Patriotism and the Spirit of Macbeth's Ambition in *Dunsinane*

Gül Kurtuluş, Bilkent University

> 'The thinking in this country is so full of traps, you have to walk around in such circular paths, sometimes I forget that another type of thinking even exists.'
>
> *Dunsinane* (Greig 2010, p.52)

Introduction

David Greig's *Dunsinane* is a play of irresoluble conflict, in which all parties aspire for the whole of the pie that is Scotland. Filled to the brim with war, deceit, and passion, *Dunsinane* also explores the topic of varieties of 'patriotism'. Characters believe they are doing whatever it is they do for the sake of their country, whether it is England or Scotland. Siward, the English commander, sets his course in *Dunsinane* with the motivation of a patriotism which soon comes to serve power-driven ambition. English troops are in Scotland to install a new king who is expected to re-establish a stable kingship, based on peace and governmental order, while soldiers loyal to the Scottish Queen Gruach, who see themselves as defending their land, are stationed in woods. Queen Gruach is, meanwhile, a deposed queen after her husband Macbeth's death, but at the same time she is a glamorous woman able to use her sexual charm as well as feminine privilege to tempt English soldiers to break their own rules and give up their cause in Scotland. Yet, Gruach tries to keep her authority over her people secure through firm resistance to the English. Varieties of 'patriotism', and their justification, are, therefore, a very strong theme in *Dunsinane*. Wars are the worst incidents ever to happen to mankind. Yet, people in all countries at

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

any time, in defending their homelands, turn to 'patriotism', a love of country and a devotion to the land that stimulates and seems to justify their actions and Greig's play offers responses to this phenomenon.

Dunsinane is a modern sequel to *Macbeth,* and many of the characters have the spirit of Macbeth's ambition breathed into them. Ambition is the driving force, not for Siward alone, but for many other characters. They use their 'patriotic' zeal as an excuse to wage and to resume war. In one speech Siward explains his passion with these words: 'I came here to install Malcolm as king so as to secure England's northern border. My job is to build a new kingdom – not to settle old grudges. So I have to clear away the past now (p. 33).' He continually emphasises the importance of building a new government, saying 'Malcolm will make a new situation where everybody works together in pursuit of the kingdom's common interest' (p. 32). A soldier explains:

> Siward says we must insist on understanding this country. Even if its people insist on resisting us, so he finds high places and he says, 'Down there and there and there and there is where they're likely hiding.' And so we go down there and there and there and there to clear whatever cave or bothy he's found and smoke out who's in it and if we meet a fight we set about it hard, Mother – and we always win. (p. 89)

A 'patriotic' war against 'patriotic' guerilla movements forms the basis of the play's plot.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Stephen Nathanson in *Patriotism, Morality, and Peace* offers a definition of patriotism: 'In addition to love for one's country, patriotism is a special concern for its well-being, and willingness to sacrifice in order to promote the country's good' (Nathanson, p. 34). Nathanson goes on to suggest that the core meaning of the term patriotism implies a 'special affection for one's own country' (Nathanson, p. 36). According to Maurizio Viroli, identification with the country might be thought implied in the phrase 'one's country', but the phrase is extremely vague and allows for a country to be called 'one's own' in an extremely thin, formal sense (Viroli, p. 136). Apparently, if one is to be a patriot of a country, that country must be one's in some significant sense; and that may be best captured by speaking of one's identification with it. George Courtauld proposes that 'Such identification is expressed in vicarious feelings: in pride of one's own country's merits and achievements, and in shame for its lapses or crimes' (Courtauld, p. 89). In the light of these identifications, in Greig's play patriotism is valid for more than one group because there are people standing for different cultures and customs. Macduff expresses one impact of this when he says,

> When I was young, you could look down a glen and know the names of everything in it... But when war comes it doesn't just destroy things like harvests and monasteries – it destroys the names of things as well. It shadows the landscape like a hawk and whatever name it sees it swoops down and claws it away. Red hill is made the hill of the slaughter. Birch grove is made the grove of sorrow and Alistair's house is made the place where Ally's house once was. (p. 120)

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Macduff describes the change the Scots experience after the war and how it effects their lives, and the very way they name their country's topography. Almost everything that is traditional – and peculiar to them – is destroyed, its original meaning lost and changed to new meanings: 'slaughter', 'sorrow', loss. Yet, this makes them more 'patriotic' and ambitious to hold on to their country. Consequently, the conflict between England and Scotland turns into a war fuelled by ambition and rage.

Laying Eggs of Peace in Another Bird's Nest

Greig in *Dunsinane* portrays the clash of two nations. The leaders of both sides represent different types of 'patriotism' according to their own interests and standpoint. Meanwhile, young and inexperienced English soldiers are dragged by their leaders to foreign lands, to fight battles which they do not want to fight at all. On the other hand, Scottish soldiers, more like experienced warriors, fight tooth and nail. They sacrifice themselves for their homeland while the English soldiers are more concerned with not getting hurt. In the second part of the play, called as 'Summer' a wounded soldier is carried into the courtyard by his comrades. Their conversation tells about the Scottish resistance and the hard time the English have in controlling them:

- What happened?
- We were patrolling.
- In the woods down near the river.
- They came at us.
- A lot of them.
- They were waiting.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

- They got Tom.
- Put him down.
- Where?
- Anywhere –
- Don't put him down in the blood.
- He's all blood, it doesn't matter. (p. 57)

The English soldiers continue to fight in a land that is strange to them for several reasons. A key one is that they have lost so many soldiers on their side that they, in a way, feel obliged to keep fighting in order not to let their comrades' blood be split in vain. Sven Gunnor Simonsen in his article 'Leaving Security in Safe Hands' asserts that 'the moral involvement of the soldier is dependent on psychological bonds between the soldier and his primary group, the military unit, and the sociopolitical system' (2009, p. 1484). In relation to this idea, the English soldiers seem to have bonded with each other, yet it is not enough. In an effort to grasp what they are really doing in a foreign land they try to clarify the situation and stick to each other as much as they can and yet look for an end to their efforts:

- What is happening out there?
- Looks like things are coming to an end.
- Shouldn't we go out there and help?
- We've done enough.
- Enough?
- Look out there. The field is covered in dead. It'll all be over soon. No sense any more of us dying now...

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

- Have we won?
- Looks like it.
- Whoo! The first fight I've ever been in. (p. 18)

When the English soldiers have to kill one of their comrades, Tom, because of his deadly wounds, they begin to question their presence in Scotland. This questioning continues till the end of the play. The English soldiers' alienation and lack of enthusiasm are reinforced in the boy soldier's final sentiment, as he says, 'And to Siward goes the doubt and to me comes the fear / And running round and round my head like a mad horse / The question I can never ask / Why are we here? Why are we here?' (p. 129) Greig compares the attempted nation-building by the English leader Siward and continued bloodshed against the English occupying forces with contemporary events of 2010 in Afghanistan and Iraq. As Victoria Price argues, '[Greig] raises important questions about whether there is a point in the process of intervention at which honourable retreat is possible. These are questions, of course, that are also at the heart of current debates regarding the withdrawal of British and American troops from Afghanistan.' (Price, p. 20) Clare Wallace in *The Theatre of David Greig* points out that *Dunsinane* unravels zones of incomprehension and misunderstanding between Scotishness and Englishness, while simultaneously alluding to contemporary zones of conflict in the Middle East (Wallace 2013, p. 92)

In Britain, talking about the struggles in Afghanistan, the authorities declared that the military missions would 'make Britain safer' (Blake 2009). They linked their presence in the Middle East with feelings of patriotism. Gordon Brown, when Prime Minister, was reported as saying that the occupation was a 'patriotic duty' to keep the

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

streets of Britain safe from terrorist attacks: 'As he tried to rally public support for the campaign the prime minister described the mission as a "patriotic duty" to keep the streets of Britain safe from the threat of terrorist attack' (Blake 2009). In a similar manner, Siward in *Dunsinane* constantly asserts that their mission in Scotland is for a good cause. His aim is to bring peace. He even urges Egham 'to wear his wounds proudly' and tells him that 'the Scots think that we're here to subdue them. It's our job to prove them wrong. We'll take no women and no gold and we'll take no one beast more than we need. We will make them to trust us.' (p. 44) The English in *Dunsinane* have the notion of preserving their borders. The views of both leaders, Brown and Siward, at their different levels and in their different contexts seem to match to some degree. In *Dunsinane* every ambitious effort, every little advance in war is justified on such grounds. Siward believes that what he is doing in Dunsinane is for Scotland's own good, and that England has no personal interest in his invasion except a desire for safety and peace. With this motivation, he brings an army and wages war in Scotland.

English and Scottish Patriotism in *Dunsinane*

In Greig's portrayal of Malcolm as a leader figure, there is no trace of patriotism. In the play, Malcolm is about to be the king of Scotland and, considering he is replacing a tyrant, he is supposed to be the head, unifier and protector of Scotland, yet when he defines Scotland, the only thing he can say is that 'it is cold' (p. 29). Ironically, the nature of the climate is the only point of consensus for the Scots and the English (Wallace 2013, p. 97). The political message that Greig delivers through the characters is supported by the specifics of nature in Scotland. The setting reveals the confrontation of the English soldiers with natural Scotland. The

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

mysterious image of the moving forest in *Macbeth* can be observed in *Dunsinane*, too. Nature in Scotland is uncontrollable, and it becomes a refuge and a secret weapon for the Scots, especially for Gruach's son when he is chased by the English soldiers. He hides in the rough and uneven geography of Scotland. The fact that the play is not divided by acts and scenes, but by seasons reinforces the importance of nature in Greig's representation of Scotland. In 'Autumn', the Scottish Boy is captured. Malcolm translates the Scottish Boy's confession:

> I have been hiding in the hills near Glen Lyon in the black woods there... In the woods we plan attacks on the English. My mother's women are witches. They cast spells. They use plants to make spells which we drink to give us secret powers. (p. 121-22)

Scottish nature sustains mystery and magical powers beyond those of the invader and in this scene Malcolm mediates that vision of 'secret powers' as the translator of the Boy's speech.

The power Malcolm has through control of language appears throughout the play. Siward is constantly encouraged by Malcolm, the king that Siward is sent by England to install, and 'Malcolm is artful in his management and distortion of information' (Wallace 2013, p. 96). This artfulness is underpinned to an extent by language barriers. These are undeniably a factor in (mis)communication and questions of (dis)engagement. When the parliament is finally gathered, Siward is appalled at Malcolm's atrocious comments on his fellow countrymen and his blunt promise to rule in his own interests. Siward utters 'He's not made himself popular' (p. 81).

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Macduff reassures him that most of the chiefs do not speak English and that they know Malcolm is simply joking. Upon Siward's not understanding and asking again the real purpose of Malcolm's jesting, Macduff replies that it is both a joke and the truth. Malcom manipulates rather than directly leading.

Macbeth's widow Gruach functions as more of a leader than Malcolm as she fulfills patriotic expectations. In her first encounter with Siward, she says, 'If I were you I would not be here. I would be at home guarding my own land. Not fighting on behalf of some other man's land. A man too weak and corrupt to hold his own land himself.' (p. 34) Her remark tells a lot about the differences between the three leader figures. She places herself in a higher position on the basis that she acts according to her patriotic values. The Scottish Queen has a strong drive to give back her country its freedom. By saying, 'Our language is the forest' (p. 76), Gruach draws on the power of Scottish nature. Her metaphor references the fatal power of the forest in *Macbeth*. Promising Siward that 'You'll go home in the end. /Beaten and humiliated', Gruach in the final act of the play goes on to declare that Scotland will 'torment England again and again and again until the end of time' (p. 136). According to Gruach, neither Malcolm nor Siward has patriotic agendas. Malcolm's love of his country is directed at England as he says, 'Lovely England. I would have liked to stay in England. I like the way people speak in England'(p. 49). For Siward, however, losing his son leads to a change in his character. After the death of his son he becomes more ruthless and less humane. At first he is optimistic but no compassion is left in him towards the Scottish boys he burns: Siward himself no longer has someone to relate personally to in considering their condition. Gruach, meanwhile, upon learning the death of her son still puts her country at the centre of her life, saying that her son

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

would not be a fitting king. Her expression of patriotism is clear: she wants Scotland to have the best ruler. Gruach is willing to go all the way, no matter what the losses will be, in order not to give up in her aim to regain her country's freedom. Her patriotism does not allow her to lead a safe life and prevent deaths in her family and her nation by giving in to English rule and domination.

Like Gruach, the Scottish soldiers also embody signs of patriotism. They have a sense of their love of their country, while the English soldiers lack that quality. William Everett quotes Cicero as he defines patriotism. Cicero writes, 'for her no true son would, if need be, hesitate to die' (Everett 1920, p. 155). This echoes the Hen Girl's final act of sacrifice as she takes her own life rather than to submit to the English. Significantly, both Gruach and the Hen Girl are celebrated by Greig, because they are women involved in war. Yet, as Irene Hermann and Daniel Palieri argue 'half of the human race is rarely the focus of debate on belligerence, except as victims' (Hermann and Palmieri 2010, p. 20). So, although both the Hen Girl and Gruach change the course of the war, they cannot escape from the threat of sexual violence in a patriarchal society. As Hermann and Palmieri say, 'since ancient times, rape has been a cruel corollary of war' (Hermann and Palmieri 2010, p. 27). The Hen Girl – who is at the heart of the risk of sexual torture by the English soldiers as they chant 'Hit her right between the legs. Hit her lips. Hit her tits. Take off her dress and hit every inch of her naked body' (Greig, p. 115) – totally rejects being the victim of war, but rather outdoes the soldiers in such a way that they are utterly intimidated and determined to get out of this country. In the same way, Gruach becomes the protagonist of the war, as she openly attacks the English soldiers, who are superior to her in physical power.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

There are some common points on which Gruach and Siward meet in their share of patriotic feelings, that echo Cicero's definition of patriotism as 'an amiable and inspiring emotion, but as a paramount duty, which is to sweep every other act of the way' (Everett 1920, p. 151). This understanding of patriotism as overpowering underlies Siward's later actions. He collects every boy similar in age with the prince and orders their execution. He even attempts to kill a baby whom he thinks is another heir for the Scottish throne. Yet, the same kind of ruthless approach, justfied by 'patriotism', is seen in Gruach as she affirms her determination by saying: 'When you're back in your empty castle, Siward, and one of mine is on the throne again in Dunsinane, I'll send parties of men raiding into your beloved Northumberland to take cattle and women and burn villages and kill your knights' (p. 136). The English are perceived as the intruders by Gruach, and she is determined to give them a taste of their own medicine. Her raid will again be fuelled by patriotic feelings, even though for her there is no reason for the English to be in Scotland, their support for Malcolm being an imposition to her mind on Scotland.

The leaders are lost in their own conflicts, and to what extent they are genuinely driven by feelings of patriotism is questionable, even though they claim to act in the name of securing and defending their homeland's borders. Greig's generation is one that can relate to their situation. Victoria Price observes, 'Greig provides a timely commentary on the ongoing turmoil in the Middle East as arising from military intervention in the name of peace-keeping – one that is highly critical of the morality of attempting to impose a new regime on countries which differ in culture' (Price 2012, p. 30). English and Scottish groups adopt their own beliefs, based on a sense of superiority and belonging, and the superiority and belonging

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

emphasise one's own country's power and togetherness at the cost of the other. This difference in culture is exemplified in many ways, not least through the English soldiers' extreme reaction to the climate in Scotland. Greig conveys the positions taken by the English through Siward's words when he declares that they might have to stay in Scotland 'a little longer' (p. 38), since the group they are fighting against is moved by their idea of freedom, while the English soldiers cannot go beyond being paid muscle-power.

As is seen in these cases and other examples so far, 'patriotism' means quite different things for different groups as people stand for different cultures and customs. They represent their own versions of patriotic beliefs and manners, all based on a sense of superiority and belonging. In Part I, Siward's speech illustrates this sense of superiority and an importance of togetherness: 'A forest of English yew, each brand of which can bend and twist but when it's knotted together in a thicket – it is impenetrable – a sword cuts one branch and another springs up to take its place' (p. 12). Such unity of purpose reinforces an appearance of patriotism. In 'Is Patriotism a Virtue?' Alasdair MacIntyre argues that:

> The potential conflict between morality so understood and patriotism is at once clear. For patriotism requires me to exhibit peculiar devotion to my nation and you to yours. It requires me to regard such contingent social facts as there I was born and what government ruled over that place at that time [...] as deciding for me the question of what virtuous action is – at least insofar as it is the virtue of patriotism which is in the question. (MacIntyre 2014, p. 288)

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

MacIntyre develops the idea that one's nation decides what is right and virtuous. Therefore, he perceives a distiction between the moral and the patriotic standpoint. In relation to this definition one may say that patriotism requires self-justification in identification with the country, the 'forest of English yew'. In *Dunsinane*, Siward identifies himself with his country and justifies his actions as for its well-being. In the 'Summer' section of the play, English soldiers differentiate their country and their culture from that of Scotland: 'This country / Stones and shitty water and food's shit' (p. 59). By inferiorising Scottish land and food they promote their own culture and their own land so that patriotism becomes chauvinist and crypto-racist. Indeed, the English soldiers look down on Gruach, the Scottish Queen, and extend their humiliating behaviour to the Scottish royalty, describing the prince as fragile and feminine, not having faced the troubles a 'real' Englishman would overcome.

Gruach, a Female Patriot, a Leader and a Mother

Gruach is a female leader who is willing to go as far as necessary, no matter what the losses, in order not to give up in her aim of regaining her version of freedom for her country. Her 'patriotism' does not allow her to live a safe life and prevent the death of her family and her nation by giving in to the English rule and domination. In her encounter with Egham, Gruach does not miss the opportunity of making him part of her plan. Egham sees and measures every issue in accordance with monetary gain and explains the real cause of his life in this motto: 'Stay alive and be comfortable / Those are the purposes of life' (p. 43). So, he constantly complains about Scotland: 'I hate this country. God never meant people to live in this far north' (p. 40). Gruach and Egham, two enemies at war, become partners and collaborators when their mutual

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

benefits and opportunism, which for Gruach is at the service of her vision of patriotism, coincide: 'If we both know where we stand. Perhaps we can help each other' (p. 53). Gruach wants Egham to betray his army, general and country, and to take her son to safety with her people in Glen Lyon (p. 54). In return, he will 'get a good price' (p. 55). Gruach's features as a strong, clever leader – which seem to be qualities commonly attributed to males rather than females in the patriarchal world of the Shakespearean original – make her a woman fiercely loyal to her country.

Her portrayal in Greig's play with its special emphasis on her femininity poses a contrast to the portrayal of Lady Macbeth in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. As Carolyn Asp observes, 'Lady Macbeth consciously attempts to reject her feminine sensibility and adopt a male mentality because she perceives that her society equates feminine qualities with weakness' (Asp 1981, p. 153). Gruach, however, embraces her feminine sensitivity and mentality, and skilfully handles them in order to serve herself and her people. Her feminine qualities are exactly what allow her to be the strongest figure. Lady Macbeth in one of her memorable speeches calls the spirits to make her into a man in order to be more powerful:

> Come, you spirits
> Tthat tend on mortal thoughts! Unsex me here,
> And fill me from the crown to the toe top full
> Of direct cruelty. Make thick my blood,
> Stop up the access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

The effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,

And take my milk for gall, you murd'ring ministers,

Wherever in your sightless substances

You wait on nature's mischief! (I, v, 33-43)

In contrast, Gruach uses her femininity as a weapon to manipulate Siward. Furthermore, she is presented as a mother who resorts to cunning plans in order to save her child, of whom she is very protective. Contrary to the way that Lady Macbeth prays for parts of her body that signify her gender and sex to be destroyed at once, Gruach is presented as not cruel and masculine, but sympathetic as she offers her affection and companionship to Siward:

Siward: Gruach,

Did your men kill my soldier?

Gruach: No.

Siward: Did you give them orders?

Gruach: My men know what I want without me having to inform it into words.

Siward: What do you want now?

Gruach: I think you know.

Siward goes to kiss her.

She lets him.

They kiss. (p. 69)

She touches and kisses him, even sleeps with him, thus using her sexuality and sensuality, considered as female attributes, in order to make Siward feel like a man,

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

which is considered in turn as measure of dominance and power. Thus, the power Gruach holds is here based on her feminine identity and the way she handles her sexuality.

Leadership is Gruach's most evident quality. Even though she became the Queen of Scotland by tyranny and regicide, she stands tall as a leader and she is actually, as the eldest daughter of the Moray family, rightfully one of Scotland's leaders. Macduff even says that the usurper king owed all of his power to Gruach: 'The tyrant came from nowhere. /His power belonged to the Queen.' (p. 30). Her clan is one of the most powerful and respected in Scotland. And her first marriage was an arranged marriage between two major clans to keep Scotland under the rule of one king. Gruach has a son from that marriage who is the future king of Scotland: 'Gruach bore that prince a son – the rightful heir (p. 31).' This makes her claims to the throne valid. However, she is not a natural leader only by birth, but by character as well. She is stern and authoritative throughout the play. Although a captive, she talks boldly and claims to still be the Queen and the authority in Scotland. When she talks about the escape of her son, she says to Siward, 'If he were dead – word would have come to me' (p. 33): she is certain that she is still in control of Scotland and there is nothing that could happen without her knowledge. In her intimate relationship with Siward, she repeatedly claims to be the Queen still. She even proposes to Siward to marry her and become the king of Scotland: 'I am not a witch but I am the Queen of Scotland. /And if you marry me. /You can be king.' (p. 70). She seduces Siward both with erotic love and promise of power in order to maintain her own position. Finally, the greatest example of her leadership qualities is the way she organises an assault on the English soldiers even when she is Siward's captive. While she maintains an intimate

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

relationship with him, she plots against the English. When the Scottish soldiers arrive, she boldly claims that they are her own saying, 'They are mine. /They have come for me (p. 86).' In the final part of the play, she makes it clear that it does not matter for her if she or her heirs die as Scotland will always find another leader. This highlights how she, as a strong leader, actually cares not for herself but for her country's 'peace', though in her own 'patriotic' terms.

Gruach's authoritative and proud tone is the source of her leadership to the extent that the only way to end her leadership and authority in Scotland seems to be to kill her after the English invasion. She is the one pulling the strings in her relationship with Siward, directing him in the way she wants with a stern and controlled tone. On several occasions, Gruach asks, even commands, Siward to retrieve her belongings such as her clothes, bed and handmaids, something Siward fulfils. Also, when Siward tries to convince her to give up her authority and rights as the Queen, she refuses harshly saying, 'My son doesn't *claim*. /My son is the King' (p. 34). She constantly reminds Siward that he is in no position to impose anything on her or Scotland as he and is army are the outsiders and have no right to meddle in Scotland politics. When Siward likens himself to a falcon, she says 'I think a cuckoo. /Making your home in another bird's nest.' (p. 65) Later, Siward asks her about the Gaelic language and wants to learn it a little. However, Gruach and her handmaids openly make fun of him. Siward is offended and says, 'Look at you smiling. You smiling and your women laughing at me. Which of us is really the conqueror here and which of us the conquered.' (p. 77). Her approach in this situation can be considered as a claim that she is the authority in her own land and language even though Siward has conquered the land by force. She even, as we have discussed, takes her relationship with Siward

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

to an erotic level, gaining his love and trust. On her marriage day, she gives signal to the Scots to attack. They slaughter many English soldiers and take Gruach with them. She is proud of her schemes when she leaves:

> The mysterious thing was her leaving, /How calmly she walked towards them – these blood covered men- /And whether their coming came of witchcraft or of treachery /Or some combination of the two (pp. 86-7).

She betrays Siward's love and trust at the end, something which can even be considered as a kind of tyranny.

Gruach embodies leadership and authority for Scotland, and her schemes to maintain her power can indeed be considered tyrannical, or at least ruthless. Her tone in all the conversations with almost everyone around her reflects her pride and authority. Her relationship with Siward and her attitude towards him are good indications of her authoritativeness and her willingness to maintain her power over Scotland. To protect her authority, she even goes as far as to propose alliance to the enemy by getting close to Siward and even by marrying him. However, when her scheme does not go as planned because of the arranged marriage with Malcolm, she signals the attack on the English, betraying Siward whom she sought as an ally. She has the required qualities to be a powerful leader including the less attractive ones like ruthlessness.

A Scottish Invader with an English Army

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Patriotism is throughout used as a political veil to cover the power-driven ambitions of the major characters, such as Siward and Malcolm, as well as Gruach. Malcolm grows up a forceful fighting man in his youth and after the death of Macbeth becomes the power figure in Scotland, whom the English king supports as the new ruler of the country. Though Malcolm does not object to Siward, in deciding what to do for the problems in Scotland, he remains silent most of the time. He warns Siward about Gruach's son, the legal heir to the throne. He is content with the idea of becoming the new king and at one moment Macduff does not hesitate to suggest that Siward should kill Gruach and put her head on a stick in the castleyard, to end all the strife and so that Malcolm will have no rival. Malcolm believes that the Moray chiefs support Gruach dearly:

> Malcolm: Don't trust a word they say. They're flies in her web.
> Nothing is spoken in Scotland without her knowing about it.
> Siward: If she's speaking her wishes through them then let's take her at her word.
> Malcom: I wondered if she might eat something.
> Siward: What?
> Malcom: A sick eel. A bad hen. Some glass... Spider. (p. 49)

The majority of Malcolm and Siward's otherwise subtle, sinister, or outright callous actions are justified through their alleged patriotism. In *Macbeth*, however, employment of 'patriotism' in such an overt, intense way is hard to find. The callousness and subtle plotting are carried out with little political cover-up. The

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

villainous intent is much less accounted for politically: for example, Macbeth admits that he will kill the king out of nothing but ambition:

> I have no spur
> To prick the sides of intent, but only
> Vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps itself
> And falls on th'other (I, vii, 25-28)

With this speech Macbeth announces that he is no more a patriot than the king he intends to assassinate. In *Dunsinane*, however, every ambitious effort, every little advancement in war is justified by some conception of patriotism. The opening scene declares the main aim shared by both sides, namely Scottish and English that take part in an unending conflict: 'To Dunsinane! Dunsinane and the fight to take it!' (p.12), followed by Siward's proclamation 'I am Siward, I am England!' (p.27) Siward's strong belief in England's interest in the Scottish situation is constantly encouraged and empowered by Malcolm, the king and Siward, an agent serving English patriotism is sent by England to install him. As Joan Hartwig notes of Shakespeare's play in 'Macbeth, the Murderers, and the Diminishing Parallel', every character who takes part in some sort of plot 'tries to inspire the murderers to a motivated slaughter' (Hartwig 1973, p. 40). In Greig's play, Siward brings an army and Malcolm a general who believes that what he is doing is just.

Both characters justify their patriotism. The English general in Scotland, Siward has a serious sense of responsibility. He loses a son in Scotland, he has an affair with Gruach, but he never lets his emotions take precedence over his duties and

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

responsibilities. When Macduff tells Siward that Osborn, his son, has been killed, he asks only 'Where's the wound?' and 'Can it be a mistake?' (p. 26), and then moves on. As the general of an army at war, he clearly considers that he has no time for mourning. In another scene, his belief in the war he has led his army to fight is indicated clearly in the questions he addresses Malcolm, who has deceived Siward about the situation in Scotland. Siward starts his demand for clarification – 'You told me the tyrant had lost the support of the chiefs' (p. 27) – and goes on to question Malcolm's promise that the English army '[was] likely to see a swift and general acceptance of [Malcolm's] rule and the chance to establish a new and peaceful order' (p. 28). As is clearly indicated in his speech, Siward believed that he was acting according to the public will in Scotland, and that his actions were in the interest of the Scottish people. However, his discovery of the real situation and his realisation that he has been deceived by Malcolm do not stop him from carrying on his duties as the commander of the English army. Even after he has found out about the rivalry between the clans and claims against Malcolm's rule, Siward does not listen to what the people of Scotland want. Although his army causes destruction in the country, he continues to support the military occupation of Scotland in the name of human intervention and claims:

> I have to clear away the past now. I have to uproot now and clear away all past claims and – That way there is a chance that we can establish a fair peace in Scotland in which every clan can flourish... New government can't be built on top of old wounds.' (p. 33)

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

He does not understand that, just like the tyrant, his army has installed a king on the throne by murder, and that the presence of his army as an occupying force in Scotland will not contribute to the settlement of disputes and to the establishment of stability and peace.

The facade of patriotism and motivation – which reveals power-driven ambition and the expansion of war almost every single time in *Dunsinane* – is nothing but a subtle criticism of military operations, the imperialist modern doctrine of so-called 'democratic intervention' that magically justifies any war brought upon marginally smaller, less powerful and influential countries today. Very much as in that doctrine, the characters in *Dunsinane* employ their patriotic zeal as an excuse to wage and resume war. Michael Taussing in 'Zoology, Magic, and Surrealism in the War on Terror' argues that 'since after World War II, wars have reverted back to being colonial war against guerilla movements' (Taussing p. 112), and that is the basis for the plot of *Dunsinane*. *Dunsinane* is a sequel to *Macbeth*, but also a political and critical modernisation of it. Although the plot is supposed to take place around the eleventh century, Scotland in the play is being treated as a modern colony by England, having sent troops to oocupy and install a new king, allegedly to establish peace, order, and harmony. The soldiers loyal to Queen Gruach, defending their land, are placed deep in the woods: every depiction of their military formation, as already noted, is very similar to modern, guerilla freedom fighters. Both sides are fighting for Dunsinane and their patriotism surely makes it justified in their terms for them to do anything to satisfy their ambitions.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Dunsinane represents Scotland as if under contemporary wartime conditions and it shows how an occupied country tries to survive at a time of chaos and instability. Siward's idea of war in *Dunsinane* is reminiscent of Rudyard Kipling's oxymoronic term 'savage wars of peace' which he uses in his poem 'The White Man's Burden' to describe imperialist wars that he believes are fought to serve the colonisers' vision of inferior peoples of the world. Siward tells Gruach that 'It's in England's interest to have peace in Scotland' (p. 34) and disregards Gruach's reminder that there was peace in Scotland prior to the arrival of the English. By extension, Siward's logic can also be connected to neo-imperialist rhetoric that justifies wars by arguing that they are fought to bring peace and stability – examples to this are found in the Gulf Wars, the ongoing war in Afghanistan, and the military interventions in Libya, as well as the lack of similar action against the current government of Syria. Although a man of good intentions, Siward's main problem is that he cannot understand the dynamics of Scotland and its conflicting clans; he is headstrong, and follows whatever he believes to be the right path, disregarding everything else. His headstrong attitude is what leads his cause to a dead end over time. At one point, Egham protests over Siward's burning people alive, and Siward explains that 'If we make a threat we have to follow it through.' (p. 94) He believes in his cause so much that he fails to understand his surroundings and in return his actions bring more destruction and harm. He explains to Egham that he has to be ruthless in his pursuit of peace, and does not understand it when Egham explains that the Scottish are fighting the English simply because they are an invading force in their country (p. 95). In his ruthless pursuit, Siward is also criticised by Malcolm who thinks that the war is 'progressing *too* strongly' (p 106), but he fails to give an ear to the warnings he receives. Because he is involved too much in his pursuit, he cannot

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

have the clear vision of those who, like Egham, keep a distance from the conflict. Lost in the pursuit he strongly believes, Siward loses control and cannot see the outcomes of his actions.

Power relations between the occupier and the occupied is one of Greig's main concerns. England and Scotland have their own ethos and culture. England receives its power from its unified structure. The English are a forest that can 'bend and twist but when it is knotted together in a thicket – it is impenetrable' (p. 12). The English have their codes, values and morals that unify them. The Scots also have their own codes, but they are fragmented and divided into factions that provide a dynamic and constantly shifting political sphere. This uncertainty of the present and the future gives Scotland a unique power. Siward, with his literal view of the world and strong attachment to stability, is a good example of a soldier who is an able body in battlefields. Gruach likens him to her former husband, a man of 'tents and fires and fields' (p. 67), which does not mean that he is a bad politician, but that his lack of delicate diplomatic understanding and ability to use power is a drawback. Malcolm in one moment likens his 'literalness' to a child's behaviour (p. 29). Siward compensates this lack of subtle political manoeuvres with his army and skills in the combat.

Conclusion

In the play's world of war and strife, Gruach rises as an important leader. As a woman she uses her femininity and the image of witchcraft to intimidate her foes. She is a perfect example of the Machiavellian image of the lion and the fox mixed in one person. What she lacks, though, is a proper and loyal army and the support of the other half of the country. Her political power and intelligence is revealed in her exchange with Siward: 'Falcons are never tame. They just chase their allegiance very

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

carefully'. (p. 68) The seduction scene between Gruach and Siward in the second act of the play portrays the balance of power in their relationship. Even though Siward had greater military power over Gruach whom he keeps as his captive, Gruach is the one who, as a woman, holds greater real control over Siward, allowing her to become more and more empowered as a leader. In an intelligent and cunning way Gruach flatters Siward's pride. She teases him as she playfully but truthfully says:

> which of us is really the conqueror here, and which of us the conquered? ... You invaded my country with your powerful army. You took it. Laid waste my land. Burned. Raped. And now I am your prisoner. To do with as you will. (p. 77)

She is a smart woman and uses her sexuality as a weapon in her own favour. Her sexual appeal allows Siward to perceive her unprofessionally, as an object of love and affection.

Gruach has magical powers by which she is able to contact her soldiers, to give them orders, and keep them afoot. A striking scene of Gruach's leadership qualities coincides with her assault plan of the English soldiers even when she is Siward's captive:

Scottish soldiers enter the hall, weapons raised. They are covered in blood.

Macduff: Where are the guards?

Egham: Dead, sir.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

> Siward: What do they want?
>
> Gruach: They are mine. They have come for me.
>
> *Gruach walks towards them and out of the hall. The Scottish Soldiers attack the crowd. The crowd defend themselves. The hall is full of fire and slaughter.*
>
> No one saw how the Queen's men entered Dunsinane. / The doors opened silently and afterwards we found that / All our sentries had been cut at the throat – but / However her men came the mysterious thing was her leaving, / How calmly she walked towards them – these blood-covered men - / And their coming came of witchcraft or of tearchery / Or some combination of the two – as the great hall filled up / With fire and blood one thought filled the room like smoke. (pp. 86-87)

Her spell is so powerful that it can even control the weather, and brings storm and snow to the land, which stops the war. It is significant that, when Siward explains how destructive a woman Gruach is, he compares her to winter when 'a black cloud' appears and 'sucks the life out the ground and leaves it frozen and hopeless' (p. 135). In a conversation with Siward, Gruach tells him that the drink will make him a bird, a cuckoo 'making [his] home in another bird's nest' (p. 65). She uses the metaphor of a bird, comparing English people to a cuckoo invading another land, Scotland, to set out her patriotic feelings. Yet, in another conversation she tells Siward that if he kills her, Scotland will find another queen, making it clear that the Scottish demand for freedom is always present. She defiantly challenges Siward, indicating that it is not a personal matter but a national one, revealing and promoting Scottish patriotism in the

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

play. Siward's plain question as to whether Scotland will ever be at peace is answered by Malcolm: 'Not in the way that you want it to be' (p. 126). The answer is not to impose 'peace'; the English are not to force Scotland to defend itself for the sake of 'peace'. As Malcolm points out, peace will never come to Scotland by imposition of any sort. The English – and Siward – are unaware that their mere presence is not imposing peace as they wish, but exacerbating war, which as the end of *Dunsinane* suggests, faced by invasion, is irresolubly ongoing and unfinished.

References

Asp, C. 1981. 'Be Bloody, Bold and Resolute: Tragic Action and Sexual Stereotyping in *Macbeth*'. *Studies in Philology.* University of North Carolina Press, pp. 153-169. http://www.jstor.org/stable/4174071 [Accessed December 11 2013]

Blake, J. 2009. 'Afghan War will Make Britain Safer'. London: Channel 4. Web.http://www.channel4.com/news/articles/politics/domestic_politics/afghan%2Bwar%2Bwill%2Baposmake%2Bbritain%2Bsaferapos/3263957.html [Accessed December 20 2013]

Cavendish, R. 2004. 'Macbeth Defeated at Dunsinane.' *History Today.* 54:7 (July, 2004), p. 55. http://www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/macbeth-defeateddunsinane#stash.ShKBkvG2.dpuf [Accessed December 13 2013]

Coursen, H. R. 1977. *Macbeth: A Guide to the Play.* Westport: Greenwood Press.

Courtauld, George. 2004. *The Pocket Book of Patriotism.* London: Halstead Book.

Everett, William. 'Patriotism'. *The Advocate of Peace.* 62.7 (1920), pp. 151-157. Web. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25751626 [Accessed December 12 2013]

Greig, D. 2010. *Dunsinane.* London: Faber and Faber.

http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS
ISSN 2046-5602

Hartwig, J. 1973. 'Macbeth, the Murderers, and the Diminishing Parallel'. *The Yearbook of English Studies.* 3, pp. 39-43. http://www.waterstonesmarketplace.com/The-yearbook-of-English-studies-Vol-3 1973-T-J-B-Spencer/book/7342761 [Accessed December 11 2013]

Hermann, I., Palmieri, D. 2010. 'Between Amazons and Sabines: A Historical Approach to Women and War'. *International Review of the Red Cross.* 92 (877), pp.19-30. http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=780877 &fileId=S1816383109990531 [Accessed January 7 2014]

MacIntyre, Al. 2002. 'Is Patriotism a Virtue?' *Debates in Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Anthology*, pp. 286-300. [Accessed 7 Jan 2014] http://www.mohamedrabeea.com/books/book1_7670.pdf [Accessed December 12 2013]

Müller, A., Wallace C., eds. 2011. *Cosmotopia: Transnational Identities in David Greig's Theatre.* Prague: Litteraria Pragensia Books.

Nathanson, S. 1989. 'In Defence of 'Moderate Patriotism'', In *Ethics.* 99:3 (April, 1989), pp. 535-552. http://mym.cdn.laureate-media.com/2dett4d/Walden/PSPA/3040/03/Nathanson.pdf [Accessed 14 December 2013]

Nathanson, S. 1993. *Patriotism, Morality and Peace.* Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Price, V. E. 2012. 'two Kingdoms ... compassed with one Sea: Reconstructing Kingdoms and Reclaiming Histories in David Greig's *Dunsinane*'. *International Journal of Scottish Theatre and Screen.* 5(1), pp. 19-32. http://journals.qmu.ac.uk/index.php/IJOSTS/article/view/143 [Accessed January 7

2014]

Taussig, Michael. 2008. 'Zoology, Magic, and Surrealism in the War on Terror'. *Critical Inquiry*. 34 (52), pp. 98-116.

Simonsen, S. G. 2009. 'Leaving Security in Safe Hands: Identity, Legitimacy and Cohesion in the New Afghan and Iraqi Armies'. *Third World Quarterly*. 30 (8), pp. 1483-1500.

http://www.academia.edu/802574/Leaving_Security_in_Safe_Hands_identity_legitimacy_and_cohesion_in_the_new_Afghan_and_Iraqi_armies [Accessed December 15 2013]

Viroli, M. 1995. 'Introduction'. *For Love of Country: An Essay on Patriotism and Nationalism*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Wallace, C. 2013. *The Theatre of David Greig*. London: Bloomsbury.