporary theatre and ethics.

pre-ontological quality of ethics, the required proximity of the 'face' of the Other for ethical engagement to take place, and the limitations attached to the obliteration of the Self as object of ethical attention.

1.2.1. Towards 'Aesthethics'

In his post-Second World War essay "Reality and its Shadow" (1948), Levinas shows a deep mistrust of aesthetics that is problematic from the point of view of this study, which attempts to relate theatrical aesthetic experimentation and ethics in Greig's work. As noted above, Rebellato has also underlined the interconnection between form and content/context, specifically globalisation and ethics. Similarly, Wallace, who has repeatedly emphasised the "ethical commitment uniting [Greig's] work" (2013: 3), writes of its mingling of "ethical queries with experiments in form" (2013: 11) and of "an ethics of form" (2012: 60) in relation to *The Author* (2009), by Crouch, a theatre maker who shares with Greig an interest in stretching the possibilities of text through aesthetic innovation and in the ethics of spectatorship.

But, of course, connecting Levinasian ethics with the idea of an ethics of form is highly problematic. Levinas's notorious hostility towards aesthetics – and by implication, theatre and performance – is based on the argument that aesthetic representation occludes the face of the other and, therefore, it "seduces its viewer into evading responsibility for the world" (Ridout 2009: 55). Ridout has attempted to navigate this impasse by correlating the effect of the encounter with the face of the Other – "the experience of something absolutely foreign" (Levinas qtd. in Aragay 2014: 6) – with a specific kind of theatre – experimental theatrical formats – able to "confront its spectators or participants with something radically other, something that could not be assimilated by their existing understanding of the ethical" (2009: 67). To sum up the argument, if theatre can produce, via form, what the

encounter with the Other generates – the experience of something radically different – then it may be legitimate to address aesthetic (theatrical) 'representation' via Levinasian ethics.

Although Ridout's contribution has been enormously helpful to this thesis, I wish to query his conclusion that "the relationship between theatre and ethics comes to be a question of form rather than content" (2009: 49) and that, in consequence, only experimental formats in theatre and performance can convey the experience of the radically other. The present thesis is driven by an interest in indirect forms of 'representation' and therefore in formal innovation, but content remains important to its approach, as does the conviction that more conventional – less overtly experimental – formats can also impart a sense of the radically different. Furthermore, it may be argued that novelty might reside in how a significantly charged content shapes form, independently of how experimental that form may be. The view taken in this thesis, then, is that content and form interpenetrate in intricate and highly productive ways in globalisation plays – hence the use of the term 'aesthethics' – and that the quality of their form – measured against its capacity to produce the experience of something radically other – is not predetermined by the degree of its innovative experimentation. As noted above, new forms in Greig's globalisation plays seek to produce something radically other primarily via the contradictions produced by experimental treatments of time, location and character that trouble "mimetic representation" (Tomlin 2013: 20), but they do not renounce representing the world for all that.

1.2.2. From Pre-Ontological Ethics to 'Polethics'

Although this study is informed by the idea that ethics "is always prior to the ontology of the ego" (Butler 2011: 15), it is also aware that such a view raises the question of the status of address in the realm of politics. Discussions of theatre in the light of the pre-

ontological quality of ethics have been productive in terms of notions of encounter and co-presence, but the passage from ethics to politics, which Aragay refers to as "the hazardous crossing from an intersubjective, relational ethics based on the face-to-face encounter to the realm of politics, of community" (2014: 13), remains problematic in the context of Levinas's work. While Ridout suggests, in *Theatre & Ethics*, that the ethical relationship might become "the ground upon which political action might be attempted" (2009: 66), in a later publication he pertinently asks, "what has happened to politics in all this ethics?" (2011: 13). Aragay too warns that "the exclusive emphasis on difference and plurality" in "poststructuralist relational ethics" might displace a "sense of collective action" (2014: 12) or politics.

In this context, it seems salutary to remember that, notwithstanding his conclusion that "where politics was the object, now it is ethics" (Rebellato 2007: 259), Rebellato's 2007 essay taken as a whole does not displace politics per se, but politics as understood within the state-of-the-nation play and the nation-state paradigm – i.e. as ideological grand narrative. As he has recently put it, "ethical debates – about the nature of our obligations to one another, the possibility of moral judgement, what makes us worthy of moral regard – are therefore also urgent political questions" (2014b: 93), and ethics and politics need to be seen as "two different areas coming into dialogue, rather than one masquerading as the other" (2014b: 81). It is in this context that the thesis suggests the neologism 'polethics' (see also Rodríguez 2012a).

1.2.3. From Proximate Ethical Encounters to Confounding Bodies and Places

As is well-known, in spite of its focus on "the naked face of the first individual to come along" (Levinas 1989: 83), Levinasian ethics tends to privilege proximity between Self and Other as the touchstone for ethical engagement. Butler's critique of Levinas in this

connection is informed by the experience of globalisation. She claims that "ethical obligations emerge not only in the contexts of established communities that are gathered within borders, speak the same language, and constitute a nation" (2011: 8); rather, the world now faces "ethical obligations that are global in character and […] emerge both at a distance and within relations of proximity" (2011: 1).

Butler's concept of the "reversibility of proximity and distance" implies that 'here' and 'there' "are fundamentally bound to one another" (2011: 8-9). In Greig's globalisation plays, the way violence is presented clearly suggests that near and distant places are inextricably connected. Gradually, throughout Greig's work, any distinction between 'here' and 'there' collapses and places become awkwardly, yet creatively and productively, fused, "confounding questions of location" (Butler 2011: 9). Indeed, as Butler puts it, "a certain dislocation of perspective is necessary for the rethinking of global politics" (2009: 47).

There is a sense, in other words, that in the context of globalisation, the 'face' of any individual is always-already 'here', because we live in an intensely interconnected world that muddles the notions of near and far, a world where "[g]lobalisation radically compresses the distance between countries" (Urban 2006: 158). Greig is interested in the scenes from the world, which in his experience means neither proximity nor distance, but rather a fusion of 'here' and 'there' into an irrevocable 'global here'. After all, "no place is really separate and secure from the impact of every and any other place on the planet, however faraway it might be" (Bauman 2010: 3), or, as Peggy Phelan puts it, "[w]hether we call this period 'the postpostmodern age' or 'the age of terrorism,' it is characterized both by an intimate reawakening to the fragility of life and a more general sense of connection to one another that exceeds simple geophysical, ideological, or cultural proximity" (2004: 577).

In sum, instead of ethics being yoked to the proximate encounter with the 'face' in a particular place and cultural context, a more open, globalised understanding of ethics suggests that bodies and places are always-already touching and being touched by one another in a context of irrepressible global interconnectedness that confounds the limits of body and place. By addressing the Other in the context of globalisation, Greig's theatre enacts a productive confounding or mutual touching of bodies and places via formal strategies that include the unusual temporalities, unspecific locations and evaporated singularities discussed above, in combination with Butler's dislocation of perspective, thus conveying a sense of global ethical obligations.

1.2.4. From a Non-Sovereign Subject to an (Un)bounded Self

The fourth aspect of Levinasian ethical philosophy that jars when placed alongside Greig's globalisation plays is Levinas's view of the non-sovereign dependent subject, which seems to erase a sense of self altogether. Coming from a very different angle, Thrift similarly mentions the Deleuzian "'becoming imperceptible'" (2008: 15), "in which extinguishing the self allows all kinds of unexpected futures to be opened up and drawn strength from" (2008: 15). On its part, Butler's proposition of an unbounded being, although perhaps more inclusive in that it encompasses both interiority and exteriority, still emphasises the ethically necessary dissolution of the Self: "when I act ethically, I am undone as a bounded being" (2011: 15).

Although the capacity to become unbounded, or the "ekstasis from an immanent self", in Nancy's terms (2007: 73), is vital from the ethical point of view – highlighting as it does, in particular, the dangers of negative globalisation's self-contained sense of self – it is also necessary to point out that a total extinguishing of the self involves its own risks. As Butler notes, "[t]o be ec-static means […] to be outside oneself, and thus can have several

meanings: to be transported beyond oneself by a passion, but also to be beside oneself with rage or grief" (2004: 24). Neel Keller notes that Greig's "unbound [characters] try to reach out, to make themselves heard" (2016: 113), but while ecstatic, unbounded states have an undoubted ethical potential in terms of openness to the Other, remaining indefinitely open – as, for example, in an ongoing state of passion, rage and/or grief – can become not only untenable, but ethically unproductive.

Thus, '(un)boundedness' – a word that encompasses the possibility of being simultaneously bounded and unbounded – contests (Levinasian) non-sovereignty as much as a binary notion of the Self/Other pair. By being *also* open to the world, we are simultaneously in and out of ourselves. Thus our sense of 'being' becomes confounded and collapses, perhaps, into a sense of interconnection and interdependence. Reinforced by equally undone senses of time and location, the treatment of character in Greig's work highlights such porousness between Self and Other, between bodies, and between bodies and the environment. And just as Greig's theatre confounds boundaries in terms of time, location and character, the conceptualisations of aesthetics, ethics and politics used in this thesis to frame it do so too.

1.2.5. Space: Walking towards 'Here'

To conclude this section, it seems adequate to address this thesis's understanding of space in the light of the above. Tim Cresswell suggests that "[w]hen we speak of space we tend to think of outer space or the spaces of geometry" (2004: 8; see also Augé 2008: 66-67), and both aspects are indeed vital to Greig's spatial imagination and theatre – witness his interest in cosmology and maps, for instance. Moreover, the word 'space' is used "to designate unnamed or hard-to-name places", or "a distance between two things or points […] a temporal expanse" (Augé 2008: 67). For both Augé and Cresswell, "space is a more

abstract concept than place" (Cresswell 2004: 8; see Augé 2008: 67). This makes it possible to explore multiple dimensions of space – not exclusively physical, logical or objective ones. In addition and crucially, "[s]paces have areas and volumes. Places have space between them" (Cresswell 2004: 8).

Augé defines place or anthropological place as "any space in which inscriptions of the social bond […] or collective history […] can be seen" (2008: viii). In contrast, non-places are "the ones we inhabit when we are driving down the motorway, wandering through the supermarket or sitting in an airport lounge waiting for the next flight to London or Marseille" (2008: 77).[45] In short, "[i]f a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity will be a non-place" (Augé 2008: 63). Two ideas related to a sense of porousness derive from this: firstly, in Greig's work qualities associated to places in Augé's definition can appear in non-places, and vice versa. Secondly, both places and non-places are viewed as porous is Greig's theatre, so space bleeds across them, rather than simply lying between them.

Similarly, (un)bounded bodies, located in (porous) places or in outer space, are also viewed as porous in this thesis – in other words, "the human body itself is perceived as a portion of space" (Augé 2008: 49). The thesis contends that the porosity of bodies and places means that everything is linked across space. Besides, the "drive towards generalizing character, allowing us to imagine people in general, transforms space" (Rebellato 2009: 79), which connects with my discussion of time, location and characterisation in globalisation plays delineated above. Space itself, then, works as the glue that brings about the sense of interconnectedness so dear to Greig's theatre. In other

[45] The context for Augé's claims is his concept of "supermodernity", which he articulates around the notion of a triple overabundance: "overabundance of events, spatial overabundance [and] the individualization of references" (2008: 33). His hypothesis is that "supermodernity produces non-places, meaning spaces which are not themselves anthropological places" (2008: 63).

words, space is, in this thesis, at this level, a metaphor for interconnectedness – which is why it seems highly pertinent to address it in tandem with ethics and spectatorship.

Following Augé's demand that we need to relearn to think space in the context of globalisation, I argue that the way in which Greig's theatre invites us to begin to do so is primarily through the plays' effort to convey a combined idea of place (and non-place) and taking place – incorporating both places and life – that the thesis calls 'here'. Greig's plays affectively put forward this 'here' as the interconnected space we live in. If "naming is one of the ways space can be given meaning and become place" (Cresswell 2004: 9), by calling the space we inhabit 'here', it becomes a 'place'. But of course, for the world to become a genuine place, in Nancy's sense, more than naming is needed. 'Here', then, is full of porous places and bodies 'glued' together by space. Greig's theatre's spatial engagement ethically aims at presenting the spectator with the scenes from the world through a particular understanding of space/place, a sense that we are all irremediably connected in this broken place called 'here'.

1.3. When Ethics Meets Aesthetics

The aim of this section is to place the preceding discussion in the context of the current wider debate on aesthetics, ethics and politics. Although it seeks to contextualise the renewed interest in aesthetics in the field of theatre studies by reference to curator and contemporary art theorist Nicolas Bourriaud's 'relational aesthetics' and Claire Bishop's critique of Bourriaud, followed by commentary on some other key figures such as Jacques Rancière, the "renewing of the aesthetic" (Elliott and Attridge 2011: 11) is part of a wider phenomenon. While "a suspicion of the category of the aesthetic [was prevalent] during the 1980s and 1990s" (Elliott and Attridge 2011: 11), a more confident "aesthetic revolution" (Rancière 2009a: 38) took over in the 2000s, a decade that has dispelled "the suspicion of

the discourse of aesthetics on the left" (Elliott and Attridge 2011: 11).[46] As Thrift suggests when addressing what he calls the "*practical aesthetic imagination*" (2010: 291; emphasis original), "[i]t is crucial to note here that aesthetics is understood as a fundamental element of human life and not just an additional luxury, a frivolous add-on when times are good" (2010: 291).

1.3.1. Nicolas Bourriaud's Relational Aesthetics

Originally published in 1998, Bourriaud's *Esthétique relationnelle* was first formulated as a series of essays around the exhibition *Traffic* curated by Bourriaud at CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain, Bordeaux (1996), and later became "an extended version of his catalogue text for *Traffic*" (van der Meulen n.d.). Bourriaud defines relational art as "an art taking as its theoretical horizon the realm of human interactions and its social context, rather than the assertion of an independent and *private* symbolic space" (2002b: 14; emphasis original). As Bourriaud puts it, his "ideas about relational aesthetics started from observing a group of artists – Rirkrit Tiravanija, Maurizio Cattelan, Philippe Parreno, Pierre Huyghe [and] Vanessa Beecroft" (2001: 2). In an interview, Bourriaud defines relational aesthetics as "a critical method, a way of approaching the art of the '90s, as well as a general sensibility that these artists shared" (2001: 1). As Bennett Simpson succinctly states in the introductory remarks to his interview with Bourriaud, relational art's cluster of

[46] Jane Elliott and Derek Attridge mention some titles that tell a story in relation to the shift from the suspicion of aesthetics in the 1980s and 1990s towards an engagement with it from the 2000s onwards: Hal Foster's *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (1983), Terry Eagleton's *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (1990), Isobel Armstrong's *The Radical Aesthetic* (2000), John J. Joughin and Simon Malpas's *The New Aestheticism* (2003), Marc Redfield's *The Politics of Aesthetics: Nationalism, Gender, Romanticism* (2003), Rancière's *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004), Jonathan Loesberg's *A Return to Aesthetics: Autonomy, Indifference and Postmodernism* (2005), Rancière's *Aesthetics and Its Discontents* (2009b) and *The Aesthetic Unconscious* (2009c), and Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell's *Politics and Aesthetics in the Arts* (2000) (see 2011: 10-11). According to Gillian Whiteley and Jane Torney, publications that involve a "radical rethinking of the contested term – aesthetics" (2012: xvii) include "Alain Badiou's *Handbook of Inaesthetics* (2005); Francis Halsall, Julia Jamen and Tony O'Connor (eds.) *Rediscovering Aesthetics: Transdisciplinary Voices from Art History, Philosophy and Art* (2008); Gavin Grindon (ed.) *Aesthetics and Radical Politics* (2008); Beth Hinderliter, William Kaizen and Vered Maimon (eds.) *Communities of Sense: Rethinking Aesthetics and Politics* (2009)" (2012: xviii).

premises can be summarised as follows: "get people together, give them some terms, provide an experience" (Bourriaud 2001: 1). When put into practice, these premises generate a series of situations which give rise to what Bourriaud calls "'an arena of exchange'" (2002b: 17) or a "social interstice" (2002b: 18), whose aim is to produce "relations between people and the world" (2002b: 42) – hence relational aesthetics.

In the wake of its translation into English as *Relational Aesthetics* (2002b), the homonymous concept has become the focus of heated and productive discussions, ranging from Bishop's critique – which is examined in the following section – to fruitful engagements with it in the work of some theatre and performance scholars in the UK and European contexts, such as Harvie's *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism* (2013), Duška Radosavljevic's *Theatre-Making: Interplay Between Text and Performance in the 21st Century* (2013), or Ridout's *Passionate Amateurs: Theatre, Communism and Love* (2013). It is hardly surprising that Harvie, Radosavljevic and Ridout are drawn to relational aesthetics, since they are interested in (participatory) theatre and performance formats beyond those exclusively involving audiences sitting in darkness, in silence, contemplating moving performers set apart on stage, in the light (see Harvie 2013: 6), and formats that favour "methods of social exchanges, interactivity with the viewer within the aesthetic experience being offered to him/her, and the various communication processes, in their tangible dimension as tools serving to link individuals and human groups together" (Bourriaud 2002b: 43).

This must be placed in a post-millennial context where participatory theatre and performance practices have become increasingly widespread in the UK – the work of companies like Blast Theory, Coney, Dreamthinkspeak, Punchdrunk, shunt or Reckless Sleepers, among others. There are, of course, difficulties – which I do not intend to solve here – surrounding the terminology used to refer to participatory theatre and performance

(immersive theatre, site-responsive performance, and so on), as well as important differences between practitioners as regards their use (or not) of text and the performance elements drawn upon (music, technology, visual material – including their degree of engagement with the visual arts – and so on). There are also difficulties at the level of the methods used (devising, engaging audiences in physical activities, the use of technologies, and so on), the variety of locations where the performances take place (from end-on stage-auditorium configurations and galleries to outdoor settings or the internet itself – or combinations of many), the audience volume (from one-to-one performance to bigger audience groups), and the degree of audience participation required (between different companies and within the work of one single company). However, a feature that connects them all is their "interest in people doing things with one another" (Ridout 2013: 13) and stopping 'pretending' that the audience is not there.[47]

Although Greig's work is generally accessed by watching performers from the darkness of the auditorium doing things in the light – and I want to make clear that there is intrinsically nothing wrong about this – many of his countless projects contest that general feature – for instance, his 'pub play' *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*, his play *Fragile*, which according to Wallace may be defined as "participatory theatre in action" (2013: 62), the use of real community choirs in *The Events*, or his Twitter theatre project, among others – the second section of the thesis's theoretical framework examines further instances of participation in Greig's work. In general terms, Wallace sees Greig's as a "style of writing […] conscious of its audience as participants" (2013: 68).

In any case, the idiom of relationality in art provides a key point of entry not only in connection with the interest in connectedness and relations in Greig's work, but as regards

[47] For recent scholarly discussions of participatory/immersive theatre, see Josephine Machon's *Immersive Theatres: Intimacy and Immediacy in Contemporary Performance* (2013), Gareth White's *Audience Participation in Theatre: Aesthetics of the Invitation* (2013) and Adam Alston's *Beyond Immersive Theatre: Aesthetics, Politics and Productive Participation* (2016).

crucial debates concerning aesthetics, ethics and politics at present. For instance, like relational art, Greig's theatre "prompts us to envisage the relations between space and time in a different way" (Bourriaud 2002b: 48) and provokes questions such as, "'[d]oes this work permit me [or rather, spectators] to enter into dialogue [with themselves, Others and the world]? Could [we] exist, and how, in the space it defines?'" (Bourriaud 2002b: 103). It also fosters "inter-human experiences [that try] to rid themselves of the straitjacket of the ideology of mass communications" (Bourriaud 2002b: 44).[48] Ultimately, beyond Greig's own work, Lehmann's claim that "[t]heatre presents an exceptional possibility of communication, it is by nature 'relational art'" (2013: 109) also underpins the grounding of this thesis's theoretical and critical framework in Bourriaud's notion.

1.3.2. Claire Bishop's Critique

Bishop is well known, among other things, for her attack on relational aesthetics in "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics" (2004), published in the journal *October*, and subsequently expanded in *Installation Art: A Critical History* (2005) and *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (2012). She begins by pointing out that Bourriaud omits a genealogy of participatory models in relational artistic practices and practices interested in activating the viewer.[49] That is just the beginning of a long list of objections to many aspects of relational art – including the marketisation of the museum, the aggrandisement of the figure of the curator, the problematic envisaging of the audience as a community, and crucially the effects of relational art and their duration, and the quality of the relationships it seems to produce (see Bishop 2004: 52-54).

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[48] Interestingly, another point Bourriaud makes about relational theatre, namely that "[s]acredness is making a comeback, here, there and everywhere" (2002b: 60), also links with this thesis's emphasis on the relevance of ritual and spirituality in Greig's theatre.

[49] The former include "Fluxus, Happenings and the situationists, which already developed participatory models in the 1960s" (van der Meulen n.d.), as well as "1970s performance art, and Joseph Beuys's declaration that 'everyone is an artist'" (Bishop 2004: 61), while the latter refer to "Walter Benjamin's 'Author as Producer' (1934), Roland Barthes's 'Death of the Author' and 'birth of the reader' (1968) and – most important for this context – Umberto Eco's *The Open Work* (1962)" (Bishop 2004: 62).

The last two are particularly relevant to the present thesis's concern with the interface between aesthetics and ethics. Bishop questions Bourriaud's notion of micro-utopia whereby "[t]he artwork is presented as a *social interstice* within which […] experiments and […] new 'life possibilities' appear to be possible" (2002b: 45; emphasis original). In particular, she disagrees with Bourriaud's view of the fleeting, transitory and temporary status of such putative micro-utopias as the core of the ethico-political agenda of relational aesthetics (see 2004: 54). To Bishop, this implies that relational art has no effect beyond the present and therefore no lasting transformative power (see 2004: 54).

"The *quality* of the relationships in 'relational aesthetics'" (2004: 65; emphasis original) is another of Bishop's preoccupations. She disputes the sense of "'togetherness'" (2004: 79) supposedly produced by relational art in favour of unease, discomfort, tension, friction and awkwardness seeking "more complicated" and "more controversial" relations (2004: 70). She is interested in adopting a "more disruptive approach to 'relations'" (2004: 77) in art – hence her phrase "relational antagonism" (2004: 79).[50] In this connection, I would suggest that if both Bourriaud's focus on interstice, fluidity and openness and Bishop's privileging of "paradox and negation" (2012: 40) are subsumed in a definition of relationality, it becomes possible to understand relational aesthetics in a way that productively combines both perspectives instead of treating them as oppositional – a view that seems particularly relevant to Greig's theatre, as will be shown subsequently.

Beyond her critique of relational aesthetics, Bishop insists, more generally, that the 'ethical turn' has become a "consensual order" (2012: 28), "a new kind of repressive norm" that tends to exclude what she values in art, namely, "artistic strategies of disruption" (2012: 25). Indeed, her misgivings underpin her argument that "unease, discomfort or frustration – along with fear, contradiction, exhilaration and absurdity" (2012: 26) cannot

[50] Bishop articulates the notion of 'relational antagonism' by drawing both on Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* and Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe's "theory of democracy as antagonism" (Bishop 2004: 69), in their *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (1985).

be attached to an ethical project, because they belong to the aesthetic realm. However, as is suggested in what follows, in the case of Greig's work this not need be the case – instead, a concern with ethics fruitfully (and critically) coexists with both disruption, fear and unease, as well as (potential) connectedness and even togetherness.

1.3.3. Ethics beyond Communitarian Consensus and Morality

Bishop is not alone in questioning relational aesthetics and the concomitant 'ethical turn'. Rancière has gone as far as to describe Bourriaud's interest in ethics as a "soft version of the ethical turn of aesthetics" (2006: 17) and Bourriaud's relational aesthetics as "little more than a moral revival in the arts" (Bourriaud 2012). Bishop's and Rancière's critiques resonate with a wider discontent. Bishop claims:

> [A]n orientation towards the ethical is part of a larger trend in the 1990s, symptomatic of what has been called our 'post-political' age. Slavoj Žižek, […] Rancière and others have observed an 'ethical turn' in philosophy (as evidenced in the resurgence of interest in […] Levinas, in Giorgio Agamben, and in the idea of 'radical evil' amongst Lacanian theorists), and this is also reflected in contemporary politics. The rise of communitarian discourse in the mid-1990s was underpinned by a desire to promote a homogeneous and consensual view of society: an 'ethical community' in which political dissensus is dissolved. (2007)

Bishop, Rancière and Žižek, among others, object to the 'ethical turn' on the grounds that it has generated a post-political climate. According to them, the ethical turn's favouring of communitarian discourse promotes consensus, which "signifies a mode of symbolic structuration of the community that empties out the political core that constitutes it, namely dissension" (Rancière 2006: 6). Specifically, in a post 9/11 era and in the context of the War on Terror, Rancière opines that "[e]thics has established its reign […] in the form of the humanitarian, and then in the form of infinite justice against the axis of evil" (2006: 7).

Although ethics should indeed strive to resist the banalisation of ideas such as "respect for the other, recognition of difference [and] protection of fundamental liberties" (Bishop 2012: 25), and these commentators' vindication of the 'post-political'

appropriation of the term 'ethics' merits attention, the view of ethics this thesis attempts to mobilise is quite dissimilar and is inflected by the work of Gilles Deleuze. As John Marks states in *The Deleuze Dictionary* (2005), "[e]thics involves a creative commitment to maximizing connections, and of [sic] maximizing the powers that will expand the possibilities of life" (2005: 87-8). This may be complemented by reference to Rancière's view of 'the aesthetic' as the ability to think contradiction (see Bishop 2006: 183 and 2012: 29). Rancière's point that "[p]olitical art […] means creating […] forms of dialectical collision or dissensus [whereby] heterogeneous elements […] are put together in order to provoke a clash" (2009a: 42) clearly chimes in with Greig's embracing of Adornian dialectics, whose aim is to produce contradictory moments that have ethical resonance.

Secondly, when Bishop and Rancière critique the 'ethical turn' of aesthetics as impeding a view of the politics of aesthetics – the artwork being capable of creating dissensus – one might respond that an excess of dissensus might become a new consensual norm. Indeed, as Harvie suggests (see 2013: 10), despite the importance of dissensus – and Wallace's lucid analysis of Greig's recent work from this perspective is particularly worthy of attention here (2016) – agreement is also vital. Art cannot just do away with some sort of consensual exchange: "I am wary of prioritizing dissenting art practices as Bishop does, because we need some agreement, but also because pleasurable fun can constructively engage audiences while dissent's bad feeling can risk alienating them", claims Harvie (2013: 10). In other words, forms and formats that produce not only some sort of consensus but also some sort of enjoyment may also importantly stir some kind of ethical engagement.[51]

A third central problem Bishop and Rancière have with the 'ethical turn' is what they perceive as its equation of ethics and moral judgements – "[a]s Rancière points out in

[51] In this connection, and as noted, Greig's interest in shamans is partly based on the entertainment aspect to their practice (see 2016a: 96).

[*Aesthetics and its Discontents*], [the 'ethical turn'] also submits art and politics to moral judgements" (Bishop 2007).[52] But what is morality? In one possible definition, morality is "a set of constraining rules that judge actions and intentions in relation to transcendent values of good and evil. Morality is a way of judging life [implying] that we judge ourselves and others on the basis of what we *are* and *should be*" (Marks 2005: 87-8; emphases original). Although the main concern of this thesis is ethics, it should be noted that at times Greig's plays do take on questions of morality. Ramin Gray, who directed the premieres of *The American Pilot* and *The Events*, has claimed that morality is one of the lenses through which *The Events* may be examined (see 2014: n.p.).[53] As noted, for Rebellato "ethical debates" indicate "the possibility of moral judgement, what makes us worthy of moral regard" (2014b: 119). It also seems that Greig's theatre sets itself "the duty to hope" (Bauman 2006: 174), and hope, according to Bauman, "is conceived whenever the imagination [another key notion in relation to Greig's work] and moral sense meet" (2005: 151). It would appear, then, that although 'morality' is a deeply fraught concept, there is space for a consideration of moral issues within the larger ethical field in relation to Greig's theatre. Greig is not alone in this as a playwright. Theatre-maker Chris Goode, for instance, underlines the "moral, as well as artistic […] courage [needed] to make work" (2015: 36). In sum, this thesis argues that the ethical dimension of Greig's theatre retains a hope of articulating better ways of living together, an awareness of the importance of agreement alongside dissensus, and a recognition that the possibility of moral judgement must remain in the horizon of meaning-making if the world is to be created at all.

[52] Partly backpedalling from this position, Bishop has subsequently stated that "the ethical turn does not, strictly speaking, denote the submission of art and politics to moral judgements, but rather the collapse of artistic and political dissensus in new forms of consensual order" (2012: 28).
[53] In this connection, see Anna Abram's reading of *The Events* (2016).

1.3.4. A Dialectical Ethics of Becoming

Ultimately, Bishop concedes that "in any art that uses people as a medium, ethics will never retreat entirely" (2012: 39) and that, after all, "[Rancière] is not opposed to ethics" (2012: 28). In fact, neither Bishop nor Rancière dismisses ethics altogether; rather, they dispute a particular understanding of ethics and its consequent connection with aesthetics. The present section puts forward the notion of a 'dialectical ethics of becoming' by turning, in more detail now, to Deleuze. As Marks points out, "ethics for Deleuze is inextricably linked with the notion of becoming", so that it implies "that we do not yet know what we might become" (2005: 88). Ethics is a productively unfinished project and 'becoming' brings to mind the notion of 'affect'. In one of its Deleuzian definitions, "affect is a transitory thought or thing that occurs prior to an idea or perception" (Colman 2005: 11). In this definition of affect, one can discern both ethics and becoming – ethics, in the sense that affect occurs prior to an idea or perception, not unlike Levinasian ethical obligations, which pre-exist us and outlive us; and becoming in the sense that affect is a transitory experience that nevertheless acts on our body and has the power to transform it/us. Building on this, I suggest that the notion of "an affective ethics" (Cull 2012: 220) geared towards maximising connections provides an illuminating angle from which to examine the undoing or confounding of time, location and character in Greig's theatre and what that undoing might generate in the spectating experience. Ultimately, as Laura Cull notes, "Deleuze's account of affect suggests that ethical and aesthetic value cannot be as easily separated as Bishop perhaps suggests" (2012: 224).

At the same time, the thesis insists that, once again, it is essential to maintain a dialectical approach to the notion of a restless ethics of becoming, so that none of the concepts involved – relationality, politics, aesthetics, ethics, communitarian discourse, dissensus, consensus and moral judgement, among others – will stagnate, and with them the

phenomena they encompass. That would be unwise, for it is the juxtaposition and interplay among those concepts that may produce ruptures in perception – and those ruptures might in turn trigger connections. Interestingly, connections are a central element both in the Deleuzian view of ethics as "a creative commitment to maximizing connections" (Marks 2005: 87-8), as noted above, and in Rancière's thought too – "the clash of these heterogeneous elements is supposed to provoke a break in our perception, to disclose some secret connection of things, behind everyday reality" (2009a: 41) – which reveals that their agendas may have more in common than is immediately apparent.

1.4. The Politics of Aesthethics

1.4.1. Aesthethics: The Real and Wounded Form

A quick Google search of the neologism 'aesthethics' immediately reveals its apparent inexistence; 'aesthetics' turns up instead. I first thought of the neologism 'aesthethics', in which an additional 'h' is added to aesthetics in an attempt to convey the combination and interweaving of aesthetic and ethical concerns, in the early stages of research for this thesis.[54] Subsequently, I learnt that the French philosopher Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe had coined the term aesthethics in the early 1990s. This was through the international interdisciplinary conference "Aesthetics and Ideology in Contemporary Literature and Drama" (University of Avignon, 19-20 June 2013), whose call for papers referred to Lacoue-Labarthe's neologism and the possibility of its use in theatre studies:

> The neologism created by Lacoue-Labarthe, 'aesthethics', might also be usefully invoked here. […] This conference could also help to pave the way for a constructive and prospective criticism of our times, a detailed description of literary and dramatic art in the political arena, even a manifesto for theatre in the 21st century. Its aim could be to […] constitute a basis for the rebirth of […] an ethics or

[54] I searched the word at the beginning of 2012 when I was researching an article that was subsequently be published in *activate* (Rodríguez 2012b). From this point in the thesis onwards, 'aesthethics' or 'aesthethic' are used without inverted commas, except when quoting authors who do place the term within inverted commas.

> an 'aesthethics'. (Gonzalez and Agostini 2012; see also Gonzalez and Agostini 2015: xxvi)

Lacoue-Labarthe develops the notion of aesthethics in "De l'éthique: A propos d'Antigone" (1991) by drawing on Jacques Lacan's reading of *Antigone* in *L'éthique de la psychanalyse* (1986).[55] It is interesting to note that Bishop, who, as shown, is in principle sceptical about ethics, points out the connection between aesthetics and ethics in Lacan's Seventh Seminar (see 2012: 39). On his part, Lacoue-Labarthe comments on Lacan's Seminar precisely by coining the neologism aesthethics:

> [W]hat this actually means is that Lacan constructs nothing more than what I might call an aesthetic – with two 'Hs'. Which, in being so/also [*aussi*; comment original] ethics, would sunder the aesthetics from the aesthetics, as does practically all philosophy of art of our time. That is to say, the aesthetics would be wrenched from that which since Plato has constituted it as such: namely, mimetology. (2007)[56]

Although what allows the second 'h' an entry into aesthetics, in Lacoue-Labarthe's reading of Lacan, is the wrenching of aesthetics from mimesis, I push his coinage in a slightly different direction in order to advance a concept of aesthethics that hopefully makes sense in relation to Greig's work.

I use aesthethics in this thesis both to refer to the ethical – and a concomitant 'commitment to the real' – entering the aesthetic realm (in this case, the play) and so as to underline the impact of that entrance on form. Aesthethics in the first sense – the ethical irrupting into the aesthetic – is grounded in Greig's need and desire to look at the scenes from the world, his "lust for connection" (Greig 2016a: 93) and, against the odds, his love for people and the world we inhabit. In sum, all this implies that "[e]thico-political responsibility re-enters into the aesthetic experience" (Lehmann 2013: 100).

[55] "De l'éthique: A propos d'Antigone" was delivered as a lecture in May 1990 and published a year later (Lacoue-Labarthe 1991). My references in French come from that volume. My references in English come from a translation by Joan Tambureno published in the *Journal of European Psychoanalysis* in 2007.

[56] The French version reads, "ce que construit Lacan n'est rien d'autre que ce que vous me permettrez d'appeler une *esthéthique* – avec deux h. Laquelle, donc, pour être *aussi* éthique, veut arracher l'esthétique à l'esthétique, comme pratiquement toutes les philosophies de l'art de notre temps. C'est-à-dire arracher l'esthétique à ce qui la constitue comme telle depuis Platon, à savoir commee mimétologie" (Lacoue-Labarthe 1991: 31; emphases original).

Secondly, the irruption of the scattered, broken, painful scenes from the world – for instance, "'political' themes" that more often than not go hand in hand with ethical abuse, like "globalisation and economic inequality" (Carroll, Jürs-Munby and Giles 2013: 21) – breaks the plays' form, leaving them not just open but, more specifically, wounded. Aesthethics therefore also names the pervasive damage encoded in form in Greig's theatre. Succinctly put, the plays' broken texture reflects the world's brokenness. Or, as a consequence of the world's breakages, aesthetic forms are damaged. Needless to say, this has methodological implications: this thesis uses a lexicon of the perforated and the broken in its analysis of Greig's plays.

In a way, these two complementary senses of the aesthethic both build on and add one more layer to the argument the thesis has been delineating from the very start. For instance, they can be sensed in Rebellato's conception of playwriting in the era of globalisation; in the refusal to locate times, places and bodies that characterises globalisation plays and their maximising of connections across a boundless space-time continuum that might enable a rethinking of global ethics/politics; in Greig's theatre's commitment to formal experimentation in ways that render content and form porous and mutually inflected; and in the thesis's refusal to erase useful concepts from its dialectical dance – aesthetics, ethics, politics, relationality, the communitarian, dissensus, consensus and morality. What follows adds yet another dimension to the discussion so far by focusing on the politics of aesthethics, in order words, by examining the journey from the scenes from the world to the plays (and beyond) in more detail.

1.4.2. To Begin with Holes

A sense of the holed, the broken, the wounded, the traumatised, and the cracked, surfaces in many senses in relation to Greig's work, not just in the shape of 'the real'

imaginatively penetrating the plays and their forms being 'damaged' as a result. Greig's own experience resonates with brokenness, crackedness, holedness. In the early 2000s his agent Mel Kenyon offered him the possibility to work in Palestine, devising a comedy with British director Rufus Norris and George Ibrahim at the Al Kasaba Theatre in Ramallah. After the experience of working in a conflict zone for a month, Greig wrote "Rough Theatre", mentioned earlier in this thesis, where he describes Palestine as a place "where theatre can only exist among bullets and bulldozers" (2008a: 210). In this piece, Greig comments on the real bullet-holes in INAD's logo and the real "shell holes" (2008a: 210) in the room where he saw some theatre in Palestine and compares them with "the new Royal court logo" which "looks as if it has bullet holes" (2008a: 210) and the "'distressed'" (2008a: 210) look of the Royal Court's "bare brickwork and exposed plaster" (2008a: 211).[57] This critical parallelism begins to indicate the importance of the experience of 'the real' in his work. As Greig indicates in this important piece of work, he could no longer let his work simply exist, without questioning what it was doing (see Greig 2008a).

Greig's creative process itself may also be described as 'holed'. Greig claims that he has "a kind of antenna on the world" and that "[y]our job is to be as…true…an antenna as possible" (2013b: 264), thus allowing his plays to be penetrated by the real. At the same time, he has noted that he manipulates his conscious mind so as to force it not to intervene if some of the signals picked up by his antenna look irrational and to let the unconscious into the writing process. This means that the playwright works as filter – another perforated element offering one more example of permeability. This double penetration is central to what Greig calls 'rough writing', where "[t]he idea is to bring unconscious images or themes out into the light, and then to start to work on them creatively" (2008a: 213). Yet, "to be unselfconscious you have to trick yourself, it's a constant effort" (Greig 2013c: 175)

[57] INAD is a small theatre company based in the Palestinian village of Beit Jala, Bethlehem (see Greig 2008a: 209).

to avoid self-censorship. As he tells to Holdsworth, "[b]y taking away the conscious layer, what I'm trying to do is let […] connections happen that want to happen without my conscious internal police system making it nice or okay or safe or unembarrassing" (2013b: 262). Similarly, he claims that "the performance element is about losing authorial control" (2013c: 164). He notes that "[o]bviously a playwright can't literally perform, but that's a way by which performance enters the writing process for me" (2013c: 164).

Greig's experiences, his approach to his material and his creative processes do not leave the form of the plays unaltered: fractures, interruptions, cracks, stains and stitches surface throughout. Eatough states that "gaps and breakdowns are actually in the fabric of David's writing", and also uses the words 'holes' and 'absences' (2013: 26; see also Howard 2013: 212).[58] In this thesis, these 'wounded' formal strategies, together with wounded characters, are seen as the means by which Greig's theatre draws heightened attention to and asks questions about violence and suffering in the global age. They can, therefore, be described as politically-inflected aesthethic gestures.

Finally, and importantly, the a/effect the plays pursue is also characterised by clashes, cracks and holes. The contradictions planted within the fractures, interruptions and stitches of Greig's globalisation plays might crack the spectator's previous understanding and punch a hole in his/her narrative superstructures – the enclosed system within which they think, imagine and live – making it possible perhaps for different connections to happen and for a glimpse of the world as it might be to momentarily take shape.

1.4.3. Wounded Aesthethic Strategies

This section attempts to map out and briefly describe some of the characteristics of the wounded aesthethic strategies present in Greig's plays. They all are to some extent

[58] Although this comment applies to Suspect Culture's *Lament*, I think it provides a stimulating idea for thinking of Greig's writing in general.

related to a sense of unboundedness and a desire to express interconnection, and they exude a sense of relational space (Harvey; above) and combination of liquid, solid and gaseous forces (Bauman; above) and suggest through theatrical means a small yet significant path towards the creation of the world (Nancy; above).

1.4.3.1. Multilocational Interweaving of Narratives

A multilocational interweaving of narratives occurs when different characters' lines, delivered in different locations, are inexplicably interwoven in a play. This transcends realistic bodily and spatial coordinates and suggests interconnection, albeit highly fraught at times. A paradigmatic example occurs at the end of *Europe* when Berlin's responses to the media coverage of the killings is intertwined with the young women's enunciation of the European cities they dream of visiting.

1.4.3.2. Stitching Up

Stitching up occurs when a spatial perspective or an object, among others, appears at the end of a scene and spills over into the beginning of the next scene. Take, for instance, the various pairs of scenes in *Cosmonaut* where the first one ends with a character looking down and the next one begins with a character looking up or vice versa. Stitching up is an act of (often painful) connection between two disparate scenes (as in text units) and, simultaneously, scenes from the world – disparate because they might involve different time scales, different locations and different characters – that links up different perspectives, locations and/or different characters, thus foregrounding a sense of one world. A precedent to this strategy is Greig's theatre's keenness for bringing together several distant locations from across the globe in one single play – witness references to France, the

West End, Canada, the Sahara Desert, Beirut and Saudi Arabia in *The Architect* (see Greig 2002a: 112-58).

1.4.3.3. Ecstasy

Greig's work exhibits many brutal moments of ecstasy, including Robert's body's colliding with the rocks in *Outlying Islands*, *The Architect*'s Dorothy trying to smash her skull against a wall in *The Architect*, or *San Diego*'s Laura literally removing chunks of herself by mutilation. My suggestion is that these moments of ecstasy are symptoms of a desire to reach out, to experience the self outside the self by transgressing the policed boundary between body and world. From the above, it should be clear that ecstasy is understood in this thesis not just as a spiritual 'out of body' experience (classical meaning) – as for instance in Greig's own experience of watching theatre: "[i]f the play is transcendentally good […] it lifts me out of myself" (Greig 2016d: 251) – but also as a physical experience (including an orgasm, vomit, violent death) that trespasses the boundary between body and world. Despite their violence, moments of ecstasy can be argued to show a desire for unboundedness and suggest a lust for the world. Examples of ecstasy in Greig's plays include various killings, experiences of pain and suffering as well as, importantly, moments of meditation, ritual, sex, and spiritual loss, among others.[59]

1.4.3.4. Aerial Characters

Aerial characters in Greig's work have more knowledge than the rest of characters. Connected to an authorial dimension, they give the impression of omniscience. Yet, beyond that relation, aerial characters escape a contained definition as alter egos of the playwright. They escape it because they seem to evoke a spiritual dimension in the sense that they seem

[59] In "Bridging Precariousness and Precarity: Ecstasy and Bleeding Across in the Work of David Greig and Suspect Culture" (forthcoming a), I explore in depth the concern with ecstasy in some of Greig's solo plays and in the work of Suspect Culture.

to be always there, to be atemporal witnesses of the world's suffering. Contiguous to this spiritual aspect is the fact that they seem to occupy an above perspective on events, which together with the noted characteristics confer them its name. Formally, aerial characters are entities that are simultaneously inside and outside the play's reality, awkwardly transiting across both realms. Examples include David Greig in *San Diego* and Elena in *Damascus*.

1.4.3.5. Evaporation

As noted earlier, the singularity of characters often evaporates in Greig's globalisation plays. A paradigmatic case is the evaporation of the singularity of male characters through generic naming – for instance, Morocco, Berlin or Horse in *Europe*; the Farmer, the Trader and the Pilot in *The American Pilot*; the Boy in *The Events*. This phenomenon is also present in the very title of plays, such as *Cosmonaut* and *The American Pilot*. Evaporation and/or generalising gestures also operate at the level of choruses and choirs. The different members of the chorus in *Europe* seem to become one voice, and choric Elena in *Damascus* finds her boundaries evaporating as she merges into a sense of 'everything'.

Experimentation with character also opens up the number of tasks that a character can tackle – John can be a performer, a walking tour 'guide' and so forth, and spectators can also be walkers and/or tourists, among other potential tasks in *One Way Street*. In *Fragile*, a character is taken over by other entity – the spectator. As spectators perform Caroline, they occupy an in-between space between character and themselves undoing the contours of both. The evaporation of singularity can also give way to a range of singularities: David Greig evaporates into David A, David B and David C and so on in *San Diego*. The evaporation of clear boundaries between participants in the theatrical event is also apparent in *The Events*, where the presence of a community choir facing the spectator

places her in an uncertain position. In addition, the evaporation of singularity also occurs through doubling (*Cosmonaut*), or more explicit examples of burning, exploding or being gassed (*Europe*, *The Architect*, *Cosmonaut*, *The American Pilot*). Yet, evaporation involves many categories besides those of naming, character and actor, which the thesis will tackle in due course.

1.4.3.6. Actors/Bodies on Stage Throughout

The post-Brechtian decision to have all actors stubbornly on stage for the duration of the play, as is the case in *San Diego*, *The American Pilot* and *The Events*, is vital to Greig's work. As Greig observes, "almost all my work benefits from productions in which all the actors are on stage all the time – i.e. Brechtian, non-fourth-wall stagings" (2011a: 6). This sense of "Brechtianness means [that] the audience see the actors assuming the characters" (2011b: 21), and thus brings attention to the actor as actor. This harks back to the 1990s when, as Eatough notes in relation to himself and Greig, "[w]e wanted to acknowledge the presence of the performer on the stage, not just the character (Brecht was a big influence in this respect)" (2013: 13), and highlight their being living things, i.e. bodies.[60] I also use the word 'body' in the section title because, at times, those present throughout the performance are not necessarily actors – they may include musicians and members of the technical/managing crew.

A characteristic that both underpins and enhances the strategy of having actors/bodies remaining on stage throughout is that, as Greig himself says, "most of [his] plays have a poetic/rhetorical register which has the effect of recognizing the presence [and proximity] of the audience even when that is not through overt address" (2011a: 6). This strategy also reminds the spectator that they are attending a piece of theatre, while at the

[60] In the case of Suspect Culture, the acknowledgement of the performer's presence on stage was most often pursued by means of gestural movement. Besides, as Wallace notes, in *Mainstream* two actors "randomly rotated the roles in each scene, while the other two waited up stage, visible to the audience" (2013: 28).

same time she might be completely attuned to the 'reality' of the play – the fictional world of the play – thus forcing her into negotiating an in-between position where a sense of heightened presence is hard to avoid. The strategy also conjures up a temporary community of actors who are always present even when not needed, perhaps mirroring the temporary community of spectators who are also there throughout (unless they choose to walk out). More speculatively perhaps, given the subject matter of Greig's plays, including the theme of violence and their interest in precarious (in the sense of precarity) bodies, the continuous presence of bodies on stage might indicate that those bodies are part of an interwoven single space the spectators are part of. If this works, spectators might see themselves as part of the scenes from the world represented on stage.

1.4.3.7. Blown-Up Structures

The overall structure of Greig's plays itself (and of Suspect Culture's work, as is apparent in *One Way Street*, the only example of Greig's work for the company discussed in this thesis) is often damaged, as unveiled generally at the end of plays/performances through the presence of clear signs of disintegration – explosion (*Europe*, *The Architect*, *Cosmonaut*), massacre (*The American Pilot*), suicide (*Outlying Islands*, *Damascus*, *Fragile*), utopian gestures (*One Way Street*, *Outlying Islands*, *San Diego*), or an outburst of light (*The Events*).

1.5. Conclusive Remarks: Bleeding Across

Starting off from Rebellato's seminal article "From State of the Nation to Globalisation", this first section of the theoretical framework has explored some of the features of globalisation plays in the context of the 'ethical turn' in theatre studies. By reference to an influential commentator who comes from ethics and aesthetics (Levinas)

and a handful of commentators who come from aesthetics and are mostly wary of ethics (including Bishop and Rancière), the thesis has tried to highlight what is important on both sides of the argument as regards Greig's work. The potential of relational-antagonic aesthetics and an ethics of becoming has been highlighted, and the neologism 'aesthethics' has been put forward in order to theoretically frame subsequent discussion of Greig's globalisation plays, where a politics of aesthethics surfaces in the shape of wounded formal strategies.

It is this thesis's contention that the interplay or dance between self and other(s) – which includes a sense of nature, the spiritual and the cosmos too – in Greig's theatre, articulated through those wounded formal strategies, produces a sense of bleeding across that may sometimes involve violence, but ultimately points to a sense of mutual mingling together, albeit without effacing any of the participants in the exchange. The implication is that the bleeding across traverses categories freely, which leads to a state of confounding, blurring or undoing of multiple components of Greig's work that is both far more demanding and more productive than having objectively, essentially and rationally contained elements. Greig's theatre's politics of aesthethics works by undoing, cracking or breaking apart myriad elements to disclose the holed, porous nature of all things and thus make virtually possible the apprehension of interconnectedness.

2. Holed Spectator, Theatre and World: Relational Affects

Beyond Susan Bennett's *Theatre Audiences: A Theory of Production and Reception* (1990) and Nicholas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst's *Audiences: A Sociological Theory of Performance and Imagination* (1998), publications on spectatorship were scarce in the 1990s. However, since the first decade of the twenty-first century, theatre studies have shown a growing interest in debates around the question of spectatorship. In the wake of

Rancière's *The Emancipated Spectator* (2009d), and with the publication of Dennis Kennedy's *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity* (2009), Helen Freshwater's *Theatre & Audience* (2009), Grehan's *Performance, Ethics and Spectatorship in a Global Age* (2009) and Rachel Fensham's *To Watch Theatre: Essays on Genre and Corporeality* (2009), among others, the study of the spectator in contemporary theatre has gathered substantial strength.[61]

A contemporary branch of the study of the spectator shows an interest in cognitive science. As Patrick Hogan has it, "cognitive science is an interdisciplinary form of study aimed at understanding human cognition. It grew out of post-Behaviorist psychology, linguistics (especially Chomskyan linguistics), computer science, and, later on, neurobiology" (2003: 29). Hogan is here summing up two waves of cognitive research. The first one took place in the 1970s and focused on the mind. Underpinned by innovations in the fields of artificial intelligence and computer science, it "conceiv[ed] of mental processes as computational systems […] separating mind from body" (Shaughnessy 2013: 5). The second wave of cognitive research, in the 1980s and 1990s, challenged such dualism by arguing for "the mind-body as an interconnected system" and "turn[ing] its attention to the physical, sensory and neurological processes connecting action and perception" (Shaughnessy 2013: 5).

Evolving around the same time, approaches to the spectator that take affect as their main theoretical and methodological horizon have also been central in current debates. While cognitive science had more prominence in the 2000s, as manifest in publications such as Bruce McConachie and Elizabeth Hart's *Performance and Cognition: Theatre Studies and the Cognitive Turn* (2006) and McConachie's *Engaging Audiences: A*

[61] The celebration of conferences such as "Theatre and Spectatorship", the 24th conference of The German Society for Contemporary Theatre and Drama in English (CDE; Barcelona, 4-7 June 2015), and the publication of a special issue on "Theatre and Spectatorship" in *The Journal of Contemporary Drama in English* (2016) based on a selection of the papers presented at the conference bear witness to the continuing interest in the topic.

Cognitive Approach to Spectating in the Theatre (2008), the end of the decade saw the publication of Patricia T. Clough and Jean Halley's *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (2007) and, inaugurating the 2010s, Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth published *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010), among others. The new decade includes Nicola Shaughnessy's *Applying Performance: Live Art, Socially Engaged Theatre and Affective Practice* (2012), Erin Hurley's *Theatre & Feeling* (2010), and her edited volume *Theatres of Affect* (2014). At the same time, perhaps taking on board Ruth Leys's critique of affect theories in "The Turn to Affect: A Critique", where she argues that they "make the error of separating the affects from cognition or meaning" (2011: 469), the 2010s have revived an interest in cognitive science. Some examples include Susan Broadhurst and Josephine Machon's *Identity, Performance and Technology: Practices of Empowerment, Embodiment and Technicity* (2012), Jade Rosina McCutcheon and Barbara Sellers-Young's *Embodied Consciousness: Performance Technologies* (2013) and Shaun May's *Rethinking Practice as Research and the Cognitive Turn* (2015).

Aware of "the twin turns to cognition and affect" (2013: 17), pertinently registered in Shaughnessy's title *Affective Performance and Cognitive Science: Body, Brain and Being* (2013), and of the potential paths that lie ahead, this thesis concentrates on one side of the pair of twins, affect. This is partly due to space restrictions and practical considerations, as the cluster of disciplines that underpin cognitive science (including linguistics, neurobiology, phychology, artificial intelligence and anthropology) are beyond the scope of the thesis. Mainly, however, affect theories seem most appropriate as a frame for the connections between space, ethics and the spectator in Greig's work, which the thesis is concerned with examining within its overall topic of Greig's theatre and globalisation. Furthermore, affect theories can also throw additional light on the thesis's simultaneous interest in the triad ethics, aesthetics and politics, explored above in the first

part of the thesis's theoretical framework. Indeed, Baruch Spinoza, unwitting 'founding father' of the discourse of affect, saw affect as 'not yet' combining a concern with ethics, aesthetics and politics: "the unceasing challenge presented by [his] 'not-yet,' convey[s] a sense of urgency that transforms the matter and matterings of affect into an ethical, aesthetic, and political task all at once" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 3).

2.1. Affect

2.1.1. 'Affective Turnings Turning': Infinite Shades to Affect

Affect theory resists the concept of a turn. Firstly, according to some scholars, the 'turn to affect' is more a 'return' than a genuine turn. Thus, Sarah Warner claims that "[t]he 'affective turn' […] is actually a (re)turn, a (re)newed interest in embodiment and experience coupled with a pressing need to contemplate the limits of reason and the role of emotions in creating and sustaining social and political formations" (2009: 258). On her part, Clough suggests that "the turn to affect did propose a substantive shift in that it returned critical theory and cultural criticism to bodily matter" (2010: 206). Secondly, and crucially, "no one 'moment' or key 'theorist' inaugurated 'a' 'turn' 'to' affect" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 19).

Thus, 'turnings' in this section's title seeks to capture a sense of multiplicity of voices and definitions, while 'turning' stresses continuity up to and beyond the present moment, since "[t]here is no single, generalizable theory of affect: not yet, and (thankfully) there never will be" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 3). In sum, taking into account Spinoza's stress on the potentiality of 'not-yet', the phrase 'affective turnings turning' attempts to encapsulate a sense of plurality and progression. The adjective 'affective' aims to convey a sense that affect towards affect theories is itself part of the journey, since theories of affect

are not easy to work with and may even be considered far-fetched due to their alleged lack of scientific grounding.

Although I will be drawing on multiple commentators and ideas, the thesis's approach to affect is generally speaking Deleuzian. In Felicity Colman's words, "Deleuze's writings of affect […] enable a material, and therefore political critique of capital and its operations" (2005: 13). Or, as Brian Massumi succinctly puts it, affect has "the ability […] to produce an economic effect more swiftly and surely than economics itself, [which] means that affect is itself a real condition, an intrinsic variable of the late capitalist system, as infrastructural as a factory" (2002: 45).[62] Admittedly, in the context of neoliberal globalisation, affect can also be commodified, orchestrated and manipulated – it can "inform and fabricate desire" (Colman 2005: 13). Recent academic discourse on precarity in theatre and performance studies has raised the question of affect's potential for commercial use in the context of global consumer capitalism: "[w]hat of the performing body in an economy where the laboring body, and its production of affect, is the new commodity du jour?" (Ridout and Schneider 2012: 6). In accordance with Warner's emphasis on the "role of emotions in creating and sustaining social and political formations" (2009: 258), global media's role in "deadening affect" (Butler 2009: 51) should not be ignored. Thrift also alerts to "the manipulation of affect for political ends" (2008: 173).

And yet, "the move to affect [also] shows up new political registers and intensities" (Thrift 2008: 173) by, for instance, encompassing less tangible and/or immaterial, "*other than* conscious knowing" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 1; emphasis original). Thrift argues that "attempts to […] relegate affect to the irrational [are] mistaken" (2008: 175); rather, affect should be considered "*a form of thinking*", "a different kind of intelligence about the

[62] Conversely, as McConachie and Hart note, "[c]ognitive studies has nothing to say about modes of production, class relations, or economic determination 'in the last instance'" (2006: 7), a further reason why the present thesis has inclined towards an affective approach.

world" (Thrift 2008: 175; emphasis original). Critically rereading Leys, this might constitute a way of keeping together rather than separating affects and meaning. Furthermore, affect is often understood as potentiality – thus, Gregg and Seigworth refer to "a body's *capacity* to affect and to be affected" (2010: 2; emphasis original). Yet that capacity depends on and interacts with a context. More than 330 years ago, Spinoza argued that "the capacity of a body is never defined by a body alone but is always aided and abetted by, and dovetails with, the field or context of its force-relations" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 3). In these senses, affect appears in Greig's plays as a form of thinking or as the potentiality of bodies to affect and be affected.

Taking up the key word 'force-relations', affect further designates a "state of relation" and crucially "the passage (and the duration of passage) of forces and intensities" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 1; emphasis original). But how do forces and intensities 'hold together' in such an elusive relational dance? Sarah Ahmed's glue-like definition of affect helps in that connection: "[a]ffect is [also] what sticks, or what sustains or preserves the connection between ideas, values, and objects" (2010: 29). But how long is it healthy for ideas, values and objects to be 'stuck' together? In a sense, affect crucially has to do not only with "relatedness" but also, necessarily, with "interruptions in relatedness" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 2). Indeed, although "[t]o work on affect […] is to work on relationality" (Labanyi 2010: 226; see also Cull 2012: 220), "[a]t once intimate and impersonal, affect *accumulates* across both relatedness and interruptions in relatedness" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 2; emphasis original). Indeed, moments of negative embodiment such as "tripping, falling over", "vulnerability, […] suffering", "weariness and exhaustion" (Thrift 2008: 10), among others, often surface in Greig's plays. All in all, in the context of this thesis, this particular relational shade to affect provides the starting point for an attempt to account for the varied methods Greig's theatre deploys to foreground interconnectedness.

It seems obvious that the body cannot stand alone as object of analysis when the focus is on relations and on the passage of forces and intensities through and across bodies – "the body" cannot be conceived of "as separate from the thing world" (Thrift 2008: 10). Indeed, the turn to affect points "to a dynamism immanent to bodily matter and matter generally" (Clough 2010: 207). Similarly, for Jo Labanyi the aim is to "study materiality, with reference not just to bodily processes, but also to the material world outside" (2010: 223). In order to stress the intricate relation between inside and outside, Deleuze uses the phrase "invagination of the outside" (2011: 9) – and one might add, to complement Deleuze's idea, the 'externalization of the inside'. While Deleuze's phrase makes sense in the context of his concept of the fold – "the fold announces that the inside is nothing more than a fold of the outside" (O'Sullivan 2005: 107) – Nancy expresses a similar idea by means of a skin metaphor: "an authentic extension exposed, entirely turned outside while also enveloping the inside […]. Skin touches and lets itself be touched" (2008: 159). The skin is a surface that connects inside and outside: "through it, with it, the world and my body touch each other, the feeling and the felt, it defines their common edge… I mix with the world which mixes with me. Skin intervenes between several things in the world and makes them mingle" (Serres qtd. in Welton 2013: 169).

To push the argument further, "[w]ith affect, a body is as much outside itself as in itself – webbed in its relations – until ultimately such firm distinctions cease to matter" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 3). Distinctions might cease to matter because, according to affect theories, "bodies [are not] defined […] by an outer skin-envelope or other surface boundary" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 2); that is, forces move in and across them in an interrelational dance. This amounts to an affective rereading of the argument put forward in the first part of the thesis's theoretical framework regarding the ethical transgression of the policed boundary between the body and the world, the ontology of the (un)bounded body,

and the ensuing sense of spatial and bodily confounding. In sum, affect theories allow the thesis to think of relations and the passage of forces and intensities – affects – across not only bodies, but all kinds of matter, as discussed in the section that follows. This implies seeing all manner of entities as porous or 'holed'.

2.1.2. Towards a Theory of Holes

Although the concepts of 'fold' and 'skin' powerfully highlight the reversibility of the inside-outside dyad, I now want to draw attention to the notion of the 'hole' as the very instrument that allows the passage of forces and intensities. Of course, ideas of porosity, piercing and perforation were already present in the first part of the thesis's theoretical framework, especially as regards the discussion of Greig's understanding of the links between conscious and unconscious, the permeability between the world and his creative process, the 'bleeding across' between time, location and character, or the potential a/effects on spectators of the plays' disruption of narrative superstructures. Drawing on Marta Segarra's *Teoría de los cuerpos agujereados* (2014 [*Theory of Holed Bodies*]), I now propose to subsume the preceding discussion under the concept of 'hole' and to place it in an explicitly affective framework by thinking of the hole as the tool that allows the circulation of forces and intensities. The purpose is to eventually account for Greig's theatre's pervasive drive towards interconnectedness.

Drawing on Derrida, and as an affect theorist might argue, Segarra states that "the hole problematises the distinction between the interior and the exterior, between inside and outside, since it connects one with the other, but it does not constitute one or the other, as by definition it is situated on the edge, in the impossible limit" (2014: 13).[63] By drawing

[63] This and all subsequent translations from Spanish to English are my own. The Spanish original reads: "el agujero problematiza la distinción entre interior y exterior, entre dentro y fuera, ya que conecta uno con otro, pero no constituye ni uno ni otro, sino que por definición se sitúa siempre en el borde, en el límite imposible"

attention to the problematisation of the distinction between spaces and highlighting the coordinates of the hole as an impossible boundary, the hole becomes, in Segarra's account, a kind of threshold, a relational site through and through – and hence, an ethical instrument. Although Segarra's title focuses on bodies, it is crucial to remember that affect's pervasive, dynamic presence not only connects inside and outside, but also exists across bodies as well as "worlds, bodies and their in-betweens" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 4), which includes the environment and unveils a thoroughly 'holed' world, porous and permeable.

It is interesting to concentrate for a moment on bodies given the relevance of character experimentation and the interest in the spectator in Greig's globalisation plays. Anatomically, holes are not only something living beings happen to have; they are intimately connected with the body's various physical needs – nutrition, sexual intercourse or excretion, among others – and are thus inextricably related to the dignity of the human body. However, holes can also have negative connotations, as they are also, sadly, frequently used in order to exert abuse and/or torture. The mouth, for example, is a marker of communication and of freedom of speech – or deprivation from it. Consequently, raising awareness about bodily holes – and, beyond them, the hole as a concept – may foreground an awareness of our vulnerability, relationality, dependence and sociability. As Butler notes, vulnerability is "the name for a *certain opening* onto the world" and "it asserts our very existence as a relational one" (2011: 2; emphasis added). In this respect, Deleuze's and Nancy's notions of the fold and the skin are supplemented and transformed in this thesis via the figure of the hole, so that the emphasis falls on porosity. For instance, because we have a *porous* skin, we are by definition holed. Allowing touch with the world but also 'being touched' by virtue of its porous nature, the skin becomes a site of passage, relation, connection and vulnerability – as well as injurability, as in cuts, wounds and scars.

(2014: 13). In my translation of Segarra's book title, I use 'hole' because it seems to me the most 'faithful' translation, even if it may sound awkward and unduly sexualised to Anglophone speakers.

Segarra mentions another useful notion in relation to this thesis, namely "transcorporeality", defined as "that which makes us transcend the limits of our individual body" (2014: 90).[64] Segarra also helpfully connects transcorporeality to the notion of character and actor. In this sense, transcorporeality refers to "the abolition of the bodily limits of characters/actors, who become permeable and easily penetrable. This condition takes us to the notion of a 'holed body'" (2014: 97).[65] Transcorporeality has diverse manifestations in Greig's work, including characters' out-of-body or ecstatic experiences and improbable moments of connection between characters (they might, for instance, not know each other and say the same line or have had the same experience), between actors (through awkward doublings), between characters and actors (via a fluid, spilled-over sense of character), between characters, actors and spectators (via actors staying on stage throughout), or between actors and spectators (via an interplay of gazes that may generate confusion as to who is who). At the theatre, transcorporeality may be evoked in a way that may also suggest connections between bodies (and worlds and their in-betweens). In sum, as Stacy Alaimo argues, "[b]y emphasizing the movement across bodies, trans-corporeality reveals the interchanges and interconnections between various bodily natures" (2010: 2) – witness also, in this connection, Svich's remark about Greig's "evident compassion for fellow humans, animals and nature" (2016: 111).

As stated, although Segarra concentrates mostly on bodily holes, this thesis broadens the notion of hole to encompass any kind of hole in any kind of structure as a vehicle that highlights the connection between realms usually thought of as separate, thus highlighting an ethical dimension. New thoughts and forms of knowledge are prompted by Greig's theatre's emphasis on bodily and other holes, precisely because of the unusually

[64] "[L]a transcorporalidad, entendida como aquello que nos hace transcender los límites marcados por el cuerpo individual" (2014: 90).

[65] "[L]a abolición de los límites de los cuerpos de los personajes/actores, los cuales se convierten en permeables y fácilmente penetrables. Esta condición lleva a la concepción de un 'cuerpo agujereado'" (2014: 97).

heightened sense of connectedness they trigger. My contention is that this pervasive quality of 'holedness' affects the spectator's own response, in the sense that she becomes inserted, connected, plugged into the world, part of that holed landscape.

2.2. An Affective Approach to the Spectator

2.2.1. The Holed Spectator

According to Patrice Pavis, beyond the classic (binary) distinctions between, firstly, the audience as "those within hearing" and spectators as "those who look" (Kennedy 2009: 5) and, secondly, the audience as indicating a "collective agent" and the spectator referring to an "individual" (Pavis 1998: 348), the two concepts are actually inextricably bound together. Particularly in relation to the second classic distinction, as Pavis suggests, "[e]ach individual spectator contains with him the ideological and psychological codes of several groups, while, on the other hand, the audience sometimes forms a single entity" (1998: 348). According to Rebellato, "in a theatre audience we can have a very sharp sense of being both ourselves [as individual spectators] *and* a part of a larger unity [as audience, a group of people]" (2009: 72; emphasis original). As boundaries evaporate between character and performer in Greig's work, they do so too between the (individual) spectator and the (collective) audience. With spectators (potentially) inhabiting a space beyond themselves and/or different spaces simultaneously, an intensified awareness of both ethics and space itself may emerge.

Greig's theatre's relentless undoing of self-contained categories – including time, location, characterisation and actors' bodies, among others – may be seen as an attempt to challenge the ways spectators might think of their bodies as enclosed, as well as their conceptualisations of time and space as contained. The possibility of being 'open' is actually in-built in the spectator's own holed body, of course. What the theatrical event may

do is to highlight, re-call or re-activate the materiality of the body's entrances and exits, of what is a common denominator to all human beings, by fostering numerous senses of undoing, therefore potentially arousing a sense of shared bodily existence and interconnectedness across space-time. Taking on board the notion of transcorporeality, the spectator's body in Greig's work emerges as a holed entity potentially traversable by affect, "a palimpsest of force-encounters traversing […] 'bodies' (bodies defined […] by their potential to reciprocate or co-participate in the passages of affect)" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 2). What follows are some examples of how these senses of reciprocity or co-participation might be generated.

Pre-dating the present attention to affect in connection with the spectator and overturning the idea of a one-way relationship between plays and spectators, Pavis describes the affective loop of theatre when he claims that "the spectator's work (and pleasure) consists in continuously effecting a series of micro-choices or mini-actions to focus, exclude, combine, compare an activity that affects the performance as well" (1998: 348), as the spectator engages in a kind of "participant observation" (2013). Indeed, "[t]he audience reaction is integral to the dramaturgy of the piece, be it a walkout, an affective response or quiet contemplation" (Radosavljević 2013: 153). This chimes in with Greig's idea that "we have to give some credit to an audience as being part of what shapes the dramaturgy of a theatre" (2013c: 161).[66] Although the measure and degree of this "mutual impression of play on audience and audience on play" (Hurley 2014b: ix) is uncertain and may perhaps be unbalanced, the spectator affects the theatrical event through her micro-choices while, at the same time, she is obviously affected by it too, in a process that reveals not only the spectators' bodies but also the staged work as holed.

[66] For more on Greig's views on the collaboration of the audience, see, for instance, "Collaborating with Audiences: David Greig in Conversation with Clare Wallace" (2016d).

However, "this is not to say that performance involves an entirely individuated experience, where each audience member affects and is affected by the performance in discrete ways" (Cull 2012: 220), as the very notion of the holed spectator underlines. Deleuze understands affect as "a type of change or creation" and thus a question of becoming, a becoming "with the world" (Cull 2012: 224). While Bishop argues that "the audience, previously conceived as a 'viewer' or 'beholder', is now repositioned as co-producer or participant" (2012: 2; emphasis original), I would argue that within an affective reading, the spectator has always participated, willingly or unwillingly, consciously or otherwise. What has perhaps changed, which an affective perspective helps articulate, is that that sense of participation overflows the theatrical event and the spectator herself, as shall hopefully become progressively clearer in the present thesis.

In a process that recalls the body's "ability to co-evolve with things" (Thrift 2008: 10) – in response to tools that produce changes in the brain, for instance – the theatre's affective loop, in sum, transforms the spectator as well as the piece, so that the holed spectator and the play, including performers among other phenomena, co-evolve in a mutual process of transformation. As Phelan notes, "the possibility of mutual transformation of both the observer and the performer within the enactment of the live event is extraordinarily important, because this is the point where the aesthetic joins the ethical" (2004: 575). And crucially, such affective circuits of 'inter-becoming' – may reveal reality – including globalisation – to be plastic and thus malleable.[67]

2.2.2. From a Holed Spectating Experience to the Holed Work/World

In our interview, I asked Greig, "[w]hat is it like to watch your own plays, to experience the reactions of audiences?" (2016a: 93). Greig's 'affective' answer, which I

[67] Recent publications on plasticity include Derrida's disciple's Catherine Malabou's work as well as research in neurobiology.

examine closely in the sections that follow suggested how not just the theatrical event and the spectator, but also the entire journey of playwriting – including, importantly, the passage from the written work to the staged play – participate in the circulations of affect.

To begin with, Greig's comments on his experience of attending performances of his own plays throw light on the inescapable pervasiveness of affect. Of the people in the cafeteria where our interview was held, Greig claimed: "[e]verybody about this room is emanating for me and I feel a kind of emotional, empathetic wavelength that I'm tuning into" (2016a: 93), where the metaphor of the 'wavelength' resonates with the definition of affect as forces and intensities that emerge and circulate as a result of the interaction between bodies. On the basis of this, Greig understands playwriting and plays as partaking in a number of transfers – from the world to himself, from himself to the playtext, from himself, the playtext and the whole creative team to the staging of the play, from the stage to spectators, from spectators back to the stage, and from the stage back to himself, the playwright, revealing a thoroughly holed spectating process. Greig claims that the sense of 'completion' that may emerge as a result of this process is about "the lust for connection" (2016a: 93) – it is, ultimately, about the world. And of course, all the entities involved in this chain of transfers are implicitly understood to be porous and permeable.

Not surprisingly, that Greig's account of the journey of playwriting and of audience's reactions may be read in affective terms is in tune with the prominence of the affective dimension in his plays, including (potential) affective responses to them. To put it differently, affect processes traverse several aspects to Greig's work, not to say all of it. This has methodological implications for the present thesis, because it requires that the discussion of Greig's plays be conducted in a sort of expanded field where, in a way that replicates the key argument of affect theories, all categories and processes unpredictably bleed across each other and are intricately interconnected. For instance, I am using affect

theories not only to examine the plays and their numerous undoings, but also the role of playwriting, creative processes and the spectating experience in circulations of affect. As defined by Cathy Turner and Radosavljević, porous works, such as Greig's, "bestow on their audience freedom and responsibility contained in the opportunities for 'relating', 'being-in-common' and 'working-with', in the interest of authoring a shared future together" (Radosavljević 2013: 190). Greig's holed plays are "not pieces that demand to be looked at, but rather looked through, a lens for reconstituting our relationship to the world around us" (Field 2016: 121) – hence holed work/world in this section's title.

2.2.3. *Zāhir* and *Bātin* or Concrete/Inconcrete: Making Real

In our interview, Greig also explained his understanding of theatre by reference to the Arabic pairing of words, *zāhir* and *bātin*, defined as follows in *The Encyclopedia of Islam*: "'AL-Zāhir WA 'L-Bātin', two terms used in Arabic theleological and philosophical discourse, the first, *zāhir,* meaning 'outward, external, exoteric sense', hence 'apparent, manifest sense', and the second, *bātin*, its antonym, meaning 'hidden, inner, esoteric sense'" (Bearman et al. 2002: 389). *Zāhir* refers to that which is concrete, graspable, tangible, present, outside, visible or manifest, while *bātin* encompasses that which is inconcrete, ungraspable, intangible, absent, inside, invisible or hidden. Crucially, the pair is characterised by its inseparability, so that it helps build bridges between the material aspects of affect and senses of immateriality, and also allows the thesis to continue arguing for the pervasiveness of affect. Although, according to Greig, the playwright can only manipulate the concrete or *zāhir*, the theatrical event would be lacking if it did not somehow bring about an experience of the inconcrete or *bātin*. While "[t]he playwright operates in the realm of the concrete [*zāhir*]" (Greig 2016a: 94), Greig thinks that his "job is to take the unseen, the hidden, into [him]" (2016a: 94) by means of the a/effects of the

empathetic wavelength described above. As a shamanic semionaut, the playwright's job, then, as described by him "is to be a kind of conduit [between *zāhir* and *bātin*]" (Greig 2016a: 94). Once he has taken the hidden into him, the task is "to turn it into something concrete" (Greig 2016a: 94) in the play. During the theatrical event, "[the concrete or *zāhir*] goes back to an audience and becomes again unseen and hidden [the inconcrete or *bātin*]" (2016a: 94).

For Greig, as noted earlier, this entire process is about the lust for connection and about the world. The theatrical experience of the inconcrete may perhaps generate a renewed sense of concreteness in the holed spectator, which might eventually have an impact on the world: could not the spectator co-participate in passages of affect in the world as she co-participates in the theatrical event? By positing this set of transfers of *zāhir* and *bātin*, Greig's theatre does seem intent on underlining the inseparability between concreteness and inconcreteness, the external and the internal, the visible and the hidden, the outward and the inward, the body and the soul, thus ultimately fostering affective thought about the world. This may not only produce a kind of knowledge that is different from the purely empirical or utilitarian sort, but it may also foster the holed spectator's sense of mutual connectedness – a sense of togetherness when they are traversed by the inconcrete – and inseparability from others and the world. Simultaneously, this concrete/inconcrete journey discloses an effort on the part of the playwright and the plays to materialise the invisible, ground abstraction, and precariously restore the intangible to life. It has tremendous significance in Greig's work because it lies at the basis of his dear idea of "[m]aking the map", of "[m]aking […] real" (Greig 2016a: 93), whereby the activity of mapping is revealed not just as an exercise in trying to understand, but crucially as a concrete attempt at doing (which, as noted, involves the inconcrete), at making real, at precariously contributing to the creation of the world.

2.3. The "Emotional Physics of Space on Stage"

One of the transfers from *zāhir* to *bātin* that is perhaps most difficult to digest given its alleged mysticism involves the conveying of a sense of the hidden (and/or inconcrete) on to the spectator by starting from something concrete. This thesis contends that in order to do so, Greig engages with myriad senses of physicality, which entails "find[ing] the right physics in [his] plays" (Greig 2016a: 95). 'Finding the right physics' may indeed sound elusive or even mystical, and "capturing the traces of [the multiple and porous] entities" that are in the world, "even for a brief moment, will clearly involve unconventional means" (Thrift 2008: 12) – all of which, of course, defy mimetic representation.

Some of the concrete elements Greig works creatively and affectively with – that is, some of the ways in which he explores what he calls a "kind of emotional physics of space on stage" (Greig 2016a: 94) – include bodies, objects and speech on stage. Bodies, objects and speech might pull holed spectators towards a heightened, albeit ephemeral, potential perception/apprehension of the invisible and its connection to the visible. Now Greig describes art – and in particular theatre – as a way of not just "map[ping] […] space" but "physically conjur[ing] it" (2013d: 16) and thus also embodying the conjured space. This means not merely that 'the real', the space 'outside', is imaginatively 'transplanted' on to the stage, and that "[t]he more art that is available to us, the larger the imaginative space available for us to inhabit. The more space we inhabit, the more we can locate ourselves" (2013d: 16), but primarily that Greig's theatre seeks to raise an awareness that those conjured spaces are already 'here'. Through several interconnection mechanisms, space is not just conjured, but *physically* conjured, which implies providing space with a sense of 'fleshiness', in the sense that holed spectators might affectively feel other spaces and bodies circulating through them. This in turn complicates the idea of the 'physical' as purely material, encompassing within it a sense of the spiritual. At those times a "jolt of pure

energy" (Greig 2013d: 16) might be experienced, and the spectator might apprehend, 'touch' or make contact with the physicality of the invisible, with what is not seen but is perhaps momentarily embodied – spaces that seem far away but are really 'here'.

2.3.1. Bodies on Stage

Finding the right physics for bodies on stage, which involves seeking an emotional physics of space, is a way in which something hidden and/or intangible may momentarily become concrete for the spectator. Greig's direct experience of and involvement with many areas of theatre-making beyond playwriting has no doubt given him a heightened sensitivity to the physicality of bodies on stage and spectators' bodies, among other elements. Greig struggles when it comes to articulating his thoughts about what theatre in particular can do:

> It's still not something I'm quite able to put into words, but I think that there is a sort of particle physics of theatre that differentiates it from other art forms, literary forms. Each form has its own physics if you like; it has a particular movement. What I mean is it's not just about a play or the dramaturgy of a play, it's about the relation of bodies on the stage, about the relationship of the audience to actors. (2013c: 163)

These lines point to circuits of reciprocity between the different bodies that co-participate in passages of affect in the theatrical event – actors' and spectators' bodies. In Greig's work, the relationship between actors' bodies and spectators' bodies may generate perplexing situations: spectators may become unconventional TV consumers, 'participate' in acts of walking while almost static, invoke the state of being dead while actually being alive, foreground senses of transcorporeality that bleed across the proscenium arch and beyond, and even doubt who they are and what their 'position' is as spectators. This potentiality of bodies on stage to generate beings that dwell in the scenes from the world reconceptualises the stage itself as an affectively holed space.

2.3.2. Humming Chairs

Objects do not escape the porous dance of *zāhir* and *bātin*; they too may catalyse hidden aspects to reality. It is not by accident that a table is central to *Savage Reminiscence*, both a door and a table to *Outlying Islands*, a sofa to *Being Norwegian* (2003; publ. 2010a) and (a) chair/s to *The Events*. What happens to objects in particular environments? In workshops, Greig often practices an exercise that may illuminate the potential properties of objects in the staging of his work. The exercise concerns a chair in a blank space, which Greig "ask[s] people to manipulate […] in such a way as to see if we can increase the amount of energy or decrease it" (2016a: 94). Eventually, Greig claims, "that chair begins to emanate or hum with unseen energy" (2016a: 94).

How does observation of and attention to objects transform their energy and that of the surrounding space? Spectators are constantly emanating unseen energy, projecting affects and exerting thought on objects on stage, and thus contributing, singly and collectively, to the emotional physics of the theatrical space. Thinking and feeling with others about objects and/or alongside objects shapes the energy of a space. By working with a concrete element such as an object, something inconcrete might be passed on to the holed spectator.

2.3.3. "Each Speech an Act of Touch"

Linking up with the view of Greig as a shamanic semionaut presented at the start of this thesis, "[t]he crucial role of language as affect" (Thrift 2008: 256) should be highlighted as another potential portal to the inconcrete. Greig is interested in "the physical aspect of words" and sees "play dialogue [as] physical first and meaningful second" (2007b: 54). His interest in the physicality of language has intensified through his experience workshopping in the Middle East in close contact with Middle Eastern cultures,

as well as through his artistic collaboration with director Gray, who has a Middle Eastern background. He tells Holdsworth that "[f]or Arabs words are physical things" and that the art of calligraphy involves the process of "making words physical" (2013b: 277).

Language, speech, dialogue, and/or words, even sound and of course music, then, constitute physical interactions for Greig, and they can morph into senses of touch – he literally states that "[e]ach speech [is] an act of touch" (2007b: 54). As Derrida claims in relation to "the great thinker of touch" (2005: 293), Nancy, "[w]hen I speak to you, I touch you, and you touch me when I hear you" (2005: 291). And such touching, as affect theorists note, always involves touching inside and outside or touching across. Thus, read in an affective light, the phrase "[t]ouch yourself" (2013e: 241) in Suspect Culture's *Mainstream* means "*se toucher toi* and not *se toucher soi"*, or, in other words, "'to self-touch you' and not 'to touch oneself'" (Derrida 2005: 290). Similarly, acts of touch in the theatrical event are not restricted to the holed spectator but may touch the world too.

Words, in sum, function haptically as instruments of touch.[68] In the field of film studies, Laura U. Marks has developed the notion of the spectator's embodied, "haptic *visuality*" whereby "the eyes themselves function like organs of touch" (2000: 162; emphasis original). What is interesting in affective terms is that "[h]aptic *perception* is usually defined by psychologists as the combination of tactile, kinaesthetic, and proprioceptive functions, the way we experience touch both on the surface of and inside our bodies" (2000: 162; emphasis original). "[T]he physical aspect of words" (2007b: 54) that Greig is keenly interested in, i.e. the idea that speech 'touches', could perhaps be termed haptic audibility, words that touch – a way, maybe, of ephemerally intimating the hidden.

Deleuze looks at speech through the lens of non-representability. As Cull puts it, "[s]peech, Deleuze suggests, must be treated as a 'real activity' – as a doing, rather than as

[68] "[F]rom the Greek, haptikos and haptesthai, to grasp, sense, perceive, 'lay hold of'" (Machon 2013: 277).

representation" (2009: 8). Nesteruk interestingly understands performativity as "the effect in both [written text and performance] of the extra intensity of words which are also acts" (2000: 21). If speech 'does' and 'acts', then the spectator may be caught up in a sense of becoming with words/worlds. Engaging with an emotional physics of space on stage and bearing in mind the spectator, I suggest Greig's theatre recurrently displays small ethical acts of touching, doing and acting that might illuminate the inconcrete and therefore reveal words, bodies and worlds as connected.

2.4. Conclusive Remarks: "Multiple-Together"

In sum, Greig's account of his experiencing of his own plays leads this thesis to view not only the spectator but the whole process of theatre – itself ingrained within the world – as affective. In other words, beyond time, location and character, Greig's theatre also undoes the contours of spectator, playwright, staging, stage, actors, and crucially the world itself. My contention is that, rather than a disorientating move, those multiple undoings have an ethical aim – namely, they highlight an irreversible sense of interconnectedness, which might prompt "spectators to seek their […] relation to the enormous, sometimes overwhelming plurality of the new worldly context" (Reinelt 2006: 152). That search might infuse the holed spectator with the scenes from the world, whereby she might be affectively foregrounded as intrinsic part of an irrevocable 'here'. In short, instead of looking on at the scenes from the world, spectators are embedded into those scenes. The spectator is understood by Greig as profoundly interconnected to the world, the playwright, the plays and their potential life beyond themselves.

Through holedness one might experience a sense of self-loss as spectator, but one might simultaneously find oneself in others, thus experiencing as a spectator "an unusual experience of commonality" (Rebellato 2009: 72) that might result in a reconfiguration of

the understanding of ourselves and the world. If we take into consideration the implications of the notion 'holed spectator' – a spectator that becomes ingrained in the world itself and whose body intertwines with other bodies, worlds and their in-betweens – then, arguably, Greig's theatre's emphasis on holed spectatorship ultimately underlines a sense of "you and I, and everyone else who didn't participate" (Bishop 2012: 9). Nancy's notion of 'multiple together', elaborated in *The Creation of the World or Globalization* (2007), seems relevant in this respect. 'Multiple together' refers to

> all existences, taken together but distinctly and in a discontinuous way, not as the totality of their differences […] but as these differences together, co-existing or co-appearing, held together as multiple – and thus together in a multiple way, if one can put it this way, or as multiple together, if we can state it even less adequately … – and held by a co- that is not a principle. (Nancy 2007: 61)

Nancy continues, some pages later, "[t]heir *co*existence is an essential dimension of their presences […] The first feature of the creation of the world is that it creates the *with* of all things" (2007: 73; emphases original). But as Nancy warns, once again highlighting dialectical tension, "coexistence is the gift and the holding back just as it is the subject and the thing, presence and absence, plenitude and void" (2007: 73). In this unusual experience of commonality-with-separateness where the spectator might apprehend 'the with of all things' lies the possibility of the world's creation.

III. Europe Plays

1. *Europe*: The Terror of Inexistence

Some days after the fall of the Berlin Wall (9 November 1989), three students at the Department of Drama at Bristol University who were to become well-known theatre-makers, namely Eatough, Greig and Kane, performed Barker's *Victory*. All three were to subsequently participate in theatrical responses to such a historical event and explore the idea of Europe in some of their most influential work – Greig and Kane wrote *Europe* and *Blasted*, respectively, and Eatough performed two pieces written by Greig for Suspect Culture, *Savage Reminiscence* and *One Way Street*. More particularly, *Europe* and *Blasted* directly engage with the Balkan Wars (1991-95).

Although generally referred to as Greig's debut, *Europe* was actually his twelfth play (see Greig 2010b). It was directed by the then associate director at the Traverse, Howard (1993-1996), who would later direct Greig's *The Architect, Outlying Islands* and *Damascus*. The result of that 'Scottish' beginning is that "having a play open in London is a relatively rare event for [Greig]" (Greig 2010b). Indeed, it took six years for a play of his to be staged in London, and that was *Victoria*, "which the RSC [Royal Shakespeare Company] did at the Barbican" (Greig 2010b). This delayed relationship with London stages has continued up to recent plays such as *The Events*, which premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival before being staged at the Young Vic.[69]

Moving on to the context of the play beyond its premiere production, the beginning of the 1990s witnessed a number of major historical, social and economic transformations, which included not only the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Gulf War (1991), the aforementioned Balkan Wars and the Rwandan genocide of 1994, but also the reunification of Germany and the end of the Cold War (1990), the disintegration of the Soviet Union into

[69] However, the musical *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* premiered in London's West End Theatre Royal Drury Lane in June 2013.

independent republics (1991), the Western rejection of Mikhail Gorvachev's Perestroika (a moderate middle ground or third way between capitalism and communism), which meant a serious blow to both communism and socialism, and the formation and development of the EU, which loosely coincided "with the rise of neoliberalism" (Zaroulia and Hager 2015: 3).

As Greig puts it, "I would say that there is a major strand in my early work [which] focused on what happened when communism fell in Eastern Europe" (2011a: 4). From there on, the ground was clear for the practice of global neoliberalism in the previous Eastern bloc as well as the acceleration of those practices in its Western counterpart. It may suffice to point out that the first McDonalds franchise opened in Moscow in January 1990 (see Rebellato 2006: 102). Connecting the end of communism in Eastern Europe and the rise of a globalised neoliberal world, Greig claims that not only *Europe* but also "*Stalinland* […] and *The Architect* all investigated the theme of the failure of the left and the rise of the globalized, fragmented world" (2011a: 4).[70] From Cold War to post-Wall Europe, and therefore from an old to a "new Europe" (see Zaroulia and Hager 2015: 7), from the dichotomy capitalism-communism to global neoliberalism in a European context of supranationalism, in *Europe*'s border town the Iron Curtain has been lifted (see Johns 2007: 324), thus putting an end to border controls, which means that trains no longer need to stop.

1.1. Contexts: Situating *Europe* Now and Then

1.1.1. Timeliness and Ongoing European Crises

Europe – a play set in a post-Wall, post-industrial border town near the Balkan war-torn area at the heart of Europe that explores issues of European belonging and identity – is one of the plays by Greig that has received most critical attention, which gives this study both a great amount of material to work with and also limits the possibilities of offering a

[70] Greig would perhaps agree that *One Way Street* and *Cosmonaut*, two other plays that seem to be informed by that climate, may be added to the list.

novel approach to it. A non-exhaustive glance at the state of Europe at present strongly suggests that the play is as timely as ever: high rates of unemployment; continuing privatisation of state-owned businesses; offshore tax havens and offshore relocation of manufacturing industries; rise of far right- and left-wing parties and neo-fascist groups; outbursts of racial, ethnic, religious and/or terrorist violence; violence perpetrated by young, dispossessed and/or disenchanted men across the globe; increasingly severe border policies (also inside the EU and EEA); diversification of nomadic subject types; easier and faster movement of goods, services and capital; the 2008 financial crash; the centrality of financial markets; unrest in Eastern Europe; unprecedented refugee crises; and the 2016 UK referendum over its EU membership.[71] Indeed, there might be some reason why Bloomsbury decided to reissue *Europe* in 2014 (Greig 2014b), apart from signalling the twentieth anniversary of its premiere at the Traverse in 1994. What *Europe* highlighted in 1994 has continuing relevance over two decades later, namely, "the extreme inequality, insecurity, and racist, nationalist ethnocentrism accompanying globalized neoliberal capitalism" (Dean 2012: 40-1), which acts of physical and linguistic violence, including war, murder and rape as well as poverty, lack of prospects, forgetfulness and disenfranchisement, point to in the play under discussion.[72]

But the timeliness alluded to in the title of this section refers not only to the wider economic and social context. In his interview with Wallace, Greig states that *The Events* goes back to the exploration of the idea of Europe in *Europe* (see 2013c: 166). Indeed, the concerns that run deep in *Europe* have not left the playwright to this day, and *The Events* explores similar anxieties in an atmosphere of unemployment, recession, migration influx and allegedly failed multiculturalism. Indeed, in both plays, the perpetrators of violence

[71] There is a moment in *Europe* that uncannily echoes current debates about different labels for people on the move, including "refugees" (Greig 2002a: 71) and "economic migrants" (Greig 2002a: 52).
[72] Most reviewers of the play's revival at the Barbican in 2007 connect the play to the present (see Cooper 2007a: 322; Fields 2007: 322; Gardner 2007a: 322; McMillan 2007a: 322; Peter 2007: 324; Shore 2007: 324; Shuttleworth 2007a: 323; Sierz 2007: 325).

blame Europe for its progressive and lax policies concerning immigration (see 2002a: 60 and 2013c: 166). More specifically, Berlin and Horse and the Boy are all members of far-right neo-Nazi organisations and are, respectively, driven by the idea of "tidying up" (Greig 2002a: 69) and of protecting their "tribe" from the Islamification of Europe (see Greig 2014a: 20 and Breivik 2011: 665).[73]

Indeed, the spectrum of violence and Otherness summoned by *Europe* is highly resonant at present: the war refugees Sava and Katia are described by Fret – the station master – as "[v]agrants" and variedly and confusedly by Adele – the station master's daughter – as "foreign", "on business" (Greig 2002a: 12), "tourists" and "gun runners from Libya" (Greig 2002a: 13).[74] In general, the refugees are represented as strangers whom the villagers fear (see Johns 2007: 323) and apparently thought of as "economic migrants" (Greig 2002a: 52). The town's immigrants are incongruously – yet resonantly at present – described by Horse as "boat people" and "[f]lying boat people" (Greig 2002a: 24). Although Sava insists that they are "not bandits" (Greig 2002a: 18), his daughter Katia thinks that they are generally perceived as "undesirable" (Greig 2002a: 51).[75] This speaks to present European fears in the context of the ongoing conflict in Syria, the current refugee crisis and the spate of terror attacks across European cities, and thus actualises the play in fresh ways.

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[73] Horse says "[t]hey [he means the Left] give all the jobs to the Somalis and Ethiopians" (Greig 2002a: 59). Moreover, a shooting attack is alluded to in *Europe* (Greig 2002a: 22), which again connects the play with *The Events*.

[74] In the list of characters, Greig describes Sava and Katia as foreigners, Berlin writes 'foreigners out' on the bus stop in the town (see Greig 2002a: 59), and "Foreigners out" is the title of Scene Seventeen.

[75] In connection with refugees, Sara Soncini notes that "Greig took inspiration from a minor episode briefly covered by British newspapers in 1992. Forty Bosnian refugees were stuck on a bus at the Slovenian border, waiting for some foreign government to grant them asylum – which Britain refused to do, on the grounds of their being merely economic migrants" (2007: 250).

1.1.2. War, Globalising Pressures and Uneven Mobilities

Overall, it is *Europe*'s perceptive exploration of a sense of European crisis that makes it a timely play in the current context. *Europe* is set in a defunct station in an unnamed Eastern European border town at the heart of Europe, where the direct physical violence attached to the neighbouring conflict seems not to have arrived, although life conditions do not seem to be so different in both places (see Greig 2002a: 18).[76] The conflict's proximity is suggested by Sava and his daughter Katia's fleeing from war in search of safer places "to rest" (Greig 2002a: 18). For them, initially, the defunct station becomes a mere place of passage until they are ready to depart again. Father and daughter are born in Greig's imagination in a context in which people affected by the Balkan Wars were myopically depicted in mainstream global media in terms of "the 'ancient ethnic rivalry' of different 'tribes'", which "allowed consumers of the media to avoid empathy with the victims or the perpetrators of this violence" (Greig 2008a: 218), a reading the play contests not only through Sava and Katia, who are unrelated to ethnic or tribal strife, but also through including the perspective of the perpetrators of violence, the local furnacemen Berlin and Horse. Simultaneously, in an atmosphere of post-industrialism and war, "[i]n the early 1990s, Europeans were exposed to an awe-inspiring, majestic discourse about the EU" (Zaroulia and Hager 2015: 4), which seems to be imprinted in the mind and heart of Adele, who dreams of visiting a number of European cities and likes to watch trains passing from the station's roof, which provides her with an aerial perspective. Additionally, the

[76] Although the Balkan conflict is not explicitely mentioned in *Europe*, there are a few geographical hints that this town and this story are set in Eastern Europe. Leźno in Poland (see Greig 2002a: 45) and Knin in Croacia (see Greig 2002a: 57) are alluded to in the play as well as dachas, a kind of house that is typical of the ex-Soviet republics. I believe that of the three references, Knin, which by the way hosts the second largest fortress in Europe, is pivotal because Sava's reference to a "sit-in" staged by the prisoners (Greig 2002a: 57) brings to mind detention camps. That reference, added to the fact that they have not changed clothes perhaps for months (see Greig 2002a: 7), Sava's comment that they have "sweated away the summer in dirty camps" (Greig 2002a: 28) and Katia's fears about being left "to rot in some transit camp over the border" (Greig 2002a: 29) work as "a reminder of the mass detention and refugee camps witnessed in Europe and parts of Africa throughout the 1990s" (Holdsworth 2003: 29) and beyond, as noted above.

play is also concerned with the globalising pressures present in European post-Wall societies, including Britain.

In the 1990s, Britain saw the consolidation of a particular set of neoliberal policies first implemented by Thatcher's conservative governments. Given the centrality of railway systems to *Europe* and the proximity to the play's first production, one key instance of privatisation was the "selling off [of] the railways in 1993" (Sierz 2012b: 30). Besides, Britain had by then a noticeable tradition of demonstrations against the waning of industries such as mining, steel and shipbuilding, as well as agriculture, visible for instance in the coal miners' strikes of 1972 and 1984. Traditional industries continued to be swept away in the 1990s, a post-industrialisation process which plays such as *The Architect* also explore. *Europe* displays a concern with the human consequences of economic changes such as the removal of manufacturing industries, which ends up causing the unemployment that three characters – "swamped by recent changes" (Reinelt 2001: 380) – suffer from: Berlin, Horse and Billy, three local furnacemen.[77] *Europe*'s locals blame this on immigrants, which Katia is well aware of (see Greig 2002a: 19). Manufacture-related job losses have continuing relevance in the context of the current manufacturing crisis in the UK, with yet another "generation of local young men unable to join in the onward surge of a globalising economy" (McMillan 2007a: 322).[78] Ultimately, these characters' situation speaks to the fact that "Transnational Corporations (TNCs) produce commodities in the poorest areas of the world and sell them globally, often subsidized by nominally neoliberal governments, undercutting local produce and undermining local economies, then cultures, customs and

[77] When writing *Europe*, Greig had in mind the collapse of the steel manufacturer Motherwell in the South East of Glasgow in the 1980s: "The closures of the plant in Motherwell – known as the production capital of Scotland – left thousands of workers directly and indirectly linked to the steelworks unemployed" (Brown 2013). As Holdsworth notes, by losing their jobs the furnacemen in *Europe* "lose a primary signifier of their masculinity" (2003: 30), a concern Greig is interested in exploring throughout his career.
[78] In 2015, it was announced that "52,000 local manufacturing workers [are] at direct risk of losing their jobs within the next five years" (Chakrabortty 2015: 37).

traditions" (Rebellato 2006: 98). This is the global context that is evoked in *Europe*, which foregrounds "a global perspective as well as local engagement" (Rebellato 2002b: xxi).

More specifically, *Europe* is concerned with how the human consequences of war and rapidly evolving globalisation pressures have an impact on the characters' decisions, lives and (in)abilities to move. The Balkan Wars evoked in the play brought human violence as well as the destruction of places and cultures in a bloody territorial conflict that would see kilometres of borders re-drawn in Eastern Europe – Katia points out that she cannot find signs identifying her town anymore (see Greig 2002a: 41), which leads her to reflect on "the fragility of place and identity" (Holdsworth 2003: 29). *Europe* also foregrounds movement and flows of different kind as well as senses of stasis: there is the movement of some people for economic reasons, as with 'successful' entrepreneur Morocco for whom borders are open – yet witness his less entrepreneurial presence in the play's opening: "*unshaven and wearing a dusty suit*" (Greig 2002a: 5) – and job-seeking Billy who decides to try his luck elsewhere; the stubborn lack of movement of some other people, as is the case with Berlin and Horse who, driven by racist angst connected to a sense of regressive nationalism and threatened masculinity (see also Greig 2002a: 23 and 61), decide to stay in town and petrolbomb the station; and the unleashing of wider mobility for some, despite the difficulties, as with the cross-European rail trip Adele and Katia embark on at the end of the play.[79] In contrast, the Chorus seems to provide a key sense of continuity and to embody a witnessing presence and an (admittedly bruised) community dimension.

Greig's *Europe* depicts a world in which rigidity and isolation appear as impediments to understanding. The play does not dwell on unequivocal ideas, stale

[79] An event that may have inspired the firebomb attack in *Europe* is that "[i]n 1992, in the northeastern German city of Rostock, several days of rioting by neo-Nazis culminated in a firebomb attack on a hostel for asylum seekers" (Brown 2007: 322).

certainties or predetermined conditions, but persistently aims at their destabilisation through the strategy the present thesis calls 'confounding'.

1.2. Confoundings

One of the ways in which Greig's play most craftily engages with the rethinking of 'givens' is through putting forward elements in a confounded manner, which in turn produces confounding. It is not just that aesthetic form reflects the content of the world but, vitally, the motivation behind the attempts at producing confounding in Greig's plays seems to be for form to reflect back at the world. Despite being an early play, *Europe* shares this feature – which crucially connects with the spectator and the world – with later plays. *Europe* uses (at least) two kinds of confounding simultaneously: a confounding of elements ('time and setting', 'chorus', 'narrative' and 'images') and a confounding of concepts ('Europe', 'identity', 'perpetrators and victims', and 'home, borders and exile').

1.2.1. Confounding Elements

1.2.1.1. Time and Setting

Europe's treatment of time is importantly influenced by its setting – a defunct station where international express trains constantly pass but never stop. The stage directions "*international express train passes/passing*", "*[e]xpress train passes/passing*" or "*[t]he train passes*" appear almost at the end of all of the play's twenty scenes. The resulting lack of interaction of the villagers with the world is read in this thesis as a metaphor for the villagers being deprived of the potentially positive counterpart of negative globalisation, which makes them hang on "backwardness and stagnation" (Zenzinger 2005: 273) – "[i]t's about Nowheresville in any country where all the good things happen elsewhere" (Mountford 2007: 323). That disconnection and the town's anonymity – "they

won't be able to find it. […] Express trains going so fast they can't even make out the station name as they pass" (Greig 2002a: 77), says Fret – produces a suspended atmosphere and ongoing stillness, which in turn build up a sense of tension and anxiety. Linking that to the setting, the "vague" (Evans 2007: 324) location characterised by "non-specificity" (Mountford 2007: 323) contrasts with the highly located burning down of the station, which momentarily puts the name of the town back in the now – the breaking news – and on the map of Western Europe's attention, somehow making it real. Thus, the confounding related to time and setting emanates from the contradictory coexistence, on the one hand, of an extreme sense of atemporality due to the forgetfulness evoked (trains not stopping) and the atmosphere noted above and timeliness (suddenly becoming part of the news bulletins), and on the other hand, of placelessness (a town where 'nobodies' live) and a heightened rendering of place (the petrolbombing of a particular station in a particular place whose name appears on the news). One way in which this oscillation between place and placelessness is captured in the play is via the name of the town not signalling any more – only shortly while on the news – a name or a place but a condition and an effect respectively (see Greig 2002a: 89).

1.2.1.2. Chorus

The chorus in *Europe* is present at the beginning of both acts. In Scene Two, the First Chorus says via direct address: "1 Ours is a small town on the border, at various times on this side, / 2 and, / 3 at various times, / 2 on the other, / 1 but always / 1, 2, 3 on the border" (Greig 2002a: 5), which highlights the notion of 'being on the border' as condition. The border is in itself a confounding space, a placeless in-between where one is 'neither/nor', on the edge, on the threshold. Choruses themselves may be understood as confounding entities, in the sense of their fluid and indeterminate status. Given that the

Chorus's voices are assumed by the actors in the cast (see Billingham 2007: 99) and that the aim of a chorus is to convey the voice of the community while *Europe*'s community is a highly dissonant one, the Chorus in the play contributes to the confounding of what community might mean. And although the Chorus "seems to embody the nameless, citizen-less, stateless disenfranchised of this new Europe" (Billingham 2007: 100), this condition is distributed asymmetrically amongst the characters, thus confounding a unified sense of community. On a different note, because the Chorus is one of the elements in *Europe* that does not move, it produces a sense of 'here', of permanence, of witnessing historical change as well as atrocity – an element that is present in *Europe* in an embryonic shape and is to develop throughout Greig's playwriting career, where choruses and choirs continue to appear in increasingly experimental formats (see Greig 2011a: 7).

Besides, the concept of community is further problematised when Berlin unveils to Adele that "the community" – he is referring to the town's skinhead group (see Greig 2002a: 22), which Adele calls "little group" (Greig 2002a: 69) – has decided to take some action against immigrants, which Horse begins by beating Sava up, then Morocco while he is having sex outside the bar with Katia, who escapes, and eventually leads to him and Berlin burning down the station. It is noticeable that *Europe* includes choral moments in which Billy, Berlin and Horse – the unemployed – speak simultaneously (see Greig 2002a: 20 and 62) and yet even amongst this small group disagreement is to be found.

1.2.1.3. Narrative

The varied yet connected narrative lines also produce confounding. Although there are many examples of Greig's skilful multilocational interweaving of narratives (see Greig 2002a: 39-46, 50-59 and 63-71), a quintessential instance is provided at the end of the play when Berlin's narrative of the killings is intertwined with the recitations of the names of the

cities Katia and Adele dream of visiting. While in the previous examples in *Europe*, events are not told retrospectively, in this final multilocational interweaving, Berlin fuses fragments spoken previous to the petrolbombing, the petrolbombing itself and its immediate aftermath with an account of his impressions and comments on the event, which in turn is intertwined with the lesbian couple's enunciation of the European cities they dream of visiting.

The interlacing of Adele and Katia's dream destinations with Berlin's formally intricate account of the firebombing creates a surreally heightened atmosphere. In other words, the women's 'orgasmic narrative' – they have sex on the train – is violently juxtaposed with Berlin's impressions about the fire and the impact of the killings. At this point, the aesthethic use of narrative confounds because although one might not lose a sense of whose voice is speaking at each given point, one might momentarily confound or travel across senses of fire and sex, angst and love, lack of present and potential futures, death and life-affirmation, nightmare and dream, inexistence and the possibility to exist – which produces a thorough sense of ambivalence that Rebellato sees as "very pertinent to globalisation" (2002b: xviii) and may ultimately become productive, given that it triggers contradiction, and hence, perhaps, a glimpse at the world as it might be.

1.2.1.4. Images

Some of the play's images also suggest confounding. The first powerful image is that of vodka, brought by Morocco across "a magic money line" (Greig 2002a: 33) – he speaks of "[m]agic money for just crossing a magic line" (Greig 2002a: 33), which reveals a potential instance of Harvey's relative space: depending on where one is, things have one value or another. The connection between globalisation's obliteration of borders for some and the fathers' deaths is established by the vodka. The vodka confounds because both

negative and positive aspects can be attached to it. On the one hand, it arrives in town through dubious yet 'legal' practices and it is the vodka that helps in the killings (Fig.1).

Fig. 1: Berlin and Horse the moment before they firebomb the station in *Europe* (Tron Theatre, dir. Douglas Rintoul, 2007). Photo by Douglas McBride. © Dundee Rep Ensemble. Reproduced by permission.

On the other hand, it is a gift from Morocco to his old friends. Through the image of vodka, *Europe* creates ambivalent connections between globalisation and violence, the killers and the victims. In other words, the vodka bleeding across those negative and positive senses illuminates the relational affects at play. Resonating with the vodka's implications, Fret tells Adele that if a train driver stops for too long for his lunch, he might cause repercussions along the line. Humorously and yet seriously, Fret says "[i]n that sausage, Adele, are the seeds of catastrophe" (Greig 2002a: 14), where 'sausage' could be replaced by 'vodka'. This cause-effect chain motif will reappear in other plays by Greig, such as *San Diego* and *Damascus*.

The connections are poetically woven by Greig's playwriting. When Berlin is narrating the petrolbombing retrospectively, he says: "[i]t was the coldest October night for a decade and a half and the vodka left a beautiful burn around the heart. A burn that spread out across the chest, oiling the veins and arteries, loosening muscles, heating nerve ends" (Greig 2002a: 82-3). This muscular, anatomic imagery is in turn connected with Fret and Sava's bodies dying in flames and their idea of Europe as having a solid railway system. Indeed, the image of vodka spreading across the body connects with a second key image in the play, railways, which in turn link cities across the continent. Thus imagery related to the body and imagery related to the railways is confounded to put forward the notion of Europe as a malfunctioning organic system.[80]

Railways can also stand for ideologies such as fascism – as Holdsworth notes, "Sava's language recalls the gas chambers and transit trains of the holocaust" (2003: 29). On his part, Rebellato connects "Fret's [and perhaps also Sava's] unconsciously fascistic imagery" (2002b: xvi) – "[s]teel and tracks and trains like blood muscle and arteries holding the continent together" (Greig 2002a: 53) – with Mussolini (see 2002b: xvi). Thus, although railways bring forward sense of network and make one perhaps feel "connected to the heart of things" (Greig 2002a: 14), they are also a metaphor for an aberrant idea of Europe and, more generally, for truncated connectivity (see Greig 2002a: 11) – trains no longer stop at the station (they do not heat nerve ends), thus failing to connect the dying unnamed town with the rest of the world. To complete this picture, the villagers are not alone in their being neglected, for "[n]o more compelling image could be offered of the obliteration of national boundaries by the forces of globalisation than the express trains that scream past these platforms" (Rebellato 2002b: xvi).

[80] The organic quality of space is explored in more detail below in relation to *One Way Street*.

1.2.2. Confounding Concepts

1.2.2.1. Europe

Is the Europe in *Europe* only part of continental Europe or, generally, non-Western Europe, and/or any place bruised by negligence and abandonment, on the edge (the border) and displaying multiple senses of fragility? In addition to this uncertainty, the town in central Europe where the action is located foregrounds the notion that 'first' and 'third' worlds are not geographically separated, but that "such borderzone experiences also cut through the very heart of the so-called 'Eurocenter'" (Müller 2005: 156) – indeed, the play mobilises early mechanisms of spatial interconnectedness. This challenge to separation is highlighted by Sava when he says, "we're not in some savage country on the other side of the world" (2002a: 29), and by Katia when she notes that she has seen the hate she sees in town around the station in her own hometown (see Greig 2002a: 29). "[N]ever truly defined" (Shuttleworth 2007a: 323), yet never presenting its component parts as disconnected, Europe appears indeed as a "liminal concept, fluid and indeterminate" (Reinelt 2001: 365; see also Sierz 2007: 325) – and thus, perhaps, open to 'our' shaping.

Moreover, the play juxtaposes a Europe immersed in war and the impediments of borders and check points with another Europe of incessant, "magic" (Greig 2002a: 34) flows of money and goods across borders, represented by black-market trader Morocco's entrepreneurial-smuggling activities. By having him say that "[t]he magic comes in the buying and selling" (Greig 2002a: 34), Greig highlights the current predominance of financial markets too. Traders will appear again throughout Greig's work – for instance in *The American Pilot*. Furthermore, Katia sees Europe as "[s]nippers on the rooftops, mortars in the suburbs" (Greig 2002a: 30), whereas her father preserves an idea of Europe as a dignified and civilised place where decency and honesty will prevail (see Greig 2002a: 29-

30), thus further confounding any given or straightforward meaning of the signifier 'Europe'.

Another sense of confounding emerges through *Europe*'s putting forward another pair of opposite views on Europe, represented by the old generation (Sava and Fret) – the post-Second World War generation – and the young lovers (Katia and Adele) – who incarnate the values of a young, liberated, progressive, outward-looking Europe and who perhaps naively long to be part of its new project together. The mouthpieces of the older Europe are killed at the end of the play while the representatives of a new outlook on Europe (their daughters) go on a train towards an indeterminate European elsewhere, which highlights the irresolution of Europe and *Europe*.

One of the widely quoted epigraphs to *Europe* is the passage from Derrida's *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (1992) that reads, "[s]omething unique is afoot in Europe, in what is still called 'Europe' even if we no longer know very well *what* or *who* goes by this name" (1992: 5; emphases original). By including this epigraph, Greig signals that his play will question the binaries inclusion/exclusion or inside/outside Europe, even within so-called European borders, and will therefore address issues such as "racism, nationalism, and xenophobia" (Derrida 1992: 78). At the same time, the epigraph remains instructive as regards a number of Greig's most relevant ideas on the politics of identity, as well as on contradiction.

Derrida claims: "I am European […] [b]ut I am not, nor do I feel, European *in every part* […]. I feel European *among other things*" (1992: 82-3; emphases original). Indeed, Greig's own non-exclusive Europeanness ties in with his interest in the rest of the world, which he sees as his country (see Greig 2016a: 91). At the same time, Derrida's view of Europe's potential becoming (see 1992: 7 and 78) is inextricably bound up with the notion of aporia – "the difficult or the impracticable" and "the event of a coming or of a future

advent" (Derrida 1993: 8) – which in *The Other Heading* explicitly "takes the [...] form of a contradiction" because it designates "*the possibility of the impossible*" (Derrida 1992: 42; emphasis original). Aporias need constant testing (see Derrida 1992: 42): "I will even venture to say that ethics, politics, and responsibility, *if there are any*, will only ever have begun with the experience and experiment of the aporia" (Derrida 1992: 41; emphasis original). As discussed earlier in the present thesis, contradiction is a central notion in Greig's theatre. In the case of *Europe*, a clear example of Adornian dialectics which encapsulates the horde of contradictory visions of Europe and potentially exercises the "testing of the aporia" (Derrida 1992: 42) is Katia's comment that "[e]ach thing you see, each thing the continent coughs up for you stretches it tighter until you can't keep all the things you've seen in the same mind and the skin rips down the middle" (Greig 2002a: 53).

As is usual in Greig's theatre, young women are left alive and 'in charge' of contributing to the possible creation of a future – this extends, for instance, to plays such as *The American Pilot* and *The Events*. Despite the bleak endings of the three plays, a sense of utopia is carried by these young women – Adele, Katia, Evie and Claire – towards an unknown future. Specifically, at the end of the play, Adele and Katia may be described as travelling "toward a Europe that does not yet exist" (Derrida 1992: 6), "another heading" (Derrida 1992: 15), one that includes the Other (see Derrida 1992: 15, 29) – in the shape of Katia – and is not given or identifiable but rather unforeseeable beyond mastery (see Derrida 1992: 18), and thus potentially confounding. The "*experience and experiment of the possibility of the impossible*" (Derrida 1992: 42; emphasis original) articulated in *Europe* through moments of Adornian contradiction or at the end of the play, among others, are perhaps passed on to the spectator and projected back at their own other headings in the world.

1.2.2.2. Identity

Pulsing between roundness and indeterminacy (see Brown 2007: 323), the characters' identity, "identity in the globalised world" (Shore 2007: 324; see also Sierz 2007: 324), is made strange by the sheer fact that some (crucially male) characters have names that stand for countries and cities – Morocco and Berlin – or animals – Horse. Although Morocco can be tentatively connected to the idea of 'outside Europe' via Islam and immigration towards Europe – Morocco being on the fringes of the African continent and extremely close to Europe, Berlin with Germany's recent fascist past, and Horse perhaps with bestiality, the characters and their allusive names resist full signification.

Furthermore, the characters' 'social' status, which also contributes to identity, is sometimes confusing. Morocco is a case in point: he is both called "cosmopolitan" by Adele (Greig 2002a: 51) and beaten up by a bunch of skinheads which include Berlin, his own friend. Yet Morocco is powerful enough to obtain documents for Katia in exchange for sex. Thus the luxuries of the global elite and the powerful, which include border-crossing, and the suffering of the migrant are located in the same body, which becomes a bodily instantiation of Adornian dialectics. Morocco also describes his own identity in terms of value, as product: "your memories are more valuable than money" (Greig 2002a: 33), a comment that sits uncomfortably alongside his apparently genuine willingness to come back home because he "missed the old place", the "boys" and "the bar" (Greig 2002a: 32).

Interestingly, in the Dundee Rep/Barbican production (2007), actors sat "at the sides of the stage when not required" (Mountford 2007: 323) therefore "remaining […] when not in a scene" (Johns 2007: 324), which replicates one of Greig's favourite post-Brechtian strategy of actors remaining on stage throughout. This has an impact on characters' identities because it highlights their presence as actors on stage. Furthermore, the fact that they sit at the sides neatly reinforces the entrapment experienced by (some of) the villagers

(see Johns 2007: 324). Ultimately, the town's identity itself is also confounding given that, as the Chorus reveals, it is sometimes on one side of the border and other times on the other (see Greig 2002a: 5), which destabilises any unmovable sense of identity.

1.2.2.3. Berlin and Horse: Perpetrators and Victims

An unequivocal distinction between perpetrator and victim becomes problematised through Berlin and Horse. This is partly due to Greig's "compassion for all his characters […] showing how they are caught in the changes refashioning Europe without the imagination or the skills necessary to adapt, or in most cases, to move on" (Reinelt 2001: 383). The burning down of the local train station, underpinned by their neo-fascist ideology, is depicted in the play as an indirect consequence of the globalising pressures that have driven their jobs out of town, where the grass is greener for profit-making. As Rebellato puts it, "[t]he wolves that hunt the forests around the station, coming out at night to make raids on the town, suggest the gathering threat of fascism that is not expunged by globalisation but perhaps provoked by it" (2002b: xvi). In other words, neoliberal globalisation could be nurturing a bloody version of nationalism, and this could link it to extreme right-wing ideologies in a cause-effect relationship.

However, while Berlin and Horse's extreme nationalism or, rather, pan-European supranationalism (see Greig 2002a: 89-90), is portrayed as deadening – as noted, it leads to various outbursts of violence – it is also characterised as a way to (re-)claim visibility in a world where only affluent places in the globe seem to matter. It seems significant in this respect that Berlin's line "we're also Europe" (Greig 2002a: 90) should close the play. In sum, Berlin and Horse do commit violence, and are therefore perpetrators, but they are also victims of the psychological and social impact of their being made redundant and their disenfranchisement. Their deeds thus become confounded in the play.

1.2.2.4. Home, Borders and Exile

Firstly, *Europe*'s characters bring to the fore very different and at times uneasy notions of 'home'. For instance, Adele does not feel at home in her hometown; she wants to travel, to dig herself out (see Greig 2002a: 49). An 'excess' of home as a result of the town's disconnection from the world has made her grow sick of roots, tired about being stuck to a particular soil. Adorno's view that "it is part of morality not to be at home in one's home" (2005: 39) and not feeling at home where one lives (see 2005: 155) are particularly resonant in Adele's case (see also Greig 1994). Fret considers himself the station's owner (see Greig 2002a: 13), in contrast to Sava, who feels at home in stations in a more spiritual way (see Greig 2002a: 29). Yet, they both crave for a past 'home', in other words, an old idea of Europe attached to the solidity of train networks, residual unionism and socialism, which surfaces especially perhaps when they enact a poignant protest against the station's closure with *home*-made banners and placards. Ironically, Sava leaves 'home' by force since himself and Sava are killed in the place Sava considers 'home', the station, perhaps symbolically mirroring how abruptly he has been uprooted from where he used to live by war.

As for the unemployed furnacemen and their visiting schoolmate Morocco, Billy decides to leave 'home' and become an economic migrant himself, which, ironically, is what incomers are accused of being by the villagers. In stark contrast, Berlin and Horse stay 'home' and end up bombing it. Additionally, Berlin's idea of home, in contrast to Adele's, is "roots", "having a wife" (Greig 2002a: 26) and digging in his heels (see Greig 2002a: 50). Morocco also comments extensively on the idea of 'home' – he claims "[w]e're at home only when we're away from home" (Greig 2002a: 71) and even, perversely since he is aware of her status as refugee, proposes a toast to Katia: "to leaving home" (Greig 2002a: 71).

By putting forward all these antagonistic senses of 'home' in a highly irresolute, suspended, awkward setting – in the defunct station of a border town – *Europe* contributes to the confounding of what 'home' means or to tearing apart any given, fixed meaning of 'home'. This achieves greater impact at the end of the play, when the bombing of 'home' and Berlin's narrative account of its immediate and subsequent consequences fuses with Adele and Katia's dream destinations and their journeying, which at that particular moment they seem to intimately view as 'home', which conveys an idea of 'home' as an intrinsically open-ended process or project.

Secondly, *Europe* is heavily concerned with the status of borders in a post-Wall, increasingly globalised climate. As Bauman puts it, "'negative' globalization specializes in breaking those boundaries too weak to withstand the pressure, and in drilling numerous, huge and unplugable holes through those boundaries that successfully resist the forces bent on dismantling them" (2006: 96). This is what happens in *Europe*, where the border is selectively porous. Indeed, what borders might mean and how they affect characters is muddled in *Europe*. While for Morocco, as mentioned, they feature indeed as holes through which he can smuggle goods, to Adele the border appears as blurred and fragile, once again challenging separation and disconnection: "[n]othing changes on either side of it, the landscape stays the same, there's just the wire. Hardly visible. Like a thought" (Greig 2002a: 11). In contrast, for territorialised characters such as Berlin and Horse (or even Fret), the lifting of borders destabilises their lives by taking away their jobs and bringing in the vodka that fuels the killings. Those who perform a violent act are territorialised, namely, Berlin and Horse. Morocco, who moves unaffected between borders for trade purposes, ends up contributing to the violent attack in an indirect way. The deterritorialised vodka, which moves easily across borders, kills territorialised Fret and Sava, for whom borders are limits that trains can cross. On its part, the Chorus is a borderline category and

it claims that the town is always on the border (see Greig 2002a: 5), although that border changes all the time – it is unstable, mobile. All those different perceptions confound any clear meaning of the border in *Europe*. In any case, borders are, by definition, spaces to be transgressed, sooner or later, which is reminiscent of the idea of hole and the world's porousness explored in this thesis's theoretical framework. This is not an isolated case; Greig's work is full of borders and check-points (*Europe, Not about Pomegranates*), walls (*The Architect*, *The Events*), and thresholds (*Outlying Islands*, *Fragile*) that are meaningfully transgressed so as to convey senses of connection that confound the sides of those paper-thin structures.

Thirdly, in relation to the confounding of the idea of exile, while Sava and Katia appear as 'real' exiles from war, some of the other characters (as well as Sava and Katia themselves) feel as exiles in an internal sense, spiritually, mentally and emotionally. For instance, Adele tells Katia: "[y]ou've lost your home and I've never had one. So we are both exiles" (Greig 2002a: 67). Zenzinger (see 2005: 272-73) argues that Adele reflects Greig's sense of internal exile (see Greig 1994a). Billy's decision to move on after having been made redundant forces him to become an economic migrant. Fret is an exile in post-1989 new Europe; he holds onto an idealised vision of Europe that does not fit the complexities of post-Wall Europe. Morocco appears as an exiled character, particularly when he is at 'home'. Adele calls him "cosmopolitan" (Greig 2002a: 51 and 56), identifies herself in the same way, and believes – ironically given her situation – that Katia is cosmopolitan too (see 2002a: 50). Müller's view that "Katia and Adele […] find solace in cosmopolitanism" (2005: 165) differs from my own precisely because of the irony with which cosmopolitanism seems to be handled in *Europe*. Greig gives the character the name of a country beyond the fringes of the European continent, and he also is an Eastern European citizen, performed by a Black actor in the play's premiere at the Traverse and

specified in the stage directions as "a dark man" (Greig 2002a: 5). He is also a villager who comes back to town and yet is beaten up for helping to arrange papers for a refugee, Katia, as if his name symbolically acted upon him, rendering him an immigrant in Berlin and Horse's eyes. However, a further underlying critique of cosmopolitanism seems to surface when Adele describes Morocco as "[s]o cosmopolitan, so civilized" (Greig 2002a: 56), yet it is revealed that Morocco's act is not altruistic: he helps Katia in exchange for sex, as noted. In sum, embedded in the play there seems to be a critique of the fact that "[w]hereas in the twenty-first century capital has indeed gone cosmopolitan, in political, social and cultural terms transnational exchange remains largely a one-way system" (Byrne and Schoene 2013: 2). Horse and Berlin feel tangibly exiled from jobs, life prospects and opportunities. And at the end of the play a more intangible sense of exile is suggested – they are exiled from visibility and representation, which situation they attempt to end by calling attention to themselves through petrolbombing the station and insisting that "we're also Europe" (Greig 2002a: 90).

Berlin and Horse's obviously reprehensible act of violence functions theatrically to foreground the terror they feel at their own invisibility. Unable to fully understand their relationship to place, *Europe*'s characters try out different ways to imagine and map their relation to roots, to soil, to territory, to 'their' place in the world, which in most cases seems a 'placelessness'. Adele negotiates her situation through imagining places she stares at in guides; Morocco feels empowered by trading across different places; Billy, Katia and Adele leave one place in search of new prospects; Fret and Sava day-dream of Europe as a by-gone utopian space; and Berlin and Horse bomb their place without place or 'un-place', an act that aims at making it a place, that is, at placing it on the map. The act of terror Berlin and Horse commit thus metaphorically foregrounds the terror of those estranged from visibility and the joys of connection to the rest of the world – a quality *Europe*'s former

manufacturers of soup and light bulbs do not possess, despite their geographical Europeanness.

1.2.2.5. 'Territorism': Terror and Territory in New Age Terrorism

"Terror", says Rancière, "is one of the catchwords of our time" (2009b: 114). The same year *Europe* was sitting on the shelves of the Traverse (1993), a terrorist attack "against US foreign policy in the Middle East" (Schrader 2001: 250) occurred: "the World Trade Centre in New York [was] hit by an Islamic terrorist, Ramzi Yousef, with a truck bomb that kill[s] six people" (see Sierz 2012a: 6). Post-*Europe* and pre-9/11, "in 1998, the bombing of US embassies in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and Nairobi (Kenya) by Al-Qaeda results in 300 deaths" (Sierz 2012a: 6). In 2001, 9/11 hits the United States. And then came "Bali, Riyadh, Casablanca, Jakarta, Istanbul, Madrid and London" (Shane 2005: 205).[81] *Europe* echoes the spectrum of terrorist violence: referring to Sava and Katia, Adele says "[m]aybe they're travelling incognito. On the run…spies, criminals, gun runners from Libya.[82] Maybe they are supplying freedom fighters or terrorist factions in…England with plastic explosives and mortars…maybe she's wanted by Interpol…maybe she's responsible for hundreds of deaths in dozens of cities" (Greig 2002a: 13).[83]

In the Backpages section of *Contemporary Theatre Review*'s volume on globalisation, Greig and other contributors offer short accounts of the phenomenon. When asked about theatre and globalisation, two contributors out of six pay considerable attention to terrorism, namely Ken Urban and Greig. Both discuss allegiances between terrorism and

[81] A spate of terror attacks has taken place since then, mainly attributed to Al-Qaeda and Islamic State and/or their local affiliates across the globe.

[82] Referring to disparate cities or locations is a common feature of Greig's globalisation plays. Other examples include Somalia and Australia in *The Events*.

[83] The fact that a refugee coming from Eastern Europe towards Western Europe (Katia) is thought by a local (Adele) to be connected to terrorist groups resonates with the current European refugee crisis and spate of global terror attacks.

territory in a global context. This section focuses on Urban's contribution, while Greig's arguments are addressed below, in the section on *Damascus*.

Urban claims that "[t]errorism was invented in the [eighteenth and nineteenth] centuries" and can be "defined as a violent political action that has a far-reaching goal", carried out by people who "see themselves as marginal or dispossessed" (2006: 158). The present thesis also reads terrorism in the light of 'global asymmetries' (see Bauman 2006: 110). From that perspective, Berlin and Horse's act can be considered as a terrorist attack for they indeed view themselves as marginal. They have a far-reaching goal, namely to make themselves visible, and they seek to convey a clear message: "[W]e're also Europe" (Greig 2002a: 90). In other words, instead of considering Berlin and Horse's petrolbombing as an act of terror alone, it seems relevant to ask whether their act is motivated by their terror at their very inexistence and should therefore be seen as a kind of terrorism, understood as a process that involves violence and springs from desperation, marginality and invisibility.

Urban is not alone in connecting marginality and terrorism in the context of globalisation. In the pertinently titled *Europe* (2004), Bauman claims that

> [n]o sane person can deny the reality of the terrorist threat. As long as our shared planetary home remains as chaotic and the global powers as unbridled and free from politics and ethical guidance, and our paroxysmal responses to terrorist outrages as one-sided, privatized and deregulated as they are now as a result of one-sided, privatized and deregulated globalization, that threat will remain real. Extraterritorial terrorism is as much an inevitable product of the way the globalization of human planetary interdependence proceeds as are extraterritorial finances and trade, crime and corruption; it will only vanish if the 'new world disorder' vanishes too – its homeland and its playground, and an inexhaustible source of its ever renewed strength. (2004: 121)

This is a concern that continues to be explored in Bauman's later work:

> The real – and *winnable* – war against terrorism is not conducted when the already half-ruined cities and villages of Iraq or Afghanistan are further devastated, but when the debts of poor countries are cancelled, when our rich markets are opened to their staple produce, when education is sponsored for the 115 million children

> currently deprived of access to any school, and when other similar measures are fought for, decided – and *implemented*. (2006: 109-10; emphases original)

This is what Urban describes as a 'new age of terrorism': "[t]his 'new age of terrorism' is often seen as a response to globalisation, to the advances and inequalities created by our increasingly interconnected world" (2006: 158). While Morocco enjoys some of the pleasures of globalisation – and in the process uncovers some of their grim undersides – and Billy embarks on a journey to change his situation, Sava, Fret, Horse and Berlin suffer from inequalities that lead the latter pair to kill the former in a misguided, aberrant response to the forces of globalisation that have taken away their jobs.

Urban links terrorism not only with globalisation but also with territory – etymologically, "at the root […] of all terrorism" (Urban 2006: 158) – in way that may be connected with Berlin and Horse's vindication. Urban considers that "[t]erritory is not necessarily geographical; it is also a spiritual and cultural category" (2006: 158). Berlin does indeed seem to have lost his town physically and geographically as well as spiritually and culturally. In other words, the causes that take Berlin and Horse to want to convey the message that they also exist may be described as 'terroristic': is there something more 'terroristic' than perceiving that you are physically alive while you are psychologically, spiritually, economically, culturally, geographically and politically dead? And this leads to a second question: can the neologism 'territorism' be used to describe acts undertaken in response to the terror of suffering from a lack of territory (understood as a 'place in the world') in the context of globalisation? Can Berlin and Horse be called 'territorists', individuals that commit violence in order to highlight their lack of place, visibility and meaning in the world?

Europe does indeed suggest a connection between terrorism and the lack of place in a global context. 'Territorism' might therefore be defined as a form of terror exerted by those who see themselves as dispossessed and directed at calling attention to the loss of

territory or place and the longing to be concrete and 'placed', to exist, to be real, to be alive. More widely, Greig's theatre might be considered an example of 'territorism' because it blows up constructed senses of territory in order to highlight the need for space to be open to all existence.

1.3. Conclusive Remarks: Towards Elsewhere

The main aim of the first section of "Europe Plays" has been to show how some features of Greig's *Europe* are affected by and respond to globalising processes and pressures. Ultimately, a central aim of *Europe*'s problematisations of the elements and concepts discussed above is to generate a space of confounding in order to ask questions about the terror of inexistence experienced by some global dwellers. The inexistent find themselves at the gates of capital, suffering the disadvantages of not belonging to the affluent side and being denied the pleasures of moving unfettered across borders. In a context of war, globalisation and uneven mobilities, including displacement, the elements and concepts listed above are confounded in the play in order to complicate holistic, self-enclosed, individual views of them. In so doing, *Europe* begins to interrogate the separation between causes and consequences, the apparent lack of connections between phenomena, in an impulse that is at the heart of Greig's theatrical project and continues to be explored throughout his work, as the rest of the thesis hopes to demonstrate.

In this thesis's reading, Berlin and Horse's violent act becomes less "a desperate attempt to put their town back on the map" (Zenzinger 2005: 274) than a desperate yearning for existence, for being included in the picture, being given the earth back. Those who have fallen behind the rapidly moving globe are left either with desperation and violence or with a yearning for a better future through border crossing, as signalled by Billy's decision to leave and the young lesbian couple at the end of *Europe*. Their escape is a reminder that

"borders that have already been thrown open and kept open by and for free-floating capital, commodities and information can't be sealed back and kept sealed against humans" (Bauman 2006: 109). Despite it being a bleak play – apart from the aspects discussed above, Billy's future is uncertain and Katia and Adele have both been raped – Billy's migration and Katia and Adele's relationship and their jumping on a train at the end of *Europe* can be considered 'gesturally utopian' (see Rebellato 2002a).

As distinctive to Greig's plays, *Europe* is characterised by a dialectic approach that becomes particularly poignant in the final intertwining of Berlin's and Adele and Katia's voices. It also includes exiles going elsewhere and (exiled) locals staying, trains being connected to both movement and stasis, or the juxtaposition of (lesbian) love and (racist) violence, among others. The closing dialectic move does not just place together the brutal explosion and sexual pleasure, but also the ground and the sky, for the "sudden lifting, [the] pulling of focus" (Rebellato 2002b: xvii) that accompanies the naming of cities provides an aerial perspective that, in combination with Berlin and Horse's 'grounded' claim for existence, may be seen as an example of a fraught map in the making.

As noted by various critics, the "theatrical and expressionist elements" (McMillan 2007a: 322) and "the poetic and the rhetorical strategies" (Reinelt 2001: 383; see also Gardner 2007a: 322; Brown 2007: 323; Alfree 2007: 323; Johns 2007: 323) move *Europe* away from a realist aesthetic, thus confirming that even in Greig's early globalisation plays formal aspects are central. When, in a rather negative review, John Peter describes *Europe* as "utterly undramatic" (2007: 324), he is putting in different words what this thesis means by Greig's defiance of mimetic representation – the difference being, of course, that this thesis does not consider it a flaw but the opposite. The play's final multilocational narrative intertwining explores two extreme visions that tear across any static, homogeneous

understanding of Europe and offer a glimpse of what the pain-ridden continent that goes by that name might become.

2. *One Way Street* as Map and Theatre: Organically Generating Memory

The second of the "Europe Plays" analysed in the present thesis, Suspect Culture's *One Way Street: Ten Walks in the Former East*, continues exploring what Europe might become, or rather, in the light of affect theories, how we might 'interbecome' with it. *One Way Street* explores the potentiality of such interbecoming through 'walking'.[84] Walter Benjamin states in *One Way Street* that, in contraposition to flying, "[o]nly he who walks the road on foot learns of the power it commands" (1979: 50). The materiality and power of walking are echoed in Greig's idea that the act of writing something might map it out, might make it real (see 2016a: 93). This section aims at illustrating how through the act – and/or the idea of the act – of walking as a way of mapping out, *One Way Street* might make some roads real and raise bodily and spatial awareness about the pervasive materialities alluded to in the theoretical framework and our power to shape them, thus opening up a sense that a small contribution towards the creation of the world (Nancy) is possible through some practices – notwithstanding their apparent insignificance.

One Way Street, titled after Benjamin's "collection of philosophical sketches assessing the remnants of 19th-century culture in the Paris of the 1920s" (Zenzinger 2005: 263) and influenced by Benjamin's idea of "drawing a map of your life" (Benjamin qtd. in Zenzinger 2005: 263) as put forward in his childhood memoir "A Berlin Chronicle" (c. 1900) (see Eatough 2013: 13), was the first piece the Glasgow-based Suspect Culture staged as a professional company (see Rebellato 2003: 62). As noted earlier, Suspect

[84] For reasons of scope, it is not possible to do justice here to the rich field of the study of walking in contemporary theatre and performance studies, both theoretical and related to practice. A recent contribution that maps out the terrain in illuminating ways is the special issue of *Performance Research* entitled "On Foot" (2012).

Culture was an experimental theatre company co-founded by Eatough, Greig and Powell in the early 1990s. Funding having been discontinued, their collaboration came to an end in the late 2000s.[85] *One Way Street* appeared in an anthology of Scottish plays, *Scottish Plays: New Scottish Drama* (1998), edited by Howard, and was "the first Suspect Culture text to be published" (Rebellato 2013a: 304). According to Greig, it is a co-authored, co-directed piece by Eatough and himself, where "the writing existed to help realise the performance" (1998c: 229). Indeed, Suspect Culture's "navigat[ing] between the poles of performance and playwriting", their mingling of "new writing with experimental dramaturgy" and "devising and text" (Wallace 2015: 179-180) was one of the company's core characteristics. Furthermore, Joyce McMillan seems to suggest that *One Way Street* "transcends the notion of hierarchy between text and performance" (Radosavljević 2013: 190) when she claims that *One Way Street* is "a seamless synthesis of text, performance, music and visual imagery" (2013: 44). In addition, and importantly, *One Way Street* "develop[ed] the company's […] characteristic patterns of repeated gestures and stylized recursions of movement" (Rebellato 2003: 62).

Set in Berlin (which connects it with a key character in *Europe*), *One Way Street* sprang out of a number of influences that include the Situationist *dérive* (discussed below), "Benjamin's version of psycho-geography" (Eatough 2013: 15),[86] Greig and Eatough's inter-rail trip around Europe,[87] a visit by Greig and Eatough to the Pearce Institute (Govan) in order to do research on maps and mapping (see Greig 1998c: 229), and Pina Bausch's *Café Müller*, which became key to Suspect Culture's interest in "gestural motifs of reaching

[85] The core artistic team of Suspect Culture, however, was reunited in the recent project *Lanark: A Life in Three Acts* (2015b) – an adaptation of Alasdair Gray's Scottish classic – for which they were respectively director, writer and composer.

[86] A possible definition of psychogeography is "unplanned drifting through a landscape, usually urban, to try to become more in tune with one's surroundings" (Morris 2015: 23). As Wallace puts it in relation to Flannery, "[h]e is distracted by quintessentially psychogeographical preoccupations: urban wandering, remembering and mapping the personal and historical associations of location" (2015: 190).

[87] As Eatough clarifies, "[w]e did this tour of the former East – places like Magdeburg, Chemnitz and Dresden – not that long after the reunification which was a central theme of the show" (2013: 13).

out, longing and so on" (Eatough 2013: 12). Other influences are "the Berlin Wall coming down […] ideas of the city as an imaginative space […] [and] these globalized spaces", that is, "spaces that you'd associate with global economics: retail spaces, entertainment spaces, travel spaces" (Eatough 2013: 15). As Howard remarks, "the germ of the play is […] Benjamin's insistence that the story of his life should be a street map – more a geography than a biography" (1998: x). This is captured in Greig and Eatough's idea that they "wanted to make a play which somehow was *both map and theatre* at the same time" (1998c: 229; emphasis added),[88] and eventually in *One Way Street*'s protagonist telling his life story in the shape of ten walks in the former Berlin East that draw a map of his life.

Maps are contextually central, since *One Way Street* was written in 1994, a time when a dramatic redrawing of borders in Europe occurred as a result of the Balkan Wars. Besides, as stated earlier in this study, maps are a vital methodological and aesthetic tool to Greig's creative engagement and geographical imagination. Here is a passage that combines maps and an aerial perspective, drawn from *One Way Street*: "Up over the city. Watch it disappear behind you. A map of streets in orange light laid out beneath you getting smaller […]. Over Europe, high into the atmosphere, follow the dawn over Warsaw, Moscow and on into Siberia and then out into orbit" (Greig 1998a: 248). In Greig's work, drawing maps or attempting to do so is not intended as an exercise that aims at imposing spatial order. Rather, mapping and writing, and indeed imagining, are part of an attempt to understand the world and to make things or ideas 'real' to spectators, as discussed in the introduction (see Greig 2016a: 93).

One Way Street also engages with maps thematically. For instance, in connection to the trope of lostness and/or being lost, *One Way Street*'s protagonist has a conversation about maps with a man in a Jewish cemetery that paradoxically brings up the question of

[88] Meaningfully in this context, the first denomination given to maps was *theatrum orbis terrarum* [world's theatre] (see Schalansky 2014: 23).

being lost: "The maps. Are you lost?" (Greig 1998a: 238). Besides, "Benjamin comments on the difficulty of […] losing ourselves – even when we want to do so" (Paroni de Castro 2013: 58). The tensions of getting lost, wanting to lose oneself and yet having maps underline a concern with the impossibility of imposing rationality on space and/or understanding the complexity of space and one's relation to it, especially in a fragmented European context.

2.1. Fragmentation 'with a Cause'

Following the fall of communism and the failures of the left, Greig points to the rise of "the globalized, fragmented world" (2011a: 4). My suggestion is that this context of fragmentation underpins the fragmentary character of *One Way Street*, which in turn, does not eclipse the possibility that fragmentation itself might be challenged. Bearing the imprint of a certain fascination with pre-Wall Eastern Europe and with life in the new post-Wall environment, *One Way Street* is subtitled *Ten Short Walks in the Former East*. By focusing on one of the sides, an implicit allusion is made to the fragmentation of Germany, and by focusing on ten walks, the piece indicates that what is at stake is not a unified walk, let alone a unified experience, theatrical and/or otherwise.

Set in post-Wall East Berlin, *One Way Street* explores the ramblings, experiences and memories of angry young intellectual John Flannery, including his lost love story with Greta. Fragments of his and Greta's story are contained in his ten walks in Berlin's former East, which he addresses to tourists (the show's audience members) on his walking tour, and which structurally articulate *One Way Street*. Thus the very premise of *One Way Street* interweaves map and theatre (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2: John Flannery lying down on the stage floor as he 'guides' spectators through East Berlin in *One Way Street* (Traverse, dir. Graham Eatough and David Greig, 1995). © Suspect Culture. Reproduced by permission.

It is also noticeable that Flannery is researching and writing about the walks that he is simultaneously "lead[ing] [spectators] through" (Greig 1998c: 229). Flannery's and the spectator's tasks are thus fragmented: the former not only acts and conducts the walks, but also tells his stories and 'writes' the content of the walks. The latter not only spectates but also 'walks' and 'sightsees' (in his/her imagination), arguably becoming the triad spectator/walker/tourist.[89] In this way, the piece blurs the contours of the 'categories' of actor/character and spectator. Another instance of such blurring corresponds to 'Flannery' embodying a hybrid alter-ego of both Greig and Eatough, as well as constituting a clear reference to Charles Baudelaire's *flâneur*, resulting in the aptly named Flannery becoming an amalgamation of fictional, real and conceptual fragments.[90] Moreover, devising in itself,

[89] For brevity's sake, only the first concept in the triad, 'spectator', will be mentioned subsequently, except when necessary.

[90] In one of its possible definitions, the *flâneur* is "that transient wanderer of the city" (Murphy 2012: 8) who throws himself into "the fugitive pleasure of circumstance" (Baudelaire 1995: 12).

which was one of the methodologies Suspect Culture followed for the creation of *One Way Street*, crucially draws on fragmentation: the results of several exercises that involve different collaborators are eventually put in common and worked upon creatively.

As Eatough explains, "[w]hen we made *One Way Street* it was a reaction to just having done a big show (*Europe*)[91] and then trying to get back to the working methods we'd used in *A Savage Reminiscence*" (2013: 11). Indeed, both pieces work with monologue and a solo performer.[92] Although *One Way Street* is conducted by the only character with a bodily presence on stage, Flannery, his monologue is actually "told by a variety of characters [unspecified as characters in the text]" (Howard 1998: xi), which produces as a result "a new way of mapping identity" (Zaroulia 2013a: 192). A series of fragments of others inhabit Flannery, thus "suggest[ing] a way of reading identity and difference through the commonality of the human body" (Zaroulia 2013a: 192). This is not only an example of evaporation of bodily singularity, but also of how, through character, the boundaries of the nation-state and the 'present' time are transgressed, since Flannery embeds voices from different countries and different time scales. On top of that, he also speaks moments of dialogue. Intricacies abound not only in connection to the idea of monologue (and dialogue), but also to the content of the walks themselves – rendered fragmentarily – which in turn bears a vital impact on characterisation and the treatment of space-time, all adding to a sense of fragmentation in *One Way Street*.

Formally, *One Way Street*'s walks fragmentarily intersperse indications usually disclosing marginal locations to spectators/tourists with lengthy sequences of stream-of-consciousness – punctuated by interruptions in the shape of direct address (see Greig 1998a: 235-36) – that reveal some of Flannery's childhood memories, Flannery's recent

[91] As Rebellato notes, Suspect Culture's *Europe* is a "double bill [*Stations on the Border/Petra's Explanation* (1994b)] [which] should not be confused with […] Greig's contemporaneous play for the Traverse Theatre, *Europe*, with which it shares a title and some thematic concerns, but little else" (2013a: 327).

[92] Other points in common include the long titles of both works and the male-centred stories they tell – although both crucially involve female characters, respectively Miranda and Greta.

experiences, thoughts and mental/physical states and disturbing pieces of historical fact. In sum, the walks are deployed in an unusual manner – via Flannery's experiences, interactions and perceptions. In one moment of direct address, Flannery confesses he is not feeling well and has to stop. This threat to break away from the walks and the play itself captures his failure to carry on with the job of 'guiding' the spectator as well as continue acting, thus drawing attention to the now of performance and his own fragility as well as the fragility of the stories and the places he is leading spectators through.

As already noted, an important consequence of the walks/walking tour being based on an experimental mingling of varied fragments and senses of fragmentation is the suggestion of a confounded coalescence of different bodies and spatio-temporalities in Flannery's (un)bounded figure. Firstly, the piece 'travels' across bodies, for Flannery embodies from his lover Greta to his boss Herr Frisch, amongst others. Secondly, the work references Lancanshire, Berlin and orbit travelling as well as myriad urban locations such as streets, bars, squares, parks and cemeteries. Furthermore, *One Way Street* mingles, for instance, Flannery's childhood house's "vestibule of silence" (Greig 1998a: 240), excerpts from Stasi files and the stink of Brecht's sweat. The strong appeal to the emotions and the senses of those allusions is further complicated by the cultural and literary references, which do not just include Brecht, Baudelaire and Benjamin but also Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Franz Kafka and Anton Chekhov, among others. The numerous shifts among and across bodies and space-times both mirror the fragmentation that characterised the 1990s (see Greig 2011a: 4) and simultaneously destabilise self-enclosed notions of particular organisms, locations and times, thus producing a unifying, albeit highly dissonant, a/effect. This strategy was to grow and develop throughout Greig's career. By both reflecting the fragmentation present in Europe in the 1990s and engaging creatively with it, *One Way*

Street aesthethically responds to a feature of 'the real' – hence fragmentation 'with a cause' in the title of this section.[93]

2.2. Radicant Walker and Radicant 'Travel'

2.2.1. Journey vs. Destination Narratives

Amongst the varied lexicon and traditions that have tackled the 'walker', I will focus on the walker as "the wanderer […] a central figure of our precarious era" (Bourriaud 2009: 22) via Bourriaud's definition of 'radicant': "[t]o be radicant means setting one's roots in motion, staging them in heterogeneous contexts and formats, denying them the power to completely define one's identity" (2009: 22), which Flannery can be said to do. Additionally, Carl Lavery's description of the nomadic walker is also pertinent in terms of what the radicant walker Flannery – and perhaps the spectator – does by walking in *One Way Street*: "s/he destabilizes the disciplinary structures that fix and regulate the city's identity" (2009: 43).

Flannery – a young, angry English intellectual expat in Berlin who, feeling lost and possibly alienated, embarks on a discovery process of his self and of the city – is not interested in showing Berlin's former East through famous museums and well-known tourist sites and trails. In this respect, he not only becomes a radicant/nomadic walker but may also be seen as resisting the idea of history as "a type of entertainment, of particular importance to the globetrotting tourist" (Augé 2008: xii), and instead promoting a more emotional, organic engagement with East Berlin. For instance, amongst the museums, he

[93] Even if I am not generally looking at Greig's work through the lenses of postmodernism and the paradigm of the postdramatic – Lehmann's seminal work was written after Suspect Culture's *One Way Street* – it seems important to signpost Zenzinger and Wallace's contributions to the discussion of Suspect Culture's work in this respect. Zenzinger points out some of the postmodern traits of *One Way Street*, such as self-reference: "The postmodern device of the fictional 'author' (Flannery) discussing the principles of his work with another character (Herr Frisch, the guidebook editor […]) widens the play's level of self-reference" (2005: 264). On her part, Wallace, who has extensively discussed Greig's work in connection to postmodernism, argues that "Suspect Culture's work with repetition, fragmentation, sound, gesture and image is richly illustrative of some aspects of the tendencies Lehmann observes" (2013: 19).

chooses the Museum of Hairdressing (see Greig 1998a: 234); amongst the Jewish memorial sites, Flannery picks up a cemetery; and amongst the trails, he includes "a walk down memory lane" (Greig 1998a: 242). Those and other examples contribute to systematically interrogating both Flannery's personal identity and a sense of monolithic identity for the former East of Berlin – hence, by implication, questioning the stability of bodies and spaces at large. Ultimately, Flannery, might be

> seeking ways to re-enchant existence and to find meaning in the world. […] [T]he enchanted sensibility of the walker is both ethical and political. It points forward to an alternative way of being in, and caring for, the world. (Lavery 2009: 49)

Importantly, Lavery's comment on walking crucially links *One Way Street* to the ethico-political dimension that trespasses all the work analysed in the present thesis.

As "an organism that […] advances" (Bourriaud 2009: 22), the radicant evokes the motif of the journey narrative. According to Bourriaud, "[t]oday the journey is everywhere in contemporary works, whether artists borrow its forms […], its iconography […], or its methods […]" (2009: 107). Helpfully for this thesis, for Bourriaud the journey is an aesthetic form that responds to globalisation: "[t]he emergence of the journey as a compositional principle has its source in a cluster of phenomena that form part of a sociology of our visual environment: globalization" (2009: 113). Indeed, the journey narrative is also present in Greig's own critical-theoretical writings. Greig is particularly interested in "the transformative power of the journey" in contraposition to the destination, which leaves little room for stories (see 2008a: 214). In a comment that is reminiscent of Benjamin (see 1979: 50), he claims that "[t]he narrative of the journey would lead us, of course, to walk and not to fly" (2008a: 214). Or, as Greig puts it, "[t]he destination narrative is in the service of capital and the journey narrative tends to be resistant to it" (2008a: 214). The radicant/nomadic walker, then, may be seen as resistant to the destination

narrative – and thus, implicitly, to globalisation – through his/her engagement with the journey narrative.[94]

2.2.2. Journal vs. Tour Guide

Although in *One Way Street*, Flannery is meant to be writing "[a] guidebook, for the tourists" (Greig 1998a: 233), he complains about the lack of imagination and the simplicity of tour guide writing: "[y]ou don't need to make too many things up and you can write about what you know" (Greig 1998a: 239). Tour guide writing seems concerned uniquely with the factual and with providing the reader with resolute narratives and potential feel-good experiences. Conversely, although his boss Frisch tells Flannery how unpleasant Flannery's work on the tour guide is and urges him to write happier stories, Flannery replies "[t]ravel. I write travel" (Greig 1998a: 242), a mode of writing more inclined to valuing imagination, thinking, and the exploration of the unknown.

This is where Flannery's keen attention to impressions, which are more prone to belong to a journal than a tour guide, can be located – 'impression' being a word vitally repeated across *One Way Street* (see Greig 1998a: 239, 242 and 249). Besides, the focus on 'travel' rather than 'guide' is in tune with Greig's idea that what interests him is to write a journal in the form of a journey narrative, not a guidebook: "[t]he narrative of the journey would lead us […] to write a journal not to read a guidebook" (2008a: 214). This results in spectators potentially engaging in a tour of Flannery's experiences, emotions, thoughts and impressions rather than following a factual, detached, thoroughly studied itinerary of commodified top locations. This kind of proximity and the sense of taking a detour are vital because they underpin the a/effectiveness of the organic, experiential, physical aspects of the piece. Following his instincts and impressions, and focusing on a sense of travel and

[94] For brevity's sake, subsequent mentions of the radicant/nomadic walker will only include the first term.

journal writing, Flannery's work resists inscription within the global neoliberal framework of a convenient, practical and marketable tourism.

2.3. Walking the Ten Walks: *Dérive,* Openness and Fictionalisation

As part of the methodology used in order to address the complexities of this "unusual and uncategorisable" (Greig 1998c: 229) piece, I went to Berlin and did the walks in February-March 2013.[95] This seemed to validate Benjamin's hypothesis that that the foot commands power, which strongly resonates with Greig's idea that the act of writing, or indeed walking – making the map, making theatre – can make things real. The exercise illuminated an aspect of *One Way Street* that I had thought was important but not central, memory, and eventually determined the phrase that subtitles this section on *One Way Street*, 'organically generating memory'.

The first indication for the walks, and at times the most clear of all, is constituted by their very names, which at the same time serve the purpose of entitling the different scenes, as for instance in "1 Prenzlauerberg" – another instance *One Way Street* becomes both map and theatre. The information that follows a given walk/scene title can be straightforward, as in "[t]ake the U-Bahn to Oranienburger Tor" (Greig 1998a: 242), or utterly disorientating, as in "[u]nwanted Sexual Advice, Elderly Transvestites and my house" (Greig 1998a: 238). In short, the indications intentionally vary vastly in terms of clarity.

Overall, the intertwining of more and less straightforward indications for the walks produces disorientation, which mirrors a crucial technique used in the piece's devising, the Situationist *dérive*, considered by Paroni de Castro "Suspect Culture's hallmark" and organically "inseparable from the life of [the company's] members and artistic partners" (2013: 59). As he defines it, the Situationist *dérive*

[95] When possible, I also travelled to other places related to the plays under analysis in the thesis. For instance, I wrote the first draft on *San Diego* during a trip to the US that included a visit to San Diego and I visited Norway in connection to *The Events*.

> involves the participant going on a walk through the city following a route determined by some arbitrary set of rules […]. It creates a kind of drifting that generates real situations, in public spaces […]. This leads to a flow of actions, defined by the route that has been taken. At the end of the exercise, considerations and reflections are made to understand and put this emotional path into context. (2013: 58-9)

The "arbitrary set of rules" that characterises the situationist *dérive* becomes highly palpable when experiencing the walks. This suggests that the form of the written itself became influenced by the notion of *dérive.*

And yet, despite the presence of an arbitrary set of rules and thus of drifting, as I followed the walks there was a sense that there was something else beyond arbitrariness, fragmentation and disorientation. Randomness, failure and the eruption of the unexpected coexisted with a sense of possibility, some kind of self-assertion and a desire to map something out. What also struck me as remarkable was the openness that the use of the technique fostered. That is, the experience of walking the walks illuminated some of the ways in which a text can be extremely open for readers/spectators to 'walk it' in infinite different ways.

The demanding nature of the piece has to do not just with the unusual walking experiences it presents the spectator with – or in this case the (voluntary) walker – but also with the blending of real and fictional elements. For instance, in my reading, there are at times fictional incursions in relation to place-naming – as in "Wertherstrasse" instead of "Wörtherstrasse" – which could range from being a spelling mistake to a conscious naming after Goethe's famous work, *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774). Some other times, fictionalisation manifests itself in the shape of inexistent sites, such as in the indication to Flannery's house (see Greig 1998a: 241), a 'minor' landmark via which *One Way Street*, again in my reading, is being extremely ironic about tourism and perhaps producing new meaning in relation to place by drawing precisely on the realm of the personal, and thus pointing out alternative connections between body and place. On other occasions, the

present-day walker faces outdated street names – Dimitroffstrasse is nowadays called Danziger Strasse – which raises, through the experience of walking, historical awareness of the transformations places may undergo. The difficulty also derives from the fact that the walks take the spectator through figurative, imaginative scenarios such as maps of vomit (see Greig 1998a: 246), halls of tears (see Greig 1998a: 239) and eclipses (see Greig 1998a: 237 and 244).

2.3.1. Linking Body and Place: Maps of Vomit and Walking over Corpses

My experience of walking seemed to intensify a central element in *One Way Street*, the persistent connection of body and place. As the railway system is described in *Europe* through the bodily metaphor of veins and arteries that hold the continent 'together', *One Way Street* continues elaborating on bodily metaphors, and it does so increasingly radically. Katia's relative's face torn off by violent conflict in *Europe* (see Greig 2002a: 43) is transformed in *One Way Street* into syphilis and brains being blown up.

These organic references to sickness and death are included in the walks and connected with places related to the Second World War, the Holocaust and political murder. In line with Flannery's interest in the journey narrative and journal writing rather than tourism and guide-books, those places are not well-known but usually marginal spots. It is worth noting that the entwinement of the bodies of the deceased and marginal places is presented to the spectator – who may also be undergoing her own organic process of engagement with space – through Flannery's sick body. All these layers of organicity are intensified by attending to the recounting of violent events while walking, in itself an organic process. My contention is that by experiencing this multilayered organic sense of walking, the spectator – or the solitary, voluntary walker – might feel organically connected to the deceased bodies through an unusual spatial experience. This process may somehow

confound the distinction between sick bodies and sick places, the body as organism and place as organism. This confounding and organic interpenetration appears as viscerally intensified in the experience of walking.

To illustrate the idea, after throwing up and 'admiring' his vomit Flannery comments ironically, echoing Benjamin's idea of life's map, that "[m]y sick has made a puke map of my life" (Greig 1998a: 246), and speaks of "[t]en short walks through the former contents of my stomach [instead of the East of Berlin]" (Greig 1998a: 246). These comments link the walks – and by default place, geography, history and memory, which he maps out thanks to the different colours and shapes of his vomit – and his bodily processes directly: "There's home, all warm, all pink in the potato hills of Lancashire…a little carroty college, German language and literature department to the south…a bile dribbling line of the route to Berlin. And there she is. The black stout splash of Greta's flat" (Greig 1998a: 246). That is, this disgusting, albeit significant, exercise in organic geography arguably connects the sickness of place and body, both considered organisms in constant transformation, no matter how much rationalisation is imposed on them. Flannery's throwing up is not an isolated event in his sick body: he apparently suffers from cancer and often bleeds as a consequence.

To comment on a second example, Flannery is not the only sick element in *One Way Street*; parts of the city emerge as a crippled and at times dead organism. But how do city locations evoke death and the walker's connection to it? In one of the walks, Flannery takes spectators to a park that has been literally created out of mountains of debris from the Second World War; plants and paths form a neutrally-looking landscape that overlooks at the Stasi quarters. The dead tissue, the ruins from the Second World War swept under the carpet, form uneven lumpy hills that people are meant to walk, jog or play on, distracted by the park's present day's amenities. Walking on top of deceased bodies and their lives

evokes again a sense of the city as organism to which the organism of the spectator may become connected precisely through her walking and the unusual 'tourist' experience *One Way Street* provides her with. Thus, horrendous acts of violence that bodies have suffered and the city has historically experienced are entwined with organic processes Flannery's and the spectator's bodies undergo through *One Way Street* having them 'walking' (in their imaginations), so that they might eventually become part of their own memory.

2.3.2. Memorialisation, Marginal Histories and Cognitive Mapping

Benjamin's "'A Berlin Chronicle,' in its very form, mimics the fragmentary experience of moving through the city as well as the act of remembrance" (Cooley n.d.). What follows seeks to bring together the similarly fragmentary character of *One Way Street* and its interest in acts of remembrance. I will discuss the relevance of acts of remembrance in the noted context via Harvey's distinction between historicisation and memorialisation, which draws on Benjamin and helps to frame *One Way Street*'s interest in memory:

> we have a choice whether to historicize […] or to seek to memorialize […]. If the site is merely historicized in relative space (by a certain sort of monumentality) then this imposes a fixed narrative on the space. The effect will be to foreclose on future possibilities and interpretations. Such closure will tend to constrict the generative power to build a different future. (2005: 107)

While historicisation "imposes [through monumentality] a fixed narrative on the space", *One Way Street* chooses memorialisation in the sense that it avoids monumentality in the spaces it takes one through. That is, Flannery's choices highlight the peripheral. Besides, *One Way Street*'s spectator has little choice but to aim at understanding space relationally rather than relatively, given all the difficulties, shifts in perspective and complexities that the piece puts the spectator – or the walker – through. Furthermore, embodying the old exiled man at the Jewish cemetery, Flannery says: "I volunteer. I do it to remember" (Greig 1998a: 238), which underlines the importance of memory in *One Way Street* – and of

course, as a radicant walker, Flannery writes a radicant journal (which favours memorialisation) instead of a guidebook (which favours historicisation). “Memory”, Harvey continues “is, according to Benjamin, a potentiality that can […] ‘flash up’ uncontrollably at times of crisis to reveal new possibilities” (2005: 107). Resonating with Flannery’s and the spectator’s potential response to place, “[t]he way the site might be lived by those who encounter it then becomes unpredictable and uncertain” (Harvey 2005: 107). If any sense of collective memory is derived at all from *One Way Street*, this might be “a diffuse but nevertheless powerful sense that […] can play a significant role in animating political and social movements” (Harvey 2005: 107).

In contrast, Flannery’s boss Frisch tells Flannery to portray “[a] city united. A city full of history etc. Pleasing cafés en route” (Greig 1998a: 250) and how he likes Kafka, but he would never commission him with the writing of a guide because

> [a] guide has to show people happy things about that make them happy, or poignant things which make them feel a little sad, like a popular ballad. A guide isn’t supposed to make people feel angry and depressed. You know that. So John. Back to work eh? Only this time. No nastiness. Can that be possible? Elegiac descriptions, Quirky humour, Zany Observation, Human Interest, Architectural History and ‘a despite troubled history everything’s O.K. in Berlin now’ resolution. (Greig 1998a: 250)

Instead, for Flannery there is more to history than just the main landmarks in the city. In favouring remembrance/memorialisation and being interested in marginal histories, Flannery engages in a critique of mainstream tourism and consumerism in a global neoliberal framework. Instead of “Elegiac descriptions”, Flannery recounts how Rosa Luxemburg was killed and her mutilated body was dumped in the Spree (see Greig 1998a: 246). Instead of “Quirky Humour”, Berlin’s waiters’ acerbic nastiness is introduced (see Greig 1998a: 233). Instead of “Zany Observation”, emotional experience is emphasised and memories are intertwined with ‘present’ events. Instead of “‘Human Interest’”, a wider definition of interest, one related to the attempt to understand people and places across

space-time, is upheld. Instead of "Architectural History", Flannery comments on his impressions of how, for instance, Karl-Marx-Allee's (formerly Stalinallee's) buildings make people feel small (see Greig 1998a: 251).

A crippled city such as Berlin with its "troubled history" (Greig 1998a: 250) where everything is *not* O.K. is not effaced in such marginal histories and locations. The 'second-class' places they evoke emerge all the more forcefully because Flannery takes 'you' there and 'makes you' walk on a 'collective corpse' instead of 'taking you' to a Second World War museum. Thus, an alternative, bodily sense of history emphasising memorialisation may unnervingly creep into the spectator and generate memory organically for her, instead of providing her with a museum-packaged experience. That might imbue spectators with an alternative memorialisation of Berlin's former East and of a European hub where the confluence of and dissonance between East and the West is illuminated in contrast to the homogeneousness that the narrative of globalisation tries to impose overall and over all in a post-Wall scenario.

Historicisation does not seem to be the path taken by *One Way Street*. Greig's "view concerning the possibility of representing history resembles in many ways Fredric Jameson's postmodern stance that history can never be represented objectively but only as a 'narrative of what happened' with a specific point of view" (Zenzinger 2005: 268). Zenzinger goes on to suggest that Jameson's aesthetic of cognitive mapping seems "an apt description of Greig's practice" (2005: 268). As he puts it, "Flannery's 'mapping' of Berlin, and of his life, is 'not exactly mimetic'" (2005: 268), as may hopefully be appreciated in my discussion of *One Way Street* throughout. The notion of cognitive mapping is influentially used by Jameson in *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) (see Walton 2012: 241). In Jameson's terms, cognitive mapping can be a way to address the "alarming disjunction […] between the body and its built environment" (1991:

44), which Flannery arguably does through his walks and through the strategy of leading us through them with him. As noted in the thesis's theoretical framework, Greig's work explores multiple ways of troubling mimetic representation. My suggestion is that he pivotally does so in *One Way Street* via Flannery's cognitive mapping of East Berlin.

To sum up, my claim is that the fact that an organic entity (the walker) evokes the organic or organic processes (sickness and death as well as sex) while doing something organic (walking) may foster an unusually heightened, embodied sense of memory, marginal histories and cognitive mapping of East Berlin. Potentially, these exercises might result in the spectator beginning to cognitively "map the great global multinational and decentered communicational network in which we find ourselves caught" (Jameson 1991: 44). What follows is a concrete example of the generation of a memory path based on through my own experience of the walks, in an attempt to illuminating in practice how *One Way Street* manages to articulate "a new sense of geography" (Zaroulia 2013a: 192). If nothing else, the precarious cognitive mapping exercise that I am about to describe certainly illuminated connections between the body and the environment, which might in turn exert pressure on that global network we are caught in.

2.3.3. Walking into Being: Creating Rosa Luxemburg's Trail

This last section before the conclusion focuses on the walk where Flannery tells 'us' about the brutality of Luxemburg's murder: "[t]he Kaiser's militia had beaten her and mutilated her and blown out her brains" (Greig 1998a: 246). As Clough claims, "[t]he affective turn throws thought back to the disavowals constitutive of Western industrial capitalist societies, bringing forth […] the traumatized remains of erased histories" (2007: 3), thus challenging dominant notions of "what matters as memorable" (Athanasiou and Butler 2013: 174). Amongst the senses of memory organically generated in my experience

of the walks, there was the emergence of a trail that had a name in *One Way Street* – Rosa Luxemburg's trail – but no existence. However, the affective experience of blindly following unwritten directions (I followed unindicated paths), of stubbornly walking the inexistent, made it 'real' in my experience, thus generating a sense of alternative memory through the organic experience of walking.

As I prepared the walks in the morning, I did not find any indication of this particular trail. I felt frustrated I could not find it, and having no traffic signs or lights or road signs (see Paroni de Castro 2013: 58) did not help initially. I refused to think too much about Luxemburg's trail in the morning: I was determined to find it and walk it, even if it was not on Google. How I would walk it – that is, by 'making' it – of course I did not know in advance. By 'making' it I do not just mean 'making it up', but 'making' it with other people I encountered and the emotions and the perceptions that were radicantly growing as I walked. Again, the experience became a practical example that things do not exist until you bring them into being, and an exercise where both maps and theatre were involved. Paradoxically, not knowing the itinerary of the walk became essential to the path-making process.

In Oranienburg Strasse, when I was trying to figure out where the trail was or began, I naïvely asked for help at a random hotel reception. The receptionist said he had no clue what I was talking about and yet he printed out a copy of a Berlin walking tour of *Scheunenviertel* from the National Geographic Traveler.[96] With map in hand and yet sort of lost – I knew where I was but not exactly what I was doing – I went back to the text, to the walk entitled "A Night walk through the City Centre. Taking in the Canal and the Rosa Luxemburg Trail". After telling 'us' how they killed Luxemburg and how her body was

[96] This 'tour of *Scheunenviertel*' map can be found at <http:///images.nationalgeographic.com/wpf/media-live/photos/000/039/cache/berlin-walkingtour-scheunenviertel_3912_600×450.jpg.>

found, Flannery urges: “[w]alk where you like”, “[y]ou’ve seen a canal, haven’t you. […] Black and still. Inviting. You don’t need me to tell you” (Greig 1998a: 247).

By ‘taking’ the spectator to the place where Luxemburg’s body was seemingly dumped, *One Way Street* offers an instantiation of the organic quality of bodies and places, once again invigorated by presenting these events while engaging with the material practice of walking. In that sense, the piece makes the spectator ‘embody’ Luxembourg’s murder. The potential sense of memory generated is alternative precisely because the story the walk tells you bleeds into your walking body and infuses it with a perceptible sense of the violence of Luxemburg’s murder and of the links between places and bodies. I would suggest that the experience makes you feel viscerally part of the world where that violent event took place. In so doing, *One Way Street* aesthethically renders a wounded feature of the real – this time, political violence – in a manner that provokes an alternatively registering of it.

To me, the canal where Luxemburg’s body was dumped, not far from Brecht’s Berliner Ensemble, the Bars of Oranienburg Strasse, the protitutes, the *Kunsthaus Tacheles* and the New Synagogue, appeared as the trail’s starting point. The starting point of the trail was generated through the material practice of walking and embedded into the immaterial practice of imagining the trail. It felt as if from then on, I could continue creating it. Partly the receptionists at the hotel, partly the National Geographic map, partly me – the trail had to be ‘made’ out of fragments, which did not prevent my attempts to link them or to make something out of them. I continued to explore the unexpected memory-lane experience, ‘creating’ what seemed ‘clearly’ the Rosa Luxemburg Trail: from the canal into which the body was thrown to the square and street that bear her name nowadays.

2.4. Conclusive Remarks: Radicant Play, Bodies and World

Bourriaud defines the radicant as "an *organism* that grows its roots and adds new ones as it advances" (2009: 22; emphasis added). Flannery is writing the walks as the walks advance, that is, while the walks are happening (theatre) he is still writing them (mapping the walks out), which makes *One Way Street* an organism that grows its roots as it advances – a radicant piece. In other words, while *One Way Street* is 'made' (the play is 'made' during the theatrical event by the walks being walked), it is also in the making (the map of the walks is being made as Flannery and the spectators walk). The play advances in crescendo, adding new walks as it walks: it is the incarnation of transformation. It also generates an "emotional cartography" (Paroni de Castro 2013: 58) because the way in which the walks are woven vitally registers Flannery's emotional personal experiences and perhaps also appeals emotionally to spectators.

In addition, the participants in this radicant walking experience are radicant organisms themselves, who grow and change as they advance. That interconnected level of organicity and transformation may be read as a profoundly resistant strategy, because it suggests that while globalisation seems a non-reversible process, as a process it is actually open to 'our' making. Although the play has a given shape on paper, that does not prevent the spectator from adding new roots to herself and the piece as both advance, thus interbecoming with this unbounded work and with the content it might bring to our bodies and lives. By engaging with the walks, I realised that the mélange of fiction and real places and events, speculation and numbing historical fact, do not leave the radicant walker in an uncertain position – rather, they entitle her to keep on walking as process of understanding. The memory that might keep historical events alive is impossible to erase if it lives on in people's feelings, stories, and projections; impossible to wipe out if it is walked, if it is part of people's cartographies of belonging, if it is part of the stories we tell each other, if 'we'

succeed in interbecoming and in understanding that memorialisation may help us come to grips with who we are and who we might like to become.

The city's organic quality blends in with the walker's body, who now might better understand and value "the significance of body-environment relations to meaning making" (Welton 2013: 164), where "the body [and its relations with the environment] is a source not just of individual but of cultural memory" (Marks 2000: viii) as well as politics through the ethical potential of cognitive mapping. The city as organism responds to 'our' shaping, which illuminates space as changeable through our engagement in radicant journeying. Returning to Nancy, the experience of being a spectator in *One Way Street* or to walk the play's walks on one's own highlights that the world, as also radicant, can be created because it is in the making. In *One Way Street*, unstable, open maps and writing become process-driven instruments whereby something might be made real.

The ten walks in former East Berlin in *One Way Street* finish with Flannery and Greta having dinner at the Berliner Fernsehturm in Alexanderplatz: 'the tower from which you see at a distance' provides, once again, an aerial perspective. The Berliner Fernsehturm sphere shape works as metaphor for the globe from which Greig tries to move away in order to look at it from above, while part of him is simultaneously inside it, this time at 207,53 metres above ground level. Having food at the end of the walks reinforces again the organic, transformative quality of *One Way Street* thematically and formally. The comment, "[w]e look out over the east, slowly turning into the west" (Greig 1998a: 259), captures a sense not only of '*Ostalgie*' – a pun on the German words *Nostalgie* (nostalgia) and *Ost* (East) that designates nostalgia towards life in East Germany, or Eastern German identity, before the fall of the Berlin Wall – but also of the increasing pressures of globalisation. Although, once again, the future is uncertain – it is unresolved whether Flannery will take responsibility for people and places and the child he and Greta are expecting – in another

gesturally utopian moment, the last words of *One Way Street* significantly are: "[u]p here Greta touches my face. We don't speak. Silently she draws me into her orbit" (Greig 1998a: 259).

IV. Vertical Plays

1. *The Architect*: Blowing Up Architectures of Power

On the eve of Tony Blair's election in 1997, which saw Labour regaining number 10 after eighteen years, a play with "a fierce politics at its heart" and "an anger with the Thatcher years" (Featherstone 2013: 218), *The Architect*, set in Edinburgh and directed by Howard, was first performed at the Traverse in 1996.[97] The play's title is quite informational, for the imprint of architecture is deep in Greig's dramaturgy. Shortly after his birth, Greig moved to Nigeria with his family, where his father was to work as a builder, which perhaps explains the fact that *The Architect*, the first of the "Vertical Plays" discussed in this thesis, is dedicated to Mum, Dad and Mike (Greig's brother). A number of Suspect Culture's titles also bear the imprint of architecture, including *And the Opera House Remained Unbuilt* and *Stations on the Border*. Furthermore, architectural references punctuate Greig's plays, including the combination of "*Nazi and Stalinist forms*" (Greig 2002a: 7) in *Europe*, "towers of Marxist purity" (Greig 1998a: 251) in *One Way Street* and Damascus's souk in *Damascus*.

For Greig, architecture reveals layers of human interaction across history; it unearths a sense of accretion, a sense that connections may bleed across time. Another idea about architecture that underpins *The Architect* is that it should create spaces for people to live in instead of championing elite architectural projects and the promotion of privatised spaces. In addition, and connected to the last point, there is a sense that architecture is never detached from power, not only the power exerted by those who decide where, when, how and what building is going to exist and with what purposes, but also the understanding that human beings have the potential to mould spaces. The play's storyline encompasses two decades, from the construction of the public council housing scheme Eden Court by the

[97] *The Architect* was made into a film of the same title in 2006, directed by Matt Tauber.

play's eponymous architect Leo Black in 1971 –'well-designed' yet currently crumbling down – to the play's fictional present time in the early 1990s. The central conflict is posited by the representative of Eden Court's tenants, Sheena Mackie, who wants Eden Court knocked down because of the poor conditions of the estate and its negative impact on its inhabitants.

Verticality, the concept that underlies my analysis of *The Architect* and *Cosmonaut*, is explored here from three angles. Firstly, verticality is related to the 'rigidity' of a group of actions that operate within normative parameters and undervalue horizontal experiences of place and relations. Secondly, verticality is addressed in relation to a kind of subject position that denotes individuality, apparent self-sufficiency and enclosure. Thirdly, verticality is also analysed in connection with the play's formal features and its treatment of space. The main argument is that the play undoes all these senses of verticality in order to arguably blow up constricted architectures of power, a process that culminates at the end of the play with the incident whereby Leo commits suicide inside one of Eden Court's flats – actually Sheena's – as it is detonated by the local authorities.

1.1. Architectures of the City

1.1.1. Eden Court across Two Decades: New Brutalism and Corruption

'New Brutalism', the style, for instance, of London's Southbank Centre, seems to be a fitting description of the architectural style of Eden Court. Alison and Peter Smithson "became famous for the approach known as 'New Brutalism', which would eventually become one of the most reviled architectural movements of the twentieth century" (Murphy 2012: 81). New Brutalism "was conceived as a form of timeless architecture, speaking of a 'functionalist tradition' that could stretch back to pre-history. Its execution eventually tended towards heavy monumentality and bespoke megastructures" (Murphy 2012: 82).

This seems to apply to *The Architect*, where the above-listed features can be discerned. Firstly, timelessness appears in the grandiosity that Leo confers to the figure of the architect and in his description of Eden Court as "[t]imeless" (Greig 2002a: 192). Secondly, Eden Court was meant to have a clear function, which was to house people fast and cheaply, and there are references to functionality in the play, such as Sheena's bitterly ironic "[e]veryone nicely boxed away" (Greig 2002a: 167). Thirdly, Leo's inspiration in Stonehenge exudes heavy monumentality: "each block represents a stone, a monolith" (Greig 2002a: 192). Finally, the dimension of Eden Court, a monumental circle of eight blocks, certainly indicates a megastructure. Although Leo sees it as a "connected" structure (Greig 2002a: 193; see also 164 and 192), his own disconnection from the people he designed it for and the faltering connection between Eden Court's residents and their environment belie his description.

Historically, the 1960s and 1970s saw corrupted state-funded housing, which is an additional context mirrored in *The Architect*'s Eden Court. Although the figure of the idealised architect can be discerned in Leo (see Greig 2002a: 95) and he says that for him, the building is perfectly sound (see Greig 2002a: 169), Paulina, his wife, unveils that at the time he used to say that "the job was rushed" and that "it was a scandal" (Greig 2002a: 166). According to Douglas Murphy, the (kind of) irresponsibility alluded to in the play "led to some of the most worthless buildings we've seen in living memory" (2012: 93), some of which have been demolished.[98] Sheena's putting through a petition to blow up Eden Court confirms the turn of the last quarter of the century towards "criticism of certain aspects of post-war mass housing" (Murphy 2012: 101).

[98] Examples include "the system-built Ronan Point tower block" in the UK, which partially collapsed in May 1968, and "the Pruitt-Igoe housing blocks" in the US, which were demolished in April 1972 (Murphy 2012: 101). One of the most recent demolitions in the UK was that of the Red Road Tower Blocks in Glasgow in 2015. The Pruitt-Igoe housing development was "a prize-winning version of Le Corbusier's 'machine for modern living'" (Harvey qtd. in Wallace 2006: 311), where "the ambition was to create rationally ordered space, from which would emerge a rationally ordered society" (Wallace 2006: 311), an idea, in principle ardently defended by Leo that, nevertheless, does not correspond to the reality of Eden Court.

1.1.2. Shifting Urban and Social Landscapes: Increasing Globalising Pressures

An additional context that is pertinent to *The Architect* are the changes to urban spaces resulting from globalising pressures, which the play points to in many ways. The play captures a shifting urban and social landscape, partly triggered by the fragmentation consequent upon historical events in the 1990s and the strong presence of globalising forces. In the 1980s, while the plays' tenants are living in Eden Court, architecture was marked by solutionist attitudes, grounded in "'pure' utility" (Murphy 2012: 87). Murphy sees in solutionism a "turning-away from the 'problem' of Europe towards the disingenuousness of American innocence" and a "total abdication of responsibility" (2012: 87), which *The Architect* crucially reflects, as I shall discuss. There is also in *The Architect* a subjacent critique of the obliteration of historical buildings, for the tower Leo is designing is going to be built "[w]here the fish market used to be" (Greig 2002a: 96). The 1990s saw the blooming of the High Tech movement led by architects such as Norman Foster – it was the style preferred by the world of commerce (see Murphy 2012: 89), with its "tightly detailed, slick and shiny architecture" (Murphy 2012: 89). This moment also coincides with the global construction of airports, shopping centres and museums. These changes have an impact at least on two fronts in the context of the play: in the treatment of figure of the architect as such and in the kinds of jobs characters have or do not have.

A global development in architecture is key in order to understand why Leo is caught up in between two conflictive notions of architecture in the 1990s: American speedier and cheaper working methods conducted by corporate architects and the shift to private contracts reached Britain, particularly the Docklands development in London (see Murphy 2012: 93).[99] This would mean a shift from the figure of the architect to the exterior

[99] 'Americanness' is also present in Billy's – Leo's son's lover and an Eden Court resident – imitating an American accent and his comment on and enactment of American movies, including his excitement at American cinema-related questions at a pub quiz session. In this pub quiz, Billy wins a crème de menthe

designer, "subordinate to the contractors themselves" (Murphy 2012: 93). Leo seems to voice resistance towards the architect's loss of authority in his insistence that he is not a builder but an architect (see Greig 2002a: 105), although he is actually a builder (see Whitebrook 1996: 251) who happened to design the façade of Eden Court (see Greig 2002a: 167).

The shifting industry and employability urban landscape within globalisation is captured by Sheena's observation that over the last twenty years available jobs and city spaces have radically changed: "the dockers and the sailors lost their jobs and you got yours…making museums and restaurants out of warehouses and whisky bonds" (Greig 2002a: 186). One of the aspects of globalisation most crucially highlighted in *The Architect* has to do precisely with urbanism, that is, the fact that "major urban centres have been reshaped under the rationalising force of technological modernisation, impelled on and on by the demands of global capital" (Rebellato 2002b: xiii-xiv). This is not only mirrored in Leo, but also in Joe, a lorry driver who transports security-related materials for building sites. Some, like Leo or Joe, were lucky enough to keep their jobs by adapting to the new tasks imposed by globalising forces, yet the overall atmosphere in the play is that of unemployment, which results particularly in the degradation of the situation of the inhabitants of Eden Court. Billy, for instance, is unemployed. In contrast, Martin, who could work with his father Leo, refuses to do so. Unemployment, associated in the play with Eden Court's working-class tenants, has an impact on levels of segregation, criminality rates, and degrees of security and safety. Paulina obsessively comments on violence in the street and warns Martin not to draw people's attention, which suggests the relative proximity of Eden Court to wealthier areas in the city.

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bottle, whose drinking is followed by his suicide. With an American accent, Billy's "[t]he fall'll probably kill ya" (Greig 2002a: 118) foretells his last fall.

1.1.3. 'First-World' Townships and their "Undesirables"[100]

Architecture is shown in the play to have a direct impact on circuits of visibility and access to power. While on the motorway, Dorothy asks Joe what lies in between here and there, to which Joe replies that there is road and small towns and fields (see Greig 2002a: 129). Dorothy's insistence on what is not usually seen and on the idea of the in-between reveals Greig's interest in seeking connection between apparently disconnected places. Martin, wearing a hardhat, mutters "I look like one of the Village People" (Greig 2002a: 99), perhaps a reference to working-class people more inclined to be living in Eden Court than in the suburbs, as the Black family does. Within this urban landscape, *The Architect* might suggest that the Black family's detached house, despite economic and social disparity, is not far at all from the inhabitants of Eden Court.

The fact that the wealthy suburbs where the Blacks' house is located and the deprived area where Eden Court's residents live are seemingly geographically close but economically and socially remote is reminiscent, albeit on a different scale, of 'third-world' townships. In his introduction to his adaptation of Sophocles' *Oedipus*, *Oedipus the Visionary* – set in South Africa – Greig wonders about a possible correlation between townships in South Africa and in the 'first world':

> Next to the town of Furiesburg is the township of Mashaeng; next to Johannesburg is Soweto. The people of the township, invariably black, work in the low paid menial, agricultural and domestic jobs that sustain the prosperity of the nearby 'white' town. This grotesque geography is a legacy of apartheid. And yet, while it is shocking to see this inequality so close up, it seems important to ask whether prosperous Edinburgh, or Stirling or Milngavie have their townships too? (2005: 4; see also Greig 2008a: 215-16)

Attempting an answer to his question, Greig points out that the townships in Edinburgh, for instance, should not be seen as "a single geographical location but […] an amalgamation of many different places and people" (Greig 2005: 4). In other words, Greig has in mind a place – he mentions "housing estates" as an example – where "the omnipresence of long-

[100] "Undesirables" is a notion put forward by Greig (see 2011f: 5) and is also used in *Europe*, as noted.

term unemployment keeps the wages of unskilled workers down" (2005: 4-5). Further, there are signs in the play that suggest that Eden Court is part of a composite township formed by different devastated places in the world at large: "[t]his site's in the middle of no-man's-land. Look at it. Devastation. [O]fficially third world status" (Greig 2002a: 97). Leo's description of Eden Court does not sit far apart from Billy's – "a dangerous state" (Greig 2002a: 158), reminiscent of "Beirut you know. War zone" (Greig 2002a: 158). Thus Greig highlights the existence of extremely poor areas within developed cities in the 'first world', which are not as visible as those in the 'third world': "Perhaps, if our township existed as blatantly as it does in South Africa we would find it intolerable. But, like so much else in Scotland, the architecture of power is rather elegantly executed and so the ugly realities are kept out of sight" (2005: 5).[101] Thus while "[i]n South Africa the connections [are] visible" (Greig 2008a: 216), in Greig's *The Architect*, the connections *are made* visible, not by architectures but by the characters whose relationships transcend their imposed architectures.

To start with, *The Architect* contests the elegantly executed architecture of power or invisibility and disconnection through the lovers Martin and Billy's experiences. Despite the proximity of the Blacks' house to Eden Court and the fact that Martin was born around the same time the estate was designed by his father, Martin has not been to Eden Court. However, though from ground level in the suburbs the view of Eden Court is out of sight, when Martin and Billy are on roofs – they see Eden Court and talk about it. That is, *The Architect* restores the visibility of 'first-world' townships through Martin and Billy's experiences, and this is a key way in which the aerial perspective becomes resistant to elegantly executed architectures of power. Billy tells Martin: "[y]ou can see my house from

[101] Greig tells Holdsworth: "I'd been in South Africa and I came back and talked about seeing townships next to *dorps*, little bourgeois rural white towns with townships right next to them. I hadn't realized that Johannesburg's pairing with Soweto is repeated right through the Transvaal with all of these towns having their own shanty towns attached. And Jo [playwright Jo Clifford] said, 'well of course Edinburgh has that, only we don't know where it is'" (2013b: 261).

here" (Greig 2002a: 150). Although as Rebellato has put it, "height as a motif is consistently associated with a failure to engage on a human level" (2002a: 10), here height reveals itself as providing the opportunity for an increasing engagement. Indeed, although at this point Martin answers with an indifferent, insulting and distancing "[w]hat makes you think I care where you live?" (Greig 2002a: 150), *The Architect* also highlights, through Martin himself, a critique of indifference towards inequality. This idea appears again in the play when Martin finally physically goes to Eden Court and Billy resonantly says "I wanted you to *see*" (Greig 2002a: 175; emphasis added). Martin's visit raises the visibility of Eden Court's location in relation to his house in the suburbs and generates a connection between the two 'elegantly' separated areas. Just as the relationship between Martin and Billy destabilises the economic and social gap between them, their experience of seeing Eden Court together destabilises the invisibility and separation instituted by architectures of power.

Indeed, the play is not just concerned with the invisibility and disconnection prompted by that architecture of power, but also with the individuals concealed by it – the "undesirables" (Greig 2011f: 5), embodied in the play by Billy, Joe and Sheena, maybe members of the same family, who evoke a wider conglomerate of 'undesirables' and the places they are entitled to frequent across the globe.[102] As Bauman puts it, "[e]ach model of spatial order divides humans into 'desirables' and 'undesirables', under the code names of 'legitimate' (allowed) and 'illegitimate' (not allowed)" (2010: 169). The lives of the 'undesirables' (Sheena, Billy and Joe) crisscross with the lives of the 'desirables' (Leo, Martin and Dorothy respectively), thus highlighting the presence of those who usually remain silent, out of place and unable to shape their environment. Ultimately, through the

[102] According to Rebellato, the connections between Billy, Joe and Sheena "are not finalised by the text" (2006: 110), perhaps as a prompt to the spectator to co-work with the piece by thinking through those relations.

will of the ‘undesirables’ to do things and their relationships and exchanges, the play destabilises the categories of the ‘undesirables’ and the ‘desirables’. For instance, powerless Sheena defies her position by heading the petition. Besides, through their relations and exchanges with Joe and Billy respectively, the architect’s daughter and son (Dorothy and Martin) raise the visibility of the ‘undesirables’ and the township where they live. In other words, the play uses the horizontality of relationships – Martin and Billy’s hanging out, Billy and Dorothy’s driving together – to contest verticality. Equally, the ‘desirables’ are portrayed as disempowered, which in a sense defies a normative architecture of desirability: Martin and Dorothy as alienated, Leo as failed and Paulina as sick.

1.2. Architectures of the Self

1.2.1. Transgressing Individual Failure, Responsibility and Pathology

Although at the beginning of *The Architect*, Leo seems quite restrictive in his opinions and views and unwelcoming to Sheena (see Greig 2002a: 103-4), it gradually becomes apparent that architects are “no more than servants of their clients” (Greig 2011f: 4) and that he is as caught up as Sheena is in the dynamics of architectures of power. Leo recognises soon enough in the play that “they need work. Some of these blocks haven’t been maintained for years” (Greig 2002a: 105). This is interspersed with discredit towards Sheena on the grounds that her “feelings are misdirected” (Greig 2002a:107) and that she is carried away by “depth of emotion” (Greig 2002a: 108), which leads Leo to dismiss her demands as “*[i]ndividual* problems” (Greig 2002a: 108; emphasis added). This argument with Sheena, who embodies an ecstatic self, a self that is ‘out of itself’ and defies verticality, deeply disturbs the architect’s vertical self.

In principle, Leo can be related to the notion of a vertical subject “steadily balanced on its internal axis and standing typically on his feet” (Cavarero 2011a: 1), who “most of

all, does not need the others to incline toward or to lean over him" (Cavarero 2011a: 1). Adriana Cavarero argues for the need "to re-orient the scene from its vertical axis to a horizontal one" (2011b: 195). This is what leads Cavarero to her articulation of an inclined subject, a self "located in a slightly different position, neither vertical nor horizontal, yet given over, exposed, offered, *inclined* to the other" (Cavarero 2011b: 195; emphasis original). From this perspective, Sheena, Joe, Billy and tentatively Dorothy may be described generally as *inclined* subjects, while Leo, Paulina and Martin tend more towards being vertical subjects. For instance, Sheena offers a moment of horizontality during her face-to-face encounter with Leo when she says, "[i]t's…just *seeing you*. Face to face, I mean. It's funny" (Greig 2002a: 109; emphasis added). At the same time, it becomes gradually apparent that Leo can experience some measure of ethical responsiveness – Paulina tells him, "[y]ou usually chat to me when you feel guilty about something" (Greig 2002a: 121).

Yet, the excessive importance Leo confers to his remaining enclosed in his worn-out ideals and self-complacency conditions the fact that two of the central notions that can be related to Leo's character struggle to remain firmly within the boundaries of his individuality: failure and responsibility. There seems to be no doubt that the play explores the theme of failure. Eden Court fails to provide people with optimal life conditions. *The Architect*'s characters, who are part of an interconnected failed architecture whether they live in Eden Court or not, fail in many ways. It is not by accident that the quote that opens *The Architect* in the individual publication of the play is Beckett's oft-quoted "No Matter. Try Again. / fail Again. Fail Better" (Greig 1996b: n.p.).

Being a builder yet refusing to disentangle himself from the grandiose 'architect' label, Leo is a failed character. Paulina, who wants a divorce, states that "[h]e looks so…failed" (Greig 2002a: 172). Leo's work does not match his own idealised descriptions.

That is perhaps why his wife does not admire him anymore and his son Martin is extremely critical of his father's occupation. He puts forward a number of prolepses of his father's death – twice he repeats, "[d]ie if you want to" (Greig 2002a: 100) and, in the same tone, he says many times, "[b]oom" (Greig 2002a: 109), thus adding to the noisy background sound of explosives at the beginning of each act and to the final explosion, which circularly connects with the beginning of the play. Leo is not just a failed architect; he epitomises many failures: the failure of housing projects, of the left, of marital relationship, of family and of patriarchy.[103]

The failure of characters to form or sustain fulfilling relationships is not just to be found in Leo. Paulina fails to cope with everything that surrounds her and to be perhaps less selfish towards Leo (see Greig 2002a: 172). Martin fails to show care for Billy and therefore fails to prevent his fatal end, after which he finally realises that 'belonging' might have become possible with Billy's love – unlike Adele and Katia, this pair fail to start a journey towards elsewhere together. Dorothy fails to tell his father about Sheena's letters, albeit out of protective love.[104] Sheena fails to respond positively to Leo's radically changed attitude when he most needs it – when he is actually trying to incline himself towards Sheena just before deciding he is going to commit suicide.[105]

Verticality is further interrogated through the play's *connected* – i.e. inclined towards horizontality – exploration of failure. That is, as the play progresses, individual failings are assembled to be regarded as unevenly distributed yet common failings that bleed across characters and their environment. They fail separately because they inhabit their suffering individually – although they struggle to communicate it. However, their

[103] There are also more banal failings, such as his failing repeatedly to light a cigarette (see Greig 2002a: 100).
[104] Leo's infatuation with his daughter is reminiscent of Ibsen's Solner and Kaja in *The Master Builder* (1892). Other tropes that echo Ibsen's play are the ideas of an outsider arriving at the house, and of a tormented architect who dies. For further comment on this connection, see Wallace (2006: 310).
[105] Inclination towards others, when unheard (Leo) or perhaps excessive (Billy), can have terrible consequences (suicide in both cases).

failings are gradually shown to be connected. In this way, *The Architect* unearths the connection between different people when it comes to failure, negates mere individual causes for their failings and ultimately reveals the impossibility – and undesirability – of uncontested verticality.

The focus of the play's concern with responsibility is initially on Leo. Referring to people, he says, "[t]hey have no…power to shape, no responsibility" (Greig 2002a: 95), and referring to architects, "[h]ere you have responsibility" (Greig 2002a: 95; see also Greig 2011f). This tone of superiority is effectively established from the beginning of the play. Architecture is sold as a grand occupation by Leo to his son: as something you are responsible for, that has effects, that is utilitarian, something that allows you to project your dreams in realisable structures, something "solid" (Greig 2002a: 96). Martin, however, is extremely critical of his father's job. With a model on the table, and in a moment that is paradigmatic of the aerial perspective, he points out that it has lumps and that it is flat, thus offering a staggering and poignant image of the fragility of structures and people within them. Martin asks, "[w]ho builds the models?" (Greig 2002a: 101), to which Leo retorts, "[n]ever mind the model" (Greig 2002a: 101), thus unburdening their creators from responsibility.

In addition, Leo makes some radically irresponsible comments about the inhabitants of Eden Court: "[t]hey fill a place with pigs and then complain it's turned into a pigsty" (Greig 2002a: 122) and "[i]t's not my fault the council turned it into a ghetto. I didn't put the people in it" (Greig 2002a: 165). Martin displays the same behaviour when he tells Billy: "[t]hat's natural, you're poor" (Greig 2002a: 160). Martin also behaves irresponsibly towards becoming an adult and towards Billy's fragility. On his part, Joe says to Dorothy: "I get runaways. Hitching. You feel responsible" (Greig 2002a: 128). Ultimately, the

friction around the notion of responsibility questions its exclusiveness or verticality within the limits of the figure of Leo and by extension within others.

Acting responsibly is linked to ethical behaviour in Sheena's remark to Leo, "[y]ou've got a chance to make things right" (Greig 2002a: 108). Later in the play, she emphasises that Leo should support the petition "because it would be a good thing" (Greig 2002a: 168). Indeed, in this particular situation, when Leo and Sheena are face-to-face, their conversation raises various ethical questions around the notion of collective responsibility. The discourse on effects at the beginning of the play shifts from a focus on the vertical figure of the architect to the horizontal view of shared responsibility, that is, everyone's responsibility for the shaping of space – Greig claims it might be necessary to "disperse the authorship of buildings amongst many groups of people" (2011f: 5). Sheena puts it concisely: "[t]his is about housing. It's about people having an effect" (Greig 2002a: 188), and she also highlights people's responsibility for perhaps taking architecture for granted in an uncritical way: "[y]ou always feel as though [Eden Court] just happened" (Greig 2002a: 109). *The Architect* can be regarded as a process in which the responsibility of the architect, of architecture, of buildings dissolves into the environment and into people's shared responsibility for the construction and continuous shaping of space, which can help balance the uneven architectures of power promoted by globalisation. Responsibility is revealed as a category that trespasses the verticality of belonging to a unique subject and appears, instead, as a horizontal category.

Lastly, in connection to pathology, Paulina engages in repeated expressions of disgust for food, the environment and her husband's manners, to name but a few of her concerns. She is critical of food and environmental pollution and is burdened by and/or concerned about plants (see Greig 2002a: 109), the sun (see Greig 2002a: 110), going to the theatre (see Greig 2002a: 117), Leo's eating with his mouth open (see Greig 2002a: 120),

Leo's drinking wine (see Greig 2002a: 121-22), Leo's belching (see Greig 2002a: 122), diseased chickens (see Greig 2002a: 125), fish brains in beer (see Greig 2002a: 155) – the list is not exhaustive. Rather than being inbuilt preoccupations, these are symptoms that seem to occur as a response to the world she inhabits. Although she remains pathological within and largely isolated as an individual, the moments when she manages to clearly express herself and when she vomits (Act Two, Scene Nineteen) seem to suggest a transgression of individual pathology, so that by the end of the day she appears to be (horizontally) connected to what surrounds her, no matter how much she has tried to resist it.

To sum up, the notions of failure, responsibility and pathology are initially presented as individual. As the play progresses, however, they are revealed to be communal through the emphasis on the interconnections between characters' acts and feelings. The ethics of failure, responsibility and pathology consists in transgressing the individual (vertical) ascription of those concepts in order to show their interconnectedness with the world (via inclination and towards (partial) horizontality).

1.2.2. Banging on Skin's Door: Escape, Sickness, Damage, Sex and the Search for Signals

As Rebellato explains, "[t]he withdrawal of governmental commitment to maintaining the institutions of civil society and the deification of the individual consumer has greatly attenuated the bonds holding people together in a society" (2002a: 12). *The Architect* recursively explores a search for bonds, as much as it registers an inventory of reactions against their absence or inadequacy by putting forward images of ecstatic selves. Basically, characters in *The Architect* convey the need to elude the individual vertical self

promoted by globalisation through the themes of escape, sickness, damage, sex and search for signals, which involve out-of-body, ecstatic experiences.

Martin desperately wants to escape; he feels lost, yet he does not know where he wants to live either: “Canada. I don’t know. Albania maybe. Maybe Fife” (Greig 2002a: 159). Alienated from family life and society itself, he decides to leave for Fife, not before discovering the dead body of his lover Billy, who has jumped from a roof. Martin’s desire to leave is expressed recursively – “[l]et’s just run” (Greig 2002a: 134), “[e]scape” (Greig 2002a: 159), “I’m just going to set off and walk” (Greig 2002a: 161), “I’m fucking off. On my own. No people. No talk. No things” (Greig 2002a: 159) – which undermines his generally vertical sense of self, as revealed through his clinical lack of emotional attachment to Billy. Dorothy’s nocturnal hitching rides with lorry drivers are her prominent way to escape. Dorothy tells Joe that she wants to go “[a]s far away as possible” (Greig 2002a: 119). As a matter of fact, in *The Architect* all characters plan to move or are on the move. Martin and Billy plan to move out of the city and Joe and Dorothy travel in a truck. Paulina wants to move out of her marriage and wants Leo to move out of the house. Sheena and the tenants want to move out of Eden Court. All these drives to escape defy a vertical logic (even visually) and a vertical sense of self and suggest the need for more horizontality, the hope that in the horizontality of escaping and leaving one might perhaps encounter more horizontal ways of being.

Sickness might be another way to manifest a desire to transgress a vertical sense of self. Dorothy suffers from “psychosomatic stomach trouble as a result of the upset going on in her home” (Reinelt 2011: 207), which provokes the nausea the spectator witnesses the first time she appears, following her mum’s unstoppable muttering. Martin cruelly reminds her that it is pointless for her to provoke her own nausea: “[i]t doesn’t make any difference when you do that. You always do that” (Greig 2002a: 114). She suffers from a second wave

of nausea when she is with Joe. These attempts to break out through nausea may be read as conveying her need to radically incline herself towards Others, her longing for connection.

Damage or its figuration is a further strategy whereby the play denotes this particular architecture of a self in desperate need to connect with others and the world. Given that *Blasted* had premiered at the Royal Court one year earlier and that Ravenhill's *Shopping and Fucking* was to open at the same venue a few months later, it might be relevant to indicate some of the in-yer-face moments built into *The Architect* apart from Martin's damaging behaviour towards Billy. For instance, Dorothy, whose own father is an architect, wants to smash her skull against the walls of houses (a vertical structure): "[s]mack it and fill the bricks cut me. Feel my skull smack" (Greig 2002a: 118). Joe's imagined crash against a school bus is not short on violent content either: "I could just yank the steering wheel and twist off the road. Plough into a bus full of schoolchildren and not stop" (Greig 2002a: 118). Joe's story contains another story of self-damage where a lorry driver crashes into the only tree in the Sahara Desert (see Greig 2002a: 119). While Dorothy might want to break apart the verticality of the individual self, Joe seems to view self-damage as shared damage, as common trauma: "[p]eople said it was insanity or coincidence or fate but I can understand it. In the middle of the desert you see a tree, one tree and…" (Greig 2002a: 119). As stated by Adorno in *Minima Moralia* and further explored by Greig in, for instance, *The American Pilot*, "[i]t is the sufferings of men that should be shared" (2005: 26), an observation that cuts across the idea of suffering as something experienced vertically, individually.

If vertical sex could be defined as being uniquely driven by fast satisfaction and lack of emotional contact, some characters in the play transgress this kind of experience. While sex between Martin and Billy is marked by lust and swift satisfaction, Dorothy and Joe's prospective sex is tinged with melancholy and sadness. While sex is initially important to

Joe, Dorothy seems driven by the need for attention. After Joe hears Dorothy's breathing while she sleeps, he confesses that he wanted to touch her, but at the same time felt sad for her, for himself, for them and for everybody (see Greig 2002a: 131). Again a prospective individual satisfaction and individual sadness collapse into a sense of horizontal connection across all sadness in the world.

A further manner whereby characters disclose their desire to incline themselves towards others is through their search for signals. Dorothy is unafraid enough to tell a stranger (Joe) about her capacity to get signals: "I get signals. Messages. Warnings. I'm not mental" (Greig 2002a: 140). This is complemented by Joe's recognition that he gets and sends dolphin signals (see Greig 2002a: 141). In relation to Joe's dolphin-calling to Dorothy, Rebellato suggests that "[t]he play dares us to imagine that such an act is possible, a kind of alternative globalisation, a utopian reduction of the physical spaces between people in an act of hopeless beauty" (2002b: xx). The next scene, however, reveals that characters can remain vertical even when they try to search for signals. Horizontality only works when there is a sentient someone at the other end. A stage direction announces that Billy is "*searching for a signal*" (Greig 2002a: 141). Not getting the signals that Martin can perhaps feel but is stopping himself from sending back to Billy is what seems to push him into jumping off the roof. While Dorothy and Joe's sending and receiving of signals denotes hope just before the ending of the play, Billy's signals are truncated by Martin's inability to show love. The constant radio background in scenes where they both appear – also relevant to Dorothy and Joe's relation, for they listen to music together – works as counterpoint to a more mystical sense of signals. When characters sending signals are unable to reach others, this results in death (Leo and Billy), while those who are able to send and capture signals remain alive and offer a tentative possibility for a future (Dorothy and Joe).

1.3. *The Architect*'s Architecture

1.3.1. Fragmented Form and Treatment of Space: Towards Connection

The Architect's formal fragmentation and its treatment of space also contest verticality and work towards the blowing up of enclosed architectures of power. As regards formal fragmentation, as the play progresses, Paulina's complaints become more truncated – "[f]umes and – […] [d]irt and – […] [a]shes and –" (Greig 2002a: 137) – which conveys not only horizontality (quite literally, in the shape of the dash itself) but also a traumatic sense of interruption. Truncated sentences contribute to the play's inability to remain a solid, a sound structure. This mirrors the decaying state of Eden Court as well as Leo's progressive deterioration, which increase as the detonation approaches. That indicates a connection between form and content: the play's form gradually becomes darker and more traumatised as the main character deteriorates and the detonation of the building approaches.

Fragmentation also affects stage directions. In some cases, they become full scenes offering snapshots of characters' lives. Again, form seems to mirror content, whereby a brief stage direction conveys a fragmented life experience – these scenes coincide with explosion, suicide, and impassionate oral sex. Besides, stage directions are interlocked with the rest of the scenes in a particular manner. For instance, Act Two, Scene Five is a stage direction that reads: "*Darkness. The sound of a motorway. Traffic passing. Dorothy is hitching. Lights pass her but no one stops*" (Greig 2002a: 173). Stage directions like this one gradually disclose Martin and Dorothy's 'land/escapes' (both 'landscapes' and 'escapes' at the same time) – toilets and roofs in the case of Martin, and trucks and motorway service stations in the case of Dorothy. Then Scene Nine amplifies our knowledge of Dorothy's life, abandoning full stage directions, which means that an initial fragmented introduction leads on to a gradual presentation of her crumbling life. "At the

play's conclusion", as Wallace puts it, "the family is seen […] engaged in fragmented activities" (2006: 292), which resonates with the detonation shattering Eden Court into fragments.

There is a sense that fragmentation in *The Architect* paradoxically highlights a "lust for connection" (Greig 2016a: 93), despite the fact that the concept may appear fraught. In any case, attempts at connection generally defy verticality. A formal feature that suggests fraught connection in *The Architect* is the technique the thesis calls 'stitching up'. In Scene Sixteen, Dorothy and Joe talk about signals and dolphin calls (see Greig 2002a: 141) and in Scene Seventeen Billy is tuning a small radio (see Greig 2002a: 141) – that is, one scene bleeds into the next through the connecting element of signals. The characteristic moment of stitching up the end of one scene with the beginning of the next occurs through an instantly recognisable element just mentioned in the former.[106] There are also other attempts at connection expressed through form, such as the last scene of Act One, where different exchanges between characters – Dorothy and Joe on the one hand and Paulina and Leo and Martin and Billy on the other – are intermingled to produce a multilocational interweaving of narratives.

As regards its treatment of space, *The Architect* points to disparate locations *across* the globe – the preposition clearly connotes horizontality. Martin mentions different jobs he could take up in work places across different locations: a cook in France (see Greig 2002a: 112), "setting up a sandwich bar […] in the West End" (Greig 2002a: 113), a road digger in Canada (see Greig 2002a: 153) and a furniture apprentice (see Greig 2002a: 161). In addition, the country is referred to by Martin and Leo, Joe refers to the Sahara Desert (see Greig 2002a: 119), Billy compares Eden Court to Beirut (see Greig 2002a: 158) and Leo

[106] This early formal strategy, which the thesis calls 'stitching up', becomes paradigmatic in *San Diego*. The element that allows the connection between two scenes is usually a contrasting spatial viewpoint such as in *Cosmonaut*, or an element used in disparate locations but made strangely 'the same' such as in *San Diego*, among other.

links it to Saudi Arabia (see Greig 2002a: 122). The device of referring to scattered places across the globe is central to *The Architect* and to Greig's theatre at large. The dispersion of Martin's self, among others, onto these disparate locations destabilises his initial vertical sense of self and space.

The play also foregrounds fast movement between different places, again contesting verticality. The places evoked are usually domestic, like the Blacks' house and Eden Court, or non-places such as motorways, motorway service stations, toilets and means of transport like trucks. However, Greig's works appropriates and rereads Augé's notion, since in *The Architect* emotion can be experienced in non-places. For instance, Martin and Billy 'connect' in toilets, and Dorothy and Joe on motorways. A closer examination reveals that edges and other marginal spaces significantly crop up and challenge the concept of the non-place, such as the outer walls of houses, roofs, balconies or the interior of a stopped truck. For instance, roofs become a place where Martin and Billy feel. Characters are sometimes literally on the edge of buildings, on the brink of breaking themselves by jumping off vertical structures – Sheena's son on the balcony he jumps from, Billy on a roof and Leo in Sheena's flat. If non-places may be seen as places where a vertical sense of identity is practiced given that they are characterised by a lack of emotional attachment, anonymity and transience, *The Architect* defies this by enacting emotions or rehearsing characters' connection in non-places. These myriad senses of place – the extremity of some notwithstanding – defy a vertical logic and, once again, suggest the need for more horizontal ways of being.

Space is also central in terms of *The Architect*'s above-below spatial logic. It is from a high perspective that Eden Court can be best seen and it is also from a high point that both Billy and Leo commit suicide. This stands in sharp contrast with the down-to-earth problems the tenants have and the place where Billy and Leo's bodies fall – the ground.

While the above-below spatial logic is clearly present in *The Architect*, as will be seen, the next play under discussion in this thesis, *Cosmonaut*, is quintessentially rooted in this spatial logic.

An above-below situation occurs when Martin plays with the model while Leo and Sheena are talking. Martin might be mimicking a power figure that manipulates people who depend on some entity from above. Sheena makes a comment that suggests the opposite perspective: "[w]e want [the Eden Court flats] knocked down" (Greig 2002a: 106). Another intriguing case of this spatial dialectic is Paulina's expressions of illness and pollution – "Illnesses are up. Cancers are up. Sicknesses are up" (Greig 2002a: 110) – while she is looking down on Dorothy, who receives the sun's heat and picks up radio signals (both up). To complicate this further, a stage direction announces that "*[a]n aeroplane passes loudly overhead*" (Greig 2002a: 110). A correlation between the sky and Dorothy's skin unveils this spatial tension once more: "[y]ou should cover up before whatever's going to fall from the sky and gets on to your skin" (Greig 2002a: 110). Another example goes from fruit below to dirty rain falling down on it (see Greig 2002a: 126). When Martin and Dorothy are at the morgue, standing (above) next to Billy's dead body (below), Martin says: "[t]he interesting thing is. Looking at him. Now. Me beside him. You here watching. I feel. Quite happy in a way. I feel powerful. It's almost erotic" (Greig 2002a: 195).

1.3.2. Fraught Spatial Dialectics: Tearing the Fabric of Rational Reality

As is virtually the case with all structures in Greig's work, *The Architect*'s spatial dialectics are simultaneously characterised by breakings and aim at breaking something. While Martin plays with the models (above), he comments on the model's fragility (below). When he was a child, Martin (above) used to play with the models where he "staged riots, assassinations" with toys (below) (Greig 2002a: 101). He also highlights the vulnerability

of the buildings when he describes the models as unprotected containers of lives: "[t]hey are so delicate. So perfect. They look solid but you only have to nudge them and something breaks" (Greig 2002a: 101).

While looking at the models, Martin, entering Sheena and Leo's conversation abruptly in a heightened non-naturalistic way, suggests the buildings could be bombed (see Greig 2002a: 107) – "[f]rom the sky. Planes" (Greig 2002a: 107) – thus offering another fractured above-below dialectical structure and an imagined instance of aerial war. Billy's mentioning of an "[a]ir-gun" (Greig 2002a: 174) and Martin saying "I just wanted to sit down" (Greig 2002a: 174) are further instances of this fluctuating above-below logic.

One more moment, this time near Billy's suicide, foregrounds a juxtaposition of spaces below and above. Martin and Billy are on a rooftop. Billy is sitting (above) with his legs dangling into space (below) and the sound of the city floats up from below (below-above) (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3: Billy and Martin hanging out on a rooftop in *The Architect* (Teatre Lliure, dir. Julio Manrique, 2011). © Ros Ribas, Teatre Lliure. Reproduced by permission.

Another above-below moment involving Billy is related to signals – "*[h]e gains the signal again by balancing on the edge of the roof. Precariously*" (Greig 2002a: 141). A further situation that foregrounds this formal spatial design takes place when Paulina and Sheena are discussing living on the ground, in a detached house, or up in a flat where you can 'enjoy' views. Paulina ambivalently says: "[o]n the tenth you can watch it all happening down below. Rise above it all. Do you watch?" (Greig 2002a: 157) – this particular elevation is connected to being poor yet she aestheticises it. Another moment when a dialectical spatial structure is highlighted occurs when Leo, Sheena, Paulina and Dorothy are looking down on the model and discussing it. When Leo proudly points to the "[a]erial walkways linking each tower, platforms linking each balcony", Sheena's ironic observation again brings to mind the above-below friction: "[i]t looks good. From this angle. From above" (Greig 2002a: 164). Knowing that communal considerations matter little to the architect, Dorothy's remark sounds at best ironic: "[i]t's about space. Architecture's about shaping space. If you look at it from here you can see how he's moulding a communal space" (Greig 2002a: 164). Continuing with the dark undertones interlaced with the above-below logic, Sheena asks "[w]ere the judges on a helicopter when they gave you the award?" (Greig 2002a: 164).

Overall, through this fraught spatial dialectics the play seems to be disturbing given spatially encoded power relations in varied ways in order to dissolve the power of the architect into a truly communal moulding of space yet to come. The friction generated by the dialectical structures discussed above might disrupt a given vertical spatial sensibility, thus perhaps tearing the fabric of rational reality or the current understanding of spatial relations. The production of tension and potential rupture in the above-below dialectics, the use of form and the treatment of space contribute to the tearing of verticality and, by extension, of rigid architectures of power. In the wake of the multiple warning signals

embedded in the play, spatial dialectics are finally blown up at the end when Leo's and the building's verticality are shattered by the final detonation.

1.4. Conclusive Remarks: Explosion, Applause and "Beyond the Known"

This, devoted to the first of the "Vertical Plays", has argued that *The Architect*'s architectures of the urban landscape, character construction and formal composition contribute to the blowing up of normative architectures of power – the power that dictates how space should be distributed, how the subject must perceive, live in and understand space. It has been suggested that architectures of the city, the self and the play itself defy verticality and connote a sense of inclination and horizontality – in the first case by rendering the vertically invisible visible; in the second, by offering myriad images of ecstatic selves; and in the third, by defying vertical forms both in the formal composition of the play, in its use of space and more specifically through its fractured above-below logic. This three-fold undoing of established architectures of power culminates with a potent metaphor at the end of the play, the demolition of Eden Court following an explosion that undoes verticality in the three senses explored here: in terms of the city, because it blows up a vertical structure; in terms of the vertical subject, because Leo dies; and as regards the play's formal composition, because the tight vertical pattern the play has kept so far metaphorically 'explodes' as well.

The play finishes with "*[t]he sound of a crowd cheering and clapping*" (Greig 2002a: 201) – a metatheatrical manoeuvre since the spectator is also about to applaud. Might this suggest a connection between the crowd watching the demolition and the audience watching the play, and thus be an early instance of Greig's keen interest in reflecting (on) spectatorship on stage? Might the proximity between the fictional crowd and the audience, together with the strong aurality and visuality of the moment, make it

pointedly difficult or perhaps uncomfortable for the audience to applaud? Reviewers like Charles Spencer, for instance, felt that the play was "uncomfortably hard to forget" (1996: 1099). Will spectators come out of the show eager to "become the designers of their own environment" (Greig 2011f: 5) and more critical of the elegantly executed architectures of power?

According to Rebellato, "from around *One Way Street* onwards […] [Greig] begins to explore a structure of feeling beyond the known" (2002a: 19), one that pushes towards utopia by working with a sense of the spiritual. Joe and Dorothy's dolphin-signal communication, their enacting an instant of hope towards the end of the play, stage directions such as "*[Joe] reaches out to touch [Dorothy] and then withdraws his hand*" (Greig 2002a: 176) and Martin's references to orbits are early examples of that exploration. Echoing references to orbits in *One Way Street* and offering a fitting introduction to the next play under discussion, Martin beautifully and ironically asks Leo whether he can build something so high that if somebody fell off it would prevent that person from hitting the ground (see Greig 2002a: 98), so that, unlike the architect, when falling, she would fall into orbit instead (see Greig 2002a: 98).

2. *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union*: "All this Fucking Beautiful Stuff"[107]

There must be something captivating about *The Cosmonaut's Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (hereafter *Cosmonaut*) for Sierz, for instance, decides to open his introduction to 1990s drama with a quote from this play (see Sierz 2012a: 1), and Raab and Keller have recently dubbed it respectively "Greig's best play so far" (2015: 238) and "a marvel" (2016: 112). *Cosmonaut* premiered at the Ustinov

[107] "All this fucking beautiful stuff" (Greig 2002a: 295) is a quote from *Cosmonaut* by Nastasja, a pole dancer.

Studio, Bath, in April 1999, and was the first play by Greig Featherstone directed. *Cosmonaut* is the first play in the trilogy formed by *Cosmonaut*, *Pyrenees* and *Volvo*.[108] The context for the play includes millennial paranoia, which was allegedly going to cause the shutdown of the system, and Blair's 'Cool Britannia', a marketing tool that rebranded the swinging sixties and boosted Britain's popularity internationally. In fact, Blair's rule saw the continuing effects of Thatcher's inherited neoliberal policies on a generation that had witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the communist bloc, the first Gulf war and the Balkan Wars, among other events. Although the race for space between the United States and the USSR had faded away in comparison to previous decades, it was still fresh in people's imageries. It was not yet customary to have a mobile phone and/or a home internet connection, but the 1990s saw great advances in computing science and electronics and the beginning of the mass surveillance and communications age.

Set in technological societies where communication is increasingly pervasive and complex, *Cosmonaut* seeks to explore a more profound kind of communication, contact and/or connection. Although the play is both about "the lack of and the attempts at establishing communication" (Zenzinger 2005: 274), and the emotional drive of the play veers towards the latter, one common trait in reviews, which Greig himself laments (see Greig 2011b: 27), is the focus on the failure of communication (see Fisher 1999: 1400; Morley 2005: 474; Young 2005: 474; Bassett 2005: 474; de Jongh 2005: 475; Clapp 2005: 475; Johns 2005: 475; Walker 2005: 476; Brown 2005: 476). Although it is true that, often, what is 'communicated' does not reach its recipient or is misinterpreted, the fact that "against all the odds, we manage to communicate" (Greig 2011b: 27) and that "the wish to communicate is always there" (Zenzinger 2005: 275) wins over the former. In other words, the desire to overcome the difficulties inherent to communication and establish potentially

[108] In our interview Greig suggested that he might write a fourth and a fifth play on Keith and Vivienne (see Greig 2016a). While *Pyrenees* is published in Greig's *Selected Plays*, *Volvo* is work in progress at the moment of writing.

meaningful contact overpowers the initial/apparent lack of addressee and/or faulty communication. Furthermore, symbolically, the play "concludes with an invitation to communication", the theme being read by Wallace as "a vital part of [*Cosmonaut*'s] political import" (2013: 118). In any case, as theatre director Keller puts it, "while their messages may not reach their intended recipients, those of us in the theater receive them loud and clear" (2016: 113).

Cosmonaut – a "multi-stranded narrative" with no single lead character (although the trilogy protagonists are Keith and Vivienne) but "a rich array" (Featherstone 2013: 219) of them – moves relentlessly across "multiple global locations" (Rebellato 2003: 78), which despite being geographically remote, appear to be inescapably connected, which instills place with a sense of continuity. The multiple locations and the situations of transnational encounter that take place in them have led critics to describe the setting of *Cosmonaut* as "cosmopolitan" (Zenzinger 2005: 274). However, I am disinclined to pursue that line of argument, mainly due to the doubtful "practical feasibility of cosmopolitanism" (Wallace 2013: 135) and the pitfalls inherent to "any banal cosmopolitan attitude" (Zaroulia 2013a: 183). What interests me most is the way in which "different places are rendered equal" (Wallace 2013: 117), which is part of the continuing attempt in Greig's theatre to represent the world as one. Of course, many of the thematic and formal elements addressed in this section – communication, technology and surveillance, connection between characters (or lack thereof) and restless movement between different places – identify *Cosmonaut* as a globalisation play. The "performance possibilities" and other formal strategies I will examine throughout "indicate the theatre's political power to escape the totalizing forces of global capital" (Zaroulia 2013a: 190).

2.1. Elements in the Title: Mingling the Personal and the Political

2.1.1. The Cosmonaut[s] […] in the Former Soviet Union

1969 was the year when a man walked on the moon for the first time, Greig was born and David Bowie released his song "Space Oddity". As a child living in Jos, Nigeria, Greig used to observe people looking at the stars and dreaming, and he himself dreamt of becoming an astronaut.[109] Greig is fascinated by cosmonaut stories, a passion that, as is apparent in *Cosmonaut* and in a recent interview (2016a), has not faded away. Cosmonauts' view from above is one of the pivotal perspectives he meaningfully adopts in his work. In part, he is fascinated by cosmonauts because they can admire the Earth from outer space, but the aerial perspective is also related to god (see Greig 2016a) or any figure occupying a 'looking down from above' position, and in the case of *Cosmonaut*, it emphasises the religious-spiritual-emotional dimension of the play.[110] In our interview, when I asked Greig about the beauty of the Earth from space, one of the stories he told me was about Canadian cosmonaut Chris Hadfield, then in active service and now retired (see Greig 2016a), who became famous for sharing posts and photos taken in space with other social media users, for the publication of two bestselling books, *An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth* (2013) and *You Are Here: Around the World in 92 Minutes* (2014), and for his 2013 music video version of "Space Oddity", which went viral on the social media. If there is hope in *Cosmonaut*, it comes precisely from that 'looking down from above' that is imprinted in the play and that characters feel comforted by – Bernard says, "[s]omeone's up there watching us" (Greig 2002a: 288). The figures that uninterruptedly occupy the aerial perspective in the play are the two cosmonauts themselves – Oleg and Casimir – and the structure they inhabit is spacecraft Harmony 114. In director Tim Supple's 2005 Donmar revival, this

[109] Greig tells Riemer, "I think Oleg and Casimir [the two cosmonauts in the play] come from somewhere else in my heart. They come from my childhood in the seventies when people looked up at the stars and dreamed" (2003: 3).
[110] Another crucial cosmonaut contextual fragment is "Yuri Gagarin saying he had a good look round for god and didn't see him" (Featherstone 2013: 220; see also Greig 2016a).

"couple of bewildered spacemen hovering above the stage" (Morley 2005: 474) had a double aerial perspective – on the other characters and on spectators themselves.

Greig focuses on cosmonauts instead of astronauts for particular reasons: "I believed that Astronauts [sic] only let American people on board their spaceships whereas Cosmonauts [sic] would invite people from all over the world" (2003: 2). Additionally, the cosmonauts in the play are not just a figment of Greig's imagination, but can be argued to have historical antecedents too. The same year the United Nations, led by the USA, expelled Saddam Hussein's Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the Gulf War, the Soviet Union disintegrated and a Russian Federation was formed (see Sierz 2012a: 26): "in 1991 in Moscow, Boris Yeltsin had taken over from Mikhail Gorvachev and a new Russia was born. Meanwhile, a cosmonaut was circling the Earth, out of sight and out of mind" (Brown 2005: 476). Travelling to space in the Soyuz TM-13 as a Soviet Union citizen in May 1991 and coming down less than a year after in Kazakhstan as a Russian citizen, Sergi Krikalev's story – "the cosmonaut stuck on the Mir space station for some months during the collapse of the Soviet Union, when nobody had the political clout or cash to launch a rocket to bring him back" (Hanks 2005: 476) – is one of the centres of inspiration for Greig's *Cosmonaut*. Krikalev's mission had been planned to last for five months but its duration doubled. Greig epically stretches the period to twelve years in *Cosmonaut* (see Greig 2002a: 252). During this time, Oleg and Casimir, weightlessly stranded, miss events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and they die before ever making it back to the ground.[111]

The 'forgetfulness' towards Krikalev and the cosmonauts stands in sharp contrast with the present all-seeing, satellite surveillance societies that *Cosmonaut* foreshadows – "what sort of cunt is it that wants to know these things about me?" (Greig 2002a: 247), says

[111] Because of their Russian names, their being a pair and the central trope of 'waiting', Oleg and Casimir inevitably bring to mind Vladimir and Estragon in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953). One could even point to the similarities between the vowels in the names of the two pairs of characters: in Vladimir and Casimir (a and i) and in Estragon and Oleg (e and o).

the Proprietor referring to him and his wife having sex outdoors. The play pivotally starts and finishes with references to TV, highlighting satellite technologies as central to the current global communications system. Yet *Cosmonaut* speaks to the global reality that "we are ever more connected but also ever more distant" (Murphy 2012: 119). This is mirrored by the spacecraft's communications system, which is significantly broken.

On top of that, Oleg and Casimir's situation of being on a secret mission can be further contextualised in relation to some real 1970s cases of Soviet cosmonauts' lives being damaged as a result of their being used a guinea pigs by their government. In the 1970s, the USSR

> didn't want to risk '*breaking*' their elite pilots so they recruited a second group. This group never knew that they were only guinea pigs. These men were tested until they 'broke'. These tests included solitary confinements, as well as physical tests. (Greig 2003: 3; emphasis added)

"Although there is no evidence that the Soviets sent these 'fake cosmonauts' into space on a test mission" (Greig 2003: 3), Greig's play imagines such a situation in *Cosmonaut*. Bernard, an ex-rocket scientist and UFO watcher "who is using his computer to try to make contact with beings in space" (Reinelt 2011: 208) used to work for the European Space Agency. He says, "I was involved in a project to send men into space for a long period of time, to see what would happen to them […] because […] we need to know the human limitations" (Greig 2002a: 290), and adds that "[t]he Russians had a similar project" (Greig 2002a: 290). It is interesting to note the language used by Greig in the quote above – "tested until they 'broke'" (Fig. 4) – because 'breaking' is central to both the damage characters undergo and the formal 'wounds' foregrounded in Greig's plays, not least *Cosmonaut*. The cosmonauts' are broken lives in a play that prompts the 'breaking' of rigid communication and of secure, expected spatial relations, the latter perhaps also involving the spectator.

Fig. 4: Casimir as he dies repairing communications in *Cosmonaut* (Lyric, Studio dir. Vicky Featherstone, 1999). Photo by Tristram Kenton. Reproduced by permission.

2.1.2. […] Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved

The play refers to the last message Oleg sent to a woman called Adrianna, with whom he had a fleeting relationship long before being sent to space and "with whom he had been too careless to maintain contact" (Zenzinger 2005: 275). In this respect, as Tim Walker points out, *Cosmonaut* is "inspired by the true story of the Soviet cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov who, in 1967, was informed by those who had sent him on a mission that he would never make it back to Earth alive, and would he care to say a few last words to his wife" (2005: 476). In addition, there is an autobiographical side to the title's "the woman he once loved". As a school boy, Greig fell in love with a Russian girl, an experience that seems to bleed into Oleg's words: "[t]his woman…we were at school together. / I was in love with her. […] We had touched each other's souls" (Greig 2002a: 241). In short, Greig "had a crush on" a Russian girl at primary school, which as an "orbiting fragment of life" (Featherstone 2013: 219-20) found its way into *Cosmonaut*.

This manifest interest in the personal is not unique to *Cosmonaut* for, in fact, a remarkable trait of Greig's work is the interweaving of personal experience with the political in the texture of his plays.[112] As Reinelt states, "[i]n his daily life, Greig's politics and his writing are visibly joined up" (2011: 217). And yet, the playwright acknowledges "[autobiography is a] dangerous territory because it can be very annoying and self-indulgent. I tend to come to it when I feel that I am telling a story which *does* concern me

[112] In "Doing a Geographical" (2006b), Greig explains that *Damascus*'s Zakaria was inspired by Zacharias, a real person he met in Aleppo's souk in Syria. *Ramallah* is about a man coming back to his wife from the Middle East – quite clearly an autobiographical rendering of Greig's experience of having been "[w]orking in a conflict zone" (2008a: 208) and coming back 'home'. Resonances of Kane might lie somewhere between the characters Sarah and Laura in *San Diego*. Greig's fascination with hotels and airports as well as running crops up in many of his plays, from *Cosmonaut* to *Brewers Fayre* and *Dalgety*. His attention to Norway (long before *The Events*) also crisscrosses his work, including the play under discussion, where one of the characters is a Norwegian World Bank worker and Middle East peace negotiator. In addition, as McKean notes, "Greig's inspiration for Leila [in *Yellow Moon*] came from a number of sources in addition to the Palestinian Leila he met at the end of the 1990s: Asian friends from school and Scottish Asian children at school" (2013: 43). Biography is also a persistent motif as regards some of the characters he chooses for his plays, who are sometimes real people – witness *Dr Korczak's Example* (2001; publ. 2001c), a semi-biographical tale of Korczak's life in the Warsaw ghetto. As already noted, *One Way Street* directly draws on Benjamin's interlacing of biography and geography as well as being an immediate response to Greig and Eatough's inter-rail trip in central and Eastern Europe.

and so I honestly ought to declare my interest, so to speak" (2011a: 10; emphasis original) and "[i]t's all me. I reveal too much. Everything is autobiographical, even when I think it isn't" (2011a: 13). Featherstone confirms this when she claims that she sees Greig in everything he writes (see 2013: 221).

After this brief excursus aimed at highlighting the relevance of the personal in Greig's theatre at large and in *Cosmonaut* in particular, I want to conclude this section by coming back to "the last message" and the moment in which it is uttered. Oleg, who having lost Casimir has no one to talk to, decides to commit suicide by bombing the spaceship. Before doing so, he records his last entry in the log – this is a fragment of the cosmonaut's last message to the woman he once loved in the (former) Soviet Union:

> In a few moments the ship will consume itself. / Somewhere on earth is a woman I once loved. / Who has most probably forgotten me. / If she looks at the sky. / Or takes notice of the stars. / She may notice the disappearance of the Harmony module. / Or maybe not. (Greig 2002a: 295)

2.2. *Cosmonaut* as a Spatial Epic: Catalysing and Transgressing Verticality

2.2.1. Form and Content: Epic Design

Cosmonaut is an epic play about the fascination for people who can see and experience the Earth from space, but also about its characters' powerlessness, the fragility of their lives and emotions in the face of historical events and political systems that are much larger than them. Of course, epicity can be connected to the Brechtian dimension of Greig's work, which "thoroughly exhibits epic features with a Brechtian coinage" (Middeke, Schnierer and Sierz 2011: xv). However, Greig goes beyond the epic alone by "travers[ing] territory between the intimate and the epic" (Holdsworth 2007: 134), an attribute of which *Cosmonaut* is perhaps the best example. That traversing permeates the play's aesthethic; at the same time, it is also responsible for *Cosmonaut*'s intricate emotional texture, which in turn is inextricably connected to the play's epic treatment of

space. Oddly enough for a play that attempts to convey the need to communicate and a desire for connection, its main strategy for doing so is an exploration of verticality. In what follows, I argue that *Cosmonaut* is a vertical play both in terms of form and content, which, nevertheless, encompasses in some measure an undoing of verticality.

From the formal point of view, *Cosmonaut* is constructed around an above-below spatial dialectic; in other words, it a/effectively interweaves scenes that take place in space and scenes that take place on Earth. Greig notes that "[i]n some ways it was simply a formal text" (2003: 2). He explains in an interview that *Cosmonaut* was based on two conceits. Let us examine the first conceit for now. Greig states that "everything had to bounce between Earth and space like a satellite signal", and further reveals that "[a] scene would end with someone looking up to the sky and the next scene would begin with the cosmonauts looking down […] and send [Greig talks of signs] back to Earth" (2011b: 25). As a result of this perspectival interplay and the cosmonauts' incessant orbiting, the space *Cosmonaut* encompasses is the whole globe. Besides, that first conceit is in itself already an epic gesture rather than a mere formal gimmick. One of the effects of using this epic dialectic pattern is the production of tension, which might prompt a tearing apart of a rational sense of space. Another key effect is the creation of a sense of dialogic space, that is, of the spaces above and below having a conversation.

The thematic articulation of verticality is no less striking. *Cosmonaut* explores the attempt to have meaningful communicative exchanges, as made evident through a host of characters that seem to try to but for one reason or another cannot generally connect. Those unfulfilled communicative exchanges are vertical in two ways. Firstly, uni-directionally, characters desire to communicate meaningfully but they are unable to reach out horizontally to other characters, so their exchanges generally remain unable to transcend verticality. Secondly, communication is also attempted bi-directionally: from characters

that are on outer space to characters that are on Earth and the other way round. This also conveys a strong sense of verticality.

Crucially, verticality is not just the pattern that catalyses both the form and content of the play, but also the motif through which form and theme connect. Characters' unfulfilled communicative exchanges very often travel along the shape of vertical structures, sometimes hitting destination – albeit, even then, not always able to create meaning – and sometimes not. That is, it is not only typically the case that a scene takes place in space and immediately after a scene takes place on the ground, but also that the relation between the scene above and the scene below hinges on the (emotional) attachment of a character above to a character below or the other way round. Emotions form trajectories that connect spaces in *Cosmonaut*. In this manner, the verticality of form and content become inextricable.

Having said that, it is also the case that the play destabilises and even explodes its own design. As Greig puts it, not unlike the detonation of Eden Court at the end of *The Architect*, "it's a play that attacks itself at the end" (2011b: 26) – witness the module's explosion and Claire's being stabbed as a result of her trying to talk to her assailant. In fact, the above-below spatial dialectic is increasingly unstable, which generates seemingly improbable connections between characters in spite of their lives being extremely separated and truncated. Characters reaching out of the vertical mould offer genuine moments of connection and/or transgression of the self. In sum, mirroring Greig's concluding "fuck[ing] up" (Greig 2011b: 26) of the play and the interweaving of form and content, characters seem to remain actively engaged in undoing the above-below, vertical spatial dialectic through attempts at connection, communication and love that illuminate the possibility of horizontality, connection and 'true' communication.

2.2.2. Places, Cosmogeographies, Spirituality and Other Epic Elements

There are other aspects to epicity that identify *Cosmonaut* as a spatial epic and also contribute to destabilising rigid verticality. To start with, epicity also springs from Greig's second conceit in the writing of *Cosmonaut*: "the play had to contain every place that I had been to in the previous year" (2011b: 25). This includes Edinburgh, London, Provence and Oslo, and highlights horizontality in terms of the mental visualisation of movement between those places. Like *The Architect*, *Cosmonaut* also includes non-places such as bars, airports, hotels and flats, as well as more nuanced places such as gardens, roofs, hospitals, a park, a patch of cultivated ground, a police station, the space of the module, balconies, the beach, the street and a UFO observatory, among others. References to the countryside in Provence, for instance, complicate the centrality of urban spaces and non-places that we found in *The Architect*. As in *The Architect*, the Middle East is also present, for Eric is a peace negotiator for the region.[113] The variety and quantity of the places evoked and the number of 'linked' characters that move across them sets into motion a sense of spatial epicity, which is reinforced by the emotional attachment or detachment of characters with those spaces and with each other. In short, places and people bleed across each other to suggest that places are not just places and people are not just people. We are as much a mixture of people and places as places are.

Given the richness of allusion to locations including outer space, *Cosmonaut*'s constellation of places might be described as a 'cosmogeography'. While Greig's plays are generally lavish as regards their allusions to different places, in *Cosmonaut* the actual play is set in all these different locations – some of them even crop up simultaneously; characters move incessantly across them, be it physically or metaphorically; and crucially,

[113] Eric formed part of "the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians, signed in 1993" (Sierz 2012b: 29).

the play makes us move imaginatively across them too.[114] Oddly, despite the presence of all these places, the play is located in an indeterminate "[r]ecently" (Greig 2002a: 208), which from the beginning disturbs a sense of setting, for 'recently' indicates 'some time before now' and offers no information about the place(s) where the action occurs. Embracing such an epic quantity of locations and suggesting an epic setting through the unspecificity of "recently", *Cosmonaut* becomes also in this way a spatial epic that aims not just at rewriting space, but at exploring the possibility of expanding the boundaries of existing meanings of space-time. Indeed, *Cosmonaut* "criss-crosses time, place, space and gravity in a way that is haunting and profoundly evocative" (Billingham 2007: 107).

The spiritual also crops up as an element that endows the play with epicity. As Nicholas de Jongh puts it, "Greig effects spiritual and actual links between characters" (2005: 475). In fact, *Cosmonaut* is one the plays Greig speaks most spiritually about. Almost religiously and recalling the idea of the shamanic semionaut, the playwright claims to feel as a conduit for *Cosmonaut*: "I was merely the conduit" (2011b: 26). Furthermore, Greig comments on the importance of allowing the subconscious to leak uncensored into the play in a way that almost touches on the transcendental: "I was very concerned to write the play from my subconscious. If an idea or an image occurred to me I did not question it[,] I put it straight into the play. What is interesting then is how connected everything is" (2003: 4). Additionally, one of the play's places has a strong connection with religiosity. Mont Saint Victoire in Provence – which resonates with Greig's later *Victoria* – is linked to Paul Cézanne and through him, with religion: "[f]or the painter Paul Cézanne this 'holy' mountain was an obsession" (Greig 2003: 3). Even Bernard's approach towards his job

[114] In that respect, *Cosmonaut* can be considered a precursor of *San Diego*, which not only alludes to different places in the world and occurs in different locations (including a plane), but also conveys a multilayered abstract location that emanates from the very presentation of the city of San Diego. In a way, *Cosmonaut* is more of a map yet it starts to flag up the notion of globe by having the cosmonauts continually orbiting the Earth, while *San Diego* more definitely foregrounds the latter. This evolving engagement with space points to Greig's theatre's efforts to convey 'the whole world'.

exudes some kind of belief. As Riemer puts it, "[t]he character of Bernard sits on the top of the Mont Saint Victoire and tries to receive signals from the cosmos and to decode them" (Greig 2003: 3).

Finally, epicity in *Cosmonaut* includes stylistic, structural and theatrical elements. Stylistically, the title is epic, which might spring from a 1990s trend influenced by the 1960s, including "Arthur Kopit's absurdist pastiche *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mamma's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feelin' so Sad* (1962)" (Zenzinger 2005: 274) and Peter Weiss's *The Persecution and Assassination of Jean-Paul Marat as Performed by the Inmates of the Asylum of Charenton under the Direction of Marquis de Sade* (1963). Structurally, the play counts forty-two scenes, which Wallace describes as "a set of juxtaposed micronarratives which though initially seem disconnected are gradually revealed as nodal points in a loosely networked plot structure" (2013: 114). The swift way the scenes shift across very different, distant places is also epic, in addition to contributing to reversing verticality. According to Billington, "[t]he play's kaleidoscopic randomness [was] held together by […] Featherstone's astutely intelligent Paines Plough production, which use[d] a Brechtian traverse curtain to punctuate the scenes" (1999). The play also makes epic theatrical demands in terms of design and lighting. Finally, epicity is also generated by the play's concern with a vast country (Soviet Union) or, indeed, in Nastasja's and the Patient's words, "that fucking lovely stuff" (Greig 2002a: 269) Greig cannot help but imagine, think, feel and write about.

2.3. Verticality and its Undoing at Work

2.3.1. Spatial Dynamics in *Cosmonaut*

The complex articulation of space in *Cosmonaut* operates on three levels. The first level is structural: scenes set in space (above) and scenes set on Earth (below) are

interspersed in *Cosmonaut*, with the dialectic becoming less rigid as the play progresses. Importantly, this implies that characters above look down on or yearn for the Earth and characters below look upwards or yearn for something out there in space. Sometimes the relationship is not established by looking but by other correlations, such as elements appearing above and below or other references – e.g. a mere allusion in a stage direction, the thoughts of characters, a bit of dialogue, or a description of the setting, among others. Characters can foreground the spatial dialectic by being physically and/or mentally either above/up or below/down. On a second level, the above-below dialectic can also occur within the same scene, with the same implications. These two levels could indeed be thought of in terms of Adornian dialectics, in the sense that they involve two spatially opposite locations or directions that collide in the same instant.

On a third level, this is complemented by a set of references that transgress the boundaries of particular scenes – not necessarily consecutive – which complicates a mere fluctuation between outer space and the Earth by pointing towards a sense of reaching out horizontally and an embracing of all space.[115] In Rebellato's words, "there are several strange echoes – mainly verbal images – that resonate across the piece and appear causelessly in separate characters' mouths and memories" and "drift across the realistic boundaries of the action" (2006: 110; see also Zenzinger 2005: 279-80). Simultaneously at play, these three levels generate a series of spatial oddities that add to the atmosphere of both failed communication – "[s]omething seemed to be coming through […] But I lost it", says Keith (Greig 2002a: 211) – and utopian possibility – Nastasja's "[a]ll this fucking beautiful stuff" (Greig 2002a: 295) – that pervades *Cosmonaut*.

While level two and level one generally reinforce one another, level three in itself would appear to 'betray' Greig's initial conceit, based on the dialectic of verticality

[115] The vodka bottle Morocco brings to the town in *Europe* is an earlier case in point.

established by 'someone looking down' followed by 'someone looking up' and/or vice versa. However, Greig welcomes this instability and believes that the play needs to be allowed to *be* the play (see 2016a). Accordingly, the spatial patterns that emerge vary throughout *Cosmonaut*. While at first they tend to be more clear-cut, they progressively become more intricate until the play itself 'explodes' with the blowing up of the capsule, which precipitates ruptures that eventually open up the possibility of a sense of connection in the wake of all those vertical exercises. What follows aims to provide a close analysis of these three spatial levels in *Cosmonaut*.

A bird's-eye view immediately reveals that the play is interspersed with scenes set on the module. Nearly half of the scenes in each act occur in outer space, which in itself supports the claim that the play dialectically explores the relationship between the sky and the ground, outer space and planet Earth. In terms of the first level of analysis, the spaces of Scenes One and Two in Act One provide a contrast: Scene One occurs on the module and Scene Two in an expensive detached house in Edinburgh.[116] At the same time, the two scenes share a number of features: they both occur in enclosed spaces (the first as a matter of fact and the second by choice); in both there is something that is not working (for the cosmonauts it is the radio; for Keith and Vivienne, the TV); the four of them are waiting (to be heard and for the TV to work, respectively); and the four of them experience communication difficulties (the two pairs' co-habitation, defined by spatial seclusion and marriage respectively, is shown to produce despair and frustration).

In addition, an example of level two – spatial dialectic within same scene – occurs in both scenes. Demonstrating that spectators are woven into the play's spatial dynamics,

[116] This echo of the Black family in *The Architect*, who also live in a detached house in Edinburgh, is reinforced by others, such as Vivienne telling Keith, as Paulina does with Martin: "I worry about you sometimes. That man who went out one evening and they just cut his throat. The local kids" (Greig 2002a: 215). In *Cosmonaut*, this disturbing reference to urban violence is confirmed by Claire's being stabbed by a shoplifter she tried to have a conversation with. In our interview, Greig confirmed that he is keen on intertextuality in relation to his own work – indeed, intertextuality is a word for his "overall project", which he sees as growing and developing "on a very wide road" (2016a: 93; see also Zenzinger 2005: 268 and 276).

scene one starts with them 'looking up' at the sky, where "*[o]ne star is moving, describing an arc across the night sky*" (Greig 2002a: 209), a poetic reminder of the cosmonauts orbiting the Earth in their forgotten capsule, while at the same time Casimir is focused on fixing the radio to communicate with the Earth (below). In addition, in contrast to Casimir's earthly concerns, Oleg is discovered floating, listening to music (above).[117] The same goes for Scene Two: the couple are bound to Earth, entrenched in the house with their shutters firmly closed, and yet Vivienne says, "I looked at the sky this evening" (Greig 2002a: 212). Concerning level three – connections that transgress the play's vertical spatial structure and increasingly suggest horizontality as the play progresses – Vivienne's comment links up with Bernard, the UFO observer who spends much of his time looking at the sky. The fact that he fails to speak after his first stroke also connects him to Vivienne's job as a speech therapist, and both elements constitute one more layer of meaning in relation to the play's focus on the difficulty to communicate. Crucially, the formal connections that crisscross the play challenge the very notion of the impossibility of communication.

Scenes Three and Four occur respectively in the module and in the house too. That is, in terms of the first level of analysis, the above-below dialectic is most of the time concatenated, with contrasting above-below perspectives stitching one scene up with the next. In one more attempt to communicate, in Scene Three Casimir calls planet Earth – "[i]s anybody listening?" (Greig 2002a: 213) – and in Scene Four, Keith, perhaps somehow 'receiving' but not being able to decode Casimir's signal because Oleg has "*pull[ed] a chunck of wires from a socket*" (Greig 2002a: 213), tells Vivienne: "I thought I heard something. Some noise" (Greig 2002a: 214). In other words, from the very beginning spaces above and below bleed into one another. In terms of the second level of analysis, in

[117] Although I will not discuss the music specifically, it is interesting to note, given Greig's abundant use of music in his plays, especially from the late 2000s onwards, that it has a resonant presence in early works such as *Cosmonaut* or *The Architect*. In *Cosmonaut*, characters listen to music (Oleg), dance to music (Nastasja and Sylvia), sing (Keith) and listen to the sound of "*sad song[s] from a Soviet choir*" (Greig 2002a: 209), another early example of the presence of choirs in Greig's work.

Scene Four Keith talks about the aerial and Vivienne about flats springing up (above) and a garden (below) (see Greig 2002a: 214). Additionally, Keith says, "[r]eception…it goes underground…it's reliable" (Greig 2002a), which is juxtaposed with references to high places like "Mont Saint Victoire" (Greig 2002a: 216). Finally, descriptions such as "*windows are tall and elegant. The night sky starlit*" (Greig 2002a: 217) and "[y]ou forget what's up there" (Greig 2002a: 217) contrast with the grounded element of mint (see Greig 2002a: 218). The scent of mint also operates on the third level of analysis, as the mint in Keith and Vivienne's patch of land has been planted by Claire. In addition, mint is the herb that Vivienne comes across when she is on Mont Saint Victoire looking for Keith (see Greig 2002a: 289), who has left her as a result of his mid-life crisis.

The fact that Keith leaves his wife is later complemented by Sylvia's story, which is similar to Vivienne's – as Nastasja puts it, "[s]ome time ago, her husband walked into the sea near the white cliffs of Dover" (Greig 2002a: 271). This suggests the possibility that Sylvia and Vivienne – both performed by Actress 1 – are different and at the same time one, offering an instance of evaporation of singularity. As a result of the doubling, which frustrated some reviewers (see Young 2005: 474), "we are uncertain about which character we are looking at" (Rebellato 2008: 202-3) – productively so, I would add. "[T]he edges of the individual" become blurred, which perhaps underlines "our mutual dependence" (Rebellato 2008: 203) and certainly undoes a sense of fixed, one-dimensional identity. As Greig states, "the doubling is a way of exploring the possibility that our lives are not fixed" (2003: 4).

Scene Five includes two instances of internal spatial dialectic: Casimir begs to God (above) and collapses (below) from his anger at Oleg, who tries to calm him down by saying that "[e]very day we pass over Baikal and every day [Nastasja] looks up" (Greig 2002a: 220). In Scene Six, the ongoing module/house logic is truncated and, instead, the

house is replaced by "[a] café in Heathrow Airport" (Greig 2002a: 220). The stage direction at the start of this scene, which refers to the sound of an aircraft taking off *and* landing – is an example of the play's second-level spatial dialectic, in addition to being an instance of Adornian dialectics or two overlapping ideas in one thought. The airport itself as a space encodes an above-below spatial dialectic – with planes continually landing and taking off. Yet in terms of the first level of analysis, it stands in contrast with the module in outer space. In Scene Six, Nastasja tells the Proprietor: "[My dad's] up there. / In the stars. / He went there when I was only six years old. / I still talk to him" (Greig 2002a: 222), another instance of second-level spatial dialectic. Similarly, when Keith arrives at the airport's café, he says about the plane: "[a]t one stage I thought we were going down" (Greig 2002a: 223). However, Nastasja's reference to the lake – "[b]ig black clouds over a lake" (Greig 2002a: 223) – is an instance of level three, for Oleg had already referred to Nastasja on the shore of a lake (see Greig 2002a: 219). The Proprietor, seemingly a third-level voice that seems to know more that it appears – perhaps an 'aerial character' endowed with a wider and different kind of knowledge about things, sometimes connected to the playwright's voice – reassures Nastasja: "[y]our daddy's in heaven. / He's watching over you" (Greig 2002a: 223).

Level one still operating, Scene Seven returns to the module. Oleg imagines taking his fictional lover, a woman named Katia pictured on one of the playing cards the cosmonauts use to arouse themselves sexually – the name is intertextually reminiscent of the eponymous young woman in *Europe* – "to a little hotel, away from my wife" (Greig 2002a: 226), which links up with Keith and Nastasja appearing in a hotel room in London in the next scene, Eight. The reference to the hotel (Scene Eight) generates a hybrid version of levels one and three. It is related to the former because the cosmonauts are above (Scene

Seven), and to the latter because while Oleg imagines taking his lover to a hotel, Casimir's daughter is taken to a hotel by Keith.

A combined example of levels two and three occurs in Scene Eight when Keith talks about Skye, and Nastasja says she likes the sky and storms (see Greig 2002a: 228), as she did before (see Greig 2002a: 223). Nastasja misinterprets the name of the island and says, "[a]n island in the sky" (Greig 2002a: 228), which offers a compact version of layer two. When Nastasja reproduces her father's words when she last saw him, a beautiful blending of levels two and three takes place again: "[h]e said, Nastasja, whenever you want to talk and you have no one to talk to, stand on the edge of the lake and look up to the sky. I'll be looking down" (Greig 2002a: 229). From Scene Eight onwards, the three levels are increasingly interwoven, so that the rigidity of the dialectic outer space (above)-Earth (below) softens and therefore verticality starts to fracture through references that increasingly crisscross different scenes. A case in point is Nastasja offering an image of two-way horizontality: "Look at the trees. Houses and trees going all the way to the sea. Come out here and feel the breeze on your skin" (Greig 2002a: 226).

From a hotel in London in Scene Eight, the play goes to "*[a] small patch of cultivated ground in a city*" (Greig 2002a: 231) in Scene Nine. Although both hotel and soil belong in principle to the ground, upon closer inspection the first-level above-below dialectic is kept in a way, in the sense that hotels are often related to people who fly – Keith is about to take his flight – and cultivated plots of land are remarkably rooted spaces. As far as level two is concerned, Scene Nine is set outside Vivienne's house while "*an aeroplane passes overhead*" (Greig 2002a: 234). The scene also includes level-three references: Claire's "[t]he things you can do. / One can do" (Greig 2002a: 234) echoes Vivienne's earlier "[t]he things you get. One gets" (Greig 2002a: 216), and Claire is going with her husband to Skye, where Keith suggested before he would take Nastasja. Scene Ten is set at

the airport, which tantalisingly combines above (planes that take off and fly) and below (planes that bring passengers back to the ground). In terms of the third level of analysis, Keith refers to Nastasja's taste, smell, skin blemish and scar (see Greig 2002a: 236), as Oleg does when he speaks of another woman on one of the playing cards, Vanessa (see Greig 2002a: 224), and later of Adrianna, his 'real' lover (see Greig 2002a: 277). To add to this confounding sense of sameness, later on the Proprietor says that a satellite can take pictures of "[t]he tiniest blemish on a woman's skin" (Greig 2002a: 247). Besides, as Skye bled across Scenes Eight and Nine, Gaelic does so across Scenes Nine and Ten – one more instance of layer three.

In Scene Eleven, the play is back to the module after three scenes without hearing about the cosmonauts, and Oleg refers to a country (the Soviet Union) and a woman (Adrianna) back on Earth – an example of a combination of second and third-level references, since both the country and the woman are below (level two) and are mentioned repeatedly throughout *Cosmonaut* (level three). Scene Twelve bounces back down to the airport bar, which juxtaposed to the module in Scene Eleven constitute an example of the first level of analysis. In Scene Thirteen, Sylvia and Nastasja are on a small stage. Sylvia "*is dressed as though to dance erotically but she barely moves*" (Greig 2002a: 241). Her slowness is reminiscent of the slowness of movement and of life for the cosmonauts – again an example of level three. This is perhaps not coincidental for the following, Fourteen, occurs in the module.

Suggesting some logic of continuity via the night coming in both locations and also in accordance with the first-level logic, after Oleg says "[w]e're over Europe, moving into the night" (Greig 2002a: 242) – European concerns remain central in *Cosmonaut* – Scene Fifteen is set in a street in London at dusk. Offering an instance of layer two, Nastasja hears "*[t]he sound of an aeroplane overhead*" (Greig 2002a: 243). When she shouts at Keith,

who is flying above, "YOU FUCK SHIT LIAR!" (Greig 2002a: 243), the connection between the aeroplane above and Nastasja's shouting into space takes the form of a collision. Yet at the same time, Scene Fifteen and Sixteen blend in because the same actor doubles for Keith and Bernard, as if the narrative had heard and responded to Nastasja's lament. This indicates a key rupture in the vertical logic (outer space-Earth) identified so far. By this point, level one is quite destabilised and levels two and three start to operate more freely, thus accelerating and intensifying the disruptions of verticality in the play.

2.3.2. Transgressing Verticality and Beyond

In Scene Sixteen, Bernard says, "[t]he Americans want to write the word Pepsi in space. / A giant advertisement. / To say 'Pepsi'. / Every night it will compete with the moon" (Greig 2002a: 243) – two elements above that can be seen from below are an example of level two. Because Actor 2 plays both the Proprietor and Eric and Actor 1 plays both Bernard and Keith, the Proprietor and Bernard's conversation in the café in Provence in this scene seems to reproduce the same encounter Eric and Keith had at the airport in Scene Twelve, which suggests a sense of sameness across differences and adds compellingly to the connective atmosphere the play sets forth. Indeed, as Rebellato has it, "[t]hese ghostly doublings [...] emphasise, beyond the power of the narrative, the connections between people that exceed the social wedges that consumerism has driven between us" (2002b: xxi).

In relation to level three, now Bernard and the Proprietor talk directly about the sky, thus establishing a link on Earth between Earth itself and outer space: "[t]ell me about the sky. / Have you made contact yet?" (Greig 2002a: 246). Convinced of the "visitors[']" (Greig 2002a: 246) existence and intelligence, Bernard says, "[t]hey're waiting till we stop. / And look up. / And realise. / And find the right words" (Greig 2002a: 246). In that short

passage, all three levels are mingled. Following this, the Proprietor uses the same phrase as Keith did earlier, which echoes Rebellato's idea of verbal images that transgress logic: "[t]he tiniest blemish on a woman's skin" (Greig 2002a: 247). This is what according to the Proprietor can be seen from spy satellites, in addition to a playing card held by a man – which operates on level three, since the cosmonauts also use playing cards – both reinforcing the above-below fluctuation pattern. Besides, in terms of the second level of analysis, the cosmonauts' position on outer space contrasts with Bernard telling the Proprietor, "[t]he craft is above us now. / Look. See. / Can you see it moving? (Greig 2002a: 248).

Formally, a fixed spatial dialectic disintegrates as the play gets closer to the spaceship's explosion. While in Scene Eighteen Sylvia, on Earth, offers a Pepsi to Nastasja, in Scene Nineteen, Casimir, in space, poignantly says, "I want to talk to my daughter" (Greig 2002a: 251) and "I want to drink Pepsi Cola" (Greig 2002a: 252). In sum, Nastasja drinking Pepsi while her father Casimir is in outer space, where the word 'Pepsi' is meant to be written, generates an impossible, yet theatrically realised, connection between the two that undermines the vertical dialectic.

The transition from Scene Nineteen to Scene Twenty makes sense in terms of the first level of analysis, for the setting in Twenty is a beach near Edinburgh, while Nineteen takes place in space again, where Oleg is seen holding a playing card that echoes the one that can be observed from satellites, according to the Proprietor – one more instance of level three. In Scene Twenty, the scene where Keith fakes his suicide to escape his previous life with Vivienne, level two steps in when he is listening to the recording of Nastasja's breathing recording and the stage direction says: *"[a]bove him, in the stars, the satellite continues its orbit*" (Greig 2002a: 253). Horizontality is suggested by the image of the horizon, which connects the sea (below) and the sky (above), in addition to signalling the

Earth's visual limit. In terms of level one, in Scene Twenty-One the play goes back to the house in Edinburgh, where Vivienne is closing the shutters while switching the TV on, while Scene Twenty-Two goes back to the module, where Casimir can finally hear a voice. The sound of a Soviet choir – like at the beginning of Scene Nineteen – as he is fixing the radio closes the circle of Casimir's attempts at reaching out (see Greig 2002a: 255). He is getting signals from Bernard: "[n]umbers in different languages" (Greig 2002a: 254). Earth and sky finally fuse just before Act Two. Communication seems to be hitting some kind of destination now. But is anybody listening *and* understanding?

The beginning of Act Two features Bernard and follows on from Casimir's insistence on communicating, which means that Act One, Scene Twenty-Two and Act Two, Scene One are stitched up in terms of the first level of analysis. Although Casimir's voice is precariously audible through the radio's static, Bernard cannot hear it. Scene Three can seem at first sight a conventional questionnaire addressed by Claire to Vivienne – they are neighbours – following Keith's disappearance. However, Claire's emphasis on Keith's tie opens up level three, which unfolds the connections between the tie – on which Mont Sant Victoire is depicted, which gives Vivienne a clue as to where to start her search for Keith – and the reaching out Bernard tries to practice on Mont Saint Victoire, the same actor performing both roles.

The transition between Scene Three and Four seems to temporarily go back to a clear-cut distinction between above and below. While Scene Three is set on the module, and it is learnt that Casimir died trying "to fix the communications" (Greig 2002a: 251), the setting of Scene Four is an underground bar in Soho. In terms of level two, Nastasja's "[m]y daddy's up in the sky" (Greig 2002a: 265) seems to indicate that everything that is below seems to be negative to her, perhaps because his father is above – she complains, for instance, about "the price they charge for your champagne down here" (Greig 2002a: 266).

In fact, Nastasja spends the whole play "mourning the loss of her cosmonaut father" (de Jongh 2005: 475), despising everything below as deadening – "[i]t's dead down here, mister" (Greig 2002a: 267) – and locating hope, if any, up in the sky. Indeed, she repeatedly describes the bar as a tomb (see Greig 2002a: 264, 267, 270 and 292). When Eric asks her, "[w]ould you like to go somewhere else?, her answer is, "[a]nywhere you want as long as it's up there" (Greig 2002a: 267). Eric takes Nastasja (and Sylvia) to live with him in Oslo and marries her. After some time, unsatisfied with the 'real' Nastasja, Eric asks Sylvia to go and find the tape of Nastasja's breathing.

In the meantime, Vivienne travels to Provence, where she stays at Bernard's place. When they meet, there is an example of dialectical horizontality: "*Bernard* [who doubles for Keith] *moves to touch her. Draws back*" (Greig 2002a: 283). This is an instance of level two, but instead of being vertical, it is, importantly, horizontal. Crucially, while in *The Architect* Joe's hand is eventually withdrawn when he is about to touch Dorothy (see Greig 2002a: 176), as is Bernard's here, in a pivotal moment in the context of the play and of Greig's theatre as a whole (and offering another instance of level three), Vivienne and Claire do hold each other's hands: "*Claire reaches out a hand to hold hers. / They hold hands*" (Greig 2002a: 261) in the interview scene. Attempting to reach out and touch the other without succeeding is a recurrent motif in Suspect Culture's pieces, such as *Airport* and *Lament*. As Rebellato notes, "[t]he backdrop of globalization adds a further level to our understanding of those utopian acts of unrequitted communication" (2002a: 20).

Later, while they are having a meal, Bernard tells Vivienne the story of his first stroke, which occurs when he sees Arianne, a rocket he worked on, exploding. He also offers an image of his (un)bounded body: "[m]y heart seemed to burst and I was surrounded by myself. The lights and the heat seemed to pour into me" (Greig 2002a: 291). At the same time, an instance of level three occurs: Bernard says it felt "[b]lue" (Greig

2002a: 291), which connects with Eric's first "blue orgasm" (Greig 2002a: 285). Another impossible connection is realised by *Cosmonaut* suggesting that Bernard, who is in hospital so as to learn how to speak after his first stroke, and the Patient Vivienne treats earlier on may actually be one and the same person – from the moments after the stroke, Bernard remembers a girl who walked over the grass to help him (see Greig 2002a: 291-2), and both a girl and grass are elements the Patient also mentions (see Greig 2002a: 249).

Another sign that the vertical spatial rigidity is breaking down is Nastasja's "I can see my daddy in the sky", followed by the shift to an aerial perspective in "I can see the whole fucking shitty world" (Greig 2002a: 294), both from the roof of the flat in Oslo. In reference to the smallness of people below – "I love them" (Greig 2002a: 294) – indicates that, once again, a young woman embodies the utopian spirit of the play in Greig's work. Still on the roof and on the same note, she adds, "Beautiful stuff. / All this fucking beautiful stuff" (Greig 2002a: 295), which links up with Oleg's death scene, which starts to be narrated in Scene Sixteen – Oleg shares the same perspective from above as Nastasja. While Scene Seventeen finishes with Bernard looking up at the stars Scene Eighteen goes back to the module, one more instance of a first-level fluctuation.

As the spaceship consumes itself (Scene Eighteen), Bernard and Nastasja (Scene Nineteen) shout "No! No! No!" (Greig 2002a: 297) from Provence and Oslo respectively. This is a further way to complicate the spatial dialectics and go beyond the multilocational interweaving of narratives by stitching up characters in different locations through having them say the same thing and/or perform the same or strikingly similar actions. Importantly, Bernard's second stroke is made to coincide with the moment in which Oleg explodes. In this way, apparently distinct spatial realms are collapsed 'globally' into one. Bernard and Nastasja's shared knowledge of the explosion disrupts not only rationality but also the

vertical dialectical tension between above and below, rehearsing horizontality and providing a poetic glimpse of a truly interconnected globe.

2.4. Conclusive Remarks: Strokes in the Sky/Explosions on the Ground

As shown, the vertical spatial dialectic identified in *The Architect* continues shifting in *Cosmonaut*. While *The Architect* is more focused on refracting a spatial dialectic on Earth, excepting a reference to falling into orbit that echoes *One Way Street*, *Cosmonaut* stretches out to include outer space and the bouncing between both spaces. While the aerial perspective as well as some above-below spatial structures are present in *The Architect*, in *Cosmonaut* the vertical dialectic takes over most of the play. While zooming is present in both *Europe* and *One Way Street* – as zooming out in the former, when Katia and Adele imagine the cities they will visit, and zooming in the latter, when John and Greta are inside the restaurant and they look down at Tony – connections across different spaces are rendered in much more complex ways in *Cosmonaut*. It is indeed *Cosmonaut*'s treatment of space that highlights the connection between strokes on Earth and explosions in the sky, thus linking violence above (accidental death and the capsule's explosion) and below (Bernard's heart attack and Claire's murder). Working towards more horizontal ways of being and/or looking for communication and/or believing in communication, then, comes at a cost for characters. Casimir dies trying to repair communications (the radio); Claire dies stabbed by an armed robber whom she was trying to talk to and understand; Bernard has two strokes coinciding with the spaceship's explosions; and Nastasja insists on communicating with her father despite the technical impossibility of doing so.

This section has tried to show that *Cosmonaut* beautifully explores the possibilities of making contact through its bizarre spatial dynamics. Although the play seems to be pervaded by a sense of lostness – Vivienne's "I'm a little lost, in fact" (Greig 2002a: 277)

and Eric's "I wasn't a lonely child but I was lost at sea" (Greig 2002a: 285) are captured in de Jongh's "[*Cosmonaut's*] existential loneliness" (2005: 475) – this does not prevent characters from seeking connection so as to perhaps find themselves in others and across space. Crucially, as highlighted in the preceding discussion, the play's scenes are connected through a set of elements bleeding across them. Thus, formally, the play conveys the notion that acts performed in one place always have repercussions along the line somewhere else.

Cosmonaut is a play about "[a]ll this fucking beautiful stuff" (Greig 2002a: 295), that is, planet Earth seen from above – the entire beautiful, albeit unbearably painful, world. The play ardently desires to embrace the globe, and therefore gradually forces a melting down of its own initially vertical design to foster a sense of horizontality. In fact, the possibility of 'true' communication and contact lies in the poetic beauty of the play, articulated through its exploration of a daring spatial sensibility. Once verticality is destabilised, we are left "floating in a most peculiar way" (Bowie). What some reviewers identify as a problem with *Cosmonaut* – "[Greig] never quite manages to join up the dots, so we are left searching for a pattern" (Morley 2005: 474), "left floating in a vacuum" (Letts 2005: 477) or "constantly off balance" (Young 2005: 474) – is perhaps its main virtue, given that it opens up myriad possibilities for the dislocated spectator to think about connections within "this fucking beautiful stuff" in their own ways.

V. Bird Plays

1. *Outlying Islands:* Birds, Islands, the Affect of Water and Acts of Watching

Definitely shifting Greig's relationship with London stages in the wake of the premiere of *Victoria* at the Barbican (May 2000), *Outlying Islands* "was offered a run in the Theatre Upstairs [at the Royal Court] for the autumn of 2002 even before it had opened at the Traverse in the summer" (Howard 2013: 214), a decade after the Court had rejected Suspect Culture's *The Garden* (1992b). *Outlying Islands* is set on a remote island in the North Atlantic in the summer previous to the Second World War, an island that stands out for the beauty and rarity of its bird population. The birds are to be studied for the first time by the newly-arrived Robert and John, two Cambridge ornithologists. During their very first meal with the island's leaseholder, Kirk, and his niece, Ellen – the only humans living on the island previous to their arrival – the old man accidentally reveals the real reason behind Robert and John's one-month stay on the island: they are to quantify the devastation produced as a result of anthrax testing on the island. Benedict Nightingale notes that this "unnamed island is clearly heading for the same fate as [the Scottish island of] Gruinard, which became uninhabitable for decades after the wartime boffins infected it with anthrax" (2002: 1151). During the fraught discussion, Kirk dies of a heart attack leaving the island to the young trio and the birds. Towards the end of the play, Robert commits suicide and Ellen and John leave the island, abandoning it to its tragic destiny.

Robert, an adamant lover of birds and nature, wishes that London was used as a testing ground instead – "[l]et them test their fucking bombs on London" (Greig 2002b: 47). John, Robert's assistant, has the same name as the civil servant in Greig's *The Letter of Last Resort* (hereafter *The Letter*), a duologue in which a female UK Prime Minister and John discuss the content of a letter which provides an unnamed commander with orders in

case of an attack on Britain, particularly London.[118] Nuclear war, the idea of London being destroyed, Robert and John being "ministry boys" (Greig 2002b: 11) from "some nameless ministry in London" (McMillan 2002: 1151) and the name of the male character in *The Letter* suggest not only intertextual connections between *Outlying Islands* and *The Letter*, but also a continuing concern on Greig's part for the threat of global nuclear war a decade after the former play.

Although in 1939 weapons trials were tied to the imminence of the Second World War, nowadays, as Kent points out in the introduction to *The Bomb: A Partial History*, they are about "the almost daily news bulletins about the nuclear threat from Iran, North Korea or from rogue terrorist groups" (2012: 6). Furthermore, one of the contexts for the Traverse production of *Outlying Islands*, directed by Howard, was the search for chemical weapons of mass destruction in the context of the War on Terror that followed 9/11 – as Sierz states, "[i]n the current climate, its speculations about war are particularly timely" (2002: 1155). Beyond nuclear power, 9/11 and the War on Terror, *Outlying Islands* "chime[s] with [other] contemporary debates on such wide-ranging issues as genetic engineering, global warming […] the profit motive, the ethics of war and sexual liberation" (Holdsworth 2007: 138). In particular, *Outlying Islands* looks at the global issue of environmental damage, crucially including animal life, a concern present in other works by Greig and Suspect Culture.[119] *Outlying Islands* – together with *Victoria* – is described by Wallace as an "ecological drama" (2013: 80). Reinelt has pointed out the connections between the environment and globalisation in Greig's work: "[w]hat is recognised and criticised throughout Greig's work

[118] *The Letter* is part of a series of plays commissioned and directed by Nicholas Kent for the Tricycle's *The Bomb: A Partial History*, one of the events included in the 'The Tricycle Goes Nuclear' programme (January-May 2012). John is also the name of the character in *One Way Street*. Many characters in Greig's theatre share names, be it across different plays (Claire in *Cosmonaut* and *The Events* and Billy in *Europe* and *The Architect*), within the same play (Amy in *San Diego*), or in the shape of variations on the same name (Helena in *Stalinland* and *Midsummer*, Ellen in *Outlying Islands*, Elaine in *Brewers Fayre* and Elena in *Damascus*). A strong sense of evaporation of singularity, bleeding across and sameness is thereby suggested.

[119] In Suspect Culture's *Futurology: A Global Review* (Greig and Rebellato 2007) and Greig's *Kyoto* the concern with the environment (climate change) is explored again.

is the damage to the environment, local economies and equality of everyday lives in the wake of neoliberalism and late capitalist expansion into globalisation" (2011: 217).

Although all those contexts are highly relevant to *Outlying Islands*, it seems pertinent to focus for a moment on 9/11 given the proximity of the event to the writing of the play and its premiere. While the plays discussed so far in this thesis were largely responding to the situation after the fall of the Berlin Wall (11/9), mostly on mainland Europe, a number of the plays examined in the sections that follow emerge from a post-9/11 scenario and open out on to other settings, including the fringes of the European continent. In relation to *Outlying Islands*, de Vos highlights the connection between 9/11 and birds: "the planes crashing into the Twin Towers are the birds of the twenty-first century" (forthcoming). Thus, *Outlying Islands* is a "Bird Play" not only for obvious reasons – in it ornithologists bird-watch and contribute to the bird census of an island including "fork-tail petrels, kittiwakes, guillemots and razorbills" (Cavendish 2002: 1154) – but also because birds may be viewed as a metaphor for planes in a post-9/11 context.

1.1. 9/11, Adornian Birds and Outlying Islands

Birds are practitioners of a perspective that is profusely present in Greig's work, i.e. the aerial perspective, which the playwright and/or his characters adopt from all sorts of heights – from orbits, space modules and planes to balconies, roofs and cliff tops. While the section on *Cosmonaut* focused on figures that occupy this perspective and orbit the Earth methodically, birds suggest a freer aerial perspective, opening up new views and trajectories and perhaps a more unrestricted interplay. This feature, added to the play's overall sense of abstraction and mythical dimension, warrants an exploration of the potential resonance of 9/11 in *Outlying Islands*. The play's sumptuous beginning, which exudes darker, incomprehensible forces, pictures a cliff – perhaps the one Robert, the

"ecstatic bird-man" (Nightingale 2002: 1151), will eventually jump off from. According to de Vos, Robert's suicide "call[s] to mind the iconic image of the falling man, a small black dot jumping from the towers [sic]" (forthcoming). In tune with the bird-plane correlation, John wants to become an air-force pilot (see Greig 2002b: 85). Additionally, the play describes the behaviour of the fork-tailed petrel in terms of aggression: "they fly into each other – they attack each other" (Greig 2002b: 60). It also refers to "*[a] thousand seabirds*" (Greig 2002b: 9 and 54) that are not only to be studied by the researchers, but also to "crash and thump on to the ground" (Greig 2002b: 60). Disturbing descriptions such as these suggest that it is not a huge leap of the imagination to think of war and, in particular, humans attacking each other and planes crashing.

While it seems important to contextualise *Outlying Islands* as "a spectre of 9/11" (de Vos forthcoming), my central line of argument is that birds host a sense of Adornian dialectics and exile. In relation to the former, the image of birds crashing into each other and on to the ground may perhaps have an affective impact on spectators through its juxtaposition with the birds' beauty and elegant flight. As regards the latter, *Outlying Islands* emphasises that the birds do not live on the island; they just stop over on it (see Greig 2002b: 22).[120] Birds do not feel at home; they migrate as a way of life. They live on journeys with stops along the way. In this sense, birds serve as a metaphor for Greig's theatre itself, where living on an endless journey instead of suggesting an unequivocal meaning of home is central. It could be said that birds have no place. Non-coincidentally, Robert, the "birdman" (Greig 2002b: 41), irately says during his argument with Kirk: "I have no 'place'. / Don't 'place' me" (Greig 2002b: 48). The highlighted bird in *Outlying Islands*, "Leach's fork-tailed petrel'. *Oceanodroma leucorhoa* […] lives at sea and only

[120] Islands feature in the play as spaces where the hidden can be kept, which brings to mind the tragedy of migrants arriving at islands such as Lesbos in Greece and Lampedusa in Italy, where they can more easily be kept out of sight.

makes landfall to breed on outlying islands" (Greig 2002b: 21-22) every two days. Apart from the sky, one such outlying island is the main setting of *Outlying Islands*.

The play's imaginary island location might be somewhere between North Rhona off the West coast of Scotland, "some 40 miles north of Lewis" (Rimmer 2002: 1152), and a real anthrax testing site such as Gruinard.[121] The island, fluctuating between an unspecific imaginary island, North Rhona and a real testing site, also evokes other islands through intertextual reference. As Greig states in the Acknowledgements to *Outlying Islands*, *Island Going* (1949) by Robert Atkinson was "*the inspiration and starting point for the play*" (2002b: 5). Describing Atkinson's bird-watching trips in the 1930s, Louise Rimmer states that "[t]he book has accounts of two Cambridge students journeying to the Outer Hebrides over 10 years, in search of a rare bird" (2002: 1152). Secondly, a series of critics mention William Golding's 1954 novel *Lord of the Flies* as an intertext (see Gardner 2002: 1152; Brown 2002: 1152 and Bassett 2002: 1154). Thirdly, Greig tells Leo Benedictus: "[w]hen I did *Outlying Islands*, it drew on history, sort of D.H. Lawrence drama" (2005: 13). Finally, *The Tempest*, a recurrent Shakesperean intertext in Greig's work, most notably in *Savage Reminiscence*, is also evoked in *Outlying Islands*, not only via the setting and recurrent claims on the island by both Kirk and Ellen (see Greig 2002b: 39 *et passim*), but also in terms of the dark atmosphere (see Greig 2002b: 9 *et passim*) and sense of enchantment – "something draws us towards outlying islands. Some force pulls" (Greig 2002b: 9), says Robert in Scene One.[122]

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[121] The importance of eroticism in the play – Holdsworth describes it as "intense, atmospheric and erotic" (2007: 138) – and its connection with nature and sex as both sacred and profane might have been inspired by North Rhona's cross: Greig was "intrigued by North Rhona's peculiar cross, which is penetrated with three holes and engraved with enormous male genitals" (Rimmer 2002: 1153). This ties in with the use of hole theory in the present thesis.

[122] In a sense, some of Greig's work is a continuous rewriting of *The Tempest*, which he directed in his second year as a student at Bristol University. While *Savage Reminiscence* is clearly a sequel to Shakespeare's play, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (see Greig 2016a) and *The Events* are much freer rewritings (see, for instance, the epigraph to *The Events* or the reference to an aboriginal boy). In turn, *Outlying Islands* and *Savage Reminiscence* are closely linked in intertextual terms. In *Savage Reminiscence*, Miranda is mainly concerned about measuring the island and Caliban about passion. Kirk and John share Miranda's focus on

Greig's theatre is interested in both urban and rural settings and beyond – *Cosmonaut*, for instance, combines urban, rural and outer space settings. Yet it would appear that inhospitable rural places and islands, particularly Scottish, are central to the playwright's imagination. The Scottish island of Skye is referred to by Claire and Keith in *Cosmonaut*, the West Highlands are the main setting in *Victoria* and also feature in *San Diego*, and an indeterminate Scottish island is the setting of *The Events* over a decade later, among other instances. Interestingly, Holdsworth describes an island as a "contained space" (2007: 128). Contained spaces are anathema in Greig's dramaturgy. The models on the table and the containers that Joe transports in *The Architect* can be looked at as contained spaces. *Cosmonaut* begins by highlighting contained spaces – the space module and the house in Edinburgh, firmly locked and with its blinds shut. The aircraft in *San Diego* is also a contained space. The shed in *The American Pilot* is a contained space. The list goes on.

The island in *Outlying Islands* can be thought of as a contained space in many ways. The island is 'made' a contained space by its very remoteness from the mainland and because it is surrounded by water. Perceptions of the island as a result of its remoteness are relative: it means escape and retreat for those coming from the mainland, but it is a prison-house for its inhabitants. However, it soon becomes a jail for John and triggers an extreme form of escape (suicide) for Robert. By selling it, Kirk wants to use it as a means to escape his social status. Ellen yearns to escape its boredom, but after Kirk's death it becomes a space of sexual liberation in communion with nature (Fig. 5).

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exploration and measurement. Kirk and Ellen's claims on the island and Robert's primitivism are reminiscent of Caliban in *The Tempest* and *Savage Reminiscence*. Robert, like Caliban in *Savage Reminiscence*, devotes his time to "the study of maps" (Greig 2002b: 9). The savagery of *Savage Reminiscence* – for instance, Miranda's rape by Caliban – is also present in *Outlying Islands* – for example, the (accidental) killing of Kirk. Like Caliban and Sycorax in *The Tempest*, the previous inhabitants of the island in *Outlying Islands* were pagans (see Greig 2002b: 13), in contrast with Kirk (meaning 'church' in Scots): "Through Kirk a particular Puritan Protestant world view is expressed, which holds firmly to the view of [sic] human nature tends to degeneracy, and that God has ordained the natural world is for human use" (Wallace 2013: 82).

Fig. 5: Kirk and Robert when the old man is about to die in *Outlying Islands* (Traverse, dir. Philip Howard, 2002). © Traverse Theatre Archive. Reproduced by permission.

In addition, the island as enclosed and pristine space inflects the play's setting with a sense of being a condensed microcosm. Paul Taylor links the play's setting to the theatre itself, to the space of the stage: "AN ISLAND as a heightened microcosm [...] where the normal rules of the mainland can be suspended for a daring social experiment" and "admirably suited to the microcosmic space of the stage" (2002: 1153). All of this was heightened by the stage design in the Traverse production of the play. Sierz, for instance, remarks on the "low ceiling" (2002: 1155), which reinforced the microcosmic setting's containment. Curiously, Howard has directed a series of plays by Greig that mostly focus on enclosed spaces: the abandoned station in *Europe*, the Blacks' household in *The Architect*, the island in *Outlying Islands*, the room in *Being Norwegian* and the hotel foyer in *Damascus*.

Finally, the play emphasises the island as contained space by making the small chapel central. Ultimately, the small, the micro or the minimal works as a resonant scenario to evoke big topics, the macro scale involved in issues such as the Second World War,

nuclear war, 9/11, the War on Terror, environmental damage and globalisation. In Holdsworth's words, "[a]n island setting can offer a contained space to explore the challenges of globalization, environmental issues and the breakdown of civil society" (2007: 128).

Although contained in those pivotal ways, there are myriad senses of unboundedness that can be identified in *Outlying Islands*. Crucially, while containment contributes to making *Outlying Islands* a globalisation play thematically, unboundedness makes *Outlying Islands* a globalisation play formally/conceptually. To begin with, the island is a space on the edge, where transgressions are recurrently attempted and achieved. For instance, birds constantly fly in and out of the island. Robert, called "birdman" by Kirk (Greig 2002b: 41; see also Greig 2002b: 26 *et passim*), crosses the threshold between the island and the sea/sky by jumping off a cliff into the storm. The sea and severe weather conditions violently hit the island throughout, which threatens its stability as contained space. Taking all of this into account, I will argue that the key element that compromises the island's containment and reveals it as a holed, porous space is water.

1.2. Water Rules

1.2.1. Layers of Tidal Movement

Rimmer quotes Greig on water, as follows:

> There's a speech in the play about the whole world being water, […]. I remember thinking it when walking in the Highlands on a very wet day. Scotland is a very watery country and I was deep in mist, burns and loch country, utterly soaked. And I just thought: the air is water, the land is water, my body is mostly water. I find that very *emotional*. (2002: 1153; emphasis added)

Greig's comment about the pervasiveness of water clearly has an affective dimension. What I call 'the affect of water' is the sense of connection produced by the ubiquitous presence of water: water is the main component of virtually everything and simultaneously crisscrosses

everything, thus undoing clear-cut boundaries and demarcations. As Rebellato puts it, "[t]he sea and the sky seem emblematic of those things that link us all" (2016: 11). The centrality of water (and the sky, which reflects the Earth's water) is reinforced by the reference to the colour blue in *Outlying Islands* (see Greig 2002b: 77) and also in Greig's work in general.[123] If almost the totality of the earth is water, the element of water and evocations of the colour blue in *Outlying Islands* may be read as signalling a sense of sameness, of commonality. In brief, water foregrounds a sense of interconnectedness in *Outlying Islands*.

The emotion produced by the affect of water might have an a/effect on spectators, who themselves are mostly water too. The movement and sound of waves washing onto the shore in the play might inundate perception both visually and aurally, thus flooding the theatrical situation with a sense of liquidity.[124] Haptically, even touch might be involved, given that our bodies *are* water too. In this sense, water seems to awaken not just perceptions, but a tactile/tangible sense of physical connection too. My suggestion is that against this beautifully woven tidal movement of the water washing up and down the shore, *Outlying Islands* inscribes a horde of dialectical structures. In other words, with this (perceptual/physical) tidal movement as background, the play fluctuates between many different conceptual poles.

No matter the phrasings they use, numerous critics have observed a bouncing between conflicting poles in *Outlying Islands*. In McMillan's words, "life and death, violence and tenderness, absurdity and cruelty and intense desire, sweep across the stage like tidal waves, carrying with them some of the most critical political and moral questions humanity faces at the beginning of the new millennium" (2002: 1151). McMillan also notes

[123] For instance, in *Cosmonaut* blue is mostly what the cosmonauts see from above, water composing three quarters of the surface of planet Earth.
[124] Unsurprisingly, given the intensity and centrality of sound, *Outlying Islands* originated as a radio play and was broadcast on BBC Radio 3 (see Rodosthenous 2015: 62).

"tensions between social obligation and individualism, humanism and environmentalism, morality and desire, religion and paganism, tradition and modernity, the knowing voyeurism of modern media culture and the relative innocence of life without the watching eye" (2002: 1151). Spencer suggests a "veering between the comic and the poetic" (2002: 1153). On his part, Sierz notes that "[a]t first the main stimulus is cerebral, with ideas about nature and nurture bouncing between Robert and John, but gradually a more emotional core is revealed" (2002: 1154).[125]

Against the background presented so far, this section now turns to exploring how the play is built across several and at times overlapping layers of tidal movement. The first layer foregrounds an oscillation between banal, quotidian situations and moments of beauty and/or the extraordinary. The second layer juxtaposes what Robert and John represent: "two complete[ly] different attitudes" (Wallace 2013: 81) – passion and irrationality and coldness and rationality respectively, among others. The third layer unveils a tidal movement within characters themselves. As usual in Greig's plays, as the play advances the opposing poles within the three layers become increasingly blurred. In addition, the affective pervasiveness of water and the peaceful fluctuation fostered by its rise and fall, the conflicting poles identified by the reviewers, and the layers of tidal movement do not merely constitute a restful soundscape or a whimsical means of presenting opposing views and ideas.

1.2.2. Tides at Work: Breakages and Floods

Although the play opens with an initially soothing tidal movement, "*[t]he sound of water on a shore*" (Greig 2002b: 9), it does not take long for "*[t]he crash of the sea on rocks*" (Greig 2002b: 9) to appear, the contrast constituting a potential visual/aural moment

[125] Examples of fluctuation also abound in the play, including "boats back and forth" (Greig 2002b: 33) and "the breast rising and falling" (Greig 2002b: 67).

of Adornian dialectics. As this clash announces, the oscillation between opposing ideas in the play produces numerous ruptures. In *Outlying Islands* “everything is on the edge” (Gardner 2002: 1152); everything involves “huge clashing forces” (McMillan 2002: 1151). Ultimately, the tidal wave movements within the different layers are responsible for the escalating dialectical tension. Simultaneously, the multi-layered dialectical structure of the play is constantly punctuated by more or less explicit breakages or images of fracture and/or explosion.

These ruptures might trigger a disruption of the spectator’s sense of rational reality, which is accentuated by the play’s perceptually heightened scenario. Some of the explicit examples of rupture, whose intensity is reinforced by the remote island being a microcosm, include an incident with paraffin, other explosions (which either take place onstage or are alluded to), the talk of anthrax or the broken door. That means that the play’s structure is also aesthethically disturbed from the very start: there is a carefully built formal structure – a triple dialectic – that is itself cracked by those repeated explosions and breakages, which brings about a powerfully affective flooding of space with water. Hence the title of the present subsection.

The first thing Robert does upon arrival on the island is go and explore its unspoiled beauties. In contrast, in Scene Two, John and Kirk are engaged in the (seemingly) banal effort of trying to fix the broken door (first layer). The image of the malfunctioning door is vital to the play. The word ‘door’ is used more than forty times in the play, not counting elliptical references. Another pivotal element that haunts *Outlying Islands* is ‘blood’ (see Greig 2002b: 10 *et passim*), sometimes accompanied by ‘door’ – “[b]loody door” (Greig 2002b: 96). Blood is a liquid element; it evokes war, and two out of five characters die violently in *Outlying Islands*. Recalling the discussion of Bauman’s liquid modernity in the introduction to this thesis, where it was argued that liquid, solid and gaseous forces remain

in dialectical tension, allusions to solidity and gas also pervade the play. The former go from the ironic – given that it breaks all the time – "[t]hat door is solid" (Greig 2002b: 30), to "[Ellen]'s been a brick" (Greig 2002b: 105), or even John's comment that he is trying to "make this place watertight" (Greig 2002b: 28). This, however, does not prevent solidity from cracking and/or liquidity from breaking loose. References to gas or gaseous states include letting off steam, being "blinking gassed" (Greig 2002b: 25), cigarette smoke and mist.

After a revitalising swim, Robert asks John, "[h]ave you seen the cliffs yet?" (Greig 2002b: 14), to which John replies, "[t]he door's stuck" (Greig 2002b: 14), and asks Robert for help repairing it, which Robert is uninterested in (combination of layers one and two). In this everyday context, an accidental explosion occurs with the paraffin when they try to light the fire (layer one) – "a flash of fire like a premonition of war" (McMillan 2002: 1151). John resonantly says, "[y]ou blew us up", and Robert replies, "[h]air and skin burned" (Greig 2002b: 17). In short, the micro explosion inside the outlying island's small chapel evokes a world at war. It may be relevant to note that during his trip to Palestine in summer 2001, Greig had a close experience of what it is like to be in a conflict zone. He describes how "very exposed" (2008a: 209) he felt as he recounts his experience of watching a play in INAD theatre company's "converted lock-up garage" in the village of Beit-Jala opposite "the Israeli settlement of Giloh", the theatre itself having recently experienced "tank shells and sniper fire" (Greig 2008a: 208-9) in the context of the intifada. The recurrent references to explosions in *Outlying Islands* might evoke that attack on the theatre – floor "covered in rubble", "bits of roof fallen down" and walls "pockmarked with bullet holes" (Greig 2008a: 209-10) – previous to his visit. John later imitates the sound of explosives twice (see Greig 2002b: 41), again gesturing towards full-scale war by enacting several miniature 'wars'. In sum, the explosions in *Outlying Islands* may be read as oblique

references to wars across time and around the globe; they evoke the devastation of (the impending) war (the Second World War) as well as its potential eruption in our lives, as it symbolically breaks out in the characters' lives.

After the paraffin explosion Robert and John also mention soldiers, another allusion perhaps to the imminent Second World War: "Shaking – raging – fear comes after – which is what it must be like for a soldier – under fire – because we nearly died. Nearly" (Greig 2002b: 18). From his rational perspective, John tells passionate Robert (layer two), "[y]ou don't think, Robert, that it might be wise – from now on – to at least try to think before you act", and adds, "you bloody irresponsible bugger" (Greig 2002b: 18) – a reference to blood and its liquidity that adds one more layer to Robert being wet from swimming, that is, it foreshadows his death. In connection to the water argument presented above, other specific references to the element include dampness, being wet, drinking whisky (in many languages 'the *water* of life'), being soaked, rain, the sea, and crying (see 2002b: 14 *et passim*).

After this symbolic – albeit potentially lethal – irruption of war, Ellen appears. The everyday situation of meeting someone for the first time is juxtaposed to the beauty of the bird and its chick found by Robert (see Greig 2002b: 20). Robert makes the bird fly, which occasions Ellen's lament that the chick may die without its mother (see Greig 2002b: 22). Another tidal movement is provided by John and Robert's contrasting viewpoints. They have just reached the island and John, all down-to-earth "civilized morality" (Greig 2002b: 28), wants to "go home" (Greig 2002b: 24), while Robert, enchanted by the beauty of the place, brutally replies, "[y]ou could be dead next year", "[s]ent off to some blinking foxhole and blinking gassed or something" (Greig 2002b: 25).

The gloom is lifted by John saying that a fag makes everything alright (see Greig 2002b: 25) and Robert telling John the story of the bird he found while John was away

looking for their kit. Concerning the first layer, the turmoil of war is placed alongside an everyday feel-good fag moment. As regards the second, while Robert focuses his attention on the birds, John is preoccupied with the practicalities of their stay on the island. Similarly, Robert's concern with the beauty of the village being built underground contrasts with John's worrying about the door again (see Greig 2002b: 26). Another divergence between Robert and John (layer two) is highlighted by Robert's theory of gamblers and savers: "I'm a gambler. You're a saver" (Greig 2002b: 26). Providing an instance of layer three, Robert's coarse bluntness stands in tension with his own beautiful ideas about the connections between nature and humanity: "[t]he cliffs and the burrows are related to each other. Like men and women" (Greig 2002b: 27).

Robert represents sex, fire (he accidentally provokes the paraffin explosion) and passion, while John embodies responsibility, aloofness and pragmatism (layer two). Robert's open talk about sex and desire is embarrassing and unpleasant to John (see Greig 2002b: 28-29), who thinks it will bring them into trouble. The fact that they end up fighting for Ellen is, in Robert's opinion, unexceptional; in John's, it lacks rationality (see Greig 2002b: 29). Later, Robert claims that "[t]here's always something waiting to be uncovered" (Greig 2002b: 36), while John is concerned with surveying facts, taking notes and writing up conclusions. Showcasing layer two again, Robert talks of opinion (see Greig 2002b: 31) and John, in contrast, of "observable fact" (Greig 2002b: 31).

Moving on to the dinner and offering an example of layer one, Robert says, "Mr. Kirk, [the island has] barely been touched by humans" (Greig 2002b: 33), which contrasts with Kirk's curt description of the ornithologists' activity on the island: "[c]ounting birds" and preparing for war (Greig 2002b: 33). John tries to explain less derogatorily that they are doing an "inventory – of the natural contents of the island" (Greig 2002b: 33). Again the broken door appears in Kirk's reply – "although you broke the door and who's to tell what

else you'll break" (Greig 2002b: 34) – counteracting John's comment (layer one). The theme of breaking continues beyond doors as Robert tells Kirk: "I think you can trust John, sir. John thinks girls break if you touch them" (Greig 2002b: 39). Like in *Cosmonaut*, the trope of breaking is central, yet here it becomes more explicit and varied – the breaking of things, the environment and people.

Soon after, more signs of disintegration appear. Recalling war again, John says, "stuff explosives up a sheep's arse" (Greig 2002b: 40) and "Achtung! Gottinhimmel!" (Greig 2002b: 41), and then imitates the sound of explosives once more. By now, with Kirk drunk and Robert and John about to find out about the imminent devastation of the island, chaos escalates. Kirk comes back and asks, "[h]ow many of my fowl are to die?" (Greig 2002b: 41), so he can calculate his losses (see Greig 2002b: 42), which shows how important profit is for him. In response to Kirk's hints and slippages, Robert explains, "[t]he ministry's intention, Mr. Kirk, is to bomb the island with anthrax in order to see how many living things will be wiped out. And for how long" (Greig 2002b: 44).

Robert indirectly provoking Kirk's heart attack is followed by hundreds of birds reaching the island, an instance of a first-layer tidal movement. The birds, Ellen says, are "[f]alling out of the sky" and "throwing themselves at the ground" (Greig 2002b: 54), again a hauntingly beautiful, yet achingly violent image that may perhaps be read as an allusion to aerial war – in particular perhaps to kamikaze suicide attacks and other casualties resulting of aerial battles during the Second World War. The double disruption represented by Kirk's death and the birds plunging on to the ground is reinforced at the beginning of Scene Three by "*[t]he sea crashing against rock*" (Greig 2002b: 54). Bringing up layer one once more, the "[b]linking door's stuck again" (Greig 2002b: 63). In sum, seemingly clear-cut dialectical fluctuation is by now thoroughly holed and destabilised by images of death, falling, breaking and crashing.

Even John shows signs of disintegration as lostness crops up in a 'solid' character such as him. He says, "I'm in a daze. Lost, a bit" (Greig 2002b: 64), and according to Ellen, he is "lost-looking" (Greig 2002b: 73). As John loses himself progressively, Robert's obsession with the island grows: "[a] whole, pristine, unobserved, unsullied, pure environment. Only for us" (Greig 2002b: 66). The problematic door is "stuck" again (Greig 2002b: 69). Solidity, in stark contrast to liquidity, appears once more. During Kirk's funeral eulogy, Ellen says to the boys: "[n]ow you must look like *stones*. / *Still* and in *heavy* consideration of God" (Greig 2002b: 76; emphases added). This, of course, diverges from the predominance of liquidity and the paganism of the island, especially now that Kirk is dead.

As the hearts becoming entwined in the American folk song "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" (1913), sung by Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy in *Way Out West* (1937), and which Ellen, Robert and John sing during the eulogy, Scene Five takes the form of two interlaced narratives, namely, the dialogue between Robert and John and Ellen's reading Robert's notebook and recounting her thoughts – an instance of multilocational narrative interweaving.[126] And yet, again, despite the exercise of fusion, connection or merging through narrative, the broken door, which John cannot open (see Greig 2002b: 79), continues to work as a reminder of breakages past and the ones that are yet to come. The broken door, the numerous explosions, the sea crashing on the rocks and the recurrent references to blood gesture towards the idea of water leaking everywhere. John, who has been trying to keep things watertight and keep himself dry throughout, is wet now, "soaked to the buggering bones" (Greig 2002b: 78).

When Robert and John come back from the storm, the door cannot be opened again (see Greig 2002b: 79). While John focuses on the mundane – "I was too numb to think.

[126] Although the association of "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine" with Laurel and Hardy brings comic undertones to the end of the scene, the song functions simultaneously as another reminder of war, as it was written a year before the outbreak of the First World War.

Except bacon and eggs" (Greig 2002b: 86) – and his socks are soaked, Robert, inspired by the weather outside, replies, "[t]he whole world's water…the world's water…Nine-tenths of our bodies is made of water. The substance of us is water. I thought…so little of us is solid we might as well be made of mist. Mist clinging to hollow bones" (Greig 2002b: 87). This is a combination of layers one and two, because John is concerned with the impracticalities and inconveniences of having been out in the storm, while Robert offers a pseudo-philosophical account of his experience in the rain – by not just merging with the elements but feeling as if he were part of the element of water, he becomes one with the world, thoroughly connected to it. Robert could be described as an 'affective character', in the sense that he may perhaps best be approached via affect theories. Crucially, this poetic speech is reminiscent of Greig's comment on water, quoted above.

As the storm and Robert's suicide get closer, references to blood and breakage appear more insistently: "[t]he sheer bloody irresponsibility of the man [Robert's]" (Greig 2002b: 91). Ellen adds to the ongoing multi-layered bouncing at play: her claims to ownership of the island seem to contradict her hatred of it and her wanting leave on the next boat (layer three). Refracting a conflicted identity like a horde of other characters in Greig's work, she passionately hates the place yet she holds on to it atavistically as her property. There are other things broken beyond doors and people. Ellen says: "I have broken the limits of decency" (Greig 2002b: 95), which contradicts her liberal outlook (layer three). References to the "[b]loody door" (Greig 2002b: 96) augment as more death approaches. When John thinks Ellen is after Robert, he explodes – his "[r]ise with him. / Rise above and watch me disappear" (Greig 2002b: 96) offers a pained aerial perspective, as if Robert was indeed a bird and took Ellen with him. However, Ellen confesses that he wants them both. This is followed by a scene of nudity and sex where Ellen, after undressing, asks an inexperienced John to do so too.

As Rodosthenous remarks, “Greig had used full-frontal nudity as a recurring motif in his earlier plays (*The Architect* (1996), *The Cosmonaut’s Last Message to the Woman He Once Loved in the Former Soviet Union* (1999), *The Speculator* (1999) and *Victoria* (2000))” (2012: 66). In my analysis, I take nudity, like water, as a signifier of sameness and vulnerability, an element that “drops [us] into an erotics of connection and commonality” (Dolan 2005: 20). In the case of *Outlying Islands*, it powerfully highlights the here and now of the performance too, something Greig is persistently interested in. Rodosthenous points out that “[w]atching the same production in Canada, Regan Danly (2006) claimed that the nudity was more ‘distracting than affective’ and commented that it only served to ‘remind us that it [was] merely a simulation’, concluding that the ‘nudity amounted to a gimmick, taking us entirely off the island and back into the theatre’” (2012: 68). I would agree that the nudity in the play makes the theatricality of the moment tangible, but I would contend that, far from being distracting or gimmicky, it does so in a powerfully affective way. Nudity brings attention to ourselves, to our own bodies, and in so doing, it affectively highlights our interconnectedness as human beings.

With Ellen and John naked and kissing, Robert comes back when and says, “I’ve been watching [the birds]. In the storm. They still fly – it’s as if they’re part of it” (Greig 2002b: 99), which connects Robert and the birds via his previous reflection on the idea that we are water, triggered by the storm. He then leaves and observes Ellen and John from the outside making love, only to come back in again and continue talking about his fascination with birds, whose mode of life evokes the Adornian notion of exile: “[t]hey land on the island, but they don’t live on it. It’s a landfall but it’s not their home” (Greig 2002b: 102). Non-coincidentally, Robert’s bird-like ideal is to “[depart] from the land” (Greig 2002b: 103), and hence from time (see Greig 2002b: 102), which is exactly what he does in his last fall – *Outlying Islands* is pervaded with references to falling, especially towards the end

(Greig 2002b: 47 *et passim*). Robert's 'spiritual' ideals also include being "[l]imiteless", mirroring the feature of unboundedness discussed in the thesis's theoretical framework in connection to characterisation (and time and location too) in globalisation plays. The play 'kills' the idealistic character – as is the case with some of the characters that desired communication in *Cosmonaut* (Casimir, Oleg and Claire) but not before putting forward his liberating yet tragic sense of "transcendental oneness" (Wallace 2013: 85) with nature, birds, beauty and the elements.

It is uncertain whether Robert had mental issues before arriving in the island or whether he decides to commit suicide out of love (he could be in love with Ellen, with John or with both) and/or guilt – he weeps when he finds John and Ellen sleeping together and says he has been cursing himself as a result of Kirk's death (see Greig 2002b: 66). In any case, his suicide contradicts his Darwinian philosophy by reversing the idea of survival as a merely physical matter – our minds are fragile too.[127] It is through Greig's theatre's characteristic multilocational and multi-character interweaving of narratives – that is, John talking to the Captain who comes to pick them up some weeks later and Ellen's monologue (delivered while she contemplates the cliff Robert jumped from) – that the spectator learns explicitly about Robert's first and last fall. Indeed, when rereading or watching it again, one might realise the stage direction "*Dawn. / The sea crashing against rocks. / Thousand of seabirds. / Wind. / A bird rising. / A bird falling*" (Greig 2002b: 103) alludes to Robert's jump.

Outlying Islands's holed multilayered dialectic interplay goes hand in hand with the play's very conscious experimentation with one sense in particular, sight, which powerfully mingles with hearing, smell and touch. In addition to the pervasive image of water explored

[127] Robert supports the idea of "humankind as just another animal species fighting to survive and reproduce" (McMillan 2002: 1151). In that line, he considers John a "sexually active male" (Greig 2002b: 28) too; thus, in the normal course of things, they should be fighting for Ellen. Robert persists in his "Darwinist thesis that [Ellen] will seek out the best sexual mate" (Holdsworth 2007: 142). In addition, for instance, Robert says that birds think that "[w]e're just a larger variety of sheep" (Greig 2002b: 26).

above, I would now like to suggest a further way in which Greig's *Outlying Islands* undoes the boundaries between seemingly different spaces.

1.3. Acts of Watching

Traditional definitions of voyeurism have highlighted notions of deviance. Like Rodosthenous, I focus on its pleasurable dimension – not necessarily pathological – but I do so in the specific context of globalisation. At its simplest, voyeurism implies "getting access to forbidden visual imagery" (Rodosthenous 2015: 4) in search for a satisfying experience. In the context of globalisation, it is worth emphasising that "the excitement of the exchange between voyeur and voyeur-ed […] is increasingly present in popular cultural discourse (such as [big-brother reality-show] television and print [and social] media)" (Rodosthenous 2015: 8), to which may be added surveillance, the pornographic industry, and even "the daily mini-performances we perform" (Rodosthenous 2015: 3). Although not necessarily always involving "watching explicitly acts which are private and hidden" (Rodosthenous 2015: 3), voyeurism [as a cult to looking and being looked] lies at the very core of contemporary global societies.

In *Outlying Islands*, whenever a character spies on another or engages in observing, she becomes complicit with the spectator. This implies that while watching and being watched is another dialectic that the play importantly sets up, a third party is always involved and a complex interplay of looks and gazes takes place. Apart from water, the island, birds, the door, blood and explosions, if there is a group of words that is recurrently present in *Outlying Islands* it pertains to the field of looking, seeing and watching. Apparently innocent expressions like "[l]ooks in good shape", "[l]et's have a look", "you see" (Greig 2002b: 24), "[w]atch yourself" (Greig 2002b: 28), "come and see", "[w]hat a sight" (Greig 2002b: 54; see also 2002b: 62, 68) or, at the very start of the play, in an

instance of direct address in a poetic register which might include the audience, "[w]e cast our eyes back to the far shore from which we've come" (Greig 2002b: 9), are too numerous and indeed significant to ignore. This is proof to the complexities inherent to "act[s] of watching" in *Outlying Islands*, which according to Rodosthenous, "develop[…] a predominant role" (2012: 62). This section engages with various aspects of looking raised by *Outlying Islands*.

One function of acts of watching in *Outlyting Islands* is to draw attention to "[its] constructedness and theatricality" (de Vos forthcoming), which is aimed at highlighting "the presence of the audience watching the performers' bodies performing on stage" (Rodosthenous 2015: 22). In other words, *Outlying Islands* demonstrates Greig's interest in exploring mechanisms that recognise the audience's presence and their participation, this time through an emphasis on the act of looking. As he claims, "I like to remind the audience that we are in a theatre and that this story is being told in the present moment" (2011a: 10). From the experience of looking at the boys as "a mere spectator just watching, [Ellen] develops into a [conscious] performer being watched" (de Vos forthcoming). Robert recounts his experience of looking at Ellen after John comes back: "It's fascinating to watch her so close up", "[s]he moves with an acute awareness of being watched" and "every step she took was considered as to the eyes watching" (Greig 2002b: 29). Drawing attention to "the daily mini-performances we perform" (Rodosthenous 2015: 3), this time in a self-consciously theatrical setting, Robert adds that "[e]very movement of hers is arranged into a small performance for the spectator. When the performance is over she drops her eyes to the floor and awaits applause" (Greig 2002b: 29).

At the same time, the play also asks questions about "the politics of seeing and not seeing, being seen and not being seen" (de Vos forthcoming) in a global context. In this respect, the fact that we do not see Robert falling off the cliff is perhaps a reversal of the

millions of viewers that saw the World Trade Center collapse. The absence of the tragic image opens up a space for the spectator to imagine and seek (other kinds of) knowledge. Because Ellen has eczema, she says her hands "[f]eel like claws. When they're looked at" (Greig 2002b: 20). Does this mean that if they were not looked at, they would not feel like claws? Rather than being merely anecdotal, and judging from Greig's work at large, there seems to be the suggestion here that looking at something produces its status as such, i.e. it creates it. Put differently, if there is no visibility, there is no existence. Indicative perhaps of an early example of *zāhir/bātin*, Robert wants "[t]o see that which is normally not seen" (Greig 2002b: 30), in other words, to see what is there but normally remains invisible (*bātin*). In utter dialectical contrast, instead of seeing, watching or observing, John is more interested in (the more detached) looking, surveying and measuring (see Greig 2002b: 30) – the pure *zāhir* of things.

Followed by John's kicking of the chapel door at the beginning of the play, "*[t]he door-frame cracks and splinters*" (Greig 2002b: 10). This initial cracking of the door frame as threshold might be read as a symbolic shattering of theatre both as an enclosed box where spectators are supposed to watch performers as they sit comfortably in the dark – a position the play troubles through its own use of darkness (both literal and in the lighting design of the piece) – and as a 'pure' genre. In addition, bearing in mind that "[m]ost theories regarding the spectator and voyeurism stem from cinematic disciplines" (Rodosthenous 2015: 9), the mention of a 'frame' can be connected to the play's "recourse to filmic devices in order to demonstrate [its] constructedness and theatricality" (de Vos forthcoming).[128] In this respect, it is crucial to note that "*Ellen appears in the doorway"* (Greig 2002b: 18) when she comes in for the first time – that is, she is framed, as if about to

[128] Greig has written a series of screenplays for the features *Nightlife* (dir. Patrick Harkins, 1996) and *Vinyan* (dir. Fabrice Du Welz, 2009), for the short film *At the End of the Sentence* (dir. Marisa Zanotti, 2005) and for the documentary *M8* (dir. Shiona McCubbin, 2002). Some of Greig's screenplays remain unmade, such as *The Darkest Hour*, *Uncommitted Crimes*, *Blackwaterside*, *A Complicated Kindness* as well as five short films co-written with Marisa Zanotti, *BlackBird Rise*.

step into a film. One of the first things she says to Robert and John is, “[l]ike minstrels you look. / Like off of a film” (Greig 2002b: 19). Once Kirk has died, reality acquires both a filmic quality – Ellen imagines she is inside a film with the boys: “Only now I’m in it. / With you two”, black-eyed Robert and lost-looking John (Greig 2002b: 73) – and a dream-like texture – she dreams of a bird/Robert “seeing into” her (Greig 2002b: 60). The ‘reality’ of the play often merges and becomes muddled with a sense that the three main protagonists are immersed in a film. While Dorothy wants attention from Joe and Martin and Billy talk about cinema in *The Architect*; Nastasja thinks she will write a play about the story of her life that will be made “into a worldwide film” (Greig 2002a: 265) in *Cosmonaut*; and Evie wants to become a film star in *The American Pilot*; Ellen fancies herself inside a film or pictures herself being watched (even by herself) – she (meta)fictionalises her life. When Robert is staring at the couple making love, Ellen says, “like film stars we are, boy. / *Made* film stars by his gull eyes” (Greig 2002b: 101; emphasis added). Here, it is not just about the interplay of gazes but importantly about something being created through looking – that is, *what we do* to others (and to ourselves) by looking at them (or refusing to look).

Moving on to explicitly voyeuristic exchanges, it seems to be the pleasure afforded by voyeurism – “as an intense curiosity which generates a compulsive desire to observe people (un)aware in natural states or performing primal acts and leads to a heightening of pleasure for the viewer” (Rodosthenous 2015: 6) – that is central to *Outlying Islands*. Ellen is not just conscious of being seen, but actively watches others as they watch her and takes pleasure in both: “We observe her and she observes us” (Greig 2002b: 29). In empowering Ellen, as de Vos has observed (forthcoming), *Outlying Islands* dramatises the reversal of the voyeuristic male gaze (a notion first put forward by feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey; see Rodothenous 2015: 9) because the boys are Ellen’s object of desire; however,

perhaps influenced by film, TV or even celebrity culture, she objectifies herself too, as I shall note.[129] Given that the spectator is often dubbed 'her' in recent academic discourse, another way of reading this passage is that performers are observing spectators too. In Greig's later plays, this develops into bodies staying on stage throughout, even when they are not involved in the action, and (potentially) watching spectators (*The American Pilot*) and the choir looking like and looking at spectators (*The Events*).

To continue with the voyeuristic dimension, when Ellen looks at the pair from "*the open doorway*", "*[s]he sees John changing*" (Greig 2002b: 86). And accentuating the play's manifest voyeurism, we learn that Robert watches them both. "He watches me", says Ellen, to which John replies, "[h]e does the same to me" (Greig 2002b: 91). Ellen describes Robert's gaze as haptic: "[h]is eyes on me like hands. / Touching" (Greig 2002b: 91).[130] Highly conscious that she is being watched and finding it a pleasurable experience, Ellen says "he watched me rising" and then when "I went to bathe" (Greig 2002b: 92). This voyeuristic watching is actually reciprocal, as Ellen confesses to having watched Robert masturbating among the rocks, although she adds it might have been a dream (see Greig 2002b: 60).

Later we discover Robert has taken a picture of Ellen naked (see Greig 2002b: 94), which she asks John to look at: "I'm flesh. / Look at me" (Greig 2002b: 97). She repeats "[l]ook" as "*[s]he undresses*" (Greig 2002b: 98), after which they start making love. Robert interrupts them with another reference to watching: "I've been watching [the birds]" (Greig

[129] In this connection, Sylvia tells Nastasjs in *Cosmonaut*: "When men see life [...], they see it through their own eyes. They're missing from the picture, [...] like the camera in a film" and "[w]hen we see life, we're in the film, [...] being looked at" (Greig 2002a: 250). Sylvia adds: "Men think the entire world is contained in their eyes [...], they think you disappear when their eyes leave you" (Greig 2002a: 250). Ellen reverses the male-gaze theory outlined by Sylvia in *Cosmonaut* not only by seeing life through her own eyes and seeing the boys as if inside a film with herself, but also because she actively becomes a voyeur – metaphorically holding the camera, deciding who and what is inside.

[130] This example of "haptic *visuality*" (Marks 2000: 145; emphasis original) whereby "the eyes themselves function as organs of touch" (2000: 162) constitutes a variation on the standard account of hapticity in film theory (the spectator is 'touched' by what she sees); here Ellen is 'touched' by being looked at. The play also evokes the sense of smell: "it is almost possible to smell the sea salt" (Halliburton 2002: 1154).

2002b: 99). On another level, because Robert says “I’ve been watching them” (Greig 2002b: 99), the spectator, already engaged in the act of watching theatre entails, might recognise herself looking at Ellen and John too. When Robert leaves, Ellen’s “[l]et me see him seeing us” (Greig 2002b: 100) complicates the interplay of gazes even further, as on this occasion Ellen objectifies both Robert and John and herself. John, a virgin, confesses in a manner that might refer to Robert and/or, perhaps, also to the spectator (de Vos forthcoming): “It’s just a bit – off-putting – having a spectator. On a chap’s first time” (Greig 2002b: 101). “[C]aught” in Robert’s “gaze” (Greig 2002b: 101), Ellen describes Robert as a birdman – “[t]his bird’s look. / Gull Robert watching” (Greig 2002b: 101) – and effectively imagines/objectifies herself and John as actors in a film: “I’m watching myself. / Watching me and you” (Greig 2002b: 101). This imaginative interplay implies an ecstatic experience for Ellen and John: “Gone from ourselves” (Greig 2002b: 101).

1.4. Conclusive Remarks: Sen(se)suality and Beauty over Cruelty and Profit

This section has looked at the multifarious symbolism of birds and the significance of the play’s evocative location; it has discussed the element of water in the play and the play’s tidal (dialectical) movement; it has explored the breakages that punctuate the play and unsettle its three-fold tidal (dialectical) movement; and it has discussed the significance of acts of watching in *Outlying Islands*. As is hopefully becoming increasingly clear, Greig’s plays often present a formal structure that they explore intensively so as to, subsequently, start disrupting or breaking it. But *Outlying Islands* does not just disrupt its structure in myriad ways; it also very consciously unsettles the fourth wall by drawing attention to the fact that spectators are both looking and being looked at too, which may perhaps foster thought about the politics of looking in their own lives.

Outlying Islands is too beautiful to end this section on an exclusively negative note. Kirk's death, Robert's suicide and the imminent destruction of the island are crisscrossed with profoundly tender and comic moments like the sex scene between John and Ellen and the trio's singing together, the painful beauty of birds falling out of the sky and throwing themselves on to the ground, or the hopeful note suggested by a mother bird going back to the nest or temporary 'home' where she left her chick five days earlier. In other words, the presence of a series of brutal images and acts is tempered with the beauty of the landscape and arrestingly poetic moments. The value of connections between people and the environment and intangibles like tenderness is juxtaposed to profit, cruelty and calculation in *Outlying Islands*, "[t]enderness between people" being "nothing other than awareness of the possibility of relations without purpose" (Adorno 2005: 41).

This section has discussed water in terms of affect, because water in the play is inextricably linked to the idea of interconnectedness. The play tantalises or even arouses our senses as water laps on the shore, ceaselessly, or as the moon wanes and waxes. The sen(se)suality of *Outlying Islands* reaches spectators through the apprehension of the affect of water. The door continuously breaking highlights the possibility of cracks or holes occurring in perception. Inside and outside (of the island, the chapel, the characters' bodies, the space of the stage, the theatre, the spectators' bodies) are in touch with each other through those holes. Once open, of course, the Captain "[c]an't shut the bloody door" (Greig 2002b: 108) at the end of the play. Even if it is repaired, it looks as if it will always be broken, but as John says "[d]oesn't bloody matter now does it? Excuse my French" (Greig 2002b: 108). The door symbolically remains open, bloody and unrepaired at the end of the play. This ambivalent image recalls Kirk's and Robert's deaths and gestures both at the environmental devastation and the lives that the war is about to break, and at the possibility – or, indeed, the necessity – of continuing to live in a broken state, with the

trauma, the damage or the cracks, retaining the memories of atrocity yet opening up on to a sense of healing. In this sense, yes, it does bloody matter.

Beauty, youth, voyeurism, sensuousness, nature, sex and tenderness all temper the play's cruelty, violence, darkness and bleakness. Moreover, they point to alternative values in a world tainted by the pre-eminence of profit – crucially including the profit made as a result of war – and the abuse of the weakest (birds, nature, the two young researchers whom the ministry lied to, and a poor island tenant and his niece). The beauty of the play's images and writing contrasts with Kirk's pursuit of material gain, Robert's growing self-interest and the ministry's disregard for the destruction of nature. Although pervaded by violence and with a bleak ending, "the work pulses far more with sen[se]suality than it does with brutality" (Cavendish 2002: 1154). Indeed, "[p]erhaps it is in fact in the beauty of David's writing that we can continue to remind ourselves that there is value beyond calculation, beyond economic value" (Rebellato 2002b: xxi-xxii), value in the affective apprehension that 'all' is water, which inexorably connects us.

2. *San Diego*: Stitching up the Globe

A hundred years before *San Diego*'s premiere in 2003, Orville Wright first flew a petrol-engined plane, inaugurating the aerial age. Although this might just be a coincidence, what is certain is that *San Diego* is very much a play about the present global aerial age. However, the play's fascination with the aerial age does not eclipse its concern with its human consequences – social, economic, cultural and psychological. While air travel is vital to the global economy and has taken some of us to places where we would otherwise probably never have been, it has also become the epitome of consumerism, pollution and uneven mobility and is inextricably linked to aerial wars and terrorism, which *San Diego* presciently – the play is set in "[t]he summer of the year 2000" (Greig 2010a: n.p.) and

written before 9/11, "in the Spring of 2001" (Greig 2013b: 264) – registers through the filming of an airplane hijack. Furthermore, directed by Zanotti and Greig himself, *San Diego* abundantly and "playfully" (Greig 2013b: 262) alludes to autobiographical elements, tackles the issue of authorship and ethically addresses the world's blatant "uneven social [and psychological] development" (Zaroulia 2013a: 184) by engaging with phenomena such as labour – crucially focusing on precariousness and precarity – global migrations and disease. Indeed, "the ethical issues that arise from an increasingly global economy and culture" (Holdsworth 2003: 27) are paramount in *San Diego*. In relation to labour, *San Diego* includes a pilot, a stewardess, other airport staff, a playwright, a Quebecois biologist, a lawyer, a singer, conceptual consultants, nuns, a hooker, her assistant, actors, cops, sand shovellers, and meat industry and call centre workers.[131] Regarding global migration, some of the characters are immigrants while many others are variously on the move as "a consequence of globalisation […] but they are not tourists" (Zaroulia 2010: 270). Zaroulia describes "mobility […] as a fundamental experience in a globalised world" (2010: 264); indeed, "[about] 175 million people are living outside their native countries" (Bourriaud 2009: 18). As for disease, in this thesis the term is also understood as "'*dis*-ease'" or "physical or bodily [and indeed mental] dis-comfort" (Bauman 2010: 75; emphasis original) brought about by the pressures of the global age, which is perhaps the central theme explored in *San Diego*.

[131] The dimension of labour is highly relevant across the work studied in this thesis. In *Europe,* unemployment is pivotal: two unemployed local furnacemen burn down a defunct station to protest against what they see as the pernicious effects of immigration. In *One Way Street*, John centrally works as travel writer. *The Architect*'s Martin and Billy are unemployed. In *Cosmonaut*, the characters' jobs range from strip dancers to a Middle East peace negotiator. In *Outlying Islands*, two ornithologists survey a pristine island. In *The American Pilot*, most characters are named after their jobs, including the Farmer and the Trader. In *Fragile*, Caroline loses her job due to the cuts to public spending. Revisiting some of *Europe*'s main themes, in *The Events* the Boy's murderous violence is triggered by his perception that immigrants are taking jobs from the locals.

2.1. Introducing *San Diego*

2.1.1. Why San Diego and Wilder's *Our Town*

After a remote island in the Atlantic (*Outlying Islands*), *San Diego* goes back again to the intensified place-shifting across locations present in *Cosmonaut*. In relation to the play's title, Greig is generally keen on using geographical locations to name his plays, as he does, for instance, in *Europe* and *Damascus*. Although the character David Greig, the playwright's alter ego, enthuses in *San Diego* that "San Diego has the highest quality of life in the whole of the United States" (Greig 2010a: 34), choosing an American city may also be seen as speaking to the fact that "big and thriving US cities like Atlanta, New Orleans, Washington and Miami are at a level of inequality almost identical with that of Nairobi or Abidjan" (Bauman 2010: 88).[132] In fact, like *Cosmonaut*, the play does connect Africa and America, as shall become clear.

In addition and as already noted, in his plays Greig is fond of using places he has physically been to and, to a certain extent, experiences he has had. He explains: "the trip I took to La Jolla Playhouse to see [*C*]*osmonaut* […] resulted very directly in *San Diego*" (2007b: 58). Indeed, confirming the centrality of the autobiographical in his work, at the beginning of *San Diego*, David Greig is going to see a play at La Jolla Playhouse (see Greig 2010a: 15) in San Diego – in this respect, *San Diego* contains the making of itself. And perhaps choosing *San Diego* as a title signals some further interest for Greig, in the sense that it is clearly a liminal, border space – a prominent theme in *Europe* too – closely located to Tijuana in Mexico and part of a two-way daily traffic whereby countless Mexicans cross the border at dawn to work in San Diego and return 'home' to Tijuana at dusk. San Diego is also a base for US naval and air forces and it is thus connected with the play's fascination with and critique of the global aerial age.

[132] Although at times the character David Greig is simply called 'David', I will always refer to the playwright's persona or the "author surrogate" (Pattie 2011: 63) in *San Diego* as 'David Greig' so as to avoid confusion. 'Greig' refers to the playwright himself, as it does generally throughout the thesis.

To all this should be added Greig's manifold biographical connections with 'Americanness'. As he explains, "I was brought up in Nigeria where I attended an American Baptist Missionary school. My first accent was, in fact, American" (2007b: 55). Beyond childhood, the links with America haunt Greig's work. He points out, for instance, that "a trip to New York for readings of *Outlying Islands* and *San Diego* produced, to an extent at least, *The American Pilot*" (2007b: 56), the next play under discussion in this thesis. Finally, it is worth noting that "San Diego has been the location of dozens of Hollywood film shoots but in the finished films the city has always stood in for other locations" (Keller 2016: 112). This captures Greig's imagination, interested as he is in the idea that the act of writing about something makes it 'real': "I've been thinking about fiction and its role in our lives and I've started to realise that there are many authors who have noticed this idea that a place doesn't exist until it's written about in fiction, that a city isn't somehow real until it's been written or made into a film, a novel, or a play" (Greig 2016a: 88). In the play, David Greig observes that San Diego is remarkably absent from "fictions, films, novels or plays" (Greig 2010a: 7). At the same time, it is crucial to emphasise that the city Greig is trying to make 'real' in *San Diego* is an imagined space.

Greig acknowledges Wilder's *Our Town*'s (1938) as a vital intertext for *San Diego* (see Greig 2013b: 261, 2013c: 120 and 2016a: 93). Bearing this in mind can help to begin to frame some of *San Diego*'s spatial complexities and indeed its anti-naturalistic sensibility. *Our Town* is renowned for its use of a post-Brechtian Stage Manager who frames the play: he addresses the audience, introduces characters and generally conducts the play including its closure by bidding good night to the audience. Greig draws on Wilder's Stage Manager – who recalls not only "that familiar figure of American life, the homespun philosopher, the talkative old sage […] the radio commentator, the television compère", but also "Fools in Shakespeare" and "the Chorus and the Messenger in Greek

drama" (Thompson 1964: ix) – to create David Greig, a fictional but also an obviously autobiographical character who comments on the action, particularly at the beginning of the play. Indeed, one key difference is that while "Wilder does not admit that *he* was the Stage Manager" (Greig 2013b: 261; emphasis original), Greig acknowledges the correlation in his play. By virtue of this correlation, another key development is that while Wilder's Stage Manager is mainly a detached ubiquitous commentator on the action and only takes on a couple of relatively minor roles, Greig's David Greig is a much less subsidiary character and he is joined by other surrogate Davids, as I shall discuss later. A third variation has to do with the understanding of community in both plays: while Wilder focuses on the fictional American small town of Grover's Corners in New Hampshire, Greig has a very different sense of 'town' in mind.

Greig has claimed that "the question that set *San Diego* off was: what would *Our Town* be now?" (2013b: 261). In response, he argues that 'our town' now is not just San Diego, "our town is also Afghanistan" (2013b: 268). What really captures Greig's imagination, then, is the idea that the *entire globe* is 'our town', and that is the concept he attempts to make 'real' in *San Diego*, both by questioning who is included or not in the 'our' and what that 'town' comprises. In this respect, *San Diego* continues thinking through some of the issues raised in *The Architect*.

2.1.2. Greig in *San Diego*

An aspect that makes *San Diego* a singularly complex piece is the fact that Greig is *both* self-reflexively exploring the idea whether he has a right to write about his experience in his work *and* writing compellingly about the scenes from the world. Both elements are part of a struggle with the 'real', both his life and work and the real world. This seems to be the main reason behind *San Diego* featuring a character called David Greig who at the

beginning of the play moves back and forth between introducing and interacting with characters, which among other things eventually leads to his being killed by Daniel.[133] Besides, adding to the awkwardness, David Greig 'resuscitates' without an explanation, perhaps as a result of self-redemption given Greig's efforts to understand his characters.

The play features many other Davids – David a patient, David A, David B and David C – who also share nuanced autobiographical elements or ideas with Greig. The former, an intern in a London hospital, suffers from Tourette syndrome, while David A, David B and David C work in a conceptual consultancy with Sarah. The split of the authorial self into one main persona and another four Davids mirrors a subject's fragmentary knowledge of itself and contributes to the blurring of the author's self. The potential "identity confusion" (Zaroulia 2010: 269) between the various Davids was compounded in the first production of the play at the Edinburgh Lyceum by having the character David Greig "[being] met off the plane by the entire cast also wearing David Greig's t-shirts" (Holdsworth 2013: 172), perhaps to emphasise that they are all inside David Greig's head and that *San Diego* is a dream – in fact Greig has claimed that characters are "trapped" in *San Diego* (see Greig 2011b: 23). While Zaroulia has interestingly read the presence of many Davids as "versions of [the playwright's] identity as it alters in new places through the experience of travelling and disorientation" (2010: 269), I tend to approach it in terms of an evaporation of the playwright's singularity, his merging with the play as his characters merge with the world, an exercise that reveals that a pure disentanglement of the real from the fictional is not only impossible but also perhaps unproductive. The continued presence of the whole cast on stage, including the actor playing David Greig, the author (see 2010a: n.p.), and "[a] continuously flashing electronic

[133] David Greig introduces the Pilot, Andrew and his family (see Greig 2010a: 9), Laura (see Greig 2010a: 12) and Daniel (see Greig 2010a: 17), concentric characters around whom the play grows.

display, suspended on high, announc[ing] that we're watching '*San Diego* - a play by David Greig'" (Cavendish 2003) intensify this productive tension.[134]

The formal decision to frame the play with a prologue subtly suggests, indeed, that the play takes place in David Greig's head in the twenty minutes before the plane lands in San Diego – the prologue, where David Greig is found flying to San Diego to see a play of his, heavily drunk and exhausted from a previous ten-hour hiatus at Toronto airport, opens at 3.17 p.m., while the landing, at the end of the play, takes place at 3.37 p.m. The fact that the space (an aircraft) as well as the 'real' time framework of the play (twenty minutes) are reduced to the minimum can be read against the backdrop of the shrinking quality of space-time in the global age. In this sense, *San Diego* would be "making use of theatrical form to consider how our perceptions of space and time have been affected by globalization" (Lonergan 2009: 37).

2.1.3. Dealing with the Scenes from the World

The play's complexity does not just arise from the above. Bearing the imprint of abstraction and experimentation that characterised Suspect Culture's shows as *San Diego* does, it does not come as a surprise to find out that the play was originally written for the company. It is perhaps one of Greig's most self-conscious attempts at dealing with the topic of globalisation, both in terms of formal experimentation and thematic concern.[135] "[C]omposed by interlocking narratives" where "the stories are happening almost simultaneously" (Zaroulia 2010: 264-65), *San Diego* starts with David Greig recounting his flight to San Diego – based on a real trip that Greig took in summer 2000 to see his play

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[134] The fact that none of the characters attempts an American accent (see Cavendish 2003) also contributes to *San Diego*'s post-Brechtian aesthetics.

[135] Ironically, the play was written during "a retreat in Hawthornden Castle which is just outside Edinburgh and is run by Drue Heinz, the beans millionaire", which is paradoxically both as close – Heinz is a global brand – and as remote – a local castle with "monkish" (Greig 2013b: 261) habits – as you can get from global flows.

Cosmonaut at La Jolla Playhouse, as noted. Once he has landed and while he is looking for the theatre, David Greig is stabbed by a "*fellow passenger*" (Greig 2010a: 17; emphasis added). Daniel, the epitome of "post-colonial rage" (Greig 2013b: 264) – in contraposition to the David Greig character's "colonial guilt" (Holdsworth 2013: 173) – is a Nigerian illegal immigrant who travels on the plane's wings risking his life to find his mother. By describing him as a "fellow passenger", *San Diego* foregrounds and critiques the uneven mobilities of the global age, that is, the situation of those who are not actually considered fellows (Daniel does not have the same rights as those who hold a boarding pass) or passengers (he is not travelling in the cabin).

The Pilot on that very flight on "June 10th 2000" (Greig 2010a: 7), Kevin (the name is reminiscent of *Cosmonaut's* Kevin), hopes to meet up with a hooker called Amy after arriving at his hotel, but he cannot even find the address of the hotel – an ironic jab, perhaps, at the anonymity of such non-places and "corporate housing" (Keller 2016: 112) and of the situation itself. When he ventures outside to check his location, he finds David Greig instead, bleeding badly. The pleasures and joys of the traveller's loss of identity (see Augé 2008: 83) are abruptly undermined by a man bleeding on the motorway. Reversing "the forward march of commerce [that] ensures that nobody stops on the freeway to help" (Holdsworth 2013: 174), somebody appears and stops, thereby transforming the non-place into a place. Amy, who was herself looking for the Pilot, finds both the Pilot and David Greig instead. However, an ambulance never makes it on time and the latter dies. The knife Daniel stabs him with is borrowed from Pious, an illegal homeless immigrant Daniel makes friends with upon arrival, an act on Pious's part that is challenged by the other illegal immigrant in the story, Innocent. While Pious sent Daniel off to kill a dog for dinner (see Greig 2010a: 27), Daniel brings a dead goose instead and kills 'the playwright'. Daniel killing a goose is intertwined with the newspaper story about the motherless geese that

David Greig reads on the plane, with Daniel (subsequently named ‘Grey Lag’ after a goose by Pious and Innocent) looking for his mother, and with the Pilot’s daughter’s references to this bird, among others (see Greig 2010a: 8 *et passim*). These recurrent, interconnected allusions to geese – Greig claims that “[he has] always had a thing for geese” (see 2016b) – invest the characters with a sense of oneness that questions their self-enclosed individuality.

The Pilot’s son, Andrew, works as actor and is currently playing the role of a pilot in a film about a violent plane hijack – “*Andrew, dressed as a pilot, is talking to the Pilot, who is also dressed as a pilot*” (Greig 2010a: 41). This foregrounds one of the central tropes in Greig’s work, the interplay between fiction and the real. Within the play’s ‘reality’, Andrew is related to ‘fiction’ by being an actor, while at the same time he plays a pilot, his father’s job in ‘real’ life. Andrew’s wife Marie, who is concerned “about the suffering in the world”, had a “vision of God as an aeroplane” and “was imbued with a feeling that we’re all part of something” (Greig 2010a: 99), develops an obsession for religion to the extreme of becoming a nun. Laura, the Pilot’s daughter, describes herself as “[s]uicidal. Manic. Self-harmer” (Greig 2010a: 54). She is an intern in a hospital in London from where her calls to her father are repeatedly unanswered, which does not help reduce the fragility of her sense of belonging and direction. She wants to go home but all of her father’s suggestions, including his offer to buy her a house, seem meaningless to her (see Greig 2010a: 81).

As the play progresses, the illegal immigrants Pious and Innocent are introduced directly and highly self-consciously on Greig’s part through their scarce possessions, in a bleak yet humorous scene where Innocent tells Pious that in the event of his death, he wants “Band on the Run” (1973) by Paul McCartney’s Wings to be played – again a reference to the aerial age and birds. The illegal immigrants live in areas hidden by elegant architectures of power (see Greig 2005: 5), in ‘townships’ contiguous to the far wealthier ‘towns proper’.

By connecting the illegal immigrants to the rest of characters in the story, *San Diego* contests the separation between 'towns' and 'townships', insisting that they are part of the same world – a discussion that continues below in 2.1.4. For now, suffice it to say that *San Diego* stretches the argument a substantial step beyond *The Architect* by placing it in a more explicitly global framework. While *The Architect* explores how global forces affect characters and architectures of power locally (albeit gesturing at a sense of global space), *San Diego* takes the idea of 'township' on to a global scale. Pious, himself a lawyer (see Greig 2010a: 89) – evoking the idea of justice in a play where injustice is pervasive – Innocent and Daniel engage in several highly precarious jobs, including shovelling sand from one side of the motorway to the other – in itself perhaps a dialectical image of entrapment – making meat patties and working in a sex call centre, the same one used by the Pilot early in the play.

That apparent coincidence is one in a long list of seemingly improbable connections. Thus, Daniel stabbing David Greig is presented as an event connected to their past – they seem to know each other from their childhood in Lagos and an enigmatic encounter "in London" (Greig 2010a: 17).[136] In addition, Laura says to David, her fellow patient, "I'll fucking stab you" (Greig 2010a: 54), which reinforces the interconnectedness between the various Davids and David Greig. The play also discloses that Daniel is in San Diego in search of his mother, although he later says that he came to kill David Greig. Daniel's mum left him in Nigeria with his aunt in order to become backing singer for Wings, which connects Daniel's story to his new friends Innocent and Pious, who talk

[136] Crucially, the fact that David Greig and Daniel know each other has an autobiographical side to it. Greig recounts an incident from his childhood when a black boy came to play with him; somehow Greig got scared and threw the blue contents of the chemistry set he was playing with in the boy's face, which led him to think that he had blinded the boy but he would get away with it because he was white and the boy was black (see 2013b: 262). In *San Diego*, Greig introduces Daniel because he "wanted to know him [the boy involved in the incident] a bit" (Greig 2013b: 264). Greig states that "[i]t's not just there are multiple yous [see David Greig, the Patient, David A, David B and David C] in your head; it's that other people exist in your head and that's what comes out in your play" (2013b: 264). The references to Paul McCartney are also autobiographical (see 2013b: 262).

about one of the band's songs, as noted above, and also alludes to the means of transport he uses to reach San Diego.

Intertextually alluding to Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (1948) – which was, interestingly, written in the United States – *San Diego* is also a play about lost and abandoned children and/or animals and adoptive parental figures, including the well-off Andrew and Laura and a Quebecois biologist who adopts some geese, the story David Greig reads on the plane. Daniel calls Pious 'mother' and Innocent 'father'. Just after 'mum' and 'dad' decide that they are going to look for Daniel's biological mother, they are found by the police and unarmed Innocent is shot dead. In a context of alarmingly high rates of violent deaths of black people at the hands of the police in the US – among them, and both coinciding with the year of the premiere of *San Diego* and closely resembling the manner of Innocent's death, Ousmane Zongo "was shot four times (twice in the back) by officer Bryan Conroy during a police raid in a storage facility where [he] worked"[137] – one of the cops bullies Innocent into picking up a stone so he can cruelly and unjustly shoot him in the back. As Innocent wished, Pious and Daniel play "Band on the Run" in his funeral on an old cassette-player. Now 'mum' is dead and his real mum is not alive to Daniel. Eventually, Pious and Daniel physically find the latter's real mother after David Greig, "the orchestrator of events" (Greig 2013b: 262), gives them her address (see Greig 2010a: 106). The surrogate author's perhaps patronising decision to try to make Daniel happy by 'letting' him find his biological mother might be the reason why Daniel stubbornly rejects it and rebels against the 'playwright' – "[y]ou are no longer in control" (Greig 2010a: 107), he tells David Greig, which mirrors Greig's remark about the phenomenon of "characters seizing control of the play" (2013b: 265). Although Daniel has the opportunity to start a new life with his mother, who works as a state agent, he eventually decides to go back to

[137] See <http://gawker.com/unarmed-people-of-color-killed-by-police-1999-2014-1666672349> (accessed 23 June 2016).

Nigeria using the same dangerous method as before – another subtextual comment on the complicated idea of 'home'.

The company the Pilot works for, British Airways, is developing a new brand – another aspect of globalisation – which leads to a scene where the members of a conceptual consultancy agency hired by the company are brainstorming ideas for that purpose. In this context, the Pilot has a conversation with Sarah, one of the consultants, which unveils her fragility. Although she is thoroughly adept at the effervescent production of concepts and ideas her job requires, her life is revealed as vacuous, which enhances the play's critique of consumerist emptiness. Belonging is also explored through a character called Bedouin Tribesman, an actor that plays a Bedouin in the movie being filmed in the play. Bedouins live in small communities of "[t]wo hundred and fifty-six people" (Greig 2010a: 100), which ironically mirrors exactly the number of people that fit into a "Boeing 777, two hundred series" (Greig 2010a: 83) that David Greig mentions when he is working on the idea of the aircraft – a non-place by definition – as a village.[138] Laura and Tourette patient David fall in love, first in an extreme and then in a tentatively healing manner. The play ends as David makes Laura vomit the tablets she has taken in an attempt to commit suicide, among other simultaneous events scattered in disparate locations – including her father holding hands with Amy on a beach in San Diego and Daniel flying back to Nigeria – that vitally convey spatial interconnection through the characters' relationships and the play's experimentation with form (Fig. 6).

[138] The aeroplane that took Greig to San Diego and inspired him to write the play had one hundred and fifty seats, exactly the number of people a person is able to "maintain stable social relationships" with according to anthropologist Robin Dunbar (Keller 2016: 114), which adds further nuance to the idea of relationality and community.

Fig. 6: David the Patient saving Laura in Scotland and the Pilot and Amy having a walk on the beach on San Diego in *San Diego* (Tron Theatre, dir. David Greig and Marisa Zanotti, 2003). © Tron Theatre. Reproduced by permission.

2.1.4. Space/Place: Visualising the 'Global Township'

Grounding their discussion in notions of non-places and travelling, scholars such as Zaroulia claim that in Greig's play San Diego becomes "a place that could be anywhere […] in the Western world" (2010: 263-67; see also Zaroulia 2013a: 185 and Wallace 2013: 121), a crossroads or "an open space where a number of different characters pass by and meet" (Zaroulia 2013a: 185). Building on those insights yet taking them in a new direction, I see San Diego as a complex metaphor for what I have called 'here' – that is, a place that could be everywhere only in the sense that it is used to articulate an urgent yearning for interconnectedness. In order to substantiate that claim, it is necessary to start by examining how San Diego is approached in *San Diego*.

Although San Diego remains a hub all characters have some direct and/or indirect attachment to, the presence of characters in, travelling to/from and mentioning places other than San Diego is central in the play, including London, Edinburgh, Lagos, Jos, Hong Kong and France, among others – a multifarious geographical allusiveness that is reminiscent of the range of places, evoked in *Cosmonaut*: Edinburgh, London, Provence, Oslo, outer space, "Amazonia", "[t]he desert", "the middle of the fucking sea" (Greig 2002a: 236), "South Africa" (Greig 2002a: 285) and "Congo" (Greig 2002a: 291). However, those places, taken as a group, are not *San Diego*'s settings. If anything, the setting would be the stage itself, as suggested in Zanotti's response to actors' uncertainty as to 'where they are' in particular scenes (see Greig 2013b: 265). As I have argued earlier, the stage is a holed space that can affectively evoke wide-ranging interconnections. Moreover, in addition to those diverse geographical locations across the globe, other kinds of places are highly varied in the play and transcend Augé's concept of non-places, as is also the case, for instance, in *The Architect* and *Cosmonaut*: planes, motorways and motels can become places that "are not solitary" (Zaroulia 2010: 268), places where emotions and identity can be explored and articulated.

Characters that are spatially far-removed from each other – a frequent situation for family members and friends in the context of globalisation – generate affective links between disparate locations across the globe through the feelings, experiences and emotions that they have shared or long to share. This extension of the skin of the globe, so to speak, results in a shifting perception of space-time. While in *Cosmonaut* the myriad connections between the characters on Earth and in space are disclosed along a vertical (above-below) axis that gradually becomes more horizontal, *San Diego* blurs the lines between air and Earth, sky and ground and reality and fiction so as to utterly defy disconnection – in fact, Greig has stated that *San Diego* "was a very conscious attempt to push what I felt I was

trying in the form of *Cosmonaut*" (2013b: 261). The metaphors of (bird) flight (geese, aircrafts) and migration and the idea that the sky is not discontinuous but thoroughly connected are part and parcel of this concern with dissolving boundaries and conjuring up one single space.

Finally, perhaps the most complicated idea to navigate in connection to space/place in *San Diego* is Greig's claim that "the Edinburgh in which [he] live[s] has districts in China, it has districts in South Africa, it has districts in America" (2016a: 91). I would suggest that, once again, Greig is referring here to the idea of 'township', which in the global age, he does not view as a unified discrete space as it still exists for instance in Africa (see 2005: 4), but as "an amalgamation of many different places and people" (Greig 2005: 4)". Although with many differences between them that should of course not be ignored, the 'amalgamation' includes immigrants, sweatshop workers and generally the precariat both outside and within wealthier areas.[139] Greig mentions "[t]he agricultural poly tunnels and pack houses of Andalusia where illegal migrant labour from North Africa supply Tesco's and Sainsbury's with fresh vegetables throughout the winter. Or, […] the anonymous sweatshops in the industrial zones of Southern China where our clothes are made and our electronic good fabricated" (2005: 5). Put simply, what a portion of the globe's population eats, uses and wears is made in an amalgamation of places that form a 'global township', which together with their inhabitants are of course "kept out of sight" (Greig 2005: 5). In *San Diego*, what Americans eat (meat patties), is packaged by the play's illegal immigrants, who, among other characters, engage in various precarious jobs. *San*

[139] Guy Standing's *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* defines precariat, "a neologism that combines […] 'precarious' and […] 'proletariat'" (2011: 7), as a group with a "fragmented global class structure" (2011: 7), with "none of the social contract relationships of proletariat", "flanked by an army of unemployed […] socially ill misfits" (2011: 8) and the "working poor" (2011: 9). Amongst the working precariat, despite their more positive "free-spirited defiance and nonconformity", central (negative) aspects comprise "temporary laboring status", employment insecurity, "a lack of a secure work-based identity" (Standing 2011: 9), "status frustration" (Standing 2011: 10), "precarious income" (Standing 2011: 11), detachment from a sense of "a solidaristic labour community" and the knowledge that "there is no future in what they are doing" (Standing 2011: 12).

Diego, then, makes a statement about the connection between different places and people across the globe by enacting an intervention into the invisibility of some of those places and people. The play not only visualises but also connects a child from Jos, a Filipino woman who refuels David Greig's plane or the illegal immigrants who make meat patties for the Americans to other less precarious characters and places. In sum, in *San Diego* this translates into San Diego having districts in Nigeria, Scotland, London, Hong Kong and the Sahara Desert, to name but a few, and it is in that sense that the play evokes "the whole world on stage" (Zaroulia 2013a: 178) – 'our town'. Thus *San Diego* clearly gestures towards what I have called 'here' through its formal experimentation with the unbounded or holed space/place that is San Diego and its inhabitants as represented in the play.

Derrida has argued that globalisation is not just "affecting the experience of place" (2012: 126) – in the play, David B says "[i]t isn't a place. It's a sound" (Greig 2010a: 76) – but also "of taking place" (2012: 126). The section that follows stretches the discussion further by asking, if *San Diego*'s characters are all in the same place, in the same town, in the same world, in 'our town', why should some subjects 'take place' and not others – in other words, why should only some have the right to belong?

2.2. Articulating Belonging in the 'Aeroplane Village'

In the present aerial age, the plane where the playwright's persona sits might work as metonymy for the globe as the 'aeroplane village', a space whose consumerist culture proves out of reach for the "undesirables" (Greig 2011f: 5) or the "excluded victims" (Derrida 2012: 127) even when they manage to force an entry. The notion of the 'aeroplane village' emerges in the conceptual consultancy brainstorming scene, where consultants David A, David B, David C and Sarah exchange ideas about "[t]he aircraft [being] your village" (Greig 2010a: 83), "the chamber" (Greig 2010a: 77) [being] "the cockpit" (Greig

2010a: 77) and "THE PILOT [BEING] THE CHIEF" (Greig 2010a: 77), "[t]he shaman", "[t]he magician" (Greig 2010a: 76). The phrase 'aeroplane village' is also used critically in the play to interrogate a neoliberal view of the globe as an enclosed space which only fit consumers have access to, or belong to: "[t]he aircraft is your village" and "'[w]elcome home'" (Greig 2010a: 83).

2.2.1. A Critique of Belonging to the 'Aeroplane Village'

2.2.1.1. A Fellow Passenger in the Plane's Wing

In stark contrast to the very first words in *San Diego* announcing that "*David Greig is sitting in an aeroplane seat*" (Greig 2010a: 7), and overturning yet another feature attributed to non-places – i.e. that only those with a checked identity can enter and leave non-places such as planes (see Augé 2008: 89) – Daniel grabs first "one wheel" and then is "raised into the wings" (Greig 2010a: 17). Similarly, the Pilot enjoys the comforts of a hotel while illegal immigrants sleep rough. A recent (June 2015) case that resonates with *San Diego*'s Daniel is that of stowaway Carlito Vale, "a young Mozambican immigrant […] who is believed to have fallen from the undercarriage of a British Airways [the same company is mentioned in the play] flight completing an 8,000-mile journey from Johannesburg" to London, Heathrow of 11 hours of duration (Quinn 2016: 11). Although "a companion managed to survive", like Daniel in *San Diego*, Vale's "life came to an end after the wheel wells opened up and sent him plummeting to earth" (Quinn 2016: 11), like Edward in *San Diego*, the friend that "took the other [wheel]" (Greig 2010a: 17).

Like illegal immigrants Pious and Innocent, Daniel is portrayed in the play as "someone who 'does not belong', a *stranger*" (Bauman 2010: 159, emphasis original). A first way in which *San Diego* interrogates the idea of the 'aeroplane village', then, is by placing a "subject[…] of globalisation" (Greig 2006b: 162), Daniel, outside the aeroplane

(village), a placement that belies his being described as a "fellow passenger" (Greig 2010a: 17). This highlights the extreme precariousness and hardship of immigrants' experiences at the same time as it interrogates the asymmetrical politics of belonging.

2.2.1.2. The Conceptual Consultancy

A second way in which the play questions any facile concept of belonging is through the conceptual consultancy scene, where David A, David B, David C and Sarah brainstorm the notion of the aircraft as a village and underline the fact that only those on the affluent side are actually part of it. The flying experience, which forms part of the circuits of global consumerism, involves having an identity attached to a ticket and becoming part of a temporary community. That is, identity and belonging are defined in terms of what you can access/pay for: as David Greig says in the play, "[t]he cabin of the aircraft is the only space where we can be certain that we belong – we have a ticket with our name on it" (Greig 2010a: 82). Greig's ironic handling of the consultancy scene suggests that a parody of belonging as a commodity and a marketing strategy, as a way of 'selling' the cosy idea of 'feeling at home', is being enacted, thus contesting the very notion of the 'aeroplane village' as conferring a 'true' sense of identity. The brainstorming session ends with the consultants ripping apart an aeroplane model (see Greig 2010a: 77), which foregrounds both the artificiality and the fragility of the 'aeroplane village' concept.

2.2.1.3. Disease and '*Dis*-ease'

A further way in which *San Diego* articulates a critique of the 'aeroplane village' is by having even those who enjoy a financial sense of belonging, the "privileged subjects of the contemporary world" (Zaroulia 2013a: 187), suffer from pathologies or at least embody some kind of '*dis*-ease' – the Pilot, Laura, David the Patient, Marie, Andrew, Patience,

David Greig and perhaps even Greig himself, among others. That is, those who can have a boarding card with their name on it also experience pain and discomfort, which confirms that belonging to the 'aeroplane village' is highly problematic.

For instance, despite the intensive mobility and elite status within the 'aeroplane village' that being a British Airways pilot grants him, the Pilot is not happier than the other characters in *San Diego*. Highly critical of "gated communities", Bauman states that "[i]nside the walls and the gates live loners: people who will only tolerate as much 'community' as they fancy at that moment" (2010: 160), such as when the Pilot fancies the company of a prostitute.[140] In this way, the play contests a sense of selective belonging or belonging *à la carte*, which in turn does not seem to offer a 'true' sense of belonging. When the Pilot cries, Andrew feels no sympathy because he has been and is a cold father. Marie becomes obsessed with religion. Patience abandons her son in Nigeria. David Greig dies. Finally, Greig has a multi-faceted relationship with *San Diego*: he brings into the play a character from his childhood who he wants to know better, creates five Davids perhaps in an attempt to interrogate himself and his work, makes his alter ego die and resuscitate, and pays homage to his friend Kane, as I briefly discuss below.

Significantly, in relation to her nine-month old baby's skin allergy, Marie states, "[w]e've brought a boy into a terrible world / So terrible even his skin reacts to it" (Greig 2010a: 60). In *San Diego*'s companion "Bird Play", *Outlying Islands*, Ellen suffers from

[140] Although Bauman does not discard community as a desire, the fact "that community demands no bargaining, no deals, no effort to empathize, understand and compromise" (2000: 100) in negatively globalised societies makes the concept at least questionable. In the case of so-called 'gated communities' – "little heaps of private cocoons suspended in a spatial void" (Bauman 2010: 159) – what is the meaning of 'community'? In Greig's theatre, the concept of community remains central. A project like Theatre Uncut, which he has engaged in, positively generates audience communities (see Greig 2016a); the political musical *Glasgow Girls* (2013) looked at how a community copes with one of its members being denied asylum; and *Yellow Moon* and *The Monster in the Hall* feature nurturing communities formed by young people and their instructors. In plays like *The Architect* and *The Events* community is, to say the least, a fraught concept. However, it is hard to dispute Greig has a "passion for the environment and a sense for and of social justice, and the importance of community – of nurturing others in the field and creating virtual and live spaces for engagement and provocation" (Svich 2016: 111).

eczema. Skin problems seem a common condition in contemporary societies, as Bauman points out:

> Hazel Curry recently offered an excellent example of a universal trend: the medical profession has noted epidemics of 'irritable skin' that have spread with lighting speed and have affected 53 per cent of Westerners so far. Only some of the cases can be accounted for by the genetically determined phenomenon of '*sensitive* skin'. (2005: 81; emphasis original)

As discussed in the theoretical framework of this thesis, our skins are porous and in constant communication with the world outside. Marie's comment suggests the violence of the world has filtered through her baby's skin and impregnated his body, thus making him ill – that is, it highlights the interconnection between precarity and precariousness.[141]

Finally, Andrew's sister Laura (the baby's aunt) is an intern in a hospital because she is a self-harmer. She literally cuts herself (as Leila Suleiman does in *Yellow Moon*), cooks her flesh and feeds herself and David with it. In this way, the play taps into a common feature of supposedly advanced globalised societies: "[i]n the most unequal societies on the planet, such as the US or Britain, the incidence of mental illness is three times higher than at the bottom of the inequality league" (2010: 85). Although suffering and violence are intertwined with affection – Laura and David fall in love – self-harm remains a negative comment on the 'aeroplane village'.

2.2.2. Alternative Senses of Belonging

2.2.2.1. Cannibal Love and Adoptive Parental Figures: We Are 'Family'

However, Laura and David may also be precariously attempting to articulate an alternative sense of belonging through their cannibalistic act of sharing – her pathology goes from an initial autophagy to inviting David into this act. From this perspective, offering David pieces of her flesh emerges as an ecstatic expression of Laura's rage at the world's rejection of sharing and the violence perpetrated by repeated acts of greed, which

[141] See Rodríguez (forthcoming a).

“has led to 1% of people owning more wealth than the other 99% combined” (Elliott 2016: 20). Although Laura’s sharing of her own flesh is destructive to both, they establish a deep connection as a result of their pathological yet communal act. Besides, David saves Laura on the verge of suicide. Despite the self-inflicted violence, this ecstatic sharing can be read as “an act of love”, as “an emblem of our interconnectedness” (Rebellato 2008: 204).

While Laura and David embody non-normative partner relations, there is also the phenomenon of abandoned children and animals, which *San Diego* “underlines with repeated reference to the television show *America’s Missing Children*” (Holdsworth 2013: 174). In this connection, Pious, Innocent and the biologist present us with alternative parental models of belonging. As mentioned above, Pious and Innocent become adoptive parents to Daniel and the biologist in the newspaper story adopts “a group of orphaned goslings” (Holdsworth 2013: 175).[142] Thus belonging with your parents, is possible as long as there are parental figures – biological or not – who care, or as David puts it, as long as they are “large” enough to “emit […] a rhythmical sound” (Greig 2010a: 8). Daniel seems to belong with Pious and Innocent more than with his ‘real’ mother. The care for nature that the biologist shows also highlights the urgently needed protection of the environment. Sharing and caring become central concerns in an articulation of belonging that questions the ‘aeroplane village’ model. Judging from the number of plotlines that are concerned with familial ties, mostly dysfunctional and yet some gesturing at the utopian, Greig might be trying to suggest that as inhabitants of ‘our town’ (the globe), we are, after all, ‘family’.

2.2.2.2. Resistant Naming and Human Cattle

San Diego also enacts a critique of the global, neoliberal ‘aeroplane village’ via experimentation with naming to suggest some epic sense of connection. There are, for

[142] The play connects both situations by having Pious and Innocent call Daniel ‘Grey Lag’.

instance, allegorical names that foreground 'goodness' in *San Diego*, such as the qualities attached to piousness, innocence and patience in the characters Pious, Innocent and Patience. These characters are either biological or adoptive parents and are all immigrants. The generic (including both male and female in this instance), the collective, the communal is critically juxtaposed to the entrenched individualism of the 'aeroplane village'.

As regards Daniel, while his family (back in Nigeria) calls him "'little shit'" (Greig 2010a: 35), Innocent and Pious decide to call him "Grey Lag", "[a]fter the goose" (Greig 2010a: 36), thus giving him the name of a bird that, as noted, encapsulates myriad resonances. Once Daniel shows Innocent and Pious the background to his identity – in the shape of a postcard sent by his mum – he is referred to again as Daniel. Having a history, then, gives Daniel his real name back. On its part, 'shit' connects Daniel with Laura and Sarah, for they all think of themselves as shit.

Another example of resistant naming is constituted by the use of 'Amy', a name that is given to many characters in *San Diego* to the extent that Pious says "[i]n San Diego everybody is called Amy" (Greig 2010a: 56). This evaporation of singularity through the communal use of 'Amy' extends to male characters too. For instance, Daniel's mum is called Patience but she wants to be called Amy; the stewardess in David Greig's flight is called Amy; the prostitute's name is Amy; the woman from the theatre who picks up David Greig at the airport is Amy; the stewardess in Andrew's movie is named Amy; and the illegal immigrants Innocent and Pious call themselves Amy when they talk on the telephone hot line or on the telesales – "Amy speaking" (Greig 2010a: 56). 'Amy' thus trespasses the boundaries of a single body and fosters a sense of interconnectedness or even oneness across bodies, all of whom have or have had low-paid jobs, or are part of the precariat, defined precisely by the "lack of a secure work-based identity" (Standing 2011:

9). ‘Amy’ thus points to the realities of precarity in the contemporary neoliberal, globalised context.

The image of meat is overwhelmingly present in *San Diego* and, like ‘Amy’, serves to raise the issue of inequality. In the play meat is cannibalised, minced, packaged; it rots and liquefies. One of the illegal immigrants’ jobs consists in processing minced meat; Laura and David eat the former’s flesh; Innocent is killed as an animal. In this respect, the connection between the illegal immigrants and Laura and meat is made explicit by introducing the former in a scene where Laura eats her flesh for the first time (see Greig 2010a: 28). The complex geographies of movement, labour and capital explored in *San Diego* powerfully intimate a sense of people being treated as cattle: “in San Diego, […] Do they suppose we are cattle? That they can eat our bodies?” (Greig 2010a: 87). It is not by accident that Laura eats her own flesh as a form of extreme denunciation of that unjust, inhumane treatment of the disadvantaged. In sum, the recurrent presence of meat to highlight inequality, injustice and cruelty is critically juxtaposed to a resistant practice of naming that destabilises the boundaries of “where one person stops and another ends” (Rebellato 2002a: 14) in order to highlight their commonality and mutual dependence not as cattle, but as vulnerable, unbounded human beings.

2.3. *San Diego*’s Formal Response to Fraught Belonging: Stitching Up

In order to spatially articulate the complex, fragile, alternative sense belonging beyond the ‘aeroplane village’, *San Diego* uses the strategy the thesis has called ‘stitching up’, whereby phenomena occurring in apparently different locations are linked up together by means of images that convey a sense of bodily and spatial interconnectedness. Stitching up confirms that “globalization […] is changing […] the way that writers compose their works” (Lonergan 2009: 186), which complicates the staging of the work too as well as

spectators' responses to it. What I call stitched-up moments can be intuited in Zaroulia's "'articulated moments' of connection between people, places and actions" (2013a: 189) and Holdsworth's reference to "several different narratives coher[ing]" (2013: 176). My purpose here is to explore this phenomenon thoroughly through the lens of the concept of 'stitching up'. Ultimately, I want to argue that stitching up formally articulates the idea that 'our town' is indeed the whole globe as one single space.

While in *Cosmonaut* stitching up is most often the result of overlapping spatial perspectives, *San Diego* includes those – as, for example, in "*[t]he shudderingly huge sound of a jet plane coming to land. / Marie looks up*" (Greig 2010a: 14) – but also widens the range notably. To start with, several stitching-up devices involving different spaces may be identified in the play – within stage directions – "*[t]he Pilot leaves the apartment. / Marie enters*" (Greig 2010a: 23) – between stage directions and lines of dialogue – when the immigrants are about to eat the goose, "[p]lease cut into the flesh" is juxtaposed to "*Laura cuts a thin slice from her body*" (Greig 2010a: 36)[143] – and between lines – David says "I'm hungry" and straightaway Andrew tells Marie, "Love? […] Love, you have to eat" (Greig 2010a: 84).

At times there seem to be micro-scenes stitched up within a scene. For instance, when Andrew is talking to his father, he is interrupted by Woman, who tells him he is needed on set for the desert scene (see Greig 2010a: 43), which overlaps with the micro-scene where Pious, Innocent and Daniel shovel sand. Sand, therefore, is the element that bleeds across the two micro-scenes, a juxtaposition that also involves a blurring of 'fictional' and 'real' dimensions within the play's 'reality'. As noted earlier, wings also bleed across the play. Stitching up can also operate across far apart moments in *San Diego*. A reference to a polythene bag in relation to Laura (see Greig 2010a: 61) – she stores the

[143] Holdsworth tentatively describes this choreography of knives as "images [that] are at once unconnected and totally connected" (2013: 176).

meat she is about to consume with David in the fridge – connects her flesh, which she is about to turn into rissoles, to the meat inside the "*polythene bag full of mince*" (Greig 2010a: 49) the immigrants turn into patties. This positions an affluent subject, Laura, as cattle too, thus connecting precariousness and precarity.

In addition to the specific instances of stitching up examined so far, there is also a more general strategy whereby different characters across different locations feature in the same scene. Usually the apparently remote characters that are part of the scene are announced in the stage directions and their lives are formally interwoven or stitched up. *San Diego* stretches this device to the extent that the entire shape of the play may be described as wounded. Implying that verticality seems no longer sufficient to convey the growing complexities of Greig's dramaturgical experimentation, the numerous, abrupt changes in altitude and latitude in the story require the spectator's fully engaged attention while, at the same time, the play's maddening 'bird flight' across locations and characters compellingly conveys a powerful sense that the characters live in the same interconnected world and that their actions have an impact on one another. In sum, *San Diego* not only stitches up characters, events or situations occurring in different locations across the globe but also gives the play itself a stitched-up structure that asks the holed spectator some pressing questions about the present globalised world.

Although the bouncing between Earth and sky and the changing perspective from above to below and vice versa are present throughout *San Diego*, stitching up destabilises the meaning of 'above' and 'below', 'up' and 'down', and point towards a view of the globe as always-already 'here'. *San Diego* appears not to occur 'in' space-time; instead, with this play 'among' and 'across' seem to have become the key prepositions in Greig's dramaturgy. Characters might not directly touch each other but *San Diego* stitches up their (unevenly) connected precarious lives. They appear so inexorably and helplessly connected

that the play seems to incarnate the 'butterfly effect' – the "capacity for the consequences of minuscule changes to swell at an exponential rate" (Bauman 2010: 107) – or rather, the 'butterfly affect', given that, instead of focusing on how a deed has repercussions elsewhere, *San Diego* conjures up moments of beautiful, albeit transient and painful, connectedness, thus foregrounding a sense of global bonding beyond cause-effect relations.

2.4. Conclusive Remarks: Blue Guides, Blue Scars, Blue Birds

By steering away from a celebratory, cosmopolitan notion of belonging, *San Diego* both suggests its desirability and warns of the obstacles that stand in its way. Although as Reinelt puts it, "Greig's dramas […] stand in for or adjacent to an existential longing for […] connection that has become increasingly vanquished from our mobile and fragmented identities" (2011: 219), they also explore new forms of connectedness that might create alternative accounts of belonging as a response to any facile, consumable versions of it in the global age.

In bringing together different existences and places, the play problematises any shallow understanding of space-time under globalisation as it firmly advances, both through content and through form, towards a sense of a whole world as 'our town' where everything is connected. Through presenting to spectators both the world of the play and the real world as holed and interdependent, *San Diego* "articulate[s] a strong belief in the possibility of change in the world of the performance as well as the actual world" (Zaroulia 2010: 272). The play articulates the precariousness of belonging under globalisation in a highly precarious manner, through a stitched-up structure that is wounded, yet intricately interconnected. Through its formal manoeuvre of stitching up the globe, and therefore engaging in world-forming processes, *San Diego* suggests that the creation of the world – in Nancy's sense – is indeed possible.

Despite its focus on precarity, suicide, stabbing, exploitation, indiscriminate murder, mutilation and cannibalism, *San Diego* displays a painful tenderness and an aching beauty. According to Sierz, the play is "a highly enjoyable fantasy which engages both playfully and painfully with the legacy of Sarah Kane" (2011: 9). The presence of a highly vulnerable consultant, Sarah, is perhaps significant in that connection. And through David's gesture of preventing Laura from committing suicide, Greig may be paying homage to his friend Kane and conveying his deep-felt desire that she was still alive.

Ultimately, despite its bleakness, *San Diego* explores and foregrounds "the ever more blatant globality of human interdependence" (Bauman 2004: 41). As is the case in *Outlying Islands*, the colour blue plays a central role in this connection. *San Diego* starts with David Greig reading a *Blue Guide to San Diego* because, as he ironically says, he likes to know the facts about a place. Daniel, the character that stabs David Greig, has a "blue scar" (Greig 2010a: 17), which evokes the chemistry accident with "blue acid" (Greig 2010a: 88) in Greig's childhood. And since as Innocent wants "Band on the Run" to be played at his funeral, it seems relevant to conclude by noting that the homonymous album includes a song entitled "Bluebird", which reads: "I'm a bluebird. / We're the bluebirds. / Singing Bluebird…".

VI. Encounter Plays

1. *The American Pilot*: A Precarious Restoration to 'the Real'

From birds and planes, with *The American Pilot* we move to a plane crash which results in a situation of unexpected encounter. After the zooming out suggested by Katia and Adele enumerating the cities they dream of visiting (*Europe*), John and Greta looking down on the city of Berlin (*One Way Street*), the falls from above in *The Architect*, the stitched-up structure of *Cosmonaut*, Robert's jumping off into the storm (*Outlying Islands*) and the centrality of aircrafts and geese in *San Diego*, an American pilot falling from the sky onto a remote, conflict-ridden rural area and being 'rescued' by American soldiers – perhaps with a young Middle Eastern woman – also 'from the sky' might not seem overly unusual.

The title of this part of the thesis, "Encounter Plays", refers to two plays – *The American Pilot* and *Damascus* – that take as a starting point a situation of encounter between an individual Western character and a group of non-Western characters. In *The American Pilot*, the encounter involves a white, male member of a relatively more affluent society, the US, and the inhabitants of a poor, Middle-Eastern village that has been mired in civil war for thirty-five years.[144] Moreover, it involves the encounter between a man coming from a society that actively participates in cultural and military globalisation – both in the sense of promoting 'the Americanisation of the world' and being involved in war on a global scale – and a group of "subjects of globalisation" (Greig 2006b: 162) who come into contact with globalisation through scarce but intense, even tragic, contact with global media and global war. The villagers' "[sense of] wonder [towards America], envy and hostility" (Cavendish 2005: 589) as well as the Pilot's disdain and brutality are flagged by the play. As regards global media, some characters are not only fascinated by American

[144] It is noticeable that for plays focused on war or powerfully alluding to war, Greig chooses micro-locations, as was the case in *Outlying Islands*.

culture, but both damaged by the media's portrayal of themselves and fully aware of their power and its sometimes disastrous consequences. As for global war, it transpires from the play that the Americans are sided with the government (see Greig 2010a: 377) against revolution, represented in the play by the Captain and his acolytes.

The idea of encounter has been discussed by several scholars in relation to the play. Drawing on Mary Louise Pratt's concept of 'contact zones', described as "'spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today'", Wallace has argued that *The American Pilot* and *Damascus* "stag[e] spaces of transnational encounter" (2016: 32). Pushing the spatial argument further, Rebellato argues that "globally disparate locations are overlaid on one another" (2016: 9) in *The American Pilot*. As noted, this contact zone or space of encounter (initially) involves the US and the Middle East.

As Greig explains, *The American Pilot* belongs to "a strand of work which looks at the Middle East and Afghanistan and war. I wrote a comedy in Palestine, *Mish Alla Ruman*, which perhaps started this thread of work off for me. Then came *The American Pilot*, *When the Bulbul Stopped Singing*, *Damascus*, *Miniskirts of Kabul*, and *Dunsinane*" (2011a: 4). After having been specifically turned down by the Royal Court (see Greig 2007c: 90), *The American Pilot*, directed by Gray, premiered at the Other Place in Stratford-upon-Avon (2005) and enjoyed a revival at the Soho Theatre in London (2006). Greig confirms that "[he] wrote the play in February of 2003" (2007b: 52), that is, *The American Pilot* predates the US-led invasion of Iraq in late March 2003. Greig has noted that "[i]t seemed plain that there would be an invasion of Iraq but that invasion had not yet happened" (2007b: 52), adding that

> [i]n the end I was relieved that *The American Pilot* didn't debut on the eve of the invasion of Iraq. When it played in Stratford there was, already, some distance

> between it and the events that had inspired it. I think the play is not really about Iraq at all: it is certainly not based on Iraq. If anything I imagined it taking place in Tadjikistan, or Darfur. (2007b: 55-6)[145]

Greig has specified that he "checked [the location of the play] against the Panjshir Valley" (2011b: 21) in North-central Afghanistan. More specifically, as a result of a conversation with the now Artistic Director of the National Theatre in London Rufus Norris in Palestine, Greig had in mind a "group of people" living in Panjshir after "the Taliban had closed in completely on them, and the Americans weren't supporting them" (Greig 2013b: 266). In connection, specifically, to the Captain in *The American Pilot*, the historical reference seems to be warlord "Ahmad Shah Massoud […] who was holding out against the Taliban" (Greig 2013b: 266) in the Panjshir Valley but was killed at the hands of two Al-Qaeda operatives two days before 9/11.[146] However, the confounding space of *The American Pilot* cannot be univocally identified with the Panjshir Valley: for instance, some of the villagers' names are Judeo-Christian (Matthew, Sarah and Evie/Eve), allude to Greek mythology (Jason) or to central Europe (Reinhardt);[147] the villagers deliver their lines in English although most of the time they speak in their local language; and the play included a mostly "Caucasian cast" (Billingham 2011: 177) at the RSC and a fully Caucasian one at the Soho. By using those post-Brechtian defamiliarising devices, the latter of which Billingham found "problematic" (2011: 177), to evoke a confounded space of encounter, *The American Pilot* carries on Greig's exploration of what I have called 'here'.[148]

The fact that the play predates the invasion of Iraq and, therefore, the release of video footage containing beheadings of American and other Western hostages makes it

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[145] In this connection, Greig has claimed that "[g]lobalisation means that the biggest issues of the day are being played out in places like Shanghai, Darfur and Baghdad" (2006b: 161).
[146] See <http://www.rferl.org/content/ahmad_shah_masud_afghanistan_assassination_taliban_al-qaeda/24323076.html> (accessed 20 May 2016).
[147] For more information on naming, see Wessendorf (2015: 103).
[148] *The American Pilot*'s indeterminate setting has been variously described by critics as "non-specific" (Woddis 2005: 587) and/or as "an impossible composite of Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan" and even "Iran" (Wessendorf 2015: 93-102).

acutely prescient. As Billingham points out, “[t]he videoed public execution of Reinhardt [the Pilot in the play] intended for world-wide transmission on the media and internet, is hauntingly predictive of the premeditated beheadings of western hostages in Iraq and the global broadcasting of their deaths” (2011: 171), such as “the death of Nicholas Berg, an American businessman abducted and beheaded in Iraq on 7 May 2004 by Islamic militants who filmed his execution to post on the internet” (Holdsworth 2013: 181) or that of *Wall Street Journal* journalist Daniel Pearl (early 2002), which Greig was probably aware of when writing *The American Pilot*. At the same time, as Holdsworth notes,

> By this point [2005] the play had garnered significant topicality following not only the 2003 invasion of Iraq by a United States led coalition but also the shocking accounts of physical, psychological and sexual abuse of prisoners by American forces emanating from Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq. (2013: 181)

This shows that violence during the War on Terror and beyond has been waged on all sides, all of which have sought to gain control of the power of the image.

The central dramatic node in *The American Pilot* is that the villagers do not agree as to what to do with the Pilot, who is both hostage and host at a local farm – hostage in the context of the ongoing political and military turmoil and host in view of the Farmer’s wife’s (Sarah’s) hospitality and his daughter’s (Evie’s) friendliness, which spring respectively from the former’s sense of religious duty and the latter’s deification of America.[149] While the Farmer, who finds the Pilot, and Sarah want him to leave their barn – where most action takes place – as soon as possible, other characters have different views and plans for the injured Pilot. The villagers’ reactions, actions and inactions in this situation refract the effects of living in a war context that, far from having sampled the benefits of globalisation, is well acquainted with the daily humiliation of lagging behind despite signs of modernisation – for instance, in the shape of painkillers and the internet. The play is interested in and problematises “the way in which peoples and cultures perceive

[149] For a reading of *The American Pilot* from the perspective of Derrida’s deconstructive engagement with what he terms ‘hostipitality’, see Aragay (forthcoming).

and understand each other through the complex and distorting double-mirror of a global media communications system" (Billingham 2011: 177). Specifically, in what follows I go on to contend that *The American Pilot* depicts "characters […] [who are] trapped in their own representation of themselves" (Greig 2011b: 23).[150]

In response to that state of affairs, one of the play's main aims seems to be to unlock or undo the villagers' entrapment in silence and invisibility and restore them to 'the real'. With this aim in mind, *The American Pilot* displays a particular, aesthethically resistant treatment of structure and character on stage. This thesis suggests that those formal strategies significantly blur the boundaries between 'the real' and 'the unreal', 'life' and 'death', so as to ask pressing questions about precariousness and precarity at present. In order to hopefully throw some light on these phenomena, it seems necessary to begin by contextualising the play's central preoccupation with the global media, before going on to lend some theoretical support to the notions of 'the real' and 'the unreal' and 'life' and 'death' in connection to that media background and, finally, examine how *The American Pilot* foregrounds a situation of extreme precariousness/precarity through several aesthethic strategies that precariously restore the villagers' 'lives' to 'the real'.

1.1. Characters Entrapped in Their Own Representation

1.1.1. The Monopoly of the Sky vs. the Imagination

Although most of the world's wealth is held by a relatively small number of people and corporations across the globe, not necessarily within the boundaries of the US, globalisation still strongly involves the Americanisation of the world, i.e. "American global domination" (Woddis 2005: 587) or "the spread of American influence – political, economic, and cultural" (Moïsi 2010: 9), which "gained new strength after the end of the

[150] Although Greig is referring to *San Diego* and *Damascus*, his claim sits very well with *The American Pilot* too.

Soviet empire in 1991" (Moïsi 2010: 10). The Pilot in *The American Pilot* stands for the pervasive post-1989 US global influence through culture and war, which the play represents as closely intertwined. In relation to the former, some villagers watch American TV and are familiar with American music – the Pilot has thousands of songs on his iPod, some of which a mesmerised Evie instantly recognises – and the entertainment industry – the Farmer and Sarah, for instance, know about the cartoon character Daffy Duck.[151] However, the omnipresence of US culture contrasted with the trance-inducing onstage live playing of "a cimbalom-type instrument" (Holdsworth 2013: 181) in the RSC production. Instead of seeing this "non-specific 'ethnic music'" as "blur[ring] and distort[ing]" (Billingham 2011: 177), this thesis reads it as a powerful instance of the villagers' strong ties with indigenous traditions in the face of global pressures and also a move that roots *The American Pilot* in the here of the performance.

The characters' shared familiarity with American culture does not reveal itself as a catalyser for communication and understanding but rather contributes to further stereotyping. This is aggravated by the Pilot talking in English – the lingua franca of globalisation – while most characters have no knowledge of the language, excluding Evie's rudimentary notions and the Translator's insufficient skills, which leads to several moments of mistranslation and miscommunication. The villagers' efforts to learn English conjures up echoes of linguistic colonisation. But of course, in performance, "the play's anti-naturalistic linguistic strategy, whereby all the characters speak in English even though the locals and the Pilot are not supposed to understand each other" (Aragay forthcoming) is one of its strongest post-Brechtian features.[152]

[151] The play was written "the year iTunes was launched" (Neate and Hern 2016: 3).

[152] As both Sandra Heinen (2011: 184) and Holdsworth (2013: 181) point out, having all characters deliver their lines in English although they are speaking different languages is a technique that derives from Brian Friel's *Translations* (1980).

American cultural invasion, “accepted and consumed” – in contrast to “physical invasion”, which is “feared and resisted” (Wallace 2013: 143) – also has material effects on the villagers, which affords America a pseudo-mythical status. For example, Evie has an unshakeable belief in the global media’s representation of the US and Americans as powerful, beautiful saviours, as promoters of freedom and democracy. Of the Pilot she says, “[h]e seems to glow” (Greig 2010a: 357), and she genuinely seems to believe that the village, and by implication, the whole world, “can be American” (Greig 2010a: 405-6). She is not alone in her veneration, either. It is exactly with that sense of fascination that the play begins, with the Farmer stating that the Pilot is so beautiful, that “[a]ll the time he was with us, I kept sensing I was only a moment away from a moment when I would suddenly kiss him” (Greig 2010a: 347). Evie’s ideas – for example, about her being “marked out by God for an astonishing purpose” such as being “a saint, a martyr, a film star, an acrobat or possibly a teacher” (Greig 2010a: 356-57) – seem to derive from a blend of war-related and more down-to-earth aspirations and the global media’s promotion of the ‘American dream’. In relation to the latter, they are (partly) evidence, as Greig puts it, that “America has colonized our dreams” (Greig 2007b: 55). To this extent, the villagers are shown to be entrapped – they seem unable to move beyond a narrative superstructure championed by mainstream global media that has penetrated every cell in their body.

However, as is the case in Greig’s dramaturgy at large – in *Cosmonaut*, Bernard says, “[d]eath to the Americans” (Greig 2002a: 243), while the Proprietor and Casimir state they like America and Americans (see Greig 2002a: 243 and 252) – *The American Pilot* offers both a gently ironic treatment of Evie’s and the Farmer’s idealisation and contrasting viewpoints on America, which to some extent counterbalance the sense of entrapment. The Captain, the rebels’ leader, sees the Pilot as his prisoner in the line of duty, not because he has anything in particular against him – in fact he says “[w]e could be in Norway. /

Drinking aquavit. / Discussing our troubles" or "walking together in the streets of Oslo looking for a bar" (Greig 2010a: 363 and 404; see also 2010a: 379) – but because he believes he has no choice but to exercise his authority by taking a decision as soon as possible in order to secure the villagers' respect (see Greig 2010a: 363). When recounting his three-month stay in San Diego – a detail that intertextually links *The American Pilot* to *San Diego* – the Translator disturbingly recalls an American man who took him to his house – "[h]e had a television in every room" (Greig 2010a: 393) – and tried to molest him.

Both Butler and Augé highlight the imbrication between an aerial perspective and the affective detachment of power. Butler argues that the "aerial view […] perspective is established and maintained by state power" (2004: 149), while Augé brings technology and the media into the equation: "Photos taken from observation satellites, aerial shots, habituate us to a global view of things. High office blocks and residential towers educate the gaze, as do movies and, even more significantly, television" (2008: xiii). This is highly pertinent to *The American Pilot*, where, as Wessendorf helpfully notes, America is "spatially identified with the sky" (2015: 107). Indeed, as already mentioned, both the beginning and the end of the play crucially relate to the sky – the American Pilot falling from it on to the village and his being lifted out of it by an American helicopter. In addition, the Captain believes "[a]n American satellite will witness [his] death. The pictures will be filed in a computer along with pictures of empty desert and pictures of the sea" (Greig 2010a: 376) – "satellite images hav[ing] made it possible to fill in the last empty spaces of the map of the world" (Bourriaud 2009: 18).

The play seeks to contest the American monopoly of the sky – through the global media, satellites and other technologies as much as through war-related acts – by conjuring up poetic moments when looking up or the aerial perspective from above are linked to the

powerless villagers.[153] Crucially, when Evie dreams of the sky being torn open to reveal "a different world behind it" (Greig 2010a: 356), we may catch a glimpse of utopia – and of the possibility for characters to precariously free themselves from entrapment in the narrative superstructure – via the play's imaginative, poetic taking over of the looking up perspective. This moment constitutes a visual instance of the a/effects of Adornian dialectics: "if you perform two contradictory ideas that pull against each other – if they pull hard enough for a moment there's a kind of gap in the fabric, the trompe l'oeil. So you just see behind for a second the real world" (Greig 2004a).

1.1.2. "Uncomplex Ciphers" and "THE AMERICAN"

Greig claims that

> Americans are allowed to have stories and lives and complex characters whereas the three thousand Iraqis dying every month in that horrible war are presented as numbers, or, at best, uncomplex ciphers 'SUNNI' or 'INSURGENT' or 'VICTIM' or 'WARLORD.' (2007b: 56)

Besides, in a way that recalls his interrogation of the media's description of communities involved in the Balkan Wars as 'tribes', Greig points out that "people often talked about Afghanistan in terms of 'clans', 'warlords', 'mountains'" (2013b: 267).[154] Being portrayed as a number or 'at best' as a label becomes 'real' to the villagers in the play, another way in which their entrapment is foregrounded. Through a process of labelling that constructs them as "uncomplex ciphers", they remain locked in the global media's representation of themselves, of others and of the world. As Butler states, "bodies will be indissociable from

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[153] Although drones are not mentioned in the play, its asymmetrical spatial interplay is symptomatic of the escalation of aerial warfare. By the time the play was written, drones were already being used: "The first real world UAV [Unmaned Aerial Vehicle] attack (a bungled attempt at killing the Taliban's supreme commander Mullah Mohammed Omar) was carried out by the CIA in Afghanistan in 2001" (Barnes 2016: 6).

[154] Elsewhere, Greig has referred to how we tend to take for granted the way in which events are presented by global media such as CNN; specifically, he mentions a Palestinian who died at a checkpoint being referred to as a 'gunman' and Israelis as 'security forces' (see 2008a: 215). Instead, "[o]n the Bethlehem local station the Palestinian was given a face and a name" (Greig 2008a: 215).

the regulatory norms that govern their materialization and the signification of those material effects" (1993: 2).

In this scenario, the play sets in motion a series of counter-labelling processes that constitute balancing acts because they contest the idea of the villagers as uncomplex ciphers and, more generally, destabilise clear-cut, fixed classifications. At a time when 9/11 was still a recent event, the War on Terror had already been launched by the US and its allies and Al-Qaeda had become the most prominent designated terrorist group "by the United Nations Security Council, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union, the United States, Russia, India, and various other countries",[155] the play troubles the very label 'terrorist' – while the Captain resists identification with "terrorists" who "are offering a million dollars for the head of an American", the Translator points out that "[w]e're all terrorists now", since "[we] no longer have the power to decide what [we] are" (Greig 2010a: 378).

In principle the male characters – both American and Middle Eastern – are rendered equal by the play's use of generic names that point out their occupation: the American Pilot, the Farmer, the Translator, the Trader, the Captain and the American Soldiers. However, this counterbalancing act does not last long, since all male characters but the Pilot and the Soldiers die in the play. Even if, as Wallace rightly points out "the pilot is never afforded the luxury of interiority, of directly speaking to the audience" and he constitutes "the Other here" (2013: 142), the Americans are those who seem to have a future beyond the end of the play where they can continue writing their stories and being in control of the narrative superstructure. Furthermore, the play does mention the name of the Pilot, Jason Reinhardt (see Greig 2010a: 374). Does this mean that whatever the play attempts to do, those who are powerless will remain nameless? Perhaps – and yet, the play

[155] See <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Qaeda#Designation_as_terrorist_group> (accessed 30 June 2016).

also gives a name (not a surname) to one of the male villagers, the Translator Matthew (see Greig 2010a: 364 *et passim*). But then again, satirically, he might have gained some ‘reality’, some ‘identity’, through his stay in America and the fact that he speaks English.

In contrast, the two female characters, mother (Sarah) and daughter (Evie), have names, as well as the Captain’s daughter and the Translator’s fiancée, Belle, who was killed by a missile built by the Americans. Although they are defined in relation to men, as wife, daughter and fiancée, the women in the story are given names, which is a recurrent feature in Greig’s dramaturgy. By remaining alive at the end of *The American Pilot*, Evie and Sarah, like other central female characters in Greig’s work (e.g. Adele, Katia, Ellen, Laura and Claire, among others), suggest a sense of future possibility where they might perhaps be able to tell their stories and generate meaning outside and beyond the narrative superstructure. As the play closes, however, Evie’s future is uncertain and *“[t]he bombing continues*” (Greig 2010a: 418), enhanced in performance by a “ten-minute barrage […], where [Gray] got extras […] who would rope in from the ceiling, there were smoke bombs, guns, shooting [and] the loudest sounds it was legal to have” (Greig 2013b: 268).

The American Pilot was inspired by Heiner Müller’s *The Road of Tanks*, “which is written from the perspective of a Russian soldier at the Front during World War One” (Holdsworth 2013: 178), who expresses awe at the military prowess of “THE GERMAN” (Müller qtd. in Holdworth 2013: 178).[156] Greig follows Müller in the use of capitals, possibly as a way of both critiquing stereotyping and articulating “[t]he fear [...] of the Other” (Greig 2007b: 52), an Other who changes depending on who holds power or tries to seize it in particular historical moments: “THE GERMAN, or THE AMERICAN, or THE TERRORIST” (Greig 2007b: 52).[157] In this context, the play interrogates the dichotomy

[156] *The Road of Tanks* is the English translation of a cycle of plays whose German title is *Wolokolamsker Chaussee* [*Volokolomsk Highway*] (1984-1988).
[157] In the context of the ongoing war in Syria, this position would perhaps be occupied, among others, by ‘the Russian’. The recent case of Russian pilots parachuted on to Syrian territory after Turkey downed a Russian

powerful/powerless in several ways. For example, the play's title transfers some powerlessness on to the American Pilot by rendering him a mere label. The Trader's wrenching the badge with the Pilot's name on it from his uniform (see Greig 2010a: 398) amounts to symbolically stripping the Pilot of his identity and turning him into an uncomplex cipher. This contributes to passing some of the condition of being more 'real' on to the 'unreal' villagers, a counterbalancing act that momentarily grants them increased power, life and complexity and enables them to transgress their entrapment while the Pilot remains "trapped […] by his inability to establish a meaningful relation with the villagers" (Pattie 2011: 62). All in all, *The American Pilot* theatrically aims at restoring the villagers to 'the real' while it locks a citizen of the United States into a label – as Greig claims, "[a]ll my play tried to do was […] to place the American in the position of 'THE AMERICAN'" (2007b: 56).

1.1.3. Seizing the Image

The villagers also attempt to counterbalance or even resist the pervasiveness of the US-led narrative superstructure by aiming to capture global media headlines through violence – torturing and killing the Pilot and distributing the images – and through promoting an image of Evie as "a Joan of Arc figure" (Marlowe 2006: 366). In other words, they are fully aware that images can have powerful – perhaps even empowering – effects on global media circuits and discourses.

The Captain and the Translator wonder whether "beheading [the Pilot] before a camera [would] propel the rebels' cause into the media spotlight" (Marlowe 2006: 366). The argument that violence makes no sense if they cannot distribute the violent images globally is confirmed by the Translator: "[t]here's no point killing him unless we've got the

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war aircraft resonates uncannily with *The American Pilot*, particularly in one of the incident's descriptions: "Gunfire can be heard as one of the rebels cries: 'Don't shoot, let's capture them as hostages'" (Malm, Tonkin and Stewart 2015).

video" (Greig 2010a: 404). The link between image and power is highlighted again when the Trader tells the Farmer to hold a gun even if it has no bullets. At the same time, the Captain dreams of releasing "[a] video message from a girl to the world […] carried by a rescued pilot" (Greig 2010a: 409) for global consumption as a means of struggle, featuring Evie as a twenty-first century Joan of Arc. The grotesque plan is imagined by the Captain as a visibility strategy which, like the scheme involving the release of the images of the torture and beheading of the Pilot, ends up failing.

It seems likely that, even if the plans had not failed, the possibility that the villagers might achieve long-term global attention and an international interest in addressing the situation's complexity more adequately is a fallacy generated within the dominant narrative superstructure itself. This keeps the powerless villagers entrapped because the effect of the images without a solid power base, even when globally circulated, is not endurable. In any case, what seems particularly relevant is, as noted above, the fact that the villagers' attempts to access the circuit of signification generated by the global media display a full awareness of the extent of its power. Crucially, they also reveal that they view their powerless situation as changeable and, hence, "unnecessary" – as Sarah puts it, "it could have been otherwise" (Greig 2010a: 408).

1.2. Circuits of Affect, New Semiotic Environments and the "Undead Dead"

In *The American Pilot*, Nightingale claims, "[w]e're left with an impression of a world where some lives matter far less than others" (2005: 588). In *Precarious Life* (2004), Butler argues that the media dictate the condition of no loss, no reality, no humanity, no grief and no commonality (see 2004: 32-36) of human beings whose lives are considered to be 'unreal' from the outset:

> [w]hat is real? Whose lives are real? *How might reality be remade*? Those who are unreal have, in a sense, already suffered the violence of derealization. What, then, is

> the relation between violence and those lives considered as 'unreal'? Does violence effect that unreality? Does violence take place on the condition of that unreality? (Butler 2004: 33; emphasis added)

In other words, is violence justified as long as it is exerted on the 'unreal'? Indeed, "[i]f violence is done against those who are unreal, then, from the perspective of violence, it fails to […] negate those lives since those lives are already negated" (Butler 2004: 33).

In *Frames of War* (2009), Butler adds that the condition of 'unreality' is produced by the media through the distribution of "dominant schemes of conceptualization and affect" (2009: xxii) "regulated to support […] the war effort [against Iraq and Afghanistan]" (2009: 40), which might be extremely difficult for media consumers to escape or at least circumvent. To Butler, "[o]ur affect is never merely our own: affect is, from the start, communicated from elsewhere. It disposes us to perceive the world in a certain way, to let certain dimensions of the world in and to resist others" (2009: 50). Indeed,

> [a]ffect depends upon social supports for feeling: we come to feel only in relation to a perceivable loss, one that depends on social structures of perception; and we can only feel and claim affect as our own on the condition that we have already been inscribed in a circuit of social affect. (Butler 2009: 50)

Natalie Bainter concurs: "affect is the lifeblood of the social body, attaching us together in arrangements […] which […] direct where our affections will flow" (2013: 102). Although, as already noted, Butler claims that "affective responses are invariably mediated […] call[ing] upon and enact[ing] certain interpretive frames" (2009: 34), she holds on to the possibility of affective resistance: "they can also call into question the taken-for-granted character of those frames" (2009: 34).

Jeanne Colleran suggests that "art and culture, especially theatre" (2012: 2) are arenas where those taken-for-granted interpretive frames might be called into question. To Colleran, we are now enmeshed in a "new semiotic environment" (2012: 7) where "every human living in the contemporary world of spectacle, sonority, and speed must, of

necessity, become a semiotician" (2012: 4). Like the present thesis, Colleran has "an interest in theatrical form, especially the revaluation of political theatre" (2012: 7) and in "how theatre enacts a political/ethical critique" (2012: 7). When Butler asks, "[i]s there some way to register war in a way that transforms the senses? And what role do transformed senses have in the demands for the cessation of war?" (2009: xii), she seems to be invoking an ethics of perception and affect. Recalling this thesis's theoretical framework, Colleran states that "these new habits of perception involve understanding *the relationship of aesthetics to perception and hence to ethical judgement*" (2012: 4; emphasis added). Theatre, in sum, may play a role in terms of the "demands for the cessation of war", even if it is a limited and imperfect one.

What *The American Pilot* seems to be doing is to bring the villagers' bodies into social affective circuits not only by disclosing and interrogating their entrapment but, crucially, by aesthethically undermining their state of 'deadness' or 'unreality'. Butler points out that 'derealised' lives "have a strange way of remaining animated" (2004: 33). The next section explores how the villagers in *The American Pilot* embody that paradox – they defy their 'deadness' or 'unreality' by compellingly albeit temporarily stepping out of their condition. In other words, *The American Pilot* brings those 'derealised', 'dead' bodies theatrically to 'the real'. Bauman's notion of the "undead dead" (2005: 65) seems a particularly apt phrase to describe the villagers' existence. 'Dead' because their life has already been negated (hence their humanity, their grievability); 'undead' because, following Butler again, they uncannily remain animated and are thus (precariously, theatrically) restored to 'the real'.

1.3. Aesthethic Restorations of the "Undead Dead"

1.3.1. Posthumous Monologues and Characters on Stage Throughout

Two post-Brechtian strategies seem particularly a/effective in terms of challenging the villagers' 'derealisation', namely, the use of posthumous monologues that are directly addressed to the audience and the 'community-emphasising' (see Holdsworth 2013: 182) presence and visibility of all characters on stage throughout the performance. Greig describes the characters' posthumous speeches as moments when "[they] step out of the play's reality" (2011b: 22). The rationale behind these monologues is Greig's question, "what is the world like from the point of view of people in Afghanistan?" (2013b: 267). He points out that "we say, men can write women, and posh people can write poor people, and vice versa, but we haven't worked this out at the level of globalization" (Greig 2013b: 268), which is what he is trying to do via this "imaginative leap" (Greig 2013b: 267). The monologues are retrospective yet add to the elucidation of the present situation – the play's 'reality' situation. Besides, the direct audience address strategy is dialectically and resonantly counterbalanced by dialogues spoken in the present – that is, from 'life' or 'reality'. The cadence of the monologues – there is one every two scenes in each act – shows how carefully designed the double dialectical structure – monologue-death, dialogue-life – is.

In most monologues, the villagers present their views on the Pilot and "describe their specific attitude and *gestus* towards the events of the play" (Wessendorf 2015: 99). Without doubt, this is the most powerful interrogation of the Pilot's dominant perspective, particularly bearing in mind that the Pilot himself does not have a monologue where he articulates his view on the villagers. That is, the pilot "is viewed only from the outside" (Wallace 2013: 142) while the villagers are allowed to temporarily unlock their entrapment and generate a label-free, complex self-representation that precariously restores them to

‘the real’. As Greig claims, “[a]ll my play tried to do was *restore to those people we routinely label* their stories” (2007b: 56; emphasis added), that is, the stories that are usually not told at all – “[w]e cannot find in the public media, apart from some reports posted on the internet and circulated mainly through email contents, the narratives of Arab lives killed […] by brutal means” (Butler 2004: 38). Conversely, it might be argued that leaving the Pilot without a posthumous monologue might suggest that he is the only one ‘alive’, that is, ‘real’. And yet, the fact that he stays on stage throughout, like the villagers, but only the latter gain ‘reality’ through the monologues arguably overshadows his centrality in representation.

The Translator’s monologue is perhaps particularly interesting. When he foretells the stabbing of the Pilot’s leg, he adds he can see Belle, his dead girlfriend, in the Pilot’s eyes (see Greig 2010a: 389). This conjures up a fraught sense of connection, since the violence done to Belle’s body by an American-built weapon is relocated to the Pilot’s own body, a formal connection that foregrounds an ethical concern by making Belle momentarily ‘real’. This ‘foretelling’ implies that the spectator accesses knowledge through the dead (monologue) rather than the ‘dead’ that are going to die (dialogue), a strategy that might perhaps contribute to bringing about an alternative registering of war and a redrawing of circuits of affect.

The powerful dialectic between death (monologue) and life (dialogue) is intensified by the characters remaining on stage throughout the performance. At the same time, by remaining visible throughout the performance characters also step out of the play’s ‘reality’. Holdsworth highlights the stubborn presence of all characters on stage – “[n]otably, in Gray’s production, all the characters stayed on the stage and visible throughout” (2013: 182) – which foregrounds theatricality, the here and now of a performance being attended by spectators. Other plays and productions by Greig where this

strategy has been used include Suspect Culture's *Mainstream* (MacRobert Arts Centre, Stirling 1999), *San Diego* (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh, 2003), *Europe* (Dundee Rep Theatre, 2007) and *The Events* (Traverse, 2013). As he points out, "I have observed that almost all my work benefits from productions in which all the actors are on stage all the time – i.e. Brechtian, non-fourth-wall stagings. I suspect this is because the plays are not written naturalistically" (2011a: 6). This is greatly intensified in *The American Pilot* by having "the characters sitting in a line, like narrators waiting their turn" (Taylor 2005: 588). As Greig puts it, "[i]t was very like *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, people sitting around, telling a story" (2013b: 267).

In an email conversation with Sierz where I was asking him about the phenomenon of having the entire cast on stage throughout the performance, he commented that

> [s]ome time in the 1980s, theatre companies such as Complicite and Cheek by Jowl developed a more 'natural' attitude to stage space, but perhaps the originator of the practice is a big name like Brecht or Peter Brook. A play such as *Tiny Dynamite* by Abi Morgan had the cast on stage all of the time, and I think plays with an 'open text' such as Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life*, Kane's *4.48 Psychosis* and those influenced by these, such as Ravenhill's *pool (no water)* and Kelly's *Love and Money*, or debbie tucker green's work, usually have the cast on stage throughout. (2016)

Indeed, for instance, tucker green's *born bad* specifies that "*once onstage, the characters never leave* (2003: 2)" and *stoning mary* has "the whole cast '*onstage*' (2005: 2)" (Monforte 2015: 329-30) too. So certainly, while Greig is not unique in the exploration of this formal device, his early use of and insistence on the strategy throughout his career merit specific attention. As Monforte comments, this feature "imped[es] […] any kind of analogical representation based on a mimetic acting style" (2015: 329). Greig places it indeed in a Brechtian framework: "[t]he most succesful productions of *The American Pilot* have had a Brechtianness at their core, which means the audience see the actors assuming the characters" (Greig 2011b: 21). Once having the whole cast on stage dissolves the

pretence that you are showing people something real (see Greig 2013b: 268-69), spectators might feel present in the performance not just as spectators but also as themselves (Fig. 7).

Fig. 7: All characters but the Captain as the Trader delivers his monologue in *The American Pilot* (RSC, Ramin Gray, 2005). Photo by Hugo Glendinning. © RSC. Reproduced by permission.

1.3.2. Undoing Dialectical Structures

1.3.2.1. Ruptures in the Monologue-Dialogue Dialectical Structure

Like most carefully constructed dialectical architectures in Greig's work, structure and character treatment in *The American Pilot* also include numerous ruptures. *The American Pilot* is divided into two acts which start in the morning and end at night on day one and day two respectively – both the two-day and the day-night pattern being in themselves dialectical. However, the dialectical structure is undone by the ending of the play itself, which, as is also the case in other plays by Greig, seems to struggle to find a formal way to blur the boundaries between its own limits and the world – in this case, the play ecstatically bleeds out of itself by means of the stage direction *"[t]he bombing continues. / The gunfire continues*" (Greig 2010a: 418).

Secondly, all scene pairs in the first act (eight scenes grouped into four pairs) and in the second act (ten scenes grouped into five pairs) exhibit a triple dialectic, that is, monologue-dialogue, death-life, representing-presenting. This results in monologues being attached to death and diegesis (telling) and dialogue to life and mimesis (showing). Through the constant fluctuation between monologue-death-telling and dialogue-life-showing, the dialectic becomes tense and occasionally snaps, blurring the dialectical fluctuation itself. However, the most crucial collapse of the dialectic occurs as a result of the interplay of both strategies, that is, the posthumous monologues and the permanence of characters on stage; in other words, the fact of having 'dead' characters (both literally and because, when living, they were the 'undead dead') that nevertheless insist on remaining 'alive' by staying stubbornly on stage throughout.

To add to the complexity, two of the villagers – Sarah and the Trader – deliver not one but two monologues, each with its own function. Although Sarah does not die at the end of the play – even if she is 'dead' in the Butlerian sense – she also reminisces in her

second monologue, which clearly indicates that her narration corresponds to her perceptions after the events at the end of the play – "God asked that my daughter be taken away from me. God decided that I should be left alone" (Greig 2010a: 408). That is, in this case, a character's perception steps out of the play's 'reality'. As far as the Trader's second monologue is concerned, it reveals his plot – to sell the Pilot to the Americans for his own benefit without the Captain's permission. The Trader is aware that "[t]here are people who are offering a million dollars for the head of an American" (Greig 2010a: 378), so he negotiates with the Americans through a contact in Dubai (see Greig 2010a: 398). This betrayal (see Greig 2010a: 411) annuls the Captain's plan to have Evie heading an army and returning the Pilot safely to the Americans as a good-will gesture for future negotiations with the West and it eventually costs the lives of most villagers, including the Trader's, thus displacing univocal concepts of victims and perpetrators.

The presence of micro-monologues within the dialogue also contributes to rupturing dialectical structures in *The American Pilot*. These include the Captain's micro-monologue on pain and power (see Greig 2010a: 381), Evie's recounting her dream that "America is watching [them]" and that "[they] can be American" (see Greig 2010a: 405-6) and the micro-monologue where the Translator (Matthew) tells the Pilot – calling him by his name (Jason) as if what he is about to tell him foregrounded their situation as more equal – that in 1980, when his country was progressively developing under Marxism-Leninism, "[y]ou [the US] kill my president" (Greig 2010a: 411). These micro-monologues destabilise a monolithic dialectical structure.

The final scene in the play is not formally a monologue, yet it might be argued that this is where death imposes itself as 'monologue' in the midst of useless dialogue – the monologue of violence totally undoes dialogue's potential for communication. The Farmer's "[s]top. Please. Stop" (Greig 2010a: 417) is completely ignored and hell breaks

loose: Soldier 3 sprays gunfire at the Trader and the Farmer while the Captain, the Translator and the Captain's men enter the shed and fire at the Americans, who fire back. The last American soldier to leave by helicopter with the others throws a grenade that kills the Captain and the Translator. The play ends with Sarah seeing the bodies amidst the deafening sound of helicopters and continued bombing and gunfire.

1.3.2.2. Ruptures in the Stepping In-Stepping Out of Character Dialectic

By having characters remain on stage all the time, there emerge a series of dialectical fluctuations between their status as characters, their status as actors and even, perhaps, their status as spectators who watch the rest of the cast as they perform their roles. Further, such dialectical interplay is not stable but shows ruptures. Characters' repeatedly stepping out of the play's 'reality' yet remaining present and visible on stage invalidates their being considered characters only, or even actors who 'represent' characters. Are they still acting when they are watching and waiting for their turn to speak, or does their condition of watching suggest something else? Do they become spectators to their fellow cast members only, or is there the possibility for them to become holed spectators themselves, intrinsically connected not only with the subjects of globalisation summoned in the play but also with spectators and with the 'real' world? What effect might this have on 'real' spectators? Faced with this confounding of roles, could the holed spectator 'identify' with actors in their spectating moments, or rather, momentarily (and ecstatically) move outside herself and generate a sense of community with the villagers-actors-spectators? Despite demarcated boundaries between characters on stage and the audience in the auditorium, limits are continually challenged by these aesthethic strategies.

At the same time, the fact that characters continuously step in and out of their roles might also be suggesting something about the fragility of the holed spectator's own status –

rather than being an irrevocable possession, it can be withdrawn at any time. In other words, a sense of commonality might emerge that might remind the spectator of a shared vulnerability in a context where, according to Butler, "there has been no common bodily condition, no vulnerability that serves as the basis for an apprehension of our commonality" (2004: 36), the play thus becoming resistant to a discourse that frames "those lives [...] snuffed out brutally" (2004: 37) in places like Iraq and Afghanistan as no lives at all, and hence ungrievable. The swiftness with which a particular state can change (character to actor/spectator and back again) strongly intimates that anyone may find themselves shifting from a situation of relative well-being into one of precarity just as fast – once more, the play closely connects content and form.

Dialectical oscillations between character and spectator, acting and watching, speaking and being silent, being dead and alive while always remaining visible are productively undone in *The American Pilot*. This ruptured strategy can contribute to the tearing of rational reality and offer a utopian glimpse of the world as it might be if the dead were dead and the living were living, a world where all bodies – vulnerable by definition – were equally worth mourning. In that way, the strategy raises awareness not only about the "inequitable ways that corporeal vulnerability is distributed globally" (Butler 2004: 30), but also about the fact that we are all interconnected through our shared vulnerability.

1.4. Conclusive Remarks: Acts of Precarious Restoration

The play, in sum, calls attention to war and the media in order to scrutinise the new global semiotic environments and highlight the need to think and practice equality as "a global obligation imposed upon us to find political and economic forms that […] minimize precarity and establish economic political equality" (Butler 2011: 31). According to Butler, a death is everybody's loss and killing means killing social life: "[t]o kill the other is to

deny my life, not just mine alone, but that sense of my life which is, from the start, and invariably, social life" (2009: xxvi). As she has it, "if we are to survive", we urgently need to "find political arrangements that protect these bodily lives" (2011: 31) and the environment. *The American Pilot* seems to engage in a search for a "global ethics" (Butler 2011: 4) by confronting the spectator with an ongoing presence that highlights audibility, visibility and existence.

Being 'real' is having your existence acknowledged, being able to tell your stories or having them told, having access to complex meanings and affective circuits. Being 'unreal' is being denied all of those. In response to the 'unreal', powerless existences of the 'undead dead', *The American Pilot* attempts to precariously (and theatrically) restore them to 'the real'. The two-fold post-Brechtian strategy of posthumous monologues and characters remaining on stage throughout leads to the spectator seeing the actors assuming their role rather than merely playing it, which may be read as an invitation for them to follow suit. In addition, while the posthumous monologues fulfil the purpose of having the villagers' unheard stories told, the characters' permanent presence provides a different perspective on the 'undead dead'. That is, speaking 'from death' while being 'alive' – or 'animated', in Butler's terms – within the play's 'reality' empowers the villagers by – admittedly precariously and temporarily – restoring them to 'the real'.

2. *Damascus*: The '*Trou*ma' of Lagging Behind

"Those of us already on the receiving end of negative globalization" (Bauman 2006: 98) – that is, the globalization "of trade and capital, surveillance and information, coercion and weapons, crime and terrorism" (Bauman 2006: 96) – "frantically seek escape and breathe vengeance" (Bauman 2006: 98). While vengeance is more prominent in *The American Pilot* – the Translator, for instance, seeks vengeance for the death of his fiancée –

in *Damascus* “the rage of the oppressed” (McMillan 2007b: 1185) surfaces through a character called Zakaria who seeks to escape through suicide. Mirroring Zakaria’s situation, “for most people globalization only emphasizes their own poverty and isolation” (Rebellato 2009: 39). As Zakaria’s suicide reveals, “[t]hese types of inequality are destabilizing and unjust, and the situation is not sustainable” (Rebellato 2009: 39).

Both “Encounter Plays” emerge from a context where “Greig has become increasingly interested in the Middle East [and] the fraught relationship between the east and the west” (Holdsworth 2013: 170), but while *The American Pilot* foregrounds “American imperialism” (Holdsworth 2013: 170), *Damascus* adds “Persia, Greece, the Ottoman Empire and France” (Holdsworth 2013: 184) – Syria, where the play is seemingly set (the Tricycle production included a picture of Bashar al-Assad hanging in the hotel foyer), only became an independent modern state in 1946. While *The American Pilot* focuses on the encounter between the Pilot and the villagers in a rural setting, in *Damascus* Scotsman Paul travels to Syria to sell English textbooks to the Syrian ministry of education, and he encounters a number of locals in an urban environment. Those “subjects of globalisation” (Greig 2006b: 162) are the hotel receptionist (Zakaria), an educationalist (Muna) and a University Dean and Muna’s ex-lecturer and ex-lover (Wasim). Both the original production of *Damascus* at the Traverse (2007) and its revival at the Tricycle (2009) gave the play a mostly naturalistic treatment. In fact, *Damascus* represents the end of a phase in Greig’s writing marked by fairly “‘well-made play[s]’” (Howard 2013: 215), which he was to transcend in the near future – as the thesis will subsequently show through a discussion of *Fragile* and *The Events*. And yet, as will hopefully become clear in the present section, *Damascus* is characterised by anti-naturalistic gestures and punctuated by several moments and strategies that unsettle that ‘well-made’ fabric.

The four three-dimensional characters mentioned above – Zakaria, Paul, Muna and Wasim – are counterpoised by the "transsexual Ukranian Christian Marxist cocktail pianist" Elena (Greig 2007a: 116), a character that disrupts the play's "elegant naturalism" (Cooper 2007b: 1185) and forms part of a particular group of characters in Greig's work that this thesis calls 'aerial characters'. Like the Farmer's shed in *The American Pilot*, the foyer of the Syrian three-star hotel in *Damascus* constitutes yet another indoor, enclosed setting in Greig's work, and even "Paul's two excursions into the city of Damascus are […] mediated discursively" (Heinen 2011: 181). Needless to say, hotels are related to travel and encounter and are key non-places in a globalised world. In the play, however, the hotel is the space where characters meet and interact, accentuating the 'encounter' theme. Another powerful and resonant element that is instantly perceptible in *Damascus* is the presence of a plasma TV, which significantly keeps playing "*news images of the current situation*" (Greig 2007a: 7) on mute, a "situation" that is alluded to by characters throughout (see Greig 2007a: 17 *et passim*).

Upon Paul's arrival, it is Saint Valentine's Day so he wishes to sell his English textbooks in order to return home as soon as possible. These are products sold globally, which is emphasised by Wasim telling Muna that the following week another rep from Singapur is coming to visit them. Paul, however, is forced to stay; his flight has been cancelled as a result of a bomb warning at Beirut airport in neighbouring Lebanon, which evokes a context where "[t]errorist outrages have been recorded in Tunisia, Bali, Mombasa, Riyadh, Istanbul, Casablanca, Jakarta, Madrid, Sharm el Sheikh and London" (Bauman 2006: 102), among others. Paul ends up tuning into the old city, lying to his wife about Syrian weather conditions, wanting to sleep with Muna and going out with Zakaria, who, unable to cope with his life anymore for various reasons, ends up committing suicide when insensitive Paul is finally about to leave the hotel for the airport.

With *Damascus* in mind, Greig asks himself, "is theatre a good place to discuss the notion that we are all truly global and so on?" (2013c: 167), to which he answers, "I don't know. On a purely practical level I've tried very hard and the work which has not always been my most successful has been the work I have tried to deal with what I perceived to be the realities of globalized life" (2013c: 167). One of those realities is the fact that the language most often used in communicative exchanges is English. Although the exchanges between Wasim and Paul are mediated by Muna's translations, which she sometimes purposefully edits, and Wasim exercises his power over Paul by means of his knowledge of French, a non-naturalistic linguistic strategy is present in *Damascus* – as was the case in *The American Pilot* – whereby fragments supposedly spoken in Arabic are rendered in English (French fragments are delivered in French). Another two realities of globalised life that underpin Paul's life as much as Greig's are the fact that travel has become a widespread experience and that products are sold globally – Greig travels very frequently and his plays are sold, translated and staged globally. As in most of his work, and although the "events of this play are wholly [his] own invention" (2007e: 3), experiences and thoughts he has had and elements he has encountered in 'the real' are central to *Damascus*. That is why my discussion of the play starts by focusing on the use of *trou* in the title – French for 'hole' – given that the play is multiply 'holed' so as to allow the entrance of 'the real'.[158]

2.1. The Writer's (Desire and) Responsibility

Greig unveils the autobiographical nature of Paul: "he's a writer of English-language text-books and he gets stuck there. It's me when I first went to Syria, rather than me now" (2010b), including the fact that he lost his sense of smell (see Greig 2013b: 272).

[158] The notion of '*trou*ma' draws on one of the aspects of 'the real' highlighted by Lacan: "[t]he real, Lacan puns, is *trou*matic" (Foster 1996: 136).

Drawing on that observation, there are at least two ways in which the emphasis on responsibility as far as the treatment of Paul is concerned might have some resonance with Greig's own experience and psyche. Firstly, Paul is not just a seller of textbooks; he has importantly written the stories in them and therefore has some responsibility for them, Muna thinks.[159] Their discussion shows that *Damascus* is not only "about a kind of multicultural Britain that is totally idealised by an educational textbook writer" (Greig 2011b: 22) but also about a Syria that is idealised by Muna (see Greig 2011b: 22), thus foregrounding their respective responsibilities and the importance of an earnest dialogue.

The emphasis on authorial responsibility in the figure of Paul resonates with the fact that Greig has extensively workshopped in the Middle East. His strong ties with Middle Eastern theatre-makers started to take shape with his trip to Palestine in 2001 to devise a comedy with director Norris and the Al Kasaba Theatre in Ramallah. As he puts it,

> [w]hile I was there, we also did workshops with writers in Palestine and then the British Council in Syria invited us [2004], in collaboration with the Royal Court, to do workshops with young Syrian writers, whom I worked with for over three years. Then April de Angelis and I did a week-long workshop in Syria with young writers from Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco [2007], which culminated over a two-year period in all the plays being read in all different Arabic countries and five of them being given full-scale readings at the Royal Court in November 2008. (2010b)

As Greig claims in the author's note to the play, "*Damascus* came about as an unexpected by-product of the artistic exchange I have been privileged to have with young theatre makers in the Middle East, particularly in Syria and Palestine, since 2000" (2007e: 3).

Greig's essay "Doing a Geographical" not only recounts some of his experiences in Syria, but also comments on the downsides to the Royal Court's International Department, particularly the colonialist impulse involved in teaching and somehow imprinting British new writing methodologies on playwrights in 'third-world' countries. The "ethically

[159] In this connection, Muna asks him to rewrite some of the passages and his company to consider redrawing some of the images so that they may speak more directly to Syrian society.

charged dimension" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 36) of asymmetrical exchange is foregrounded through the character of Paul in *Damascus*. The self-critical suggestion is that Paul brings the textbook and through it, his (Western) ideas and thoughts, much in the same way as Greig does via teaching playwriting. In connection to the workshops he conducted in the Middle East, what he found most exceptionable was the fact that the work he developed with young writers was not easily given an afterlife on British stages. This lack of "[r]eciprocity" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 36) has however been addressed in the last few years by means of several projects, perhaps the most notable of which was *Told from the Inside: New Plays from Syria and Lebanon* (Royal Court, 7-12 March 2016), which included dramatic readings of works-in-progress by Syrian Liwaa Yazji (*Goats*), Lebanese Maya Zbib (*Ghalia's Miles*) and Syrian Ghiath Mhithawi (*The Final Return*).[160]

Muna's involvement and her insistence on the need to change some of the stories and drawings in the textbook might suggest a small measure of reciprocity in her and Paul's temporary and precarious space of intercultural encounter. And yet, although the prefix 'inter' suggests some kind of exchange – "[i]nterculturality signifies interaction between cultures" (Zaroulia 2010: 265) or "interaction of two sides, each of which sustain[s] its cultural difference" (Müller and Wallace 2011b: 5), and Greig sees *Damascus* as "a play about cultures interacting" (Greig 2013c: 167) – the relationship between the cultures present in the play is asymmetrical from the start. Besides, if anything, "the interconnection of world cultures" appears mostly "negatively – as the growing homogenization of world

[160] The projects also include "*Amid the Clouds* by Amir Reza Koohestani" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 152); "the translation and presentation of a selection of the work [Greig had been helping develope in Damascus] at the Court in January 2007" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 172); "the Court's season of readings I Come from There: New Plays from the Arab World (November 2008)" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 152), which was born "[o]ut of a series of three workshops held in Damascus, Tunis and Cairo between 2007 and 2008, with playwright Greig and de Angelis" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 173) and included writers from "Syria, Palestine […], Morocco, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 173); "After the Spring Readings in August 2011" (Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 175); and David Greig's 2012 season of new plays from the Arab world at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh and Òran Mór, Glasgow (see Aston and O'Thomas 2015: 171) entitled 'New Work from the Arab World: One Day in Spring'.

cultures" (Reballato 2009: 5), as is the case when Muna comments on the effects of his students being exposed to ludicrously idealised masculinities. However, there are also moments in the play when the interconnection of world cultures is regarded "positively in terms of the growing exchange or hybridization" (Rebellato 2009: 5) – for instance, when Paul 'walks' around the souk in the world's oldest inhabited city or as regards the interaction between Muna and Paul.

A sense of responsibility also underpins Greig's facing the daunting task of writing Arab characters for *Damascus*. Notwithstanding the effort he put into this (see Greig 2016a) and his awareness of "the ethical minefield that [he] cross[es] in attempting it" (Inchley 2015: 76), *Damascus* has been charged in some quarters with Orientalism (see Greig 2013b: 271 and 2016a: 91). This came about as a by-product of the Middle Eastern tour of *Damascus*: when touring "Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Tunisia and the Palestinian territories" (Holdsworth 2013: 187), *Damascus* engendered indignation, particularly as regards the portrayal of a Muslim man committing suicide. Although during after-show discussions Greig would often be shouted at and insulted – "'neo-orientalist'" and "racist" (Greig 2013b: 274-75) – young people would come to him afterwards to let him know that his depiction of a suicidal young man was on target (see Greig 2013b: 271 and 275; Greig 2013c: 170; Greig 2016d: 245-6).[161] Subsequently, the Arab Spring, which involved numerous cases of young Muslim men committing suicide, reassured Greig that his play was not a ludicrous imaginative exercise but all too sadly a reality – in one of the touring versions, Greig and director Howard had Zakaria "set fire to himself" (Greig 2013c: 170).[162] In terms of affect, Greig was struck by the emotional intensity generated by

[161] For further discussion of the reception of the play in the Middle East, see Howard (2013: 215-16).
[162] Another prescient aspect of the play is Paul's mentioning to his boss Sean on the phone that "[i]t's a war zone" (Greig 2007a: 10) and adding, "if I wanted to cause harm to – terrorise, what would I do? I'll tell you – I'll tell you what I would do – I would stand amongst the glass and ivy in the lobby of a five-star hotel and spray bullets from my Kalashnikov into the businessmen and arms dealers and – and, yes! – sellers of educational textbooks" (Greig 2007a: 11).

Damascus during its Middle Eastern tour. He notes that the fact that the play raised "very important debates […] in public […] created an electric atmosphere" and that "[i]t was as if the audience completed the play for me. All the gaps I felt in the UK were filled in the knowledge and the feelings the audience brought to it" (2013b: 274).

In addition, Greig found his inspiration for Zakaria while having a stroll in Aleppo, during which he met and spent some time with a handsome man called Zacharias.[163] This chance 'real' encounter in the citadel in Aleppo is a key component of Greig's defence against the accusations of Orientalism and the suicide ending (Greig 2013c: 171). Indeed, in "Doing a Geographical", he connects his workshopping experiences and a conversation with Zacharias. Zakaria's words in *Damascus* are borrowed verbatim from the real Zacharias, including the fact that he wants to end his life (see Greig 2006b: 162-63; see also Greig 2013b: 272), and so are Zakaria's desires, experiences and feelings, like writing a script, wanting to visit a female friend in France and feeling dead inside. Writing Zakaria did not stop Zacharias from haunting Greig's mind, for he says: "I would have liked Zacharias to have been able to attend my workshop. I would like to read Zacharias' film script although I doubt I ever shall" (2006b: 164) – instead, he imagines what Zacharias's script might have looked like through the fragments of Zakaria's script in *Damascus*, which disclose an intimate connection between fragments of 'the real' and fictional fragments.

In sum, Greig's experiences workshopping in Syria and sightseeing in Aleppo's souk, among others, find a way into *Damascus*, punching a hole in the fabric of the play. Although he admits that "Damascus probably only has something like eight professional theatre productions a year and if one of those is a very expensive British-funded play, of course you're going to approach it thinking: 'You cheeky bastard, what are you doing writing about us?'" (Greig 2010b), and that the play may to some extent be faulted with an

[163] "[T]he character of Muna was […] loosely based on Laila Hourani of the British Council" (Howard 2013: 216) and "the piano player is real", "she was there, in the hotel I stayed in, every day" (Greig 2013b: 272).

Orientalist representation of Arab characters, he is adamant that what is happening in Syria – or anywhere else for that matter – are scenes from the world – his world, our world – that he is genuinely interested in, feels a responsibility for and therefore wants to write about, notwithstanding the risks involved (see Greig 2016a: 91).[164]

The experiences described above – the difficulties and risks of writing Arab characters as "a British playwright writing about the Arab world" (Howard 2013: 216), the accusations of Orientalism, the "bruising" (2013c: 170) experience of the piece's tour in the Middle East and his sadness about not having had Zacharias in one of his workshops – unveil a traumatic dimension to *Damascus* and its creative process. Starting off from this sense of woundedness, the present section focuses on '*trou*ma' through a close examination of Paul, Zakaria, Elena and the constant presence of the TV that broadcasts images of the current situation.

2.2. From Trauma to *Trou*ma in a Global Context

2.2.1. Paul's Globalised Guilt: The Burden and the Ordinary

Referring to his playwriting workshops, Greig states, "[f]or the playwright it is an interesting way to travel and for the British Council it's a way to parlay the good name of British theatre into small amounts of desperately needed political capital in those many parts of the world where our name is mud, or worse" (2006b: 161). Here Paul's trauma – which surfaces in his inability to smell, his repeated interjections ("Fuck. Piss. Cock"; Greig 2007a: 9 *et passim*) and in "his neurotic and insensitive tendencies" (Wallace 2013: 149) – is read as disclosing both a vertical subject sealed off from the outside world and a sense of "guilt" (McMillan 2007b: 1185; Bassett 2007: 1186) for "[the] many echoes of imperialism or 'the white man's burden' in Western writers telling other people's stories

[164] The sway of the real would continue to be felt after the premiere of the play. See, for instance, Howard's discussion of amendments to the text in the context of the Middle Eastern tour (2013: 216).

for them" (Greig 2006b: 161). In the specific case of Syria, the local 'encountered' characters in *Damascus* spell out some of Britian's, and generally the West's, ignominious colonial history. Elena refers to Lebanon openly, where "[t]he French mandate locked the different confessional communities into an unstable relationship" (Greig 2007a: 30). Muna, on her part, recalls "Balfour – […] Sykes – […] Picot – […] Mossadeq – […] Suez – and always always support for Israel – […] Guantanamo – […] Iraq…" (Greig 2007a: 50).

The play is not just interested in the state of the country at present, but also about emphasising local resistance and the prior existence of a stable country through a historical perspective. Thus, the first thing Wasim tells Paul when they meet is that his grandfather killed a British soldier during the British mandate in Jerusalem. Bitter and disappointed, Wasim, like the Captain in *The American Pilot*, has stopped believing in change, and who like the Translator, reminisces about life before the war, including poetry and the pervasive scent of real jasmine trees – as opposed to the plastic-made ones in the hotel foyer, which is in tune with Paul's deficient sense of smell – and the existence of a welfare state. Muna's liberal parents are from Jaffa, a sea port next to Tel Aviv that was "a vibrant [Palestinian] cultural centre, with theatres, ornate cinemas and all manner of cultural societies" and "the most advanced city in Palestine" before Israeli occupation in 1948.[165]

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[165] See <http://www.palestine-primer.com/Palestine_Primer/Jaffa.html> (accessed 4 July 2016) and <http://www.palestineremembered.com/Jaffa/Jaffa/> (accessed 19 December 2014) respectively. Muna's parents' having fled Jaffa evokes the following historical background: "The UN Partition Plan of 1947 designated Jaffa as part of a future Palestinian state, an enclave surrounded by the projected Israeli state. However as soon as the Plan was announced Zionist terror attacks began. Armed forces in Tel Aviv (the new Jewish settlement immediately adjacent to Jaffa) started an operation ominously named 'pesach', the Jewish word for yeast. The operation commenced on the first day of Passover, when Jews believe they must 'cleanse' their house of yeast. Some 20,000 Palestinians left the town, mostly middle class people many of whom will have had a home also in Jerusalem, expecting to return. The mass assault beginning in March 1948 led to many more deserting […] A further 10,000 to 20,000 fled by sea, many going to Gaza and to the Lebanon where there are to this day large refugee camps. Jews left for Tel Aviv. Unsurprisingly it was the poor who were left behind and it was in large part a bunch of courageous teenagers who attempted to defend the town. They were ill equipped and help which was expected to come from Egypt didn't arrive. By contrast the Jews of Tel Aviv were well organised and armed […]. When the Haganah (the Jewish paramilitary force which, in 1948, was commuted into the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]) took the town, only 4,000 Palestinians were left" (<http://www.palestine-primer.com/Palestine_Primer/Jaffa.html>, accessed 4 July 2016).

Although trauma can be located in discrete events and historical developments and their consequences, as the just noted, it can also be understood as an ingrained condition that surfaces in physical/mental pathologies – while etymologically "the Greek *trauma*, or 'wound,' originally refer[s] to an injury inflicted on a body", "[i]n its later usage […], the term *trauma* is understood as a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" (Caruth 1996: 3). Both senses of trauma are present in Paul.[166] A significant step in the development of trauma studies was taken by Dori Laub and Shoshana Felman in *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* (1992), where they challenge the widespread assumption that trauma was to be related with a discrete happening in the past and argue instead that it may also be experienced through the witnessing dimension that literary and other kinds of texts open up to readers (or, indeed, spectators). Although Katia in *Europe* and Claire in *The Events* are clearly mentally traumatised by discrete happenings, namely war and a mass shooting respectively, Greig's plays also evoke a wider, interconnected sense of the traumatic that resonates with Caruth's idea of trauma "as never simply one's own" but "implicated in each other's traumas" (1996: 24). This is the perspective from which Greig's traumatised characters – including Paul – as well as some other elements in his theatre are approached here.

Patrick Duggan (2007) discusses the experience of traumatic embodiment he went through as a witness to Kane's *Blasted* (Warwick Arts Centre Studio, 2000) and Kira O'Reilly's *Untitled (Syncope)* (2007). However, the focus on the body – "a[n] organism, a closed system" for theorists of trauma generally (Clough 2007: 11) – is incompatible with the present thesis's (un)bounded ontology of the body. As Clough points out, "[t]o think the

[166] In what follows, my aim is not to provide a comprehensive picture of the "interdisciplinary field [of] trauma studies" (Bennett 2005: 4) but simply to tease out some ideas that underpin the thesis's approach to trauma.

body differently is to rethink matter and the dynamism inherent to it" (2007: 11), whereby "[t]rauma is made to open up to a new ontology of bodily matter" (2007: 9).

In addition, trauma can also be re-routed by thinking of it as both private and public. Thus, Mark Seltzer proposes to "shift the large question of the meaning of the trauma or wound in the direction of this coalescence, or collapse, of private and public registers" (1997: 4). He puts forward the need to move beyond the trauma of the subject not because it is unimportant, but because there might be more to say about trauma as category: "[t]he resurgence of trauma as a flash point of psychological and social ways of locating the subject and its vicissitudes is thus perhaps by now self-evident. But the category itself, and what exactly it provides evidence of, have in fact remained something of a black box" (1997: 4). In this connection, Roger Luckhurst talks about "contemporary trauma culture" (2008: 2); Christina Wald describes trauma as "a *general* form of injury" (2007: 93; emphasis added); and Philip Tew's assessment of the contemporary, post-9/11 British novel and trauma highlights that "traumatic experience expands to become the truly traumatological" (2007: 193). Tew argues for "a post-9/11 shift toward a wider ideological awareness, responding to the very sociopolitical uncertainties which appear to both permeate and transform the public as well as the aesthetic consciousness" (2007: 193).

Indeed, a recent way to articulate trauma is through the idea of 'the ordinary'. For instance, the kind of trauma that literary critic and political theorist Laurent Berlant addresses in *Cruel Optimism* (2011) is no longer viewed as an "exceptional shock and data loss in the memory and experience of catastrophe" (2011: 10) but "simply an event that has the capacity to induce trauma" in the context of the current "systemic crisis" or "'crisis ordinariness'" (2011: 10). Duggan and Mick Wallis also couple the word "ordinary" (2011: 4) with trauma. On her part, Derrida's disciple Malabou, working on the interface between philosophy, phychoanalysis and contemporary neurology, has written *Les nouveaux*

blessés: De Freud à la neurobiologie, penser les traumatismes contemporains (2007). Referring to the wounds of the newly wounded she claims: "[i]t's about the kind of injuries or wounds or brain damage that psychoanalysis never took into account. It's a reflection on brain lesion or pathology (Alzheimer's or Parkinson's disease) but also on trauma in general (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, all kinds of what I call 'social-political' traumas)" (2008: 8). Indeed, she addresses "la forme globalisée du trauma – résultats des guerres, des attentats terroristes, des abus sexuels, de tous les types d'oppression et d'esclavage" (Malabou 2007: 344) – the kind of trauma that many, not to say all of Greig's characters, including Paul, suffer from. As Greig stated in our interview, "I like wounded people".[167]

2.2.2. Zakaria's Humiliation: 'To Break My Life, Only a Little'

A highly wounded character in *Damascus* is Zakaria. Zakaria's trauma is related to "the despair and the humiliation of millions in the world beyond the West" (McMillan 2007b: 1185) who lag behind in a globalised world. Zakaria's every day, multi-layered humiliation, which involves a very particular sense of masculinity in crisis, operates at different and co-existing levels in a context pervaded by "the tensions and traumas produced by globalization" (Szeman 2010: 76).

Firstly, Greig states that "[m]any of us are, in a cultural sense, American. […] This is particularly true in the Middle East, by the way. Which is why, of course, young men feel so particularly humiliated by American's rejection of them" (2007b: 55). Zakaria is a case in point. In particular, *Damascus* highlights the traumatising, humiliating effects of American culture putting forward a kind of life that Middle Eastern young men may never 'achieve'. Although Muna claims "[i]t is important for the Arab world that we have young people who are able to make their way in a globalised marketplace" (Greig 2007a: 25), she

[167] More than half of the material, including this statement, I transcribed from my interview with Greig remains unpublished.

complains about rap lyrics in the textbook because they "concern things he [the singer] will achieve through his music. He will be famous. He will own a car, a big house. Also he will sleep with many women" (Greig 2007a: 44) – experiences that will in all probability remain unavailable to the students using the textbook.[168] Muna argues she does not want to make her students "feel any smaller than they already do" (Greig 2007a: 45).

A sense of humiliation is also present when Zakaria gives his script to Paul, who fails to understand the young man's desperation (see Gardner 2007b: 1184) and carelessly drops the script on the floor. In a similar way to Evie in *The American Pilot*, who venerates America because she believes it represents a way out of her situation, Zakaria wants to go out with American girls and send a film script to Hollywood. His truncated and inconclusive script reveals the fragmentary nature of trauma, "that which cannot be narrated" (Wald 2007: 96): "A man drives a car. In the sky there is an American. Two boys climb a tree to find America. A friend falls from a tree. He is dead" (Greig 2007a: 87). In any case, Zakaria's life is never told in its entirety, because from the outset even Wasim – a fellow subject of globalisation – dismisses it as fantasy.

In addition, as a Muslim youth, Zakaria embodies the problematics of "being and becoming a man in the Middle East" (Ouzgane 2006: 1). According to Bauman, "being a Muslim means being a victim of multiple deprivation, as well as being cut off from (or barred from using) the public escape routes leading out of oppression" (2006: 117). This is particularly the case with young Muslims:

> They belong to a population officially classified as lagging behind the 'advanced', 'developed', 'progressive' rest of humanity; and they are locked in that unenviable plight through collusion between their own ruthless, high-handed governments and the governments of the 'advanced' part of the planet, ruthlessly turning them away from the promised and passionately coveted lands of happiness and dignity. (Bauman 2006: 117)

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[168] Yet, in the current Syrian context, rap can conversely prove a means of struggle. For instance, "Palestinian-Syrian crew Refugees of Rap, who fled Damascus after receiving regime death threats and having their studio destroyed, are now based in Paris" (Yassin-Kassab 2015: 4).

This asymmetry is enhanced by the vast gap between the rich and the poor, which highlights a further traumatic dimension to Zakaria's existence. As McMillan points out, *Damascus* portrays "a global village increasingly divided by extremes of wealth and poverty" (2007b: 1185).

Ultimately, Zakaria's compulsive repetition of "[w]elcome" (Greig 2007a: 10 *et passim*) and "[y]ou are welcome" (Greig 2007a: 12 *et passim*) – sometimes meaningfully misplaced to create *trous* in the already faulty communicative flow – might be motivated by his multivalent experiences of traumatic humiliation. Zakaria is even denied a visa to see his female friend in Valence, France (see Greig 2007a: 37) – Lyon in Zacharias's 'real' story. Zakaria's disappointment in love is again articulated before he commits suicide at the end of the play. As Greig remarks in an interview, "now it's incredibly difficult for young Arabs to travel anywhere. Young people in the Arab world often have a sense of claustrophobia because they're trapped in a national identity that doesn't fit their experience" (2011b: 31). Indeed, Zakaria is obsessed that nothing happens in his life, which makes him feel dead inside (see Greig 2007a: 35). Like Zacharias, Zakaria craves change – "I like to change my life. Only a little […] To break it up" (Greig 2007a: 33) – but he cannot attain it in the present asymmetrical era.

2.2.3. Elena and a Stage Direction: Abstraction and the Monological

Although *Damascus* appears to be a formally uncomplicated play and it was given "a very naturalistic production [both at the Traverse and at the Tricycle]" (Greig 2013b: 272), in fact it harbours a similar structural strategy to *The American Pilot*, the other "Encounter Play" discussed in the present thesis, namely the dialectical tension dialogue-monologue. Although as the play progresses the tidiness of the strategy starts to loosen, there are two central monological foci – Elena's interventions and the largely invariable

stage direction "*[t]he television shows news images of the current situation*" (Greig 2007a: 7 *et passim*), which surfaces in scenes One, Three, Five, Seven, Nine and Eleven in Act One and in scenes One, Three, Five and Seven in Act Two – that grant a strong dialectical component to the play in tension with dialogue. While Elena always appears every two scenes in each act, the stage direction in question is dropped for the last scene in each act where Elena is present. That invites one to see a connection between Elena and the stage direction as instruments that confer structural solidity to the play. These dialectical elements – abstract components (such as Elena and the stage direction) in contrast to more naturalistic ones (such as the foyer and three-dimensional characterisation) and monologue in contraposition to dialogue – constitute punctuated acts of repetition, which are finely placed to arguably explore trauma by producing *trous* in the play's texture.

2.2.3.1. Elena: "I Am Always Here"

Presenting us again with a non-naturalistic counterpoint, Elena provides piano backing, engages in direct address with spectators, comments on the action and figures as all-seeing storyteller. Storytelling is a device that Greig has increasingly trusted from *San Diego* onwards – "[t]here's a thing that *San Diego* doesn't know but the plays thereafter start to know. I tried to push against story as far as I could in *San Diego* and I had the realization that actually story is the source of ambiguity and endless reflexiveness" (Greig 2013b: 265) – so that moments of telling instead of showing, diegesis instead of mimesis, become increasingly common in the course of his playwriting career. Elena is *Damascus*'s diegetic narrator; she recounts instead of enacting. As a clear dialectical counterpoint, the TV in *Damascus* shows (images of the current situation), which is intensified by the fact that it is muted.

Story finds the perfect ally in music: "what I like about putting music on a stage is that it changes the space into a space in which we are performers and you are an audience and we all know we're here and we're going to tell you a story" (Greig 2013b: 269). Indeed, Elena does not have any direct interaction with the rest of characters; she only indirectly relates to them through music, which she manipulates to make them feel happy or sad. Although the RSC production of *The American Pilot* had a musician on stage as accompaniment, *Damascus* makes an explicitly diegetic, post-Brechtian use of music through Elena.

Elena's seeming omniscience also fosters a sense of 'aboveness'. Indeed, Elena may be understood as a framing device that controls the narrative: "the piano player makes everything happen" (Greig 2013b: 272). Given that the playwright's job is "to manipulate the concrete" (Greig 2013c: 172), namely *zāhir*, and "the realm of story is the realm of the concrete" (2013c: 172), Elena manipulates the concrete in order "to [potentially] produce the intangible" (2013c: 172), namely *bātin*. Elena's abstract presence is simultaneously precise and indeterminate, even surreal. She is an 'aerial character', both because on one level she is the playwright's persona and because she suggests a spiritual dimension – she is "a bit like [...] God or something" (Greig 2013b: 272), as (perhaps playfully) suggested by her viewpoint from above, since she is placed "up on a slanting platform" (McGinn 2009: 126) (Fig. 8). She works as a dialectical tool not only by providing the counterpoint to the play's stable 'reality', but also by continuously stepping out of it – she feeds the spectator with information through direct address – while simultaneously remaining inside – she is the hotel pianist. Again prompting a post-Brechtian staging, the spatial distribution of actors on stage matters, for Elena is situated "at the side of the stage" (Maxwell 2009: 126), on the edge of the play's 'reality'. Ultimately, by bleeding across space-time, Elena

becomes a repository for affect – an aspect that is also foregrounded by her *trans*(sexual) identity.

Fig. 8: Wasim with Muna and Elena in the background in *Damascus* (Tricycle, dir. Philip Howard, 2009). Photo by Tristram Kenton. Reproduced by permission.

Due to her quality as an 'aerial character' and the information she uncovers – sometimes retrospectively, like the villagers' monologues in *The American Pilot* – Elena appears as an all-encompassing witness of all suffering. And yet, she cannot do anything to prevent Zakaria's suicide or terrorist attacks – she always plays the same songs. She can recount things repeatedly; she can aim at contributing to an alternative narrative of war; she can encourage the spectator to become a witness – at the start of the play, she helps herself and offers spectators a drink, a gesture that seeks to ease their way in and stimulate their engagement with the traumatic events that are about to unfold.[169] Elena is "witness, chorus and conscience of a play" (Cooper 2007b: 1185) and crucially seems to become a sort of

[169] Elena and Muna – the female characters – are the most robust figures: they face trauma instead of avoiding it. Again, Greig gives the strongest roles to women. Although the focus here is not on Muna, she also shows traces of trauma when she recalls her brother, killed at war.

bridge between the playwright, the characters, the spectator and perhaps the world – which ultimately, however, she cannot change.

Importantly, Elena unveils the travels of the gun that Zakaria uses to commit suicide:

> [t]he gun was made in Russia and sold to Iraq […]. An ex-civil servant [in Baghdad] from the oil ministry was issued with it and used it to shot at American trucks […] When he got to Damascus he sold the gun to a young man associated with the Islamic Brotherhood who had decided to take up *jihad* [but eventually] he sold the gun on to a dealer […]. The dealer sold it to Kamal, who was thinking of going to Chechnya [and Zakaria borrowed it from him]. (Greig 2007a: 114-15)

Arguably, an alternative account of war momentarily emerges here whereby "we're compelled to take stock of our interdependence" (Butler 2004: 27) in contrast to the (alleged) deterritorialisation and anonymity attached to globalisation.[170] The story of how Zakaria got hold of the gun underlines the importance of history and memory, as well as the enormous impact every single act may have further along the line in a globalised context where "[o]ur behaviour never takes place in a vacuum, and our actions always have consequences for people other than ourselves" (Ridout 2009: 12). Elena is simultaneously in the hotel foyer and yet everywhere, as noted. She is a sort of atemporal witness: she has seen everything and is always 'here'.

2.2.3.2. "*The TV Shows News Images of the Current Situation*": Re-Situating the Global Spectator

Crucially, Wald observes that traumas "affect the aesthetics of the plays" (2007: 92). In *Damascus,* the stage direction "*[t]he television shows news images of the current situation*" (Greig 2007a: 7 *et passim*) punctuates the play evenly. A powerful dialectic emerges out of the contrast between the static TV showing images of the current situation throughout and the movement related to the characters' conducting their daily business.

[170] "The gun also theatrically complies with Chekhov's maxim that a gun shown early in the play must be fired by the end" (Koenig 2009: 125).

Another strong contrast is provided by the muteness of the images and the musical and conversational background in the hotel foyer. The reviewers' descriptions of the TV images are varied but similar: Gardner's "endless images of bombed buildings and wailing women" (2007b: 1184) emphasises the damage inflicted on buildings and people; McMillan's "images of conflict in neighbouring Lebanon and Iraq" (2007b: 1185) fills in a specific localisation for the conflict; and Veronica Lee's "constant TV images of the Middle East conflict" (2007: 1185) opts for a generic Middle East. The muteness of the images is also recurrently pointed out (see Nightingale 2007: 1184; Gardner 2009: 125 and McGinn 2009: 126). In Holdsworth's words, the footage "included images from Iraq, Palestine and the release of Alan Johnston, the former BBC Gaza correspondent held hostage for 114 days" (2013: 185). Having the images running unstoppably one lying on the top of the other strongly suggests their connection, their being part of the same single space.

According to Ridout, although "[t]he global media separate our perception from our personal experience by constantly bombarding us with images […] [t]heatre reconnects perception and experience" (2009: 58). As he claims, "[s]uch a theatre might work by presenting precisely the same images as those circulating in the global media, but doing so in theatrical situations in which the audience is actively aware of its own participation in the event rather than a passive recipient of media saturation" (2009: 58). This is exactly how the TV images in *Damascus* work, that is, "[t]he images of the global media are re-situated to awaken an active ethical response or sense of 'response-ability'" (Ridout 2009: 59), since the spectator is addressed doubly – both as spectator vis-à-vis the play and as spectator vis-à-vis the news. Because she is watching globally distributed media content, the spectator may be described as a global one, but because the images are re-situated in a

theatrical context that constantly draws attention to the here and now, they might have an ethico-political impact on holed spectators.

They might, for instance, open up questions regarding the spectators' responsibility when they consume this kind of images. As Crouch argues, "I believe that we must be responsible for what we choose to look at. Legislation exists to enforce this belief – it is a criminal act to watch the abuse of children on the Internet. It is not illegal to watch a beheading" (2011: 417). Indeed, "a critical disposition toward image and narrative" is, in Colleran's words, "an indisputably necessary skill in the mediated, networked world" (2012: 5). Although unable to change the world, *Damascus* might provoke the spectator to become a semiotician, to improve her critical skills as regards "political conflict as it is currently waged and staged" (Colleran 2012: 6). This might ultimately enhance the spectators' capacity "to understand the veiled power dynamics underlying specific kinds of brutality, they also invite us to consider connections between representational violence and political violence" (Colleran 2012: 9). In sum, the development of those critical skills might contribute to an alternative inscription of violent acts across the globe and to generating an affective kind of knowledge about the world.

Perhaps one of the most crucial intended effects of the presence of TV images of the current situation is to partly revert the global spectator's preconceived expectations about life in the Middle East: "instead of the war-torn picture we're used to [and that Paul, in a way, expects to find but does not], the play offers an urbane comedy set in a city of cultural riches" (Fisher 2007: 1186), where the images of conflict are a mere background. At the same time, however, the trauma (ordinariness) suggested by the images of the current situation continually pierces through into the hotel foyer, thus hinting at a network of connections between events in the foyer, outside the foyer and the places where the images

where taken. Such connections are intensified through the presence of Elena, who sees everything and is always here, witnessing suffering.

2.3. Conclusive Remarks: '*Trou*ma' Binds us Together

In *Damascus*, *trou*ma binds together the playwright, the characters and their stories and the images of the current situation, thus highlighting the connectedness between those who are doing well under globalisation and those who are lagging behind. As is the case in the other plays analysed so far, there is a final violent *trou*, this time produced by Zakaria's bullet, which not only puts an end to his life, but also brings about the collapse of the very fabric of the play, that is, the dialectic interplay between Elena and the TV images – monological – and events in the play – dialogical. Nevertheless, by foregrounding narratives of connectedness such as the gun story and through the character of Elena whose haunting presence connects the foyer, the TV images, the spectators and the world, *Damascus* seems to want to insist that we are "all *objectively* responsible (that is, responsible whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not, and – an ethically crucial point – whether we intend it or not) for each other's miseries" (Bauman 2006: 99; emphasis original).

*Trou*ma interconnects human beings; it binds us together. As Luckhurst puts it, in a way that recalls the affect theories and the theory of holes alluded to in the present thesis, "[t]rauma is *a piercing* or breach of a border that puts inside and outside into a strange communication"; "[it] violently opens passageways between systems that were once discrete, making unforeseen connections that distress or *confound*" (2008: 3; emphases added). The spectator, whose life is full of dulling, repetitive routines, might herself be pierced by the unusual sense of repetition explored in *Damascus*, its presentation of broken characters (Paul, Zakaria) and its wounded formal strategies (Elena, stage direction).

Although *Damascus* is “much more pinned to specific places and times than is usual” (Shuttleworth 2007b: 1186) in Greig’s work, the play’s observations on trauma and unequally distributed opportunities under globalisation give it a more universal resonance.

Although Zakaria tells Paul, “I bring you my life” (Greig 2007a: 86), when he gives him the script, he subsequently finds it on the floor next to a sleeping Paul, who cannot seem to find a space for ‘Zakaria’s life’ in his suitcase. The metaphor becomes real. Zakaria brings Paul his life, but Paul cannot see it. As Gardner puts it, “[l]ike Paul, our expectations are confounded, and in the play’s dying moments we are unavoidably implicated, as Paul’s easy platitudes, and his blundering relationship with Zakaria, lead to an unexpected act of violence” (2009: 125). Paul’s surname, Hartstone, clearly alludes to his lack of empathy, his insensitive dealings with Zakaria and his aspiration to reach the American dream. Zakaria’s script foreshadows his death – “[t]wo boys climb a tree to find America. A friend falls from a tree. He is dead. […]. Now he is alone. […]. Now he dies” (Greig 2007a: 87). But as Elena says, as if comforting Paul for the irreparable loss and the impossibility to fill in the absence left by Zakaria’s suicide, “[y]ou held his hand. / I know. / I was here. / I’m always *here*” (Greig 2007a: 116; emphasis added).

VII. Here Plays

1. *Fragile*: 'Sharing Doing' and Spatial Transcorporeality

From Elena's suggestion in *Damascus* that she is always 'here', the thesis moves on to its last part, "Here Plays". While *Damascus* "played in Syria, Egypt, Tunisia and look what happened a year later: the Arab Spring" (Greig 2013b: 270), *Fragile* is a short play about (threats of) suicide by young men as a form of protest in the context of "austerity Britain" (Greig 2011c: 51) and the Arab Spring (2010-2012), which led, among other things, to the resignation of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia (January 2011), where the Arab Spring started, and of Egyptian Hosni Mubarak (February 2011). Later came Libya's Colonel Muammar Qaddafi's death (October 2011) and Ali Abdullah Saleh's departure from Yemen (January 2012). Zakaria's suicide in *Damascus* predates the suicides of many Muslim young men in the context of the Arab Spring including Mohamed Bouazizi's, which *Fragile* crucially draws upon (see Greig 2011c: 60-4), as well as the ongoing war in Syria, which started in March 2011. Also ongoing are austerity measures, which have become the norm in the UK since 2010, when the first drastic cuts to public spending were implemented. The Conservative Government's commitment to lowering welfare spending has clearly intensified the strain on those who are already highly fragile.[171]

Short and sharp, *Fragile* is part of a larger project, namely Theatre Uncut, whose co-Artistic Director and Founder is Hannah Price (the other co-Director is Emma Callander). Price herself directed *Fragile*, which had a short run at the Southwark Playhouse Vaults between 15 and 19 March 2011.[172] For Theatre Uncut 2011, a number of donated plays written by different playwrights – Clara Brennan, Dennis Kelly, Lucy

[171] Greig's *The Monster in the Hall*, which premiered the same year as *Fragile*, also tackles "experiences of social vulnerability and social services provision" (Wallace 2013: 57).

[172] "After leaving its original home in Southwark Bridge Road in 2006, the theatre operated in vaults beneath platform one of London Bridge railway station [Southwark Playhouse Vaults], accessed from Tooley Street, from 2007 until early 2013" (see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southwark_Playhouse; accessed 6 July 2016). Since 2013, Southwark Playhouse has been based at 77-85 Newington Causeway.

Kirkwood, Laura Lomas, Anders Lustgarten, Ravenhill and Jack Thorne in addition to Greig – and responding to the austerity measures undertaken by David Cameron and Nick Clegg's Coalition Government in October 2010 were made available on the project webpage for a week to be used freely by anyone anywhere. This innovative strategy was undertaken in an overt spirit of protest, reflected both in content and form – the plays simultaneously protest against austerity measures and generate space for participation in what has become a global protest movement.[173]

Indeed, the 2011 Theatre Uncut had "89 simultaneous premieres across the globe" (Brodie and Price 2011), crucially including constituencies not previously involved in theatre and managing to foster a sense of community. The London ticket sales profits were donated to the Child Poverty Action Group. Theatre Uncut's profile from 2012 onwards, the year in which Greig participated with his play *Dalgety*, has become increasingly global and has included more playwrights from overseas. Although since 2013 the plays' subject-matter has zoomed out from the initial focus on austerity, Theatre Uncut remains centrally concerned with the intersection between art and politics. So far, "Theatre Uncut plays have been performed by 6,000 people in 15 countries across four continents" (Greig 2016a: 90).

1.1. Global Fragility

Although *Fragile*'s two immediate backdrops are the cuts to the welfare system undertaken by the UK's Coalition Government and the Arab Spring, the play resonates with the wider global atmosphere of recession and financial squeeze and related protests – such as those at Puerta del Sol (15-M or Indignados movement, Madrid, May-June 2011), Syntagma Square (Athens, 2010-2012) and Zucotti Park (Occupy Wall Street, New York, September-December 2011) – and historical revolutions via, for instance, Caroline's

[173] See <http://www.theatreuncut.com/> (accessed 4 April 2013).

"Sandanista" T-shirt (Greig 2011c: 54). In a nutshell, *Fragile* all too painfully captures "the spread of neoliberal capitalist domination, a domination accompanied by extremes in economic inequality […] and police violence, as well as by widespread militancy, insurgency, occupation, and revolution" (Dean 2012: 10).

In spite of the popular revolt climate of the early 2010s, which harks back to "the global anti-capitalist movement of the 1990s" (Grindon 2008: viii) and the protests against the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in the 2000s, global neoliberalism marches on seemingly undisturbed. That is, no global or local movement, NGO, World Social Forum meeting, anti-globalisation protest, green activist group, community, coalition or allegiance has been able to meaningfully and visibly arrest the neoliberal greed-fuelled race (yet). Those who have succeeded in isolated and/or transient ways have found their subsequent actions impeded or violently repressed. Hacktivism – for example, the famous hacker activist group Anonymous – indymedia – independent journalists reporting on the internet – culture jamming activism – for example, The Yes Men (Rebellato 2009: 50) – adbusting – for instance, Adbusters – DiY culture – for example guerrilla gardening and anarchist groups such as Reclaim the Streets – "radical cheerleading" (Reballato 2009: 50), environmental organisations and other grassroots movements and forms of protest both individual – whistleblowers acting on their own – and collective – Wikileaks – are indeed trying to challenge this atmosphere of complacency, yet "[t]he movement is not unified" (Reballato 2009: 50), which limits the possibilities of making a robust impact so as to, maybe, begin heading elsewhere.[174]

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[174] Hacktivism is "a form of virtual protest that seeks to disrupt the flow of information using new communication technologies" (el-Ojeili and Hayden 2006: 207). "Indymedia seeks to provide democratic and non-corporate coverage of current affairs, using real time distribution of video, audio, text, and photos" (el-Ojeili and Hayden 2006: 207). Adbusting "is a form of media that looks like an advertisement but actually opposes the values and assumptions presented by a corporation through its advertising campaigns" (see: https://classnet.wcdsb.ca/sec/MD/Gr11/Eng/.../ADBUSTING.docx; accessed 5 July 2016). Guerrilla gardening "is the act of gardening on land that the gardeners do not have the legal rights to utilize, such as an abandoned site, an area that is not being cared for, or private property" and "[i]t encompasses a diverse range of people and motivations, ranging from gardeners who spill over their legal boundaries to gardeners with

Fragile explicitly mentions Bouazizi, whose self-immolation took place in Sidi Bouzid (Tunisia) on 17 December 2010. Apart from a general sense of humiliation, "Bouazizi's act of suicide was also a reaction against a municipal official, who confiscated the fruit cart on which he depended to make a living" (Zahrouni 2013: 152) – without meaning to downplay the obvious differences, by depriving people of ever more resources, austerity measures in the UK are also increasing their sense of fragility. As is widely known, "[t]he self-immolation of Bouazizi [...] invited demonstration that extended throughout Tunisia against the president and his regime, resulting in the Tunisian Revolution, the stepping down of the president and the fall of the Tunisian police-state system" (Zahrouni 2013: 152), as well as the president's fleeing the country. Bouazizi was the first of many who would carry out the same act in the years to follow.

Of course, *Fragile* and the Arab Spring are behind us by half a decade but, sadly, not the realities the play alludes to. In the context of Australian asylum policy, 23-year-old Iranian, Omid Masoumali set himself alight last April "in protest at his continuing detention on Nauru, one of the two offshore detention centres run by the Australian government as a deterrent for asylum seekers arriving by boat" (Doherty 2016: 16). Like Bouazizi, he did not survive the burns. "Masoumali had been recognised as a refugee", but "had been on Nauru for three years" (Doherty 2016: 16). Before setting himself on fire he said, "'[t]his action will prove how exhausted we are. I cannot take it any more'" (Doherty 2016: 16).

"You seem…fragile" (Greig 2011c: 55), says mental health worker Caroline to patient Jack in Greig's *Fragile*. Jack concurs – "[f]ragile, that's it, completely fucking fragile" (Greig 2011c: 58). It is interesting to notice that Greig uses a state, the state of

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political influences who seek to provoke change by using guerrilla gardening as a form of protest or direct action" (see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_gardening; accessed 5 July 2016). Radical cheerleading "is a form of cheerleading performed at demonstrations that combines elements of non-violent direct action and street theatre" where "[r]adical cheerleaders reappropriate the aesthetics of cheerleading, sometimes in an ironic fashion, and use cheers that promote feminism and left-wing causes" (see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_cheerleading; accessed 5 July 2016).

being 'fragile', for the title of his play. Greig's titles are generally either highly specific, like *San Diego*, *Damascus* or *Europe*, or downright generic, like *Outlying Islands*, *Fragile* or *The Events*. Despite the spatial specificity of their titles, the plays in the first group are decidedly malleable and allusive as if, paradoxically, that very specificity conferred some indeterminacy on them. Conversely, in the case of the second group, generality does not imply lack of specificity or an inability to ground responsibility in location. Both strategies manifest Greig's effort to foreground spatial interconnectedness and, in the case of *Fragile*, a sense of global fragility.

1.2. An Atypical 'Duologue': Caroline's and Jack's Openness

Fragile features an intense dialogue between Jack, a mental health patient who is about to lose his twice-a-week treatment due to the UK government's implementation of austerity measures, and Caroline, Jack's (former) "mental health support worker" (Greig 2011c: 58). While Jack is performed by an actor, Caroline, in a post-Brechtian manner, is performed by the audience, who are asked to read her lines on a PowerPoint "projection" (Greig 2011c: 49) since the cuts to public spending have made it impossible to hire a second actor (see Greig 2011c: 51). This central formal decision aesthethically catalyses the ethical resonance of the piece. The very day the cuts are made public, Jack breaks into Caroline's living room late at night – one more self-contained yet allusive space – to tell her about his plan to challenge the government's decision.[175] He wants to commit suicide as a form of protest as Bouazizi did in Tunisia, namely by setting himself alight.

[175] Throughout Greig's career, those micro spaces become increasingly nuanced and begin to evoke and 'do' more things, i.e. they confound and provoke more thought about the significance of space and increasingly foreground a sense of 'here'. In the "Europe Plays", spaces seem to 'clearly' be the defunct station in a border town in central Europe (*Europe*) and East Berlin after reunification (*One Way Street*) respectively. The "Vertical Plays" shift locations more self-consciously, timidly in *The Architect* and boldly in *Cosmonaut*, and yet an enclosed place is central to each play, Eden Court and the space module respectively. The "Bird Plays" *Outlying Islands* and *San Diego* focus on the micro spaces of an island and (arguably) a plane. And after the farm shed in *The American Pilot* and the hotel in *Damascus*, we reach Caroline's house in *Fragile* and a room in which a choir might conduct rehearsals in *The Events*.

On the surface a dialogue between two counterparts, Caroline and Jack, that sets up a strong dialectical tension between them, 'duologue' is a problematic term to use in relation to *Fragile* for, like it or not, the play's formal strategy "casts the audience as a [participating] community" (Wallace 2013: 62). In other words, the play opens itself onto the audience, so that a sense of fixed boundaries for any of the two characters evaporates; boundaries become indeterminate and diffuse and the unbounded counterparts can only exist in relation. This section aims at unpacking *Fragile*'s fascinating experimentation with character and *through* character, which involves novel treatments of stage managing, spectatorship, place and dialogue. Instead of appearing as fixed, character unfolds as an undone element pregnant with myriad ethical reverberations.

Through Caroline/audience, the spectator is invited to 'consensually' join a conversation with Jack that cuts across the fourth wall and conjures up a 'here' – a move that has, potentially, some far-reaching ethical implications. Some members in the audience cry, some laugh, some giggle nervously, but most of them "step in" (Greig 2011c: 51). The connection between Jack and Bouazizi is the means to bodily and spatially weave together the protests against the cuts to public spending in the UK and the Arab Spring. Indeed, I would suggest that Jack's openness – his connection with Bouazizi – is grounded in a transgression of the limits of his particular body and space, and thus forcefully conveys the idea of 'here'. What might the a/effects of Caroline having a conversation with Jack be, taking into account the openness that both embody?

1.2.1. Caroline: 'Sharing Doing'

In his "Note on the Text", Greig states that "[t]he character of Caroline is intended to be spoken as a choir by the audience at the show" (2011c: 49). In fact, spectators are even meant to read out loud the stage directions projected on the screen. In relation to the

use of technical devices such as PowerPoint, Greig notes, "I always learn from any audience: technical things about storytelling, timing, dialogue etc. Generally I'm surprised by how similar audiences are" (2007b: 53). Certainly, the use of PowerPoint in *Fragile* involves experimenting with "storytelling, timing and dialogue": a story is told with the audience's vital participation, "[t]iming is important" (Greig 2011c: 49) and dialogue, for more immediately graspable yet perhaps less readily apprehensible reasons, far surpasses a mere verbal exchange between two characters.

There is a clear precedent to the use of PowerPoint in Greig's work – *Brewers Fayre*, which he himself directed. However, while in that play Greig was not sure that giving lines to the audience through a PowerPoint presentation would work, when he did *Fragile* he was certain it would, so he pushed this post-Brechtian strategy further.[176] One basic difference between the plays' female protagonists is that while Elaine (*Brewers Fayre*) has an individual bodily instantiation, Caroline is conjured up by a group of spectators. Another difference is that while spectators deliver her lines, Elaine sits amongst the audience pretending she is an spectator until what Greig calls a "big speech" (Greig 2010a: 491) signals the moment when "an actress who has been sitting in the audience should stand up and take over the role of Elaine" (Greig 2010a: 491). Caroline, in contrast, is performed by the audience throughout. This leaves the audience in *Fragile* almost alone – except for the stage manager who controls the projection – to do the job of performing Caroline – and perhaps also the job of caring? In *Brewers Fayre*, then, the audience and Elaine swap roles – spectators perform Elaine up to the 'big speech' and the actress performs Elaine from that point onwards, thus foregrounding the interchangeability of actor and spectator and their necessary collaboration. In contrast, in *Fragile*, spectators act out a character – the audience becomes Caroline.

[176] Unpublished information present in the full manuscript of my interview with Greig.

At the same time, there is something else *Fragile* seems keen on emphasising. Greig indicates that "[t]here is a sense in which the stage manager responsible for the PowerPoint is the other actor in the company" (2011c: 49). That is, by having audience and stage manager collaborate in the 'making' of Caroline, *Fragile* suggests that both share the role of being "the other actor in the company". Stage manager and audience 'act out' Caroline *together* – a move that contests the "*[w]e're all in this together*" (Greig 2011c: 51) spectators are ironically asked to repeat during the audience briefing exercise, a Conservative slogan since David Cameron assumed leadership of the party in 2005 that became a vacuous mantra once the Tories came back to power in 2010 and began to implement severe austerity measures. Perhaps *Fragile* embraces the more realistic "we are all in this mess together" (Keller 2016: 113). Through this sharing, the notion of responsibility – "responsible for" (Greig 2011c: 49) – opens out to include the PowerPoint operator. None of the participants is singly or fully the actor for/the character of Caroline, but they are all Caroline. They need each other for the 'making' of the play – and perhaps the world too. In sum, if she chooses to participate, each individual spectator ecstatically becomes someone else with an indeterminate number of others.

Fragile's experimentation with roles proceeds with Greig's interest in such an area of theatrical exploration. Among the plays discussed in this thesis, it is a central strategy in both *San Diego* and, as will become clear in the next section, also in *The Events*. In *Mainstream*, the author's note on the text clarifies:

> *Mainstream* was created with the intention that four actors, two male and two female, would randomly be assigned the roles of A & R and Personnel in each scene. This has the effect that in any given scene the performers could be two men, a man and a woman or two women. It is not necessary to perform the text in this way but it informs a reading of the text and may influence production decisions to know the circumstances of its creation. (Greig 2013e: 189)

While this strategy gives *Mainstream* multiple possibilities in terms of gender assignation, among other effects, *Fragile* pushes the experimentation with roles further by involving the

spectator, whereby role-playing bleeds out of the space of the stage and, simultaneously and dialectically, the auditorium bleeds onto the stage through Caroline.

In consequence, from now onwards 'Caroline', 'audience', 'Caroline/audience' or 'the spectator' are used indistinctively. Indeed, in his "Note on the Text", Greig interestingly refers to both "Caroline's lines" and "the audiences' [sic] lines" (Greig 2011c: 49), which productively blurs or confounds Caroline's individuality. This sense of collectivity, of necessarily 'making' Caroline together 'out of need' – the show is not happening without the audience – may be read aesthethically as underlining a necessarily collective sense of responsibility and caring for especially vulnerable people like Jack and highlighting our "shared condition of precarity […] even as precarity is differentially distributed" (Butler 2012: 135).

In sum, an entrenched characteristic of the contemporary globalised world – precariousness and precarity – takes over the play's form. In other words, the play foregrounds its precarity by requiring the audience's participation for it to be performed at all, and by theatrically risking everything, it exposes its own precariousness. According to Bourriaud,

> [a]rt has found a way not only to resist this new unstable environment but also to draw new strength from it, and […] new forms of culture and *new types of formal writing* could very well develop in a mental and material universe whose backdrop is precariousness. For this is the situation in these early years of the twenty-first century, in which transience, speed and *fragility* reign in all domains of thought and cultural production, giving rise to what might be described as a *precarious aesthetic regime*. (2009: 85; emphases added)

As part of this "precarious aesthetic regime", the aesthethics of *Fragile* work by leaking part of the content of the world outside – precarity/precariousness – into the (holed) play's form (as well as its content). The fact that the play *cannot exist* without the audience's voice(s) raises bodily/affective awareness about the action necessary for the non-existent to become existent (visible and audible), even as it reveals that the kind of engagement that is

required involves doing things together – 'sharing doing'. Through the audience helping bring the play into existence, the wills of people are revealed in practice to be capable of making things happen, making things real.

1.2.2. Jack: Transcorporeal Spatiality

Jack has drugs- and alcohol-related mental health problems that let up considerably thanks to the support he receives through the health care system. He threatens to set himself alight as a response to the cuts that will deprive him of this assistance. Although he is aware his self-immolation might not change much in "the old train of shittiness [which] will just go rumbling on down the old shitty tracks" (Greig 2011c: 63), Jack thinks – in a way that perhaps echoes Berlin's gesture of setting the station on fire in *Europe* – that "more people will notice if I set myself on fire" (Greig 2011c: 63) and advocates that "[t]hings can change" (Greig 2011c: 61). In relation to Jack, a series of formal strategies are deployed to highlight interdependency. In its final stages, the play advances in four tempos that crescendo towards the moment Jack is on the verge of suicide, Caroline begs for the lighter but the audience is left uncertain as to whether Jack is going to give it to her. She tries to convince Jack not to commit suicide by promising that they will start a campaign. Thus, by establishing a connection between historical (Sandinism), current (austerity measures in the UK) and future gestures of protest (Caroline's promise), *Fragile* posits a spatio-temporal sense of connectedness, a sense of 'here'. The word 'tempo' is meant to indicate that from this point onwards, the pace at which the play builds up its (ir)resolution is highly significant – as noted, Greig claims that timing is important in *Fragile*.

The first tempo – from Jack's "[w]e don't matter enough" (Greig 2011c: 60) to Caroline/the audience's "*one big saving*" (Greig 2011c: 60) – is preceded by a poetic description of how Jack's "body left prints in the frost on […] [Caroline's garden's] grass"

(Greig 2011c: 59) when he broke into her house.[177] Crucially, when Jack states, "[w]e don't matter enough" (Greig 2011c: 60) just before he starts discussing the Arab Spring in the following tempo, he begins to turn his own problem into a collective one that includes "Soraya, Damon, Alisdair Macintosh, Johnny the Bang and Itchy George, and Aisha and Welcome-In-Duane. It's all of us, Caroline" (Greig 2011c: 60). In other words, this tempo inaugurates Jack's interweaving of his body with other bodies, or more precisely, the idea that each of us is always-already everyone else through our shared vulnerability.

Jack becomes an embodiment of 'everyone'. As Rebellato notes, "[t]his […] drive towards generalizing character, allowing us to imagine people in general, transforms space" (2009: 79) – *Fragile* is indeed "another piece of impossible geography" (2009: 80) by virtue of its undoing of the boundaries of character and place in such a way that they collapse into a sense of 'here'. As Butler puts it, "[t]he public will be created on the condition that […] certain names of the dead are *not utterable*, certain losses are not avowed as losses, and violence is derealized and diffused" (2004: 37-8; emphasis added). In an attempt to acknowledge those derealised lives, *Fragile* voices the names they bear. Similarly, as will be seen, *The Events* speaks the names of the murdered.

The second tempo starts with Jack asking whether Caroline has ever heard of Bouazizi (Greig 2011c: 60) and finishes with Caroline's/the audience's "*all I can do*" (Greig 2011c: 61) and introduces Bouazizi's story. Despite retaining the dialogue form, the play becomes more monological, given the longer speeches. The first remarkable aspect about this tempo is the constant repetition of the word 'Caroline' in Jack's speech (seven times), which does not just signal an urgent cry for help, but also presses on the motif of Jack's transcorporeal summoning of others. The second remarkable aspect is Jack's description of what he calls "fucked up Tunisia" which "we need to do something about it"

[177] Caroline's/the audience's words are in italics in the text.

(Greig 2011c: 60-1) and especially the interweaving of the Tunisian situation with his own: "when you came round and found me under my wardrobe that day Caroline […] I thought this situation is all fucked up Jack and it has to change" (Greig 2011c: 61). This is the first time Jack interlaces his story with Bouazizi: Bouazizi realised "[j]ust like I did" (Greig 2011c: 61).

After Caroline's admission that she can't fight anymore (see Greig 2011c: 61), the degree of abstraction increases with the start of the third tempo. It opens with Jack's poetic invitation to Caroline to "[l]ook at the tree […] – can you see it in the moonlight? – can you see the way the light's glistening on the branches?" (Greig 2011c: 61), which includes another reference to "frost" (Greig 2011c: 61). It must be emphasised that moments like this one had special resonance in Price's staging, where the use of darkness was absolutely central. As she notes in a personal email communication:

> We were in total darkness in an old railway vault underneath London Bridge station. It was very atmospheric and the air was very very damp. Trains periodically trundled overhead. […] I had it entirely cross lit so the words could be read, but the darkness was really to help with the feeling of importance, of an event, and of protest. (2016)

Again, in this tempo, two central aspects crop up. Firstly, Bouazizi's and Jack's bodies merge through Jack's allusion to "[t]hat peculiar smell of smoke and crisps and diesel" (Greig 2011c: 61), "the smell of Jack" (Greig 2011c: 62), which is the way he chooses to hint to Caroline that his plan to commit suicide in the same way as Bouazizi. In addition, in reference to himself but simultaneously reflecting upon Bouazizi's action, Jack speaks of "the day he lit the spark which changed the situation" (Greig 2011c: 62). Finally, once Jack's and Bouazizi's fragile bodies and minds, sense of humiliation, 'fucked-up' situations and their (potentially) being "the spark" that "changed the course of fucking history" (Greig 2011c: 62) have been thoroughly entwined, *Fragile* also transports elements that appeared to belong to Tunisia – "shitty Tunisian duvets and their shitty Tunisian biscuits and the shit

on their shitty Tunisian kitchen floors" (Greig 2011c: 60) – to an enigmatic 'here': "*this* duvet stinks, *these* biscuits have mould on them, there is shit on *our* kitchen floor" (Greig 2011c: 62; emphases added).

The title of this section, 'transcorporeal spatiality', is an attempt to capture what has been delineated so far. According to Segarra, transcorporeality "makes us transcend the limits of the individual body" (2014: 90), a fitting description of Jack's unbounded body.[178] The notion of 'transcorporeal spatiality' indicates that by virtue of that bodily unboundedness, bodies touch upon one another and make space collapse into a 'here'. Instead of representing Jack's and Bouazizi's bodies as exchangeable and Tunisia and Britain as reversible places, the narrative laboriously and yet succinctly ingrains the former in the unbounded and transcorporeal figure of Jack and suggests the space they inhabit is a singular 'here'.

From this moment on, Jack visualises the protest that his self-immolation would produce and entwines his body – which, as noted, Caroline found under his wardrobe at one point (see Greig 2011c: 61) – with those of "ten million" imagined protesters "coming out from under the wardrobe" and "marching up to Parliament Square" in London (Greig 2011c: 62) – a description that both points back to the student protests that took place in the UK in November and December 2010, with the focal point in central London, and uncannily foreshadows the anti-austerity demonstration or March for the Alternative that took place in London on 26 March 2011, only one week after the end of the run of *Fragile*. Just as Tunisian realities became "this", "these" and "ours", at this point "my wardrobe" becomes "the wardrobe", which highlights the passage from isolation and individuality to connection and collectivity even as Tunisia and London – apparently disconnected spaces – are linked up into one single 'here'.

[178] My translation of the Spanish original: "la transcorporalidad, entendida como aquello que nos hace transcender los límites marcados por el cuerpo individual" (Segarra 2014: 90).

The fourth and last tempo starts when Caroline asks Jack what he has in his bag (see Greig 2011c: 62). Jack tells Caroline/the audience the truth and starts pouring diesel over his head and body (see Greig 2011c: 62) (Fig. 9).

Fig. 9: Jack as he pours petrol over his body in *Fragile* (Southwark Playhouse, dir. Hannah Price, 2011). © Theatre Uncut. Reproduced by permission.

In the 2011 premiere production, "[w]hen Syrus [Lowe] poured the petrol over his head we used very warm water, so the lights lit up the steam like he was already on fire, already smoking. The lights came down slowly over the whole piece, so at the end it was just his face, the promise lit up behind him and the lighter. All else, and all the audience, in virtual pitch black" (Price 2016).[179] The play closes on Caroline/the audience begging him to give her – who exactly is unclear, given Caroline's/the spectator's unbounded nature – the lighter and without a resolution being provided at the end. Yet somehow the smell of smoke, crisps and diesel is already 'here'.

[179] In the production presented at Teatre Lliure by Alberto San Juan and Nuria Gallardo, directed by Mariano Barroso (Barcelona, 6-9 February 2014), Jack's suicide was hinted at as the stage went pitch black.

1.3. Some A/effects: Visibility, Audibility, "Project!"

Several other a/effects derived from the use of PowerPoint and Jack's intertwinement exercises are worth highlighting. One of them has to do with visibility, given that the audience is asked to perform a character they do not see on stage – all they see is a projection of words. That is, multiple bodies are invited to 'inhabit' an unseen one, which implies that the audience might need to imagine or generate the visibility of frail bodies via their own conversation with Jack – who, as suggested in the preceding discussion, *is* all of us. In Bishop's terms, the audience might become "you and I, and everyone else who didn't participate" (2012: 9) by means of this mechanism. In this way, the audience does not just physically materialise Caroline's absent body but they also help to perform the invisible – the vulnerable Other who also becomes themselves through their unusual connection with Jack.

In addition, instead of seeing and listening to a character having a conversation with another character, the audience see and hear themselves performing individually and collectively, with different voices that may become one – according to Greig, "[t]he more people did this, the more the whole crowd seemed to have it's [sic] own, human, voice", an effect that may recall chants at protest marches.[180] The alternative audibility thus produced has an ethical dimension. As Wallace puts it, "[t]hrough their choral and collective engagement in the performance, audience members may come to countenance the necessity to respond to the vulnerable other, and to take responsibility for their political actions and compromises as a step towards envisioning social change" (2014: 131). Interestingly, in is "Note on the Text" Greig uses the word "choir" (2011c: 49) to describe the audience's participation, which highlights the notion of individual sounds (perhaps haltingly and incompletely) coming together into a collective voice. Through the PowerPoint strategy,

[180] See <http://www.front-step.co.uk/fragile/> (accessed 12 September 2013).

the spectator's body enters an alternative field of audibility where she hears her own voice and those of other spectators simultaneously yet (probably) dissonantly, since all the voices are never fully synchronised. In this way, audience members may perhaps experience a sense of reaching out through their 'shared doing' and thereby reach moments of genuine connection and assonance, including perhaps an apprehension of the idea that "[t]he sharing out of the world is *the* law of the world" (Nancy 2007: 109; emphasis added). Even those who decide not to join in are somehow nudged out of themselves by the mere fact of standing/sitting next to ecstatic others who remind them that they, too, inhabit holed bodies with the potential to touch and be touched – that they, too, live in this and no other world, a world that "does not have any other law" (Nancy 2007: 109). Bodies, in sum, need to be seen and heard, since they risk non-existence otherwise. As Butler puts it, "the body must enter the visual and audible field" (2012: 125-6). *Fragile* allows spectators to enter those fields by engaging in a conversation with an assemblage of bodies who suffer in the shape of Jack.

At the beginning of the play, the actor in charge of delivering the audience briefing says, "[f]eel free to act! Project!" (Greig 2011c: 52). Obviously spectators are being asked to project their voices as actors do so they can be heard clearly. However, together with the mention of the "PowerPoint projection" (Greig 2011c: 49) instead of 'presentation', the play seems to be self-consciously pointing at its own fundamental mechanism of projection, whereby Jack embodies himself and everyone else – the other named mental health patients, Bouazizi, Caroline and, through Caroline, all of us – and reflects this multiple/ecstatic being back at everyone by virtue of the audience having a conversation with him. This raises central ethical questions – if Jack becomes a fragile 'everyone', the audience ends up talking to and looking at their own vulnerability through the mechanism of projection. Ultimately, that is, the audience has a conversation with 'everyone', 'here',

and trying to convince 'everyone' not to commit suicide. Will we manage to convince ourselves too?

1.4. Conclusive Remarks: Austerity Spring and Writing, Staging and Becoming 'Here'

Blending together 'austerity measures' and 'Arab Spring', 'austerity spring' attempts to convey in one single phrase the way in which the two key contexts evoked in *Fragile* are rendered, that is, in an intertwined, interconnected manner. *Fragile*'s treatment of space via its experimentation with character brings apparently discrete bodies, situations and events together into one single 'here' that is emphatically not "the European, Western 'here'", which "assumes its full meaning in relation to the distant elsewhere" (Augé 2008: 7), but a global 'here' where pre-existing boundaries between different places dissolve so as to evoke a shared fragility that encompasses spectators. *Fragile*'s nuanced, experimental treatment of character enables the experience of ecstatically moving beyond one's body so as to transcorporeally become 'all bodies'. Through formal strategies that blur the edges of Jack's, Caroline/the audience's and Bouazizi's individuality, location and status, *Fragile* "asks about responsibility for the suffering of others" (Reinelt 2011: 217).

Fragile is a globalisation play because it interconnects events, places and bodies across different locations. It is also a globalisation play because of the way it responds to 'the real'. While most of Greig's works show a keen interest in the world we live in, *Fragile* meant a turning point in the development and refinement of his political theatre. The play takes the form of a response to 'the real' through a deep aesthethic commitment to both form and content, which bleed across each other in many ways. Apart from the blurring of stage and auditorium, the demarcations between fiction and reality, the supposed 'thereness' and distance between Tunisia and the Arab Spring and the 'hereness'

and proximity of London and the anti-austerity demonstrations evaporate. *Fragile* breaks down the distinctions between play and world, viewing and acting, actor and technician or facilitator, character and spectator and proximity and distance. It experiments with the overlap between reality and theatricality and reveals them to be holed and interconnected. Ultimately, *Fragile* puts forward a complex sense of confounding that shows a desire to render 'the real' theatrically and articulate a 'here' that insists on being seen and heard.

Although Jack has a bodily presence on stage, his resonances bleed out of the confines of his body. Although Caroline is constituted by multiple voices, there is a sense of unity that springs from the shared playing of Caroline. There is one body that evokes many other bodies – Jack – and many bodies that evoke the body of one character – Caroline. With Jack, the play goes from one voice and one body to many; with Caroline, the play goes from many voices and bodies to one. This complex dialectical exercise destabilises a sense of individuality and spatio-temporal difference and produces, instead, a strong impression of 'here', of one single world pervaded by fragility.

As part of the Theatre Uncut project, *Fragile* undoes economic barriers (it is rights-free, albeit for a limited period) physical barriers (the plays are not necessarily performed in theatres), geopolitical and geographical barriers (the plays can be performed in any country and multilocationally within one single country, even simultaneously)[181] and professional barriers (the plays can be performed by anyone willing to do so). Hopefully *Fragile* may also undo theatrical barriers by bleeding out of the theatrical space by dint of the potential repercussions of Caroline's/the audience's dialogue with Jack. With *Fragile*, strategies of confounding achieve such a degree of maturity that fixed positions and particular bodies

[181] As Price puts it, "[o]n March 19th [2011] eighty-nine groups nationwide (with 6 additional groups internationally) performed the plays as part of a theatrical uprising in protest against the spending cuts announced by the Coalition government on October 20th 2010" (2011: 9). As noted earlier, global multilocationality also materialised in *The Great Yes, No, Don't Know Five Minute: Created by Anyone, for an Audience of Everyone* (2014). *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Heart* was performed in a pub rather than a theatre.

collapse perhaps precipitating the acknowledgement that we all inhabit an interconnected, interdependent, fragile 'here'.

2. *The Events*: Confounding Spacecraft

While still a work-in-progress, *The Events* stirred controversy when an article published in the *Observer* in March 2013 dismissed it as a musical based on Anders Breivik's massacre (2011).[182] In July 2011, Breivik killed eight people in a bomb attack outside a governmental building in Oslo, and, two hours later, shot sixty-nine people dead, mostly teenagers, at a Workers' Youth League camp on the island of Utøya. Many more were injured.[183] Greig swiftly replied on his website by asserting that it was not a musical and that neither Breivik nor Norway were mentioned in the play. This incident, however, helps pave the way for some relevant points in connection to *The Events*.

When the *Observer* article was published, Greig was attending rehearsals of a musical he had written the libretto for, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, while simultaneously writing *The Events*, where the role of music is absolutely central – to the extent that one of the 'characters' is constituted by a choir.[184] Despite the omission of the words 'Breivik' and 'Norway' – "*[t]he Choir sing the Norwegian Coffee Song*", though (Greig 2014a: 12) – Breivik's abhorrent attacks are key to *The Events* in a context of violence that is not just Norwegian or even European, but global in its reach – it was as a

[182] Written by Vanessa Thorpe, the article, amended on 24 March, is entitled "UK Playwright Plans Show Drawing on Anders Breivik Norway Killings" (2013).
[183] Given the political background of the second victim group, it is worth noting that since 2006 and at the time of the attacks the party in power in Norway was the right-wing Progress Party, whose leader Siv Jensen's "anti-immigration rhetoric" (Coman 2015) is part of a growing European trend – witness Britain's UK Independence Party (UKIP), Germany's Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), Austria's Freedom Party, Hungary's Jobbik, The Finns Party, the Danish People's Party, France's Front National, the Netherlands' Party for Freedom (PVV), Poland's Law and Justice, Italy's Lega Nord, Sweden's Democrats and Greece's Golden Dawn, among others. As I edited this chapter, Jo Cox, Labour MP, was murdered by Tommy Mair (16 June 2016), yet another right-wing extremist with similar white-supremacy motivations.
[184] With music and violence having recently been sadly tied in the Bataclan attacks (Paris, 13 November 2015), which killed 90 concert-goers and injured many others, we must recognise once again Greig's theatre's ability to read the world in advance or, as he puts it, "to pick up signals that maybe are under the surface" (Greig 2016a: 95).

result of Greig's and director Gray's trip to Norway to do research on the killings only five months after the massacre that "the writer […] decided not to name Breivik in the show and to relocate the atrocity to his native Scotland" (Thorpe 2013).[185]

The Events, co-produced by the Actors Touring Company, the Young Vic Theatre, Brageteatret and Schauspielhaus Wien, premiered at the Traverse Theatre at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in August 2013, just over two years after Breivik's killings. The play focuses on the aftermath of a mass shooting perpetrated by a character called 'the Boy' in an unnamed town, which kills the members of a local multicultural choir in the middle of a practice session. The choir is described as bringing together "vulnerable people, old people, asylum-seekers, immigrant men, young mums and so on" (Greig 2014a: 14) – that is, the theme of fragility discussed in the previous section is again central. Although the play goes back to moments before the massacre takes place and includes snapshots of the massacre itself, it focuses on the aftermath of the events, which is mainly explored through the figure of a lesbian female vicar, Claire, who is the leader of the (dead) community choir and the only survivor of the massacre (Fig. 10). More widely, the play looks into how communities and individuals might deal with both trauma and justice in the wake of extreme situations of violence. The argument in this section is that several elements in *The Events* – primarily characters, space-time and story/structure – are both carefully laid out as bounded categories and astutely undone to produce complex confounding. In this way, a compelling sense of 'here' emerges – hence the reference in this section's title to a confounding "spacecraft" (Greig 2014a: 12) – that might be ethically transferred on to the spectator and perhaps the world.

[185] Norway appears recurrently throughout Greig's work, including a Norwegian Middle East negotiator in *Cosmonaut*, a reference to Oslo in *The American Pilot*, his play *Being Norwegian* and *The Monster in the Hall*'s protagonist's father's Norwegian friend, Agnetha. This connection stretches back to Greig's childhood when he read a history of "Norse Mythology" (Greig 2005: 1).

Fig. 10: Claire, the Boy and A Choir in *The Events* (Southbank Centre, dir. Ramin Gray, 2013). Photo by Stephen Cummiskey. © ATC. Reproduced by permission.

In fact, the frequent occurrence of the word 'here' in *The Events* is perhaps indicative of its strong significance. It is linked, among other things, to Claire's choir – "[e]veryone's welcome here" (Greig 2014a: 11); community as diversity – "[w]e're all a big crazy tribe here" (Greig 2014a: 11); god – "[h]e's here" (Greig 2014a: 14); community as exclusionary homogeneity – "I don't hate foreigners. I hate foreigners being here. There is a difference" (Greig 2014a: 19), "[e]veryone who belongs here, go" (Greig 2014a: 48); survival – "[b]ecause you're the person who's here, Claire" (Greig 2014a: 25); trauma – "I'm the victim here" (Greig 2014a: 45); disbelief in the face of atrocity – "what's happening here?" (Greig 2014a: 49); shared vulnerability and responsibility – "I should find others and bring them in here –" (Greig 2014a: 49); attempted suicide – "[i]t's normally very noisy here" (Greig 2014a: 53); colonisation – "'Thank fuck! Thank fuck something interesting has finally happened round here'" (Greig 2014a: 63); and of course, it reappears in the final song's "*we're all here, we're all in here*" (Greig 2014a: 65).

Cumulatively, 'here' becomes an increasingly complex signifier whose import this section gradually attempts to unpick.

If the post-Brechtian tenor of another piece where Greig and Gray had collaborated – *The American Pilot* – was highly relevant, *The Events* extended and intensified this by mustering a series of post-Brechtian strategies that trigger alienation a/effects that are crucial to the piece's ethico-political dimension. By way of introduction, they include unbounded, multi-tasking characters, a character introducing other 'voices' – Claire announces "[t]he father", "[t]he friend" and "[t]he politician" (Greig 2014a: 25, 29 and 31) – the prominent presence of a real community choir on stage to explore resonances between choir members and spectators, song lyrics on electronic display, the fact that all actors, the choir and even the show's stage manager remain visibly on stage at all times, the resourceful use of music, the unrestrained non-linearity and bleeding across of space-times, and the fragmented shape of the narrative itself. The present section is an attempt to explore the play's "whole point": "you experience its form" (Greig 2016c).[186]

2.1. Bounded Categories or 'Foundings'

2.1.1. Characters

2.1.1.1. The Boy: The Perpetrator

The Boy, a character based on Breivik, is the author of the massacre in *The Events* (the fact that he also embodies other subject positions will be discussed later). Breivik's attacks were carefully premeditated, as made clear by the macabre theoretical manifesto Breivik released on the internet on the day of the attacks, *2083: A European Declaration of Independence* (2011) – the Boy has written a blog (see Greig 2014a: 32 and 62) and *The Events* contains a fragment of it (see Greig 2014a: 12-13 and 62). Breivik killed in the

[186] In my analysis, I use the revised edition of *The Events* (2014a). However, when necessary, I refer to the 2013 edition (2013a).

name of Nordicism, which he describes as “the ideology of racial superiority which claims that the Nordic race (the Germanic peoples/tribes), would constitute a master race because of an innate capacity for initiative, long term planning and leadership” – a capacity he extends to “other European tribes” too (2011: 1152) – and against the “Islamisation of Europe” (2011: 665) and multiculturalism, which he sees as “an anti-European hate ideology designed to deconstruct our European cultures, traditions, identities, Christendom and even […] national states” (2011: 1152).

To pause for a moment on the concept of multiculturalism, Kenan Malik perceptively points out that it has “come to have two meanings that are all too rarely distinguished. It refers to a society made diverse by mass immigration. It also refers to the political policies necessary to manage such diversity” (2011). Claire’s words, “[m]y choir wasn’t state-funded propaganda for multiculturalism. / It *was* multiculturalism” (Greig 2014a: 35; emphasis original), echo that distinction precisely. Malik adds that “[t]he problem with [multicultural] policies is that by forcing people into ethnic and cultural boxes, they undermine much of what is valuable about diversity and weaken the idea of a common citizenship” (2011). In his view, Breivik “opposes diversity precisely because he wants to put people into cultural boxes” (2011), in this case Nordicism (excluding the defenders of multiculturalism in the first sense delineated above) vs. the rest, in particular Islam. Thus, both Breivik and the Boy understand violence as “[a] weapon of communal [in the tribal, exclusionary sense] defence” against diversity (Bauman 2000: 194).

In Greig’s nuanced treatment of the issue, however, Claire’s choir was not just multicultural, but it “brought together vulnerable people” in general, including “asylum-seekers [and] immigrant men” as much as “old people [and] young mums” (Greig 2014a: 14). The Boy, in other words, targets the vulnerable of the global era as much as multiculturalism. Significantly, all kinds of precarious subjects – be they immigrants or

locals – are mingled together in Claire's – "[m]y choir was Jesse and Mr Aziz and Frank and Mrs Singh and Isaac and Sherrie and Corrine and Gisela and Kamal and …" (Greig 2014a: 35) – and A Choir's recitations of the choristers' names – "*the rehab man*", "*young mums from the centre*", "*Waheed and Isaac, and Agnessa*", "*[s]ome people from the church*", "*Chantal and Kai*", Simon and his sister, "*the Polish crew*", "*[t]he young man with the temper*", "*[e]x-offenders*", "*[a]nd people, everyone*" (Greig 2014a: 65). To complicate matters further, the Boy is both the perpetrator of such violence and also, in a sense, a victim of the 'globalisation project'. His statement that "[he] kill[s] to protect [his] tribe from softness", "[a] softness born of cheap togetherness – which is an illusion fostered by failed elites who cling on to power and wealth through immigrant labour and globalisation" (Greig 2014a: 20) points a finger in the direction of the neoliberal elites that endorse austerity and simultaneously prompt the victims of the ensuing cuts to vent their frustration on immigrants, or at least turn a blind eye when that is the case.

The perpetrator in the play is called 'the Boy' because the press in Norway would not use Breivik's name but would call him, for instance, 'him', 'ABB' (for Anders Behring Breivik) or 'the Boy' (see Greig 2016a: 93). This inability and/or refusal to name Breivik is made explicit in the play. The far-right party leader – played by the same actor as the Boy – calls the Boy 'him' and dismisses any connection by saying, "he's got nothing to do with us" (Greig 2014a: 34).[187] In any case, and as already mentioned, the use of generic names for male characters is a frequent practice in Greig's theatre, in contrast to female characters, who usually have proper names. Greig has noted that this is probably due to the fact that (particularly young) women often carry the driving impulse in his plays. This is certainly the case with Claire in *The Events*.

[187] In this instance, the 'community' he is part of excludes him.

2.1.1.2. Claire: The Survivor

Claire is a lesbian female pastor who survives the shooting that kills all the members of her choir (listed as 'A Choir' in the play's list of characters); in order to attempt to cope with this traumatic event, she tries to delve into the 'why'. As was the case with Zakaria in *Damascus* and with the Boy himself, among other figures in Greig's plays, Claire has real antecedents – a female priest Greig, Gray and the ATC team met during their research stay in Norway. In addition, Claire was a role 'created' by the first actress who played her, Neve McIntosh, as stated in the technical sheet for the New York Theatre Workshop run of *The Events*.[188] Claire's partner Catriona – also played by the Boy – makes yurts; their relationship has clearly deteriorated as a result of Claire's Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).[189] Claire's deep depression, which combines an acute desire to understand and a deep thirst for revenge, surfaces, for instance, in her attempt to commit suicide and in her desire to kill the Boy.[190] A year after the events, she sets up a new choir and introduces new exercises related to shamanic practice in order to, as she puts it, recover their lost souls (see Greig 2014a: 38-40).

2.1.1.3. A Choir: The Victims

After his experience with *Fragile*, Greig explains that he "was already very interested in the idea of placing characters in a relationship to people who are not necessarily actors, not necessarily even amateur actors or anything, but with people who were there to watch the show and could participate" (2016d: 248). One of the most innovative techniques in *The Events* is the participation of a different local community

[188] See <http://www.atctheatre.com/uploads/images/THE_EVENTS_NYTW.pdf > (accessed 20 February 2015).

[189] A yurt is a round, semi-permanent tent originating in Central Asia, popular nowadays in, for instance, Scotland. In the play, yurts convey the couple's generally progressive outlook (in terms of e.g. concern for the environment and left-leaning political ideas).

[190] Although revenge drives are part of Claire's multifarious response to the events, it is central to note that Greig consciously aims at the "opposite of a Greek tragedy, which follows a character's thirst for revenge" (Thorpe 2013).

choir in every performance. In other words, a choir whose practice takes place in the location where the play is performed plays the character of ‘A Choir’ in the show. This means that *The Events*’s ‘A Choir’ is simultaneously a choir – a local choir that comes along to participate in *The Events* – and A Choir – the role they play in *The Events*. The local choirs have different degrees of expertise in choral practice, diverse styles – from chamber to pop – and are formed by a variable number of individuals gathered together in more or less diverse groups and around varied motivations. All these variables, among others, elicit multifarious, unpredictable results on stage.

Although “there was a multiple choir rehearsal [at the beginning of each week] (in which all the choirs working on the show [for the duration of that week] came together), and a pre-show rehearsal, with a call two hours before the show went up” (Pattie 2016: 54), it is important to note that the choirs had no previous knowledge of the script.[191] As Jess Banks, Stage Manager for *The Events*, puts it, “[w]e intentionally didn’t tell them everything so they were discovering the show along with the audience” (2016).[192] In performing the role of A Choir – and thus taking on all the uncertainties and risks it involves – each choir member becomes perhaps a performance amateur, described by Ridout as “someone who interrupts his or her work in order to make theatre” and “acts out of love” (2013: 29). During the show, they sing part of their repertoire and the songs created by John Browne (*The Events*’s composer), among others; they also recite some fragments from the play and perform some other activities. They are the hub of a network of dialectical structures by virtue of their co-existence on stage with professional actors, their singing in between spoken fragments and their sitting opposite both the spectator and

[191] The specifications in square brackets come from my personal communication with Banks (2016).
[192] The premiere production of *The Events* had ATC’s *real* Stage Manager Banks visible on stage throughout – witness, however, the *fictional* stage manager figure David Greig in *San Diego*.

the actors, among others. Yet that is not the only conundrum A Choir faces the spectator with.

Given that, in the play, the victims of the events are members of a choir, A Choir clearly functions as the hinge that connects the real local choir and Claire's fictional dead choir, simultaneously singing for the show and singing posthumously – somewhat like the villagers' posthumous monologues in *The American Pilot*, also directed by Gray. Moreover, as with the Boy and Claire, A Choir also draws from real life, specifically from Gray and Greig's anecdote of picking up Oda Radoor's (*The Events*'s Norwegian dramaturg's) mum from her choir practice (see Greig 2016c and 2016d) – community choirs being very popular in Norway. Instead of waiting in the car, Greig and Gray attended the last minutes of rehearsal. Inspired by this event while feeling hugely "dispirited by humanity" and "depressed" at that stage of their research in Norway, Greig ended up thinking, "I can only do this [*The Events*] if there is a choir" (see Greig 2015a). Given that the production could not afford a hired choir, guest choirs were the obvious alternative (see Greig 2016d: 248-49), and it was in fact a more appropriate option in the wake of *Fragile* and its exploration of precariousness and precarity. Besides, the use of choirs makes *The Events* easier to digest in the sense that music provides ritualistic, emotional and entertainment factors that to some extent counterbalance the weight of the subject matter – although 'entertainment' can come across as a fraught concept in a play that deals with extreme violence, it is a word used by Greig when he discusses music and shamanic practice in relation to *The Events* (see Greig 2016a: 96). These anecdotal, culture-specific, budget and tonal backgrounds and inducements steer away from the play any claims about the use of real people as an exploitative, unethical enterprise.

Two frameworks seem crucial to the play's understanding of choirs: the chorus in ancient Greek theatre and shamanic practice. *The Events* goes back to the origins of ancient

Greek drama, because “[t]here is a protagonist, an antagonist, and a choir [sic], who come together with a community to examine the pressing issues of the day and provoke a cathartic response from their audience” (Malkin 2016: 115). The functions of the ancient Greek chorus were “witnessing and commenting on the drama” (Zaroulia 2016: 79), as well as highlighting a sense of collectivity – Gray, for one, comments that he was interested in “embodying community on stage” (2014: n.p). Both the chorus as a theatrical device that frames the play – albeit occasionally stepping out of its position as witness and commentator, as will be discussed in due course – and the choir as a group of singers shape the function played by A Choir in *The Events* without cancelling each other out.[193]

As regards shamanic practice, and as noted in the introduction to the thesis, Greig understands it not just as a ritual, and so a rigorous, serious practice, but also as partaking in pure entertainment and performance elements (see Greig 2016a: 96). Both aspects are inextricably connected to *The Events*'s potentially healing dimension. Greig has stated that he is “driven by the thought that [his] impulse to write, is somehow connected to a deep human primal impulse to retrieve lost souls” (2016b), and *The Events* includes a shamanic exercise conducted by Claire with A Choir – her new choir after the atrocity, revealing that, indeed, A Choir embodies more than one choir, an aspect that is addressed below – which aims at the recovery of their souls. “In order to retrieve the patient's soul”, it is necessary to access “other worlds” “via a spiritual portal” (Greig 2016b) – “bodied by your energy I will cross through the symbolic portal” (Greig 2014a: 40), says Claire. In order to create that portal, “the shaman calls the community together in space – perhaps a hut perhaps a circle on the ground” (Greig 2016b) – *The Events* mentions a “dream hut”, which A Choir create by forming a circle (Greig 2014a: 39) – and “uses music and dance and audience

[193] Choruses – the chorus and choral moments in *Europe* or the choruses in his numerous adaptations of Greek classics – and choirs – the sound of a Soviet choir in *Cosmonaut* or audience members' voices functioning as a choir in *Fragile* (see Greig 2011c: 49) – feature often in Greig's work. Reinelt's perception that in *The Events* “there is no catharsis” (2016: 117) is connected to the fact that A Choir are not fully/only a classical chorus.

participation to induce trance and to summon up spirits" (Greig 2016b) – in the play, for instance, Claire and A Choir perform a simple repetitive hummed chant. All these a/effects – witnessing and commenting on the action, embodying the community on stage, entertainment, performance and (potential) healing, among others – are simultaneously attached to A Choir in *The Events*.

2.1.1.4. Repetiteur: The Pianist

Largely unmentioned in reviews and criticism of the play, Repetiteur has one foot inside the reality of the play – he is listed under 'Characters' and has one line in the play, "I think maybe we should all break there for a cup of tea" (Greig 2014a: 40) – but remains outside it most of the time. This is precisely what makes Repetiteur so pivotal to the play's theatricality. The term 'repetiteur' is connected with A Choir for the obvious reason that it refers to a person – often a pianist, which is why 'pianist' is at times used interchangeably – who coaches solo or choir singers and plays the piano for them during rehearsals. In the play, Repetiteur – in the shape of a number of pianists who participated in *The Events* but did not necessarily change every night – fulfils an important aim: his/her presence offers support and a sense of safety (see Banks 2016) to the choir performing each evening. Repetiteur also points to 'the real', not only by not being a professional actor but also by highlighting the labour involved in staging the piece. In a post-Brechtian way, through the figure of Repetiteur *The Events* lays bare its theatrical, technical and production underside.

2.1.2. Setting and Time: A 'Room' in 'Fife'

The Events is set in Scotland yet the indeterminacy of the place is accentuated so that perhaps the atrocity can translate well to other locations. Particularly, the play seems to be set in an unnamed Scottish island or coastal town, maybe "in Fife" (Greig 2016d: 247).

In any case, Greig claims that "[t]he play takes place in a room, the sort of place in which a choir might rehearse" (2014a: 7) – which was indeed reproduced in Gray's production – where Claire and her fragile choristers are rehearsing when the gunman opens fire on them. Leith, Iona and Peterhead are specific geographical references mentioned in *The Events*. Leith is where Dave (performed by the Boy), who helps Claire and A Choir with the shamanic exercise, comes from – yet another David in Greig's work (see Greig 2014a: 40).[194] Catriona suggests Claire and herself go "[t]o Iona / For the festival of spirituality" (Greig 2014a: 46).[195] Peterhead (Aberdeenshire, Scotland) is the location of the prison where the Boy is an intern (Greig 2014a: 44).

As usual in Greig's work, *The Events* also contains references to a range of geographical locations across the globe, including the Illawara River in Australia (Greig 2014a: 12), "Viking warrior shamen" (Greig 2014a: 16), "Afghanistan" (Greig 2014a: 34), "Somalia" (Greig 2014a: 46) and "Leeds" (Greig 2014a: 60). Time is also epically stretched in *The Events* to encompass current global conflict and previous colonisation processes – the reference to the aboriginal boy who witnessed the arrival of the very first ships from England (see 2014a: 12-13) – as well as, in the 2013 text, "[o]ne hundred thousand years ago" when darkness was born (Greig 2013a: 57). Overall, by refusing to locate the events in space-time as unique and particular, the play can evoke other violent events across history and so foreground and suggest that brutal acts such as the Boy's do not erupt out of nowhere but are ingrained in a space-time continuum or 'everywhereness' of violence.

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[194] In relation to the idea of the 'shamanic semionaut', the fact that the character helping Claire and A Choir "bring back [their] souls" (Greig 2014a: 39) is called Dave evokes Greig's interest in the connection between shamanism and writing. Furthermore, because Dave is performed by the Boy, he visualises in one body, in an Adornian dialectical manner, both art and violence. "If I'm going to make a mark on the world I have to do it now / The only means I have are art or violence" (Greig 2014a: 18), says the Boy earlier in the play.
[195] The last four letters in Catriona's name coincide with the name of the island. 'Iona' also shares some vocal similitude with Utøya.

2.1.3. Story and Structure

To say that attempting to sketch a chronological storyline for *The Events* is a difficult task might be something of an understatement. Reduced to its bare bones, the events narrated in the play span the massacre (with fragmentary flashbacks to certain earlier moments), its aftermath – Claire's quest for understanding and, perhaps, revenge – and the situation one year after – when Claire decides to start a new choir.

2.1.3.1. Scene Division: Fragments

The play is composed by twenty-eight untitled and unnumbered scenes, separated by an asterisk, which in post-Brechtian fashion work as fragments that offer different perspectives.[196] The aim seems to be both "to try to have each scene told in a slightly different way, so that we frequently get to see characters from a new angle [or angles]" (Hollands 2013: 223), as in *Yellow Moon*, and to play around with the way in which scenes are rendered spatio-temporally, among other formal aspects. Although described by Mountford as "a series of frustratingly fragmentary episodes" (2013: 956), the overall effect is of a fast-paced piece that attempts to capture through a wounded form the way traumatic memories unravel – in an inconclusive manner, in broken pieces, in fragments. Indeed, as Malkin points out, "[i]n Greig and Gray's research, they found their fractured dramaturgy mirrored in psychiatric discussions of how the brain endures trauma" (2016: 116). As director Wils Wilson puts it in connection to Greig's play for children *Gobbo* (2006c) and *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*, "if the story demands it, it's on table" (2013: 227). Thus, the structure of *The Events* makes the traumatic palpable – formal experimentation and ethical concern are thus aesthethically intertwined.

[196] I number the scenes in my analysis for practical purposes.

2.1.3.2. Dialectics: Conferring Tension on Structure and the Stage Picture

In classical dialectics, thesis and antithesis are held together in order to arrive at a synthesis. In Greig's Adornian understanding of dialectics, instead, the basic procedure is to hold two very different ideas against each other in the same thought until – through the production of contradiction – something breaks, and this rupture potentially affords a glimpse of 'truth'. *The Events* bombards the spectator with extreme oppositions across different levels, some of which overlap. This complex dialectical texture confers tension on the already fractured structure of *The Events*.

Firstly, *The Events* sets up a physical dialectical dynamics by having the Boy repeatedly "*rock[ing] on the balls of his feet*" (Greig 2014a: 11 and 47). A further dialectical structure emerges as a result of the arguments 'for' and 'against' colonisation and, implicitly, multiculturalism. While the Boy is critical – "on these ships are convicts […] officers and ratings […] class and religion and disease and a multitude of other instruments of objectification and violence" (Greig 2014a: 12) and if the audience, whom he addresses at this point, "could go back in time", they would tell the aboriginal boy, "'Kill them. Kill them all'" (Greig 2014a: 13) – in the prison scene Claire articulates a provocative argument 'for' colonisation (and multiculturalism) – "after sixty thousand years of entirely unchanged culture […] he might say […] 'Thank fuck! Thank fuck something interesting has finally happened round here'" (Greig 2014a: 63).[197]

Lastly, another dialectic structure is formed by the juxtaposition of a community choir and a song such as Dizzee Rascal's "Bonkers", the Boy's favourite song – which includes lines such as "[a]nd all I care about is sex and violence" and "[t]here's nothin' crazy about me".[198] Particularly so when taking into account the contrast created between

[197] Similarly, in his first play *Savage Reminiscence*, Caliban says after Prospero and Miranda leave the island, "[s]hit. I miss their company already and they're only four months gone" (1991: n.p.).

[198] Other plays by Greig also highlight the links between music and violence, particularly in the context of the global Anglophone music industry. Examples abound, including the Snoop Dogg's work in *The American*

the life-affirming momentum of A Choir's own song – which should be "bright and bold" according to Greig's "*A Note on the Choir*" (2014a: 7) – or their rendition of 'How Great Thou Art' (Greig 2014a: 31) and the noted "Bonkers". If Brecht intended the V-effect to produce distance, the a/effects of the songs performed by Greig's post-Brechtian A Choir are simultaneously defamiliarising and alienating and deeply moving, perhaps even uplifting. Singing – as communal and shared action, argues Zaroulia, "adds to the theatre event's affective quality, which consequently enhances its political potential" (2016: 78) and constitutes "moments that demand a response that is both affective and ethical" (Pattie 2016: 56).

2.2. Confoundings

As already established, 'confoundings' are a series of (post-Brechtian) formal strategies present in Greig's globalisation plays that aim to undo the contours of characters, space-time and story/structure and thus make tangible the idea of 'here'. In *The Events*, confoundings are (partially) responsible for articulating the polethics of the play, that is, the suggestion that we are irremediably tightly connected and that, therefore, our actions and inactions have inevitable repercussions.

2.2.1. Fluid Entities

2.2.1.1. The Boy and…

"[P]lacing any conventional assumption of unified character under considerable strain" (Wallace 2016: 37) and resulting in "fragmented, elusive identities" (Zaroulia 2016: 80), both the role of the Boy and Claire are fractured. Indeed, the Boy is not *just* the Boy. The Boy – i.e. one single actor – plays a range of unlisted characters, his bodily boundaries

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Pilot, the reference to Rihanna's *Umbrella* interlaced with children stabbing each other in *Brewers Fayre*, or a Spice Girls' hit in *Miniskirts of Kabul* against the backdrop of the murder by the Taliban of the Afghan president Najibullah (28 September 1996).

becoming therefore unmarked. In no particular order, he plays Claire's girlfriend Catriona, someone Claire bumps into in the street, Claire's therapist Mr Palmer, the Boy's father, the Boy's friend, the leader of the far-right party the Boy was a member of, Gary – a man who saves Claire when she is on the verge of suicide – as well as silent roles – such as Dave, who helps in the shamanic exercise by playing a large traffic cone as a didgeridoo (see Greig 2014a: 40). As a result, the Boy gives a strong impression that what he *is* is an interconnected constellation of snapshots of other people – Others – apart from himself, and thus of interrelations. While Pattie interestingly reads the constant role-changing as signalling that "all [Claire] can see is the Boy, everywhere" (2016: 52), in my view it has the effect of confoundingly refracting the Boy through his environment, his community, his everyday life (as well as Claire's).[199]

Crucially, the (visual) impact of making the spectator 'see' Others through the Boy and unearthing the complex interrelations he is part of as much as his personal thoughts and experiences raises key ethical and political questions about responsibility. Although the Boy is unquestionably guilty of murder, the play cautiously suggests the partial responsibility of certain Others in his having become a killer. For instance, Claire tells the party leader that he "put [the choir] on a list of state-funded propaganda for multiculturalism" (Greig 2014a: 35), which results in the Boy choosing it as his target. The Boy is also influenced by his father, who talks "about the decadence of contemporary society" (Greig 2013: 28) referred in his book by reference to the "medieval Arab philosopher" (Greig 2014a: 28) Ibn Khaldun, according to whom when cities become

[199] In pragmatic terms, it also sidesteps the need for a much larger cast, in tune with the current sway of precarity, "the condition of labor in the increasingly self-confident regime of capitalism [...] known as neoliberal" (Ridout and Schneider 2012: 7). As regards Pattie's reading, it is true that at certain points it does seem as if all Claire can see is the Boy – in the first part of the FAQ scene, for instance, we have the impression Claire is visualising/imagining the situation, since A Choir both ask the questions and answer them as if they were the Boy (see Greig 2014a: 18-20) until Claire interrupts after A Choir/the Boy states, "I kill to protect my tribe" (Greig 2014a: 20).

decadent they need to be purified by "barbarian tribesmen com[ing] roaring out of the desert on horseback" (Greig 2014a: 28).

The Boy's stepping out of himself in order to perform other roles (and then back into himself again), which contributes to the demanding dialectical interplay the play produces on many fronts, may be approached in terms of ecstasy (see Rodríguez forthcoming a). Two caveats should be mentioned here, however. Firstly, ecstasy is an ambivalent concept in *The Events* – in the middle of the massacre the Boy describes his state as "los[ing] yourself. Except these strange […] jolting eruptions of self-consciousness that interrupt your flow", which he nonetheless dismisses as "silly" (Greig 2014a: 49). Secondly, there are two scenes where the Boy's going out of himself is unconnected to embodying other voices. In Scene Six, he describes how a "'beserking' state" may be reached by communing with one's spirit familiar (Greig 2014a: 16-17) and in Scene Eighteen, he actually "attempt[s] [his] first berserking" by communing with a fox after drinking reindeer piss that is actually tea (Greig 2014a: 42) so as to build up "his killing rage" as Viking warriors did (Greig 2014a: 17).[200]

The Boy's complexity does not stop there. Sometimes, when he is playing a different role than himself, his voice and the voice he has taken over confoundingly bleeds into and across each other. For instance, when Catriona – enacted by the Boy – is talking to Claire about leaving together, several lines bleed out of Catriona's voice to become the Boy's, in a back and forth movement that keeps healing and violence in unresolved dialectical tension:

[200] The Boy's inducing himself to believe that the tea he drinks is reindeer piss reveals that it is a matter of choice and, hence, responsibility. Similarly, the chimpanzee and bonobo story read by a member of A Choir (in the Young Vic run) states that human beings share 98% of our DNA with both species, the former being prone to violence and the latter being focused on sex – "[t]he other 2 per cent", however, "is just us" (Greig 2014a: 50-1).

Why don't we both go away?
Just the two of us.

I could learn how to make a bomb.

If we could just get up and go

To Somalia
For guerrilla training.

To lona
For the festival of spirituality.

We could watch jihadi videos.

We could stay with the community there.
You could pray,

I could manufacture a bomb with nails and bolts and
stones bursting out the back of a rucksack tearing a hole
through everything and everyone.

We could just do it.

What do you think?

Claire?

Because I'm running out of time

If I'm to leave a mark on the world I have to do it now. (Greig 2014a: 46-7)

The racial background of the actor playing the Boy – Rudi Dharmalingam in the premiere production (2013) and Clifford Samuel in the subsequent UK tour (2014 and 2015), actors with an Asian and a Black background respectively – visualises a multiethnic society such as Britain's, whose members might look like some of the members of Claire's dead choir – Mr Aziz (Greig 2014a: 35) and Mrs Singh (Greig 2014a: 35), for example. This contributes to the confounding of the Boy, who kills in the name of European white supremacy yet is performed by "non-Caucasian British actors" (Wallace 2016: 37), a contradiction that might tear a hole in the fabric of reality, perhaps suggesting that by killing multiethnic Britain, both the idea and the human beings that make it up, the Boy is

actually killing himself. Although Greig has claimed that he does not generally see "why actors need to be in any way like the characters they are playing" (2016c), the choice in *The Events* seems quite deliberate.

The Boy also resonates with a sense of "[m]asculinity in crisis" (Greig 2014a: 26), a recurrent preoccupation in Greig's work – "I am a point in the continuum of contemporary masculinity" (Greig 2014a: 51), he says. The section entitled "Tough Baby" in Adorno's *Minima Moralia* alludes to the model of masculinity the Boy seems to embody: "all have about them a latent violence" (2005: 46) and "[i]n its downfall the subject negates everything which is not of its own kind" (2005: 46). There are clear parallels between *The Events* and Breivik's case in that respect in a wider frame of "dissociated" (Gray 2014: n.p.) or "disaffected young men choos[ing] to kill" (Greig 2013g). Indeed, the Boy may be seen as "a point in a continuum" that includes "Dunblane, the London bombings and Columbine" (Jones 2013: 957), the Boston marathon attack in 2013 (see Greig 2013g; see also Gray 2014: n.p.), the Woolwich killing in London also in 2013 (see Greig 2013h; see also Gray 2014: n.p.) and even, paradoxically, "Islamic terrorism" (Greig 2013h).[201] In an article that also mentions the Oklahoma City bombing (19 April 1995), Malik observes an analogy between Breivik and Islamic terrorism:

> Both jihadists and Breivik seem to be driven not so much by political ideology as by a desperate and perverted search for identity, a search shaped by a sense of cultural paranoia, a cloying self-pity and a claustrophobic victimhood. Islamists want to resurrect an 'authentic' Islam that never existed in the first place and to enforce that identity upon all Muslims. Breivik similarly wants to establish an authentically Christian Europe, again that has never existed, swept clean of Muslim pollution. (2011)

This is mirrored in the play when Claire suggests that perhaps the Boy is searching for his identity, "something he can hold onto", "[c]ertainty" (Greig 2014a: 29), in one of her several attempts to understand the killings. Once again, this confirms Greig's interest in

[201] The mention of "jihadi videos" in the passage cited above highlights the similarities between extremist acts of violence across the globe. Thorpe claims that Greig "hopes *The Events* will make audiences wonder whether a mass murderer such as Osama bin Laden is so different to a lone killer such as Breivik" (2013).

placing concrete cases within a wider, global frame of violence (see also Zaroulia 2016: 73), a concern that in this case also seems to underpin the play's chosen title.

2.2.1.2. Claire: PTSD and Possible Worlds Theory

Although Claire might seem to be a less complicated character than the Boy, even a psychologically-rounded naturalistic figure, her trauma seems to take hold of her and turn her into a complex entity. As a result of the massacre, Claire suffers from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (see Greig 2013a: 24), a condition that Caruth has described as "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled, repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena" (1996: 11) – although the explicit mention of PSTD was omitted from the revised 2014 version of the play.[202] She is, for instance, incapable of remembering whose funeral she is talking about, Isaac's or Jesse's (see Greig 2014a: 16), she confuses summer with autumn (see Greig 2014a: 55), steals a Twix (see Greig 2014a: 22-3), screams in public (see Greig 2014a: 18) and attempts to commit suicide (see Greig 2014a: 54). Claire's trauma also affects her sense of space-time – "a collapse of narrative time: the survivor-sufferer is unable to live in either past or present" (Duggan and Wallis 2011: 5) – which is in tune the way in which space-time is rendered in *The Events*.

Claire tries to cope with her trauma and recover her lost soul by embarking on a journey towards understanding – "[i]t matters because I don't understand him" (Greig 2014a: 21; see also 27). During this journey, she goes thorough "spiritual crisis, depression, anger, rationalisation, self-destructiveness, and violence" (Wallace 2016: 37) and ponders whether the Boy is insane (see Greig 2014a: 23), evil (see Greig 2014a: 24), empathy impaired (see Greig 2014a: 24), psychopathic (see Greig 2014a: 37), or an example of the

[202] Repetition is key to trauma. In that respect, it is remarkable that the play includes a character called 'Repetiteur'.

crisis of masculinity (see Greig 2014a: 26), among other possibilities. She is eventually forced to acknowledge that understanding may be "[b]eyond reason" (Greig 2014a: 37). Indeed, I want to suggest that in Claire's convoluted journey towards understanding, rational and irrational elements intermingle to generate a gamut of possible answers to her incessant questioning and/or responses to the events, and that this translates in the narrative as possible worlds that take shape in certain scenes or fragments of certain scenes. This is framed here via Possible Worlds Theory, which basically proposes that "things might have been different in countless ways, both trivial and profound" (Menzel 2016). In *The Events*, "[e]ach possible world – ghost world – hovers in and out of vision, never quite resolved" (Greig 2013f: 40), which rules out the possibility of one 'correct' answer from the outset.[203] In other words, in this thesis's reading, certain scenes (or fragments of scenes) enact Claire's responses to her trauma.[204] The particular aspect of Possible Worlds Theory that is emphasised here is the "[f]ascination with the scenarios of counterfactual history and creation of fictional universes in which the real and the possible exchange places. In such worlds characters may ask: '[w]hat would have happened if Hitler had not won the war?" (Ryan 2005). In *The Events*, three questions are particularly relevant – what if the Boy had had a different life?, what could have been done in order to prevent the killings?, and last but not least, what is to be done with the Boy once the attack has taken place?

Scenes/fragments focusing on possible worlds – and thus confounding the limits of Claire's existence in the 'real' world of the play – start appearing towards the second half, crucially after a few perspectives on the Boy – his father's, the party leader's and a friend's – have been introduced. Concerning the first question – what if the Boy had had a different

[203] Recalling his experience with Suspect Culture, Greig has stated that "[w]e were very influenced at the time by ideas of the 'possible worlds' theory" (2013f: 39). Wallace suggests the use of Possible Worlds Theory, which "proposes that the actual world may only be one of an undetermined number of possible ones" (2013: 25-6), in relation to *Mainstream*. The fact that in *Mainstream*, "many of the scenes offer […] overlapping and alternative versions of particular conversations" (Rebellato 2003: 69) can be considered as a precursor of the experimentation with Possible Worlds Theory in *The Events*.

[204] Bearing in mind Greig's comments on how dispirited he felt when working on *The Events*, the play's profoundly wounded form also inscribes his very traumatic writing process.

life? – she becomes a mum (Scene Eighteen) by embedding Catriona's and her own voice ('we') in a monologue where she says that they adopted a fifteen-year-old boy they found "on the coastal path", who is now studying law at university, or perhaps working in a shop, or a garage (Greig 2014a: 43-4).[205] In this possible world, which in itself comprises multiple possibilities as just noted, and bearing in mind Breivik's troubled family background, it becomes evident that the boy Claire is talking about is the Boy – "it emerged his mum had jumped off a bridge and his dad was an alcoholic" (Greig 2014a: 43) and fifteen was the Boy's age when this happened (see Greig 2014a: 28). This possible world – the adoption story – also partly answers the second question – what could have been done with him in order to prevent the killings? A much less sanguine response to it, however, comes only two lines later, when Claire says the adopted boy "is dead" (Greig 2014a: 44), or when, in another possible world, she is a nurse who kills a newborn baby boy (see Greig 2014a: 35-6).

As noted earlier, the third question – what should be done with the Boy? – generates a world in which Claire kisses and strokes the murderer. In this possible world, the fact that things could have been different is foregrounded: Claire walks towards the Boy and takes his hand "with so much tenderness and love" that "[h]is soul returns to his body" and "[h]e understands that he is understood" (Greig 2014a: 51), and spectators are thus allowed to imagine that he does not kill Mrs Singh.[206] However, in the following scene, Claire's response to the Boy's question, "[w]hat is to be done with me?" (Greig 2014a: 52), like many other elements in the play, enacts an unresolved dialectical tension between

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[205] This ability to occupy more than one role is not unique to the Boy. Catriona is enacted both by the Boy – most prominently – but also occasionally by Claire.

[206] This might be seen as a gesture of forgiveness on Claire's part. At the same time, however, she seems to fake her forgiveness so that she can get into the prison and kill the Boy (see Greig 2014a: 56-7). The two possibilities stand in dialectical tension and thus problematise the status of forgiveness in the play. For a reading of *The Events* that discusses forgiveness, see Zaroulia (2016).

forgiveness – "you will be cleaned, tended, healed" (Greig 2014a: 52) – and revenge – "I'll stamp on your neck and break your spine" (Greig 2014a: 53).

Finally, in her search for justice, she ponders whether she should kill the Boy and decides to do so by mixing powder from a mushroom called Destroying Angel with his tea on her future visit to prison. Claire's sleep-walking and imaginary conversation with A Choir (see Greig 2014a: 54-6) at this point bleed into the play's 'reality' in the scene where she visits the Boy in prison and does indeed try to kill him – although she ends up "knock[ing] the cup of tea off the table" (Greig 2014a: 64). Therefore, as is often the case in Greig's holed theatre, a possible world – which emerges out of Claire's 'real' *trou*matic world – leaks into the 'reality' of the holed play. Although Claire's identity is held together by the fact that she is performed by one single actress and she remains intensely concerned with understanding throughout, her restless journey across possible worlds destabilises the play's sense of 'reality' as well as notions of character and space-time, thus positing a complex, provocative sense of aesthethic confounding.

2.2.1.3. A Liquid Choir

A Choir appears as a fluid entity on multiple overlapping levels. To begin with, A Choir infuses the play with high doses of theatricality – for instance, when they sing the Boy's favourite song "Bonkers" (see Greig 2014a: 25). However, when A Choir is not singing for the show, they 'return' to their status as a real choir watching the show, thus mirroring the position of spectators opposite them. Simultaneously, as noted earlier, they represent both Claire's dead choir and the new choir she sets up one year after the massacre. To sum up, A Choir fluctuates between theatricality and the real, singing and watching, life and death, 'real choir' and 'fictional choir', which strongly confounds their status as an enclosed, stable category.

Additionally, A Choir does not just sing or watch the play; they occasionally perform other tasks, such as arranging the chairs in the room, reading or engaging in a conversation with Claire. They are a multi-tasking Choir, which further confounds their status. A Choir's fluctuations – which do not necessarily operate in a clear-cut manner – contrast with their remaining on stage throughout, just as the actors and spectators (unless they choose to walk out) are always present. In other words, A Choir, actors, Repetiteur, the Stage Manager (and backstage staff) and spectators are always 'here'. A Choir's constant and sudden stepping in and out of the play and their mirroring of spectators aesthethically foreground the notion that atrocities sadly belong to this and no other world and that things may change at any moment for anyone – for the worse, but also, perhaps, for the better.

A Choir also morphs into various collective and individual shapes. As noted, they are a real community choir that simultaneously enact Claire's dead choir and the new one she sets up one year after the massacre, in which capacity they participate in Claire's shamanic exercise "to help us all heal" (Greig 2014a: 41). They morph into a collective, albeit dead, shape and adopt an all-seeing aerial perspective when, "*speak[ing] in unison*" (Greig 2014a: 54), they engage in a conversation with Claire while she is, impossibly, both sleep-walking and collecting the poisonous mushrooms she intends to kill the Boy with (Scene Twenty-Five) and also the end of the play, where they sing "*we're all here*" (Greig 2014a: 65), which (potentially) has a formidable affective impact.

The members of A Choir also intervene individually in the play on several occasions. In the FAQ scene (Eight), several members of A Choir ask the Boy questions individually. At this point, the members of A Choir also seem to adopt an aerial perspective, as they are apparently aware of the massacre that is to take place: "Your actions will be shocking" (Greig 2014a: 20). On another occasion, a member of A Choir

reads the text on chimps and bonobos (see Greig 2014a: 50-1).[207] In a pivotal moment in the play, "[*a*] *member of the* [new] *Choir becomes Mr(s) Sinclair*" (Greig 2014a: 40), i.e. an individual spokesperson for A Choir, to tell Claire that they are not interested in her shamanic exercises, that they simply "*want to forget*" (Greig 2014a: 41) – yet another possible response to trauma.

2.2.1.4. Repetiteur: Witness?

Beyond the obvious practical implications of Repetiteur, s/he is also, like Elena in *Damascus*, one of those figures in Greig's work that are always on stage and thus continually remind spectators of their co-presence in the theatrical 'here'. In addition, Repetiteur's constant presence on stage turns her/him into a witness to the suffering enacted every night in every performance, which highlights, perhaps, the repetitiveness of acts of violence in the world. Indeed, Repetiteur continuously transits between the play's 'reality' – s/he is indispensable to the life and blood of the show – and its outside – in contrast to the other characters, s/he is the one that stands furthest apart from the story – thus connecting them – the show and 'the real' – together. Therefore, s/he makes a crucial contribution to stitching up all spaces – the room, the stage and the world – into 'here'.

Repetiteur can be connected to *The Events*'s Stage Manager. The Stage Manager wears headphones and sits in a corner, visibly laying bare the labour and technical requirements necessary to stage the play – just like Repetiteur, without whom the choir might feel lost. As Banks, Stage Manager in *The Events*, claims, "[f]or the choir to feel safe it was key to have a pianist who really knew the show and my presence on stage help

[207] In the last scene of the play, in the 2013 version, a "Choir Member" (2013a: 67) reassures Claire the new choir will come. This figure becomes the "Caretaker" in the revised script (Greig 2014a: 64). As Banks explains, "the character of the caretaker was never listed as it was going to be a choir member like Mrs Sinclair […]. The caretaker was given to me, the stage manager, when the practical implications of the show came to light – the spilt tea and the need for the choir to sing" (2016).

reassure them" (2016). As she puts it, the Stage Manager was "present throughout keeping an eye on everything, or you could say taking care of everything" (2016). What Repetiteur and Stage Manager share is that they both take care of something in the 'here' of the performance and occupy an in-between space between the play's 'reality' and 'the real', thus a/effectively undoing the borders between the space of the room where the events happen, the stage where the performance takes place and the single space we inhabit.

2.2.2. A Room and a Stage

The setting of *The Events*, "a room, the sort of place in which a choir might rehearse" (Greig 2014a: 7), has a range of resonances. One of them has to do with precarity: it is a room at a community centre that is taken over by A Choir as their rehearsal space. The fact that it is a rehearsal room suggests another reference to theatre to add to Repetiteur's and the Stage Manager's continued presence, which ensures the spectator does not forget that 'we are here' watching this performance. Self-reflexively, the fact that the room is a rehearsal space (and a theatre) might even be pointing to the play itself as work-in-progress – an open, rough, unfinished project about violence, trauma, community, revenge and forgiveness that the spectator might hopefully continue rehearsing thought about. At the same time, the room is an abstract space in the sense that it bleeds out of its own limits to encompass the woods where Claire finds the poisonous mushrooms, the prison where the Boy is an intern, Australia centuries ago – the spaces of life and death, the concrete and the spiritual. That is, the room displays a confounded, almost cosmic treatment of space-time whereby apparently different spaces and times collapse into 'here'.

2.2.3. Story/Play: A Broken Structure

2.2.3.1. Traumatic World, Story and Play

Greig claims that he separates 'story' from 'play' and that he has been doing so perhaps more consciously in the last six or seven years (see Greig 2015a). As he explains, 'story' has a beginning, a middle and an end (see 2015a). In *The Events*, at the level of story, roughly, there is a shooting, a traumatic process and a setting up of a choir a year after. While 'story' follows causality and is what the play is about, 'play' corresponds to how that 'story' is structured formally (see Greig 2015a). Underlying Greig's distinction is the classic narratological pair fabula/sjuzhet. According to David Bordwell, fabula corresponds with "the story that is represented", which "embodies the action as chronological, [a] cause-and-effect chain of events ocurring within a given duration and a spatial field" (2004: 245). Sjuzhet "consists of the particular pattern of events (actions, scenes, turning points, plot twists)" and thus "the form in which the perceiver actually encounters [the story]" (Bordwell 2004: 247).

'Play' can strongly confound and can partly dictate the experience of story, but 'story' lies intact underneath. As Greig put it when *The Events* was still a project, "once you've got confidence of story you can then really fragment" (2013c: 173). In *The Events*, fragmentation is present not just in terms of the play's composition, including the utterly non-linear rendering of space-time.[208] While trauma is clearly present in the 'story' – in Claire, in the broken lives of the members of A Choir – as well as in the world the events depicted in the 'story' are drawn from, brokenness is also crucially present in form, or how 'story' is structured into 'play'. In other words, world, 'story' and 'play' are holed, porous categories trauma transits across, leaving traces in its way – briefly put, 'play' acquires a traumatic shape that may affect its perceiver too. 'Play' responds to 'story', 'story'

[208] A clear precedent is one of Suspect Culture's shows, *Mainstream* (see Greig 2013c: 173), where "[t]he story is splintered into fifty-five short scenes, not structured in chronological order" (Rebellato 2003: 69).

responds to world and in so doing, *The Events* ends up mirroring the world's broken, fragmented form and confronting the spectator with a wounded 'here'.

2.2.3.2. Exposed Wounds

The play's *trou*matised form is productively apparent in its beginning and ending. In the 2013 run at the Young Vic, when the audience was waiting for the play to start A Choir entered the stage, talking, understandably rather nervous. From the bundle that is A Choir – which in a way represents a dissonant community – there emerged Claire and the Boy. Claire was crying disconsolately, while the Boy looked as if he was possessed, was visibly under the effects of having just done something terrible. This beginning is holed because it does not really signal the starting point of 'story'. Something similar happens at the end, which perhaps gives this highly fragmented play some sense of circularity. In the Young Vic run, A Choir and Claire moved closer to the audience, perhaps inviting them to join the community that is A Choir, while the Boy remained in a corner, visibly separate, perhaps alluding to *The Events*'s epigraph, "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine", from *The Tempest*, and asking the audience to recognise that, no matter how hard we try to ignore this or push it away, the reasons for the Boy's darkness are inextricable from the community he forms part of. With full lights on everyone, crucially including spectators but excluding the Boy, Claire – who was crying once again – thanked A Choir, which was now given its name as the specific choir that participated on that particular night.

Neither the beginning nor the ending of 'play' constitute the beginning or the ending of 'story', and both bleed out into the world to include spectators and 'here'. The disturbing undoing of the beginning and the ending suggests the play is, in a sense, an exposed wound, and yet, while still open, it is (precariously) stitched together into a courageous piece of work by the very same formal strategies that undo it. This unresolved dialectical tension

might ensure that the play's (holed) spectators never un-feel, un-see or un-think everything they have experienced vis-à-vis *The Events*.

2.2.3.3. Tearing a Hole through Everything

Dialectical structures are often aesthethically ruptured in *The Events*. The rupture that the Boy's constant rocking on his feet signals is brutal for this dialectical gesture – "back forward back" (Greig 2014a: 47) – is abruptly torn when he goes berserk and starts killing Claire's choristers. In Scene Two, Claire welcomes the Boy as a new member of her choir. In Scene Three, when Claire is "*lead[ing] the choir in call and response, [she] pick[s] the Boy, who does not join in*" (Greig 2014a: 12). Scene Twenty, which like Scene Two, starts with the "*[t]he Boy rock[ing] on the balls of his feet*" (Greig 2014a: 47), intertwines Claire's impressions from moments before the shooting until the point when the Boy asks her and Mrs Singh to decide which of them his last bullet is going to be for (see Greig 2014a: 50) – this time, however, instead of a multilocational interweaving, both Claire and the Boy are here, in the same space.

As noted earlier, preconceived ideas about colonisation are cracked open as a result of the play's dialectical treatment – paradoxically, the right-leaning Boy argues against colonisation, while the left-leaning Claire vindicates it (implicitly for the sake of difference and multiculturalism). The dialectical contrast between the two main kinds of music used in the play, one solemn and life-affirming and the other drawn from twenty-first century consumer culture, is also torn apart when A Choir interprets "Bonkers", intensified (in the Young Vic's run), by the Boy asking members of the audience to join in and high-five.

An excellent, if deeply disturbing, metaphor for the tearing of rational reality that Adornian dialectics pursues is exemplified by the Boy's suggestion that he "could manufacture a bomb with nails and bolts and stones bursting out the back of a rucksack

tearing a hole through everything and everyone" (Greig 2014a: 47). By telling a story in traumatised, holed bursts and chunks, *The Events* arguably invites us to see through them and perhaps momentarily find some kind of light.

2.3. The Confounded Spectator

The disposition and movement of objects and bodies in space in *The Events* creates numerous viewpoints that cast many of the show's participants as spectators. To begin with, most of the time A Choir is sitting on a tiered platform opposite spectators, a position that adds 'spectating' to their multi-tasking list. At the end of the play, Claire repeats the same words she said to the Boy at the beginning – "If you feel like singing – sing / And if you don't feel like singing / Well that's OK too. / Nobody feels like singing all the time" (Greig 2014a: 65) – which links the audience to the killer, even though at other points, as will be seen later, they seem to 'become' the victims. At the same time, Claire's words at the end of the play function as an invitation to the audience to become her choir and are followed by A Choir's refrain, "*And we're all here, we're all in here*" (Greig 2014a: 65). When I saw the play (2013 run at the Young Vic), Claire bowed to both spectators and A Choir, thus confirming their status as spectators too – albeit confounded by the various roles and positions they occupy across the play. The two actors, who inhabit the space between A Choir and the audience, also give the impression at times of becoming the show's spectators. All of this compellingly confounds the spectator's supposedly unique and perhaps comfortable task.

Crucially, A Choir does not just function as audience vis-à-vis Claire and the Boy, but also in relation to the group opposite, the real audience. In addition to "intensif[ying] the sense of theatre's co-presence with its audience, our mutual dependency" (Rebellato 2016: 18), this generates a confounded spectating loop – A Choir spectates the spectator as

she spectates, just as they do.[209] In sum, through its exploration of confounded spectatorship *The Events* suggests that there is indeed “something particular about theatrical spectatorship that offers ways of thinking about ethics – and, specifically, thinking socially and politically about ethics – that no other cultural practice seems to offer” (Ridout 2009: 14-5).

In particular, the spectating loop identified above opens up important resonances in connection to A Choir’s ‘deadness’ and ‘aliveness’ and their a/effects. When A Choir become spectators to Claire and the Boy, they confirm their deadness. When they become spectators to *The Events* – which they also form part of – they affirm their aliveness, i.e. the fact that they are a real choir that has come along to sing their songs and experience the performance. The fact that, in a sense, A Choir is simultaneously both alive, like spectators themselves, and also dead might produce a mirror a/effect whereby spectators recognise themselves as vulnerable – i.e. as potential victims of a similar atrocity.

There are other moments of spectating that challenge the already confounded spectator even further. For instance, Claire also becomes a spectator in the FAQ scene. In the Young Vic run, the Boy became a spectator to A Choir’s rendition of his favourite song, Dizzee Rascal’s “Bonkers”; he even tried to interact with spectators (“Give me your five”) and asked them to clap, as if (grotesquely) inviting them to join him in his spectating experience. The spectator watching this might be utterly counfounded, having lost track of who is watching, who is watched and with what potential implications.

In the Young Vic run, spectatorship was further confounded in the massacre scene (Twenty), when the Boy finds Claire and Mrs Singh but has one bullet only. The Boy pointed his gun at Claire and the audience, who by implication collectively ‘became’ Mrs

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[209] In earlier plays by Greig, a similar mechanism is deployed, but this time through the strategy of playing in the round: in *Yellow Moon* and *The Monster in the Hall*, young people are “watching other young people watching the show and they’re watching other people watching them watching the show” (Hollands 2013: 224).

Singh, whom we know the Boy kills. By means of this mechanism, spectators were 'killed' by the Boy, which adds even more grotesqueness to their having been asked to high-five and sing with A Choir (Scene Eleven), thus strongly suggesting that the murdered community could be any community – given also the formal strategy of choirs changing every night with no criterion but their locality, which is nowhere but 'here'. That is the reason why I have chosen to capitalise the indeterminate article – 'A Choir' could indeed be any community. In addition, as was the case in *Fragile*, voicing the names of the vulnerable is a central practice in *The Events*. Claire states, "[m]y choir was Jesse and Mr Aziz and Frank and Mrs Singh and Isaac and Sherrie and Corrine and Gisela and Kamal and…" (Greig 2014a: 35), which implies that spectators, 'a collective Mrs Singh', are (could be) dead, since we are part of *The Events*, not merely detached observers.

The confounding of the spectator is also exercised through lighting. At the end of the play in the Young Vic run, blinding white light fell on the auditorium – perhaps because "[i]t's important to turn dark things into light" (Greig 2014a: 44), as Claire says. The space of the audience as those who sit in the dark watching people doing things in the light (see Ridout 2013) was therefore confounded in these final moments. At this point, the Boy's darkness was highlighted by having him sit in a dim corner while Claire and A Choir came physically very close to the audience. Specifically, in this case the full lights that foregrounded the audience's presence had the effect of including them in the ignorance surrounding the Boy, who was visibly outcast by the community formed by A Choir, Claire and now also spectators. In sum, lighting aesthethically placed the confounded spectator in a bewildering, traumatic, 'here'.

2.4. Conclusive Remarks: Back to Europe and 'We Are All (in a Cracked) Here'

Walker describes *The Events* as a "'Euro-pudding', with backing from German [Austrian, in fact: Schauspielhaus Wien] and Norwegian [Brageteatret] theatre groups, as well as the Actors Touring Company and the Young Vic" (2013: 958). However, the idea of Europe in *The Events* runs deeper than Walker's comment suggests. When Wallace asks Greig whether the idea of Europe still interests him (see Greig 2013c: 165), his answer refers to Breivik: "he cites Europeanness, he's part of this notion of Europeanness as being something threatened by Islam" (2013c: 165). He adds,

> [Breivik] was attacking Norwegianess, Norwegian social democratic ideology, […] his family essentially. And his family, Norwegian social democracy, is Europe as welcoming, multicultural, open, tolerant and secular. He was attacking it, at least nominally, on behalf of some other Europe. It's the same story in *Europe*; it's the same one again and again. (2013c: 166)

The concern with Europe is actually explicit in *The Events*: "I am a Europe-wide malaise" (Greig 2014a: 51), says the Boy. In what may be described as the post-*Folkhemmet* era of globalisation, some of the conundrums explored in *The Events* are far from resolved in a Europe that currently faces an acute migrant crisis, the alleged failure of multiculturalism, tensions over 'place', the increasing ordinariness and sophistication of terror attacks, and a growing polarisation of political stances.[210]

The phrase "*[a]nd we're all here, we're all in here*" (Greig 2014a: 65) is sung many times at the end of *The Events* and has more than one layer of signification. Firstly, in the context of this thesis, "we're all in here" implies that we inhabit an interconnected 'here' and are thus inescapably interdependent – as Butler puts it, "what happens there also happens here, and that 'here' is already an elsewhere, and necessarily so" (2011: 31). Furthermore, "we're all in here" invokes the dead and foregrounds the experience of living on in a community that has traumatically lost some of their loved ones. Against all odds,

[210] "During the 1930s, the idea of the Folkhemmet, or people's home, was popularised by the Swedish Social Democratic prime minister Per Albin Hansson. It became the cornerstone of the world's first and most advanced welfare state, in which no citizen should be left behind" (Coman 2015: 22).

and at least in the Young Vic run, "*The Events* resonated as a celebration of [boundless] community" (Malkin 2016: 116), a "community perforated, but not destroyed" (Wallace 2016: 38) – or the dead talking to the living, or perhaps a dissonant community, bearing in mind that "a proportion of the choir – no more than a quarter, according to the play's information pack – sing 'I'm not here'" (Pattie 2016: 49).[211]

By experiencing *The Event*'s broken form, spectators are induced to aesthethically experience the brokenness of the world. The play itself is a stained – spilt tea on the floor (see Greig 2014a: 20 and 64) – and formally fragmented piece that refuses to renounce the possibility of our living together despite being holed. Indeed, the fragments have been put back together in such a way that the bolts are unashamedly visible in the play. *The Events* is the result of great doses of collaboration, effort, research, lust for connection, love for theatre and a passionate need for and deep commitment to justice and the exploration of the scenes from the world and their potential transformation – the transformation of this "fucking beautiful" (Greig 2002a: 295) and broken stuff called 'here'.

[211] 'Boundless' is Malkin's term elsewhere in the same reference.

VIII. Conclusion: World-Forming Theatre

The present thesis has attempted to contribute an extended study of David Greig's political theatre – from *Europe* to *The Events* and including one of Suspect Culture's shows, *One Way Street* – in relation to "the theme of living *through* globalisation" (Reinelt 2011: 204; emphasis added). Globalisation has been defined as an asymmetrical, unevenly distributed phenomenon that broadly speaking encompasses the world-wide expansion of multiple aspects of contemporary life, such as trade, finance, culture, communication, violence, terrorism, technology, movement, surveillance, information and services. While globalisation has many blatantly negative consequences, it is also, importantly, a process open to our intervention, which means that it is open to change. Greig has famously claimed that "political theatre has at its very heart the possibility of change" (1999a: 66) and located the foundation of theatre "in a kind of spiritual ritual of transformation" that "makes it a place where politics should be discussed" (1999a: 68). In other words, while Paul's attempt to grasp the spiritual in *Damascus* is inconclusive – "[s]pirituality is…", "there is a spiritual dimension to –" (2007a: 31) – a sense of the spiritual is inextricable from the political dimension of Greig's theatre.

Space, ethics and the spectator – the notions present in the thesis's subtitle – form a cluster of interpenetrating elements through which the thesis has attempted to articulate Greig's theatre's responses to globalisation. It has been argued that a key reason for "the texture of the world glimpsed on stage" (Rebellato 2002a: 2), which has been described as 'holed', is the need and desire on the part of the playwright to bring forth in his plays the scenes from the world, which is itself, by definition (albeit not exclusively), holed, torn and cracked. Emanating from Greig's own holed creative process, it has been shown that the leaking or bleeding of 'the real' into the plays generates not only countless instances of undone time, location and character that defy mimetic representation, but also a series of

wounded aesthethic strategies, including multilocational interweaving of narratives, stitching up, ecstasy, aerial characters, evaporation of singularity, actors/bodies present on stage throughout and blown-up structures. Those unbounded categories and wounded formal strategies not only foreground the damage of the world through the brokenness of form, but also actively and affectively seek to punch holes in the spectator's narrative superstructure.

The thesis's methodological and theoretical framework has aimed at situating the aesthethico-political project of Greig's work. Via the notion of holes in tandem with affect theories, it has been argued that Greig's wounded, porous theatre engenders myriad senses of bleeding across and confounding that put forward a compelling vision of an intricately interconnected 'here' – one single global space. The desirable a/effects of this kind of theatre are world-forming, as opposed to an uncritical, unquestioning approach to globalisation.

The thesis's articulation of globalisation has highlighted both negative (mainly by reference to Harvey, Bauman and Nancy) and more positive notions such as the potential of relational space (Harvey), the combination of liquid, solid and gaseous forces (Bauman) and *mondialisation* or world-forming processes (Nancy). A survey of Greig's artistic dialogue with Graham, Adorno and Brecht has (unsurprisingly) revealed that dialectics is their common denominator, an interest that runs deep in Greig's creative processes and his theatre, especially in the shape of meaningfully fractured dialectical structures. A brief discussion of these three figures in relation to Greig has provided a pillar for the analysis of Greig's theatre in practice, including its complex spatial interplay, its attempts to aesthethically produce contradiction and its post-Brechtian sensibility on the page and on the stage.

The thesis has also argued that one of the most powerful ways in which Greig's work responds to globalisation is through its experimentation with space, which is closely entwined with questions of ethics and spectatorship and has become increasingly complex (in the aesthethic sense) over the years. It is also central to highlight that, when examined closely and individually, it becomes apparent that Greig's plays put forward a careful architecture to then go on to dismantle it in order to foreground the key notion of one single space, one single world – this one, 'here'. Therefore, what I have found myself doing when discussing the selected plays has been sketching out that architecture and then tracing the process whereby it becomes undone.

Thus, *Europe* blurs the borders between two Europes (old and new), immigrants and locals, financial elites and economic pariahs, among others. *One Way Street* focuses on walking and destabilises both the spaces where it takes place and the corresponding memories – hence unsettling time too. *The Architect* engages with a three-fold architecture of power – of places, of the self and of form – which eventually explodes to reveal, perhaps, a new spatial understanding. *Cosmonaut* ingrains urban and outer spaces in an above-below dialectics wherein characters, despite communication failures, are able to reach out of themselves horizontally – a vital step towards the articulation of the notion of 'here'. *Outlying Islands* continues delving into the idea of 'here' through bird trajectories and an insistence on the pervasiveness of water and the fluidity of watching acts across stage, auditorium and the world. *San Diego* stitches up the whole globe, so that impossible connections are disclosed between supposedly distant occurrences. *The American Pilot* probes the concept of 'here' further through an emphasis on the space of the stage, where the entire cast remains visible throughout the performance. Gaining confidence in the power of both story and theatricality, *Damascus* acknowledges the presence of both performers and spectators through the use of music on stage, story-telling devices and a

character that, by always being ‘here’, connects the worlds of the play, the spectator and the one ‘outside’. *Fragile* manages to render separate locations as one single space via Jack transcorporeally evoking all bodies and spaces and Caroline’s/the audience’s becoming part of that through the unusual conversation she/they establish(es) with Jack. Finally, *The Events* highlights ‘here’ via the highly a/effective strategy of having real local choirs participate in each performance so as to compellingly put forward the idea that events (albeit unevenly) always happen to all of us, in this cracked globe.

In sum, Greig’s complex, multivalent experimentation with space aesthethically foregrounds the urgent need to foster an interconnected ‘here’ in the face of negative globalisation (Bauman). According to Kershaw, “theatrical performance […] can work to reduce these global pathologies [his examples include terrorism and global warming] to the extent that it demonstrates the nature of their interdependence” (2006: 146), which is precisely what Greig’s work attempts to do. By emphasising the transformative power of affect and affirming that the world is changeable and its inhabitants are able to make a difference, Greig’s theatre highlights that world-forming is possible.

1. Contributions, Shortcomings and Future Research

1.1. Original Contributions to the Field

Drawing on previous Greig scholarship and a rich array of materials and media – ranging from Twitter and the Internet to reviews and personal and email conversations with Greig himself and with theatre makers Banks, Eatough and Price – the thesis combines a sense of continuity with already existing research with the attempt to provide what is hopefully a fresh perspective on the study of Greig’s theatre. The latter has involved finding new vocabularies and critical strategies. Given its content and methodology, the thesis might be of interest to academics working on Greig and contemporary British playwriting

at large, students looking at Greig's work and playwrights or other theatre-makers who are interested in the philosophy of theatre-making processes and the blend of formal inventiveness and ethical concern at the theatre.

All in all, while Greig's work has been the object of scholarly study for over two decades now, for the first time this monograph offers in-depth critical analyses of many of Greig's plays spanning two decades, and does so by focusing on a subject matter and an approach that are both hopefully innovative. As regards the former, the significance of this piece of research lies in looking at the topic of globalisation in its intersection with theatre, given that few studies have done this so far. As for the latter, the thesis lays out a methodological and theoretical framework to address the crosspollination between aesthetics, ethics and politics, and uses affect theories in order to address the above-mentioned transformative loop involving world, playwright, play, spectator and world-to-be-created. The interface between aesthetics, ethics and politics in Greig's work has never been explored so closely before. The aim here has not just been to "suggest a certain set of relationships between art's formal properties and its ethico-political functions" (Bennett 2005: 16), but to ground that crosspollination theoretically in order to delineate what a globalisation play might look like, which has led to positing the notion of the 'politics of aesthethics' in relation to Greig's plays. As regards affect theories, to my knowledge, Greig's holed theatre had not been examined before through this lens, at least not on the same scale as here.[212]

Affect is actually a key aspect of aesthetics, ethics and politics: "[t]he political dimensions of affect generally proceed through or persist immediately alongside its aesthetics, an ethico-aesthetics of a body's capacity for becoming sensitive to the 'manner' of a world" (Gregg and Seigworth 2010: 14). Greig's plays, the thesis argues, tap into the

[212] Zaroulia briefly points out "the affective dimension of [Greig's] work" (2010: 273; see also 2013a: 180 and 184, and 2016: 78) in connection with relations between "stage and auditorium, actors and audiences" (2010: 273).

spectator's capacity to become sensitive to that manner (Gregg and Seigworth) or texture (Rebellato) of the world. His 'global theatre' – a holed theatre that penetrates and is penetrated by the world where it happens – is met in the thesis by what might be described as a 'global approach' to it that seeks to uncover that thoroughly holed interconnectedness.

By probing Greig's conception of theatre – the writing process as performative and shamanic; plays engaging in a series of transformative loops; an understanding of theatre as a collaborative, unfinished, open process – the thesis implicitly questions the exclusive correlation between performative aspects and performance and thus contributes to undoing the rigid separation between text-based and performance-based theatre. Wallace has for instance pointed out that Greig's constitutes a "style of writing […] that is generously open to performance" (2013: 68), including his "use [of] workshops as part of the writing process" (Greig 2011a: 5). As the thesis has shown, Greig has an acute interest in playwriting strategies that foreground the here and now of the performance. The use of the Arabic terms *zāhir* and *bātin* (seen and unseen) are attempts to do justice to that dimension of Greig's theatre by calling attention to transfers between the concrete and the inconcrete both in relation to the plays, and given their holed nature, to the world beyond.

Last but not least, as regards the analyses on individual plays, the thesis's innovative insights include putting forward neologisms such as 'territorism' (in relation to *Europe*); understanding walking as a transformative activity that has the capacity to reconfigure perceptions of 'the real' (*One Way Street*); developing existing discussions of voyeurism in connection to *Outlying Islands*; viewing cannibalism as a radical expression of protest against the world's resistance to sharing and reading the formal insistence on connectedness as the expression of a profound need to stitch up the world (*San Diego*); and connecting a character's PTSD with the structure of a play by drawing on Possible Worlds Theory (*The Events*).

1.2. Some Drawbacks

Writing a thesis about theatre and globalisation comes with its own limitations and even contradictions. For instance, the thesis does not delve into how contemporary theatre might strengthen and promote negative aspects of globalisation. The theatre, one of the 'public' spaces par excellence, is usually attended by the cultural elites and, to a great extent, is being taken over by corporate funding, which is also true of other artistic institutions and/or cultural forms.[213] Equally, the thesis focuses on globalisation, which may be viewed in some respects as a 'refined' continuation of colonising processes, and yet it spotlights the work of one white Western middle-class male playwright, which might be looked upon not just as reductive but as reproducing the very mechanisms of injustice and asymmetry it is interrogating. The critical and theoretical concepts the thesis draws on are also mostly Anglo-American and continental, possibly another drawback when it comes to writing a thesis on globalisation. All I can say in this connection is that it would have been utterly unrealistic for me to even attempt to take on the vast array of critical and theoretical perspectives beyond those prevalent in Anglo-American and continental academia – the educational and cultural background I am most familiar with.

As theatre reinvents its formal boundaries and conventions, criticism cannot but at least try to engage with this sense of theatrical openness. In the thesis, this has led to a search for new vocabularies, including neologisms (e.g. 'polethics') and theoretical and critical tools (e.g. holes, wounded formal strategies, bleeding across, stitched-up structures). Although some readers might find the thesis excessively onerous in that respect, a consistent aim was to formulate concepts that would make it possible to identify and name the bizarre, extraordinary forms of (fraught) connectedness Greig's theatre unstoppably and multifariously explores. I can only hope that in the end clarity has vanquished ornament.

[213] Rebellato refers to 'megamusicals', for example, as "McTheatre" (2009: 39-49).

Instead of providing a conventionally identified (and identifiable) state-of-the-art chapter or section, I have consciously chosen to comment on previous work when relevant to the specific topic in hand. Although this might be considered a limitation, it seemed more in tune with the thesis's deployment of a wide-ranging methodology for a series of globalisation plays that are themselves diverse and have triggered manifold responses by scholars. For similar reasons, I have not offered robust comment on a fixed set of theorists. The preferred approach, as just noted, was via an eclectic, precariously stable set of tools, concepts, ideas and notions that might adequately address the variety of themes and issues raised by Greig's work and his intellectual and political outlook on the world. Likewise, the emphasis was placed on grasping the pervasively relational affects of Greig's theatre rather than on looking at a particular issue or set of issues – a choice that has hopefully proved productive.

Finally, my own theoretical musings can and should be read critically. For instance, although the theory of holes usefully undoes the idea of the body as a 'sealed-off whole' and foregrounds the porosity of both bodies and the world itself, there are reasons to argue that some sense of 'wholeness' – of solitude, intimate reflection, privacy, inwardness; of immanence perhaps – is worth preserving as well. The pun '(w)hole' – yet another one – precariously and provocatively holds together the ideas of 'hole' and 'whole'. The same applies to 'confounding' – 'founding', here in the sense of finding, locating, specifying and clarifying, is also very much needed when looking at and responding to the scenes from the world. Likewise, the thesis's unremitting insistence on interconnectedness might be argued to have been absorbed by the neoliberal rhetoric, thus partially disarticulating the force and vitality of the argument. That was obviously not the intention, though, nor is it the way in which it functions in Greig's work.

1.3. Future Avenues of Research

In terms of methodology and theory, future avenues of research might focus on the upsurge of "new epistemologies predicated on *process*", particularly "affective neuroscience" (Shaughnessy 2013: 4; emphasis original), an area I have merely touched upon by reference to Malabou. Specifically, contemporary theatre may be addressed in relation to "newly designated fields [such] as neuropolitics, neuro-geography, and neuroaesthetics" (Leys 2011: 434-5), which, according to Leys, "have not only emphasized the importance of affect but have called for a renewal of their disciplines based on the findings of scientists working in the emotion field" (2011: 434-5).

Due to my poor knowledge of German, I have neglected a rich vein of critical assessment of Greig's theatre, especially regarding its reception in Germany, that might be taken up for future research, as might its reception in countries across the globe, from Egypt to South Korea. Future Greig scholarship may also wish to engage further in the study of his plays for children and young people, which Reid has recently addressed (2016b). His social media theatre and other material, his passionate use of music – including plays with songs such as *Midsummer* and *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* – and his position in the wider Scottish theatrical, cultural and political context – including his (theatre's) involvement with the independence movement – also deserve further scholarly attention. If Greig has been prolific as a playwright so far, his appointment as Artistic Director of the Edinburgh Lyceum looks no less promising.

Some of the plays that have not found their way into the thesis, even if they were relevant to its topic, could also be taken up for future research. Perhaps an obvious case is *The Speculator*, which, set in eighteenth-century Paris, scrutinises the origins of financial speculation to the extent that it "appears singlehandedly to prefigure the global financial crash of 2008" (Howard 2016: 114; see also Müller 2005: 153). Wallace does include *The*

Speculator as part of her discussion of globalisation in her book on Greig, together with *Cosmonaut*, *San Diego*, *Pyrenees* and *Brewers Fayre*, and Botham (2016) has recently written on it too. Perhaps what ruled out *The Speculator* in my case was my specific interest in plays that represent globalisation indirectly – Howard praises *The Speculator*'s achievements "in terms of subject matter" (2013: 213) – and are self-consciously formally inventive – a quality that in the case of *The Speculator* seems to have been eclipsed in the rewriting process (see Howard 2013: 213 and 2016: 115). Indeed, as Howard himself laments, "my default position was that the play needed to be 'a better play', by which I meant more conventional" (2016: 115).

Greig's numerous adaptations and/or rewritings, such as *Dunsinane* (2010; publ. 2010d), a sequel to *Macbeth* (c. 1606) that focuses on the English occupation in Scotland after the overthrow of Macbeth and suggests parallelisms with the American and British occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, do not form part of the corpus examined in the thesis. An additional reason for not including *When the Bulbul Stopped Singing* (2004b), an adaptation of Raja Shehadeh's *When the Bulbul Stopped Singing: A Diary of Ramallah Under Siege* (2003), based on the author's – a "Palestinian layer, writer and activist" (Starck 2006: 61) – own account of Israeli occupation, was that *The American Pilot* and *Damascus* seemed to 'sufficiently' represent Greig's creative engagement with the Middle East. Likewise, *Dalgety*, about nudity activism, walking and new age spirituality, and including recurring references to the internet and Tesco car parks, could well have featured in the thesis but was excluded for reasons of scope. Besides, *Fragile* already represents the Theatre Uncut project in this study. Scope also dictated the exclusion of a play for children such as *Danny 306 + Me (4 Ever)* (1999b) – which addresses, among other issues, global brand and logo culture in relation to education – Suspect Culture's *Futurology: A Global Review* and Greig's *Kyoto* – which focus on issues such as environmental politics and

global warming and are set in the global scenarios of hotels and conference halls. Other plays that have been commented upon only in passing, such as *The Letter of Last Resort* (in relation to *Outlying Islands*), *Brewers Fayre* (in relation to *Fragile*) or *The Great Yes, No, Don't Know Five Minute Theatre*: *Created by Anyone, for an Audience of Everyone*, could also be targeted in future research.

In addition to *Futurology*, many other Suspect Culture shows are susceptible of being discussed in relation to globalisation (see Greig 2011a: 4). *Candide 2000* (2000b), set in a shopping mall, provides "an image of contemporary Britain: constantly subjected to surveillance, offering enormous consumer choice, finally sterile" (Rebellato 2002a: 19). *Lament* is a response to loss in the context of 9/11. *Airport* and *Mainstream* are both beautiful accounts of attempts at connection in an increasingly dissociated scenario; they are also formally and productively experimental in some of the ways Greig's 'globalisation plays' have been claimed to be in the thesis. *Casanova* (2001; publ. 2001d), about "an international artist travelling the world" (Rebellato 2013a: 312), is another case in point. In sum, "[t]he imprint of globalization can be found right across Suspect Culture's work" (Rebellato 2003: 64).

2. "*They Hold Hands*"[214]

2.1. Precarious Recompositions

Although all the plays analysed in this thesis are pervaded by violence, ending on that note would be unfair to Greig's work, where "[t]he ghost of a better world, a better way of being with others, haunts the violence" (Rebellato 2008: 204). Indeed, Greig's theatre is insistently and consistently interested in beauty, hope, healing and humour – I have perhaps underestimated the "comic side" (Keller 2016: 113) of Greig's plays in the thesis. The

[214] From *Cosmonaut* (Greig 2002a: 261).

phrase ‘precarious recompositions’ is meant to name the small yet significant acts of reconstitution that are central to the sense of world-forming process Greig’s theatre arguably pursues.

To begin with, violence is often traversed by love stories. For instance, Oleg’s life is made slightly easier by the memories of the woman he once loved in the Soviet Union (*Cosmonaut*); Zakaria wants to go to France to see his lover Fanny but he has no visa and ends up committing suicide (*Damascus*); the Translator’s wrath at the Pilot is poignantly intensified by the killing of his lover Belle by an American-built missile. Although the stories of connectedness through love do not overcome the violence, they do nuance violent situations. One of the metaphors Greig uses for trauma, or rather *trou*ma, is the breaking of a pot – which can perhaps be put back together in an act of recomposition: “Once the pot is broken, you can only repair it, but it can still be a pot. And the cracks where you’ve glued it back together are beautiful, interesting in their own way” (Greig 2013g). Replacing ‘pot’ by ‘world/globe’ in Greig’s lines links up with the illustration on the cover of the thesis as well as, partly, with what occurs in *The Events*. Greig’s work is also pervaded by countless poetic moments – bird stories in *San Diego*, the sex scene in *Outlying Islands*, Joe and Dorothy’s dolphin sign communication in *The Architect*, or *Casimir*’s profound belief that he is being heard in *Cosmonaut*.

2.2. Female Characters as Harbingers of Utopia

Greig’s work transpires a profound respect for, almost devotion to, women. As noted in the thesis, his female characters are often harbingers of utopia. Greig’s theatre, however, is not utopian *tout court*. If anything, its utopian dimension comes across as an intense love for the world as it could be – the utopian, in other words, as a world-forming impulse. In this sense, Rebellato believes that “in David’s work […] there is a tremendous

affirmation, an evocation of a better world, even a sense of utopia" (2002a: xxii) that is arguably mostly embodied in his female protagonists, who are often young women, are the driving force of Greig's plays, are given proper names (while male characters tend to have generic ones) and manage to survive violent situations.

Indeed, Greig's theatre usually 'leaves' women alive, heading towards the future: Adele and Katia escape on a train (*Europe*); it transpires that Greta is going to carry on with her pregnancy whether John takes responsibility for it or not (*One Way Street*); Pauline survives her husband's crises and Dorothy might use her moments of connection with Joe to construct a more solid emotional life (*The Architect*); although Claire dies, Nastasja eloquently expresses a sense of the utopian (*Cosmonaut*); Ellen embarks towards an elsewhere at the end of *Outlying Islands*; David the Patient saves Laura from an overdose (*San Diego*); Elena is the witness and story-teller who is always 'here' and bleeds out of the play itself (*Damascus*); Caroline remains alive while we do not know whether Jack sets himself alight (*Fragile*); and Claire survives the shooting and might perhaps head elsewhere with her partner Catriona (*The Events*).

Female characters are further linked to care – Caroline (*Fragile*) or Repetiteur (*The Events*) – hospitality – Sarah (*The American Pilot*) – or education and dignity – Muna (*Damascus*). Women also try hard to understand violence – Claire, both in *Cosmonaut* and *The Events*. Outside the scope of the thesis, the future rests on a female Prime Minister in *The Letter of Last Resort*; Stephanie's future in *Dr. Korczak's Example* is more hopeful than Adzio's; Prudentia Hart joyfully joins the karaoke at the end of the show; the character that imagines the situation that gives way to the play in *Miniskirts of Kabul* (2009; publ. 2009) is a female and the character that embarks on a new way of living in *Dalgety* is also female.

2.3. "Unchosen Together"

In Edgar's *State of Play: Playwrights on Playwriting*, Greig highlighted "the possibility of change" (1999a: 66). Similarly, in "Rough Theatre", he stated that "theatre cannot change the world, but it can allow us a moment of liberated space in which to change ourselves" (2008a: 220). As he puts it, "if people understand that the world is changeable, then they will try to change it" (2007c: 80). Change might begin to occur as a result of an experience of transcendence – "the political foundation of Rough Theatre", according to Greig (2008a: 220) – triggered by contradictions planted in the plays with the aim of circumventing the management of imagination by power. Although Greig claims that "[he] hopes to avoid overt political writing", he admits he is "interested in power and the way that differences in power shape relations between human beings. That inevitably makes my work political" (Greig 2011a: 4). I would suggest that Greig's theatre crucially contributes to "expand[ing] the envelope OF THE POLITICAL and so both restore the spaces of moral and political reflection that 'man' has collapsed" (Thrift 2008: 197; emphasis original). This widening and deepening of the political is pursued through, and takes the form of an ardent quest for understanding. As Reinelt puts it, "[t]he kind of political theatre Greig writes is joined to his own quest to understand his times and what constitutes an appropriate way to live and to belong to an interconnected society" (2011: 217-8) – a quest that, as Claire says in *The Events* (see 2014a: 37), needs to reach beyond reason towards the affective and the spiritual.

Although all the plays discussed in the thesis address negative aspects of globalisation, and Greig's theatre foregrounds injured bodies, both physically and psychologically, and all kinds of violence and damage – ranging from torture to suicide, bullying, mutilation, cannibalism and rape – the courageous act of dealing with such scenes from the world entails a belief in a future

> positive condition and democratic pole of a desired globalization, enabling access to a common language, to exchange, to techno-science, and to an economic and social progress for communities, national or not, communities that would not otherwise have access to them. (Derrida 2012: 122)

Since "widening economic inequality, worsening ecological degradation, intensified ethnic rivalry, spreading militarism, escalating religious nationalism, and other ills" (Gunn 2001: 19) are "rooted in global space, the task of restoring the lost balance between power and politics can be performed only at the global level" (Bauman 2010: 114). This is why theatre that addresses the entire globe as a 'here', as our problem, is so vital to the formation of the world (Nancy).

As Derrida puts it, "[t]he peoples of the earth have […] entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point that where [sic] a violation of rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*" (2000: 5; emphasis original). This makes us, whether we like it or not, not only multiple together (Nancy) but also, in Butler's words, "unchosen together" (2011: 24). From that perspective, 'here' means suffering (together) and the other way round – "'suffering' means here" (together) (Nancy 2007: 38). Yet we might also find joy in the journey towards "a concrete world that would be, properly speaking, the world of the proper freedom and singularity of each and of all" (Nancy 2007: 38) – the kind of world Greig's theatre beautifully upholds as possibility.

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