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David Greig's Other Heading

Mark Robson, University of Dundee

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In Kelso they gather to debate the border ballad and we, the audience, go with them. From conference to karaoke, the characters argue about folk traditions and popular culture, about beauty and desire, about 'reality'(historical fact, life beyond the academic world, life beyond poetry, a world stripped of the supernatural, and so on) and the imagination. Yet what lies at the centre of *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* (2011) is a playing out of the power of form, not least in its ability to disturb and to disrupt all of those apparent oppositions. The play is a celebration of the power of the imaginary to intervene in the real, and it draws much of its strength from its interweaving of the past and present materials of a culture.[1]

In Greig's work, that distinction between reality and imagination is frequently put under stress. Exploration of imagination's potency through formal experimentation is more than a narrowly aesthetic choice for Greig and is central to the political charge of his work.[2] As he suggests in his essay 'Rough Theatre', what is at stake in the contemporary world is precisely a struggle that takes place in and as that relation between the real and the imagined. In the 'management'of that relation, this struggle is decidedly unequal, since that management takes place

[1]David Greig, *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011). The original 2011 National Theatre of Scotland production has already been revived several times.
[2]This is apparent from Greig's work with Suspect Culture onwards. See *The Suspect Culture Book*, eds. Graham Eatough and Dan Rebellato (London: Oberon, 2013). Eatough's comment on the setting for *Europe* around a train station –'even then we thought maybe this is a bit old-fashioned'(p. 14) –sits alongside Greig's own description of their search in each piece for a 'formal question'that would work with a thematic or emotional question (p. 37).

through a harnessing of the resources of the media by global capital: 'By intervening in the realm of the imaginary, power continually shapes our understanding of reality'.[3] But rather than seeing in this a consequential drowning of theatre in the shallow waters of the mass media, in Greig's account this investment in imagination gifts a particular potential to theatre, for'if the battlefield is the imagination, then the theatre is a very appropriate weapon in the armoury of resistance'.[4] There is more to this than a utopian gesture of idealism. Greig admits more than once in the final pages of that essay: 'Theatre cannot change the world, but it can allow us a moment of liberated space in which to change ourselves'.[5] A certain Marxism would have its objection to this ready to hand. But this is not an easily dismissed re-description of the world, since what occurs under the name of resistance finds a path to effective change through a strategy of displacement and indirection. Resistance is rooted in a transformation of the self; that is, it is projected into the sphere of identity and identification, but this transformation of the self is not isolated from a rethinking of the relation between that self and that with which it may be identified. As such, it is never simply an individual matter.

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Let's turn to the scene of another academic conference, and to another interrogation of its form:

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[3]Greig, 'Rough Theatre', in *Cool Britannia? British Political Drama in the 1990s*, eds. Rebecca D'Montéand Graham Saunders (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), pp. 208-221 (pp.214-15).

[4] Greig, 'Rough Theatre', p. 219.

[5] Greig, 'Rough Theatre', p. 220.

> A colloquium always tries to forget the risk it runs [*couru*]: the risk of being just another one of those events where, in good company, one strings together a few talks or speeches on some general subject. Just another *cultural* event, for example, or a performance, or else an exercise in what one calls, with this very obscure word,'culture'.[6]

A risky opening perhaps, an opening about risk that is an opening to risk.[7] The stakes are reduced, for me at least, by the fact that this overture is not mine: it belongs to Jacques Derrida, and it comes at the beginning of his short book on Europe and democracy, *The Other Heading*. In the English version of this passage, we can pick up the explicit reference to performance, but this framing of a certain theatricality is stronger still in the French version of the text, since the word that is translated here as 'event'–just another one of those events, just another cultural event –is 'spectacle', the same word used in French for a variety of stagings, shows and live events.[8] Derrida draws our attention to a certain theatricality, then, at the heart of culture 'itself', even the academic culture of the colloquium: culture is always a matter of performance, but the risk lies in the notion that the colloquium (and by extension other attempts to 'perform'culture) may be nothing more than a performance, and worse, a performance that we have always already seen, just another 'cultural event' in a series that, in continuing, it leaves intact, even inert.

There is a crucial and characteristic move in the last twist of the phrasing of this opening, however: Derrida does not in fact say 'culture'. He says 'what one

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[6]Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), p. 4.

[7]A first draft of this piece was written for the David Greig Symposium organised by Jacqueline Bolton at the University of Lincoln in March 2014. In revising it, I have not attempted to disguise that original context.

[8]Derrida, *L'autre cap* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1991), p. 11.

calls …"culture"'. Those familiar with Derrida's texts will recognise the move that he is making here, since it is one of a series of such audaciously cautious gestures. Elsewhere, for example, he speaks of 'what is called literature'.[9] We might relate this to an inheritance from Heidegger, perhaps, who also introduces this kind of unsettling specificity into the title of a text such as *Was heißt denken?*, translated as *What is Called Thinking?*.[10] This sense of calling and naming highlights a sense of constructedness, of fiction as that which is made, but also emphasises the notion that naming 'culture'is a performative speech act. The distancing effected by drawing attention to 'calling'provokes consideration of the sheer oddity of the things constructed, the obscurity of a word like culture or the strangeness of an institution such as literature. In other words, and however circular this may sound, Derrida is reminding us both that 'culture'is always cultural, that is, not natural or given, and also that the processes by which culture is identified as such tend towards, perhaps even depend on, a certain opacity. This reminder might seem unnecessary, were it not for the dominant context of thinking about 'Europe'that assumes a certain Europe, whether that assumption is made in order to tread a Eurocentric path or to pursue an anti-Eurocentric one. Indeed such apparently opposed projects frequently assume the same Europe.[11]

The singular context for Derrida's comments on the problem of the cultural event is a colloquium on 'European Cultural Identity'.[12] What can save this event from simple repetition, he proposes, is an 'imminence'that would be 'at

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[9] See'"This Strange Institution Called Literature": An Interview with Jacques Derrida', in *Acts of Literature*, ed. Derek Attridge (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 33-75.

[10]Heidegger, *What is Called Thinking?*, trans. J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1968).

[11]See Bernard Stiegler, *Constituer l'Europe 1: Dans un monde sans vergogne* and *Constituer l'Europe 2: Le motif européen* (both volumes Paris: Galilée, 2005), Marc Crépon, *Alterités de l'Europe* (Paris: Galilée, 2006), and my review article 'An Other Europe', *Paragraph*, 31.3 (2008): 375-88.

[12] The colloquium took place in Turin on 20 May 1990.

once a chance and a danger'. The obvious question becomes, as he immediately concedes, what imminence, what is it that is imminent? He answers by appealing to the notion of Europe itself:

> Something unique is afoot [*en cours*] in Europe, in what is still called Europe even if we no longer know very well *what* or *who* goes by this name [ce qui *s'appelle*]. Indeed, to what concept, to what real individual, to what singular entity should this name be assigned today? Who will draw up its borders?[13]

'What is still called Europe', he says, while also claiming that it is not certain what or who goes by this name. Drawing together the name, the concept, the 'real individual'and the singular entity, Derrida again emphasises a fictive quality to this movement of identification (and of self-identification, since Derrida is always attentive to the reflexive verb and so we must hear also a question about who or what gives itself this name, that is, self-identifies as 'Europe'). Borders are still to be drawn, and these borders must also be thought of as both conceptual and real, limning the limits of the imagined and policed space.

There is something surprisingly powerful in prising apart the what and the who. Derrida makes a similar gesture in the film by Amy Kofman and Kirby Dick called *Derrida*, in which he claims, when asked by Kofman to say something about love, that he cannot speak in generalities.[14] He then improvises the beginning of an answer that at once demonstrates this impossibility by referring back to a certain origin of philosophy that itself begins precisely in and as this attempt to disentangle the who and the what. The distinction is particularly charged in the context of a discussion of love. As Derrida glosses his distinction:

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[13] Derrida,*The Other Heading*, p. 5/*L'autre cap*, p. 12.
[14]*Derrida*. Dir. Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman (Jane Doe Films/ICA Projects, 2002).

do I love you because you are *you* (because of *who* you are) or do I love you because you possess some quality (because of *what* you are)? In other words, do I love a singularity that is open to transformation (I will love you because you are *you* even if the nature of this *you* changes), or do I love an aspect of you that may be possessed or lost, with the implication that if this quality were no longer to be possessed then I would have no reason to continue to love you. Put in these terms, the distinction between the who and the what demands a consideration of temporality, identity and possession, and the structures of desire.

All of this is at play in the insistence on adding 'what is called'to the name of Europe. Two pages in to his performance at the colloquium on European cultural identity, then, Derrida has already called into question the notion of Europe, the notion of culture, and the notion of identity. So who or what, then, will be able to reassign these names?

For Derrida, this is not a matter of choice but of a responsibility that comes to impose itself as a task. As Rodolphe Gaschéglosses it:

> For Europeans this task consists above all in *being* such that they assume the memory of Europe. To be by taking responsibility for their inheritance in no way reveals nostalgia or traditionalist fervour. On the contrary, understood as a task, the affirmation of this inheritance does not exclude –indeed it may even call for –a radical transformation of what has been handed down. The prime duty of the European is to take responsibility for this heritage, that is, the modern tradition of reflecting on European identity. This is so not only because these discourses concern being European but also because such identity is always established in relation to alterity, to the other, to the non-European.[15]

[15]Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task: A Study of a Philosophical Concept* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 266. Original emphasis.

Thought of in these terms, responsibility involves accepting the fact of inheriting a certain idea of Europe and the discourses that sustain that idea, but also accepting that this establishes a relation to the various forms of otherness through and against which that idea is defined. The 'non-European'is thus necessarily bound up in European (self-)identification in the very act of its exclusion. If recognising this is not to take the form of a simple assimilation of the other, then assuming responsibility demands an openness to transformation of the self as well as of that with which the self might wish to identify.

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The printed text of David Greig's play that is called *Europe* (1994) carries two epigraphs. The second quotes a line from Derrida's *The Other Heading* that we have already seen: 'Something 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.'Derrida's text functions as a paratext or threshold, then, a point of entry for a reader, if not for an audience. What this paratext directs us to is precisely the issue of naming and identity that provides Derrida's point of departure. The issue of identity in the play is one that has attracted a fair amount of critical attention, but there remains something about the invocation of Derrida that complicates further some of the more apparent elements in Greig's working through of problems of identification.[16]

[16]See, for example, in addition to works cited later, Peter Nesteruk, 'Ritual, Sacrifice and Identity in Recent Political Drama –with Reference to the Plays of David Greig', *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, 15.1 (2000), 21-42; Janelle Reinelt, 'Performing Europe: Identity Formation for a New Europe', *Drama Review*, 53 (2001), 365-87; David Pattie, '"Mapping the Territory": Modern Scottish Drama', in *Cool Britannia?*, pp. 143-57; Nadine Holdsworth, 'Travelling Across

One answer that Greig suggests to Derrida's question of the assignation of names and the drawing of borders is that it is the task of the writer. As Marilena Zaroulia points out, in his 1994 essay 'Internal Exile'Greig outlines the notion of a 'geography of the imagination'that blends history, memory and fantasy, saying: 'It is in the interweaving of the two worlds, the real and the imagined, that the writer experiences home. In a sense, writers walk the boundaries mapping and exploring the space they share with others'.[17] Just as borders demand to be drawn and redrawn, so to write is to walk, and to walk is to map and to explore. But what is experienced is a sense of 'home'that appears precisely where the real and the imagination are interwoven. There is a textual aspect to this in the metaphor of weaving (text, textile, context, et cetera), but also a performative one; walking as performance is now a well-established practice.[18] What is crucial in Greig's conception of home, however, is that this is described as a shared space. But shared with whom? And is it only shared by virtue of the movement around its boundaries?

In *Europe*, precisely this motif of movement is apparent from the first image: a train and a station.[19] A station is always a space determined by its relation to an elsewhere, by the transience of those who pass through it, by the rails that indicate a heading that is itself always more than simply a destination, opening up to what we call 'connections'. But not everyone has a heading, or at least not everyone knows what that heading may be. When Sava and Katia arrive,

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Borders: Re-Imagining the Nation and Nationalism in Contemporary Scottish Theatre', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 13.2 (2003), 25-39.

[17]Quoted in Zaroulia, "'Geographies of the Imagination"in David Greig's Theatre: Mobility, Globalization and European Identities', in Clare Wallace, *The Theatre of David Greig* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 178-94.

[18]See, for example, Deirdre Heddon, Carl Lavery and Phil Smith, *Walking, Writing and Performance: Autobiographical Texts* (Bristol: Intellect, 2009).

[19]I am using the version in David Greig, *Plays 1* (London: Methuen, 2002), pp. 1-90. All further references are to this text.

Fret, the stationmaster, fears precisely this lack of direction, this openness to a future that has not already been defined: 'Inter-railers–travelling about without a bloody destination …expecting nothing …letting it happen …getting on and off trains with complete disregard for the principle of the thing'. In his station, he says, you buy a ticket and 'you go where you say you're going to go'(17). To expect nothing is to deny civic responsibility. Sava will later echo this idea but only to shift its sense: he also feels a responsibility as a citizen, but for him this responsibility consists in staying where he is rather than leaving. Towards the end of the play, he says: 'A station is a place to finish a journey as well as a place to start one'(82).

Other characters see mobility differently: Katia fears stasis and believes that she and Sava should keep moving, but he wants to remain within the bounds of Europe; Morocco –who Adele repeatedly describes as 'cosmopolitan'and even (as he gropes Katia) 'civilized'(51, 54, 56) –sees the crossing of borders as an opportunity, noting that as objects cross borders their value changes (33). Cosmopolitanism is associated with a form of contraband, movement across borders never simply a neutral act but a necessary transvaluation, and the character's name is also poised on the boundary between the who and the what, between naming a person and naming a place (as is the character of 'Berlin').[20]Using place-names as personal names pulls in two directions, offering a sense of location and origin while at the same time invoking a name that marks the not-here, just as Adele and Katia list the names of cities at the end of the play as if they were magic charms or incantations, markers of an exotic form of

[20]There is a link here to the tensions between globalization, cosmopolitanism and transnationalism. See, for example, Dan Rebellato, *Theatre & Globalization* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, trans. Mark Dooley (London: Routledge, 2001).

imaginary dislocation and disidentification. In these migrations, both forced and unforced, longed-for or lamented, people become objects whose value also fluctuates as they pass from one place to another. This is again a matter of weaving together the real and the imagined. For some, like Adele and Katia, it is precisely the possibility of having a value other than that which they have known that makes movement so desirable. Elsewhere, Greig notes how this desire for relocation as an opportunity for the transformation of a damaged life (sometimes termed, for example in drug addiction treatment, 'doing a geographical') might in fact simply be a form of displacement, in which the changes necessary to repair that damage are postponed and avoided in the dream of an elsewhere.[21]

Just as movement in the form of walking may be considered as performance, there is also perhaps a metatheatrical dimension to Greig's sense of a body moving through space in its echo of a minimal definition of what constitutes an act of theatre: a body crossing a space watched by another, that interplay of movement and spectatorship, the 'act of theatre'that becomes a spectacle in a moment of co-presence and sharing.[22] The mark of Brecht is stronger in Greig's work than that of Brook, of course, but there is a movement towards minimalism in his work in terms of production resources, as he indicates in the essay on 'Rough Theatre'and as can be seen in the staging of *Prudencia Hart* and even *The Events* (2013). The reflexive move that Derrida makes in

[21]See Greig, 'Doing a Geographical', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 16.1 (2006), 160-64.
[22]The echo is of the famous first sentences of Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Penguin, 2008; first published 1968), p. 11.

questioning the performative dimension of the colloquium finds its equivalent in Greig's reflection on form in the middle of performance.[23]

If names complicate rather than simplify identification in *Europe*, then at times location is also deliberately obscure, that is, unnamed. As Clare Wallace notes, Katia refuses to say where she is from.[24] Katia says: 'The place I came from isn't there any more. […] Its name was taken off the maps and signposts'. Adele fails to see the significance: 'Its name might have changed but the place must still be there. It's the same place …isn't it?'But as Katia puts it: 'There's no way of checking'(41). Geographical naming is revealed as fiction, as a temporal and temporary construction that is both threatened by and effaced from the real (the name was 'taken off', the violence behind such an act barely hidden) and kept – both held and withheld –in memory.

Without such signposts and maps, it is hard to tell where one stands. Sava exemplifies the paradox of belonging without belonging, and thus the difficulty of identifying with an entity such as Europe: 'We're a long way from home but we're still in Europe'(29). Katia is less convinced:

> Europe. Snipers on the rooftops, mortars in the suburbs and you said: 'This is Europe …we must stay in Europe.'So we stayed, even after the food ran out: 'This is Europe.'When the hospitals were left with nothing but alcohol and dirty bandages. I warned you and you still said: 'This is Europe. Honesty will prevail, sense will win, this war is an aberration …a tear in the fabric. In time it will be sewn up again and things will look as good as new.'(30)

[23] For example, the use of the border ballad in *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart.* The matter of verse becomes crucial to the unfolding of the plot, as well as offering a frame for the mode of narration.

[24]Wallace, *The Theatre of David Greig*, p. 50.

The textual metaphor returns here, suggesting the extent to which that which we call Europe has been woven together, its identity patched and stitched, its fabric fabricated. In his attachment to the ideals of honesty and sense (a shorthand for a version of the Enlightenment project of commonsensical rationality), Sava also makes the explicit opposition between Europe and barbarism: Europe is culture, it is the name of civilisation, even or especially in time of war.

The last scenes of *Europe* complicate and darken our sense of what this civilisation might be, however. In another metatheatrical move, the final scene of the play is itself called 'Europe'. It offers multiple strands of action simultaneously: on the train, Katia and Adele travel towards destinations unknown but, as I have already noted, they offer a list of the names of European cities (to this extent, a name is a possibility); meanwhile, Berlin describes the aftermath of the burning down of the station. The fire brings the town to public and governmental attention: 'They said the name of our town, politicians and sociologists all across the continent said its name'. But just as it is recognised, just as its name comes into European public consciousness (though not that of the audience, for whom it is never named), the name ceases to refer to a place. It was repeated, says Berlin: 'Until it wasn't a name any more but a condition, not a place but an effect'(89). Naming is again unfixed, dislocated, disidentifying. Berlin ends the play's dialogue by repeating the line from the opening speech of the chorus: 'we're also Europe'(90). The circular economy rounds the play off, but that 'also'indicates that which has not yet been taken into account in such an

economy, what we might want to think of as the distinction between that which is thought to be *in* Europe and that which is *of* Europe.[25]

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If space is in play, then so too is time. Derrida makes much of 'today'in *The Other Heading*.[26] It is a matter of a certain presence, but a presence already marked by a futurity. Chance and danger come together in other Derrida texts under different names –opportunity and monstrosity, for example, in *Of Grammatology*–but it is frequently in order to call (up, on) a future that is not the predictable playing out of the already legible, always foreseen repetition (*futur*) but instead that unpredictable interruption that he calls in his later texts the 'to-come'(*l'à-venir*).

This notion of futurity is central to the first axiom of *The Other Heading*: 'a certain Europe does not yet exist', he tells us, asking 'Has it ever existed?'. The *time* of Europe is thus at stake in any attempt to define or comprehend its spaces. Europe, Derrida insists, is that which must be left if Europe is to be found, and the future of Europe is thus tied to a certain past, or at least to memory. If there is to be a truly 'new'Europe, however, it must not be over-determined by this past:

> The irruption of the new, the unicity of the other *today* should be awaited *as such* (but is the *as such*, the phenomenon, the being *as such* of the unique and of the other, ever possible?); it should be anticipated *as* the

[25]Derrida notes the centrality of the figure of the circle to European thinking on economy, as well as its Greek etymology in the idea of home (*oikos*). See *Given Time 1. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994). On the 'in' and the 'of', please see my 'In the Bitter Letter (A Rendition of *Othello*)', *Oxford Literary Review*, 34.1 (2012), 89-108.

[26] Strikingly, alongside the quotation from *The Other Heading*, Greig quotes Auden's 'Refugee Blues': 'But where shall we go today, my dear?/But where shall we go today?'

> unforeseeable, the *unanticipatable*, the non-masterable, non-identifiable, in short, as that of which one does not yet have a memory.[27]

Memory anticipates and guards against the return of 'the phantom of the worst', that embodiment of the 'new'that we have seen before, in another monstrous dream of a 'new order'for Europe. The tear in the fabric of Europe, that Europe of honesty, civilization and reason that is always a fabrication, may be a form of the 'new'come from the past, a haunting repetition that has been, we might say, pre-fabricated such that the aberration may come to look like the rule. Put in other terms, this may be another example of what Derrida calls auto-identification as a repetition of the self.

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In *Europe*, the emphasis on the complications of naming and identification is explicit, but this concern is something that runs through later Greig texts in ways that show where *Europe* itself was heading. If we expect the titles or the use of proper names in the texts of the plays to offer us a firm sense of their relation to place, then Greig suggests that such faith may be, let's say, misplaced. In an interview with Mark Fisher, Greig refers to the reception of his 2007 piece *Damascus*, and to the hostile response to the depiction of Damascus by some of its inhabitants. Greig suggests that the objections to the characterization of the city in the play are rooted in a notion of referentiality that is not in play:

[27]Derrida, *The Other Heading,* p. 18/*L'autre cap,* p. 23.

> For me, the word 'Damascus'in the play means 'writing'. If you go through the play and replace 'Damascus'with the word 'writing', there are only about two examples where the substitution doesn't absolutely work. *Damascus* is as much an abstract play as *San Diego*.[28]

Substitution and abstraction are earthed in the name's place in the imaginary. While it is not possible to pursue this thread to its end, Greig's suggestion can be tested in a couple of examples. A few lines in to *Damascus*, for example, Zakaria the hotel receptionist and porter, asks Paul: 'You are in Damascus before?'[29] In Derrida's terms, this is the moment of hospitality, that opening to a welcome that is also a soft interrogation: Are you a stranger? Have you been to this place before? Do you understand where you are? Paul's 'No'prompts an opening and locates him as an outsider.

The effect of substituting the name with the word 'writing'is striking. The question now becomes: 'You are in writing before?'It is as if Zakaria is asking whether Paul is a figure from the imagination, a known fiction. In this rewritten context, the 'No'resonates wholly differently, making a claim for identity that – even assuming we accept the claim –still makes us wonder about the status of the character with which we are presented.

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[28]Greig, 'Interview: Suspect Cultures and Home Truths', in *Cosmotopia: Transnational Identities in David Greig's Theatre*, eds. Anja Müller and Clare Wallace (Prague: Litteraria Pragensia, 2011), p. 22. For Greig's initial reflections on the reception of his play, see the diary extracts in M*odern British Playwriting 2000-2009: Voices, Documents, New Interpretations*, ed. Dan Rebellato (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 270-85.

[29]David Greig, *Damascus* (London: Faber and Faber, 2007), p. 11.

Damascus heads in the direction of Damascus, but perhaps never arrives. A title, says Derrida, is always a heading.[30] What the notion of 'heading'stresses is direction, a tendency, a goal or end perhaps (*telos*), rather than a location. This sense of heading as goal is one towards which Greig feels a certain ambivalence. In his essay on 'Rough Theatre', he says:

> We are encouraged to dream of destinations. Our imagination begins to place us in cities to which easyJet has opened up a new route. We take photographs of ourselves at the destination. The destination becomes a part of our self-description so that we can say 'Prague is my favourite city'just as easily as we might say 'Nirvana is my favourite band'.[31]

'The destination becomes a part of our self-description': there is a movement of identification, of interiorization or appropriation, but a movement that is in fact a partition rather than a fusion or assimilation. In this identification, it is not clear which term becomes the frame for the other: is it that the destination is related to the self, that is, that it becomes –through the work of the imagination –an aspect of a self-image that is itself imaginary, or is it that the imagined self is reconfigured to become an aspect of the imagined destination? The two projected images that these two possibilities offer merge in the photograph at the destination, literalizing an image that has already been present to the imagination in the dream of travel. Adele voices this in *Europe*, as she talks to Katia about Budapest: 'I've read about it, imagined it, I've been there so often in my head. I think I'd recognise it. I think I'd remember it'(36-7). Memory becomes the recalling of an imagined rather than a material reality. While we might be tempted to think dialectically, and to suggest that these two structures amount to the same

[30]Derrida, *The Other Heading,* p. 13.
[31] Greig, 'Rough Theatre', p. 214.

thing, the economies of desire, the emotional investments in these dreams of displacement, might propose a negative dialectic. In other words, however similar the structures of these identifications may appear to be, they will be experienced differently. As Zaroulia suggests, Greig is frequently concerned to examine issues of identity through differences of feeling rather than of logic.[32]

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What runs alongside concern for stable identity –the desire to patrol the borders, maintain the purity of countries, peoples, categories, identifying and identifying with, locating the stranger, the dead, the sacrifice or scapegoat, but also the friend, the father, mother, child, the home, in that economy that finds itself not in the tragedy of an Oedipus or a Hamlet but in the odyssey of a Ulysses, that circle that always seeks to close upon itself in the return home –is the question of the example, of the exemplary and the structure of exemplarity. Here the 'name'is drawn into another economy, one that always threatens to draw the name from its singularity into a field of generalizability and of substitution.

This is the logic of translation and transformation that Greig proposes for Damascus and *Damascus*. Can this logic be contained, then? What word would replace the name 'San Diego', for example? Or'Ramallah'? Or 'Dunsinane'? Or 'Europe'? In the suggestion that naming has a function beyond the most obviously referential, and that its affective charge may *mean* more than its materiality, Greig extends a fascinating invitation to rewrite his plays, to take a proper noun and translate it into an abstract noun. But what this might reveal is the abstract nature

[32] Zaroulia in Wallace p. 192.

of even the most apparently rooted of proper nouns, here and elsewhere; in other words, the properness of the proper is revealed as improper, and any claim to property over such a noun –that it belongs to a person or people, that any person or people belongs to it –is pushed towards what Derrida has in several places called exappropriation, an experience of the loss of that which was never possessed, but a 'loss'which is none the less felt as a loss. We find ourselves once more with feeling.

What Derrida presents in *The Other Heading* undercuts any unreflective sense of identity, particularly cultural identity. As he puts it:

> *what is proper to a culture is to not be identical to itself*. Not to not have an identity, but not to be able to identify itself, to be able to say 'me'or 'we'; to be able to take the form of a subject only in the non-identity to itself or, if you prefer, only in the difference *with itself* [*avec soi*]. There is no culture or cultural identity without this difference *with itself* […] there is no self-relation, no relation to oneself [*rapport àsoi*], no identification with oneself, without culture, but a culture of oneself *as* a culture *of* the other, a culture of the double genitive and of the *difference to oneself*.[33]

This has been echoed in some of Greig's statements about Scottish independence: one of the great virtues of an independent Scotland, he has suggested, is that it would allow Scots to spend less time and effort defining Scottish cultural identity and more time being Scottish, opening up precisely the range of possibilities to which the term 'Scottish'might then be attached. But this is felt as a responsibility as much as a liberation, and it is not confined to those who would self-identify as Scots.

If Greig's plays often seem to stress economies of emotion and attachment, Derrida's conclusion in *The Other Heading* also takes us towards feeling. Having

[33]Derrida, *The Other Heading,* pp. 9-10/*L'autre cap,* pp. 16-17.

insisted that even if his cultural identity is European, it is not *only* European, Derrida proposes:

> If, to conclude, I declared that I feel [*je me sens*] European *among other things*, would this be, in this very declaration, to be more or less European? Both, no doubt. Let the consequences be drawn from this. It is up to the others [*Aux autres*], in any case, and up to me *among them*, to decide.[34]

To be European is to feel oneself to be more, less and other than European, as well as European. The consequences of this are for 'the others'to decide: but who are the others here? Derrida does not limit his comment to others who feel themselves to be more or less European, but neither does he refer to those who would feel themselves to be other-than-Europeans. What his text enacts is a disabling of the distinction between the two such that we could never say that we were not 'among them', and it is this sense of a shared world –however uncomfortable and violent that sharing may be –that marks David Greig's other heading.

[34]Derrida, *The Other Heading*, p. 83/*L'Autre cap*, pp. 80-81.