

T.C.
ISTANBUL UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
WESTERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

MASTER'S THESIS

**NEOLIBERALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM IN
SCOTTISH GLOBALISATION PLAYS: A STUDY
OF DAVID GREIG'S VICTORIA AND KIERAN
HURLEY'S RANTIN**

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İSTANBUL - 2025

ABSTRACT

NEOLIBERALISM AND COSMOPOLITANISM IN SCOTTISH GLOBALISATION PLAYS: A STUDY OF DAVID GREIG'S **VICTORIA** AND KIERAN HURLEY'S **RANTIN** GÜLPERİ AKCAN

This study examines the impact of globalisation on theatrical performance and production, drawing on the theories of Veronica Rodriguez and Dan Rebellato. Rodriguez's idea of "globalisation plays" serves as a basis for analyzing how plays reflect the complex effects of globalisation on society, identity, culture, and politics while critiquing neoliberalism and promoting ethical foundations for new global communities.

Focusing on David Greig's **Victoria** (2000) and Kieran Hurley's **Rantin** (2013), the analysis highlights themes of class struggle, cultural alienation, and predatory capitalism. Both playwrights depict the dehumanizing effects of neoliberalism through the characterisation of corporate figures and different classes. They explore issues like global terror and environmental disruption, embodying Zygmunt Bauman's concept of *negative globalisation* as a manifestation of their critique of globalisation.

The plays reject rigid ethnic characterisation, instead adopting a post-structuralist and postmodern view of identity that challenges neoliberal homogenisation and dehumanization. In **Victoria**, the central character's self-fragmentation arises from her experiences with nature, gender, and belonging. In contrast, **Rantin** illustrates multi-ethnic society and postmodern plurality as characters navigate transitions amid societal biases.

As a result of globalisation, mobility is crucial for identity formation, allowing for nuanced discussions on nationalism and belonging. The plays portray characters navigating cross-border spaces, prompting audiences to reflect on contemporary societal issues related to identity and collectiveness. Furthermore, new stereotypes,

including tourists, corporate individuals, and refugees, highlight the outlook of a globalised nation.

Aerial views in the plays mirror global connectivity. The spatial aspects of both plays are profoundly emphasized to mirror the transformation of localities and the flow of capital under globalism and neoliberalism. Moreover, as an impactful medium, the media representation of globalisation reflects ideological changes in the plays.

Ultimately, the study reveals various cosmopolitan frameworks in the plays, such as environmental activism and working-class struggles. The analysis showcases how the playwrights use aesthetic and formal innovations to cultivate a sense of community, highlighting theatre's potential to adapt to and promote cosmopolitan ideals.

Keywords: Scottish Theatre, Globalisation Plays, Globalisation Theory, Neoliberalism, Cosmopolitanism, Multiculturalism, Post-Structuralist Identity, Post-Nationalist Identity, Postmodern Identity, English Literature.

ÖZ

İSKOÇ KÜRESELLEŞME OYUNLARINDA NEOLİBERALİZM VE KOZMOPOLİTANİZM: DAVID GREİG'İN VİCTORİA VE KIERAN HURLEY'NİN RANTİN OYUNLARI ÜZERİNE BİR İNCELEME GÜLPERİ AKCAN

Bu çalışma, küreselleşmenin tiyatro performansı ve prodüksiyonu üzerindeki etkisini Veronica Rodriguez ve Dan Rebellato'nun teorilerinden yararlanarak incelemektedir. Rodriguez'in "küreselleşme oyunları" kavramı, oyunların küreselleşmenin toplum, kimlik, kültür ve politika üzerindeki karmaşık etkilerini nasıl yansıttığını analiz etmek için bir temel oluştururken, neoliberalizme yönelik eleştiriler içermekte ve yeni küresel topluluklar için etik temelleri teşvik etmektedir.

Çalışma, David Greig'in **Victoria** (2000) ve Kieran Hurley'nin **Rantin** (2013) oyunlarına odaklanarak sınıf mücadelesi, kültürel yabancılaşma ve yırtıcı kapitalizm temalarını vurgulamaktadır. Her iki oyun yazarı da neoliberalizmin insanlık dışı etkilerini, şirket figürleri ve farklı sınıfların tasvirleri aracılığıyla ortaya koymaktadır. Oyunlar, küresel terör ve çevresel tahribat gibi konuları ele alarak, Zygmunt Bauman'ın *negatif küreselleşme* kavramını küreselleşme eleştirilerinin bir yansıması olarak somutlaştırmaktadır.

Bu oyunlar, katı etnik kimlikleri reddederek, neoliberal aynılaşma ve insanlık dışılaştırmaya meydan okuyan post-yapısalcı ve postmodern bir kimlik anlayışını benimsemektedir. **Victoria** oyununda, ana karakterin kimliğinin parçalanması, doğa, cinsiyet ve aidiyet ile ilgili deneyimlerinden kaynaklanırken, **Rantin** çok etnik yapıları bir toplumu ve postmodern çoğulculuğu tasvir eder; karakterler, toplumsal önyargılar içinde geçişler yaparak kimliklerini inşa etmeye çalışırlar.

Küreselleşmenin bir sonucu olarak hareketlilik, kimlik oluşumu açısından önem taşımakta ve milliyetçilik ile aidiyet üzerine daha derin tartışmalara olanak tanımaktadır. Oyunlar, sınır ötesi alanlarda hareket eden karakterler aracılığıyla izleyicileri, kimlik ve kolektif aidiyetle ilgili çağdaş toplumsal sorunlar üzerine

düşünmeye teşvik etmektedir. Ayrıca turistler, kurumsal bireyler ve mülteciler gibi yeni karakterlerin sahnede temsili, küreselleşmiş bir ulusu vurgulamaktadır.

Oyunlardaki *kuşbakışı sahneler*, küresel bağlantısallığı ön plana çıkarmaktadır. Her iki oyunun da mekânsal yönleri, küreselleşme ve neoliberalizm altında yerelliklerin dönüşümünü ve sermaye akışını yansıtacak şekilde güçlü bir şekilde vurgulanmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, küreselleşmenin medya temsili, yerel bağlamlardaki ideolojik değişimleri ortaya koymaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, oyunlarda çevreci aktivizm ve işçi sınıfı mücadeleleri gibi çeşitli kozmopolit çerçeveleri açığa çıkarmaktadır. Analiz, küreselleşme oyun yazarlarının estetik ve biçimsel yenilikler kullanarak tiyatro izleyicilerine küresel bir topluluk hissi aktarmaya ve tiyatronun kozmopolit ideallere uyum sağlama ve onları teşvik etme potansiyelini vurguladığını göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İskoç Tiyatrosu, Küreselleşme Oyunları, Küreselleşme Teorisi, Neoliberalizm, Kozmopolitanizm, Çokkültürcülük, Postyapısalcı Kimlik, Postnasyonel Kimlik, Postmodern Kimlik, İngiliz Edebiyatı.

PREFACE

This study closely analyses David Greig's **Victoria** and Kieran Hurley's **Rantin**, examining the effects of globalisation on economics, politics, cultures, society and identity in these plays. I aim to highlight societal change, the tension between tradition and modernity, as well as the relationship between local and global places in these Scottish works. In their effort to preserve a distinctive national identity, Scots often define themselves in opposition to British policies and capitalism, leading to a broader critique of neoliberalism. The analysis of characterisation and identity in these plays fosters a divergence from national and ethnic representations towards postmodern and poststructuralist identity theories. This study illustrates how theatrical trends of globalisation plays demonstrate innovation in formal, aesthetic and narrative styles, ultimately embodying cosmopolitan perspectives and frameworks on stage.

Writing this thesis has reshaped my worldview, particularly in relation to globalisation's impact on contemporary politics, economics, and world problems. This process coincided with my visa application, navigating consulates, leaving my home country, and beginning a new life in France in pursuit of growth, liberation and innovation. Seeing my confusion on national belonging, societal change, class privilege, and tradition in these playwrights' long-term agenda has resonated with me, proving a beyond-border bond among people. David Greig's **Victoria** has transported me to the memories of my mother's village, my uncles' socialist ideals, and the protests against hydroelectric projects in the region. It underscores the shared struggles of local farming communities facing neoliberalism and globalisation here and there.

Victoria's sense of displacement, pilgrimage and stagnation mirrored my own journey - leaving people and places behind, moving across houses, neighbourhoods, cities, and countries in search of a home during my master's studies. Towards the completion of my writing, Donald Trump's second election victory in the U.S. and the war in Gaza intensified my engagement with the themes explored in Kieran Hurley's **Rantin**. This kind of playwriting, without a doubt, fosters a cosmopolitan experience for everyone involved - from the playwright and audience to the researcher. It has

transformed my writing into something deeply personal, meaningful, and enriching, for which I am profoundly grateful.

I would like to express my gratitude to my brother, Assist. Prof. Kadir Berk who has advised me throughout my academic journey since the first day of the school when I was seven. I also want to thank his wonderful wife, my best friend, Inst. Nurten Çelikkol Berk for her endless support and encouragement. I could not have accomplished this without them.

With great admiration, I would like to extend my utmost respect to my seniors for their leadership - Assoc. Prof. Fatma Aylin Akın, Assist. Prof. İmren Yelmiş, Assist. Prof. Jeffrey Howlett Winslow, Assist. Prof. Mohsen Muhammad Liyakat – and to all my lecturers from Hacettepe and Istanbul University for their unwavering support. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Prof. Clifford Werner Endres, who taught me the importance of tradition and history that can easily be forgotten, systematically eroded and carelessly destroyed. I will always cherish the time we spent at his historic house in Fener last year. I am especially obliged to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Arpine Mızıkyan, for her support, kindness, and help in completing this work.

I am deeply indebted to my friend Paul Bora Akcan, my *finanseur*, cook, and international book distributor, for supporting me in every possible way. Finally, I would also like to express my affection and love for Panda, Lilo, and Soleil, the cats of our home. As reminders of beautiful and wild nature from the confines of my room, they have always been ready for hugs and communication in their peculiar ways.

GÜLPERİ AKCAN

İstanbul, 2025

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
ABSTRACT	ii
ÖZ	iv
PREFACE	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
1. THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK	6
2. IN THE FACE OF CHANGE: THE CLASH OF GLOBALISATION AND LOCALITY IN DAVID GREIG'S VICTORIA	22
3. THE MUSIC OF OUR NATION AND DIFFERENCE: COSMOPOLITANISM AND NEOLIBERALISM IN KIERAN HURLEY'S RANTIN	
3.1. ETHNOSCapes, DETERRITORIALIZATION, NEOLIBERALISM AND IDENTITY IN KIERAN HURLEY'S RANTIN	60
3.2. KIERAN HURLEY'S REINTERPRETION OF THE CEILIDH PLAY AS COSMOPOLITAN BARDISM.....	87
CONCLUSION	96
BIBLIOGRAPHY	101

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines two contemporary Scottish theatrical works: David Greig's **Victoria** (2000) and Kieran Hurley's **Rantin** (2013). These plays serve as critical reflections on the complexities of globalisation and neoliberalism, illustrating how these forces reshape societal identities and lay the foundation for possible future communities. Reflecting their anti-globalisation stance, both plays portray post-structuralist and postmodern plurality in characterisation and narration. Employing innovative aesthetic and political forms, both works exemplify what Dan Rebellato and Veronica Rodriguez term "globalisation plays."¹ The playwrights critique the globalisation process, aligning with anti-globalisation perspectives, and reflect globalised societies and spatiality, offering their imaginings of new globally aware communities.

While globalisation plays analyse globalisation theories on stage, they simultaneously introduce their own theatrical conceptualisation. This analysis draws on key perspectives, including Zygmunt Bauman's critique of negative globalisation and Marxist theories on global, environmental, and social inequality, emphasising power struggles and class dynamics. Diverging from nationalist and fully-aware individuals, globalisation plays presents characters in post-structuralist fragmentation and postmodern plurality that will be analysed through the plays. Additionally, the plays incorporate new theatrical aesthetics, such as media representations and *aerial views*, which enhance their narrative and thematic depth. Through their idealistic visions of community and collectivity, **Victoria** and **Rantin** embody a cosmopolitan hope articulated through the concepts of *porous skin* and Marta Segarra's idea of *transcorporeality*.²

¹ Veronica Rodriguez. **David Greig's Holed Theatre: Globalisation, Ethics and the Spectator**, Canterbury, Palgrave Macmillan, 2019, p. 44.

² This framework is selectively driven from **David Greig's Holed Theatre: Globalisation, Ethics and the Spectator** by Veronica Rodriguez. The text offers a thorough argument that can be consulted for further apprehension of the terms, and the philosophical and ethical background of globalisation plays.

Theatrical analysis of these concepts reveals how globalisation has transformed the very fabric of theatrical forms, highlighting its profound impact on society, culture, identity, and ideology. Ultimately, this study contends that theatre emerges as a vital space for interrogating the implications of global interconnectedness, critiquing existing power structures, and envisioning alternative futures.

Globalisation is a frequently debated term in political and academic discourse, often understood in two distinct ways: as an inevitable evolutionary stage of world politics and economics or as a system that perpetuates inequality and threatens traditional societies. Manfred Steger encapsulates this complexity by defining globalisation as “a process, a condition, a system, a force, and an age.” He introduces the term “globality” to describe the interconnected social conditions that increasingly diminish the relevance of national borders.³ Suitably, globalisation, characterised as an “uneven” process, intensifies interdependence and integration—a phenomenon sometimes referred to as the “liquefaction of borders.”⁴ Given globalisation's dual nature, playwrights have explored anti-globalisation themes within their works.

Zygmunt Bauman's concept of *negative globalisation* sheds light on the sudden transformations, uncertainty, and fear that arise from this global shift. Many plays depict pervasive anxiety due to the weakening power of nation-states and the uncertainty surrounding borders, gathered by environmental degradation, alienation, and xenophobia exacerbated by neoliberal policies. In **Victoria**, characters struggle with the fear of potential airstrikes on the eve of World War II, while in **Rantin**, this fear manifests in nuclear threats and rising xenophobia. Both plays explore the characters' challenges to adapt to rapid societal changes, highlighting their difficulty in assessing risks and understanding their evolving world.

Since the 1970s, neoliberalism has emerged as a dominant economic model, reshaping global monetary policy by promoting free markets and trade while emphasizing entrepreneurship and self-interest.⁵ This shift transformed “state forms

³ Manfred B. Steger, **Globalization: A Very Short Introduction**. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2009, p.8.

⁴ **Ibid.**, *passim*.

⁵ David Harvey, **A Brief History of Neoliberalism**. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007,

and international relations,” largely through supranational institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.⁶ Rooted in Adam Smith’s ideas of free-market competition, neoliberalism has faced criticism for its unchecked, often hypocritical nature, particularly during the presidencies of Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan.⁷ The ideology David Greig and Kieran Hurley argue, fosters rampant consumerism and competitive individualism while undermining equitable income opportunities and humanitarian values.

Hence both **Victoria** and **Rantin** offer a sharp critique of neoliberalism, focusing on themes such as class inequality, the erosion of social solidarity, industrial violence, cutthroat competition, and class activism. These plays challenge the notion that entrepreneurial spirit and private enterprise ensure prosperity for both individuals and nations. Instead, they expose neoliberalism’s imperialist and totalitarian roots, often associated with American ideals.

The liquefaction of borders, facilitated by global flows and supranational institutions, signifies a decline in the power of nation-states. Marko Ampuja notes that “global flows of finance, ecological crises, terrorism, culture, and communication” do not respect territorial borders, contributing to this phenomenon.⁸ This shift fosters a transition from nationalism toward pluralism and hybridity in identity, reflecting the weakening influence of traditional nation-states.⁹ Although nationalism has served as a liberatory force against colonialism and exploitation through solidarity and the desire for sovereignty as Gandhi’s salt march, modern nationalism can obtain a darker, violent, and discriminative ground based on terrorism and national radicalism.¹⁰ Post-nationalist identity theories have emerged in response to these complexities. In an increasingly multicultural world marked by existential alienation, postmodern

pp.1-2.

⁶ **Ibid.**, pp.9-10.

⁷ Fred Block, “Foreword,” **The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times**, by Kieran Polanyi, Boston, Beacon, 1957, p.xviii.

⁸ Marko Ampuja, **Theorizing Globalisation: A Critique of Mediatization of Social Theory**, Boston, Brill, 2014, p.4.

⁹ **Ibid.**, pp.5-35.

¹⁰ Paul W. James, **Globalism, Nationalism, Tribalism: Bringing Theory Back in**, London, Sage, 2006, pp.296-297.

plurality and post-structuralist fragmentation resist both neoliberal totalitarianism and nationalist discrimination.

Globalisation plays reflect this transformation through themes of mobility, migration, and cultural hybridity. In **Victoria** and **Rantin**, characters are depicted in constant motion, crossing borders and cultures. These works also explore how media technologies—television, radio, and newspapers—shape ideologies and individual identities. **Rantin** further examines the role of consumer data in dehumanisation and popular cinema in identity construction, a perspective aligned with Arjun Appadurai's theories on the cultural dimensions of globalisation. His theories enlighten the re-configuration of urban local spaces with technology and transnationalism signifying the weakening power of nation-states, globalisation and the media's influence on these.

The theatre has increasingly become a space for exploring cosmopolitanism as both an anti-globalisation stance and an ethical approach to understanding the "other." This study analyses cosmopolitan themes in **Victoria** and **Rantin** through concepts such as *transcorporeality* and *porous skin*, offering diverse perspectives on the emergence of a global collective consciousness.

As in Wajdi Mouawad's **Sister**, which examines linguistic cosmopolitanism, this study investigates *ecological* and *aesthetic cosmopolitanism* in these plays, bringing a fresh perspective to theatre studies. The multilayered structures of the plays contrast with uniform narratives, allowing for the staging of diverse perspectives. For instance, bearing Ceilidh elements such as music, Kieran Hurley constructs a social ritual that counters the alienating effects of neoliberalism in **Rantin**. With the use of storytelling and traditional elements, the play demonstrates an *aesthetic cosmopolitanism* highlighting a technically innovative approach to the theatrical performance. On the other hand, David Greig hints the common ancestry and global collective based on ecocritical terms in **Victoria**. The focus on *material entanglement*, *geological time* and spiritualism, signifies how bodies are connected to their surrounding natural elements and each other. Combining this with the environmentalist protest and media advocacy, the play visualizes a future, leading the

environmental crisis to a politically motivated global community under *ecological cosmopolitanism*.

Though set in specific locales, these plays resonate with universal themes. By rejecting the region-specific narratives traditionally found in the state-of-nation plays, globalisation plays reflect issues relevant across various global contexts. Kieran Hurley exemplifies international sensitivity toward human ethics in **Rantin**, referencing the Palestinian War and critiquing Donald Trump's capitalist identity. For instance, while **Victoria** portrays the struggles of a local agricultural community in the West Scottish Highlands, it also mirrors the challenges faced by agricultural communities worldwide, reinforcing the playwrights' identification as internationalists.

In conclusion, **Victoria** and **Rantin** illustrate globalisation's far-reaching effects on urban and rural communities. This thesis highlights how Greig's and Hurley's works engage with globalisation, neoliberalism, and identity, reflecting the complexities of a globalised society. By employing modern theatrical techniques and addressing dominant social issues, these plays contribute significantly to ongoing conversations about globalisation and its impact on individuals and communities. The next chapter will provide a theoretical and historical framework for understanding globalisation plays and their related concepts.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Ric Knowles in **Theatre & Interculturalism** and Dan Rebellato in **Theatre and Globalization** historically mark the relationship between globalisation and theatre, dating back to Antonin Artaud's visit to the Paris Exhibition of Colonial Exposition.¹¹ Antonin Artaud's confrontation with Balinese theatre at the time, according to Rebellato, is "one of the most celebrated and controversial encounters in modern European theatre" and "an instance of theatrical 'interculturalism'".¹² Likewise, Rebellato points out mega-musicals such as **Cats** and labels them Mc-theatre as an outcome of the globalisation of theatre.¹³ Writers acquire international recognition, and corporations finance plays. Furthermore, the playwrights exhibit cosmopolitan worldviews and ethical concerns about war and inequality, disregarding where they happen.

In **David Greig's Holed Theatre: Globalisation, Ethics and the Spectator**, Veronica Rodriguez theorises the forms of aesthetics and politics that emerged in David Greig's theatre as a response to the new global world. Drawing from Dan Rebellato's article, "From the State of the Nation to Globalization: Shifting Political Agendas in Contemporary British Playwriting," she formulates the term globalisation plays that underscore an analysis of globalisation theories on stage. In her study of Greig's eight plays, she scrutinises the spatial concepts as well as nationalism, multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, post-nationalism, and identity. Building on her theoretical framework, this chapter presents the ideas and arguments that globalisation plays encapsulate.

Veronica Rodriguez points out spatial elements in Greig's plays, such as *aerial views* of planes, astronauts, and pilots and "structures that suggest crossing and

¹¹ Rick Knowles. **Theatre and Interculturalism**, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p.12. and Dan Rebellato. **Theatre and Globalisation**, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, p.7.

¹² Rebellato, **op. cit.**, p.3.

¹³ **Ibid.**, pp.39-40.

interconnecting,” such as causeways and bridges.¹⁴ These representations function to allude to the connection of localities to the international context or greater forces of neoliberalism and world politics. Both David Greig and Kieran Hurley include *aerial views* (perspective from above) and other transports. By doing so, they specify the global situation and individuals’ networked lives, offering spatial dialectics within the “intimate connection between sky and ground”.¹⁵ As narrative devices, depictions of transport and *aerial views* evince diasporic movements, transnational bonds, the privileged status of some groups, and the flow of global capital.

In this context, globalisation plays reflect the reorganization of space according to global trends and ideological orientations. In this sense, **Victoria** narrates the transformation of a community in the West Scottish Highlands over three generations, revealing its relationship with geography and its reactions to changing ideologies. Initially local and isolated, this community undergoes significant changes with the rise of globalisation. The play showcases spatial changes through scenes set in three different periods of the 20th century: traditional ceilidh homes are replaced by bars and municipal buildings, symbolizing the erasure of local culture and the rise of the welfare state. The mountain represents the dominance of neoliberalism in the region—shaping the lives and psychology of the people—being overtaken by mining activities.

Suitably, in terms of globalisation plays, the place is of peculiar substance considering the flow of global capital.¹⁶ Just like the social organizations of tribes, urbanisation and capitalism have divergently structured time and place. Furthermore, David Harvey proposes that “understanding the spatio-temporal rhythms of capital accumulation” is substantial to understanding global climate change.¹⁷ Suitably, the Marxist approach to space is practical to shed light on the deficient policies of neoliberalism that overlook other space temporalities.¹⁸ In **Victoria**, the body of the

¹⁴ Rodriguez, **David**, pp.12-13.

¹⁵ **Ibid.**, p.17.

¹⁶ David Harvey builds his argument on three concepts: *absolute space*, *relative space* and *relational space* in “Space as a Keyword” from **Spaces of Global Capitalism: A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development**. Although this study does not benefit from these terms, Veronica Rodriguez includes Harvey’s theories to the analysis of globalisation plays.

¹⁷ **Ibid.**, pp.95-96.

mountain, the mining procedure manifests the spatio-temporal aspect of global capital. The representations of two capitalist individuals, Donald Trump and Kenny, exhibit the same idea in **Rantin**. They shed light on the scope of internationalist ventures of capitalist entrepreneurs.

Veronica Rodriguez expands on Zygmunt Bauman's idea of *negative globalisation* through her analysis of globalisation plays.¹⁹ The playwrights acquire anti-globalisation stances for many reasons. Because of the liquefaction of borders and the decline of nation-states, the concept of 'risk' is argued as a collective or individual fear state caused by ambiguity and immense change. Thus, Bauman's *negative globalisation* points to a vast set of challenges. The fear and ambiguity in the globalised world cover xenophobia, global terror, war and global warming. Bauman explains the term as such:

If the idea of an 'open society' originally stood for the selfdetermination of a free society proud of its openness, it now brings to most minds the terrifying experience of heteronomous, vulnerable populations overwhelmed by forces they neither control nor truly understand, horrified by their own undefendability and obsessed with the security of their borders and of the population inside them [...] On a planet tightly wrapped in the web of human interdependence, there is nothing the *others* do or can do of which we may be sure that it won't affect *our* prospects, chances and dreams.²⁰

In terms of risk, which is a commonly argued term of globalisation theories, Zygmunt Bauman's definition of the term demonstrates the scope and unpredictability of the change. He also notes the fear of others and the crisis of trust in societies as a reaction to the unpredictability.²¹ This idea is prevalent in David Greig's **Victoria** and reverberates through the characters' psychology and expressions of confusion and lostness. Likewise, **Rantin** presents the characters while searching for their true selves.

¹⁹ Rodriguez, **David**, pp.35-38.

²⁰ Zygmunt Bauman, **Liquid Fear**, Cambridge, Polity, 2016, pp.96-98.

²¹ **Ibid.**, p.67.

This kind of criticism is labelled as anti-globalisation, marking the playwright's concern for globalisation's societal and cultural results. On the other hand, **Victoria** presents a communal struggle repeated in all three acts.

Another anti-globalisation theme in the plays is neoliberalism. They reflect the economic aspects of globalisation and free market policies. Since globalisation marks the vindication of capitalism as the world economic order, the scope of criticism entails the analysis of class, power struggle and inequality.

In Marxist terminology, class struggle “describes not only those moments of social conflict bursts out in the open, as in a strike, a riot, a rebellion, or a revolution, but also daily struggle between bosses and workers [...] – the whole complex of practices and distributions within a given social formation.”²² Hence, class struggles in the plays are argued not only based on corporate representations but also on the daily struggles of characters who strive to understand class relations, show industrial violence, take arms, fall into destitute and become misfits.

Dan Rebellato heeds Marx as the most noteworthy critic of globalisation, considering globalisation as the globally permeated scale of capitalism [...]”²³ In **Communist Manifesto**, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels speculate that “[t]he need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It must nestle everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere”.²⁴ Thus, its foundation can be traced back to the notions of Adam Smith's *laissez-faire* in economics, given that it is based on the ideas of free trade and the global market. Whereas David Greig debates the policies of neoliberalism and their effects on the local community and environment in the characterisation of Euan in **Victoria**, Kieran Hurley ventilates his criticism of neoliberalism through multiple references to Adam Smith's “invisible hand” and the analogies of “the broken watch” and “rat race” that will be analysed in the related chapter.

²² Barbara Foley, **Marxist Literary Criticism Today**, London, Pluto Press, 2019, p.14.

²³ Rebellato, **Theatre**, p.87.

²⁴ Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, **Communist Manifesto**, London, Pluto, 2008, p.38.

Thirdly, Manfred Steger historically underscores that neoliberalism is associated with “‘Washington Consensus’ – a set of economic institutions and policies alleged to have been designed by the United States to globalize American capitalism and its associated cultural system.” Hence, the role of US politics in globalisation and neoliberalism is fundamental. Accordingly, Steger regards “glorifying the individual self-interest” as one of the main principles of neoliberal economics for the pursuit of profit.²⁵ The plays elaborately criticize individual self-interest and capitalist individuals concerning Americanisation. Characters such as Euan and Kenny demonstrate highly Americanised personalities, expressing their individualistic and Machiavellian mindsets. Due to predatory competition and dehumanisation, these characters' dysfunctional relationships with their families offer a microcosmic representation of the loss of solidarity and fraternity.

Lastly, Wendy Brown also ascribes ubiquitous neoliberal policies to “the economization of everything and sphere” and the organisation of “everything” of individual sites.²⁶ In **Globalisation: Human Consequences**, Zygmunt Bauman relates globalisation to the idea of the Enlightenment and modernity. Bauman argues that: “[m]apping the space in a way easily legible for the state administration, yet going against the grain of local practices, depriving the ‘locals’ of their well-mastered means of orientation and therefore confusing, was thus the first strategic task of the modern space war”. He explains the idea of mapping as a control mechanism over space with an “impersonal eye”.²⁷ Similar to the concept of population that reduces people into numbers, mapping, as a means of neoliberalism, reduces the environment to geopolitical places and resources for exploitation in **Victoria**. The play thematises the transformation of humanitarian values and the definition of people. The economisation and degradation of humans are observed in **Rantín** through the arguments on users’ data, sets of economic terms and MacPherson’s despair.

²⁵ Manfred B. Steger, **Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction**, New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, p.x.

²⁶ Wendy Brown, **Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism’s Stealth Revolution**, New York, Zone Books, 2015, p.40.

²⁷ Zygmunt Bauman, **Globalisation: Human Consequences**, Oxford, Polity, 2005, pp.31-35.

Aside from the economic aspects of globalisation, the playwrights offer a critique of nationalism that has lost its power as an ideology from the 20th century onwards. Globalisation plays are an uptrend from agitprop and state-of-nation plays. Thus, they mostly revolve around a political methodology.²⁸ While the plays enlighten playwrights' involvement with international politics, they clearly diverge from nationalism to offer new identity politics. In this sense, contemporary Scottish playwrights David Greig and Kieran Hurley explicate their stances and worldviews as "internationalist" and "not-nationalist". David Greig, in his interview with Veronica Rodriguez, explains:

I'm not sure I'm a nationalist. I wouldn't like to use that word about myself. I think I'm an internationalist. I don't know what I am but I would like Scotland to be an independent country. But, to me, that's not in contradiction with a sense that the entire world is my society: it's my world, it's my country. In a world where I have friends in Damascus and Cairo, Hong Kong and Africa, when I'm watching television and I see what I see, and when my goods are made in China, how can I not think that those are scenes from my world?²⁹

Similarly, from an anti-Unionist perspective, Kieran Hurley, in **Aye Talks** about the Scottish Independence referendum in 2014, fervently states that compared to our commonness with ordinary people in Liverpool "We also have more in common with ordinary people in Dublin, Madrid, Chicago, Malmo, Auckland than we do with the Duke of Rothesay [...] what kind of genuine internationalism can be based upon the idea that the people you have most in common with of those you share a border with

²⁸ Dan Rebellato, "From the State of the Nation to Globalization: Shifting Political Agendas in Contemporary British Playwriting," **A Concise Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Drama**, Ed. by Nadine Holdsworth and Mary Luckhurst, Oxford, Blackwell, 2008, p.254.

²⁹ Rodriguez, "Zahir and Batin: An Interview with David Greig," **Contemporary Theatre Review**, Vol.XXVI, No:1, 2016, p.91.

[...] I am not a nationalist”.³⁰ Kieran Hurley's speech supports Scottish independence and demonstrates his beyond-border cosmopolitan views on belonging and class.

For the playwrights, the idea of identity and belonging exceeds the narrow and ethnic definitions of national identity politics. This notion reverberates through the playwrights' internationalist concerns or the global significance of their plays. To illustrate, Veronica Rodriguez exemplifies internationalism in Sarah Kane's **Blasted**, which treats the Bosnia and Herzegovina war as a sign of this rising sentiment and concern for global matters.³¹ In this sense, David Greig's **Victoria** carries the local farming community's challenges in the face of neoliberalism and change, underlining the macrocosmic value of these struggles shared by local communities. However, the play simultaneously criticises nationalism in the pub scene, representing the ideology of which meaning and value become redundant for communities. Ric Knowles associates internationalism with “cultural exchange” on stage.³² Likewise, Kieran Hurley seeks to negotiate national belonging by de-centring the meaning of it through the multiethnicity and plurality of the modern nation.

The playwrights also draw their pro-independence stance and internationalism from Scottish politics. Ben Jackson articulates that the Scottish nationalist movement does not prosecute an identity based on ethnicity or jingoism. Instead, Scottish representatives in Westminster position themselves as opposed to “the political agenda of the left in a neoliberal era” and against the “right-wing British state” supporting the capitalist market.³³ This counter-stance simultaneously includes nuclear disarmament and peace and is accrued by the support for European integration and a powerful, self-adequate economy in 2014.³⁴ In this sense, David Greig affirms, “The world drama of which I am part, it's Scottish, it's British, but it's also European.”³⁵ These

³⁰ Kieran Hurley, “Kieran Hurley: 25 Reasons for Yes,” Sept 2, 2023, (Online) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8zse_7on5I. Dec 10, 2024.

³¹ Rodriguez, **David**, p.20.

³² Knowles, **op. cit.**, p.3.

³³ Ben Jackson, **The Case for Scottish Independence: A History of Nationalist Political Thought in Modern Scotland**. Cambridge, Oxford University Press, 2020, pp.2-6.

³⁴ **Ibid.**, p.127.

³⁵ Rodriguez, “Zāhir,” p.91.

attachments beyond the peripheries of nationhood are the outcome of the globalisation process, which has illuminated the utopian possibilities of the age.

This divergence from nationalism results from the diaspora of people, multiculturalism and transitivity of borders. Although the diaspora and transculturalization of people date to pre-modern times, the unprecedented scale of mass migration is peculiar to our age. In almost 50 years, by 2015, the scale of global immigration has quadrupled to 250 million.³⁶ The role of globalisation is signified by the fact that EU politics can alter the cultural and ethnic outlook of its member states. T. M. Devine draws attention to the role of the EU in the quadrupling numbers of migration: “By 2017, the EU had grown to a total membership of twenty-eight nations, so allowing workers within the Common Travel Area to move more freely across much of the continent unimpeded by most controls. These migrant people not only include the citizens of European states but also refugees and asylum seekers who had originally moved to Europe from further afield.”³⁷ These diasporic movements and migrations undoubtedly have readjusted the demographic outlook of societies and subverted the logic of ethnic-nationalisms.

Accordingly, through the lenses of globalisation plays, the characterisation ranges from immigrants and tourists to corporate personalities and xenophobic people. The mobility epitomises the clash of dominant ideologies and how a cosmopolitan view of society has become possible with globalisation in **Victoria**. Doing so, both plays underscore the significance of mobility and the flow of people who carry their ideas and ideologies with them, causing change and tension between local and global or tradition and modernity. This representation signifies the cultural change underlining societal alienation and tension in modern societies.

Considering these arguments, Rodriguez points to the post-structuralist and postmodern employment of identity that surpasses fixed and linear identities, commonly portrayed in the state-of-nation plays. The fragmented and mobile representation of identity can essentially be founded on the ethical reasonings of the

³⁶ Thomas M. Devine, Angela McCarthy, editors. **New Scots: Scotland's Immigrant Communities since 1945**, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2018, p.2.

³⁷ Devine and MacCarthy, **New Scots**, p.4.

playwrights. As against “the dangers of globali[s]ation’s self-contained sense of self”³⁸ the characters show resistance against the self-righteous and ideologic foundations of capitalist individuals and racist personas administering power or superiority. Rodriguez signifies the liquidity of identity and states that:

In globalisation plays, one tends to find “non-specific characters” 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”, among other configurations. Sometimes past, present and future bleed into each other (time is holed), so that history appears as an awkwardly connected continuum.³⁹

In **Victoria**, the representation of the main character, who floats in three different periods of the twentieth century, not only elaborates on the rejection of a fixed character but also defines identity as interwoven with time and space with a spiritualist undertone. The characters—in Rebellato’s terms—are not “specific, fully realized individual characters” that stand “against a greater sense of history in motion” in globalisation plays.⁴⁰ Fittingly, Kieran Hurley’s characters are on the move, in between places, and they are identities in the making rather than complete and not static. To reject the economisation of subjectivities by neoliberal policies,⁴¹ this fluidity accentuates the fragmentary structure of the play.

Furthermore, Rodriguez underlines this characterisation opposes the “favouring of the individual as consumer, self-containment and by extension any enclosed 'category' or narrative.” Fittingly, whereas Hurley structures the elements of music and storytelling to reflect the postmodern plurality of voices in **Rantin**, these elements cooperate to underline the liveliness and transitiveness of movement and being. This kind of characterisation opposes to the singularity of meaning and

³⁸ Rodriguez, **David**, p.66.

³⁹ **Ibid.**, p.50.

⁴⁰ Rebellato, “From the State,” pp.246-248.

⁴¹ Rodriguez, **David**, p.46.

experience from a postmodern perspective. David Greig's characterisation of Victoria, reflects the complexity of being. The idea is represented in her psychology, her deep and perplexed relationship with the place and nature, showing the impact of these on her personality. In conclusion, these representations seek to restore the humane value to the characters on an individual level.

On a societal level, Kieran Hurley's multiculturalist representation demonstrates the transformation of localities and post-nationalism due to the sub-ethnic groups in **Rantin**. According to Will Kymlicka, one definition of *multiculturalism* is "[...] a wide range of non-ethnic social groups which have, for various reasons, been excluded or marginalised from the mainstream of society." The definition can be extended to the signification of "national and ethnic differences" in multinational and poly-ethnic societies such as Scotland.⁴² In the play, spatial narration is carried out through the postmodern representation of a multicultural nation; social division, differentiation, and diversification are staged through urban environments. Reflecting migration patterns, cities are portrayed as spaces where displaced communities group together and form microcultures. The play seeks to present the perspectives of these marginalised communities and represent them in the space of the Scottish nation.

To define the global situation, the representation of media alludes to interconnectivity as an outcome of fast communication in globalisation plays. To this end, Rodriguez analyses the means of global media and their possible indications in David Greig's plays since globalisation is an outcome of "the expansion and acceleration of our global transport and communication networks, the fairly widespread use of the Internet, the corporatisation of the media industry, the social media revolution and big data"⁴³ In **Victoria**, the means and usage of media transform through time to signify the change of local culture and the acceleration of interconnectivity. Hurley's references to user data and questioning of interconnectivity in the play serve as a signifier of globalisation and a reference to isolation in modern

⁴² Will Kymlicka, **Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights**, New York, Clarendon, 2003, p.18.

⁴³ Rodriguez, **David**, p.34.

societies. Due to the spread of images through popular media, Howard's distant nationalism epitomises the role of media in shaping identities while offering a critique of nationalism in the play. Conclusively, the devices reveal social change and the challenges of society and individuals.

In contrast to the cultural homogenisation encouraged by Americanisation, dehumanisation of predatory capitalism and erosion of social solidarity, these plays imagine new ways of forming communities. They explore how theatre can reconnect individuals in a fractured world by arguing ethics, empathy and collective experience.

Rebellato discussing Kantian ethics, argues that "[g]lobali[s]ation is driven by a hypothetical imperative: to make money" and this economic drive, he suggests, is why cosmopolitans take anti-globalisation stance.⁴⁴ He further explains that "[a] cosmopolitan ethical principle is founded in both community of beings, and in theatre audience we can have a sharp sense of being both ourselves and a part of larger unity."⁴⁵ Theatre, therefore, offers a unique space where individuals experience collective belonging. It creates a space where the self is expanded to greater collectives.

Dan Rebellato takes a strong stance, stating that "[...] cosmopolitanism is, in fact, a radical opponent of globalisation."⁴⁶ The idea of cosmopolitanism dates back as early as 1375 B.C., when the Greek term "cosmopolitan" referred to being a "citizen of the world"⁴⁷ Concerning globalisation, Ulrich Beck argues:

In the normative sense (of 'maxim'), cosmopolitanism means *recognition* of cultural otherness, both internally and externally. Differences are neither hierarchically ordered nor dissolved but are accepted as such, and even regarded positively. However, nowhere in the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century are such conditions anywhere near being accepted. But what can unite human beings of different skin colour, religion, nationality, location, pasts and futures if not recognition? The answer proposed by the theory of world risk society is: by the

⁴⁴ Rebellato, **Theatre**, pp.69-71.

⁴⁵ **Ibid.**, pp.72-75.

⁴⁶ **Ibid.**, p.68.

⁴⁷ Hugh Harris, "The Greek Origins of the Idea of Cosmopolitanism." **International Journal of Ethics**, Vol.XXXVIII, No:1, 1927, pp.1-8.

traumatic experiences of the enforced community of global risks that threaten everyone's existence.⁴⁸

Beck's analysis reveals how a new "civil culture of responsibility that transcends borders and conflicts" has emerged in the age of globalisation. Accordingly, new cosmopolitanism actively resists the negative effects of globalisation, such as xenophobia, marginalisation, declining solidarity under neoliberalism, and environmental destruction.⁴⁹ In **Victoria**, David Greig portrays protestors as symbols of politically engaged citizens. Meanwhile, in **Rantín**, Kieran Hurley refers to the Luddites and industrial violence, marking the workers are the same all around the world.

Michel Feher defines cosmopolitanism "calls for a dynamic of mutual transformation, not for a static respect for each other's integrity or a pledge to a universal notion of humanity."⁵⁰ Similarly, Claire Colebrook underlines that "[c]osmopolitanism is not the reduction of all difference to a single model of citizenship; it is, rather, an *Idea* of a polity—a gathering of bodies for discussion, decision and determination—that would not be that of this or that nation but of the cosmos."⁵¹ Through these perspectives, both playwrights construct a politically motivated cosmopolitan society in their works, with a focus on aesthetic and ecological dimensions.

Veronica Rodriguez introduces the idea of *transcorporeality* in globalisation plays as a way to illustrate this interconnection. Martha Segarra describes *transcorporeality* as a medium that "makes us transcend the limits of our individual body" and leads to "the abolition of the bodily limits of characters/actors, who become

⁴⁸ Ulrich Beck. **World at Risk**, Trans. by. Ciaran Cronin, Cambridge, Polity, 2008, p.56.

⁴⁹ **Ibid.**, p.57.

⁵⁰ Michel Feher, "The Schisms of '67: On Certain Restructings of the American Left, from the Civil Rights Movement to the Multiculturalist Constellation," **Blacks and Jews: Alliances and Arguments**, Ed. by. Paul Berman, New York, Delacorte Press, 1994, p.276.

⁵¹ Claire Colebrook, **Death of Post Human: Essays on Extinction, Vol. 1**. Ann Arbor, Open Humanities, 2014, p. 97.

permeable and easily penetrable.”⁵² In this way, theatre dissolves the boundaries between the self and the other.

To elaborate, a striking example of *transcorporeality* can be found in Wajdi Mouawad’s one-person play, **Sisters** which is a *mise-en-scene* of globalisation and language. Performed by Annick Bergeron, the protagonist Geneviève is a second-generation immigrant and a mediator in international conflicts. After attending a lawyers’ convention on language mediation, she checks into a voice-activated hotel room. The system only responds in English, leading to a crisis. She desperately wants to hear her mother tongue, French. Frustrated, she tears the hotel room down and vanishes under the bedframe. Later, an Arab woman, played by the same actress, arrives to assess the damage for an insurance company. The voice of the first character now echoes through the walls.

The play uses projected text on the wall, to merge the characters’ sentences of shared pain demonstrating how suffering transcends linguistic and cultural barriers. The enmeshed words touch upon the linguistic similarities of the two languages signifying further humanly connection beyond differences.

Consequently, this indicates that a bond of shared pain can exceed the linguistic and cultural barriers. The Arab girl mirrors the first character and vanishes.⁵³ Their out-of-body experience makes the audience question the integrity of different selves and bodies. The play suggests that *transcorporeality* is more than a theatrical device – it is a philosophical statement.⁵⁴ It asserts that identity is not fixed. It highlights the deeper connections between people beyond cultural, linguistic and national constructs.

⁵² Marta Segarra, **Teoría de los cuerpos agujereados**, Barcelona, Melusina, 2014, pp.90-97. The translation belongs to Veronica Rodriguez and is taken from **David Greig’s Holed Theatre: Globalisation, Ethics and the Spectator**.

⁵³ Wajdi Moawad. **Sisters**, Directed by Wajdi Moawad, Perform. by. Annick Bergeron, The Théâtre national de la Colline, 22 Nov 2023, Zorlu PSM Turkcell Platinum Stage, İstanbul.

⁵⁴ To explain the ethical ground of the term, Veronica Rodriguez introduces Jean Luc-Nancy’s term, *mondialisation*, in **David Greig’s Holed Theatre: Globalisation, Ethics and the Spectator**. Critics suggest the French word as an alternative to globalisation. Meaning “to form new worlds,” *mondialisation* contradicts globalisation’s anglophone roots, standardisation and ideologic totality. This argument is pursued by many other critics, such as Jacques Derrida.

Like Mouawad, both David Greig and Kieran Hurley explore encounters with ‘the other’ on ethical grounds. Suitably, environmental crisis is a key theme in **Victoria**. Saiz argues that the cosmopolitanism is essential in addressing global environmental risks. She suggests that globalisation has opened the way to “the realisation of a sustainable society” by enabling “to think and act globally and locally” through networks of communication.⁵⁵ In this sense, **Victoria** does not simply portray environmental awareness, it handles it, using media and transport as symbols of interconnected activism.

David Greig expresses cosmopolitanism in **Victoria** through an ecological lens, drawing on the concept of *material entanglement*. He combines ideas of interconnectedness with spiritualism, *geological time*, and psychology to highlight the deep environmental connection beyond bodies. The *material entanglement* appears a pre-determining property for characters. Moreover, it emphasizes the *porous skin* of characters, marking interconnectedness. In contrast, Hurley employs musicality in **Rantín** to emphasize the ritualistic and immersive aspects of performance. Music’s fluid nature, along with its interaction with the audience, conveys a sense of unity and what Rodriguez calls *porous skin* through a sonic environment in theatrical space. She explains:

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 and connection as well as vulnerability and injurability—as in cuts, wounds and scars or other signs or reminders of violence and/or opening.⁵⁶

By presenting bodies as *porous* invites audiences to see themselves as part of a broader collective. Dan Rebellato references to the discovery of “‘Ice Man’ a 5,300-year-old

⁵⁵ Angel V. Saiz, “Globalisation, Cosmopolitanism and Ecological Citizenship,” **Environmental Politics**, Vol.XIV, No:2, 2005, pp.163-164.

⁵⁶ Rodriguez, **David**, p.96.

mummified corpse found [...] in the mountains between Italy and Austria.” He describes it as a representation of humanity’s shared ancestry, emphasizing that “one of our common ancestors extend and bloom millions of branches and leaves to form the exact population of the world as we know.”⁵⁷ From this perspective, aesthetic elements of globalisation plays, such as *transcorporeality* and *porous skin* reflect the universal human connection between actors, audiences and characters.

Formally, David Greig employs *transcorporeality* through naming. Characters across different periods share the same name, emphasising their shared ancestry and deep connection to nature. Veronica Rodriguez highlights Greig’s holed playwriting for the utopian possibilities that might unfold.⁵⁸ She explains that: “A holed spectator is a spectator whose body intertwines with other bodies, worlds and their in-betweens.”⁵⁹ In this way, theatre’s *porous nature* allows it to create an emphatic sphere. In the same way, in **Rantin**, employs a blurred distinction between actors/actresses and performers of the band. Actors and actresses adopt the storyteller role, while another acts the character creating a *porous/ holed* acting that diminishes clear distinctions between agents on stage.

To conclude, drawing from Rebellato’s theories, Veronica Rodriguez analyses the effects of globalisation in David Greig’s plays, incorporating the concepts and philosophical arguments of David Harvey, Jean-Luc Nany and Zygmunt Bauman. According to Dan Rebellato and Veronica Rodriguez, globalisation plays include themes of poststructuralist, postmodern and cosmopolitan identity, innovative theatrical forms such as aerial perspectives, critiques of neoliberalism, and portrayals of psychological displacement. These plays portray characters constantly travelling, evolving, and struggling with feelings of rootlessness and connection.

Scottish playwrights David Greig and Kieran Hurley, working in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, can be linked to European Modernism, particularly its leftist Brechtian approach to audience engagement.⁶⁰ While they critique the consequences

⁵⁷ Rebellato, **Theatre**, p.65.

⁵⁸ Rodriguez, **David**, p.15.

⁵⁹ **Ibid.**, p.98.

⁶⁰ Mark Brown, **Modernism and Scottish Theatre since 1969: A Revolution on the Stage**,

of globalisation, their works also seek to rebuild social bonds. They invite audiences to embrace diversity and rethink the meaning of solidarity in an increasingly interconnected world.



CHAPTER ONE

IN THE FACE OF CHANGE: THE CLASH OF GLOBALISATION AND LOCALITY IN DAVID GREIG'S VICTORIA.

David Greig's **Victoria** explores the historical transformation of Scotland's Highlands through the lens of globalisation and shifting ideologies. Originally conceived as a trilogy, the play unfolds over three acts, each set in a different period—1936, 1974, and 1996—to trace the continuum of class struggle, capitalism, and environmental concerns. Greig presents globalisation as an economic, political, and cultural force shaping the Highlands' local identity, aligning **Victoria** with the characteristics of globalisation plays.

Each act of **Victoria** corresponds to major ideological shifts in Scotland: Act one (1936) explores pre-war ideologies of fascism and the lingering of feudalism, highlighting class structures in the Highlands. Act Two (1974) examines incipient neoliberalism as oil exploration and free-market policies reshape the region. Act Three (1996) depicts the collapse of previous ideologies, replaced by green and environmental movements in the face of dominant neoliberalism.⁶¹ Through this structure, Greig critiques how global capitalism has impacted local communities over the twentieth century, making **Victoria** a crucial case study in globalisation plays.

The play text starts with "Author's Note" through which David Greig narrates what motivated him to write **Victoria**. A part of his imagination is driven by his visit "to an island off the west coast" and his impressions of the local community are reflected by a local telephone directory that includes only around eighty names.⁶² The Highlands' isolation mirrors Bauman's idea that those trapped in local spaces are unable to partake in globalisation's economic benefits and have a say in life progress.

⁶¹ Peter Billingham, "Interview with David Greig," **At the Sharp End: Discovering the Work of Five Contemporary Dramatists**, London, Bloomsbury, 2007, p.86.

⁶² David Greig "Author's Note" **Victoria**, Berkshire, Methuen Drama, 2014, n.p.

Towards the nineteenth century, the land market in the period assisted in the praise of the Highlands' beauty and sports like stalking, followed by the expansion of deer forests. Especially, the western Highlands offered a distinctive solitariness for tourists, by making it a popular attraction⁶³ Act one introduces Lord Allan, and his elite circle of friends, depicted as enjoying their time with activities in the Highlands. It presents the aristocratic Allan family, local farmworkers, and servants in a rigid class hierarchy.⁶⁴ The other characters are Shona, a kitchen maid, Gavin, a gamekeeper, Euan and Callum, farmworkers. Suitably, these characters are depicted, while assisting the elites with deer stalking, sightseeing, cargo-unloading, and maintaining the house. Acted by the same actress, Victoria represents different characters in each act. First Victoria, as the minister's daughter, is disturbed throughout the act by her strong desire to escape from the place.

The play highlights generational change and shifting ideologies over time. Clare Wallace aptly notes:

Margaret's progressive modernism has paled into aristocratic conservatism. [...] It seems not; the dilapidated state of the property and her son Jimmy's libertarian attitude signal the end of such an era and its values. [...] [Oscar and Shona's] son Euan, in rejection of his father's politics, is individualist and capitalist, and is motivated solely by a desire to exploit a profit margin.⁶⁵

During her conversation with Lord Allan, Mrs Armitage hints at this transformation when she remarks, "One is bound to be surprised by the choices of one's children, Lord Allan. But if the world contains these surprising possibilities, what choice have the young but to unearth them?"⁶⁶ This foreshadowing indicates that change and self-discovery are integral to the narrative.

⁶³ Thomas M. Devine, **Clanship to Crofters' War: The Social Transformation of the Scottish Highlands**, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994, pp.78-81.

⁶⁴ Clare Wallace, "'Just History': Victoria," **The Theatre of David Greig**, London, Bloomsbury, 2013, pp.73-74.

⁶⁵ **Ibid.**, p.79.

⁶⁶ Greig, **Victoria**, p.11.

Contrasting Mrs Armitage's optimism, David, the Allan family's heir, David, embodies melancholy and nihilism mirroring the decline of traditional clan structures. David, during his journey to Germany, meets The Allans' family prospective bride, Margaret, a middle-class woman from Kent. The coming back of David with Margaret to the Highlands signifies the transformation; hence, the act is intentionally entitled as "The Bride". The younger, mobile characters introduce new ideologies, creating tensions that define the era. This signifies Greig's ideas on the nature of change. Margaret and David, representing continental modernity, bring external perspectives to the rural Highlands. This leaves the locally-bound Highlanders confused and threatened as the act unfolds.

Margaret's recollections underscore the shift: "[David] told me he was a modernist. And I said to him, if being a modernist means wanting things to become modern then I'm a modernist too."⁶⁷ Modernism and tradition, key elements in globalisation theories, drive conflict in the act. As Appadurai notes: "Whatever else the project of the Enlightenment may have created, it aspired to create persons who would, after the fact, have wished to have become modern. This self-fulfilling and self-justifying idea has provoked many criticisms and much resistance, in both theory and everyday life."⁶⁸ Margaret and David's views reflect the uneven distribution of these values.

One of the most striking effects of globalisation in **Victoria** is how mobility becomes a privilege of the elite, leaving commoners "fixed in their locality". Mobility and speed define class privilege and the pre-effects of globalisation. Zygmunt Bauman explains:

All of us are, willy-nilly, by design or by default, on the move. We are on the move even if, physically, we stay put: immobility is not a realistic option in a world of permanent change. And yet the effects of that new condition are radically unequal. Some of us become fully and truly 'global'; some are fixed in their 'locality' – a

⁶⁷ **Ibid.**, p.48.

⁶⁸ Arjun Appadurai, **Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalisation**, Minneapolis, Minnesota University Press, 1996. p.1.

predicament neither pleasurable nor endurable in the world in which the 'globals' set the tone and compose the rules of the life-game.
Being local in a globalized world is a sign of social deprivation and degradation.⁶⁹

Migration depicted as a struggle, is evident in Euan's dialogue: "**Euan** [...] Then at Leith there's a boat taking coal to Biarritz. We'll be given work on the boat [...] Then we'll join some others who'll be waiting and they'll take us over the mountains into Spain."⁷⁰ The second sentence illustrates his working-class struggle for economic migration. Commoners and servants, like farmworkers Oscar and Callum, remain rooted in place, unable to access the monopolised opportunities.

Euan and Victoria's escape from the Highlands suggests that, before globalisation, mobility was a privilege reserved for elites. Meanwhile, the first act presents elements of traditional Highland life, such as ceilidhs, stalking, and music, reinforcing the modernity-versus-tradition conflict. The Highlands, lacking Wi-Fi during this period, rely on travellers to introduce modern ideas. Margaret exemplifies this perspective: "A causeway, Lord Allan, I was telling the ladies how I intend to build a causeway across the lake. I was telling them about my plans to modernise the estate and the village."⁷¹ Her desire to "speed things up" reflects a colonialist and elitist outlook.

John Tomlinson suggests that "[a]cceleration rather than deceleration has been the constant leitmotiv of cultural modernity."⁷² Margaret's advocacy for building "electrification" in the village reinforces this statement: "I see no reason why we should left behind."⁷³ Throughout the play, 'outsiders' directly or indirectly criticise the locals for not understanding the spirit of the age. Hence the freedom of mobility is a class privilege. This notion underlines the monopoly of wealth and opportunity as a form of cultural imperialism. The elite's speed and freedom contrast with the land-bound cultures deemed 'ignorant' and 'backward'.

⁶⁹ Bauman, **Globalisation**, p.2.

⁷⁰ Greig, **Victoria**, p.42.

⁷¹ **Ibid.**, p.47.

⁷² John Tomlinson, **The Culture of Speed: The Coming of Immediacy**, Nottingham, Sage, 2007, p.1

⁷³ Greig, **Victoria**, p.57.

The play exposes how class hierarchies persist despite changing ideologies. In Act I, the Highlands are depicted as a rigidly stratified society, where social mobility is rare, and power remains concentrated in the hands of the elite. Beyond mobility, class distinctions emerge through Lord Allan's social circle, which includes a shipyard owner, a factory owner, and a venture capitalist. This analysis underscores a stratified society. A striking example of class distinction occurs when Oscar and Euan unload Margaret's belongings. Oscar, curious about foreign goods, remarks:

This smell is the smell of a woman who does not sweat [...]
You'll not get that smell of a kitchen maid's scents.
This is a smell that belongs to the aristocracy alone.⁷⁴

Here, bodily labour is a marker of class difference signified by sweat. This sensory and materialist representation such as silken linen and smell underscores the play's emphasis on class.

Euan further critiques inherited power, referencing historical oppression: "It was his grandfather cleared this estate. Half Canada's there because of Allans. [...] It's Allan schoolmasters that belt you for not speaking English [...] Allan ministers they put in the kirk."⁷⁵ His remarks on land clearances and cultural assimilation highlight systemic oppression. The play demonstrates that class-based distinctions remain entrenched, portraying neoliberalism as a continuation of cultural imperialism.

The first act also explores clanship's decline as a sign of ideological change. David, heir to the Allan estate, expresses disillusionment with his heritage. Induced by melancholia and stress, he philosophises and explains:

Three hundred years ago you would have admired me.
Three hundred years ago I would have been admirable.
You a clan and me your captain.
Look at us now.
This rotting jelly. [...]

⁷⁴ Greig, **Victoria**, p.12.

⁷⁵ **Ibid.**, pp.40-41.

I am the last damaged specimen of a once admirable seed.⁷⁶

David's language ("rotting," "damaged specimen") signals his rejection of aristocratic legacy. His use of "jelly" — slang for jealousy — suggests resentment towards class privilege. Despite his noble status, his alienation from the commoners underscores the enduring barriers of class hierarchy. Illustrating how esoteric knowledge and modernity negatively impact his self-identification, the play also underscores the questionability of modernity. The playwright highlights instances of inequality and David's sense of alienation to emphasize the tensions before the transformation.

Drawing attention to social inequality, the Highlands are depicted as suffocating, resembling Martin McDonagh's post-nationalist representation of rural Ireland in **The Beauty Queen of Leenane** where the rural area turned into a suffocating mother to her children. The play underlines the role of the colonialist past in the depressing outlook of the place.⁷⁷ Likewise, wealth disparity and limited opportunities turn the Highlands into a claustrophobic setting. As Bauman notes those bound to locality remain unheard and "keep silent", while "those at the top of the new hierarchy [who have] freedom to move" dictate the future.⁷⁸ David and Margaret, representing modernity, impose their vision and commoners have no voice in shaping progress. Ultimately, the play critiques the persistence of class divisions, illustrating how neoliberalism perpetuates historical inequalities under the guise of modernization.

To sum up, an extensive representation of class differences in the act describes the cyclical nature of economic exploitation and class struggle, continued in the following acts. The first act reveals globalisation's and global capitalism's contradictions: tradition vs modernity, stagnancy vs mobility, privileged and underprivileged.

⁷⁶ **Ibid.**, p.26.

⁷⁷ İmren Yelmiş, "Martin McDonagh's **The Beauty Queen Of Leenane** as a Tale of Debunked Mother Myth, (Self-)Exile And Emigration," **The Journal of International Social Research**, Vol.IX, No:45, 2016, p.237.

⁷⁸ Bauman, **Globalisation**, p.43.

As the first act deals with the inter-war period, specifically the year 1936, the play refers to a possible German bombing. The threat of war alludes to global instability as an inevitable byproduct of expanding ideologies:

David The forces are gathering, Euan. This is what I learned in Germany. An avatar has come.
The clouds are coming off the Atlantic to meet the hill.
The forces of the North, the pure, against the forces of the degenerate, the civilised, the carriers of disease.
There will be a fire.
A magnificent fire.⁷⁹

As stated in the quotation above, David informs about the emerging fascism in Germany. As a *non-calculable probability* or *planetary uncertainty*, the notion of war is handled as a part of global terror that can be discussed under the term of *negative globalisation*. Bauman states that “[a]llowed a free run, ‘negative’ globalisation specializes in breaking those boundaries too weak to withstand the pressure, and in drilling numerous, huge and unpluggable holes through those boundaries that successfully resist the forces bent on dismantling them.”⁸⁰ After the liquefaction of borders with globalisation, the fear of war and terrorism is planted irrevocably in modern societies.

The scale of the First World War can serve as one of the first signs of this global terror, and uncertainty is represented in the play as the fear of German bombing. In relation to this, Rodriguez elaborates that: [t]he aerial perspective, itself a powerful and controlling perspective, is related to the world not only mentally but also physically, for instance, in relation to mental effects on bodies and aerial warfare.⁸¹ Accordingly, German bombing is a sign of aerial warfare, ergo a fear state. Moreover, this correspondingly epitomizes the role of class in warfare. Considering that the upper classes have pushed the common people to the battleground, Euan’s readiness to take

⁷⁹ Greig, **Victoria**, p.29.

⁸⁰ Bauman, **Liquid**, p.96.

⁸¹ Rodriguez, **David**, p.188.

arms is the embodiment of inequality and the suppression of local people based on class.

These tensions lead to the murder of David as the future of the Allan family and line. The power struggle is symbolised by a gun and explosion that shifts target throughout the play to accentuate the sight of transformation and changing ideologies. Handing over a gun to Gavin, Macallister, a teacher states that: “I have no love for the Allans, Gavin. Or the rest of their class. There will be a time when we’ll call for guns.”⁸² Gavin and Oscar murder David, who is found “*hanging from a butcher’s hook*” the next morning.⁸³ On the same basis, the period is characterized by its protest culture as “the Highland Land Wars which began in 1914 and lasted until at least 1939, albeit with significantly decreasing intensity.”⁸⁴ As a “recurring motif of fire as both destructive and cleansing”⁸⁵ fire symbolises power struggle and resolving of tension in the play. This symbiotic relationship of symbols of nature is pursued through the characters’ psychology in the last act.

Act Two begins with a helicopter crash, which becomes the central concern for the local community. From the wreckage, Victoria, an American geologist, emerges, leaving her injured colleague to die. The police investigate the crash, recovering belongings from the area.

Meanwhile, Euan, the son of Oscar and Shona, returns home from the United States, bringing an American musician, Connolly, with him. Now an entrepreneur, Euan’s capitalist ambitions clash with his father’s socialist ideals. Simultaneously, Oscar attempts to purchase Allan’s estate, which now belongs to Jimmy, the son of Margaret and David.

Notably, except for Margaret, the characters in this act are different from those in the first act, despite sharing the same names. The play is set just three years before Margaret Thatcher’s rise to power and her fervent support for the free market, making

⁸² *Ibid.*, p.56.

⁸³ Greig, *Victoria*, p.65.

⁸⁴ Iain J. M. Robertson, *Landscapes of Protest in the Scottish Highlands after 1914: The Later Highland Land Wars*, New York, Routledge, 2013, p.2.

⁸⁵ Wallace, *op. cit.*, p.77.

the effects of neoliberalism increasingly visible. The arrival of Americans fuels local hopes that the discovery of oil could bring economic prosperity to the region. However, Veronica later reveals to Oscar that the mountain holds a valuable resource: granite.

Sensing a business opportunity, Euan acquires maps from the police station, seizes the chance to capitalise on the land, and purchases the estate, marking a decisive shift towards neoliberal economic structures in the Highlands. Having spent time in America, he returns with a business-oriented mindset, purchasing both the Red House and the estate. His Machiavellian nature is revealed when he manipulates Norrie into shooting Connolly's left hand, which Connolly had insured for financial compensation.

In the first act of **Victoria**, the Highlands is a confined place that hinders outer contact and exit. Rodriguez discusses that "de-territorialized placelessness" is a preliminary compound of David Greig's plays; appropriately crossing the borders and travelling are not one of the necessities. Sarah Kane's hotel room in **Blasted** is evocative of placelessness as it is set in a hotel room that can be anywhere in the world. Rodriguez additionally stresses that re-territorialization occasionally pursues de-territorialization by indicating the hole in the hotel room's wall in **Blasted**. The hole re-connects the characters and audience to the world and here.⁸⁶ Subsequently, "The Crash", the title of the second act, alludes to a hole in the land.

In Veronica Rodriguez's terms, a hole is "[w]hile a "place", a hole is also an in-between, a threshold, a passageway. A hole allows constant interaction to take place. [...] Holes suggest opening as well as damage; contact as well as contagion; vision as well as surveillance."⁸⁷ Crash, as a word, hints at an unexpected and sudden violent contact. The local place becomes *reterritorialised* by the crash and a part of the neoliberal world "because weakening spatial barriers open the whole world as [...] [a] profitable oyster [of the multinational capital]."⁸⁸ The crash, as a violent contact, implies that locals are caught unready in the face of neoliberal values. Similar to

⁸⁶ **Ibid.**, p.48.

⁸⁷ Rodriguez, **David**, pp.20-21.

⁸⁸ David Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," **Annals of the Association of American Geographers**, Vol.LXXX, No:3, 1990, p.428.

German bombing and aerial warfare, the compulsive and improbable contact of the helicopter, which carries American businesspeople, is the epitome of *negative globalisation*, since it allows no consent or annunciation.

Similar to the German bombing threat in Act One, the arrival of American oil investors mirrors *negative globalisation*, to describe how weaker regions are forcibly incorporated into global networks without consent. The helicopter, a symbol of speed and neoliberal trespassing, imposes itself without negotiation, signalling the loss of autonomy for local communities. As the second aerial representation it connects the ground and terrain, uncovering the global connectedness of American ventures for oil.

Act One presents a traditional Highland life, emphasizing ceilidhs, music, and communal living in **Victoria**. However, after the crash in Act Two, these cultural markers fade, replaced by increasing references to global media. The proliferation of television, newspapers, and telephones signifies the Highlands' transformation from a remote cultural enclave to a globally connected site. Television emerges as both a political arena and a tool of capitalist expansion, as the Highlands become more enmeshed in neoliberal ideology and American corporate interests.

The crash also marks a turning point in land perception. In Act One, land is tied to heritage and belonging, but by Act Two, it becomes —a space to be mapped, surveyed, and exploited for resources due to neoliberalism. This transition echoes Bauman's theory of mapping as a tool of control, where grids and charts transform landscapes into assets for economic profit.

Accordingly, the terminological usage of the map and mapping is encountered in the second act as: “[m]aps, a report from the oil company”⁸⁹; thereby, the mapping of local space for economic profit by American business ventures is alluded to. In terms of globalisation, mapping is a crucial signifier of the rationalisation of space.

⁸⁹ **Ibid.**, p.111.

In **Globalisation: Human Consequences** Bauman states the phenomena as:

Monopoly is much easier to achieve if the map precedes the mapped territory: if the city is, from its creation and for the duration of its entire history, simply a projection of the map upon the space; if, instead of desperately trying to capture the disorderly variety of urban reality in the impersonal elegance of a cartographic grid, the map turns into a frame in which urban realities yet to arise are to be plotted, deriving their meaning and function solely from the site allocated to them within the grid.⁹⁰

Bauman underpins that mapping is a process that transforms and confines the place into grids by depriving the place of its meaning for control or “monopoly”. Maps become a crucial signifier of this rationalisation.

In Act Two, Carter’s leather suitcase is searched by the police, revealing a map of the region. Similarly, Victoria, an American geologist, explains:

Victoria The Hills.
Granite – volcanic
I’m a geologist. [...]
Rocks and time
I work for oil companies.
I read the landscape for them.⁹¹

Victoria’s scientific, corporate-driven perspective contrasts with the local, lived experience of the land. Unlike farmers and Highland locals, who experience the land through generational ties and cultural entanglement, Victoria sees it as a resource to be examined. This shift marks the loss of traditional land-based identity in favour of capitalist rationalisation.

⁹⁰ Bauman, **Globalisation**, p.41.

⁹¹ Greig, **Victoria**, p.87.

Historically and culturally, the meaning of land diversifies in Gaelic culture as in many tribal land-bound communities. Thus, Robertson and MacDonald explain that *Dùthchas* signifies a “place of origin, homeland; heredity, heritage”⁹² as a contradiction to the *oighreachd*, “estate or inheritance” in Gaelic.⁹³ Similarly, Kevin James Grant informs: “Thus the ownership of land could be claimed as *dùthchas* of a clan or group that felt that its ownership of the land stemmed from generations of working it, or as *oighreachd* by another group or an individual whose rights derived from legal acquisition or inheritance.”⁹⁴ Thereby, the mutual responsibility and protection that clanship is based upon, is disparaged due to capitalism in act one. Act Two, on the other hand, reveals the modernisation and rationalisation of the land under neoliberalism.

Bauman notes that monopoly thrives when “the map precedes the mapped territory”—in other words, when land is first defined and categorized by economic interests before its actual use is determined. By Act Two, maps serve as blueprints for privatisation, marking the land as a space for profit rather than cultural continuity.

The shift from communal values to neoliberal individualism is embodied by Euan’s transformation. Once rooted in Highland life, he returns from America as a capitalist entrepreneur, embracing self-interest over collective prosperity. His dismissive remarks on communal well-being illustrate the ethos of neoliberal success:

Euan [...] If you want to take the whole fucking village along for the ride you buy a fucking bus. I’m into Ferraris. [...] You know... wave to me as I drive past.⁹⁵

The Ferrari, a status symbol of luxury and speed, contrasts sharply with the bus, a communal mode of transport. This comparison underscores Euan’s rejection of

⁹² Boyd Robertson, Ian MacDonald, **Teach Yourself: Gaelic Dictionary**. London, Hodder Education, 2004, p.50.

⁹³ **Ibid.**, p.90.

⁹⁴ Kevin J. Grant, “‘And in Every Hamlet a Poet’: Gaelic Oral Tradition and Postmedieval Archaeology in Scotland,” **Historical Archaeology**, Vol.XLVIII, No:1, 2014, p.33.

⁹⁵ Greig, **Victoria**, p.94.

collective progress in favour of personal gain, reflecting the American-style capitalism he has adopted.

On this ground, the divide in the perception of nature, between power holders and locals is highlighted throughout the play. Considering that ecotourism was one of the signifiers of the region in the nineteenth century, the elites are portrayed in the first act, while deer stalking, through which environmental criticism that David Greig pursues in **Victoria**, is encountered. These characters need gamekeepers for this activity. Gavin, the gamekeeper describes: “The stalking party tomorrow, Euan, they’re city people, not great shots. I’ve left the hinds’ hay up in the corrie so they’ll be hanging around waiting to be shot at. [...] if there there’s any they hit badly, you can finish them off.”⁹⁶ The quote associates the stalking with the animal brutality; on the grounds that, animals are shot for excitement and experience, leaving them crippled. The following quote:

Euan Shit.
Silly fucker’s got its leg.
Poor beast.⁹⁷

unveils the animal suffering due to “poor shots”. Correspondingly, the representation of stalking for touristic excitement reflects a fracture of disruption of nature. On the other hand, the inadequacy of elite tourists in stalking, explicate their lack of knowledge in the nature of the Highlands.

The Highlands’ relationship with nature also shifts under neoliberal influence. In Act One, nature is tied to local customs, tourism, and gamekeeping. The aristocrats, though exploitative, still see the land as a site of leisure and tradition. In contrast, by Act Three, Euan sees nature solely as an economic resource:

Euan [...] I own this place.
I own the fucking sea and the fucking mountain and the forest.

⁹⁶ **Ibid.**, p.22.

⁹⁷ **Ibid.**, p.36.

This place is mine.⁹⁸

This absolute claim over nature reflects the core ideology of capitalism: land is no longer a shared, lived space but a privatized commodity. The traditional belief that land belongs to those who work it—rooted in tribal and communal values—is directly opposed by Euan’s neoliberal ownership model.

David Greig draws a parallel between neoliberalism and historical oppression. Just as Highland clanship once determined social hierarchy, neoliberalism creates a new form of class-based dominance, replacing ancestral ownership with economic monopoly.

Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital is reflected in how outsiders recognise economic opportunities that locals overlook, revealing the mobility’s function in shaping ideologies:

[r]ock and the sea’s all we saw.
We didn’t see the opening.
They saw – they moved – that’s the difference.⁹⁹

Euan’s ability to “see the opening” aligns with neoliberal ideology, which rewards risk-taking, market-driven insight. His transformation into Mr. Sutherland, owner of the estate, represents the erasure of Highland cultural values in favor of global capitalism.

Greig contrasts Euan’s capitalist mindset with his father Oscar’s socialist ideals. Having participated in protests in Madrid, Oscar envisions an alternative society, one where land is used for the common good. His frustration is evident when he laments:

⁹⁸ **Ibid.**, p.149.

⁹⁹ Greig, **Victoria**, p.103.

We can't even get ourselves educated.
Can't even own the land.
My son's against me.¹⁰⁰

While Oscar fights for land reform and education, Euan represents a generation that has abandoned collectivist ideals in favour of market-driven success.

The play critiques the illusion of wealth promised by global capitalism. When American oil companies arrive, locals naively believe in shared prosperity:

Maggie We'll have Americans drinking bourbon in our pub.
Rigs in the loch.
Helicopters.
Callum We'll be like sheiks.
Maggie Swanning round in Rollses.
Callum Our little Billy – he'll be an oil man.¹⁰¹

However, this hope is ultimately misplaced. Greig suggests that only those who adopt capitalist values will benefit, while the larger community remains economically marginalised, stressing the centrality of class in neoliberal system.

The Red House, initially a symbol of aristocratic oppression, is proposed as a community school under Oscar's vision. However, under neoliberal restructuring, it is instead auctioned and privatised. Jimmy, representing the next generation, rejects clan authority, stating:

Oscar This would be the library.
The classrooms. The canteen.
A theatre –
The outbuildings would be accommodation for the students.
Margaret: Who are they – these students?¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ **Ibid.**, p.122.

¹⁰¹ **Ibid.**, p.124.

¹⁰² **Ibid.**, p.70.

Set to sale, the Red House is designated to underscore the final throbbing of the clanship as an ancient socio-structure. Jimmy, as the representative of new generation and the future of the Allans, rejects the privilege coming from his lineage in his statements as follows: “**Jimmy** Other people have authority. The police. The council. It’s really none of our business.”¹⁰³ The part demonstrates the Scottish Highlands’ changing social and cultural fabrics under the Well-fare state, as there is a transition of power centre from clans to the state. In the act, the places as a council, a pub and a police station are observed. The transformation is embodied by public spaces such as police stations and a council building, enlightening the spatial aspect of the play. Accordingly, ideologies are thematised through spatial representations.

The Red House simultaneously symbolises history. Margaret states that “[The Red House] was visited by Boswell and Johnson Historians. I mean, literary historians, for example, might want to see it from time to time.”¹⁰⁴ The part signifies its historical importance as a negotiated place. This further points out the tradition and if that tradition is going to be adopted by people or erased under neoliberal ventures. This argument resounds with the fading of traditional elements in the play, underlining the erasure of memory and culture.

The commentaries on the land and nature are analogously utilised to signify the difference between the perspectives of locals and Americans. The second act focuses on multiple questionaries of the time. Americanisation under the influence of neoliberalism all around the globe is manifested with the following lines: “**Euan** No. In America they’ve trained themselves to see the opening. So they say, there’s rain, I’ll sell umbrellas. Or there’s a sunset, I’ll take a photo for a calendar.”¹⁰⁵ Euan’s analogous remarks exemplify his Anthropocentric ideas based on commodification of nature and environmental colonialism.

From the same ecocritical perspective, Euan elaborates the objectification and reification of nature:

¹⁰³ **Ibid.**, p.85.

¹⁰⁴ **Ibid.**, p.95.

¹⁰⁵ **Ibid.**, p.92.

Euan [...] In the seventies I made money from the sea. Used the deep water the build rigs in.
Now I make money from rock.
Most people [...] value the barest survival by the most complicated means.¹⁰⁶

These ideas are protested by Polyani; on the grounds that, this kind of production renders the society and nature into commodities causing the annihilation of both as an outcome of self-interest.¹⁰⁷ The part is functional to illustrate how the meaning of nature is undermined to profit, leading also to the diminution of local people in the following act.

In Act Three, Euan's enterprise culminates in large-scale excavation of the mountain, symbolizing industrial exploitation. Meanwhile, environmentalist protestors, having gained media attention, challenge the Sutherland Aggregates' destruction of the landscape. As activism intensifies, protestors set fire to the excavation machines in an act of sabotage.

Following Oscar's funeral, Euan is haunted by his father's ghost, representing his suppressed and guilty subconscious. However, instead of valuing his memory, Euan manipulates public perception, portraying Oscar as a man who fought for the common good, using this revisionist narrative to counteract media opposition.

The third Victoria, introduced in this act, is Euan and Vicky Sutherland's daughter. She is depicted as psychologically disturbed, struggling with her sense of self and relationships with men. The act opens with Old Victoria on a plane, returning to the Highlands, reinforcing themes of cyclical time and return.

Vicky, formerly Victoria the geologist, now embraces a mystical connection to nature, believing in reincarnation and that natural elements hold the history of the land. The play concludes with an overlapping conversation between the three different

¹⁰⁶ **Ibid.**, p.134.

¹⁰⁷ Karl Polanyi, **The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times**. Boston, Beacon, 1957, p.44.

Victorias, intertwining past and present, reinforcing Greig's thematic focus on belonging, historical continuity and change.

The third act faces toward the mountain in the area as the geological formation that locals centre their lives around. It reveals David Greig's principal arguments on nature and time. Dan Rebellato's commentary on the mountain reveals the systematic oppression through a century:

[...] a mountain whose very rock in the 1930s seemed to hold on to its inhabitants, thwarting their attempts to escape, has, by the end the nineties, been levelled, ground down to make aggregate by a mining corporation. This corporation's name is 'Sutherland Granite Aggregates', which recalls the Sutherland estate that in the 1810s saw some of the most barbaric episodes in the history of the Highland clearances.¹⁰⁸

Through the Sutherland reference, David Greig signifies that the power shifts from aristocracy to global elites, due to the inequality of class and opportunity. As a geological formation, the mountain becomes a site of capital accumulation due to its immense reserve of granite that can fuel industries. Hence, its meaning alters from a natural land formation on which local people have formed and pursued their lifestyles and personalities to a private property on which a company has certain rights.

Similarly, comparing towns and cities to smaller places, David Greig speculates that the twentieth century "set also against the presence, in the mountains and sea, of a much larger geological time—both of which serve to contextualise the recent past and our dreams of the future."¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, the third act, "The Mountain," thematises the neoliberal accumulation of capital and structured time that interfere with *geological time*. Discussions of different perceptions of time are the foundation of Greig's *ecological cosmopolitanism*.

¹⁰⁸ Dan Rebellato, "Introduction," **David Greig Plays : 1 Europe, The Architect, The Cosmonaut's Last Message**, London, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2002, p.xiii.

¹⁰⁹ Greig, "Author's Note", With n,p.

Associated with the *geological time* and archive, the mountain is destroyed by the Aggregates. Fittingly, Euan Sutherland informs:

We take granite from the mountain. Mainly we use explosives. The stone gets processed automatically. The granite's sent into machine which crushes the rock into smaller pieces. [...] The gravel's called aggregate. The aggregates are taken down through the mountain, directly beneath our feath, by a conveyer belt. It's taken to a port at the lochside [...] The loads are then shipped out.¹¹⁰

The explanation of industrial procedure that contains explosives, automated processing, and a conveyor belt is the epitome of global industries with high-tech technology. In this part, the global network of trade is also mentioned by granite that is shipped all over the world (i.e., New York, Bilbao) by sea.¹¹¹ Euan Sutherland's information on mining raises questions on the future as well as ecology, given that homo sapiens obtain a "transformative presence in the Earth's strata."¹¹² As renowned for its beautiful landscapes and panoramic views, a complex and massive operation like this visually portrays the mountain as subjugated and violated by conveyor belts and machines.

At this point, David Greig expounds on the *geological time* handled as opposed to the structured time:

Euan [...] The mountain contains three square miles of solid granite.
That's a hundred years of supply.
If we only take the far side of the mountain.
Five hundred years if we take the whole mountain.¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Greig, **Victoria**, p.133.

¹¹¹ **Ibid.**, p.133.

¹¹² Thomas Meneley, Jesse O. Taylor, "Introduction," **Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times**, Ed. by. Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor, Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017, p.3.

¹¹³ Greig, **Victoria**, p.133.

The references to time on scales as “a hundred years of supply” and “five hundred years” to take the whole mountain epitomize the difference between human time and *geological time* (or deep time). Linked to “the plate tectonics and the movement of Earth’s crust”, the origin of granite and its place in *deep time* are characterized by “high temperatures and pressures”, melting and crystallization of rocks that take millions of years and forming the splendid views of landscapes.”¹¹⁴ This geological process, which is counted in billions and millions of years, is inconceivable to human perception, yet we are part of it.

On the difference between human history and *geological time*, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen notes:

[h]uman history is shallow and local, a chronicle of small wonders, rapid in its tempo. Geological time is cosmic and profound, a dense account of planetary formation, mineral thriving, continents that slowly glide on a liquid mantle, ceaseless subduction. [...] [Its] scale is a mathematical line that extends to infinity.¹¹⁵

Deep time’s scale has a temporal duration that is beyond human perception. This counterposes the imposed structured time of industrial production and capitalist accumulation, offering an extensive criticism of neoliberalism.

The second act allusively offers commentaries on the conception of time as such:

Connolly [...] I said to Euan – take me somewhere that doesn’t move so fast. Take me to a different time zone.

He took me here.

Ellish [...] It’s a different time zone here, right enough.

¹¹⁴ “Granite,” 27 Aug 2023 (Online) <https://geologyscience.com/rocks/granite>. 13 Jan 2025.

¹¹⁵ Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, “Anarky,” **Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times**, Ed. by. Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017, p.25.

Clock's stopped.¹¹⁶

Contradicting the urban space, rural time is described as almost “stopped”. It can be argued that rural time is operated by the cycle of nature, unlike the structured time of industrial cities.

This idea evokes the great acceleration which is the “explosion of human enterprise” after the Second World War.¹¹⁷ Related to production, the term still characterising today's global world, underlines “an exponential growth post-1950 in population, GDP (gross domestic product), energy use, major damming projects, and fertiliser consumption, the period during which we see nearly three-quarters of the anthropologically driven rise in carbon dioxide concentrations.”¹¹⁸ Considering the speed culture and high mobility of the global age, profit-oriented capitalist production overlooks *deep time*, causing massive destruction to nature with an unprecedented scale and speed.

At this point, David Greig turns to spiritualism and natural imagery to offer his counterargument and envisioning of future. Likewise, regarding the landscape and its relevance to identity, Clare Wallace argues:

“Repeatedly characters remark upon the air, the sea, the forest and the mountains, and their sense of being in relation to them. The oscillation between acceptance and rejection of the environment is maintained throughout Greig's exploration of its imperative role in shaping their identities.”¹¹⁹

In compliance with Wallace's argument, the remarks on nature in **Victoria** are emblematic on many levels. The acceptance and rejection of the environment highlight the characters' tidal relationship with nature, further unveiling the nature's impact on their lives and psychology.

¹¹⁶ Greig, **Victoria**, p.83.

¹¹⁷ Will Steffen, et al, “The Anthropocene: Are Humans Now Overwhelming the Great Forces of Nature?” **Ambio**, Vol.XXXVI, No:8, 2007, p.617.

¹¹⁸ Richard G. D. Irvine, **An Anthropology of Deep Time: Geological Temporality and Social Life**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp.12-13.

¹¹⁹ Wallace, **op. cit.**, p.76.

David Greig's spiritualistic symbols of nature, which can be listed as rock, stone and fire, can be argued in their relation to the entanglement of matters or humans and natural elements in the play. Heather Sullivan explicates: "[...] our bodies exist among other bodies, enmeshed, and intra-acting trans-corporeally, with all sorts of substances, including food, water, air, and a full range of industrial chemicals."¹²⁰ Suitably, *material entanglement* abolishes the human-nature divide by signifying the biological and chemical *porousness* of natural elements with its inhabitants.

This transitive property alludes to the connection between land and its people. Victoria, the geologist, marks how water tastes differently in the region:

Victoria This coffee tastes weird.

Euan It's the water. Maybe the water. It comes straight off the hill.

Victoria Granite.¹²¹

The granite that affects water's quality is, conclusively, subjected to all locals through farming, grazing and drinking over time, considering that "organic life is geochemical."¹²² This epitomises the transitiveness and *porous* quality of the characters' skin, signifying a deep bond between land and people.

Conclusively, Greig connects this idea of entanglement to spiritualism through the play. The following dialogue serves as another fitting example of theory:

Victoria It's everywhere.

We'll all become it. [...]

We'll all turn into oil or coal or gas.¹²³

¹²⁰ Heather I. Sullivan. "The Ecology of Colors: Goethe's Materialist Optics and Ecological Posthumanism," **Material Ecocriticism**, Ed. by. Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann, Indiana University Press, 1992, p.92.

¹²¹ Greig, **Victoria**, p.86.

¹²² Cohen, **op. cit.**, p.29.

¹²³ Greig, **Victoria**, p.104.

In this sense, in a mutual relationship, these rocks are also the annals of human bodies that have been there throughout history. Therefore, the locals are not exterior observers of nature surrounding them but active and entangled participants of circulating matter.

The use of sea, stones, and air is significant; since each agency of materials is where “an inadequate number of records are preserved, a climate-controlled collation secured against time and weather, *le temps*.”¹²⁴ Linked to this, the play establishes a spiritual correlation between the body of the mountain and the body of the individual:

Vicky Our bodies hold memories, the same way the earth holds fossils.
In the quarry, you can find fossils in the rock.
The shapes of creatures from before time.¹²⁵

While setting a resemblance between the human body and the body of the mountain, Vicky’s ideas on fossils refer to “lithic annals” that mountains have kept and formed during their formation that trace a route from Earth’s crust to magma formations. Similarly, Irvine points out that “[t]he fossil record of the deep future may recognise our present as a surface of mass death.”¹²⁶ Appropriately, David Greig alludes to a colonialist erasure of history over the body of land. This erasure of data on the strata of Earth offers a futuristic projection that can be perceived as a “mass death”.

At this point, Greig’s spiritualism and hope for the future are manifested on a symbolic level in the play. The heaviness and sameness attributed to the sea and stones are similarly emblematic concerning that the local place holds its habitants and confines them by “thwarting their attempts to escape.” The heaviness also signifies the slowness of local time opposing industrial time. Symbolised by guns and explosives, , fire in its main form indicates the end of each act, each period of history, as well as the initiation of revolution and the coming future. Because granite formation is predicated on excessive heat from magma, fire analogously and deductively is a part and character of Highland culture.

¹²⁴ Cohen, **op. cit.**, p.29.

¹²⁵ Greig, **Victoria**, p.153.

¹²⁶ Irvine, **op. cit.**, p.6.

Through fire, the play signifies a cyclical order of renewal and revolution. Hence, after Oscar's burial, Young Victoria as the representative of the new generation and future, sets his journals on fire. The action is a symbol of giving life to his ideals. Regarding the symbolic meaning of fire in the play, the play ends with a hopeful trajectory for the future.

By implications, David Greig distinguishes *geological time* that is inconceivably ancient and stagnant, compared to the historical periods of human activity. He also challenges the idea of linear narratives of history. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen's argument on "the period as segment or line connects in motion past, present, future and becomes thereby the round, the cycle, the spiral" echoes through David Greig's structuring of the events and ideas on an individual level in the play. According to Cohen, "[t]here is no return to arche or origin that is not a spiralling."¹²⁷ In this sense, the plot, the shared names of the characters, and the cycle of changing ideologies in the play intermittently allude to circular time.

The play discusses the circular structure of time and transformation through the representation of Eastern metaphysics:

In due course time itself falls towards destruction.
Then there is rebirth, and the cycle begins.
Everything is contained within the cycle of time.
The connection is in time.¹²⁸

Repeated in the first act by David, these texts are gathered from Jimmy's father's library including Hindu Vedas as pieces of Eastern spiritualism. Veronica Rodriguez points out to the ritualistic character of David Greig's plays.¹²⁹ Suitably, the encounter with other cultures is not only a form of cosmopolitanism but also it is a spiritualistic overreach that originates in nature.

¹²⁷ Cohen, **op. cit.**, p.37.

¹²⁸ Greig, **Victoria**, p.102.

¹²⁹ Rodriguez, **David**, p.2.

Nature is handled as an origin and connection between people through *material entanglement*, Eastern metaphysics and protest that resists the global environment crisis in the play.

Correspondingly, David Greig's treatment of nature and global crisis lead to *ecological cosmopolitanism* on a multifaceted set of reasoning. This idea of protest and revolution is also pointed out in all three acts by Oscar, who urges to buy the Red House in the second act for the common good and education. The character narrates his memory of a protest in Madrid, Spain, as such:

I saw a tram full of barbers.
Barbers.
Going to the front.
They hadn't even taken off their aprons. [...]
I didn't know the barbers had a union even.
Never mind a militia.
And I wondered. Because I really didn't know.
Are they members of the Communist Party?
Or are the barbers are anarchists?
But I was so proud to see them.
Proud of myself and proud of human beings.¹³⁰

In the third act, as an epitome of the play's repetitive pattern, it is revealed that the memory belongs to Young Euan, Oscar's comrade. Considering David Greig's spiritualistic onset, this shared memory demonstrates Oscar's bond to his comrade and a form of fraternity. This emphasises that compared to capitalistic individualism, socialism acquires a sense of communal bond. Conclusively, David Greig attunes a spiritualist and emotional depth to how characters are associated with each other through ideals.

David Greig's cosmopolitan approach is signified by protest, socialism, and environment within the scope of 'expanding global consciousness' and the role of media in that. The representation of protestors, who consist of locals and people from Nottingham and Glasgow, signifies the expanding global consciousness. The protestor

¹³⁰ Greig, **Victoria**, p.122.

from Nottingham also criticises Sutherland Aggregates on ecocritical grounds: “**Annie** The hill’s been here for millions of years. Longer than humans.”¹³¹ Annie’s ideas summarise the protestors’ ecological ground for protesting by emphasising *geological time*. The influence of protest, although mitigated in the end, has an impact on the Aggregates, as Euan complains:

Euan These protestors. They influence the media.
They influence the council.
The application to expand the quarry might be at risk.¹³²

Here, Greig highlights the power of media in shaping public discourse and policy. While earlier acts depicted media as a tool of capitalist expansion, by the final act, it transforms into a weapon for environmental resistance.

Moreover, environmental resistance manifests in the form of industrial violence. Annie and Norrie pour petrol over machinery in the excavation site. Annie explains: “We make trouble. We continue to make trouble. That’s the way we work. We don’t let it be easy.”¹³³ By industrial violence, David Greig underscores the role of environmental activism signifying the impact of political collectives on businesses and companies. This complies with Victoria’s desire for a land unspoilt and pre-defined. After, the act ends with three of Victorias’s overlapping dialogues.

On the other hand, this politically motivated society has emerged in the form of protest due to the Anthropocene’s impact on *geological time*. Thus, the local community that has lost its connection to the land rebuilds this relationship with the rise of global society, driving its force from nature and its relationship with it. By exploring the terms above, David Greig indicates his views on cosmopolitanism. These ideas reverberate through the contemporary nucleus of environmentalist studies and protest culture worldwide. Since the play represents the epitome of the worldwide

¹³¹ **Ibid.**, p.141.

¹³² **Ibid.**, p.134.

¹³³ **Ibid.**, p.175.

neoliberal destruction of natural resources and the sufferings of local farming communities, Greig simultaneously alludes to the global impact and significance of environmental protests.

Given that, besides Victoria, each act includes different characters named the same as Euan, Oscar and Gavin. Accordingly, the *transcorporeality* is manifested through the naming process by underlining the fluidity of identity. From this perspective, Greig implies the continuity in the circularity of social, biological, and cultural life and transformation. Besides the circularity of the plot, it simultaneously alludes to the characters' entanglement with nature. This circularity reverberates in the characters' responsive psychology. In this manner, Greig's characters are entangled with the place, matters of nature, and each other, which is the epitome of *transcorporeality*. The idea also unveils Greig's understanding of *ecological cosmopolitanism*.

Furthermore, the play offers a poststructuralist fragmentation in representing the main character, Victoria. The Dundee Rep's Artistic Director and joint artistic director of the play, Philip Howard, comments: "The same actresses, play another Victoria in the 1980s and in the third act, she plays a third Victoria in the 1990s and we never quite sure whether or not she is three different women over those three different time periods or whether in a really magical way she is almost like the same woman moving through history."¹³⁴ Likewise, Greig's **Victoria** represents circular time through repetitive actions and dialogues to stress the fundamental interdependence of nature and people. Similarly, the play ends with the interfering and fragmented dialogues of Old Victoria, Victoria and Vicky:

Victoria Born here.
Old Victoria Been over the water,
All the time I was away.
Thought about coming back. [...]
Victoria Come back.
And now all I want's to cross that water again. [...]
Vicky Mountain, sea and forest

¹³⁴ Philip Howard, "Introduction to Victoria," **Youtube**, uploaded by Dundee Rep, Aug 7, 2013, (Online) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyAsygEqkvY>, 15 December 2024.

Time before me and time after.¹³⁵

The poetic expressions can be observed in each act with the exact same wording. By gathering three different Victorias from different times to the same moment, David Greig emphasizes the circularity of plot, time and transformation.

Since Victoria's presence is so persistent in the play, David Greig's contemplations on identity and spiritualism can be analysed by deconstructing her characterisation. The character is inspired by a real-life scene of a woman who sits "by a tree, smoking a cigarette and waiting for a man to arrive."¹³⁶ The play presents Victoria "*sitting on a stone*",¹³⁷ planning an escape with men, swimming and asking "Do I look like I belong?"¹³⁸ Thus, unlike other characters, Victoria's sense of belonging is conflicted: one part of her desires to go no matter what and another is inextricably interwoven with the place. She expresses this forceful and intense conflict in her psychology:

If I could step out of my body.
Leave my skin and bone on the hillside.
Walk into some new life.
But I'm half in and half out of the ground¹³⁹

Her fragmented psychology fluctuates with these clashing selves who seek to ground themselves but always spiral and centre around the idea of belonging. For many enthusiastic critics of his works, David Greig's theatre and characters are dislocated and fragmented, in Charlotte Thompson's words as contrary to "whole

¹³⁵ Greig, **Victoria**, p.180.

¹³⁶ Greig, "Author's Note.", With n.p.

¹³⁷ Greig, **Victoria**, p.1

¹³⁸ **Ibid.**, p.132.

¹³⁹ **Ibid.**, p.172.

subjectivities.”¹⁴⁰ Victoria’s disposition is always marked by ambiguity which indicates she does not acquire a whole or fixed identity. The tension does not only macrocosmically represent the clash between local and global, but also between the nomad and settled. This fluctuation is embodied through the representation of the three different Victorias while, trying to escape, refusing to leave, staying and coming back home.

In Zygmunt Bauman’s terms, Victoria is a pilgrim. Accordingly, he expostulates: “For pilgrims through time, the truth is elsewhere [...] The desert meant putting a distance between oneself and one’s duties and obligations, the warmth and the agony of being with others, being looked at by others, being framed and moulded by their scrutiny, demands and expectations.”¹⁴¹ Moreover, pilgrimage is no longer the mode of life due to modernity and the systemisation of every sphere of life. Regarding this, Bauman speculates that a pilgrim’s freedom is a “raw [and primal] [...] freedom”, but “once was in a place [...] meant staying put.”¹⁴² Similarly, Greig’s shamanic spiritualism reverberates as a fragmented self. As a form of resistance and rebellion, the fragmented-self counterposes the systematised, fixated and rationalised neoliberal world, since she is not self-contained and fully aware. Victoria’s wishful imagination of an intact land supportively underscores the idea:

Place without a name left even.
Nothing was touched or spoiled. [...]
Nothing to read by us.
Nothing but us.¹⁴³

The lines demonstrate Victoria’s search for the unbounded freedom of not being someone within the definitions and confines of society. The character imagines a pre-

¹⁴⁰ Charlotte Thompson, “Beyond Borders: David Greig’s Transpersonal Dramaturgy,” **Cosmotopia: Transnational Identities in David Greig’s Theatre**, Prague, Litteraria Pregensia Books, 2011, p.105.

¹⁴¹ Zygmunt Bauman, “From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity.” **Questions of Cultural Identity**, Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, editors, London, Sage, 2003, pp.19-21.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.20.

¹⁴³ Greig, **Victoria**, p.176.

known, pre-named, and unspoilt land. This serves as a counterargument to the rationalisation of natural space under neoliberalism within the connected bond between the character and the place. Her character's complicated urges and oscillations portray a deeply individual resistance against control, standardisation, and suppression in a century.

Considering that Greig names his plays after the names of places, understanding why the title of the play is **Victoria** can be a pivotal discussion to the analysis. To signify the global connection attributed to the name, Victoria is the name for cities and states in USA and Australia. However, considering the tribute to the place, the play is not named as the Highlands in a similar fashion to Greig's other plays. From this perspective, the dominance of Victoria's character in the play similarly underscores the inextricable bond between the place and her body. This bond highlights the play's ecological criticism emphasizing the inseparable nature of one's body and the body of nature.

However, more importantly, the circular time is mostly attributed to Victoria in the play. From the perspective of gender, this can be understood as "the gendering of 'Father Time' in Harvey's terms. Given that, Forman argues that attributing cyclical times of nature to the female is an imposition of women as the "strangers in the world of male-defined time."¹⁴⁴ The gender is appropriately hinted in the play. To illustrate, Victoria inquires, "You been stalking me like a hind?"¹⁴⁵ Similarly, the same Victoria from 1936 confronts Euan's statements on her pregnancy:

Euan You can't leave it, Victoria.
Your father's the minister.
You can't leave a child growing in you and not speak of it.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Frieda J Forman, "Feminizing Time: An Introduction," **Taking Our Time: Feminist Perspectives on Temporality**, Ed. by. Frieda J. Forman and Caoran Sowton, Oxford, Pergamon, 1989, p.1.

¹⁴⁵ Greig, **Victoria**, p.33.

¹⁴⁶ **Ibid.**, p.34.

Concerning her pregnancy, Victoria is chained by the bounds of her body as well as the norms and systems of patriarchy. Still, Victoria constantly resists being bound, and male figures are taken as agencies to help her leave. The father time is mainly manifested through Young Victoria's relationship with his father. The clash is hinted by how Victoria is a psychology student, and Euan Sutherland just opposes her by saying, "This is the psychology," while taking the money out of his wallet.¹⁴⁷ Accordingly, Young Victoria offers men money to make them stay and love her. This implies her disturbed relationship with his father, which is material and uncommunicative. Following that, while burning her grandfather's journal, she sets fire to thousands of cash. Suitably, since the expressions on her body mirror the *transcorporeal* entanglement of matters and she is a pilgrim that neoliberal totalitarianism makes the world uninhabitable for, Victoria's femininity counterposes a male-defined nature, time, psychology, and economy.

Besides endowing a pilgrim attribute to Victoria, it can be stated that according to Bauman's ideas on identity, Euan is a *flaneur* or a *stroller* who sees others only as actors in his story, does not fear the consequences of his deeds and only shops from the repertoire of the world at his pleasure.¹⁴⁸ This stereotypical representation can be attributed to corporate businesspeople in globalisation plays, considering their Machiavellian disposition towards humans and non-human others. As Connolly represents, the tourist similarly comes forward as the systematic seeker of experience.¹⁴⁹ Considerably, globalisation plays problematises the questions of identity from a poststructuralist and postmodernist perspective; while, offering the new types of the globalised world as tourists and businesspeople.

Apart from fragmented characterisation, the global transformation in the twentieth century is embodied through the representation of media and transport to signify rising connectivity. The play treats mobility as a privilege solely to aristocracy in the first act. Secondly, the helicopter crash is a signification of the networks of neoliberalism with a permeating scope in 1974. Lastly, the third act presents more

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.145.

¹⁴⁸ Bauman, *op.cit.*, pp.26-27.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.29.

mobility of people compared to the previous two periods. As such, Old Victoria cherishes:

Last time I crossed this water.
I was on a ship
Moved more slowly.
I just want to see the water.
So I know I'm moving
The plane takes off.¹⁵⁰

Old Victoria wants to see water to know she is moving. This reflects the difference in generational understanding of high-speed mobility. While the Victoria of 1936 is desperate to leave but without means, Old Victoria's return to the Highlands by aeroplane emphasises the expanding *global connectivity*.

Suitably, while repetitive dialogues and scenes create a paced narrative, they also symbolise the rising connectivity through transport and the flow of images through media, thereby causing a *time-space compression* in which "the more global interrelations become, the more internationalised our dinner ingredients and our money flows, and the more spatial barriers disintegrate."¹⁵¹ Through these repetitive scenes, with their observation of patterns, the audience can become alienated, and their experience of duration is also compressed, creating temporality or a sense of timelessness.

The pace is accelerated through the increased number of repetitive remarks, scenes, and events towards the end of the play; thereby, through repetitions, Greig also changes the pace of the play from stagnant to rapid. This technical approach mirrors the acceleration due to globalisation characterised by the flow of imageries via media, people and capital. As stressed in all acts, speed is portrayed as an upcoming force and a result of the globalisation process. Similarly, it creates a *time-space compression* through the last dialogue of Vicky, Victoria and Old Victoria.

¹⁵⁰ Greig, **Victoria**, p.130.

¹⁵¹ Harvey, "Between," p.427.

In **Victoria**, David Greig utilises media representation to explore the shifting perception of locality under globalisation. Media plays a pivotal role in the play, highlighting the tension between local and international influences.

The first significant reference to media in the play comes through a failed attempt at radio reception. In the first act, Margaret, wanting to listen to BBC radio, tries to get reception in the Highlands, asking, “Do you have wireless?”¹⁵² The hiss of failed reception implies the resilience of the land to the greater change that emerges from the modernity and not-yetness. Suitably, as a sign of the early twentieth century or the pre-globalisation period, the deterritorialised place in its locality is close to the networks of media, newspapers, and fast communication. Lord Allan’s comment on the radio clarifies the isolation of the land to the mobility of images and information as follows: “**Lord Allan** There was a time when it would take months for the latest news from London to reach this house.”¹⁵³ This comment underscores the delayed flow of information in rural communities, contrasting the rapid dissemination of news in urban centres.

Apart from radio, newspapers also serve as a marker of connectivity. However, his access to this newspaper was indirect—he only saw a few lines of it, as it had been repurposed as wrapping paper:

Oscar In the paper they said the British have dug lines around Huesca.

Euan When did you see a paper?

Oscar It was a line or two in the Scotsman.

Jeanie’s sister had used a page to wrap her hat when she came back from Perth for Ally’s funeral.¹⁵⁴

This scarce engagement with newspaper trivializes the national belonging. As Benedict Anderson argues, print technology played a crucial role in the rise of nationalism, binding communities through shared media consumption.¹⁵⁵ However, in

¹⁵² Greig, **Victoria**, p.15.

¹⁵³ **Ibid.**, p.56.

¹⁵⁴ **Ibid.**, p.43.

¹⁵⁵ Benedict Anderson, **Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism**, New York, Verso, 2006, *passim*.

Victoria, the Highlanders' national belonging is already fading, as globalisation erodes local identity.

David Greig also employs media to symbolize the collision of modernity and tradition. Regardless of the numerous attempts of servants, the contraption fails throughout the act. The failed contraption also further signifies a psychological reaction to the change. David's adulterous intercourse with Shona leads to a tragedy. Hence, the sexual relationship can be regarded as the undermining of old values by Europeanism and modernity. As the representative of modernity, David initiates the disruption of tradition through sexuality. Reception intervenes with the speeches by giving a dramatic effect to scandalous secrets the characters share:

Victoria He made you?
You seen Gavin [...]
Shona Tell nobody.
I'll loose my job. I'll need to leave [...]
White Noise.¹⁵⁶

After eavesdropping on the secret, Gavin, Shona's boyfriend, stops trying to find a wireless connection and leaves the radio open with no connection. The white noise reveals the disruptiveness of the modernisation process to local communities that are forced to adapt to change and caught unprepared. Bauman's idea of *negative globalisation* marked by ambiguity with constant and unadaptable change is portrayed through the catastrophe caused by the disruption of locals' values through modernity.

Compared to the failed contraption in the first act, the second act includes home TV setups. Personal televisions both signify heightened interconnectivity and political consciousness. Euan describes his fascination with broadcasting: "This television is state-of-the-art."¹⁵⁷ Euan's mother, Shoana, argues that his father sees the television as an arena of propaganda. Similarly, Anthony Giddens exemplifies the political importance of television: "[t]elelevision played a direct role in the 1989

¹⁵⁶ Greig, **Victoria**, p.45.

¹⁵⁷ **Ibid.**, p.75.

revolutions, which have rightly been called the first ‘television revolutions.’ Street protests taking place in one country were watched by television audiences in other, large numbers of whom then took to the streets themselves.”¹⁵⁸ Thus, television does not only allude to the expanding connectivity through media at the time but also to a political body to be created with it.

Compared to personal, home setups, television is also represented in a communal activity in the play. Rebellato clarifies David Greig’s point of view of Scottish nationalism as followed: “I’d suggest that David sees little merit in simplistic and narrow definitions of Scottish national identity because it’s the very slipperiness of Scottishness that is its prime virtue”¹⁵⁹ The characters’ responses to national belonging in **Victoria** are manifested on an emblematic level:

The pub
Evening
A television on showing international football. [...]
The camera is following the team as it sings the anthem.
Flower of Scotland
Euan is watching
Maggie is watching.
Norrie is watching.
Patrick is watching
Bryce is watching.
David and **Billy** are watching.¹⁶⁰

The identical wording across acts suggests a ritualistic, almost mechanical engagement with nationalism. The description of the scene is repeated in the second and last acts with the same wording. This depiction critiques nationalism since pubs are generally regarded as working-class gathering spots in the UK, accompanied by another working-class activity: football.

¹⁵⁸ Anthony Giddens, **Runaway World: How Globalisation is Reshaping Our Lives**, New York, Routledge, 2000, pp.32-33.

¹⁵⁹ Rebellato, “Introduction”, p.xi.

¹⁶⁰ Greig, **Victoria.**, p.171.

As the quote persistently repeats “watching”, it describes a mundane passivity related to solidarity and national belonging. In this sense, the national symbol, the Flower of Scotland, becomes redundant to what it symbolises. Even though each act is set in a different period of the same century, the sequence of the names, and the activity is pursued in the same pattern. The uniformity of the names is functional in tearing individuals from their agencies emphasising their passivity in the systematic suppression and inequality they are subjected to. The references to media, in this sense, are practical in illustrating the networks of collectives and their complications while offering notions of ideologies such as nationalism.

Oscar’s funeral in the third act marks another criticism of nationalism and its dissolution into transnationalism. When she sees the coffin wrapped in a Spanish flag, Victoria asks her mother, “What’s the flag mean?” Her mother, Vicky, responds, “A man came from the Spanish Embassy. They awarded all the international brigades Spanish citizenship [...] They brought the flag.”¹⁶¹ Accordingly, as people, civic identities become transnational and international due to globalisation. This instance also epitomises Greig’s discarding of fixed, linear definitions of national belonging.

Throughout the play, media serves multiple functions—as a symbol of modernity, a disruptor of tradition, a facilitator of globalisation, and a tool for political activism. Ultimately, Greig presents media as a double-edged force - one that can accelerate capitalist expansion but also mobilise opposition against it.

One of the most defining aspects of globalisation is the mobility of people, goods, and information facilitated by transport and media. David Greig captures this dynamic in **Victoria** through key characters who embody different stages of global transformation. David and Margaret represent the arrival of modernity, while Victoria, Carter, and Euan symbolize the spread of neoliberalism. In contrast, Annie and the environmental activists stand as defenders of the land, resisting capitalist expansion. These figures introduce external ideologies that challenge the local way of life, creating tensions that drive change.

The play unfolds across three different historical moments, each reflecting the transformations and struggles of the Highlands under globalisation. Throughout,

¹⁶¹ **Ibid.**, p.136.

media technology plays a pivotal role in expanding *global connectivity* and *awareness*, reinforcing how locality is reshaped by external forces. However, these media devices do more than document change—they also reflect the characters' psychology, exposing internal conflicts, ideological divisions, and the ongoing tension between nationalism and cosmopolitanism.

Additionally, Zygmunt Bauman's concept of *negative globalisation* is particularly relevant to **Victoria**. Bauman critiques globalisation's unequal distribution of benefits, linking it to neoliberal expansion, economic insecurity, and the pervasive fear of war and uncertainty. Greig's play echoes these concerns, offering a critique of Americanisation, self-interest, capitalist accumulation, and class divisions. As Marxist theory provides the foundation for most critiques of neoliberalism, **Victoria** explores class stratification, socio-economic hardship, and the persistence of economic inequality in the Highlands.

While globalisation introduces economic and ideological challenges, **Victoria** also highlights localisation as a potential response to these pressures. The struggles of the Highlanders mirror the broader issues faced by rural communities worldwide, reinforcing Greig's focus on place-based identity. Given the central role of geography in Greig's plays, this chapter has examined how the Highlanders' material, spiritual, and emotional connections to their land shape their experience of globalisation.

A key example of this geographical transformation is the mountain itself, which serves as a site of capitalist accumulation and ecological destruction. The play exposes the neoliberal networks of trade and industrialisation that commodify the land, stripping it of its cultural and historical significance. Meanwhile, public spaces such as police stations, councils, and pubs illustrate how governmental authority, and societal interactions shift under economic and political change.

Finally, this chapter has analysed David Harvey's concept of *time-space compression* in relation to **Victoria**'s pacing and structure. Through repetition and overlapping dialogues between the three Victorias, Greig symbolises the contraction of distance and time, reflecting the accelerated speed of global transport, communication, and economic integration. Harvey's theories provide a crucial lens

for understanding the intricate connections between globalisation, politics, and time perception in the play.

The following chapter will extend this analysis by examining how Kieran Hurley's **Rantin** engages with similar global themes, particularly through music, storytelling, and participatory performance.



CHAPTER TWO

THE MUSIC OF OUR NATION AND DIFFERENCE: COSMOPOLITANISM AND NEOLIBERALISM IN KIERAN HURLEY'S RANTIN

2.1. ETHNOSCAPES, DETERRITORIALIZATION, NEOLIBERALISM AND IDENTITY IN KIERAN HURLEY'S RANTIN

Kieran Hurley's **Rantin**, co-authored with Liam Hurley, Gav Prentice, Julia Taudevin, and Drew Wright, is a play that blends experimental storytelling, music, and performance to explore themes of globalisation, identity, and neoliberalism. With its fragmented, multi-layered structure, the play challenges traditional theatrical forms, portraying a diverse range of characters and places across Scotland. This chapter examines the play through Arjun Appadurai's concepts of cultural globalisation, *deterritorialised communities*, and *ethnoscapes*. These terms reveal the role of media in shaping identities and spatial division in multicultural societies. Additionally, it discusses the tension between tradition and modernity and critiques neoliberalism. Finally, **Rantin**'s cosmopolitan and humanitarian values are analysed in relation to international politics.

The play is structured around multiple narratives, each centred on different characters: Howard, an American of Scottish descent, travels to Scotland seeking a romanticised connection to his ancestral homeland. Miriam, a Palestinian refugee in Scotland, journeys on a bus to her first job. Gregor, a young man from a traditional rural community, grapples with the decision to leave for a better future. Kenny, a high-status businessman, embodies the corporate elite's values of global capitalism. MacPherson, a drunkard and street ranter, represents the disenfranchised underclass. Emma, an employee conducting a poll on digital connectivity, critiques the illusion of social connection in modern media. Shona, a student, questions history and national identity.

To attune to the plurality of voices on stage, **Rantin** deliberately challenges vertical structures—both architectural and social—that define modern cities. By breaking down traditional hierarchies of plot, spatial division, and class relations, the play brings complex, modern society onto the stage for a form of reconciliation. The play represents multiple locations, such as cities: Devon in East England, Clydebank, Edinburgh, and towns: St. Andrews, Port Glasgow, and Methil in Scotland. It also includes cafes, high-class private dining rooms, pubs, and kitchens. To “aestheticise the political”¹⁶² Cities, in this sense, are not merely backdrops but active components of the play’s representation of global and multicultural interactions.

Designed to be performed in pubs across Scotland, **Rantin** embraces the informal, communal nature of these spaces. Pubs serve as meta-theatrical settings where strangers meet, share stories, and participate in collective narratives. The play’s minimalist stage - devoid of elaborate props, costumes, or backstage areas- centres storytelling as the primary focus. This highlights the characters’ stories, drawing the audience into a shared experience.

The play’s non-linear narration, divided into “SHORT STORIES,” offers a panoramic view of Scotland. These fragments underscore social inequalities, globalisation’s effects, and the changing landscape of national belonging. To illustrate, Hurley introduces an 8-year-old boy, Asjad, in “SHORT STORIES (1)”:

Magic! So now he runs, skipping and hopping past the fruit stalls, the halal butchers, the Irish pubs, away from his mum shouting after him in Urdu, past the bookies, past the old blue rinse ladies, past the Romani kids playing football, past the block lettered sign on the evangelical church telling all below that Christ Died For Our Sins [...].¹⁶³

¹⁶² Diana Brydon, “The White Inuit Speaks: Contamination as Literary Strategy,” **The Post-Colonial Studies Reader**, Ed. by. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, London, Routledge, 2003, p.137.

¹⁶³ Kieran Hurley, **Rantin**, London, Oberon Books, 2014, p.16.

A striking example is the portrayal of Asjad, an 8-year-old boy, running through a city filled with halal butchers, Irish pubs, Romani children, and evangelical churches. This imagery encapsulates the coexistence of different ethnic groups within the same urban environment, demonstrating the reality of *detrterritorialised communities* defining the global flows of people, reshaping the national imagery. In this cultural pluralism, the play re-defines national belonging, presenting a catalogue of characters and their problems.

Appadurai explains that an acute loyalty and devotion to “the ideas of the homeland” has become “more deeply territorial than ever” in the case of *detrterritorialisation* such as migration, exile and terror. The *detrterritorialised communities* divergently follow their style of nationalism—which can be transnational or post-national—and trans-culture—now mediated by the global media-.

Additionally, Hurley points out the reasons behind social division, such as xenophobia, disconnection, and class-based differences through the play. In this light, the media is represented as connecting but alienating and causing social division. In this light, Appadurai clarifies:

The landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree.¹⁶⁴

These movements have occurred in multiethnic cities and neighbourhoods. *Detrterritorialised communities* acknowledge their small circles and families as the “microcosm of [their] culture” deepening the division and alienation¹⁶⁵ Appadurai notes that these kinds of subnational and transnational groups significantly transform the conceptualisation of localities.¹⁶⁶ Today, these spaces constitute the separation and heterogeneity in metropolitan cities as an outcome of globalisation.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.33.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p.45.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.45.

The play references the post-9/11 *fear culture*, as seen in an airport scene where an announcement warns of an “unexpected item in the bagging area.”¹⁶⁷ This subtle allusion to global terror highlights the paranoia surrounding migration and borders in contemporary society.

Similarly, Hurley critiques *digital connectivity* through Emma’s role as a market researcher. The play exposes how corporations manipulate social connection for profit, reducing individuals to mere data points. Emma’s questionnaire asks people how “connected” they feel, parodying the superficial ways in which modern technology claims to foster relationships while fostering social alienation:

JULIA: Emma [...] She’s here to find out what people of Glasgow think about communication and connectivity. In their area. And whether or not their experience would be positively enhanced by greater access to community building features and the integration of accessible social elements. You know, apps and that.¹⁶⁸

Here, connectivity is allusively and sarcastically handled, offering a societal critique, as social media and apps have become the sources of disconnection rather than connecting people. Hurley problematises the isolating disposition of cities, neoliberalism and media as illustrated by Emma’s poll since the poll includes questionnaires such as “Please indicate overall how well connected you feel by your service provider in your area”.¹⁶⁹ This allusion is stressed through the options in the poll ranging from very connected to disconnected under multiple questions.

Fittingly, Kieran Hurley, problematises the modern problems. Like maps and science, the use of data refers to a scientific rationalisation of human interactions and preferences. It offers a close surveillance of people’s lives for consumerist reasons. Robert Hassan notes:

¹⁶⁷ Kieran, *Rantin*, p.33.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.37.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.38.

How does [digitality] produce culture? How do we consume it? What, precisely, is the 'connection' between you and me and the virtual network that pervades our physical world by means of digital bit-streams that colonise our consciousness through the ubiquity and relentlessness of its commercial message? [...] what sense do we 'produce' when digital technology ensures that we don't even have to be aware that we are 'producing' the data that is being harvested, almost constantly, if we carry a smartphone?¹⁷⁰

Suitably, the reference to consumer data in the part, problematises the transformation of knowledge, way of knowing and transmitting of information. In this sense, David Harvey argues some ethical questions on data: "Who will have access to them? Who will determine which channels or data are forbidden? The State?"¹⁷¹ From this perspective, the play underlines companies' reduction of people into numbers and consumers, reflecting the innovative and contemporary ways of totalitarianism.

Similarly, Miriam's story highlights the complexities of migration and national belonging. A Palestinian refugee, she struggles to reconcile her past with her new life in Scotland: "She is 42 years old. Born two and a half thousand miles away in Ramallah, occupied territories of the Palestinian West Bank."¹⁷² The play refers to the prolonged Israeli occupation in Ramallah through the representation of Miriam. The reference to Ramallah in the Palestinian West Bank offers a discussion of global war and the international migrant crisis related to it. In this sense, Miriam's immigration is an outcome of, in Appadurai's terms, a "diaspora for hope", defining an escape from the unimaginable terrors of war.¹⁷³ The idea can be supported by "She has been driven here, buffeted and blown here on the roch wind of forces beyond her control. But she pushes on anyway."¹⁷⁴ The quote illustrates that Miriam has no choice except to escape from the terrors of war, characterising a cause of migration.

¹⁷⁰ Robert Hassan, "Digital Alienation," **The Condition of Digitality: A Post-Modern Marxism for the Practice of Digital Life**, Westminster, University of Westminster Press, 2020, pp.159-160. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvw1d5k0.9>.

¹⁷¹ David Harvey **The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change**, Oxford, Blackwell, 1992, p.6.

¹⁷² Hurley, **Rantin**, p.19.

¹⁷³ Appadurai, **op. cit.**, p.6.

¹⁷⁴ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.19.

Migration includes economic and societal dimensions, as well as political dimensions. Fittingly, the storytelling continues: “But now, she is here, in Clydebank. On her way to her first shift in a new job. A cleaning job?”¹⁷⁵ Her journey to her first job—cleaning—highlights the economic realities of migrant labour. Like many immigrants in Europe, Miriam is relegated to low-wage, unskilled work despite her broader aspirations. The play critiques the economic disparities underpinning global migration, illustrating how neoliberalism exploits migrant labour while offering little social inclusion.

Appadurai argues that globalisation does not erase local identities but transforms them into new hybrid forms. **Rantin** reflects this idea through Miriam’s experience of cultural dislocation. She describes Scotland as a “mongrel nation,” struggling to reconcile her understanding of national identity with her experience of displacement.

KIERAN: Someone once said to her, Scotland, it is a mongrel nation. And she laughed thinking of the small scabby yappy dog that always leaves a shit on the street [...] A nation like this she thought.¹⁷⁶

The author William McIlvanney called Scotland a mongrel nation in his speech, referring to ethnic multiplicity in Scotland.¹⁷⁷ Alastair Niven demographically comments, “Scotland is now – and in earlier times was – a composite nation, melding together several ethnic elements. Unlike a country such as Iceland, with its extraordinary racial and cultural homogeneity, Scotland, as far back as we have knowledge of its human history, has always been an admixture of peoples.”¹⁷⁸ For

¹⁷⁵ **Ibid.**, p.19.

¹⁷⁶ **Ibid.**, p.20.

¹⁷⁷ Kevin McKenna, “William McIlvanney: not Just Godfather of ‘Tartan Noir’ but Lion of Literature,” 5 Dec 2015 (Online) <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/dec/05/william-mcilvanney-not-just-godfather-of-tartan-noir-but-lion-of-literature>. 12 Jan 2025.

¹⁷⁸ Alastair Niven, “New Diversity, Hybridity and Scottishness.” **Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume 3: Modern Transformations: New Identities (from 1918)**, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2007, p.321.

Miriam, compared to her ethnically homogenous and pre-industrial motherland, Scotland's realities are challenging to comprehend.

Miriam's comparison between Ramallah and Scotland demonstrates the cultural and demographic differences refugees try to internalise and adapt to. This difference is based on economic and technological developments such as the industrialisation of European countries. Thus, the playwright's idea of privilege is expressed through how the colonial past of developed countries is the source of their wealth: "In St Andrews, Colette sits in a café, patiently explaining to a friend how the town was built on the sugar, coffee, slaves, and blood of her people."¹⁷⁹ Accordingly, Collette highlights British imperialism and industrialisation, which led to post-industrialised nations' modern wealth. In the same vein, Miriam considers: "Half the world want[s] to be here, in this place, away from their own stories. And these people think they have heavy duty times."¹⁸⁰ This idea is based on the hypocritical nature of neoliberalism, which also underpins poverty in developing countries.

Likewise, the tension between inclusion and exclusion or adaptation and alienation epitomise the societal aspect of immigration:

She feels the disapproving gaze of the woman in the seat opposite hers. She looks up. The woman instantly looks away, staring out the window, at nothing. She thinks to herself.

JULIA: I'm here you know I'm here too. [...]

JULIA: You don't have to pretend you can't see me. And you can't just wish me away. Grumpy cow.¹⁸¹

The disapproving gaze of the woman portrays a sign of xenophobia. Similarly, the foundation of xenophobia is introduced in *SHORT STORIES*. In "SHORT STORIES (2)", Kieran describes another scene of a fourteen-year-old boy: "[...] in a bus shelter in Aberdeen, Liam, 14 years old, takes a permanent marker from his pocket and writes

¹⁷⁹ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.31.

¹⁸⁰ **Ibid.**, p.20.

¹⁸¹ **Ibid.**, p.19.

‘ALL POLES GO HOME’ underneath a drawing of swastika. He’s drawn that the right way wound, aye? He’s sure that was the way his brother taught him.”¹⁸² Thus, the part treats hatred for others as a learned behaviour. By positioning clashing dualities of instances and identities, the play decodes hatred. In the face of her conditions, Miriam rationalises ways for inclusion and a sense of belonging. To do so, she reminisces about her son’s words on how this job shows that she now belongs to the place and that she may apply for citizenship. This type of questioning renders Miriam’s bus journey an active journey for self-identification.

As the music and storytelling become an analogy of belonging and the characters resolve their confusion and disappointments, Hurley brings a resolution to Miriam’s confusion and exclusion through a musical action. Demanding recognition, she takes off an iPhone that her son gave her. After picking a “London” song, she turns the volume up. Martin Stokes argues, "Migrants and refugees might identify with the popular genres produced by the dominant group, especially if these have sentimental points of connection with an imagined rural world and uncorrupted moral order.”¹⁸³ Her microcosmic resistance is supported by the sound of music that disturbs the other passengers since Miriam speculates:

JULIA: What if they all heard this music, with their heavy-duty faces? Maybe all the bus would sing along? Maybe even this woman here.¹⁸⁴

By turning on the volume, Miriam claims her existence and space in the bus and society. Her bus journey is essential in the sense that bus is a public space and a microcosm of the nation. This implies that these identities want to be part of the story, songs, and performance. Miriam’s dualistic sentiments of belonging are supported by her resistant and determinant gaze against the dominant, separatist, racist, and xenophobic gaze, as she catches the eye of the woman who has not turned to the other side for a long time. Thereby, Miriam claims her presence in society.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p.35.

¹⁸³ Martin Stokes, “Introduction: Ethnicity, Identity and Music,” **Ethnicity, Identity and Music**, Oxford, Berg, 1994, p.18.

¹⁸⁴ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.42.

Hurley also discusses being cosmopolitan or leaving your space as a counterpoint to being local and traditional through the representation of Gregory. With a Gaelic lullaby, “Griogal Cridhe”, composed by Mór Chaimbeul. The narration transitions to Gregor, who represents the younger Scottish generation and represents a local identity. Dated to 1570, Griogal Cridhe can be translated as “Gregor of the heart” or “Beloved Gregor”. One of “the most famous and most graphic” Scottish lullabies that are quite prevalent in Gaelic convention.¹⁸⁵ His grandmother sings the song to Gregor during his childhood. As an islander, on his way to Glasgow, Gregor passes Minch, a strait separating Lewis and Harris islands. Coming from the Scottish islands in the northwest of Scotland, through Gregory’s, Hurley portrays the elements of traditional society that can be regarded in opposition to modernity and big industrial cities.

These islands are situated at the edges of Scotland, one of the few places where Gaelic is still spoken. Towards the end, Gregor talks of “puggy,” a bagpipe in the vernacular. The bagpipe, a signifier of Scotland’s Celtic origin, refers to Scottish roots.¹⁸⁶ Concerning the argument, the representation of Gregor marks smaller communities that still adopt their peculiar cultural traditions. Gregor’s story also signifies the uneven geography and spread of globalisation, as the traditional representation of local groups contradicts the globalisation that has stipulated modernity through Europeanism and Americanisation. To justify his leave, Gregor speaks to himself: “This isn’t one of those sad stories alright? This isn’t about the island mourning another lost son.”¹⁸⁷ Lines refer to how rural parts stuck in locality suffer from underpopulation and migration due to education and underemployment. However, Gregor explains his urge to leave the island: “KIERAN: [...] There’s only so long you can stay on the island after all. I mean if you really want to find out about the world, about yourself, if you really want to contribute, you have to get out.”¹⁸⁸ Suitably, Hurley’s coming-of-age theme that actualises through leaving your comfort

¹⁸⁵ June. S. Sawyers, **Celtic Music: A Complete Guide**, w. Place. De Capo Press, 2001, p.126.

¹⁸⁶ **Ibid.**, p.5.

¹⁸⁷ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.23.

¹⁸⁸ **Ibid.**, p.22.

zone is stressed. The same urge for discovery and cosmopolitan wonder of being somewhere else is also given as opposed to locality. The additional lyrics written by Gav Prentice to the song mark Gregor's situation of being local:

I thought one day we'd all agreed
We'd never take the gold
We'd never take the king's and queen's
Now I'm the only one unsold.¹⁸⁹

This 16th-century song, deeply embedded in Gaelic culture, symbolises Gregor's roots and the weight of tradition, unveiling the tensions between tradition and modernity.

As Howard and Miriam, who are on the move, Gregor's in-between-placeness is illustrated through his questioning process. He considers whether he betrays his family, values, and community by leaving his hometown for a better future. This underlines that the play emphasises novelty brought by experiencing new places.

Similarly, Emma displays the same view of the cosmopolitan search for new experiences as a means of growth and understanding:

She didn't need to go home. She didn't need a home. Each day in a new town. [...] But right now, Emma just wants to fill her life with stories. Come on Glasgow, she thinks. I am in you.¹⁹⁰

This form of belongingness is significant in innovation and inclusiveness, as it rejects fixed and stabilised definitions of tradition and being from only one place. This approach to identity is highlighted by the fact that every character in the play is somehow on the move, crossing their circles and 'borders'.

Accordingly, Hurley's characters adopt divergent views on belonging. As the play title suggests, the emphasis that every character is on the move underlines the

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.23.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.40.

transformative aspect of becoming and the distortion of fixed identities. The underpinning of transformation can be conceptualised by Hurley's hope for the future made possible by saying "Yes" to innovation and moving forward. This leads to his perception of nationalism, neoliberalism and cosmopolitanism.

Similarly, the play alludes to the Scottish gypsy heritage. The inclusion of Thomas Armstrong's "Come All Ye Tramps and Hawkers" references Scotland's gypsy heritage, emphasizing themes of migration and displacement. Scottish *hawkers*—nomadic traders—historically roamed the land, existing outside mainstream capitalist structures¹⁹¹. The song reinforces **Rantin's** critique of capitalism while celebrating the cultural significance of leaving one's space and seeking new experiences. Even the title of the play, "MacPherson's Rant" alludes to this heritage. Jamie MacPherson, a fiddler and composer, was himself a hawker. In this way, Hurley's characters are in motion, mirroring the play's embrace of multiple perspectives and spaces.

From this perspective, Howard's, the first character's, story directly gives an *aerial view* by "[play] starts, for our purposes, right here under this old railway arch in Glasgow, with each of you here. But it also starts, among other places, above our heads, here."¹⁹² In line with this, the *aerial view* corresponds to a greater context and the world outside the Scottish periphery. Howard's in-between placelessness functions metaphorically and literally because he is neither in the States nor Scotland. The story unfolds Howard's flight from the States to Scotland, his landing and his first expressions of the country. Conclusively, from a cosmopolitan perspective, his journey unfolds the transformative aspect of being on the move. Accordingly, the activeness of characters simultaneously represents the way of life that enables fast travel and communication.

Raised in an *ethnoscape* of Scottish immigrants in the United States, Howard's story addresses the issues of transnationalism and the Scottish diaspora. It also explores the influence of media on national identity, exemplifying the media's role in shaping *ethnoscapes*. Appadurai pinpoints how new groups and self-identification are

¹⁹¹ Sawyers, **op. cit.**, p.177.

¹⁹² **Ibid.**, p.3.

formed in different neighbourhoods of cities and their cultural ideas are driven by the images of media:

Those who wish to move, those who have moved, those who wish to return, and those who choose to stay rarely formulate their plans [...] and telephone. For migrants, both the politics of adaptation to new environments and the stimulus to move or return are deeply affected by a mass-mediated imaginary that frequently transcends national space. [...] [D]eterritorialization creates new markets for film companies, impresarios, and travel agencies, which thrive on the need of the relocated population for contact with its homeland. But the homeland is partly invented, existing only in the imagination of the deterritorialized groups.¹⁹³

Accordingly, Howard's presumptions about Scotland are based on his imagination, which is driven by the productions of Hollywood, Disney, and the Scottish national symbols. This underscores the global media's impact on nationalism and identity. Howard's ruminations include important references to cinema, regardless of the anachronism of his perception. These media images reduce the importance of national space and distance considering national belonging.

Viewed through this perspective, -in Rebellato's terms- a "Brave-heart nationalism"¹⁹⁴ is offered through the representation of the character. For this aim, the play exemplifies the empowerment through these popular images:

He was 50 years old when he first watched **Braveheart** and it changed his life. Even if some of it was made up, sure, I mean Howard's nobody's fool. But that very week he bought himself a kilt. Jeez Louise he felt powerful. His varicose roots swelled out of his Celtic warrior legs, and he knew at that moment that one day those warrior muscles were going to take him home.¹⁹⁵

Howard's idea of the kilt—the Scottish national symbol—is associated with “the heroic deeds of the Scottish soldier” and clanship, especially during the 18th century

¹⁹³ Appadurai, **op. cit.**, pp.6-49.

¹⁹⁴ Rebellato, “Introduction,” p.xii.

¹⁹⁵ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.11.

and the Napoleonic Wars.¹⁹⁶ Hence, the part highlights the anachronism in Howard's perception of Scotland, signified by "varicose roots swelled out of his Celtic warrior legs," and also alludes to the empowerment through these cultural and national imageries.

Popular productions such as **Braveheart**, **Trainspotting**, and **Brave** significantly influence Howard's transnational identity. In his transnational building, these films and Howard's references to Bubbi Burns, a Scottish poet, illustrate how media, particularly Hollywood and Disneyland, play a pivotal role in shaping his perception of Scotland. His deep attachment to these cinematic productions renders him a deterritorialised viewer, disconnected from the physical reality of Scotland.¹⁹⁷ This also alludes to his community in the States as a "diasporic public sphere".¹⁹⁸ **Trainspotting** reflects "Welsh's post-Thatcher dystopia", the inevitable poverty upon the dissolution of the well-fare state.¹⁹⁹ **Brave** depicts the Highlands landscape by sticking to the facts, even in the granite rocks.²⁰⁰ Nonetheless, Howard's cinematic repertoire is inadequate for forming a realistic understanding of Scottish social realities. However, these images affect his transnational self-identification, made possible through global media.

Accordingly, after watching **Trainspotting**, Howard thinks: "This is so fucking exotic."²⁰¹ Howard's romanticisation of Scotland is scrutinised through his selection of adjectives. He contemplates: "Googling the real meaning of those mysterious and ancient sounding words,"²⁰² The choice of 'mysterious' and 'ancient' adjectives illustrates his romanticised perception of the culture. His reference to "Scotland's national bard", Robert Burns²⁰³ was a traditional lyrics writer through

¹⁹⁶ Devine, **Clanship**, p.87.

¹⁹⁷ Appadurai, **op. cit.**, p.4.

¹⁹⁸ **Ibid.**, p.4.

¹⁹⁹ Michael Gardiner, **From Trocchi to Trainspotting: Scottish Critical Theory Since 1960**, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p.89.

²⁰⁰ Laura Barnett "A Scottish Historian on Brave" 29 Aug 2012 (Online) <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2012/aug/29/scottish-historian-view-brave>. 12 Jan 2025.

²⁰¹ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.11.

²⁰² **Ibid.**, p.10.

²⁰³ Sawyers, **op. cit.**, p.153.

which “national consciousness” is expressed”²⁰⁴, symbolises hyped nationalist feelings of Howard. Consecutively, after landing, he realises: “nobody speaks Gaelic stuff anymore. To be honest he’s not really sure why they bother doing the road signs in two languages”.²⁰⁵ When he gets off the taxi, “a shattering disappointment and inevitable defeat”²⁰⁶ captures him. His first encounter with Scotland reveals itself to be anti-climactic.

Right after, the performance of “Ae Fond Kiss” written by Robert Burns, the narration continues as: “[r]ight now, as Howard circles up ahead, he doesn’t know any of this. All he knows is that he’s trying to see himself as part of a story.”²⁰⁷ Hurley’s work elevates the concept of belonging by illustrating the power of narrative in shaping one’s identity. Howard’s experience of Scottishness, while initially rooted in romanticised notions, is seen as a journey of discovery and growth. The storytelling in the play serves as a metaphor for diversity, difference, and belonging, underscoring its profound impact on our understanding of self in the stories of others.

Although Howard’s story is a humorous, his belonging differs from ethnic and civic ideas of nationalism:

Howard returns to his Scots language phrasebook, [...] musing on the variants of the word ‘rant’ and feeling perplexed as to how a rant can be both an expression of anger and a song of joy all at once, he doesn’t know that that same man is about to [...] pick up a guitar with two strings on it, and sing a song. A song which is both an expression of anger, joy, and hope, all at once.²⁰⁸

The reference to a song as “an expression of anger, and a song of joy and hope” alludes to conflicting emotions on one’s nationalistic image: anger for its wrong policies and hatred for others, joy for sharing, and hope for its future. This reveals the play’s postmodern approach to nationalism.

²⁰⁴ Devine, **Clanship**, p.90.

²⁰⁵ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.49.

²⁰⁶ **Ibid.**, p.50.

²⁰⁷ **Ibid.**, p.51.

²⁰⁸ **Ibid.**, p.52.

Since **Rantin** was produced in 2013, a year before the Scottish Referendum, “a gradual increase in public involvement in the independence campaigns characterises the period. In this political context, the tensions between being apart and being together played out on a national scale.”²⁰⁹ Accordingly, Hurley considers what independence might bring and hopes for new possibilities.

Conclusively, his idea of national belonging centres around conflicting feelings that coexist as a postmodern narrative. National belonging does not evoke a fixed and total definition since every character drives its meaning based on their different experiences in space, time, and economy. In doing so, Hurley rejects grand narratives of national discourses. The juxtaposition of differences and antinomies reveals that “[o]ne man's imagined community [can be] another man's political prison.” These differing experiences, Miriam’s adaptation, MacPherson’s destitute, Howard’s romanticisation or Kenny’s high-status life, are set against national homogeneity, mirroring the diminishing power of nationalist discourses and multiculturalist societies.

Moreover, the play critiques neoliberal values in an extended narrative, benefiting from the postmodern plurality of characters and classes. In this sense, following McGrath’s political theatre, Hurley offers a set of analogies and references to extend his criticism of neoliberalism in the play. Accordingly, considering the year that **The Cheviot** was published, the former nationalist tendencies of defining Scotland’s cultural distinctiveness and origins are replaced by defining “Scotland as a politically distinctive community.”²¹⁰ This led to a strong opposition to market capitalism in Britain. In this sense, created by the socialist 7:38 company, **The Cheviot** historically coincided with the Scots arguing “Who owns Scotland” and “Who has its Natural resources?”²¹¹ Even today, Scottish political theatre diverges by its sense of leftism on stage. In this sense, Nadine Holdsworth, a prominent critic of John McGrath’s works, informs:

²⁰⁹ David Overend, “Rantin and Raving: Kieran Hurley’s Aesthetic Communities,” **Contemporary Theatre Review**, Vol.XXIX, No:2, 2019, p.175.

²¹⁰ Jackson, **op. cit.**, pp.90-91.

²¹¹ Ali Altun, “National Issues and Their Reflections in **The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil**,” **RumelIDE Journal of Language and Literature Studies**, Vol.XX, December 2021, p.766.

In retrospect it is clear that the 1970s and early 1980s did provide a context in which political theatre could flourish, as ideological campaigns and resistance were commonplace in the social, industrial, and personal arenas. There was a resurgence of classbased activism, a phenomenon necessitated by economic crisis, high inflation, and rising unemployment.²¹²

Since the working class suffered not only from unemployment but social exclusion,²¹³ The ceilidh form, originally the focus of communal life, was convenient for sustaining a class identity. As a production of 7:38, **The Cheviot** is focused on historical instances of economic change and struggles with the representations of different classes and capitalist individuals, such as Patrick Sellar.

Likewise, at the National Collective Edinburgh Session, Hurley explains: “[...] defending working-class games of all kinds is vital and urgent, and independence should be viewed as a first act of defence against the relentless advance of 21st-century neoliberalism.”²¹⁴ As such, as an epitome of *negative globalisation*, Hurley’s criticism of neoliberalism is expressed in **Rantin** through multiple analogies and references. However, besides the class-based seclusion, the play treats the contemporary seclusion that neoliberalism, media and urban cities have created.

Concurrently, the stereotypical representation of the business world and corporate people is encountered in the play as an element of globalisation plays. Kenny, a high-status cooperate man in “a high-class private dining room in the centre of town”, is described. Accordingly, the fact that Kenny is about to sign a contract with Chinese delegates characterises these companies that have internationally operated their influence and networks. Kenny’s taking a private jet to London simultaneously epitomises the fast mobility and high technology that the mega-corporations have been founded on. These vast networks underline global capital and the market’s complex interrelations and connections.

²¹² Nadine Holdsworth, “Good Nights Out: Activating the Audience with 7:84 (England),” **New Theatre Quarterly**, Vol.XIII, No:49, 1997, p.30.

²¹³ **Ibid.**, p.31.

²¹⁴ “Kieran Hurley: 25 Reasons for Yes.” **Youtube**, uploaded by nationalcollective, 2 Sept 2023, (Online) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8zse_7on5I&t=1s, 15 December 2024.

Furthermore, Hurley introduces Smith's terminology of the *invisible hand* as a basis for his criticism of neoliberalism. Referred several times in the play, the term is encountered in Sanjit's presentation on economics:

And in Stirling, Sanjit, a first year economics student from Devon, prepares for a presentation on Adam Smith's theory of The Invisible Hand. Seems the idea is that the free market and profit motive will make us all treat each other alright, and that an invisible hand will carry the less fortunate along, and keep the bullies all in check²¹⁵

The term originates in **An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealthy of Nations** by Scottish economist Adam Smith. The *invisible hand* necessitates foreign investment that can offer a "so-called" long-term communal benefit. However, the term is built on a loose promise: "[B]y pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it."²¹⁶ Accordingly, the term is associated with a promise of wealth and communal profit in the long term with the rise of the free market. On the contrary, the promises of these policies have been falsified, and the capital accumulation of the richest minority in the world has become more condensed and unreachable than ever.

Kenny, a high-status businessman, exemplifies the ideals of the free market. His private jet to London and negotiations with Chinese delegates illustrate the global networks of corporate capitalism. Through him, Hurley critiques the dehumanising effects of neoliberalism, encapsulated in Kenny's philosophy:

KIERAN: In this moment, as we speak, all that matters to Kenny is thrill of the chase and kill: they fucking signed. [...] It's not for ne reason they call us venture capitalist, he thinks. A venture, right? A risky or daring undertaking. A journey in which one jeopardises one's own safety and security. We are the frontiersmen. The front line of economic growth²¹⁷

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.31.

²¹⁶ Adam Smith, **An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealthy of Nations Volume 1**, Indianapolis, Liberty, 1981, p.456.

²¹⁷ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.29.

Thus, the economic aspects of global capitalism and capitalist individualism are criticised by a long analogy of Adam Smith's economic theories as the "thrill of chase and kill". The term responds to the survival of the fittest in free, global trade that necessitates predatory competition. Competition is one of the milestones of the free market as it decides the equilibrium in market rates and demands.²¹⁸ The economic terminology parallelly is continued as follows:

Nothing needs to change round here as long as there are people like him around with that hunter's instinct, with the will to win the race. And it's only a rat race if you're losing." And he continues as "Yes. The system works. It worked for him didn't it?"²¹⁹

Thus, "Hunter instinct" is fundamental to imply a connection between predators and capitalism. On the other hand, rat race—a term used in economic terms—corresponds to the spread of capitalist thinking to areas other than the workplace, such as domestic, individual, political, temporal, and social. It corresponds to "the situation in modern society in which people compete with each other for money and power" and "severe competition."²²⁰ This pinpoints the propagation of capitalistic thinking and consumerism. The term underlines competitive individualism and working immense hours to acquire material gain. In other words, neoliberalism preaches the continuation of the rat race. Kenny's mindset flaw is parallelly enlightened by his failure to connect with his daughter. Thus, the criticism of neoliberal values is negatively demonstrated in personal life and relationships. Conclusively, Hurley underlines that these characters' ethical background is self-centred at most, not to mention societal benefits and solidarity.

²¹⁸ Smith, **op. cit.**, pp.134-135.

²¹⁹ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.30.

²²⁰ "Rat Race," **Cambridge Dictionary** (Online)

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/rat-race>. 12 Jan 2025.

On the same ground, composed by Gav Prentice, “The Invisible Hand” reinforces the criticism of neoliberalism in the play:

GAV: There is a story that if only you try
The future for us all is mapped out in the sky
That as sure as the sun and the stars and the moon
The money will flow and the people will bloom
An invisible hand will guide us all along
Holds us up if we’re weak and knock us back if we’re wrong
And if it’s in this hand that you place your faith
Then we will grow
And we will grow.²²¹

It alludes to control, false promises and inequality that neoliberalism created and imposed. In this sense, Adam Smith’s *invisible hand* transforms into a totalitarian force or an ideology of power and status as stated by “holds up us if we’re weak and knock us back if we’re wrong”. Fittingly, “a future mapped out in the sky” emphasises that these neoliberalist values are imposed on people, leaving them no choice as if they are predestined. In this sense, the invisible hand is transformed into a gadget of subjugation and control. Fittingly, the song deconstructs Kenny’s propagation of capitalist ideas by revealing a contradictory commentary on the *invisible hand*.

Hurley also criticises the loss of solidarity concerning economics. To indicate the abandonment of traditional industries that the Scottish economy was founded on, the lyrics of “MacPherson’s Rant” are sung and played on the stage:

Farewell to steel, and ships and coal
The pride o’ industry
What price the cost? Oor greatest loss
Was solidarity.²²²

The lyrics refer to Scotland’s traditional industries as steel, shipbuilding and coal that if maintained “the economic history of Scotland would have been very different.”

²²¹ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.35.

²²² **Ibid.**, pp.7-8.

Scotland was a workshop that offered a market for cars, airships, and balloons based on these materials.²²³ Collapsed during the 1930s, these industries were also a powerful emblem of national identity.²²⁴ Accordingly, they were also the banners of working-class belonging. These industries are either privatised or left to decline because of their incompetency in the global market.

Since the loss of solidarity can be related to neoliberal values and loss of class consciousness, additional lyrics to “Macpherson’s Rant” support the criticism of isolation of the society under the term of *negative globalisation*. Likewise, the idea simultaneously is reflected in MacPherson’s monologues:

KIERAN: Every man for himself, eh? Every man for himself. Staring straight ahead, ignoring every other cuntr, elbowing them oot the way front ay the queu to dig our own mass grave.²²⁵

“Every man for himself” can be argued in relation to capitalist imperative of making money that does not allow any emotional bond within the society. Suitably, the second character MacPherson who is an underclass drunkard, makes use of metaphors of “broken watch” and “rat race”:

KIERAN: A broken watch. Cause a watch right it’s an invention right. That people just made up. Aboot how to organise the world, how tae go about it! And noo we cannae imagine a world witout it. Right. And that’s the system.²²⁶

“Broken watch” signifies a criticism of capitalism since it refers to structured time that manages the time of workers however it is broken. Furthermore, “the rat race” alludes to the immense working hours in which soulless workers are lost in the social roles of

²²³ Thomas M. Devine, **The Scottish Nation: A Modern History**, London, Penguin, 2012, p.271.

²²⁴ **Ibid.**, pp.642-643.

²²⁵ **Ibid.**, p.14.

²²⁶ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.13.

consuming and acquiring status. Suitably, time has a significant value in “the rat race”. In this light, considering the conceptualisation of Marx of the structured time, Harvey explains that time must be understood based on “different class perspectives, different time horizons for social calculation.”²²⁷ Conclusively, the quote enlightens the system only benefits whoever adopts its values and leaves others to destitute.

At this juncture, Hurley resembles MacPherson, the fiddler who composed “MacPherson’s Rant”, and MacPherson, the ranter in the play. Jamie MacPherson, who composed “MacPherson Rant”, was an outlaw and Scottish equivalent of Robin Hood. Remembered as the hanged fiddler, MacPherson’s story that leads up to his execution is based on the unjust accusation of stealing.²²⁸ Accordingly, as the wanderer and folk musician, MacPherson’s story is also about injustice. This correlation between the fiddler and the drunkard emphasises class-based inequality.

In this sense, it can be argued that MacPherson, the drunkard, suffers from the unjust circumstances of society. “MacPherson’s Rant” is a farewell that he played and improvised on his way to the gallows.²²⁹ Accordingly, followed by the song, MacPherson, the drunkard is described as about to fall and in misery as follows:

JULIA: Waves rising then breaking. Collapsing like all of it collapsed. The shipping.
The coalfields. The oil. The power plant
KIERAN: AW FUCKED!
JULIA: And right now, it’s Macpherson’s turn to collapse.²³⁰

The references to coalfields, oil and the power plant as collapsed underline the connection between economic criticism and the correlation between the fiddler and the ranter. Gallows is another analogy in Kieran Hurley’s set of metaphors. Pursuing the reference to the gallows in the stories of multiple characters, the play points out the beyond-borders subjugation of people under neoliberalism. However, the play

²²⁷ Harvey, “Between,” p.420.

²²⁸ Sawyers, *op. cit.*, p.73.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*

²³⁰ Hurley, *Rantin*, p.18.

creates a modern archetype of a character who cannot adapt to the system and fall into destitute

MacPherson's destituteness reflects the historical challenges for the Scotland's economic independence. This economic criticism is expanded and resolved by the appearance of a selkie, a Scottish mythological creature that can shapeshift. The selkie's mythological root is: "In order to pass through the ocean which separates them from mankind, they have to take on another form, usually that of a seal. On land they can remove their magical skin, but if they lose it they must remain where they are."²³¹ Fittingly, Selkie speaks: "We're not rats. We're human beings"²³² The part resolves the argument of neoliberalism within the conceptualisation of a culturally specific element of Selkie. The part functions as a contradiction to Kenny's affirmative ruminations and reasoning. In this sense, the juxtaposition of identities such as under-class and advantaged super-rich people empower Hurley's criticism of the unequal distribution of wealth and the discussion of class-based inequality due to global capitalism.

The play touches on Donald Trump by illustrating the supra-national global trade network. The American magazine **Jacobin**, which promotes a prominent leftist voice, characterises his capitalistic mindset as:

The essence of Trump's lumpen capitalism is expressed in many ways, beginning with his shady, illegal (or bordering on the illegal) financial operations. "Normal" capitalists will often take illegal shortcuts in pursuit of profit — like avoiding paying taxes, violating government regulations, illegally smashing union drives — all in the course of managing otherwise "normal" capitalist enterprises. For lumpen-capitalist Trump, however, those shortcuts are the principal strategy for his profit-making.²³³

²³¹ Westwood, Jennifer, Sophia Kingshill. **The Lore of Scotland: A Guide to Scottish Legends**, London, Random House Books, 2009, p.404.

²³² Hurley, **Rantin**, p.45.

²³³ Samuel Farber, "Donald Trump, Lumpen Capitalist," 19 October 2018 (Online) <https://jacobin.com/2018/10/donald-trump-lumpen-capitalist-class-elections>. 25 January 2025.

Accordingly, with an extended reference to Donald Trump, the play underscores its criticism of American ideals of free trade and neoliberalism as a starting point. Seventy-eight-year-old Ruth, from the window of her house, “looks on to the site of Trump International Golf links.” Donald Trump comes from a family of generational wealth. His ventures include constructing a second golf centre in Scotland, Aberdeenshire, while the first resort at Menie threatens a national treasure of the region's natural habitat.²³⁴ That said, Trump represents American venture capitalists who pursue profit by modifying nature and making people consumers. Accordingly, “[Ruth] thinks to herself, fit like is that Trump? I’d throttle him [...] she is singing that song in her kitchen.”²³⁵ The performers play “Donald, You’re a Loser” by Drew Wright. At this point, the narrator invites the audience to sing along. The lyrics include:

I’ve just flown in from the USA
 I’m rich and I always get my way
 But all I ever hear you say is
 ALL OTHERS: Donald You’re a loser! [...]
 They live in slums they live like pigs
 Why aren’t they working on the rigs.²³⁶

The lyrics, with their direct reference to American individualism, support Hurley’s capitalist criticism. The song also alludes to wages, inflation, and the neoliberal promise of wealth. However, Donald Trump was not America’s prime minister and lost the elections in the year that the play was staged for the first time. From a more contemporary approach, his Semitic support and anti-immigration policies cover a great amount of media coverage and news today. From this perspective, facing a lot of hatred from progressive and humanitarian circles, Donald Trump represents radical nationalism and American jingoism. He is a defender of anti-humanitarian values in his promotion of war in Palestine. From this perspective, the reference to Donald

²³⁴ “Donald Trump to Open Second Aberdeenshire Golf Course in 2025,” 7 October 2024 (Online) <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cjr3jyynxx8o>. 26 January 2025.

²³⁵ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.17.

²³⁶ **Ibid.**, pp.17-18.

Trump distinguishes Hurley's international ethics and humanitarian values concerning the Palestine war in the play.

In this aspect, global armament and war are alluded to by a reference to a nuclear submarine as follows: "Near Rosneath, by the mouth of Loch Long, Cheryl, 38, clears a bookshelf in her estranged deceased mother's house. Over the other side of the bay, nuclear submarines haunt the waters below the surface. It's so quiet here, she thinks"²³⁷ Nuclear submarines are the marine equivalents of atomic power. In addition to the implications of global armament and war, they acquire significant environmental risks and hazards in case of radioactivity leakage.²³⁸ Accordingly, Hurley refers to the high-tech weapons utilised in modern warfare. Manufactured for patrolling, nuclear submarines signify the political power of nation-states in military surveillance and deterrence. By representing a nuclear submarine, the play also thematises the function of mobility and transport due to the globalisation of war.

Hurley's cosmopolitan ethical principle that undertones the unity and responsibility beyond borders is displayed by his allying for protest the occupation of Gaza in Glasgow²³⁹ or his reciting "We are For Palestine" at a fundraiser at Lighthouse bookshop in Edinburgh.²⁴⁰ The play's final song, "Freedom Come All Ye", explicitly supports Palestinian resistance, aligning Hurley's political stance with international solidarity movements. By connecting MacPherson's gallows with an Arab boy in Gaza, **Rantin** underscores the universal struggle against oppression. Hamish Henderson's "Freedom Come All Ye", is a product of the folk revival of the 1950s and grew on a strong socialist sentiment as the result of industrial decline and poor social conditions.²⁴¹ The song is characterised as both "unmistakably Scots and totally

²³⁷ **Ibid.**, p.35.

²³⁸ Zia Mian, et. al., "Nuclear Submarines in South Asia: New Risks and Dangers," **Journal For Peace And Nuclear Disarmament**, Vol.II, No:1, 2019, pp.184–190.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/25751654.2019.1621425>, p.185.

²³⁹ Steph Brawn: "Scottish Cultural Figures Join Israeli Boycott -See the Full List" 22 March 2024 (Online) <https://www.thenational.scot/news/24202063.scottish-cultural-figures-join-israeli-boycott---see-full-list>. Jan 12, 2025.

²⁴⁰ Hurley, Kieran: "We are for Palestine: Livestream" 25 Mar 2024 (Online)
<https://lighthousebookshop.com/events/we-are-for-palestine-livestream>. 12 Jan 2025.

²⁴¹ Sawyers, **op. cit.**, p.177.

international at the same time.”²⁴² Song’s origin deepens the play’s reinterpretation of it as a message for global resistance and solidarity.

The additional lyrics added by Drew Wright: “An Arab lad fae yont Gaza/ Dings the fell gallows o the burghers doon”²⁴³ (“An Arab lad from beyond Gaza/ Knocks down the deadly gallows of townspeople”²⁴⁴) empowers Philistine communities and raises international awareness of war in theatrical community. It also underscores Hurley’s cosmopolitan ethics since “to act morally is to speak universally, in the name of all peoples”²⁴⁵ The reference to gallows in the lyrics, correlates MacPherson, the fiddler and MacPherson, the drunkard’s stories to the Arab lad. Thus, it regards the resistance against inequality and oppression as a global matter. Considering the ‘rat race’ analogy, ‘pigs’ in “Donald You’re a Loser” and ‘the thrill of chase and kill’, **Rantin** seeks to make visible the dehumanising aspects of neoliberalism. In this sense, the allusion to Jamie MacPherson, the fiddler, gypsy and Scottish equivalent of Robin Hood, underscores the empowerment against the totalitarian discourses of global capitalism.

The backdrops of other songs such as “Come All Ye Tramps and Hawkers” imply working-class roots in Scotland. Originally titled “Come All Ye Bold Miners”. Altering the song’s title, A. L. Loyd extracted the original fiery Marxist lyrics and chorus in the new version. Composers “hope[d] to find - workers as 'heroes', and occasionally heroines, or other 'visions of the people'” with differing interpretations.²⁴⁶ The repertoire of songs aligns with the message of the play, demonstrating Scottish historical tradition and its relevance to related matters.

At this juncture, Hurley also marks his cosmopolitan ethical principle in **Rantin**: “JULIA: Anyway, Mr. Grant is lit that: English workers, he says, English

²⁴² Hugh Shields, Tom Munnely, “Hamish Henderson (1919-2002),” **Béaloides**, Vol.LXX, 2002, p.214.

²⁴³ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.52.

²⁴⁴ The lyrics are translated by me.

²⁴⁵ Daniel Herwitz, **Cosmopolitan Aesthetics: Art in a Global World**, New York, Bloomsbury, p.57.

²⁴⁶ David Harker, “Debate: Taking Fun Seriously,” **Popular Music**, Vol.XV, No:1, 1996, pp.110-111.

workers, are just the same as us.”²⁴⁷ Accordingly, Hurley points to the common sweating system and the disparity the working class suffers from worldwide. Similarly, Shona explains what her history teacher has told the class: “He was like sortay like a jakey Robin Hood [...] So Ned Ludd was like the king of Luddites. Except they were real.”²⁴⁸ Gathered under an idealistic figure, Luddites symbolise the basics of resistance against capitalism through machine breaking. François Jarrige and Siân Reynolds describe: “The workers immediately gathered in front of the workshops, calling for ‘the departure of the workman installing the machine, and the destruction of the machine.’”²⁴⁹ Regarding Luddites and the ‘industrial violence’,²⁵⁰ Hurley underlines his anti-neoliberalist stance. The images of falling factory buildings in **Beats** parallelly demonstrate industrial violence.²⁵¹ Accordingly, Hurley links class activism – represented by industrial violence- against a destructive and unhumanitarian neoliberal system.

Kieran Hurley delves into the origin of societal seclusion and alienation to achieve unity through the play. For this reason, the playwright comprehensively critiques neoliberalism through Adam Smith’s foundational terms of free-market, *invisible hand*. Doing so, the play refers to a set of concepts such as the “rat race” and “thrill of the chase and kill” to correlate neoliberalist values with capitalistic individualism and predatory competition. By connecting MacPherson, the fiddler, to MacPherson, the drunkard’s stories, Hurley macrocosmically regards neoliberalism as the source of inequality, as signified by the “gallows” in the play. Accordingly, the playwright mirrors *negative globalisation* in Bauman’s terms and aspires to treat humanitarian values. This criticism also reverberates through the international politics of Donald Trump and the war in Palestine.

²⁴⁷ Hurley, **Rantin.**, p.32.

²⁴⁸ **Ibid.**, p.32.

²⁴⁹ François Jarrige, Siân Reynolds, “Gender and Machine-Breaking: Violence and Mechanization at the dawn of the Industrial age (England and France 1750-1850),” **Clio. Women, Gender, History**, No:38, 2013, p.15.

²⁵⁰ **Ibid.**, p.16.

²⁵¹ Kieran Hurley, “BEATS by Kieran Hurley - Trailer - Touring Autumn 2013,” 24 June 2013 (Online) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Er66zbO8nEc>, 20 Jan 2025.

The play encapsulates the complexities of globalisation through its fragmented narrative, diverse characters, and thematic exploration of migration, neoliberalism, and cultural identity. By juxtaposing local traditions with transnational encounters, the play critiques the homogenising forces of global capitalism while celebrating multiculturalism and resistance.

Through musical storytelling and intimate performance settings, **Rantin** fosters a collective experience that seeks to mend the social fragmentation caused by neoliberalism. The play's critique of economic disparity, media alienation, and cultural displacement situates it within the broader discourse of globalisation theatre. This chapter has examined how **Rantin**'s themes resonate within contemporary debates on nationalism, identity, and community in the era of globalisation.

2.2. KIERAN HURLEY'S REINTERPRETATION OF THE CEILIDH PLAY AS COSMOPOLITAN BARDISM

Drawing inspiration from John McGrath's **The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil** (1973), Kieran Hurley reinterprets and expands the ceilidh play tradition in **Rantin** (2013). He envisions what a ceilidh play might look like in the twenty-first century, reimagining it as *cosmopolitan bardism*.²⁵²

This chapter examines how **Rantin**'s formal structure reinvigorates a postmodern narration to create "a patchwork of the nation"²⁵³ in contemporary Scotland. It then analyses how the play embodies *aesthetic cosmopolitanism*, merging ritual, storytelling, and music with internationalism and the aesthetic devices of globalisation plays.

In its origin, ceilidh is a cultural product of Celtic tradition,²⁵⁴ - 'a social gathering' that involves music, drinking, songs, and dance.²⁵⁵ Back in the 18th century, "[c]eilidh houses existed in most townships and were the focus of community life. There tradition bearers within the local community shared knowledge in a way that fulfilled needs now served by books, newspapers, films, radio and television."²⁵⁶ In times of conflict, ceilidh assisted Gaels to remember themselves as the "members of a society possessed of a high art of ancient and aristocratic origin in which they could directly participate."²⁵⁷ The gatherings were secretly conducted after the Disarming

²⁵² He pursues a cosmopolitan bardism, in the sense that medieval bardism has evolved in a tool for global unity with the far-reaching multi-ethnic representation of issues and characters. The audience is not a homogenous community as well neither defined by class or ethnicity. The term must be understood within the aesthetic cosmopolitanism that draws from the rhizomatic relationship of ceilidh and experimental theatre, hybridisation of songs with international and modern influences and cosmopolitan ethics.

²⁵³ Hurley, "Writer's Note," With n.p.

²⁵⁴ It is pronounced as "kay-lee", Ethel G. Hofman, "A Highland Ceilidh," **Gastronomica**, Vol.IV, No:2, 2014, p.61.

²⁵⁵ **Ibid.**, pp.59-60.

²⁵⁶ Derick Thomson, **The Companion to Gaelic Scotland**. Gairm, 1994, p.281.

²⁵⁷ Michael Newton, **Warriors of the Word: The World of the Scottish Highlanders**. Edinburgh, Birlinn, 2009, p.108.

Act of 1746 passed since performing any form of Gaelic culture was prohibited.²⁵⁸ Accordingly, ceilidh historically acquired a sense of cultural resistance and a ritualistic aspect for the local communities of the time, preserving and redefining cultural values and connecting the audience to their cultural heritage.

Therefore, it is quintessentially an evolving and dynamic form in which content alternates depending on society's changing problems through historical and political paradigm shifts. A ceilidh is a collective ritual accompanied by music, dance, the storytelling of bards, drinking, and feasting, which assist collective ties, struggles, and complications. In this sense, Hurley's return to Scottish myths, traditional forms, and folklorist songs multi-functions as cultural empowerment and the restoration of communal ties.

Ceilidh adopts musical and ritualistic properties, to be applied to *transcorporeality*. Paolo Chagas explains: "From a musical point of view, the concept of "simultaneity" is related to "polyphony", a term used to designate different kinds of music and conveying two important notions: multiplicity and individuality."²⁵⁹ Thus, polyphony sustains a sense of individual and collective identity in the multiplicity of instruments, rhythms, melodies, and signing. This treatment of musicality parallels with postmodern plurality.

Moreover, Chagas elaborates: "Sounds affect the whole body, and embodiment is shaped by our aural history and by multiple levels of interaction with the sonic environment."²⁶⁰ From this perspective, musicality acquires properties that listeners can react to depending on their personal repertoire and musical backgrounds from a self-referential stance. Regarding the employment of *transcorporeality* with musicality, the theatrical space is a sonic environment in which "sound waves produce vibrations which are reflected, absorbed or transmitted by spaces."²⁶¹ Moreover, the sonic properties of songs reach out to the audience by "joining them as a single entity"

²⁵⁸ Hofman, **op. cit.**, p.59.

²⁵⁹ Paolo Chagas, "Polyphony and Embodiment: A Critical Approach to the Theory of Autopoiesis," **Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network**, Vol.III, No:2, 2010, p.1.

²⁶⁰ **Ibid.**, p.8.

²⁶¹ **Ibid.**, pp.3-4.

and “facilitating themselves to rediscover themselves”.²⁶² Conclusively, the performance sustains a sonic entanglement of bodies through musicality. Hence, *transcorporeality* treats the performers and audience as cosmopolitan and enmeshed bodies through music.

Correspondingly, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari argue the transitive aspect of music or rhythm between places in **A Thousand Plateaus Capitalism And Schizophrenia**: “There is rhythm whenever there is a transcoded passage from one milieu to another, a communication of milieus, coordination between heterogeneous space-times.”²⁶³ The tension between different social spaces and backgrounds manifests a transitive nature through music, creating a “critical solution of the antimony.”²⁶⁴ This highlights how music reflects the tension between various social spaces and backgrounds, allowing for a transitional experience that resolves opposing forces.

Deleuze and Guattari associate rhythms with passages. Fittingly, the sonic environment produces a *porous* space in which “the skin [of the performers and audience] becomes a passage” along with the performers' and audience's psyche.²⁶⁵ Hence, the employment of music generates a unifying approach among all participants. The audience can sing along, clap, drum on the tables and even dance to the songs. Conclusively, Kieran Hurley regards music as a unifying framework of the ritual and utilizes it for *transcorporeality* to abolish the limits of bodies in theatrical space for the sake of his politically engaging theatre.

In the same way, Hurley pursues his regard for musicality and community in his other plays. To illustrate, **Beats** acquires a DJ set on stage and manifests a ritualistic approach to performance and music. Besides touching on political activism through music, the play also demonstrates Hurley's conception of crowd and ritual:

²⁶² David Roesner, **Musicality in Theatre: Music as Model, Method and Metaphor in Theatre-Making**, Surrey, Ashgate, 2014, p.26.

²⁶³ Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, **A Thousand Plateaus Capitalism and Schizophrenia**, Trans. by. Brian Massumi, Minneapolis, Minnesota University Press, 2005, p.313.

²⁶⁴ **Ibid.**, p.314.

²⁶⁵ Rodriguez, **David**, p.96.

And without even noticing the music finds a flow through him, speaking straight to his body. Like it's flowing through him but like he's immersed in it at the same time, engulfing him in its immediacy, in its intimacy. [...] Slipping effortlessly between individual interactions and a sort of tribal mass consciousness. All of us, he thinks. All of us together holding on, clinging on for dear life! Knowing that the world outside is shit but all there really is is us! And all that really exists is now, right now!²⁶⁶

In the techno concert scene, the euphoric crowd, some under the influence of ecstasy, encapsulates an epitome of *transcorporeality*, as the psychology of the character is portrayed in “a sort of tribal mass consciousness”. Fittingly, the quote emphasises a ritualistic trance that is the “[e]xposure to manifold, intense, repetitive, emotion-evoking stimuli ensures uniformity of behaviour in ritual participants.”²⁶⁷ This highlights that Kieran Hurley handles musicality as a ritualistic and collective experience. It gathers bodies together and enmeshed, revealing the employment of *transcorporeality* in the play.

Meanwhile, it leads to collective renewal as in rituals, underlining his the political playwriting. Likewise, regarding Rancière’s political performance, David Overend expostulates that: “Hurley negotiates his position in the crowd and ultimately gives himself over to it, culminating in a physical and political movement forward.”²⁶⁸ This stance is operative in bringing “the divided people of protest” into “a collective harmony”.²⁶⁹ This notion of ritualistic trance resonates with Victor Turner’s concept of liminality—where participants temporarily suspend societal structures, entering a transformative space. In **Rantin**, ceilidh’s ritual elements create a liminal performance space, allowing for collective negotiation of identity, history, and social change.

Ceilidh is founded on a deep-rooted story-telling tradition. Mike Alfreds highlights the immersive nature of storytelling: “Storytelling allows us, performers and audiences, to go anywhere in space and time.” This adaptability enables **Rantin** to exist in “two realities simultaneously”—the world of the play and the audience’s

²⁶⁶ Kieran Hurley, **Beats**, London, Oberon, 2013, p.51.

²⁶⁷ Barbara W. Lex, “Neurobiology of Ritual Trance,” **The Spectrum of Ritual**, Ed. by. Eugene G. D’Aquili, Charles D. Laughlin, Jr. John McManus, New York, Columbia University Press, 1979, p.120.

²⁶⁸ Overend, “Rantin,” p.170.

²⁶⁹ Jaques Rancière, “Aesthetic Separation, Aesthetic Community,” **The Emancipated Spectator**, Trans. by. Gregory Elliott, New York, Verso, 2009, p.57.

immediate present.²⁷⁰ Storytelling also invites audience participation: “storytelling allows us, performers and audiences, to go anywhere in space and time” in its immediacy.²⁷¹ By engaging the audience in meaning-making, storytelling strengthens **Rantin's** postmodern structure and deepens its experiential impact.

Storytelling's adaptability to postmodern plurality and fragmentation enables these crossings and mobility. The play's use of storytelling leads to “[existing] simultaneously in two realities—here and now.” Moreover, Mike Alfreds notes: “Storytelling allows us, performers and audiences, to go anywhere in space and time” in its immediacy.²⁷² Apart from being one of the most ancient forms of performance, storytelling is a significant element of bards in Ceilidh gatherings. Kevin J. Grant notes that the bards of the time 'helped the local community to define itself' and wrote songs and stories based on people's needs. This form of storytelling fosters community engagement.²⁷³ These aspects deepen the play's experiential aspect.

[Storytellers'] virtuosity confirms that latent within every one of us, there exists a universal connection, a protean understanding of others; we all possess something of everyone else, past, present and, at a reasonable guess, to come.²⁷⁴

Thus, storytelling enhances the experiential aspect and underpins the play's postmodern narration in **Rantin**.

Simon Frith argues: “Identity is not a thing but a process – an experiential process which is most vividly grasped as *music*.”²⁷⁵ **Rantin** uses music as a vehicle for exploring identity in flux. Veronica Rodriguez describes this as “the porous nature of all things and/or entities,” which fosters an “apprehension of interconnectedness”.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁰ Mike Alfreds **Then What Happens?: Storytelling and Adapting for the Theatre**, London, Nick Hern Books, 2013, p.27

²⁷¹ **Ibid.**, p.29.

²⁷² **Ibid.**, p.29.

²⁷³ Kevin J. Grant, “‘And in Every Hamlet a Poet’: Gaelic Oral Tradition and Postmedieval Archaeology in Scotland.” **Historical Archaeology**, Vol.XLVIII, No:1, 2014, p.31.

²⁷⁴ Alfreds, **op. cit.**, p.44.

²⁷⁵ Simon Frith, “Music and Identity,” **Questions of Cultural Identity**, Ed. by. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, London, Sage, 2003, p.130.

²⁷⁶ Rodriguez, **David.**, p.21

Fragmentation and plurality create porous characterisation, while musicality, storytelling, and ritual generate porous experiences, selves, and performances.

Postmodern identity in **Rantin** is not just a narrative device—it is an act of resistance. The play challenges the rigidity of capitalist structures and Fordist production models, offering instead a fluid, communal sense of self. Since neoliberalism reduces human value to economic output, **Rantin's** pluralistic, postmodern approach directly opposes this dehumanisation. Accordingly, Foster explains that continuity cannot be perceived in 'the trace' of the fragment that can be practical while switching from production to consummation. Fixed systems and definitions can only offer illusions.²⁷⁷ One of the most striking moments in the play is when Selkie reassures MacPherson, saying, “We are humans.” This simple statement resists the reduction of individuals to economic or social status, affirming self-worth through shared experience. By fostering a lively, interactive theatrical space, the play reaffirms collective identity.

To reach a politically motivated drama, Hurley employs musicality to access the audience, alternate their views, and renew their bodily and consciousness states through ritual in **Rantin**. The play employs liminality to deconstruct hierarchical divisions, allowing for playful engagement with serious sociopolitical issues.

Trish Reid describes **Rantin's** setting as convivial, encouraging collective participation and engagement.²⁷⁸ Victor Turner notes that liminal spaces provide a threshold for transformation, offering temporary suspension of social norms.²⁷⁹ Hurley's opening line “The story starts, for our purposes, right here under this old railway arch in Glasgow, with each of you here. But it also starts, among other places, above our heads here.”²⁸⁰ establishes the simultaneity of performance and audience experience, reinforcing ceilidh's immersive and participatory nature.

²⁷⁷ Hall Foster (editor), **The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture**. Washington, Bay Press, 1983, p.142.

²⁷⁸ Trish Reid, “‘Sexy Kilts with Attitude’: Scottish Theatre in the Twenty-First Century,” **Twenty-First Century Drama: What Happens Now**, Ed. by. Sian Adiseshiah and Louise LePage, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, p.203.

²⁷⁹ Victor Turner, **From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play**, New York, PAJ Publications, 1982, p.24.

²⁸⁰ Hurley, **Rantin**, p.9.

Moreover, **Rantin** integrates humor and entertainment, mirroring ceilidh's ludic elements. Turner asserts: "Liminality may involve a complex sequence of episodes in sacred space-time and may also include subversive and ludic (or playful) events."²⁸¹ The play's carnivalesque atmosphere creates a space for both critique and joy, aligning with ceilidh's traditional role as a space for both cultural affirmation and social satire.

Conclusively, musical rhythms and melodies that the audience is subjected to collectively produce an altered state of consciousness in theatrical space. These properties result in a ritualistic experience composed of play's ludic and liminal states, bringing renewal in the aftermath.

Suitably, the quote weighs the synchronicity of the stories and the performance as an indicator of both storytelling and liminality. Likewise, the significance of the place is stressed, with an invitation to imagine a map with the names of places for the audience in **Rantin** as a vision of national space.

From this perspective, the play includes humour, as the basic principle of music is based on entertainment. Accordingly, Turner elaborates: "Liminality may involve a complex sequence of episodes in sacred space-time and may also include subversive and ludic (or playful) events." The carnivalesque atmosphere of the play is alluded to by the title, since 'rant' means "to speak or complain about [something] in a loud and angry way" and with gerund form emphasises "continu[ing] for a long time".²⁸² Hence, play also offers vitalising performance and entertainment. Fittingly, this ritualistic aspect draws from the Dionysian sense of drinking, carnival, and transition to an Apollyonic state. After leaving the stage, the audience can reconceptualise the matters alluded to during the performance. This underlines the audience's agency in meaning creation.

Ceilidh ascribes a communal identity through dancing, Gaelic, and repetitive seasonal staging. Drawing from its ritualistic characteristics, **Rantin** aims to "deep[en]

²⁸¹ Victor Turner, **The Ritual Process: The Structure and Anti-structure**, New York, Cornell University Press, 1977, p.27.

²⁸² "Rant," **Oxford: Advanced Learners' Dictionary: International Learner's Dictionary**, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p.1233.

mutual understanding” and not only “reveal the values of the group” but also reproduce them.²⁸³ Amidst its functions, rituals have properties such as “reaffirmation of communal values” and “social euphoria”²⁸⁴ Accordingly, the play simultaneously addresses, in Turner’s terms, the crisis in societal life, providing the “total semantic wealth” of societies by the complete range of shared meanings and symbols²⁸⁵

This “expressive or symbolic function” expresses the community’s values, beliefs, and identity.²⁸⁶ It is celebrated in the play, describing the cultural distinctiveness of Scottish culture. The blending of Gaelic and Scottish musical elements, historical figures like Luddites, and mythological figures like Selkie revives the cultural belonging. Exploring why these values have disappeared, the play seeks to reconnect people with their long-forgotten values and restore the cultural memory.

Rantin’s engagement with ceilidh traditions extends beyond national identity to embody *aesthetic cosmopolitanism*—a blending of local and global artistic influences. Hurley incorporates Gaelic songs alongside global musical traditions, creating a hybrid form that celebrates cultural diversity.²⁸⁷ Songs like “Donald You’re a Loser” and “Freedom Come All Yea” exemplify this synthesis, merging local elements with broader, globally relevant themes.

The play’s musical and ritualistic properties also lend themselves to *transcorporeality*, where sound and movement dissolve the boundaries between performers and audience. Paolo Chagas notes that polyphony in music sustains both individual and collective identity, mirroring **Rantin’s** balance of personal storytelling and shared experience. This is further emphasized in the play’s pub setting, where the audience is encouraged to sing, clap, and even dance—breaking the traditional performer-audience divide.

²⁸³ Turner, **The Ritual**, p.6.

²⁸⁴ Harry Alpert, **Emile Durkheim and His Sociology**, New York, Columbia University Press, 1939, pp.199 -203.

²⁸⁵ Turner, **The Ritual**, p.85.

²⁸⁶ **Ibid.**, p.15.

²⁸⁷ Motti Regev, “Ethno-National Pop-Rock Music: Aesthetic Cosmopolitanism Made from Within,” **Cultural Sociology**, Vol.I, No:3, 2007, p.318.

Hurley uses ceilidh's flexibility and inclusivity as a critique of capitalist rigidity. Simon Frith describes identity as a process, most vividly experienced through music. Rantin embodies this by presenting identity as fluid and participatory, countering neoliberalism's reduction of individuals to economic units.

David Overend divides the collectives in Kieran Hurley's political theatre into "political community in the making," "assembled audience community," and "communities we encounter in the stories."²⁸⁸ In **Rantin**, these collectives are treated as active agents, leveraging musicality and postmodern storytelling rooted in ritual. To conclude, Hurley acquires a cosmopolitan bardism to redefine and consolidate the communal ties and alienation in **Rantin**. He captures an *aesthetic cosmopolitanism* through the rhizomatic inter-play of ceilidh and experimental theatre.

At this point, Daniel Herwitz claims: "Synergy is the 'genius' of the cosmopolitan, working between traditions and global forms."²⁸⁹ As a twenty-first-century play, **Rantin** extends theatre's potential to forge cosmopolitan unities while resisting neoliberal narratives. Its *aesthetic cosmopolitanism* challenges audiences to reconsider how theatre can serve as a space for communal belonging, cultural hybridity, and political resistance.

²⁸⁸ David Overend, Kieran Hurley, "Rantin and Raving: An Interview with Kieran Hurley," 12 July 2019, (Online) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JsOHQfFKRY4&t=229s>, 22 January 2025.

²⁸⁹ **Ibid.**, p.102.

CONCLUSION

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, capitalism solidified itself as the dominant global economic order. With the abandonment of Keynesian economics, Adam Smith's free-market ideals reshaped the global landscape, accelerating the expansion of markets, deregulation of tariffs, and financialisation of economies under institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The rise of neoliberalism intensified economic disparity, privatisation, and the commodification of social services, exacerbating social fragmentation and individualism.

Alongside these economic shifts, technological advancements in transportation, communication, and digital media have accelerated the movement of capital, people, and information. This interconnectivity has reconfigured cultural identity, national belonging, and social structures, sparking debates on *cosmopolitanism*, *transnationalism*, and *detrterritorialisation*. As societies become more interconnected, global theatre has emerged as a critical space for exploring these transformations.

Scottish theatre has responded to these global changes by engaging with themes of mobility, neoliberalism, and identity formation. This thesis has examined how David Greig's **Victoria** and Kieran Hurley's **Rantin** employ the aesthetics of globalisation plays to critique the social, political, and economic consequences of neoliberalism while proposing alternative models of belonging and solidarity.

Both plays foreground movement and mobility as central themes, reflecting the realities of globalisation. In **Victoria**, characters are in constant flux, mirroring the ideological and economic shifts of the twentieth century. The poststructuralist identity is observed in the characterisation of Victoria through her nomadic urge to leave and the traces of nature in her psyche. The play's three-act structure illustrates the changing power dynamics and economic structures in Scotland, from pre-war aristocracy to industrial expansion to late-capitalist exploitation. By contrast, **Rantin** presents a more fluid and fragmented approach, juxtaposing multiple narratives that illustrate how globalisation affects different ways of belonging, social classes and identities.

Hurley's work takes a postmodern approach to mobility, depicting characters who move physically, economically, and socially across different spaces. While Kenny, the businessman, represents the hyper-mobility of global capital, MacPherson, the destitute drunkard, embodies the immobility and exclusion caused by neoliberalism. Similarly, Howard, a Scottish-American, experiences transnational dislocation, while Miriam, a Palestinian refugee, navigates migration and cultural adaptation. This multiplicity of perspectives challenges traditional notions of national identity and rootedness, positioning Scotland as a site of contested belonging.

David Greig's **Victoria** and Kieran Hurley's **Rantin** serve as poignant critiques of contemporary political and economic setbacks under the term *negative globalisation*. Coined by Zygmunt Bauman, the term signifies a fear state caused by constant change. The plays vividly depict the influence of neoliberal industries, the global market, changing social demographics, and global terror on our society. In **Victoria**, characters express their fear of a possible German bombing, and their psychological instability is a stark negative outcome of globalisation. Both plays include aerial views that depict the local places as networked by globalisation and neoliberalism. Similarly, Kieran Hurley positions his criticism of globalisation into a wide range of challenges, including international politics, inviting the audience to critically engage with these issues.

Considering the propagation of capitalist individualism and predatory capitalism, the plays explore the erosion of communal ties and fraternity. With its relatively brief duration, **Rantin** employs multiple analogies to indicate class distinction and the foundations of alienation in society. Kenny, a high-status businessman, articulates the terms "hunter instinct" and "thrill of chase and kill". The phrases connote a terminology used in treasure hunts and hunting by signifying predatory capitalism. Suitably, "rat race", referred to by him and MacPherson, is a term used in economics. The term marks a society that has absorbed heavy work hours while competing for money and status. The same ideas reverberate in Euan Sutherland's dialogues. The character passionately discards fraternal bonds, adopting a profit-driven personality in **Victoria**. The dysfunctional and uncommunicative family bonds of both character underscores the plays' negative emphasis on

neoliberalism critique. Furthermore, both plays instance industrial violence and activism, materialising their critique of neoliberal system and empowering communal resistance against injustice.

Both Greig and Hurley challenge traditional nationalist narratives, embracing cosmopolitan perspectives that emphasise transnational belonging and global solidarity. *Transcorporeality* blur the differences, and distinctions between bodies, the self and the other. This transitivity emerges with a focus on the *porous* nature of our skins, underscoring enmeshed and immersed experiences of biochemicals or sonic conductivity. David Greig explores human-nature or *material entanglement* as a basis for rethinking our humane commonness and meaningful bond as human society. While **Victoria** critiques the environment's deep effect on people through *ecological cosmopolitanism*, **Rantín** envisions a cosmopolitan theatre that reclaims collective bonds. Through ritual and music, it connects bodies under a sonic environment, re-adapting the traditional art forms with global influences, and composing an *aesthetic cosmopolitanism*. This demonstrates how theatrical terms can be adaptable to the ideas of *transcorporeality* and *porous skin*. Through the terms, the theatre adopts a mediator of the role in society by underlining our commonness.

Ultimately, theatre's adaptation to globalisation tends towards representing global connections and playwrights imagine new collectives by creating new-cosmopolitanism(s) through their idea of unity.

Rantín's experimental form—which combines live music, storytelling, and audience participation—embodies a hybrid theatrical approach, bridging local traditions with aesthetics of globalisation plays. Hurley redefines *ceilidh* as a political form, using its ritualistic and communal elements to resist neoliberal alienation and foster a sense of shared experience.

Both plays scrutinise the role of media in shaping public consciousness. In **Victoria**, radio, television, and newspapers serve as tools of nationalist discourse and cultural transmission, shaping how characters perceive themselves and their place in the world. Defining themselves as modern and atop, the Allans sustain a privileged status at the top of others who cultivate the land and labour. The communal television

watching and the access to newspapers are regarded as the intermediaries that highlight the aspects of nationalism and social belonging. While newspapers attune national awareness and consciousness, they also signify the spread of information. Fittingly, the play portrays the transformation of the Scottish Highlands through an increasing number of communication technologies referred to in the play. The final act highlights the growing influence of global media, positioning it as both a vehicle for corporate interests and a tool for activism.

In **Rantin**, Hurley critiques digital connectivity, revealing its double repercussions. Emma's corporate survey on "connectivity" ironically underscores the alienating effects of neoliberal digital culture. Similarly, the play highlights how cinema and mass media construct distant nationalism, as seen in Howard's cinematic perception of Scotland shaped by **Braveheart** and **Trainspotting**.

Theatre, as both a performative space and a communal gathering, offers an alternative to neoliberal isolation. Both plays reimagine theatrical space as a site of resistance, fostering dialogue, critique, and renewal. Greig's **Victoria** employs historical continuity and environmental consciousness as a means of resisting the capitalist erasure of local communities, while Hurley's **Rantin** uses participatory performance and musical engagement to create a dynamic, inclusive theatrical experience.

Both playwrights resist neoliberal fragmentation by emphasising connection—whether through shared histories, cultural memory, or communal participation. Their works challenge the homogenising effects of globalisation, instead proposing new models of belonging that embrace multiplicity and interconnectivity.

Through their innovative use of aesthetic devices, musicality, and political critique, Greig and Hurley push the boundaries of globalisation plays. Their plays reveal how neoliberal policies, transnational mobility, and cultural hybridity shape contemporary Scottish identity. By engaging with the tensions between local and global, past and present, and capitalism and community, these plays highlight the transformative power of theatre. As the world continues to transform and deal with

the consequences of globalisation, theatre remains a crucial space for negotiating identity, fostering solidarity, and imagining alternative futures.

Both plays demonstrate that theatre is not merely a reflection of society but a medium for active engagement and resistance. Through its ability to reshape narratives, create shared experiences, and challenge dominant ideologies, theatre remains a powerful tool for rethinking globalisation, national belonging, and the possibilities of a more interconnected, just world.



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