# Voices of Inheritance: Aspects of British Film and Television in the 1980s and 1990s

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## Contents

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## Abstract

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During the 1990s the notion of the heritage film has become a taken for granted category of British cinema. Rather than dispute the merits of particular films that lie within this genre I question the construction of the relation between the idea of heritage and contemporary British film and television. Using the critical literature established by the contending cultural histories that address the rise of heritage in British culture, I highlight other, frequently personal and national engagements with inherited pasts. The concentration upon inheritance lends a greater emphasis to what is passed on from the past and endures in the present.

The modes of articulating these inherited pasts are formally distinctive and constructed out of the vocabulary of documentary and fiction. The corpus of texts begins with the apparently radical avant garde film-making of Derek Jarman and moves through the work of the Black Audio Film Collective to the apparently conservative television documentaries of Alan Bennett. These key voices are then situated in relation to the hegemonic definition of heritage and current debates concerning British film and television. The persisting opposition which defined British cinema during the 1980s posits an unofficial cinema characterized by dissent and urban decay against an official cinema represented by the heritage film. My corpus of texts challenges this opposition. The different engagements with inherited pasts take place from different speaking positions and represent a diminishing publicly funded tradition of film and television production. The range of positions from margins to centre reveal that there was a contestation of the cultural sources which are aggregated into the construction of heritage during the 1980s and 1990s.

## Introduction

This thesis is an exploration of the articulation of *inheritance* across British film and television produced in the 1980s and early 1990s (1). In the written text that accompanies The Last of England (1987) Derek Jarman makes an explicit claim to the cultural inheritance he recognizes against the inheritance represented by family, property and wealth. It is the latter meaning that Jarman endeavours to isolate from his cultural inheritance that is commonly associated with inheritance. Jarman states: 'I need a very firm anchor in that hurricane, the anchor is my inheritance, not my family inheritance, but a cultural one, which locates the film IN HOME' (2). The idea of home is the ground where the overlap between the meanings of inheritance occur. This conflict between the understanding of home that is inherited and the idea of home Jarman wants to inherit is articulated in The Last of England. Jarman's personal films give voice to the conflict that he feels between the inheritance of home and family which is inseparable from the idea of England personified by his patriotic RAF officer father, and the cultural inheritance which is comprised of those chosen aspects of a past England that inform Jarman's mode of expression. This conflict is expressed against the larger context of England in the 1980s and within Jarman's terms it is also a conflict over the medium of film.

Jarman claims his preferred inheritance through the form of the home movie. The inheritance that Jarman wishes to isolate from the dominant understanding of inheritance is not necessarily unique to him, but it is an expressive means through which Jarman identifies himself and his disposition towards the condition of England under Thatcherism. The conflicts in The Last of England are given a specific focus through the home movies taken and passed on by Jarman's father and grandfather. These home movies refer to Jarman's childhood and his father's investment in the British Empire and are expressive of the connection between personal memory and national cultural identity. The idea of inheritance incorporates

the relation of past to present and between the particular (personal) and the general (national), and the given and the desired. The expression of this relation is formed out of the conflict between Jarman's attachment to, and distance from, the meanings he attributes to inheritance. Against the background set out by Jarman in The Last of England I wish to investigate a set of related voices situated across British film and television of the 1980s and 1990s, that following the terms set out by Jarman, articulate the meaning and value of inheritance in formally contrasting styles.

It is the shared theme of inheritance rather than a singular formal or narrative unity which brings together the different strands of my corpus. The articulation of inheritance is a significant constituent of the relation between the condition of the national culture and British film and television in the 1980s and 1990s. The voices I have selected for my corpus incorporate, in differing proportions - a personal mode of address and a state of the nation mode of address. The voices range from the distinctly personal and non-fictional voices of the apparently radical Derek Jarman and the apparently conservative Alan Bennett, through to the less individual and more collective voices of Black Audio and to a lesser extent Patrick Keiller. The presence of Beeban Kidron's adaptation of Jeanette Winterson's autobiographical novel Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit together with the less personally marked fictional television drama of Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll written by Debbie Horsfield require an investigation of the cultural terms in which inheritance is expressed. These texts are brought together in the same chapter in order to show how the relation of women to the articulation of inheritance is negotiated. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is clearly addressing a personal inheritance that appears to resemble that expressed by Davies and Bennett but it is primarily an assertion of sexual difference. Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll demonstrate a greater degree of engagment with the themes established by the previous chapters. The corpus is otherwise structured by directors and writers

because my research is motivated by the desire to investigate the expression of the relation between personal and national inheritance.

The voices of inheritance occupy relatively marginal and dissenting speaking positions with Bennett occupying the location closest to the centre. From these speaking positions there are dissenting views of the nation which also engage with inherited conditions of belonging. These conditions are predicated upon culturally instituted ties of attachment that are passed on across generations and cross private and public spheres. Formative experiences are remembered through family, marriage, community, arriving at the mother country, the gallery and the abbey.

The different articulations of inheritance in the film and television that I have studied reveal different formal combinations of sound and image. These can be formally summarized as: i) use of voice over as descriptive and poetic insight ii) the reworking of the vocabulary of documentary and fiction iii) re-construction of a past life iv) self-reflexivity and modernism. The voice of personal experience is clearly inscribed through these formal characteristics. There are suggestions of autobiography spread across these formal features and this is most apparent in the films of Terence Davies, but the narrative impulse of autobiography as the story of a life, is largely resisted and my corpus cannot be generically designated as autobiography, and does not account adequately for the value of the relation I wish to explore.

Inheritance is voiced primarily through an internalized relation with the past. This past is not the distant periodic past that is consecrated within the adaptation of classic literary texts such as Orlando (Sally Potter, GB, 1993), or the aberrant royal personage of Edward II (Derek Jarman, GB, 1991), but a more recent past that is passed on and resonates across generations. The engagement with the inherited past involves a more self-conscious relation with time and occurs not in isolation from,

but in connection with, the present, and the wider context of the condition of England in the 1980s and early 1990s.

One of the political effects of Thatcherism was to successfully arrogate on behalf of the political right the meanings of national identity established in the post-war period. The intensity and range of expression within the corpus of texts I have selected occurs in dissenting opposition to, or negotiation with, such consequences of Thatcherism. The resulting condition of England in the 1980s and 1990s feeds an acutely felt and elegiac sense of loss and an inability to look forward with hope, which is not equally felt nor equally distributed across gender, class, ethnicity and sexuality. For the subject position articulated in Handsworth Songs the sense of loss lies beyond the boundary of England, and intensifies the feeling that the right to belong to the mother country is not inherited and must be asserted. The articulation of inheritance results in neither an outright rejection of identifying with certain aspects of England or Englishness, nor a yearning that corresponds with patriotism, but a negotiation of the contradictory ground between the personal and the national.

The production background of my corpus reveals a shared institutional context that crosses film and television. The institutional contexts of the BFI, BBC, Channel 4, and the Black Audio Film Collective film and video workshop all provide sources of public funding for marginal, lower budget productions that are unlikely to command a wide audience, but guarantee the continuation of traditions of independent production and space for formal innovation and dissenting views within British film and television. During the 1980s the BFI Production Fund became less able to depend upon government provided resources and became more dependent upon the funding made available through Channel 4. The changing conditions of public finance meant that public institutions such as the BFI and BBC had to adopt a more commercial and pragmatic approach to funding.

The articulations of inheritance take place from institutionally sanctioned spaces which had come to represent a tradition of publicly funded film and television production. The future existence of this tradition would be increasingly altered and called into question by the economic and political agenda of the 1980s and 1990s. The history of this production background informs directly and indirectly the articulations of inheritance I have selected. The relation of the voices that reside within this tradition to the political polarities which have defined British cinema in the 1980s suggest a greater degree of overlap and contradiction than has so far been suggested.

The defining and enduring polarity that characterizes the histories of British cinema in the 1980s is provided by Thomas Elsaesser. Elsaesser identified an opposition between an unofficial cinema exemplified by Sammy and Rosie Get Laid (Stephen Frears, Great Britain, 1987) and an official cinema exemplified by the Oscar winning success of Chariots of Fire (Hugh Hudson, Great Britain, 1981) (3). The historian Norman Stone underlined and simplified this opposition in The Sunday Times in 1988 and prescribed a demise in the national cinema that he viewed as patently manifest in the unofficial half of Elsaesser's pairing (4).

What I have identified as the voices of inheritance sit in between Elsaesser's opposition through an often unofficial disposition towards England which is combined with an expressive relation with the past. The exhibiting of the national past is epitomized by the characteristics of official cinema and it is the heritage film established in the 1980s which forms the critical apex of this cinema. Heritage cinema has become the critical nadir which other oppositional cinema is defined against. The unofficial, other cinema where, following Stone, all left wing and conspiratorial dissent is located becomes overdetermined within a contemporary shorthand of urban deprivation and breakdown within Thatcher's Britain. It is this

polarity of national politics and national cinema which defines British cinema in the 1980s.

The voices of inheritance demonstrate the expression of different articulations of the past. They also form a connection through time with dissenting and unofficial portrayals of contemporary England by presenting critiques of inherited England. The notion of inheritance is quite clearly a predicate of what has entered the vocabulary of cultural criticism as heritage and the generically identified heritage cinema. I have favoured the idea of inheritance in preference to heritage because it enables an intervention between the terms with which British cinema is conceptualized. Beginning with inheritance suggests a greater emphasis upon what is passed on and how it is passed on. Heritage is always already established as an object within the national imaginary. The investigation of inheritance calls into question the construction of the relation between heritage and film and television and gives greater emphasis to the cultural resonance of heritage beyond that of the preserved artefact.

There is a discrepancy between what has been written about heritage outside of film studies and the debate about the heritage film within British film and television of the 1980s and 1990s. The critical literature dealing with the rise of heritage offers contrasting cultural histories that account for and conceptualize heritage in different ways. A survey of this literature reveals a rich set of arguments that is not reflected in the terms of the debate carried out within film studies. A certain set of meanings has become both definitive of the relation between heritage and film, and an inevitable accompanying response of left critics to the increasingly evident heritage film. This is not representative of the range of insights provided by the cultural histories. A hegemonic national heritage crudely represented in its most prominent mode through the country house, the rural landscape, and the affairs of the monarchy and aristocracy, has been mapped on to those films which replicate this

iconography in a critical relation of correspondence. Andrew Higson's work which takes the national past and national heritage as starting points, is definitive of this generic relation (5). Higson's position on the heritage film has triggered a number of counter claims which do not dispute the issues and meanings around heritage that Higson sets out, but point instead, to the possibilities of other textual readings of the heritage films which prioritize issues of gender and sexuality over issues of national identity and representation of the past. Richard Dyer defines the heritage film across European nations and beyond and points to the readings available to what is suggested as a skilled female spectator (6). Claire Monk has questioned the contours of the heritage film and has also endeavoured to amend the terms of debate by affixing the term *post* to heritage (7). The parameters of this restrictive debate where a concern with nation and heritage is rarely coterminous with gender or sexuality, and in which Higson has become something of a convenient target, continues to overlook the construction of the relation between heritage and national cinema. There remains precious little engagement with the discursive construction of heritage and its resonance across film and television in the 1980s and 1990s. The paradigm of textual analysis which traditionally underpins film studies, in this instance takes for granted and closes down the formation of the relation between heritage and cinema. My chapters are underpinned by textual analysis but this methodology is not intended to offer another reading in relation to an already established debate where the formative terms are not in question, but is motivated by the desire to form connections between the singular, personally marked text and other levels of emphasis to show how the construction of the debate - between the limits of heritage and British film and television, can be taken in new directions by the different voices of inheritance.

Higson confirms the possibility that other types of film display a different heritage but this pluralistic qualification has not been significantly addressed. The voices of inheritance clearly emanate from below the level of hegemonic national heritage, but

they address the terms of identification with the national heritage. These issues underwrite the polarised response to the heritage film but have yet to be significantly addressed. Consequently, the range of the argument that is presented across the cultural and historical work of John Corner and Sylvia Harvey, Raphael Samuel and Patrick Wright, is not reflected in the debate about the heritage film (8). The heritage film remains a taken for granted object with generic characteristics.

John Hill's account of British Cinema in the 1980s provides a significant intervention in the heritage debate and at the same time suggests other avenues of further research that remain open (9). He acknowledges the fact that the idea of heritage is critically contested and similarly that the uses and meaning of nostalgia are not necessarily exhausted by heritage. Crucially, he remains within the equivalent generic arc of the heritage films initiated by Higson. Hill follows his analysis of the heritage films with a consideration of the state of the nation film. I want to attempt to resist the direction of the argument which sets up an opposition between the mythical heritage film whose narrative is adapted from a fictional text, and the non-fictional, leftist state of the nation film motivated by historical and political realism. A significant third term within this opposition is modernism. The linkage of past with present often occurs through modernist form in the film texts in my corpus. This suggests that the relation between English modernism and the impulse to look back into the past from the situation of the present, are not necessarily inimical.

Corner and Harvey show that the ascent of heritage in Britain occurred precisely during a period of considerable change which they summarize as the mediation between tradition and modernity. The political and cultural context in which heritage came to the fore provoked a reaction across English culture that was also manifest in film and television. The application of inheritance as a predicating term allows for the wider cultural context and a wider range of formal expression to be

contrasted with the hegemonic national heritage. Inheritance is not necessarily manifest at the level of an imposed artefact as Robert Hewison describes the Heritage Industry, but as a structure of feeling which is expressed in formally divergent modes that may or may not trigger recognition with the spectator (10). The response to heritage is symptomatic of the 1980s where critics either recoil in rejection or highlight the possibilities of other textual readings. The dispute between Cairns Craig and Alison Light in Sight and Sound over the sources of critical and political significance in the heritage film is illustrative of this tendency (11). The terms of this argument and the debate which has followed continue to fail to address what is at stake when the relation between heritage and film is formed. I intend to reveal through textual analysis that their remains an expressive cultural tendency, which is best understood as inheritance and is manifest across contemporary British film and television.

My research can be summarized through the following questions:

i) what are the inheritances that are expressed in particular texts within the defined period and how are they articulated in relation to British film culture and British culture ?

ii) what does the investigation of the idea of inheritance running across differing audio-visual material add to the debate about British film and television and heritage ?

# Chapter One

## The Coupling of Heritage and Cinema

## The Coupling of Heritage and British Cinema

There are two distinct bodies of research which share the concept of heritage and encompass my area of research. The cultural/historical writing on heritage in Britain and Ireland and the recent work on British cinema come together in the construction of the relation between 'heritage' and British film and television.

It was during the 1980s when the idea of 'heritage' reached its apogee in Britain. John Corner and Sylvia Harvey's pairing of Enterprise and Heritage as the title for their edited book on the subject provides some indication of the political context which surrounded 'heritage' :

> The National Heritage Acts of 1980 and 1983 sought in different ways to secure further funding for increased activity in the preservation, restoration and display of historic properties whilst at the same time providing 'heritage' projects more generally with a new (and a commercially aggressive) public philosophy. Out of the 1983 Act a new public body, English Heritage, was formed to oversee the management of buildings and monuments and to co-ordinate and fund schemes of preservation and redevelopment across the board (1).

The National Heritage Act 1980 established a National Heritage Memorial Fund and in the 1990s the Heritage Lottery Fund which functioned to:

> give financial assistance towards the cost of acquiring, maintaining or preserving land, buildings, works of art and other objects of outstanding interest which are also of importance to the national heritage (2).

This was continued in the 1990s when John Major's successor to the Thatcher governments of the 1980s granted the matters of National Heritage cabinet status and the department of National Heritage was formed. Heritage was later incorporated by the Blair government in 1997 into the renamed department of Culture, Media and Sport. This new department initiated an attempt to renew British identity without directly threatening tradition (3).

The salience of heritage both in Britain and internationally during the 1980s has tended to result in heritage being viewed as a political and cultural consequence of this period. It is however, worth pointing out the more literal meanings of the term. Dictionary definitions confirm that the idea of heritage has been historically linked to *inheritance*, and the act of passing on:

> *heritage*: i) anything that is or may be inherited, ii) inherited circumstances, benefits, etc. iii) a nation's historic buildings, monuments, countryside, etc., especially when regarded as worthy of preservation (4).

There is a movement across these three definitions from a wider sense of *inheritance* to a much more familiar and recognizable National Heritage. It is this latter capitalized and politicized notion of Heritage rather than heritage, which is evident in the accounts of Patrick Wright's On Living in an Old Country (1985) and Robert Hewison's Heritage Industry (1987) (5). The accounts of Wright and Hewison continue the Marxist historical tradition typified by the related work of Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm's prior edited collection Inventing Traditions (1983) (6). The scant attention given in these accounts to peripheral engagements with the past and with the other sources which might constitute the meaning of heritage for individual subjects can be attributed to the determining ideological context of the 1980s otherwise known as Thatcherism. For Wright and Hewison it

is the political project of National Heritage which is most significant. Wright's contribution stems from his return to England after a period away. He observes the increased presence and significance of - 'the imperilled traces of a closely held iconography of what it is to be English - all of them appealing....to the historical and sacrosanct identity of the nation' (7). Wright goes on to point out that one of the objectives of the National Heritage Act was to 'increase the exhibition of the heritage' (8). Similarly, for Hewison 'The Destruction of the Country House Exhibition in 1974 is the point at which heritage was born' (9). Hewison makes a connection between three key historical factors: i) a heritage that is perceived to be in danger, ii) a marked industrial decline most evident in manufacturing and heavy industries such as mining and steel, and iii) a distinct increase in the cultural significance of preserving the past be it via the country house or the preserved industrial past in a museum. From this teleology Hewison identifies the formation of The Heritage Industry. The accounts of Wright and Hewison lead to the formation of a narrative of explanation of the political emergence of heritage. Corner and Harvey maintain that Wright and Hewison's accounts of heritage are largely informed by - 'the context of a marked industrial decline which was seen as the primary determining factor' (10).

These accounts describe how British/English identity was being appropriated by the political right through the public discourses of heritage which became prominent in the 1980s. In both accounts there is a prevailing tone of loss in relation to national discourse which is indicative not only of a response to the rise of a selective National Heritage, but also the registering of the corresponding decline in the ability of the left to influence issues of national identity and to intervene in the debate concerning the political mobilization of National Heritage.

The corollary to the positions of Wright and Hewison emerged in the first published volume of the late Raphael Samuel's Theatres *of* Memory. Samuel concentrated

upon alternative and marginal sources of heritage such as old photographs, old magazines and the terraced house, which offered a means of contesting as well as extending the cultural history of heritage beyond the 1980s. Samuel's emphasis upon popular memory and living history continued the 'history from below' tradition of History Workshop Journal. As Kenneth Thompson rightly points out - 'for Samuel, heritage and conservation referred to older and more varied popular efforts to preserve distinctive local and grassroots cultures' (11). However, there is a distinction to be made between the disciplinary question of what historical sources are privileged and the wider cultural and political question concerning whether heritage is constituted as a primarily national phenomenon or whether other sources of history manifest other sources of heritage. The criticism levelled at Samuel by Wright is that he overlooks the wider national process that took hold of heritage during a period of marked industrial decline:

> Heritage may be 'people's history' in one manifestation, but it is also quango- culture and tourism paraded as an alternative for industrial policy....Conservation is certainly not responsible for Britain's relative economic decline, but in the public symbolism of recent decades, a partial and backward-looking conception of heritage has been squared off against modernization in a manner that has constrained our ability to imagine a future (12).

The position of the former Marxist Samuel can be equated with a postmodern and populist defence of heritage but the central point of Samuel's polemic against the critics of heritage is historiographic. The argument can be summarized in a juxtaposition of Samuel's heritage from below against the castigation of the political implications of the Heritage Industry expressed by both Wright and Hewison. Where Samuel cites everyday artefacts as sources of historical evidence Hewison and Wright concentrate on the political and cultural effects of the apprehending of

National Heritage by the Conservative government. One of the issues raised by this debate is the movement from heritage to National Heritage. Samuel's argument is politically undeveloped and unfinished but it does point to the range of investments that are made in the past across the culture of an old country. However, the contestation of heritage by comparatively marginal sources prompts the question of the *level* at which such conflict is decided. Clearly, it is not sufficient only to point to the historical evidence of sources of heritage. These other sources of heritage have to be situated within, rather than only against, the broader hegemonic level of National Heritage.

The distinction that comes through these accounts is how Samuel identifies different cultural and historical sources that do not correspond with the representation of heritage identified by Wright and Hewison. The benefit of Samuel's account is that it highlights the range of cultural attachments to the past that are aggregated under the hegemonic idea of Heritage. Samuel sidesteps the discussion of the familiar National Heritage by pointing to the preceding and formative connections that according to the National Curriculum Working Group are best understood as *inheritance*:

> we have been careful to minimize the use of the word 'heritage' because it has various meanings and is in danger of becoming unhelpfully vague. For historical purposes the word 'inheritance' may be more precise in its meaning, implying 'that which the past has bequeathed to us'. While all people in Britain partake to a greater or lesser extent of a shared 'inheritance' they also have their own individual group, family, etc. 'inheritances' which are inter-related.The study of history should respect and make clear this pattern of inheritances (13).

This paragraph outlines the range of identification that is at stake in the construction of heritage. The suggestion that the meaning of heritage can be formed from a wider range of historical material is underlined by Samuel's account and the political limits of emphasizing a pattern of inheritances from below are asserted by Corner and Harvey. Corner and Harvey's wide ranging cultural account is not only a response to the political appropriation of National Heritage by the Conservative government during a time of decline but it also points out the political and social limits of Samuel's position:

> Nationalist nostalgia might well serve to construct via sentiments of *inheritance*, a sense of the National Present perfectly suited for use as a departure point for an 'enterprising' National Future.....attempts to rework or to replace the presently dominant and successful forms of heritage will have to offer more than alternative, 'real' histories. They will have to speak to that much broader restructuring of identities, desires and social relationships (14).

Corner and Harvey suggest the terms of analysis that will reconcile the polarization of historical sources which emerges out of the argument between Samuel and Wright and Hewison. Wright also recognizes that the sources of inheritance are not only national and do not necessarily begin and end there. Inheritance is manifest within what he terms as the first level of national ideology and the second level of lived experience. He also acknowledges the different cultural histories that might offer the possibility of pluralizing heritage:

> one only has to think of the specific 'heritages' which have been mobilized in opposition to the dominant 'national' one - local heritage, women's heritage, working-class heritage, black heritage - to realize two things. First, that the expression of oppositional

> demand is likely to involve struggle over the right to the meaning and public status of traditions. Second, that National Heritage, as a publicly instituted structuring of consciousness, functions by excluding traditions which it cannot incorporate (15).

These critical perspectives highlight in different ways, the cultural process through which inheritance, often via the contested vehicle of tradition, passes into what is publicly recognized as National Heritage. Corner and Harvey and Wright share a common attribute with each other, and also with one of the dominant paradigms in film studies, which is the privileging of national discourse. It is at this determining public level that inheritance becomes compressed into heritage. The idea of heritage being nationally determined is not ignored but discounted by Samuel, in order to reveal how inheritance is expressed from below the ideological level of the nation through unofficial historical or private sources. An issue remaining after Samuel's initial volume is the need to reveal how these levels of focus can be meaningfully connected.

Gill Davies argues in relation to The Way We Were an exhibition of the industrial past at Wigan Pier, that the representative ground between a local, regional inheritance and national heritage is not necessarily seamless:

> might not the we in *The Way We Were* be addressing a different community, a shared experience that is not 'national' and spuriously unifying, and that is not so readily incorporated for reactionary political ends ? (16).

Davies' insight highlights the need for not only more empirical work about how people identify with the versions of the past that are offered, but also a fuller and connective account of the inheritances which lie below the level of the nation and

which might not necessarily correspond with the hegemonic National Heritage (17). The inheritances from below that are present in Samuel's account are mentioned in both Corner and Harvey and Wright, but there remains a requirement for more inflected research into heritage that draws connections between the positions of Samuel with those of Wright and Corner and Harvey.

There are other accounts of heritage written from outside the context of British politics and culture. Writing in 1996, David Lowenthal examines the relation between history and heritage. Lowenthal's contribution is significant because he is the first male academic to bring together heritage and the issue of gender. To do so Lowenthal breaks heritage down into a useful constitutive vocabulary:

> Heritage is traditionally a man's world, inheritance largely a matter of father's and son's....gender inequality is embedded in the very language of inheritance. It is *patrimony* never *matrimony*, that we get as persons and nations....Men alone also inherit the anxiety of patrimonial displacement, the classical urge to kill their fathers...women are not simply excluded from men's heritage: they belong to it (18).

David Brett writing in the complex context of Ireland, concentrates upon the construction of heritage rather than that English sense of a heritage that is always already familiar and merely reaffirms the ancient inheritance of English identity. Brett's account is useful because he considers how heritage appeals to individuals and his different location leads him to recommend that 'we should resist the reduction of mythical categories and explanations to the level of ideology' (19). Brett argues that - 'behind the succession of popular histories (and successive definitions of 'heritage') is the history of prefigurations' (20). Rather than describing the political apprehending of National Heritage Brett identifies how the discursive appeal of heritage is formed.

The entry and growth of heritage within the cultural vocabulary is confirmed by the appearance in 1995 of an academic journal dedicated to the study of heritage - The International Journal of Heritage Studies. In an article from this journal Susan Pearce endeavours to widen the definition of heritage:

> the notion of cultural heritage embraces any and every aspect of life which individuals, in their variously scaled social groups, consider explicitly or implicitly to be a part of their self-definition (21).

Pearce provides a very wide and politically neutral definition. Her location of Museum Studies with its emphasis upon the analysis of exhibition facilitates a depoliticizing and inclusive definition of the cultural reach of heritage. The open cultural range of the journal is indicative of how the critical formation of heritage as an object of study independent of the politics of history is evolving.

The more discursive accounts of heritage suggest how the frame in which heritage is discussed can be expanded. By breaking down National Heritage into issues of inheritance and treating it less as an already defined object other wider cultural factors can be placed into the debate. The discursive force of National Heritage not only structures the present but it suggests the nature of the relation within modernity between tradition and change. The passage of popular memory into official National Heritage can cut across cultural boundaries but what connections are made by those inheritances which cannot? The range of the literature on heritage written from inside and outside the British context, reveals a richly differentiated critical engagement that is not yet reflected in the debate about heritage within film and television studies.

The coupling of heritage and cinema occurred in the 1980s through the work for film studies of Charles Barr who pointed to the heritage film made in the 1940s (22). However, it is in the pages of Sight and Sound in 1991 where there is the first evidence of a defining response of left critics such as Cairns Craig (a Scot) to the view of England that is represented by the heritage film:

> the dominance and success of this particular brand of film-making in the past ten years is symptomatic of the crisis of identity through which England passed during the Thatcher years. It is film as conspicuous consumption: the country houses, the panelled interiors, the clothes which have provided a good business for New York fashion houses selling English country style to rich Americans (23).

Craig's article was supplemented by an editorial concerning the Merchant/Ivory films 'An English Inheritance' which warned of 'this ideology of Englishness which those wanting to revive the British film industry should guard against (24). Craig is rebuffed by a response from the feminist historian Alison Light:

> a very different analysis of the films would have emerged if it had concentrated on the representation of sexuality rather than merely reducing all discussion to a uniform and mechanical notion of class and consumption (25).

At this point the debate within film studies is not about heritage per se but about the connection between the image of Englishness which the Merchant/Ivory films represent and the context of Britain in the 1990s. Craig and Light establish the critical opposition between issues of class and national identity versus questions of sexuality and gender. In an collection edited in America in 1993, and unambiguously titled British Cinema and Thatcherism, Andrew Higson makes and

develops the connection between heritage and, not only the Merchant/Ivory films, but other earlier and similarly prestigious productions such as Chariots of Fire (Hugh Hudson, Great Britain, 1981). Higson argues that these films which he traces over the period of the 1980s and early 1990s 'used....one version of the national past as their prime selling point' (26). Higson's level of emphasis is upon the status and prestige that the films bear. This means that the films function primarily as images for export:

> Images of Britain and Britishness (usually, in fact, Englishness) became commodities for consumption in the international image market. The films I have in mind are the cycle of quality costume dramas, or what I will refer to here as the heritage film (27).

Higson forms his connection with heritage by arguing that the heritage film is 'symptomatic of cultural developments in Thatcherite Britain' where 'the heritage film and its reconstruction of the past...represents just one aspect of the heritage industry as a whole' (28). Higson draws upon the accounts of Wright, Hewison and Corner and Harvey to corroborate his identification of the heritage film and he also incorporates Light's argument which emphasizes Forster's progressive representation of sexuality. He concludes that the critiques within the films are ultimately contained by 'the iconography of the genre' (29).

Higson also situates the visual style of the heritage film within a postmodern aesthetic where, following Frederic Jameson 'the past is reproduced as flat, depthless pastiche, where the past is not the past itself but other images, other texts' (30). The direction of Higson's analysis reveals an attempt to establish and define a category of British cinema which he identifies as 'a genre of film which reinvents and reproduces, and in some cases simply invents, a national heritage for the screen' (31). The contemporary political context of National Heritage is a significant and

determining factor which continues Craig's response to the films but also considers Light's argument within an analysis that highlights the visual characteristics of the heritage cycle.

Claire Monk has been one of the most prominent of the critics of Higson's position. Monk argues that the heritage film is a much less consistent generic category than is alleged (32). Certainly, the precise nature of the relation of the heritage film to i) costume drama and ii) to the historical film has not been defined. Monk directs her criticism at nominated heritage films such as Howards End (James Ivory, Great Britain, 1992) in order to point out that the representation of heritage in such films is 'a discourse of diverse origins' (33). Monk argues that Higson's analysis is reductive because he simply equates these films with the context of National Heritage. Monk prefers to relate the films to the experience of watching where 'the pleasures they offer have - far - more to do with sexuality than with national identity, and more to do with ironic distanciation than its rapt consumption' (34). Higson identifies a postmodern aesthetic within the heritage film. Monk's argument suggests that reading a heritage film necessitates a postmodern spectatorial position and leads to the realization that - 'Englishness is blatantly a *construct*, a product of cross-cultural masquerade, intrinsically impure' (35). Monk draws upon Pam Cook's and Sue Harper's work on costume drama to point out that the 'anti-heritage position is actually similar to the dismissive criticisms which greeted earlier costume films' (36). The critical dichotomy established in relation to the Gainsborough melodramas where male distrust of inauthenticity is opposed by feminine pleasures of decoration and display is reiterated. Cook's work is notable for combining the gender issues raised by a discussion of costume drama with issues of national identity. She avoids joining the heritage debate but the introduction to her work on Gainsborough melodrama summarizes nicely the restricted terms of the debate. Cook argues that the response of male critics to the restrictive shorthand of National Heritage is motivated by:

> a fundamental desire to find a 'home', an imagined place where unified, stable identities nurtured by common interests can flourish. This conception, inevitably shaded by infantile longing, often relies on traditional gender roles of patriarchal authority overseeing maternal sacrifice (37).

Cook suggests why the construction of heritage is of more concern to men than women. The selection of the terms of Cook's argument reveals that the argument between the pleasures available to a female spectator and the unrepresentative meanings of National Heritage is a recapitulation of the argument about costume drama and melodrama.

The possibility of contending positions to Higson is confirmed by Richard Dyer who argues in the context of an Encyclopedia of European Cinema that the heritage films - 'require the skilled reading of a female spectator' (38). The reproduction of the gendered dichotomy from melodrama on to the heritage film is indicative of the limitations of the debate within film studies. John Hill provides a contribution which adds a much needed sense of methodological history:

> the 'transgressiveness' of the heritage film is...read against the spectatorial relations characteristic of certain kinds of 'classical' films of the past rather than in relation to the more plural forms of female spectatorship characteristic of contemporary media culture in which the 'taboos' against female and gay looking are much less apparent (39).

Hill also suggests that the critical tendency that simply highlights the possibility of counter-readings needs to be extended:

> there is a danger that a conventional (or essentialist) notion of the 'feminine' (an interest in clothes and appearance, for example) is simply validated (or claimed as 'subversive') without a critical inspection of how this 'feminine' appeal is ideologically mobilized (40).

Higson's reply to his critics also stressed the 'need to remember the extent to which films like Howards End are promoted and circulated within the culture precisely as heritage films' (41). The argument here is indicative of a methodological void which exists between on the one hand, situating a film within a specific context and on the other, pointing out that certain spectators might read the film within the terms of their own identification and outside of its context. There appears to be a need for a study of audience and reception of the heritage film as Higson suggests and Monk's current research is directed towards introducing empirical evidence into the heritage debate (42).

A further consequence of repeating the trajectory of the melodrama debate is that the context which gave rise to forming a relation between heritage and film disappears. The meaning of heritage becomes secondary along with any situated discussion of national identity. The consequences of ascribing the heritage film to the situation of Britain in the 1980s and 1990s are highlighted by Higson's detractors but they assume that the transgressive spectators of their accounts, like their own critical agendas, have no investment in issues of national identity. John Caughie offers a different perspective:

> the past and our relationship to it is not entirely stable nor is it lacking in its own contradictions and tensions, and it cannot simply be described, and then dismissed, by blanket terms like heritage or nostalgia (43).

The logic of Caughie's argument suggests that the framework that Higson established for the discussion of heritage and film can, beneficially, be broken down. Hill's account of British cinema in the 1980s states that 'the Heritage Industry is not a unitary phenomenon and heritage culture is certainly more varied than Hewison suggests' (44). Similarly, Higson acknowledges through Samuel, that heritage need not be a monolithic object. He argues: 'heritage is not simply an elite version of the national past purveyed by bodies such as English Heritage; the past can be and has been appropriated in all sorts of ways' (45). The question which follows from these insights is: how then does film studies advance the heritage debate ? Hill points out the other cultural areas aggregated under the heading of heritage but retains the generic category of the heritage film. The heritage film remains subject to the dichotomy formed by Craig and Light in Sight and Sound. despite Monk's attempt to mobilize the term 'post-heritage' (46). The heritage film continues to be situated within the official half of Thomas Elsaesser's defining and enduring description of British cinema in the 1980s as an opposition between 'official and unofficial cinema' (47). Jeffrey Richards recapitulates Elsaesser's opposition through his notion of 'art house films with necessarily limited audiences such as The Last of England (1987) which were largely preaching to the converted' and the heritage films which he describes as 'profoundly subversive' (48).

The insights of Caughie and Hill suggest that other engagements with the past would supplement the discussion about heritage and film and television. The complexities of our relation to the inherited past that Caughie identifies are not reflected by the current relation between heritage and film and television. This suggests not only a more elastic mobilization of the meaning of heritage but also a closer examination of nostalgia. Hill challenges the assumption that nostalgia is simply an effect of heritage and outlines a more rigorous account of the effect of nostalgia (49). Wright also criticizes the inexact use of nostalgia as the catch-all term for the sentiment that heritage appeals to:

> a lot of this talk of nostalgia is hopelessly general. It conflates any number of historical impulses, and it also seems to assume that the desirable state for a society is to be untroubled by any sort of historical awareness at all (50).

Higson also contributes to the extension of the discussion by suggesting an extending range of films that could also be considered in relation to heritage:

> another group of contemporary costume dramas dealing with the more recent past, including Wish You Were Here (1987), Distant Voices Still Lives (1988). These films concentrate on the everyday lives and memories of "ordinary people," and in many cases push female characters to the fore, to some extent democratizing the genre and offering a rather different range of narrative pleasures and identifications. The converse of this, however, is that their representation of the past remains in a conservationist mode such that even the mise-en-scène of ordinariness delights the eye, and invites the collector's curiosity (51).

One of the films that Higson highlights enables the insights of Hill's discussion of nostalgia to be put together with Caughie's suggestion that the nature of our relation with the past be given further consideration. Distant Voices Still Lives represents not only a personal engagement with the past that is inherited across generations of a working class family and community in 1940s Liverpool, but it is also expressed with a degree of formal innovation that does not correspond with the defining characteristics of heritage cinema but significantly, engages with the meanings that are aggregated under the meaning of heritage. Distant Voices Still

Lives rests between the terms of Elsaesser's opposition of official and unofficial cinema, and between the terms of that opposition suggested by John Hill where heritage cinema functions as a category which the rest of cinema is defined against: 'a *cinema d'auteur* which circulates in Europe and the heritage film which appeals to the US' (52).

The mode of articulation in Distant Voices Still Lives prevents it from simply being discussed as a generic heritage film. The film does address the deeply personal memories of the Davies family but the nature of this representation also make it subject to being recruited into the iconography of national heritage. This text which is poised between the personal and the national enables the different critical accounts of heritage to enter into and extend the heritage debate. For example, Davies' earlier position regarding the *The Way We Were* exhibition at Wigan Pier can be contrasted with Wright's guarded warning on the modern cultural process:

> the modern period has seen a sharpening or intensification of the relation between the historical process and the life experience of individual people....new coherences within publicly symbolised self-understanding therefore also become possible. Thus for example actual memories of the second world war can be recuperated to a national mythologisation and redeclaration of that war...In this way personal memory - with the full and particular intensity of feeling it involves - can be caught up in a wider process of cultural nationalisation (53).

The intensity of feeling mentioned by Wright is expressed in Distant Voices Still Lives and is not adequately accounted for as nostalgia. The form of film gives a texture to memory in Distant Voices Still Lives and demands a different kind of relation to the heritage context analysis than has been suggested. The formal modernism of the film demands a more critical working through of the relation with

# Chapter Two

## Inheritance and Mortality: The Last of England and The Garden

## Inheritance and mortality: The Last of England and The Garden

Derek Jarman was a figure who, because of his art school background, enjoyed the status of film-maker and artist. Jarman's films are borne out of a problematic relation between the radical disposition he cultivated and his artistic and cultural investments in the past. As a gay artist and film-maker Jarman's films reflected his apparent position on the margins of England in the 1980s. However, as his status as a creatively prolific artist whose life was threatened by the ailments resulting from being declared HIV positive, he attracted more media attention, and became increasingly fêted by the media and establishment he consistently railed against. Jarman frequently positioned himself outside of institutional formations such as Channel 4 even though though they had become an influential source of funding for low budget British and European film making in the 1980s. In 1984 Jarman established his hostility to Channel 4:

> I never did think that Channel 4 would be a panacea....after eighteen months it settles into a pattern, and certain things were good for their audience ratings and others bad, and the good things will be funded again. So another establishment is very quickly set up (1).

Despite being critically situated within the British art cinema tradition of the 1980s along with other key figures such as Terence Davies, Bill Douglas, Sally Potter and Peter Greenaway, Jarman never perceived his work as belonging to the contemporary cinema. Jarman repeatedly stressed his individuality as an artist who happened to make films over any desire to seek alignment or common practice with other contemporary film makers in Britain. His opposition to the commercial and critical success of Chariots of Fire demonstrates the outspoken public stance Jarman would readily assume:

> the English film world is mesmerized by Oscars, and almost any project has to pass the Hollywood test. All indigenous work has to be historic and *quaint* - *Brideshead* or *Chariots of Fire*, a dull and overrated TV film, fit the bill (2).

Jarman preferred to align himself with auteurs from the tradition of European art cinema who struggled against convention in order to express an individual vision such as Michael Powell and Pier Paulo Pasolini. Pasolini is a strong source of influence for Jarman and this is demonstrated in his depiction of the relation between the criminality of gay men and art of the renaissance (3). John Hill's critical dichotomy of British cinema is confirmed by Jarman's self positioning. Hill identifies two broad stands of British cinema: 'a *cinéma d'auteur* which circulates in Europe and the heritage film which appeals to the US' (4). Jarman's films do not fit easily into the auteur cinema that is represented by relatively mainstream art cinema and is demonstrated by the lush aesthetic of The Draughtsman's Contract (Peter Greenaway, Great Britain, 1982). The feature length The Last of England (1987) and The Garden (1990) continue to display Jarman's roots in an avant-garde rhetoric and also a collaborative and relatively improvised mode of film making. Michael O'Pray argues that there was a growing tendency in the 1980s for British film to combine elements of avant-garde and art cinema but this diminishes the extent to which Jarman went to position himself on the margins (5).

The marginality that Jarman cultivates as an artist and gay man is also intimately connected with his relation to what he sees and imagines as the condition of England. This is articulated most clearly through his most personally voiced feature length films such as The Last of England and to a lesser extent The Garden. Jarman first began to examine the state of England by juxtaposing representations of past and present in his earlier film Jubilee (1978) (6).

In The Last of England and The Garden Jarman and his collaborative circle of friends articulate the conflict between personal themes of home and sexual identity and the constricting forces that were manifest in England during the 1980s and early 90s. This period was defined by the effect of a decade of Thatcherism which contained the key reference points of the Falklands War, riots in the cities and the passing of Clause 28. Jarman was also informed that he was HIV positive in 1987. Jarman's response to the effects of Thatcherism upon England is expressed as a relation between past and present where, the present is not only the 1980s but the longer demise of the post-war period. The past is that pre-capitalist England of the Renaissance which is allied with a close affinity to the English landscape. Jarman's closeness to the English Renaissance is signalled in the earlier films Jubilee and The Angelic Conversation (1985). Jarman's evaluation of past and present England can be understood as an expressed relation with his inheritance and is articulated most intensely in The Last of England. Jarman maintains a seemingly radical, avant-garde approach to his art and politics. This stance co-exists, not unproblematically, with a feeling of a deeply held and romantic attachment to an imagined and past England which is confirmed by Jarman's alignment of his film-making with the English romantic tradition:

> Blake and William Morris...all of them look backward over their shoulders - to a paradise on earth. And all of them at odds with the world around them. I feel this strongly, chose a novelty medium - film - in which to search (7).

The possibility of finding the paradise on earth had passed and pre-existed Jarman and it bore very little resemblance to the more contemporary post-war England that surrounded him. There is an intense and war-like sense of conflict in The Last of England which is not represented through military conflict but as an internalized

condition which represents Jarman's response to the 1980s. In Kicking the Pricks a book written during the filming of The Last of England Jarman asserts that:

> I need a very firm anchor in that hurricane, the anchor is my inheritance, not my family inheritance, but a cultural one, which locates the film IN HOME (8).

The hurricane that is mentioned here represents the forces contained in England. The claim that Jarman makes in this statement is founded upon a negotiation with the tenets of inheritance. He rejects most of the norms of the English middle class family inheritance but at the same time wants to conserve and claim *a* notion of home and belonging through the medium of film. This dialectic is expressed through the relation of past to present. Jarman states that 'it is hard to establish *home* being a gay man' (9). This literal and metaphorical desire for home is articulated through Jarman's attachment to the form of the home-movie. Jarman developed his own form of the *home-movie* in his early short films shot on super-8. The films made with his friends such as Studio Bankside (Derek Jarman, Great Britain, 1970), A Garden in Luxor (Derek Jarman, Great Britain, 1972) and In the Shadow of the Sun (Derek Jarman, Great Britain, 1980) confirm Jarman's transition from painting to film-making and suggest the beginnings of his distinct style. O'Pray notes the gay sensibility and influences from American underground cinema such Kenneth Anger and Andy Warhol that are manifest in the style of Jarman's films and also - 'a strong sense of the *home movie*, with the personal production of images and ideas' (10). Jarman made full use of the relative freedom and practicality of the portable, hand held super-8 camera with its facility to vary the number of frames shot per second in his film-making. This specific type of camera also enabled Jarman to appropriate the domestic form and practice of making the home-movie which was important to Jarman because this was the one custom that was handed down to him through his family that he wanted:

> ...there's no place like the home-movie. The super-8 films.....are home movies, an extension of my father's and grandfathers work. The difference is that they don't record family life (11).

By the time of The Last of England Jarman had developed his characteristic super-8 style and was able to carry over his collagist aesthetic produced through fast cutting and varied frame speeds into the feature length film. This was made possible by the increased editing possibilities made available by video technology. Jarman was able to transfer his super-8 footage on to video for editing and post-production and then transferred back to 35mm film for cinema exhibition (12). The freedom to make low-budget unscripted feature length films about personal concerns Jarman attributed to the independence he gained from working with super-8 (13). The Garden is comprised of a mixture of super-8 and 16mm film and the slower and less intense pace and tone of the latter film is marked by a greater use of static tableaux. The theme of home is explored through the fusion of biblical allusion and the setting of Dungeness where in the barren ground surrounding Prospect Cottage Jarman cultivated his celebrated garden (14).

The sources of the cultural inheritance that Jarman claims through the form of the home-movie, lie in the renaissance past and specifically in alchemical figures such as John Dee and Jungian symbolism (15). In an interview in 1985 Jarman stated that: 'Elizabethan England is our cultural Arcadia, as Shakespeare is the essential pivot of our culture' (16). These high cultural sources of Jarman's often unconscious imagery combine with a deep affection for the English landscape and flowers and gardens held since childhood. The cultural inheritance that Jarman claims in The Last of England is set against the hostile forces within the condition of England in the 1980s. In The Garden this inheritance is set against the symbolic power of Christianity and is fused with a growing engagement with his own mortality since

Jarman had been declared HIV positive. The films give expression to the struggle between claiming a personally identified cultural inheritance and those dominant, national discourses that obstruct this desire. Consequently, there is a mixture of elegy and ire, past and present in the films that is replicated in the critical marking of Jarman as both radical and conservative. This is demonstrated in the following critical summaries of Jarman. An early review of Jarman's painting written in 1967 is highlighted by Stuart Morgan:

> as a patriot who more than once described himself as a 'conservative' and who felt free to celebrate the beauty and culture of Britain - English nostalgia is his danger, wrote one of his first reviewers (17).

Similarly, twenty six years later Peter Wollen observes that:

> the elegiac tone of his recent films has its roots in this metaphysical historicism and in his deeply rooted ambivalent nostalgia for childhood, fed by an intransigent anger and a will-to-resist rooted in gay culture (18).

John Caughie develops and clarifies the threads of ambivalence identified by Wollen:

> there is something disingenuous about Jarman's appeal to the English tradition...The films play out a tension between the elegiac traditionalism which continually returns to Golden Ages - Shakespeare, Marlowe, Caravaggio - and a gay pop sensibility on which traditions founder (19).

The taint of nostalgia and traditionalism identified by these critical summaries are indicative of the stress between the locations where critics favour situating Jarman, be it within the avant-garde or, in the case of Wollen, the British modernist tradition, and the clear articulation of a yearning to return to the sanctuary of imagined previous times. There is a recurring tension within Jarman's films between the apparently radical avant-garde style and thematic expression of his yearning for certain aspects of the past. This can also be understood as the tension between the stated predilections of Jarman the prominent figure within the national film culture and the films he made in collaboration with his friends. My approach to Jarman will focus on this apparent contradiction between radicalism and conservatism which is a source of contention for criticism that does not concentrate solely on the representation of sexuality but endeavours to place Jarman within broader cultural trends. The tension I have outlined can be viewed as the particular result of Jarman's articulation of his inheritance which is comprised of the intertwining of personal and national identity.

The critical summaries given above concentrate their emphasis upon Jarman's work rather than the profile of his life. However, by the time of The Garden in 1990 Jarman's own status had shifted as he admits, and he was no longer simply an institutionally patronized but marginal figure of British cinema. After public announcement of his being HIV positive Jarman notes:

> now I no longer know where the focus is, for myself, or in the minds of my audience. Reaction to me has changed. There is an element of worship, which worries me. Perhaps I courted it (20).

The increasing visibility of Jarman's life makes biography and humility in the face of struggle with illness key components within critical accounts of Jarman. There is by the time of The Garden a parallel between the personal and the national between the

elegy for a lost England and Jarman's increasing sense of his own mortality which is underlined by the increasing extra-textual critical commemoration of the life of one of the distinct voices of British cinema (21). James Cary Parkes argues that these themes have always been apparent across gay culture: 'even before AIDS, gay art and the 'homosexual sensibility' wore the weight of elegy. Melancholy and mourning are the poetic legacies of prosaic oppression and menace' (22). There is an indication of continuity between the sense of loss that is expressed in The Last of England and the theme of mortality that runs through The Garden. These two films represent markers of the significant transition that Jarman made between the latter half of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s. During the later stages of his career Jarman passed from the position of marginal film-maker to being a more prominent figurehead of gay culture and he continued to write and produce funded films quickly and cheaply while suffering from the debilitating effects of AIDS. The wilful radicalism that is continuously apparent across Jarman's films must therefore be situated against the increased recognition of Jarman's mortality and the patronage that followed from this wider public recognition. This is not to dilute Jarman's sexual politics but it is to inquire just how marginal he really was, in the light of his longing to claim an English inheritance in the face of an increasing sense of personal and national mortality.

## Production context

The Last of England and The Garden were both backed by British Screen and the television institutions Channel 4 and ZDF a West German television company. Following the abolition of the Eady levy through the Film Act of 1985 the government appointed a new body named British Screen to succeed the National Film Finance Corporation (23). Like its predecessor British Screen enjoyed a certain level of government funding but this was reduced and the changed conditions of provision meant that the funding could not be guaranteed in the

future. The new body with Simon Relph as Chief Executive had to foster a more commercial approach to film finance and, at the same time - 'encourage British talent and original high quality British film work, especially from younger, less established producers and directors' (24).

The inception of Channel 4 in 1982 as a subsidiary of the Independent Broadcasting Authority was significant for a film industry which was struggling to adapt to the enforced commercial imperatives of the Thatcher government. However, the launch of Film on 4 from within the Drama department of Channel 4, and the encouragement of experimental work through the Department of Independent Film and Video led by Alan Fountain, meant that, despite the enforced commercialism, British cinema began to enjoy something of a revival in the 1980s. Duncan Petrie points out that during the 1980s and early 1990s Channel 4 became - 'the major bulwark of the low budget British film industry, having a stake in roughly half of all the feature films produced in Britain in any one year' (25). The implication of the involvement of Channel 4 was a much closer relation between film and television production. As is evident from Jarman's earlier comment on Chariots of Fire, the increased proximity of television did not necessarily meet with everyone's view of what kind of films British cinema should be producing.

The West German television company ZDF operated along similar lines to Channel 4 in that it commissioned independent production companies to make programmes for transmission by the television company. Television companies such as ZDF would fund projects such as the Last of England in order to demonstrate its independence as a television company from state regulation (26).

During the 1980s Jarman blamed Channel 4 for the privatization of the BFI and the rise of a certain type of art cinema which Jarman's own films of that period did not match. Eventually, Jarman's work would become much more closely connected with

Channel 4 (27). However, prior to the Last of England, earlier films such as Sebastiane (1976) and Jubilee (1978) and The Tempest (1979) were funded, as O'Pray points out, by - 'private sources, often rich gay friends - and in the case of The Tempest by the maverick producer Don Boyd (28). These three films had been screened on Channel 4 in 1985 and had since become the subject of the debate surrounding the Video Nasties Bill. O'Pray notes that 'Channel Four issued a statement denying any intention of showing the films in the foreseeable future' (29). Jarman was angered by the implications of Channel 4's purchase of his films and states that - 'I never wanted, or made my films for, this television audience, or their bloody children' (30).

O'Pray argues that in the early eighties Jarman 'did not fall comfortably into any film-making camp: the mainstream had failed to finance his work yet he did not fit in with the Independent Film-Makers Association notion of independent cinema with its workshops, leftist political agenda and strong documentary aesthetic that had grown from the theories and debates of the 70s' (31). However, Jarman's disposition to institutions during this period was to not fit, and to be seen to be not conforming nor compromising in the face of establishment bodies. Jarman became adept at working with limited resources and would develop a closer relationship with Colin MacCabe who had succeeded Peter Sainsbury as head of the BFI Production Board in 1985 and was Executive Producer for the BFI funded Caravaggio (1986).

With the benefit of hindsight there is an apparent fostering of dissent in relation to both government and institutions yet, despite the overdetermined political polarities of the 1980s, Jarman seemingly, by the time of the 1990s, came to represent an institutionalized voice who enjoyed the patronage of those institutions he had previously declared hostility towards. This demonstrated that the voices of independence and dissent could not readily be separated from increasingly

compromised publicly funded bodies such as British Screen and Channel 4. The development of Jarman's films over the 1980s and 1990s is reflective of the changing policy of public institutions faced with the situation of demonstrating that investment in innovation and young British directors was not incommensurate with commercial imperatives.

## The Last of England

The title of one of Jarman's most critically acclaimed films (which won the LA Films Critics' Award for best independent/experimental film), is taken from a mid-nineteenth century painting by Ford Madox Brown (32). This painting depicts two people leaving the shores of England by boat for New Zealand. There are parallels with this trajectory of exile within Jarman's own family. His great grandparents left Devon for New Zealand in the latter part of the nineteenth century and Jarman's father came over to England from New Zealand. The title of The Last of England is also suggestive. The background of the title and the painting refer to the specifics of a journey and it is also connotative of a loss of moorings, and a traumatic expression of upheaval where belonging is surrendered in return for a new destination and the search for a new home. Jarman takes this experience of personal and national destiny and transposes it into a film that addresses the state of England through the juxtaposition of familial and national reference points. The temporal direction of The Last of England is 'a journey back in time and forward into an uncertain future' (33). Jarman's inheritance is expressed through the particularity of his background and upbringing as the son of an RAF officer who Jarman describes as 'obsessed by the need to belong' (34). Jarman registers his past through the interweaving into the film of footage from his father's and grandfather's home movies which Jarman had obtained shortly before his father's death. O'Pray describes the film as being 'studded with his father's home movies' (35). O'Pray's description is not incorrect, but it simplifies the function of the home movies within

the terms of the whole film. It is precisely out of the friction and feeling between the bequest of the legacy that is captured by the home movies, and Jarman's own attachment to the form of the home movie, that The Last of England acquires its force within British film and television of the 1980s. My analysis will trace the insertion of the home movie footage throughout the course of the film.

O'Pray argues that The Last of England 'exposes both a national and a family romance' (36). This description simplifies the issues of attachment that the film lays bare as the opening scene of the film demonstrates. The first shot shows Jarman at a desk in a darkened interior writing in an album. The words being written will be narrated by the voice of Nigel Terry in what Jarman refers to as 'a BBC monotone' (37). Jarman writes the narrated, poetic sequences but the mode of articulation of these sequences is descriptive of Jarman's particular view of the collective national subject. The black and white shot of Jarman writing is intercut with footage of a topless man in an urban landscape of derelict post war housing firstly preparing to inject himself and then stamping and writhing around on top of a version of Caravaggio's Profane Love. The shadow of the camera is evident in this footage too. The visual switching between the locations of inside that Jarman occupies and the outside space taken up by Jarman's friend Spring is punctuated by the narrator who evocatively describes a condition that connects the images both personally and collectively:

> "Imprisoned memories prowl thro' the dark. Fuck it. They scatter like rats in the echo. Ashes drift in the back of the skull. A goblin parts the black velvets with a slant-eyed chuckle. Panic. I blink as he vanishes into the shadows, hint of predatory cat's eyes. The dust settles thick, so by five when I stagger to the freezing bathroom I leave footprints for others to excavate. They say the Ice Age is coming, the weather's changed. A thin yellow pus drains thro' the institutions, mutating

> malevolent bureaucracies large as dinosaurs, which prowl the pavements of our regressed neighbourhoods. Citizens stand mute watching children devoured in their prams. Tomorrow the dinosaurs move on. No one ever saw them, invisible as the atom. In the silence of an English suburb power and secrecy dwell in the same house; ancestral gods have fled the earth. Strange forces are moving in"

The words and imagery of this prose embodies the conspiratorial and apocalyptic tone of the film. The words express an oppositional view of the apparent inertia of the English suburb from the position of someone who, through his particular scrutiny of an inherited past can imagine other possibilities that have gone largely unnoticed by the majority of the population and are now irrevocably lost. The ire and pathos of these words is heightened by the use of music which has the effect of connecting and relating their tone to the images. The aesthetic of collage combined with words and a highly resonant use of music evokes a view of England that makes connections between past, present and future. Jarman describes an unofficial view of England but it is less a rejection of the nation than an expression of a heightened feeling of dispossession. Jarman's view of the condition of England is contrasted with footage from his family's home movies passed down through the Jarman family since the end of the 1920s. The use of the home movie footage not only supplements the personal dimension of the film but confirms Jarman's stated desire to reclaim the home movie form.

The first extract of home movie shows Jarman's mother seemingly dressed for a wedding. Her outfit is strikingly black and white and she has a red flower in her button hole. She is shot against a background of ivy growing up the wall of the RAF home of Jarman's parents. The depth of the colour of the home movie film stock and its verdant images forms a sharp contrast with the images of Spring's drunk and drugged state amidst the landscape of derelict public housing. The

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squatting and wandering around the derelict public housing of Docklands. The language of conspiracy and human and material waste supplements the representation of dispossession. This aesthetic of word and image represents a continuation of Jarman's alliance with punk which was demonstrated in Jubilee. Nigel Terry's voice shifts Jarman's non-conformist writing into the high English, establishment register that Jarman rails against.

The shifting grammar of the narration is as O'Pray points out - 'a device by which present, past and future could be mingled' (38). However, whilst this ire appears as an understandable response to both Thatcherism and the impotence of the political left, its reactive gestures and raw slogans reveal little evidence of an alternative solution. It is this overdetermined view of England which forms such a stark contrast to other official portrayals of England represented by the heritage film. Norman Stone's assessment caricatures the crude politics of this strand of British cinema (39). Dick Hebdige also comments on the same trend in films such as My Beautiful Laundrette (Stephen Frears, Great Britain, 1985) and Sammy and Rosie Get Laid (1987) which portray, not without justification, an apocalyptic England of the 1980s:

> the institutionalized nature of the *symbolism* employed in many of these films, the overpolarized vision of cultural and political conflict....and the likely impact of both of these predictabilities on the extent and degree of genuine audience engagement with the issues supposedly raised within the films (40).

The tendency in British cinema that Hebdige describes represents less a sophisticated analysis of the politics of Thatcherism than a felt and repeated response to the authoritarianism of her ideology that only begins to diminish in the next decade. The significance of The Last of England lies in the way Jarman insists

that this state of crisis is an inevitable consequence of the England that his generation has inherited.

Jarman juxtaposes extracts of the family past recorded by the home movies with sequences recording the desolation of London's docklands and suburbs of Liverpool. The third sequence of home movie footage shows Jarman and his sister in the garden of their home. The home movie footage is characterized by pictorial compositions as well as the self consciousness of the family in the presence of the domestic camera. One of the effects of inserting the home movie footage into the film made by Jarman and his friends is to recontextualize the look of the subjects. The look of Jarman's mother at the camera and at Jarman's father behind the camera becomes redirected. The moment recorded by Jarman's father becomes not only redolent of the past but of Jarman examining this past from the position once occupied by his father. The gaze of the subjects in the home movie footage is also redirected at the spectator viewing The Last of England. The self-reflexive effect of this connection of looks is to inscribe the passing on of the right to occupy the space behind and in front of the home movie camera. Pierre Bourdieu identifies a connection between the domestic use of the still photograph camera and family life:

> photographic practice exists and subsists for most of the time by virtue of its *family function* or rather by the function conferred upon it by the family group, namely that of solemnizing and immortalizing the high points of family life... reinforcing the integration of the family group by reasserting the sense that it has of itself and its unity (41).

Jarman does not confer the family function on to the super-8 camera in the way that Bourdieu suggests of the domestic camera. The home movies function as an inherited means for Jarman to recall his childhood but more significantly, their repeated presence confirms the importance of the form of the home movie to

Jarman's film-making. The memories captured by the home movies are part of Jarman's past and the lush colours of the 1950s contrast with the barren and derelict locations of the present. There is a semblance of lost innocence to the home movie footage which is connotative of a nostalgia for home which is accentuated by the stark absence of family, home and any presense of intimacy from the present. This implied yearning is problematized by the increasing presence of the RAF locations which defined the location of home for the Jarman family. Jarman looks back to his past and to the role of home as an anchor and a shelter from the forces that are unleashed as the film progresses. However, there remains a degree of ambivalence about the meaning of the home movie footage in terms of the film as a whole.

The fourth extract of home movie footage shows his mother's side of the family eating Sunday lunch. The image of meat being carved, the sound of cutlery on plates and the tentative piano playing of an unseen beginner can be heard. These sounds without voices suggest a partial diegesis and lend the black and white image a heightened elegiac quality. The innocence and intimacy of the subjects in the home movie footage gives way to the growing surveillance of the squatters in contemporary London. The earliest moment in the home movie footage is juxtaposed with the beginning of the imagining of a nightmarish vision of a future England. Black hooded figures carrying guns begin to appear within the barren landscape and an atmosphere of surveillance is created by the indistinct electronic sources of the soundtrack. This signals the onset of Jarman's vision of an allegorical England of the future that is implied as the inevitable outcome of the recent past. The shifting between this imagined future and the past recorded by the home movies signals Jarman's temporal grammar where 'the present dreams the past future' (42). The contrast between the refuge of home and the threat of an apocalyptic future is stark and it is indicative of how Jarman's apparent conservatism and radicalism are expressed as distant poles of an unresolved opposition.

The fifth sequence of home movie footage establishes Jarman's mother and her two children within the perimetered garden of the barracks of RAF Abingdon. The soundtrack reveals planes roaring above and wind. The emotive effect of the home movie footage is also ambivalent. There is a way in which the deep colours of early film stock showing the flowers in the garden and the attachments of home appear to corroborate Hill's view that the home movie footage 'celebrate a sense of innocence and connection (with nature, with family)' (43). However, this innocence of connection is undercut by a cumulative awareness of the camera and of Jarman's father's presence behind the camera that increases as the subject matter of the home movies begins to reveal more of Jarman's father's life in the RAF and less of his mother with her son and daughter. As the home movies inscribe more of Jarman's father's role in defending the nation Jarman's loose temporal grammar of the present dreaming the past future becomes more apparent. Any semblance of an idealized nostalgic childhood is increasingly circumscribed by the effects of growing up as the son of an RAF Officer. In his writing Jarman states that his family upbringing gave him 'no language for the emotions' (44). Jarman increasingly attacks the implications of his father's inheritance captured by the home movie footage and juxtaposes this with his vision of dereliction and terrorism.

In the darkened interiors of this ruined environment Jarman uses the language of pop video to construct his own disco scene. A group of naked men illuminated by a flashing red light and a single modern dancer gyrating around a fire dance to electronic pop music. This scene then gives way to a different scene showing a naked man making love to a fully clothed, hooded soldier on a bed covered in a Union Jack and surrounded by empty wine bottles. Though both scenes symbolize Jarman's desire to shock, the tone shifts from defiance to one of mourning through the use of the classical music of Bach Violin Sonatas in the latter scene. Jarman's vision seems driven by colliding extremes that spans classical and contemporary pop sources and is evident in love and sado-masochism, tenderness and aggression, self-

abuse and solidarity, fire and water. Jarman's film is a means of letting loose of the dream imagery that appears to be radical and defiant but takes place against Jarman's conscious desire to claim his cultural inheritance through the home movie.

The tempo of The Last of England builds towards a sequence where the commemorative function of the home movie and the commemorative function of the British Empire and European high culture converge in a montage sequence structured around the Albert memorial. Images of the oriental features of the Albert Memorial, the sixth extract of Jarman's father's home movie footage showing a military parade in Pakistan, news footage from the urban riots of the 1980s, the armed soldiers who command the burnt out docklands, and tracking shots of the houses that line a suburban street are overlaid on top of each other and juxtaposed through rapid cutting. An orchestral rendering of Land of Hope and Glory provides the soundtrack. The montage ends with the sound of air raids and an image of a ring of poppies floating in water. Hill argues that this scene is:

> locked into the very discourse it is seeking to oppose: disputing the Thatcherite claim to a resurgence of greatness but still finding the past superior to the ugliness and squalor of the present (45).

Hill's identification of an opposition between the past of the Empire and the squalor of the present overlooks the influence of Jarman's father. As the film progresses the role of Jarman's father becomes crucial to the connection that Jarman forges between his personal inheritance as the son of an RAF officer and the national inheritance that was circulating within Britain in the 1980s. The home movie is essential to this connection. The convergence between Jarman's excavation of the family past and England's imperial past gives rise to a divergence of critical summaries of The Last of England. The comments of Colin MacCabe and Annette Kuhn illustrate this:

> ....probably his most personal work: *The Last of England*, a deeply autobiographical investigation of the destruction of the country which he had loved so much (46).
>
> The Last of England - a less personal film, I believe than it might seem (47).

I don't think it is correct to refer to The Last of England as deeply autobiographical but I do think that it is a film with a personal vision that engages with the personal in the national. The role of Jarman's father makes his family inheritance particularly acute. Jarman personally confronts this inherited disposition to national identity with his own vision of England. This confrontation is not resolved but its exposition through the form of the home movie is significant when viewed against the background of Jarman's stated aims.

The autobiographical elements in the film revolve around the home movies and the background recorded by these movies is not one Jarman would have chosen but which he has inherited and has affected him personally. The structuring presence and influence of Jarman's father increases as The Last of England moves towards its final crescendo. The seventh extract of home movie footage shows Jarman's mother and father in and around RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland. The footage combines images of the Scottish landscape with images of the working airfield at Lossiemouth. The children are absent in this footage which does not affirm the family to the degree of the footage that precedes it. It is at this point that Jarman's family inheritance converges with the post-war English inheritance of his generation. The malaise of England signalled through the references to fathers in the monologues and the hyper-masculinity of the men with guns who seize control is both masculine and coterminous with the militaristic bearing of Jarman's father.

Jarman's aversion to this is underlined in the final piece of home movie footage where Jarman reverses the trajectory of the previous footage to show - not his sister and himself together but himself as a baby in the arms of his mother. The final excoriating scene of the increasingly conspiratorial film shows Tilda Swinton taking part in a parody of a royal wedding and a baby is shown nestled amongst tabloid newspapers carrying headlines about the Falklands war. Swinton is then shown shedding an elaborate wedding dress amid a storm on the shore of the Thames. The gothic intensity of Diamanda Galas' accompanying music accentuates the intensity of expression of Swinton's casting off of her wedding dress. Jarman comments on this extreme scene:

> where is the feminine in The Last of England ? Until Tilda takes over the film in its last minutes it is represented by my mother, Elizabeth Evelyn; she picks me up and holds me in the air, to the sound of bombs dropping....In the last minutes...Tilda blown by a whirlwind of destruction, becomes a figure of strength; she is able to curse the world of the patriots...She projects and protects love's idyll, a mother, my mother (48).

The final scenes of the film suggest that having exorcised his view of the condition of England and the role of his father within this vision, Jarman wants finally, to include a gesture to his mother. The consecration of motherhood implied by Jarman's statement attempts to reclaim some form of consolation in the face of the storm. Jarman expressed his need for an anchor in the face of the hurricane and that anchor being comprised of a cultural inheritance located in home. In the light of the Swinton scene the mother can be added to this formation as a key figure within Jarman's articulation of his inheritance.

The home movie form of The Last of England represents Jarman's claim to his cultural inheritance. But the film also represents an expression of a sense of loss through an England that has gone to waste. This is a feeling that is symptomatic of the left in the 1980s but for Jarman this deeply felt loss is also a result of the implications of a masculine and heterosexual inheritance, the inheritance Jarman would rather discard but because of his need to claim an idea of home is compelled to address. The finality of the last image of refugees fleeing in a boat underlines the title of the film and its reference to exile. The difference is that Jarman didn't leave but stayed. Jarman's film represents an address to the decade when Thatcherism and the Falklands War reasserted Britain's imperial past. Despite the overdetermined representation of the imperial view of England that Jarman assigns to the patriots, Jarman also wants to claim something of the values that underly this attachment to national identity, at the same time as making shocking images of his friends within a derelict contemporary London. Jarman comments that - 'there is nothing in Margaret Thatcher which is patriotic, intelligent or honourable' (49). This unresolved tension, constitutes the conservatism and the radicalism of Jarman, and it lies at the centre of his film-making and his inheritance, and it is continued in The Garden.

## The Garden

The Garden continues the personal expression and home movie form of The Last of England but replaces family with the structuring influence of religion. The intolerance and prejudice that Jesus suffered is recast in the light of the experience of gay men and staged within the English landscape of Dungeness. The continuing influence of the Church as a moral standard and reference point is set against the consumerism of the modern world. The sources of the inheritance Jarman wants to claim are present via home and home movie, the garden, the English landscape and nature. These sources of attachment frame Jarman and his friend's inquiry into the

inherited moral strictures that continue to effect the identity of gay men. There are no direct references to AIDS other than through the images of Jarman face down at his table or on a bed. However, it is clear that there is an allegorical connection suggested between the condition of Jarman and the selected scenes that make reference to and critique the Passion - the term for the final sufferings and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

O'Pray argues that The Garden is 'a home movie devoid of the innocent certainties of that form of film making' (50). The innocent certainties that O'Pray refers to are the chains of attachment and belonging that are inherited through family and home. However, Jarman assumes a degree of innocence that is transplanted on to the couple of gay men who appropriate the role of Jesus and assume his persecuted role throughout the film. The strong references to home that were provided by the family home-movies in The Last of England are replaced in The Garden by an externalized idea of home through the representation of the garden and the surrounding coastal landscape of Dungeness. The Garden is shot outdoors and the form of the film fluctuates between static tableaux with occasional use of back projection and super-8 footage marked by Jarman's customary slowed frame speed, of aspects of the landscape. The longer takes and slower pace of The Garden results in a less frenetic and intense film than The Last of England but the home-made look of improvisation and juxtaposition remains apparent.

Jarman's presence as film-maker is again inscribed at the beginning of the film. The opening credits are intercut with images and sounds of the film apparatus. The voice of Jarman directing is audible and the camera flicks across the lights and then on to the garden. This introduction takes place in darkness suggesting that the film was conceived out of darkness. There are no night scenes in the rest of the film which makes use of natural light. The narrator's introduction confirms the annexing of the unconscious and of dream as a means of realizing the film:

"I want to share this emptiness with you.
Not fill the silence with false notes or put tracks through the void.
I want to share this wilderness of failure.
The others have built you a highway, fast lanes in both directions.
I offer you a journey without direction, uncertainty and no secret conclusion.
When the light faded I went in search of myself.
There were many paths and many destinations"

This narration is followed by a shot of a black and white interior. Water drips onto sculpted objects made from stones and nails. There is a cut to a metal sculpture of the crucifixion and a similar image on the wall and the water drips onto this object too. A cut shows Jarman slumped over the table. The soundtrack and a sound that approximates to a heart beat give a unifying momentum to the images. In the new decade the absence of a direct concern with the condition of England produces a different tone. Jarman is now acutely aware of his own mortality and continues to need to restate his defiance of narrative convention through a combination of words which are also indicative of a turning away from the pace and utility of modernity. A return to colour shows the filming of a man on his knees dressed in the black leather and chains of sado-masochistic attire looking directly into the camera and a man and a woman embracing. Opening the film through this visual juxtaposition of the ailing figure of Jarman, the crucifixion, and sexual deviance articulates the allegorical link between Jarman and the Passion. Jon Savage described this less reverentially as Jarman's 'martyr complex' (51). The persecution that was directed towards Jesus is re-imagined as the persecution that Jarman as a gay HIV positive man feels from the Church. The motif of water and the heartbeat lends the scene a sense of the realization of self-mortality. The link between Jarman's physical state and the world around is suggested through the representation of nature and the

garden as a close up of the nails in the sculpture dissolves into a close up of grass outside blowing in the direction given to it by the wind. The construction of the film is located in the tension between Jarman's love of the landscape that is a part of the English inheritance he wants to claim, and his unconscious obsession with the continuing moral authority of the church. The statement made by Jarman in War Requiem (Derek Jarman, Great Britain, 1989) is a conscious declaration of this belief: 'To all those cast out like myself, from Christendom. To my friends who are dying in a moral climate created by a church with no compassion' (52). Despite all his radical gestures it is also apparent that Jarman cannot reject religion as an agnostic or atheist might because, like Pasolini, he requires its expressive and structuring force. In this way, Jarman is able to assume, as John Orr suggests:

> the Anglo-Protestant standpoint of the post-Christian sensibility of the sacrificial unconscious, where their darkest protagonists are sacrificial figures on the moving canvas of a profane, that is to say, unredeeming and unredeemed world (53).

Jarman also situates religion against a simplified view of modern capitalism. A man is shown sitting on a rock in a robe reading from the bible the story of the birth of Christ against a background of back projection which shows film footage of the elaborate display of Christmas lights which appear in cities during the period leading up to Christmas. The juxtaposition of ancient and modern through the irony of camp is Jarman and his friend's commentary upon the discrepancy between the moral authority of the Church and the unquestioned consumerism that occurs during a period of the year that is traditionally meant to represent religious remembrance. The simple juxtaposition of ancient and modern is indicative of Jarman's temporal grammar. The past of the Passion is brought into conflicts which endure in the present through the frame of the garden and Jarman's loose juxtapositions.

One of the reasons Jarman attracts the description of a radical conservative is because he draws upon the polarities of symbolic oppositions - such as ancient and modern, criminal and suffering hero, fire and water, and the shocking and the lyrical, in order to relativize the distance between them. A contrasting figure from the other end of the political spectrum to Jarman such as Alan Bennett expresses a boyish piety towards the Church of England at the same time as distancing himself from certain aspects of the national culture. The difference between these modes of articulation is that the expressive interval between Bennett's personal attachment to his childhood memories of the Church and the nationally instituted Church of England is comparatively small. The restated symbolic oppositions are evident in The Garden through the gay men played by Johnny Mills and Kevin Collins who adopt the role of Jesus and enjoy alternating moments of loving tenderness between themselves and brutal persecution from forces outside themselves.

David Gardner locates Jarman in the tradition of Genet and Pasolini where the construction of the image aims to - 'invert the positive/negative binarism and thus pervert what is oppressive in the norm' (54). Gardner's argument is evident in the way that a connection is suggested between modern capitalism and biblical themes. A bare chested man dressed in leather with his tongue hanging out who represents Judas is shown hanging from a rope and is taunted by a figure who stands next to a red motor cycle who represents the devil. Back projection shows the bright colours of flowers and shrubs. The devil then starts showing a number of credit cards and says "hello everybody today is credit card day the day when all your dreams come true". The back projection changes to footage of the London Docklands Light Railway and exterior views of the shining citadels of corporate capitalism. Judas also begins to brandish his credit card to the camera. The meeting of a queer aesthetic and the narrative of the Passion produces oppositions which become overdetermined to the point where their politics of irreverence and subversion stop

being so and appear simply juvenile even when viewed in the context of the end of the 1980s.

Jarman's use of the landscape that surrounds his cottage affects the biblical themes he is referencing. The Garden domesticates the imagery of religion. Domestication here, is manifest less in transference into an enclosed area than in shifting the domestic to the exterior. Given the previously cited comment on *home* and the *home-movie*, domestication can be understood as accessing religious themes through Jarman's cherished connections with the English landscape, the garden and nature. There is also a manifest domestic and home-made look to the improvised tableaux that represent the biblical scenes in The Garden. This is evident in the staging of a scene at a long table which suggests a reference to The Last Supper. Tilda Swinton appears as an angel at the table of The Last Supper which is set against a background of the English Channel made to look like the Sea of Galilee. Jarman takes such influential themes and rather than affirming their consecration as high culture as the art of the renaissance did, he re-articulates them through the smaller scale of his own improvised, local and domestic style.

In The Last of England the connection between what has, and also what might, become of England and Jarman's personal disposition is overstated but expressed with resolution and intensity. The expressive ground between personal and national levels of identification is aptly described by Chris Lippard and Guy Johnson as 'the intensely private and wilfully public' (55). In The Garden these terms of address are less easily shared and less easily recognized (56). The concern with the sexuality Jarman has claimed and the debilitating effect of the moral authority of the Church upon the gay community in the light of AIDS is suggested in The Garden but is made in such private, unconscious and tendentious terms that the force of the argument is diminished.

Jarman's attachment to the English landscape, his garden and nature emerge throughout the film. The inherited attachments to the English landscape exist in tension with the unconscious mortality that is apparent in those scenes with Jarman at the centre. This is shown in a sequence shot on the beach at low tide where Jarman lies on a hospital bed covered in white sheets and is encircled by people in white robes holding aloft wooden flares of fire. The camera traces a circle around this formation. The suggestion laying claim to a rite fades into and out of view, in alternation with super-8 footage of the landscape and the garden. Jarman's attachment to his cultural inheritance frequently functions as the screen through which the struggle for the legitimation of a gay sexual identity takes place. The super-8 footage shows reeds growing in water lit by a deep orange sunset and rustled by the wind, the circular formations of stones in the garden and the shrubs that are growing in the unforgiving conditions of Dungeness. These images of the landscape are rarely static and incline more towards the surreal than the deliberate composition of the pictorial. The images are shot at Jarman's customary low frames per second setting which accentuates the portrayal of nature in The Garden, which is not benign but stirred by the force of the elements.

Jarman's garden is not a garden in the traditional sense. The garden understood literally as an enclosed space where plants and flowers are cultivated only partially encapsulates Jarman's garden. The space around Prospect Cottage is an open space where borders are not fixed and enclosed. The frame for the garden that Jarman has made around his cottage and the wider space of Dungeness is the sky and sea. These natural perimeters enclose the space of the film. The harshness of the coastal location which has shingle rather than soil makes the cultivation of plants and flowers less a natural and rural process than a struggle with the feral conditions of climate and nature. Jarman forms his garden out of found objects combed from the surrounding coastline. His improvised arrangements of stones, driftwood and metal underline Jarman's approach to film. When Jarman is shown watering, potting and

tending to his garden, he is not only tending the garden of Prospect Cottage but literalizing his claim to his cultural inheritance. In Jarman's personal films there is the suggestion that the idea of home and the practice of making films come close together. As he stated - 'the home movie is bedrock...in all home movies is a longing for paradise' (57).

Despite Jarman's rejection of conventionally picturesque garden design Christopher Lloyd places his garden within a traditionally English cultural practice describing the garden around Prospect Cottage as - 'very much in the English garden tradition, showing a love of plants and growing them well as a personal satisfaction' (58). Nikolaus Pevsner who taught Jarman at King's College identifies the design and historic characteristics of English gardens:

> The English Garden, the *Jardin Anglais,* the *Englischer Garten,* is asymmetrical, informal, varied, with its winding serpentine paths in striking contrast to the straight lines and ornamental avenues of the French - had been thought to incarnate the English spirit of liberty (59).

There is an underlying sense of longing expressed within The Last of England and The Garden which co-exists albeit uneasily, with their radical and avant-garde characteristics. The loving scenes of the garden and the surrounding landscape suggest, when viewed against the clear desacrilization of the received morality of religion, that Jarman's attachment to his inheritance is a form of devotion. However, as the garden and the landscape endure then the overall trajectory of the film becomes increasingly elegiac as the narrative of the crucifixion, and the plight of the ailing figure of Jarman, and the gay lovers converge. The interweaving of the themes of the death of Christ and a love of the garden is not only elegiac but also expressing a recognition of personal and collective mortality. What survives both the film and Jarman, subject to the cyclical turns of nature - is the garden. The

garden at Prospect Cottage serves as a monument to the film, Jarman and his lifelong aspiration to find a home in the work of making images on celluloid (60). O'Pray views this combination of personal and religious destinies 'exquisite sense of being in touch with mortality' and for O'Pray 'perhaps the film's greatest achievement is to forge an inextricable relationship between mythology and personal cinema that does not rely on 'dreams', simple parallelisms or juxtaposition' (61). O'Pray's position rests upon the acceptance of Jarman's claiming of the role of Saint and martyr. John Orr offers a different view. He claims that Jarman's:

> sacrificial unconscious, that constant return of the not-so-repressed in which images of crucifixion abound, is flavoured by moments of fetishistic ceremonies of consecration, elaborate rituals which cannot ever quite take themselves seriously (62).

Orr's refusal of the camp aesthetic within what O'Pray views as a successful film raises the issue of just which audience Jarman's films address. There is an affirmation of gay sexuality through moments of camp as well as a realization of the implications of AIDS through a critique of religion. The overall effect is to fall between an address to his circle of friends in the gay community and a repeated desire to shock the straight audience. There is an absence of recognition of other contemporary structuring discourses such as class, gender and race, perhaps because as Colin MacCabe observes - 'Jarman's chosen historical space is that interface between the Renaissance and the present which was first unveiled by John Dee in Jubilee' (63). In this interface Jarman shifts registers and while he expresses his claim to a pre-capitalist inheritance it is also largely accompanied, in the films by what he himself refers to as his 'profound dislike of my own' (64). In the films Jarman reveals few redeeming qualities and little relevance in the people of England, it is in the landscape and in the English renaissance that he identifies the sources of the inheritance he wants to claim. Free of home and family Jarman is able to assert a

greater degree of expressive and sexual agency. This is arrested by the onset of AIDS. There is no direct reference to AIDS in The Garden but Jarman's ailing presence and the theme of the crucifixion suggest, at least, a metaphoric reference. Susan Sontag's history of illness as metaphor goes some way to describing the mantle that Jarman assumes in The Garden through his linkage of gay identity, crucifixion and mortality:

> thinking of syphilis as a punishment for an individual's transgression was for a long time.... not really distinct from regarding it as retribution for the licentiousness of a community - as with AIDS now, in the rich industrial countries (65).

At the end of The Garden Jarman speaks for his community of friends through the voice of a narrator:

> "I walk in this garden
> Holding the hands of dead friends
> Old age came quickly for my frosted generation
> Cold, cold, cold they died so silently
> Did the forgotten generations scream ?
> Or go full, full of resignation
> Quietly protesting innocence
> Cold, cold, cold they died so silently"

The accompanying image is of a funeral rite, the gay couple bring a flaming urn of ashes to a table of assembled mourners. The testimonial words convey the dignity and almost submissive loss of a generation of men which echoes the tone of War Requiem. The finality of national loss expressed in terms of the nation in The Last of England is restated through the mortality of human loss in The Garden.

At the centre of Jarman's films is a claim for sources of tradition and value such as home, garden and landscape and an affinity for a lost England. These themes find expression through the avant-garde style and punk sensibility of the films. In between these tenets of conservatism and radicalism is Jarman's experience as a gay man, which always guarantees that he will be viewed firstly as a radical and unofficial voice rather than a conservative voice, particularly in relation to the institutions which fund his work. Lawrence Driscoll argues in relation to national culture that Jarman's films create - 'a space in which the supposedly "traditional" is exposed as the marginal, while the "marginal" is revealed as the traditional' (66). Driscoll argues that Jarman creates a vision where these positions can co-exist. Driscoll's argument concentrates upon the concerns of Jarman the artist/author revealed in interviews rather than the construction and style of the films. The radical appearance of Jarman's films is to some degree contradicted by the conservative disposition to certain aspects of the past which is also also expressed. It could be that the tension between Jarman's radicalism and his conservatism is partly a result of a disparity between the beliefs that Jarman disclosed in interviews regarding for example, his disposition towards the English Renaissance, and his preference for a collaborative and improvisational approach to film-making. This space tends to be closed down because of the degree to which the course of Jarman's life overshadows his films. The growing sense of mortality by the time of The Garden and his subsequent death in 1994 has meant that to write about Jarman is also an act of remembering and commemorating the life of the man.

Driscoll suggests a means of postponing the tension that for Wollen is ambiguous and for Caughie disingenuous. But if there does appear to be a tension if not a contradiction, then it is perhaps less surprising, that this should characterize one of British cinema's seemingly agitating voices, because as will become evident, the values of the past frequently influence dissenting and even modern(ist) voices.

Jarman's articulation of his inheritance and the central and anchoring role of home function as the formal and thematic axis for the associative style of the films. Jarman's articulation of his inheritance comments on England as it is now and how it might be in the future. This is a different direction of articulation to the turning back or away from the present that is implied by the marking of Jarman as an English nostalgist.

# Chapter Three

## Inheritance and Nostalgia: Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes

conventionally autobiographical trajectory. The recall of memory is centred around the troubled subjectivity and point of view of the young boy - Bud. Davies' articulation of inheritance lies in the evocation of memories of internalized relationships, and the formative and *inherent* role of the patriarchal relations of family, home and community in Liverpool in the 1940s and 1950s.

Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes do not display an explicit and unofficial engagement with the identity of a national inheritance and therefore elude the unofficial axis of British cinema that The Last of England and The Garden could be positioned within. The period settings of Liverpool and the restored look of terraced streets and interiors, gives the films a proximity to the context of northern working class heritage and the heritage film. Andrew Higson locates Distant Voices Still Lives within an alternative group of heritage films that -

> concentrate on the everyday lives and memories of "ordinary people,"....to some extent democratizing the genre...The converse of this, however, is that their representation of the past remains in a conservationist mode such that even the mise-en-scène of ordinariness delights the eye, and invites the collector's curiosity (3).

The latter part of Higson's argument is concentrated upon the way the past is exhibited. This position neglects the formal deviation from the heritage film and the degree of pathos that underlies the ordinary lives evoked by the films. Patrick Wright's discussion of the rise of heritage identifies the issue which pertains to the connection between Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes. Wright argues that - 'personal memory - with the full and particular intensity of feeling it involves - can be caught up in a wider public process of cultural nationalisation' (4). The personally articulated views of northern England represented in Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes might well be pressed into the service of

national heritage. However, the past that is represented by Davies is not necessarily useable in the same way as the past that is represented by a preserved country house is useable as a view of England. However, Davies does address the means of identification that heritage appeals to. The appeal of heritage is based upon a nostalgia for a lost past and proceeds as Higson argues by 'projecting the subject back into a comfortably closed past' (5). Davies is returning to and working through his remembered past but it is not a comfortable past nor is it a closed past. Tana Wollen situates Distant Voices Still Lives within a group of films which she argues - 'interrogate and resist the nostalgia that memory makes too easily of the past' (6). The articulation of inheritance in Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes does not correspond with the finished article of heritage nostalgia. The films express a conscious relation with time that is manifest as a series of memories that over the course of Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes inscribes Davies' return to and departure from his remembered and inherited past.

The sources of Davies' inheritance are evoked through traditions of representation that can be located within and against English culture and the accompanying configurations of British cinema. Davies revisits the lives of his family and his younger self, their destinies and the pain and suffering that occurred as a result of his father's brutality. These events are given a reflexive form through the repeated motifs of frames within frames, still images and a use of the camera that is lent an autonomy of movement across and through space and time independent of the characters' actions. This formal style is given an added depth of feeling by the expressive utilization of music and the repeated quotation of the Hollywood musical. Davies is keen to show not only the experiences of the family past but importantly the feelings that went with the experience. The recreation of memory is inseparable from the feelings provoked by the act of remembering the past and making films from this past (7). Davies' articulation of his inheritance formally inscribes the process of his own return to and departure from it. The exploration of

inherited ties of belonging gives rise to a different structure of feeling that is not equivalent to the pleasures of identification with period detail that flow from the narrative of a conventional heritage film. By attending to the formal articulation of inheritance in Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes, it is possible to question the generic characteristics that have characterized the heritage film and the related axes of British cinema.

Production context

By the time of the making of Distant Voices Still Lives in 1988 Davies had made his Trilogy of Children (1976), Madonna and Child (1980) and Death and Transfiguration (1983) with the backing of the British Film Institute Production Board. The continued backing of the board gave Davies the opportunity to make his first film on 35mm. The BFI Production Board represents a tradition of independent production in British cinema. The board is the successor to the Experimental Film Fund set up by Michael Balcon in the early 1950s to encourage native talent. In the early 1980s the BFI handbook explicitly states a resolve to align this strain of film-making with European art cinema:

> 'recipients of awards from the fund...had not always seen themselves as trainees, but sometimes as pure experimenters in the tradition of the non-commercial and aesthetically orientated film artists of European countries - a tendency that intensified in the mid 1960s' (8).

However, as the decade progressed the stated rhetoric of the BFI as an assured source of funding for non-commercial projects was forced to change in the light of the changing conditions of film funding. The changing structures of film funding under the Conservative government fostered a realization of the need to combine

innovation and experimentation with the financial necessity of reaching an audience. The degree of change is evident in the BFI Yearbook for 1987 which asserts that:

> 'the notion of a completely alternative and independent sector has given way to a much more complicated and complex understanding of the relations between various forms of state subsidy and the variety of commercial possibilities including, most importantly the possibilities offered by television' (9).

John Hill points out that Jeremy Isaacs, the first head of Channel 4, was aware of the role of television in funding film in other European countries and expressed his desire 'to make, or help make, films of feature length for television here, for the cinema abroad' (10). Isaacs' statement, contrary to the earlier European rhetoric of the BFI, reveals his perceived distinction between a European cinema found abroad and the relation between film and television in Britain. In 1985 the connection between the BFI and Channel 4 was established. Channel 4 committed £500,000 per year to feature films and received television rights to the films in return (11). Colin MacCabe points out that this link affected the decision making process since decisions taken by Channel 4 were taken not by a board representing a composite of different interests but by an individual commissioning editor (12). MacCabe points out that one of the consequences of the changing conditions of film funding was the greater consideration given to a film's likely audience (13).

Distant Voices Still Lives was funded as two separate films - Distant Voices and Still Lives through a combination of the BFI, Channel 4 and the German television company ZDF. The Long Day Closes was made with the backing of the BFI and Channel 4 which by the time of 1992 had named its film production section Film Four International. Stephen Romer highlights the scarcity of resources available to

Distant Voices Still Lives which was shot on location, in contrast to the purpose built set of The Long Day Closes (14).

MacCabe points out that one of the effects of the changed conditions of funding was the more pronounced role of the producers (15). In his role of head of production at the BFI MacCabe experienced the skills needed in bringing together finance through a combination of sources with different demands and he also observed how the producer would ensure that the director was aware of the audience during the making of the film (16). It is against this changing production background that the contrasting personalities of Davies and Jarman produced their personal films. What emerged across the films of both Davies and Jarman was a shared need to address and come to terms with the inherited past. The difference between them is that Jarman connected the past with his overtly declared hostility to the institutions and forces that affected him in the present.

Out of the struggle with limited resources and financial austerity emerged a critically acclaimed film. Distant Voices Still Lives received the International Critics Prize for Best Film at Cannes, the Critics' Prize at Toronto and the Golden Leopard at Locarno. Despite the increased influence of television funding within British cinema Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes look and sound much less like films made for television than many of the Channel 4 backed films of the 1980s and early 1990s, even though much of the audience for the films would come through their screenings on television. Distant Voices Still Lives has become a canonic British film that has become a source of a certain amount of prestige for the BFI Production Board and for British cinema.

Distant Voices Still Lives

The reproductive and inherited rituals of commemorated family occasions are marked in the opening scenes of Distant Voices. The representation of the family is marked by the affirmation of unity which emanates from the intimate relations between the women, which is disrupted by the cruel discipline of the father. The family home and the central role of the mother in the home are established in the initial scene. The familiar sounds of heavy rain hitting the street and the radio announcer reading the shipping forecast precede the opening image of the exterior of the terraced house. Freda Dowie who plays the mother of Eileen, Tony and Maisie retrieves the milk from the doorstep and the camera closes in on the view of the stairs framed by the entrance to the family home. The inscription of memory as the mode of expression for Davies' inheritance is signalled through sound and image. The use of the familiar voice of BBC radio that reads the shipping forecast of "Dogger, German Bight, Rockall, Mallin, Hebrides, Fastnet..." is acoustically modified from an external, extra-diegetic recorded sound to an internal, diegetic sound that emanates from the wireless in the home. The spectator is not sutured into the space of the home through the conventions of shot reverse shot editing but is made aware of its movement through, across and over space. The use of the camera signifies that the home is represented as a space that contains memories that do not equate to the singularity of narrative. Once the children are summoned downstairs we do not see their arrival confirmed at the breakfast table. These opening events are suspended as the camera moves into and through the home to words of the song I Get the Blues when it Rains. The camera moves from the column of the banister at the foot of the stairs through space and halts at an image of light shining through the glass in the front door into the inside of the house. The one hundred and eighty degree shift in camera position and the subsequent scenes indicates a spatial strategy that represents memory as an assembly of vignettes that refuse linear organization but suggest instead an overall circularity. The familiarity of remembered and repeated events of funeral, marriage and birth is complicated by the camera passing over and through the surfaces of doors, frames and windows.

Geoff Eley describes the effect of this self-reflexive fluctuation as - 'the release of meaning as much as its accumulation' (17).

The use of song indicates a shift in tone as the words of Kathleen Ferrier's ceremonial lament anticipates the significance of the theme of daughters and sons bearing the loss of their father:

> "there's a man going round taking names
> there's a man going round taking names
> he has taken my father's name
> and he's left my heart in pain
> there's a man going round taking names"

A dissolve replaces the image of the closed door with one of an open door showing the funeral car pulling up outside the house. A further dissolve shows the remaining family dressed in black arranged for a family photograph in front of the camera. A framed photograph of the father of the family with his pony hangs on the wall behind and above them. The pictorial assembly of mother, and her children Eileen, Tony and Maisie move out of the frame to take their places in the funeral car leaving the frame for the camera to linger on the photograph hanging on the wall. The rhyming absences of the father from the family photograph and the family from the photograph of the father foresee the internal fissures in the family. The present tense and motion of film's successive images of time combines with time that has passed and has been arrested into the stasis of a formal photograph. The relation of filmic to photographic temporality signifies the layering of memories and the commemoration of family and home. The 'temporal vacancy of the photograph' (18) described by Vivian Sobchack is expressed through shifts in pictorial formation. The static family album image is restated throughout Distant Voices as a memorializing motif of family reproduction. The opening sequence ends with a dissolve back to

the time frame established in the initial shot. The remaining family repeat the previous pictorial formation for the funeral except that this occasion is Eileen's wedding. The tone of this sequence evokes an intense structure of feeling that testifies to a presence becoming absence - both in terms of the father and visually, aurally and temporally. Jarman's use of his family's domestic home movie footage takes on meaning through juxtaposition with the film-maker's own idea of home. Davies demonstrates a greater concern with the texture and temporality of memory than with claiming an idea of home.

Davies' inheritance is signalled through the formal affirmations of family unity which is undone by the shared and contradictory memories of Maisie's, Eileen's and Tony's father. The memories that are enfolded around the family ceremonies of funeral and marriage reveal the brutality of the father (Peter Postlethwaite), but they do not attempt to explain it. The father's eruptions of rage recalled by Maisie and Tony unsettle the overall tone of the film. The inability of the father and successive husbands to reciprocate feeling is set against the expressive intimacy and romance of female friendship. Eileen's courtship is remembered with her friend Mickey. Eileen tells Mickey about receiving a present of Chanel No. 5 perfume from Dave. The romance of courtship is not shown but it is imagined through the friendship of the women and their shared idiom. This abundance of affection is contrasted with the solemn and formal declaration of the couple's Catholic wedding ceremony. The close up of Dave slipping the ring on to the finger of Eileen is accompanied by the voice of the Catholic priest:

> "before you are joined in matrimony I have to remind you both of the solemn and binding character of the vows you are about to make. This marriage is the union of one man with one woman freely entered into for life to the exclusion of all others"

Davies describes his inheritance through a gendered duality of intimacy and patriarchal oppression within family and community. The repetition of these family cycles is not challenged by the possibility of change through challenging the terms of the inheritance. The celebration of the wedding in the pub releases a freedom of expression that is consistently in tension with the actual experience of family and domestic lives. The communal singing of popular songs functions as a site for the release of emotional expression usually prompted by the women. The expressive invocation of the vocabulary of music reworks the tradition of the working class representation based upon social realism. The combination of the feeling of popular song with modernist self-reflexivity represents an exception to the antinomies of realism and fantasy which have historically defined British cinema. Davies does not express a longing for an authentic northern working class England that is free from the influence of American mass culture in the tradition of Richard Hoggart (19). The use of popular song in Distant Voices Still Lives suggests an Anglo-American musical tradition that was locally embedded (20). It is not the case that Davies simply describes the imposition of the products of popular culture from elsewhere as Eley assumes in his separation of commodity culture and tradition:

> the stress on dancing, on going to the "pictures," on popular radio variety shows, and on popular song interpellates the working-class persons of Davies's film in relation to the commodity culture of the marketplace and no longer in relation to the superior virtue of those old and valued "traditions" (21).

Cultural traditions remain and are not necessarily replaced by commodity culture but are subject to modification through the preferences of different generations. This is illustrated in the generational contrast between Eileen and her friend Mickey, and Eileen, Tony and Maisie's grandmother. Mickey frequently displays an affinity for songs from American culture such as Brr-Brr-Brr-Brr Busy Line. This can be

contrasted with the words sung by the grandmother at the celebration of the Christening of Maisie's child: "I like pickled onions I like pickled cabbage Piccalilli's alright with a bit of cold meat on a Saturday night. I like Tommy Offo's...". It is the voice of a shared local cultural idiom that the women share which unites the songs from different national cultural sources. In this way Davies reveals how his inheritance is formed by sources within and beyond local and national boundaries.

The use of song is not visually rendered through the generic codes of the Hollywood musical but through the specificity of cultural tradition. At the same time formal visual style creates a reflexive distance from the sentiments of popular song. During the singing of Barefoot Days at Eileen's wedding the camera moves off into space and settles on the etched pattern which decorates a glass partition in the local pub. The distance of the camera supplements the singing and the communal performance of song with the distance of memory. The observational distance of the camera and the use of framed tableau connected across space means that other more painful memories can be situated alongside the songs and the necessity of classical linear narration is bypassed. Eley describes the effect of this combination as 'disruptions and estrangements of form articulated in the most familiar of moments' (22).

The fluidity of the camera moving through and across space also has a temporal effect. During Eileen's wedding celebration she mourns the absence of her father and the camera pans horizontally across this tableau past the window of the pub and along the terraced street highlighting the Christmas decorations through the windows and finally onto another tableau showing the children at midnight mass. The autonomy of the camera connects non-contiguous space which assembles memories which are shared by the Davies family but separated by time. The spectator is not allowed to settle into the period setting but is constantly reminded of the significance of returning to and departing from the past.

The chiaroscuro lighting and high art realization of memories of a working class family appear at a general level to confirm Higson's argument about ordinariness delighting the eye and inviting the collector's curiosity. This aestheticizing of the past translated into critical prestige for the film from the critics of the mainstream press such as the Mail on Sunday. Peter Keighron questions the high art status accorded to a film that deals with working class life. He cites the Mail on Sunday who honour Davies for having - 'wrenched high art from the lower depths of his deprived Liverpool childhood' (23). The refusal to deliver a politically emancipatory project to meet the demands of left critics renders Distant Voices Still Lives liable to a public discourse of prestige from sources closer to the Conservative project of National Heritage. The view of the Mail on Sunday is not entirely untrue because the departure of Davies from his inheritance and his return to it as a film-maker is inscribed across both films. The social mobility implied by the language of the Mail on Sunday overlooks the significance of what the film represents as remaining and continuing. The process of Davies coming to terms with the inherited past he has been able to leave behind becomes in the critical sphere a source of tension between the personal and the national.

Davies does seek to reconstruct fragments of his past but not into a temporally fixed consistent time frame that is predicated simply upon the lavish recreation of period detail. The movement from Eileen crying in Tony's arms outside the pub to the street and to mass is a seamless movement back through time and one of the expressive high points of the film. This seamlessness between different spaces is aided by the design of Christopher Hobbs who does not overload the frame with the details of period accuracy. The film image is also drained of primary colours which gives the image a quality that is between black and white and colour and between film and photography. Davies manipulates film as a medium of the time and space of memory, to reflexively reconstruct his inheritance.

The second portion of the film Still Lives articulates how family lives continue and follow quite similar patterns. Davies summarizes the relation between the two portions of the film: 'all the family history is packed into Distant Voices while in Still Lives life has reached an even keel and ticks silently away' (24). The death of the father has been registered and the trauma of his brutality bared. Guy Westwell suggests that Still Lives shows the healing process necessitated by the first part of the film (25). However, the overall pathos of the film is sustained by the likelihood that the relationships of Eileen and Maisie remains subject to warnings that facets of their father would be reproduced in their families and indeed inherited by their husbands. The recurring presence of clocks on the mantelpiece and the sound of their regulatory ticking forms a background to the routines of domestic life. Eileen comments at her wedding that "it doesn't feel any different". On Tony's wedding day the groom is shown reflecting alone on the doorstep of the family home and his tears do not appear to be tears of joy. This scene offers a moment of autobiographical recognition to Carolyn Steedman:

> I know exactly and for what purpose he weeps. I could render that feeling to the last syllable: it is *my* feeling, my moment. The young man cries because he knows that *it will go on like this*, that nothing will change; that the endless streets, the marriages made like his parents'.....will stretch on forever: no end in sight. I had never looked before at a representation of this feeling: I was grateful for the confirmation it offered me (26).

Steedman's response introduces a different level of identification and recognition to that of Higson. Her recognition is of a past that she shared and has similarly left and returned to in her writing of Landscape for a good woman (27). The issue of gender enters the ground between personal inheritance and the national heritage.

At the end of Distant Voices the mother is elevated into a sacred realm through the stylistic use of white. After Eileen's wedding she anticipates her children's betrothals at the same time as recalling the reality of her own experience through the commanding voice of her husband. The camera moves in on the window of her bedroom to the wordless song of the soprano from Vaughan Williams' Pastoral Symphony. A dissolve to the interior of the bedroom shows the camera pulling away from the window and the wind billowing through the curtains. The mother appears in an all white room except for a chair where she sits and the photo (previously shown in the downstairs room) of her husband on the wall above her shoulder. Voice over dialogue says "I love the light nights..." and Eileen replies "but they're starting to draw in now aren't they, Mam ?". The voice over dialogue continues as Eileen says - "sorry about the mess, Mam" and she replies "go on yer all right I'll see to it". Eileen replies "thanks Mam" and Monica and Jingles bid her goodbye before the sound of the door closing. The ownership of these memories appear to be the mother's, but they are subsequently shown in convergence with those of Eileen as a dissolve to a close shot of her in the parlour by the fire in tears as her husband, from out of shot bellows at her that she is "..married now - I'm your husband - your duty's to me, frig everyone else. Monica, Jingles, that's all ancient history now". A further dissolve reveals an empty chair in the parlour with a newspaper on it. The camera then pans across the floor of the room showing toys strewn across the floor and dimly lit by the light of the fire. The out of frame sound of the children's mother imploring the children to - "come on - up the dancers!" is heard with the sound of children's giggles. The dialogue continues - "how much do you love me ?" and the children reply "a pound of sugar".

This sequence suggests a transition in point of view from mother to daughter. The remembering seems to be on the part of Freda Dowie's mother but becomes that of Eileen as a result of the cut to the over the shoulder shot of Eileen gazing into

space. However, the transition suggests more than tying down the ownership of memory to an individual point of view. The sequence also conveys the shared experience of marriage and the role of wife that Eileen recognizes that she is coming to share with her mother. The realization of the passing on of the inherited role of wife to a despotic husband is contrasted with the special language and innocence of childhood. Eileen cries because she has recognized the implications of the transition from daughter to wife. The smile of Freda Dowie as she sits in her chair in the sacrilized white room is both her own smile at her anticipation of the married futures of her children and also the way she is remembered by Eileen. Motherhood is sacrilized through the experience of childhood and the mother daughter axis. Eileen's tears are an echo of the tears of recognition that Steedman points to in the tears of Tony. The injustice of inherited patriarchal relations is revealed but the women continue to endure them.

The mother's affection for her children offsets the subjugation she endured in her own marriage. Eileen and Dave's marriage is childless. The articulation of inheritance in Distant Voices Still Lives suggests that there is more consolation in being a mother than there is in being a wife without children. The fluctuation between domestic life with severe husbands and the sentiment of commemorating births, marriages and deaths reveal the contradictions of inherited families and the pivotal role of mothers. The polarity at the centre of family life ensures that memory is neither idealized nor repressed but recalled with an accompanying degree of trauma and pathos.

In The Last of England Jarman correlates by juxtaposition, the militarism of his father with the England he has inherited and the allegoric England he imagines in the future. Davies remains within the personal memories of family and lives and works through the contradictory process of patriarchal family attachments to which he belonged and exposes the formative influence of his inheritance. In both films the

influence of departed father's looms as a structuring absence. While Jarman repudiates his father Davies shows signs of the reproduction of his father's brutality.

The structure of feeling that emanates from this process of mourning a loss is less nostalgia than it is elegy. Despite the idealization of the children's mother and childhood there is no indication that the past is preferable. The felt attachments of family are inherited and internalized along with their contradictions and inequities. Out of this personal discourse emerge moments of recognition described by Steedman. For Steedman this moment is unique and contrasts with the mise-en-scène of ordinariness which according to Higson is a repeated and determining characteristic of the heritage film.

Davies endeavours to speak of his family's memories through the medium of film. He comments that his background was:

> a very *constricted* culture, but a very rich one. All we had was the radio and the cinema and the pub, and the dance hall and for men, the football match on a Saturday. But that culture was very *rich*, because you had to make your own entertainment (28).

Davies emphasizes the material resources of his inheritance and it is these that Samuel privileges as historical sources of heritage. The act of representing the experience of these historical sources on film adds the dimension of a structure of feeling to Samuel's historiographic argument. If Distant Voices Still Lives is subject to the process of cultural nationalisation outlined by Wright and implied by Higson then the question of how recognizable these memories are to the wider public must be addressed. One way into this is through the notion of commonalities. The recognition of the unchanging pattern of lives that Steedman recognized would be one such commonality. The image of the working class as enduring hardship and

simply "getting on with it" is a part of national mythology. However, the means by which this is recognized across generations is less an imagined national terrain than it is an increasingly gendered and classed terrain. Other commonalities would be the role of Eileen's close friendships with other women from the community which is polarised by the investment of Dave and Red in football. Steedman notes how 'women's autobiographies are constructed through their relationships with other people' (29). Similarly, the abundance of communal singing is a feature of cultural history that has significantly changed. The centrality of radio and the voice of the BBC in the home exemplified by the recognizable language of placelessness which characterizes the shipping forecast. The language refers to place names but to many of the shipping forecast these places are unknown and unmapped. These are aspects of local and national culture that Paul Willis refers to as a 'common culture' (30). The expressed commonalities of everyday practices convey an intimacy, a feeling of belonging, as well as the saddening inevitability of circumscribed lives. Such commonalities are not generalized into macro-history with the exception of one reference to air raids in the second world war. This culture does not easily accommodate cultural difference but for all the particularity of the personal experience of Distant Voices Still Lives there remain lines of connection that can be drawn with the public and the national. These need not necessarily only be those inanimate details highlighted by Higson or the iconographic features noted by John Caughie which he summarizes as - 'the familiar habitat of working class nostalgia; a rain-drenched urban landscape transcended by community' (31). Davies' focus also reveals and works through the contradictory particulars of home, family and community and resists and critiques the visual tradition of working class realism and documentary through a reflexive modernism that ensures the past is not closed off from the process of revealing it. The bleak conclusion to the film does not suggest transcendence but offers the minor consolation that Tony, like Davies, has realized what Eley calls an 'affective truth' (32). In this way, while subject to cultural nationalisation as Wright suggests, the past lives that are shown are not preferable.

As Eley suggests '*this* past in is not usable. It cannot help' (33). The past on view helped Davies make his film but the past he reveals is not sealed and contained into a view of Liverpool in the 1940s and 1950s, but splits and dissipates points of view rendering memory ungovernable by narrative and the simplified past represented by national heritage. The dispersed memories of Distant Voices Still Lives are clustered into the singular subjectivity of the budding cinephile in The Long Day Closes.

## The Long Day Closes

With the trauma of the father dealt with in Distant Voices Still Lives Davies concentrates on his own memories as a young working-class Catholic boy growing up in Liverpool. The prevalence of popular song and singing in Distant Voices Still Lives is replaced by the expressivity of film and cinema going in The Long Day Closes. The doors, frames and windows of the home that connoted the general lineaments of memory in Distant Voices Still Lives are connected with Bud's subjectivity and gaze in The Long Day Closes. Across both films the visual configuration of home anticipates the making of a cinema out of home. For Davies the films occur as a consequence of him being able to leave home and his inherited past. For Jarman home represents a refuge but its meaning and form are subject to amendment through the act of film-making.

In Distant Voices Still Lives the temporality of the image is revealed in the service of memory. The frontality and refusal of sutured space compares with the early cinema that Noël Burch termed the 'primitive mode of representation' (34). The frames, screens and shafts of light of The Long Day Closes are organized around Bud's point of view and Bud's gaze. This suggests a later narrative cinema but it also suggests the significance of the activity of cinema going as a means of negotiating the inherited boundaries of home. This is emphasized in the opening of

the film. The initial image shows a brick wall where the framed arrangement of bricks rhymes with the curtained screen that pronounces the opening of a film in the cinema. The camera then moves vertically to a street sign that specifies "Kensington Street L15" and then some remains of film posters. Without cutting the camera then moves along and around to a wider view of the dark, rain drenched, terraced street. The soundtrack reinforces the introduction of a particular street in Liverpool as coterminous with the introduction of a film. Firstly, there is a single beat of a gong before the middle-class English voice of Margaret Rutherford in The Happiest Days of Your Life (Great Britain, Frank Launder, 1950) says: "a tap Gossage, I said "tap" - you're not introducing a film". This anticipation of a beginning is continued by the drum roll of a band. Finally, the words of Stardust by Nat King Cole express a sentimental longing for a preferred past which ends by giving way to the ongoing persistence of rain:

> "and now the purple dusk of twilight time steals across the meadows of my heart steals across the meadows of my heart....love is now the stardust yesterday the music of years gone by"

The longing tone of these words contrasts with, but nevertheless connects to, the image of Kensington Street which forms the physical and imaginary setting of Bud's childhood. This setting is also synonymous with the figure of "Mam". In the absence of the father, Bud is spatially closer in the feminine sphere of the home to his mother and sisters than his brothers. He realizes his desire for the cinema through his sister Helen (Titch). But the beginning of the recognition of his sexuality remains internalized and unshared. This is confirmed when he looks at the naked torso of the builder who returns his look and winks at Bud. The intimacy of this exchange of looks in space is confirmed through the rare occurrence of shot/reverse shot cutting. Just as in Distant Voices Still Lives where the children observe their father tending to his pony shot/reverse shot cutting does not naturalize the exchange of

looks in space in the service of narrative but sensitizes the transaction of looking. Bud is embarrassed and turns away from the window that frames his gaze into his bedroom. He overhears his mother below singing a song that expresses the heterosexual desire that is reproduced in and by the family home: "if you were the only boy in the world and I were the only girl...". His emerging realization of his possible difference from the heterosexuality of his inheritance is negotiated within the intimate proximity of home and family. Bud's position on the stairs behind the bars of the stair banister separates him from his mother's remembered desire and therefore from the reproductive sexuality of the family.

The imaginative possibilities provided by Hollywood cinema are appropriated to transform the terms of the sexual norms Bud inherits in the home. This is illustrated where Bud's sister and her boyfriend kiss on the threshold of the family house - the front doorstep. This privileged site where dates conclude and indication is given of a couple's future possibilities is a space of isolation and uncertainty for Bud. He is frequently left there on his own as he observes others leaving to do things he would like to be included in. As the front door closes the moonlit image of their particular kiss becomes screened by the glass of the door and compromised by Bud's point of view from the stairs. The balance between light and darkness is changed and they become a silhouette of *a* couple kissing. Bud looks back at this scene over his shoulder from the stairs his facial expression indicates his problematic relation to their embrace. He is unable to see himself in their courtship but is bound to the tenderness he can only find in the family home with his sister and mother. However, the alteration of the image of the home's threshold caused by the door becoming a further frame and the domestic equivalent of a cinema screen suggests the possibility of a different desire. This interior longing for a desire created on different terms is embodied by the cinematic quotation of Judy Garland as she sings Over the Banister (35).

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> street and factory) against an external authority of school, the Guardians, the Assistance Board or the police (37).

The external authorities are evident in The Long Day Closes but the articulated solidarity usually expressed through a resistant male figure is turned inwards towards Bud's closeness to his mother, sister and home. Consequently, his mother and sisters are fixed while the narrative of Bud's emergence is suggested through cinema. British traditions of realism are again breached through the lavish quotation of Hollywood cinema. The wish fulfilment of Hollywood serves as a substitute for the inherited morality of Catholicism. Davies points out that 'the Hollywood musical was as potent as religion' (38). The inculcation of musical sentiment into the topos of Bud's inheritance is exhibited in a seamless overhead pan that traverses the area outside the family home and the communal spaces of cinema, church and school through a beam of light. The extra-diegetic music consists of Debbie Reynolds singing Tammy suggesting that the prospect of transcendence awaits Bud. The empathy that Bud has for the cinema with his sister Titch is contrasted with the antipathy that exists between Edna and Curly. Edna does not and cannot identify with Curly's *impersonations* of Hollywood stars. She remains indifferent to his attempts to amuse an audience. The polarity of their coupling separates them along national cultural fault lines. Edna's dour scepticism of Curly and her enduring deprecation of her married situation belongs in the representational repertoire of traditionally realist British cinema and television. Curly's theatricality finds its sources from beyond the cultural borders that constitute Edna's discouragement of his antics, but always finds a response which falls within the limits of those borders. Curly, like Mickey in Distant Voices Still Lives displays a fondness for Hollywood that is not reciprocated by his wife, suggesting that such a sensibility is incompatible within the normality of married life. Through Bud's subjectivity Davies asserts his difference from, and attachment to, his family inheritance. But for characters such as Curly and Mickey the gap between the fantasy offered by Hollywood and the

reality of English life is never closed. The scene in Distant Voices Still Lives where Tony cries at his realization that life will go on as it did before is replaced by a more optimistic final scene in The Long Day Closes. After crying in the cellar of the house as a result of being overlooked by his friend Albie, Bud is shown reconciled looking outwards and upwards towards the stars out of his bedroom window with Albie. The camera is positioned behind Bud and Albie and aligned with the direction of their shared gaze out of the window. The correspondence between this view of home with the viewing situation in a cinema anticipates Davies being able to leave his inheritance. The subsequent movement of the camera towards the sky and out of the space of the home confirms this point of release and closure and also suggests that Davies has completed his return to his past through the medium of film.

The possibility of recognition that lives will remain the same that Steedman observes in Distant Voices Still Lives becomes amended in the later film by the articulation of difference. The comparative plenitude suggested by the references to Hollywood and the cinema are substituted for family, community and making do. British cinema's enduring opposition between fantasy and reality which was mitigated by the formal modernism of Distant Voices Still Lives re-emerges in The Long Day Closes. The representation of Bud's experience is one of innocence. His experience of childhood and Catholicism offers identification to a gay male spectator. At the same time there is a sense as Raymond Durgnat argues that Bud is - 'too impeccably cherubic Bud' (39). Durgnat's description of Bud occurs because the construction of The Long Day Closes represents a negotiation between the Hollywood musical and the realist and class tenets of British cinema. It is because Davies was able to leave his inheritance for film-making that the film seems to represent a testament to the tradition of the musical rather than a testament to the tradition of realist British cinema.

The transaction between the boundaries of inheritance that I have outlined is modulated by sentiment and nostalgia. The critique of nostalgia articulated through the pathos and elegy of emerging adults in Distant Voices Still Lives is exchanged for an abundance of transcendent sentiment from the Hollywood musical and concentrated in the travails of Bud's childhood. It is only because Davies has left and grown out of belonging to the milieu that produced this sensibility that he is able to express its loss. Nancy Miller identifies the subjective cleft that this trajectory brings about: 'it is only because we have left those childhood places - the place we were made to occupy that we can write of it; writing this past is implicitly to acknowledge our own self-division' (40). The childlike address of The Long Day Closes approximates more closely to nostalgia than Distant Voices Still Lives even though Davies is not savouring every aspect of his past. Davies admits that the film is based upon 'the loss of childhood paradise and innocence' (41). The difference in Distant Voices Still Lives is established by the formal inscription of retrieving memory. John Caughie confirms the greater distancing effect:

> a complicated relation to the past, marked in the films by an aesthetic formalism which struggles to keep its distance from sentimental nostalgia even while it is celebrating sentimentality (42).

The intensity of emotion in Distant Voices Still Lives is expressed through the assumed antinomies of formal modernism and the heightened performance of popular song. This significantly differentiates the elegiac structure of feeling from the nostalgia of The Long Day Closes. The expression of elegy is coupled with nostalgia by Susannah Radstone who argues that the 'remembering of boyhood in The Long Day Closes constitutes a nostalgic elegy for a lost idealized father' (43). I would argue that it is the mother and the home that are idealized in The Long Day Closes through Bud's attachments (44). It is less the loss of the father than the loss of the innocence of childhood that builds up as Bud encounters the harsh

heterosexual masculinity of Catholic school. There is an evident overlap between elegy and nostalgia suggested in Davies and Jarman through a constituent mourning of loss and an occupation of the status of male victim. However, the pain of remembering rather than simply the desire to return to a past in retreat from the present is one way of suggesting a critical interval between them. The valorization of the mother/son axis is heightened by Bud's distance from the masculinity that surrounds him. Similarly, in Distant Voices Still Lives the centrality of mother and successive mothers are key to the expression of personal feelings. The idea of home is key to the value that Davies and Jarman place upon their inheritance. Davies commemorates his mother through the home while Jarman looks to re-imagine and formally claim the idea of home. Across both Davies and Jarman the mother and the feminine represent a refuge against the outside world. The personal articulation of inheritance is apparently predicated upon what David Lowenthal describes as - 'patrimonial displacement' (45).

Caughie warns of the dangers of Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes being recruited into heritage discourse as a *musée imaginaire* because - 'the risk is that everything - the streets, the rain, the pubs, Kathleen Ferrier, becomes an exhibit' (46). The restorative view of the past does entail this anxiety over reproduction. However, this position implies that the past should not be exhibited. A more pertinent question, following the scarcely resourced background of these films is surely how should the past be shown ? Davies does not incorporate a dialectic with the present in his films but he does reveal, across these two films how the parameters of inheritance are embedded, negotiated and assume value when left behind. Davies is working through his relation to the past in the process of making it visible. In this process Davies combines a self-reflexive modernism with popular cultural traditions. This personal articulation of inheritance suggests that the formation of the connection between British cinema and heritage is not singular but comprised of different modalities.

# Chapter Four

## Black British History and the Boundaries of Inheritance:

## Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush

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The critical literature on heritage and heritage cinema has not addressed the possibility of the relation between Black British cinema and the idea of heritage. The construction of inheritance and heritage occurs within and depends upon national boundaries. Inheritance in this thesis has so far been articulated from the relatively homogeneous English sources of Derek Jarman and Terence Davies. The internalization of the condition of England that is expressed from the margins in The Last of England is nevertheless a white view of England and only hints at England's cultural diversity in the scenes which depict the plight of homeless refugees. There is no equivalent figure in black British culture in the 1980s and early 1990s who articulates this condition in the same way as Jarman and his friends. The cultural interval between personal inheritance and national heritage is unevenly distributed and it is therefore problematic to assume a relational equivalence between the speaking positions of Jarman and Davies that are predicated on the meaning of home and the black British subject position of John Akomfrah and the Black Audio Film Collective. The consideration of this inequality reveals the precept of belonging that substantiates the rootedness of Davies and his family, and the connection between Jarman and the English landscape. The pairing of black and English or British is therefore problematic and uneven but it is nevertheless a pairing of increasing salience. In a change from the Britishness addressed in There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack, in a recent article about English art, Paul Gilroy favours the coupling of black and English: 'The picture and its history pose a challenge to the black English today. It demands that we strive to integrate the different dimensions of our hybrid cultural heritage more effectively'(1).

The films that I am investigating explicitly engage with the dominant meanings and traditions of Englishness through the experience of black people living in the major

English cities of Birmingham and Liverpool. I therefore recognize the problem of assuming Britishness when only England is referenced but I do so because of the pre-existing placement of the black workshop films as black British cinema since the films of the Black Audio Film Collective are part of the black British cinema that emerged in the 1980s and early 1990s. One of the consequences of pairing black with British is to put together the past of the black population with the idea of the national past as an imperial past. The double consciousness required by black British subjects in relation to the past is a result of a diasporic relation. One of the legacies of the British Empire and the slave trade is a migrant population whose roots lie outside Britain but whose routes have taken them home to the Mother country (2). The history of this journey and its significance for the construction of British identity is addressed by the two films Handsworth Songs (1986) and Touch of the Tarbrush (tx 12.11.1991). These films address the disparity between the history of black British experience and the official documentation and recognition of this experience.

The recent positing of black and British as a pairing rather than an opposition within the construction of cultural identity suggests that a relation between the black British experience and the idea and meaning of heritage can be tentatively posed. This is underlined by the recent exposure given across the media to the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival at Tilbury of the Empire Windrush carrying men and women from the Carribean. The BBC's Windrush season commemorated the experience and affirmed the presence of those men and women who left the Caribbean in 1948 to live and work in Britain. This institutional commemoration of a past moment of arrival and of subsequent experience asserts the black population's right to belong within the configuration of black Britain that is represented by the extensive range of programmes (3).

The testimonies of personal memory that were a formative source for the Windrush season could conceivably assume a position as one of the historical sources of Samuel's Theatres of Memory. However, Corner and Harvey warn of the dangers of conflating national heritage with marginal histories from below:

> '...attempts to rework or to replace the presently dominant and successful forms of heritage will have to offer more than alternative, 'real' histories. They will have to speak to that much broader restructuring of identities, desires and social relationships' (4).

There is a presumed dichotomy in this argument between the nostalgic screen fictions of heritage and the alternative, presumably non-fictional form of 'real' histories. One of the distinguishing features of the work of the Black Audio Film Collective is the interrogation of the inherited burden of political truth that black representations have to bear. Black Audio interrogate the dominant representations of black representation not simply through a presumed political realism of anti-racism but through a politics of form that hybridizes inherited English traditions of representation.

The break-up of the post-war economic and political consensus that took place in the 1980s was supplemented by an increased sense of cultural fragmentation and pluralization. In black culture this was evident in the questioning of the essential black subject that historically underpinned black politics (5). In Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush the black sign embraces Caribbean, Asian and mixed race individuals and families. The emergence of a more hybrid black political culture is pinpointed by Kobena Mercer:

> 'across a whole range of cultural forms there is a powerfully syncretic dynamic which critically appropriates elements from the master-codes of the dominant culture and *creolizes* them' (6).

The hybridity of black culture is articulated in relation to the dominant understanding of English identity. Consequently, in the films it is less a case of asserting racial difference than of politically articulating ethnicities within and against the hegemonic idea of England. This cultural pluralization of the 1980s and 1990s is also concurrent with the assertion by the political right of a perceived threat to the heritage of England (7). The move to protect and conserve through the mobilization of heritage can also be viewed as a response to the loosening of national boundaries manifest through global economic as technological forces. Kevin Robins argues that 'continuity and historicity of identity are challenged by the immediacy and intensity of global cultural confrontations' (8). These centrifugal forces can be set against the homogenizing and nationally sanctioned patronage of heritage discourse (9). It is this tension, which is also conspicuous in the coupling of black and British, that is an important factor in the political rise of heritage and the enraged tone of the early critical response to heritage cinema. However, these wider cultural shifts have not featured in the films that have been discussed in relation to the context of heritage.

Contemporary black film makers inherit this cultural context, and the turn to the past is demonstrated by the title of Sankofa's first film Passion of Remembrance (Maureen Blackwood/Isaac Julien, Great Britain, 1986). Black Audio Film Collective's representation of black experience within contemporary England demonstrates a similar impulse to Jarman's in The Last of England. The collective project of Black Audio juxtaposes past and present through personal memories, archival representation and direct testimony. The difference between them lies in Jarman's relatively privileged access to a personal inheritance that can be

interwoven with his national inheritance and the result described as "a personal view of the condition of England". The black British inheritance does not offer equivalent access to the personal and national register assumed by Jarman. The black British speaking position assumes a hybridizing relation to both national identity and the terrain occupied by Jarman. In The Last of England Jarman interrogates the inherited sites of belonging such as home and family. These sites are set against a collage of images that flaunts the distance between them and the derelict London Jarman sees from his perspective as a gay male artist. He is able to juxtapose this relation with a view of the condition of England. The movement between the personal and national in Jarman appears to be unselfconsciously hegemonic when compared with the Black Audio films. The black experience of England is not centred upon an inheritance of family, home and nation. The trajectory of this relay is reversed in Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush. The right to belong as a black British person is not asserted through home and family but through re-articulating the boundaries of this formation. The role of the black personal voice in this articulation is spoken from a position that as Stuart Hall points out is - 'always *other* than where he or she is, or is able to speak from' (10).

One of the consequences of the conjoining of black with British has resulted in an address to past experience which does not simply highlight racial injustice but also begins to discursively engage, through formal and cultural tradition, with existing modes of representing England such as the documentary film. Gilroy's discussion of black art in relation to the aesthetic traditions of England encourages the racializing of Englishness by: 're-compos[ing] understanding of English culture as a whole and....a re-reading of that culture's history which places the idea of 'race' at the centre rather than the margin' (11). Black Audio Film Collective continue the practice advocated by Gilroy through the combined resources of the audio-visual media. The Windrush season underlines how black British voices are affirming the

history of their own experience of arriving and living in England. Salman Rushdie argues that this experience can be named as a tradition:

> 'Indian writers in England have access to a second tradition, quite apart from their own racial history. It is the culture and political history of the phenomenon of migration, displacement, life in a minority group....the past to which we belong is the English past, the history of immigrant Britain' (12).

Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush both address this shared and subjective condition in formally different ways. Handsworth Songs which was awarded the BFI Grierson Award in 1987, continues the two part tape slide show Expeditions: Signs of Empire and Images of Nationality (Black Audio Film Collective, Great Britain, 1982) by inscribing the tradition summarized by Rushdie into a formal assemblage of sound and image. Touch of the Tarbrush utilizes a more direct and televisual address through personal testimonies, talk to camera and voice over narration by the director John Akomfrah. These evidential elements are combined with archive footage and exterior views of contemporary Liverpool. The collective production context of Black Audio results in a personal dimension that is not centred around the expression of a singular authored self but draws upon a range of black experience that is not exclusive to the Caribbean. John Akomfrah directs the films but the collective practice behind their production is acknowledged and takes priority over the articulation of an individual vision. It is the stated ambition of Black Audio to combine the political imperative of black film making with the British and European modernist documentary tradition (13). The Black Audio films can be seen as an attempt to continue the tradition of independent cinema and at the same time reach the audience whose experience they seek to represent.

The significance of Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush lies in the means by which the past is addressed. Both films combine memory, history and contemporary experience in order to reveal the discursive relations between them. These films enact the hybridity of England's past firstly through the form of Handsworth Songs and secondly through the documentation of experience in Touch of the Tarbrush. In this way the construction of the boundaries that national heritage and heritage cinema are founded upon are revealed.

Production context

The black film and video workshops which emerged in London in the 1980s are now viewed as a significant element in the make up of British cinema in the 1980s. Black Audio were one of a group of grant aided workshops comprised of Sankofa Film and Video Collective, Ceddo Film and Video Workshop and Retake Film and Video Collective.

The growth of the workshop sector in the 1980s was encouraged by Channel 4 and the decision to form an Independent Film and Video department with Alan Fountain as senior commissioning editor. The Workshop Declaration was agreed in 1982 between Channel 4, the Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians (ACTT), the British Film Institute, the Regional Arts Association and the Independent Filmmakers Association (14). The non-profit-making and non-commercial workshops were run co-operatively and committed to an integrated practice of production, exhibition, distribution and the development of audiences, research, education and community work more generally (15). The film and video produced by the workshops would be broadcast to a television audience on The Eleventh Hour an 'independent' slot at eleven o'clock on monday nights on Channel 4.

The black workshops tended to be based in London but there was also a number of other workshops based in the major cities. These workshops had a strong regional emphasis that provided access to film production facilities and also gave a voice to women, working class communities and the black population. Workshops such as Amber in Newcastle and Birmingham Film and Video Workshop continued a political campaigning tradition of film-making that Sylvia Harvey has situated in a history of oppositional and independent film-making practice (16).

The election of a labour adminstration in 1981 to control the GLC under the leadership of Ken Livingstone occurred in the same year as the Brixton riots. The GLC increased funding for the arts significantly with a greater emphasis upon representing the ethnic diversity of London. The budget of the Ethnic Arts sub-committee of the GLC Arts and Recreation Committee increased from 30,000 to 2 million (17). The Black Audio Film Collective was formed in 1986 and funded by a combination of The London Borough of Hackney, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, The London Borough Grant Scheme, British Film Institute and Channel 4 (18). Black Audio were active outside London and staged programmes at independent cinemas such as the New Cinema in Nottingham and toured the country with their tape-slide programme Expeditions gaining insights through discussions with audiences. Jim Pines notes how the distribution of the Black Workshop sector went beyond regional and metropolitan art house cinemas and into social clubs, community centres and cultural associations (19). Handsworth Songs represented the progression on to film of the formal strategies of Expeditions. Pressure exerted by the Independent Filmmakers Association led to the independent distribution group - The Other Cinema opening the Metro Cinema with backing from the GLC's Arts and Recreation Committee (20). Consequently, films such as Passion of Remembrance and Handsworth Songs were as Judith Williamson points out able to enjoy the first West End runs of workshop films (21).

The riots that occurred in London in 1981 and again in 1985 formed the urban political background that is addressed by the black workshops. However, it is also important to note as John Akomfrah states, that Black Audio - 'as a whole emphasized formal experimentation, but also tried to anchor it in some kind of cultural and political address' (22). The existence of organized groups such as the London Film-makers' Co-operative founded in 1966 and the Independent Film-makers' Association formed ten years later provided a background of commitment to formal innovation independent of the BFI Production Board (23). The collective practice of the workshops provide a different genealogy to the the individually voiced tradition of the BFI Production board. The workshop films are therefore located in a political and aesthetic rather than an individually authored aesthetic tradition.

Following the Broadcasting Act of 1990 Channel 4 was responsible from 1993, for selling its own advertising. Consequently Channel 4 withdrew its backing for the workshops in 1990 (24). The abolition of the GLC compounded the situation for the workshops. This change of circumstance is evident in the shift from the experimental film documentary of Handsworth Songs to the television documentary Touch of the Tarbrush which was commissioned by the BBC in 1991 as part of a series about English identity.

Handsworth Songs

Handsworth Songs is constructed around the events of the Handsworth riots in 1985. This event functions as a central axis around which a range of audio-visual materials are assembled. The range of sources that are brought together by Handsworth Songs are accurately described by John Corner:

> 'Visuals: archive footage, news footage of disturbances, interview material, actuality sequences, symbolic sequences used primarily for symbolic effect. Soundtrack: actuality sound, songs, music' (25).

Handsworth Songs refers to the representation of the Handsworth riots as a point of departure from where the archival sources that represent black experience in England and the Birmingham/Black Country area are surveyed. The effect of this multi-layered texture is to discursively historicize not simply the *story* of the event of the Handsworth riots, but also the documented representation of the black presence within England. The representation of black experience in England follows a chronological trajectory that draws extensively upon archive footage from film and television sources that range from Birmingham Central Library, Yorkshire television and British Movietonenews. This assemblage of sources incorporates the historical moments identified by Barnor Hesse:

> 'during the twentieth century, *race* occurs three times. The first time as "coloured colonials"; the second as "coloured immigrants"; and the third as Black and Asian citizens' (26).

The dialogism that Mercer locates across black culture is formally expressed through the texture of Handsworth Songs. The annexing of the British and European documentary tradition in order to enlarge the documentation of black experience in England is achieved through the formal possibilities of sound and image. This is illustrated during the opening of the film which shows footage of an industrial museum and a black attendant in uniform observing the preserved and working machinery of the industrial revolution. The visual signification of British history and the black presence within this time frame is rendered dissonant by the strategic use of non-diegetic sound. The ambient, asynchronous sound connotes a metallic tonality that overlays diegetic sound. This suggests an acoustic space

which resonates with but does not belong to or emerge from the diegesis of the image - echoing the position of the black museum attendant in relation to the preserved artefacts of local and national history. The look of the attendant at an historical artefact of the industrial revolution anticipates the meeting of white English working class history and diasporic black experience. This could be a conventional black and white documentary image but the use of sound undercuts this assumption. The look of the attendant and the camera is concentrated on the rotating wheels of the machinery. The motion of the machine describes an overall circular movement and within this circularity there is also the diagonal motion of the axles and cranks that connect the wheels. The isolation of these structural axes in the museum function as a metaphor for the organization and movement of time between past and present. This is underlined by the organizing principle of *songs* which is confirmed by the title that overlays this opening image.

The use of sound as a means of calling into question the conventions of documentary realism is continued in the initial sequence that introduces the theme of the riots. Firstly, the sound of police sirens and the sound and image of a horde of starlings introduce the theme of the riots. This temporal certainty established by verisimilitude is then made strange by the continued use of off-screen sound that is not materialized in relation to the image. The images of the footage of the disorder that ensues during the riots are denied the voice of commentary. Broken segments of the voice of commentary that have been manipulated through looped repetition and reverberation, and the further use of a current of unplaceable, temporally dissonant, ambient sound continue the estranging effect on the spectator of these juxtapositions. A monument to J.B. Priestley who died in 1984 is described from a self-consciously low angle of vision. The permanence of the monument to a national literary figure which is situated next to the national museum of photography in the multi-cultural city of Bradford is juxtaposed with the transience of the slowly moving gaze of a clown and combined with the footage of the police response to

disorder. The juxtaposition of an event in the present with the memorialization of Priestley is an illustration of the degree of self-reflexivity that is deployed to contest how the riots are represented. The isolation of the figure of Priestley draws attention to who is commemorated publicly and where. The public formations of memory inherited by a black British subject position are predominantly white. John Akomfrah comments on the significance of memory:

> 'black cultural movements always have to deal with this question of memory because it is the only raw material, the only stock, that they can turn to. Since you don't have statues and memorials which speak about slavery and colonialism' (27).

Handsworth Songs is a reflexive survey of the audio-visual sources that are available to articulate the black experience of England.

The following sequence shows two black men talking direct to camera and outlining the reasons they believe caused the riots. They cite class and police harassment. Whilst their reasons conflict with the media concentration on the effect of disorder it is the language they use to express themselves that is significant in relation to the images and sounds that follow. They speak in a language which is not recognizably placed as either everyday English nor the accent of the West Midlands (ie. Birmingham/Black Country). The rhythm of their speech and its probable undecipherability to a non-local spectator connotes a source that is both from the black community of Handsworth but also breaks the boundaries of England. There is also a difference within the dialects of these two men. The Afro-Caribbean sources of their language are not as homogeneous as the monocultural naming of language by nationality usually is, but comprised of many voices emerging from a diasporic and hybrid cultural inheritance. Stuart Hall describes this situation as transcultural where the relation of boundaries to language is fluid: 'the

transformation of standard English which is patois, which is Creole - the hundreds of different languages which cover the face of the Caribbean in one place or another' (28). The disjuncture between hybrid language and the comparative fixity of Englishness is reinforced by the succeeding images of segmented newspaper reports.

Two contrasting versions of Jerusalem form the musical counterpoint to the reporting of the riots. The printed photographs and accompanying headlines that report the riots are isolated by a camera that moves toward and across the assembled pictures and text. The edges of this mobile frame are also broken by the manoeuvre of other pieces of reports in and out of both the horizontal and vertical edges of the frame. The reframing of newspaper pictures and headlines has the effect of highlighting the discursive forces that set the agenda for reporting the riots. The condensing of an event into headlines such as "the bleeding heart of England", "riot of death" and "torch of hate" confirms how the terms of the conflict are discursively constructed and documented as narrative moments that bear no relation to history.

The mobilizing of the frame by film integrates into moving images and sound those forces that lie outside of the formal borders of pictorial reporting. The negotiation of boundaries is signified by the deliberate use of a hybrid version of the patriotic anthem Jerusalem by Mark Stewart and the Mafia. The Bristol based band combine dub reggae with the words of the song. Consequently, the meanings of the anthemic song of belonging to the Mother country are undermined by references to the culture of colonial subjects. This illegitimate version of a national artefact is followed by the another version which connotes a different cultural tradition. The sound of the brass band refers to an industrial working class tradition of affiliation. The black community of Handsworth are ostensibly working class but these two versions of Jerusalem indicate the representative gap between tradition, class and

ethnicity. Handsworth Songs increasingly looks back to the inherited class tradition of the Black Country and ethnicizes this tradition. The film interrogates the contact between this tradition and the black population which came to the West Midlands to claim its place within this tradition.

The black British inheritance that is articulated by Handsworth Songs cannot be freely chosen and delineated as simply another England through the combination of radicalism and traditionalism evident in Jarman's films. The struggle for the right to belong to and be recognized as part of England's imperial inheritance is articulated from within the boundaries of existing language and representations. Stuart Hall argues that part of the originality of Handsworth Songs and other films that address the subject of being black in Britain 'is precisely that they tell the black experience as an English experience' (29). The bracketing of black with English in relation to Handsworth Songs reveals the cultural contours of this relation in comparison with the personal and English representational terrain that is apparent in the films of Jarman and Davies. Davies articulates the relation of sexual difference to a local working class inheritance. Handsworth Songs claims a position within this working class inheritance by hybridizing its boundaries and articulates it through the relation of past and present. By comparison Jarman's view is not situated but confined to a personal artistic but significantly privileged and unselfconsciously hegemonic perspective.

Handsworth Songs contests one of the key values of heritage - the feeling of belonging, and the right to express this feeling. The enquiry into the unrest in the present is surrounded by archive images that document the black experience in England and the official assertion that these people are different and cannot assume the right to belong. This experience is not only described through external sources but is also personalized through the use of photographs and songs. A sequence of personal photographs of a wedding couple(s) are remounted in a space that

surrounds them with darkness. There is sufficient light to see the images but not to attach a referent to the space in which they appear. Such photographs refer to the formation of a domestic context where they assume a place on display or in an album that forms a key part of the biography of the place called home. Without these surroundings these suspended photographs suggest unplaced and dislocated personal moments in time. The arrangement of the still images describes a diagonal line and perspective in space. The movement of the camera through this diagonal plane alters the view of the photographs to suggest a movement back in time and through different generations. Jarman and Davies include home movie footage and staged family portraits to signify the reflexive and formative effect of memories of family, home and community. The clear articulation of family and home is absent from Handsworth Songs. The lineaments of memory are punctuated by the empty space between each image and pluralized by the anonymity of the images. The photographs are mounted in a spatial allusion to the museum. Sharon Macdonald notes the capacity of the museum space 'to turn culture into an object; by *materializing* it and exhibiting it' (30). Because this sequence does not establish and confirm the signifying space of the museum, the unlit space of exhibition and the tension created through the togetherness connoted by the photographs results in turning attention to the process of the making and exhibiting of images.

The overall formal self-reflexivity of the film is supplemented by a dimension of poetic feeling through the narration of songs. The words of the songs re-articulate the muted archival footage and describe the relation between black experience of England and the Caribbean left behind. There is only one image of the Caribbean during the first song and this refers less to home than to the subjugation of Empire since it shows a child cutting sugar cane. The narrator of the initial song is female and the grammar is both personal and collective:

> "He said to her remember Bonney Henriques and Gretta Borg and Lady June Barker? Remember the nights of carouba cocktails and carouba sour.....their secret pregnancies your wet nursing and me nappy washing. It's about time we had our own child. Our own Master George Hammond Banner Bach. That night I moved from an idea to a possibility. I was born in a moment of innocence"

The song inscribes memory referents from the Caribbean but they are quickly counterbalanced not by the trauma of the father as in Distant Voices Still Lives but through domestic labour and a situation of servitude that is not freely chosen. The accompanying images move from footage of a sugar plantation in the Caribbean to a civic dance in Birmingham where black and white people mix on seemingly equal terms. By the end of the song a doubly inflected, diasporic inheritance can be identified. The inheritance that is given in England, and the one that is lost to memory, both articulated through the subjugation of imperialism. The sense of loss described is not concentrated in childhood and a clearly articulated notion of home but through migration and displacement.

The following song is narrated by a male voice and it describes once more the melancholy of departure and the loss of a place of connection that is not signified as home. The repeated references to water register the distance travelled and the realization of impending displacement:

> "they had all heard the phrase the well being and development of primitive peoples form a sacred trust of civilization but today they only heard the water's heartbeat. Summoned by the water they stood there in collective silence....it was said that each person recognized their fate in the song and as he stood there the Caribbean sank into the water. The land was there but he will not go to it anymore"

Water is a significant element within Caribbean cultural identity as Stuart Hall points out: 'the word *Jamaica* is the Hispanic form of the indigenous Arawak name - *land of wood and water*' (31). The juxtaposition of sound and image articulates a diasporic subjectivity where land and water resonate with the tension between departure and arrival. The archival footage is denied the authority of commentary and *shows* the Caribbean families coming to an island where (despite its colonial past) the water that surrounds the British Isles represents a means of securing and maintaining physical and cultural boundaries. The poetic, inner voice *tells* of a disappearing homeland which was a fluid combination of water, islands and nations clustered under terms such as the Caribbean or West Indies. The grammar of the personal register fluctuates between personal and shared nouns and does not settle into the familiar refrain of melancholy and elegy. The poetic passages are not assigned authors in the credits to the film. They are read by the voices of anonymous readers with a conviction that conveys an affinity for the condition described. The song evokes a subjective condition that is dispersed and ephemeral in comparison with the definitive inheritance, and *owned* experience of home and family registered by Jarman and Davies. The poetic description of inner feeling transforms the point of view of the newsreel footage from the camera and the apparatus of news to the subjectivity of the people in the images. As the song ends and the archive footage shows the new arrivals approaching the national threshold black and white images of the industrialized west Midlands signify the terms of a cultural inheritance shifting through class as well as nation. Coco Fusco states that Handsworth Songs resonates with 'the immigrants' innocent faith in the motherland' (32). The trajectory described by the songs also reveals how this faith is met by the reality of working life in an industrialized region.

Subjective displacement realized through history is juxtaposed with displacement in the present as a man testifies to his witnessing of police brutality. In this way the

context of the songs inform and encircle the interrogation of events in the present. Akomfrah confirms this temporal relation: 'a series of moments of solitude...which as they threaten to be moments of solitude are recuperated into race and become racial questions' (33).

Pam Cook suggests a different critical perspective on the songs:

> 'the commentary's mourning of a lost innocence spoken by a female voice-over and evoking images of suffering motherhood, betrayal and disappointment, remains a powerful emotive thread...the effect is to make women's role once more one of passive endurance' (34).

Cook's argument underestimates the awareness of gender politics evident in the film and in the personnel of the Black Audio Film Collective. The claim within the songs for a subjective voice is uttered from a speaking position that the images suggest is approaching the physical and mental threshold of an island nation. Trinh T. Minh-ha identifies this location as: 'looking in from the outside while also looking out from the inside' (35). The first song is read by a female voice and is less mournful than the following song read by a male voice. The second song registers the feeling of leaving the Caribbean. The voice of mourning and loss is personally expressed but evokes a collective condition that is a contributing factor in the subsequent displacement encountered in post-war west Midlands. There remains a tendency for the expression of loss, which appears to be culturally coded as feminine, to slide towards the feminine register that Cook highlights but not as unequivocally as she suggests.

The feminine voice does speak in Handsworth Songs and is not subject to the same enduring fixity of motherhood, class and family inheritance that is manifest in Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes. Archive sources are used to

plot the double inflection of displacement of the Caribbean population as both racial outsiders but also outsiders who had taken up a position inside a working class population. This conjunction of race, ethnicity and class is also inflected through gender. Archive footage from 1937 of Labour Day in Birmingham shows a street parade where men hold aloft a union banner and a float from Ladywood Co-operative Women's Guild carries women and children. A doll-maker from East Bengal is also shown taking an adult education class of men working with a needle and thread. The interrogation of the sources of working class tradition through gender and ethnicity is continued in the words of a folk song that accompanies the archive footage: "where did you come from they wanted to know, now I said The Black Country and how they did stare". The formal making strange of the familiar gender coding of work also inscribes the cultural specificity of ethnicity into the working class tradition represented by Labour. Handsworth Songs answers Hall's posing of the question of -

> 'how to represent a non-coercive and more diverse concept of ethnicity, to set against the embattled, hegemonic conception of 'Englishness' which, under Thatcherism, stabilizes so much of the dominant...discourses, and which, because it is hegemonic, does not represent itself as an ethnicity at all' (36).

A sequence of external documentary footage connects the terraced street, with the factory, canal, railway cutting and viaduct. The iconography of the industrial working class is shown in the high contrast black and white tradition of photography exemplified by Picture Post and Bill Brandt. The distinguishing feature of this formal assemblage of aesthetic traditions is that it resists the simple knowing quotation and pastiche for a modernist critique of traditions of representation. The unacknowledged history of Empire that underlies the prejudice that is precipitated by the contact between race and class is exposed by the following images. The

representational terms are shifted from the local and communal to the national and colonial through the inscription of Empire. Footage of a film entitled Chains shows an iron forge in the Black Country that produces "chains for workshop and factory", "chains for the toller in the mine", and "chains for those who go down to the Sea in Ships". The meaning of the manufacture of chains is extended beyond the honest toil of white working men by the juxtaposed static image of iconic artefacts of Empire such as the union jack, a helmet, a chain, a sword, all assembled for exhibition. The discursive hybridizing of traditions of representation is contrasted with the representation of ethnicity as racial difference through the official voice of commentary. A sequence of images of the industrial west Midlands are described by a voice that reports the erosion of an indigenous, common culture to the musical background of Jerusalem, where once - "the street was a centre of social loyalty" but is now being cleared away leaving "derelict epitaphs to the industrial revolution". The immigrant "army of total strangers" are described entering a regional culture already in visible decline.

These diachronic moments of archived representation occur within an overall circular structure which surrounds the context of the enquiry into the reasons for the riots. The syncretic dynamic of black British culture identified by Mercer is given a formal temporality in Handsworth Songs. The organization of time through an assemblage of past and contemporary images forcefully articulates a diasporic inheritance. The formal structure of the song that governs the structure of Handsworth Songs is echoed in James Snead's encapsulation of black music:

> 'in black culture, repetition means that the thing *circulates*...there is an equilibrium. In European culture, repetition must be seen to be not just circulation and flow but *accumulation* and growth. In black culture, the thing (the ritual, the dance, the beat) is there for you to pick it up when you come back to get it...It continually *cuts* back to the start' (37).

The difference is that syncretion in Handsworth Songs occurs across the separation that Snead constructs between European and black culture. Colin MacCabe notes how the films from the Black workshops such as Handsworth Songs were criticized for deploying 'outdated aesthetics' (38). Similarly, Alan Lovell identifies in the workshop films 'the dead ends of 1970s aesthetics' (39). However, these assumptions collapse the new ethnicities of black British cultural politics into the argument that the moment of the modernist aesthetic has passed by and is no longer of any relevance. The significance of Handsworth Songs lies in its hybridizing intervention within the perceived Eurocentrism of modernism and the inevitable postmodernism of black culture. The syncretion of the documentary film tradition of British and European modernism with the circularity identified by Snead is also a significant refusal of realism. The politics of form are channelled into a historical and political postulation of black experience of England. Handsworth Songs both shows the Mother country a history that is not readily acknowledged and simultaneously claims a black and English cultural inheritance.

Touch of the Tarbrush

Touch of the Tarbrush is a documentary commissioned by the BBC for the Lay of the Land series which examined the meanings of English identity. Touch of the Tarbrush is a continuation of J.B. Priestley's visit to Liverpool in 1933 which formed part of a chapter covering Lancashire in his written survey of England - English Journey. Priestley noted the presence of the mixed race community in Liverpool and its multiplicity of origins and concluded:

> 'We can only remind ourselves that while violent racial prejudices still exist, all the dice are loaded against the children of mixed blood, the

very circumstances of whose parentage have probably been unfortunate' (40).

The statue of Priestley in Bradford that commemorates his life following his death in 1984 occurs during the opening of Handsworth Songs. Just as the earlier film was informed by the re-working of a documentary tradition Touch of the Tarbrush revisits Priestley's Liverpool (41). Akomfrah occupies the mode of address that evaluates the condition of England and reposes Priestley's questions in the present. Akomfrah's presence in the film means that he is not simply continuing the investigative tradition of the writer and war time broadcaster that is continued by figures such as George Orwell, John Betjeman and Alan Bennett; but also occupying a speaking position that carries a degree of cultural capital and which is underlined by the commissioning role of the BBC. Akomfrah's role is more than that of a detached observer because he refers to his own experience of growing up in London. The established Englishness of Priestley's speaking position is ethnicized by Akomfrah revisiting his journey and its findings. Akomfrah's desire to continue Priestley's prior investigation is achieved by issuing an invitation via local radio to contact him at the Adelphi Hotel for the people of Liverpool's mixed race community to participate in his documentary. If Handsworth Songs enacts the hybridizing of Englishness through a formal modernist aesthetic then Touch of the Tarbrush frames this project within a more direct enquiry that questions respondents on their feelings and experience of being black and English.

Touch of the Tarbrush combines the resources of documentary: archive footage, interviews, family photographs, exterior footage of the port city and music. These resources are assembled around Akomfrah's enquiry into the mixed race community. Priestley expressed a desire to know more of the future of the community he found on his visit to Liverpool: 'I wish it were possible to learn what becomes of all where they go, what they do, what manner of men and women they

turn into' (42). Akomfrah takes it upon himself to address Priestley's questions but to also mitigate the distance between the objectives of the documentary and the subjects of the documentary by including his own insights into the experience of growing up in England. Akomfrah orders and arranges these questions and contributions into a culturally located argument for a black English identity.

Touch of the Tarbrush shows the inherited tradition of the meaning of England and its hostility to mixed race couples through early BBC television documentaries such as Does Britain Have a Colour Bar ? from 1955 and Mixed Marriages from 1968. This is underlined by personal consciousness of a diasporic positioning illustrated by the former world champion boxer John Conteh's testimony:

> "I'm black, I'm English and....I've been changed three times since I've been here. When I was in Liverpool I was coloured and then I was half-caste and then later round about the sixties in America they were saying - say it loud I'm black and I'm proud, I was saying keep it quiet lads I'm just about getting away with being coloured here"

The diaspora of Liverpool's mixed race community is not split across two sites, but dispersed among many nations. Akomfrah wants to juxtapose the given meanings of England with the mixed race community who belie the diasporic label through the length of time they have lived in Liverpool. Akomfrah does not dwell upon their diasporic inheritance but favours describing the community as "rooted and located in Liverpool 1". The port city's historic connections with the slave trade remain secondary to Akomfrah's search for personal testimonies. The frequent long shots of the city and its coastal location suggest this historical background without making direct reference to it. Akomfrah wants to trace the age of a community from the evidence of the present as well as the past. Stephen Small confirms the age of a

population which predates official discourse about the black population of Liverpool:

> 'most studies date the establishment of the black community to the 1700s...Liverpool has the longest standing and largest indigenous black population in the country....Liverpool is the only city with a major indigenous black community that dates back several generations. Even Bristol and Cardiff do not match it' (43).

Akomfrah does not concentrate on the historical project of excavating the precise *origins* of family roots, nor does he comment on the connection between gender and racial difference. Priestley referred to the social situation he encountered where 'all the dice are loaded against the children of mixed blood....the very circumstances of whose parentage have probably been unfortunate' (44). His agenda refuses binary oppositions favours pointing out the generational presence of mixed race families in Liverpool. Touch of the Tarbrush probes the tension via the intimacy of television between how the individuals feel about their own identity and how they feel they are identified by others. Akomfrah relates their reposes to an argument for the construction of an idea of a black English identity. The absence of a narrator in Handsworth Songs means that these issues are shown through the form of film and with a greater temporal range compared to the more direct televisual register of Touch of the Tarbrush.

Touch of the Tarbrush concentrates on family photographs as historic evidence of the presence of the mixed race community. The photographs are not formally abstracted in the manner of Handsworth Songs but are shown to be part of the family home and its history. The camera observes the Quarless family who responded to Akomfrah's invitation examining their old photographs at home. The oldest photograph from 1911 shows George Quarless' brothers in the Liverpool

Boys Brigade. The photograph is utilized as a signifier of memory but primarily as historical evidence that invites the viewer to recognize the length of *time* this family has been present in Liverpool.

The fact of being in England for so long has not meant that the Quarless family can situate themselves within the boundaries of an inherited English identity. The hybridizing of the whiteness of English identity is repeatedly stated through the recurring motif of white clothing worn by Akomfrah and his respondents. The feeling of being situated both inside and outside the terms of belonging is highlighted by Christine Quarless. She describes the diasporic condition of "being born here but my roots aren't here...at the same time I'm a black Liverpool woman". Her Liverpool accent confirms this. All of Akomfrah's participants speak with the distinct accent of a Liverpudlian that forms one of the meanings associated with the term "Scouser".

The experience of having to reconcile how one is seen and placed by sight, with firstly, how one feels, sounds, and recognizes oneself, and secondly with codes of nationality, is related through music. Ray Quarless recalls the time in Liverpool "when a lot of the black people were listening to music that was not of the English kind". Quarless's personal testimony serves as a voice over to a public exhibition that partially documents black people's history in Liverpool. Ray's relation to music produces a cultural resource from within and without Liverpool that affirms his mixed race identity to himself and others. Ray points out the influence of the tradition of black music upon one of the prominent fixtures of Liverpool's public heritage - The Beatles. The contrast between an official artefact of Liverpool's heritage and the personally held recognition of the diversity of sources that are less readily acknowledged in the formation and exhibition of local and national heritage. The refusal to evoke the past and imbue it with the sentiments that accumulate through time results in a more overtly political and historical documentary.

The historic sources of the local culture of Liverpool in the 1940s and 1950s which preceded The Beatles is key to Davies' articulation of inheritance. By offering a version of a reconstructed past Davies is able to express how the cultural influence of American music and musicals delineated the boundaries of his childhood inheritance. The scenes in the pub in Distant Voices Still Lives and the importance of the musical in The Long Day Closes show the Anglo-American elements within a locally experienced common working class culture. In this way the ethnicity of working class family life in Liverpool is bared with personal feeling. The asymmetry of this ethnicity is made plain in The Long Day Closes when a black man comes to the door of the family home and Bud is frightened by what he sees. Davies sets out the contours of this formation in the past to suggest why he left Liverpool and eventually became a film maker. In Touch of the Tarbrush the recalled past is less distant. Ray Quarless describes how the negotiation of these boundaries of ethnicity are not confined or only expressed through the past but remain a formative and ongoing part of his subjectivity and life in the city he has not left.

The hybridity of Ray's cultural inheritance and the public exhibition of this inheritance is not nationally resonant in the way that Davies' inheritance is. This is not only because Touch of the Tarbrush does not reconstruct the past but also because the hybridity of Ray's Liverpudlian identity and the visual expression of pastness cannot draw on the same iconography of pastness. Handsworth Songs formally annexed established visual traditions but Touch of the Tarbrush relies largely upon personal testimony and verbal argument to assert the presence of the mixed race community in Liverpool. The lingering long and silent shots of the port city reveal how little the of the colonial history of Liverpool is immediately visible to the surveying eye (45).

Akomfrah shows that the mixed race community have earned public spaces in a local pub and club. At these places the hybrid musical tradition identified by Ray is stated, shown and placed into Akomfrah's argument for "the lives and histories that represent the hope for another England". An exterior shot shows a small street corner pub overlooked by the landmark of Liverpool's Anglican Cathedral. Inside the pub the camera shows a singer and a series of close shots of the mixed race community completely at ease and enjoying themselves in this archetypally English space. Akomfrah adds through voice over:

> "I used to dream about pubs like this when I was eighteen. The pubs I knew were places of terror....So whenever I see a place like this I know it is a place where a small English battle has been fought and I also know that I am looking at the victors. The people in this pub are now involved in another battle. For generations they were seen as the key problem of race relations in this country.....because they held a mirror to our society and showed it something it claimed not to know, that racial and cultural boundaries can be reshaped, reinvented"

Akomfrah describes the development of a marginal but relatively shared local mixed race culture that is expressed through what Mercer refers to as 'affinities, not roots' (46). Indeed, Touch of the Tarbrush stops conspicuously short of pursuing the *origins* of the families right back to their national sources. The absence of home and family as primary sites of belonging that are personally significant means that the mixed race people can address their local situation of feeling part of, and not part of, Liverpool. The community that is observed in Liverpool is situated within and against the hegemonic conception of English identity. Akomfrah questions Gary Christian of the pop group The Christians about the extent of his feeling of belonging. Christian like Christine Quarless describes the situation of feeling a sense of belonging that is at the same time recognized as being incomplete and

negotiated: "I speak with a broad Liverpool accent but I don't feel a part of it really...there's a part of me that has nothing to do with Liverpool or England and I'd like to find it". This encounter is shot in the Adelphi Hotel in front of a large mirror that duplicates the image in front of the camera without revealing the camera or the person behind the camera. Self-reflexivity is not deployed in Touch of the Tarbrush as a guiding principle as it is in Handsworth Songs and earlier Black Audio work. In this instance it appears to suggest that the cultural resources that offer recognition to the mixed race community, such as the television documentary that Akomfrah is constructing for the BBC, are still residual. Touch of the Tarbrush claims the representative ground that defines who can feel as though they belong which Akomfrah summarizes as - "all those other Englands that are denied and told that they can't feel comfortable here, that they must stay in the twilight zone".

Handsworth Songs exposed the degree to which the archival representations of England's migrant population contains a history of racism that underpinned the unrest in Handsworth. Touch of the Tarbrush is concerned with affirming, via the reach of the BBC, the presence of a settled mixed race community in order to hybridize the boundaries of Englishness. The direction of the articulation of this mixed race inheritance does not look back to the refuge of a lost past, but proceeds and develops from a partially historicized past.

The people interviewed in Touch of the Tarbrush do not dwell on the past for sufficient time to invoke the 'sentiments of inheritance' that are expressed through nostalgia or elegy. The viewer might sense a degree of pathos in the face of divided subjectivities but this does not become heightened by the articulation of a lost past. Akomfrah is shown wandering along the shore of the Liverpool docks amidst the remnants of an industrial and imperial heritage. There is a sense that he has found a marginal but settled community that "can create a different England". The following expressive sequence visually underlines this affirmation. The introduction of

operatic music and the subsequent fade to a black and white photograph of an anonymous black child isolated from the crowd she is standing with because she is looking directly at the camera while waving a Union Jack. There is a clear contrast between this scene and the opening scene which shows familiar images of black male and female athletes competing successfully for Great Britain. The abstracted and placeless arena of international sport sanctions the recognition of a black British presence because it is exceptional and subsumed by the codes of patriotism. By the time of the image of the black child Akomfrah has discursively revealed how the pairing of a black and English cultural identity can be posited against the essentially constructed image that opened the documentary.

Akomfrah does not refer directly to the terms established by the opening images. George Orwell, another writer who like Priestley addressed the condition of England, wrote during the second world war of the strength of feeling that underlines patriotism and national loyalty. Orwell describes the strength of the feeling of recognition to his reader as '*your* civilization, it is *you*' (47). This crystallisation of feeling which is generative of racial conflict as well as the imagined collectivity signified in the opening images, is not referred to by Akomfrah. Akomfrah wants to intervene in the "line of culture which divides white people from black people" by contesting the idea of Englishness through the hybridity of Liverpool's mixed race community. Akomfrah does not question his respondents on the correlation between the degree to which they feel that they belong in Liverpool and feeling patriotic towards England.

The respondents affirm their identity through the history of their presence in Liverpool. This is usually accompanied by the ambivalence of the twilight zone and the legacy of Enoch Powell and the racial divide highlighted by Akomfrah. The trans-national sources of a mixed race inheritance mitigate against the essentially nationally confining boundaries of the patriotism suggested by Orwell. In Orwell's

use of the grammar of 'you' and 'your' to describe the recognition of belonging he is articulating a means by which people recognize themselves in the meaning of England offered to them. Davies and Jarman occupy this terrain which is the same cultural ground that national heritage is constructed from. The addition of Touch of the Tarbrush places the hybridized subjectivities of a community within the terms and the parameters of these articulations.

Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush reveal the contours of the relation between black British history and the idea of heritage. The articulation of a split subjectivity through the past and within and without England exceeds the boundaries of Englishness and the constitutive force of nationhood. The relocation of a Caribbean cultural inheritance into the Mother country is formally and temporally politicized in Handsworth Songs. The assemblage of archive footage historicizes and documents black experience and confirms Derek Walcott's belief that 'the conceit of owning time is a European manifestation' (48). The black British film-makers cannot simply claim *a* heritage because of what Johannes Fabian described as the 'denial of temporal coevalness' (49). The incommensurable relation between black British history and national heritage is not necessarily a lack or simply a relation of myth to reality. The formal ambition of Handsworth Songs draws upon the high cultural tradition of European modernism to suggest a different organization of time and a hybrid cultural inheritance. The past is represented not as a means of compensation but to reveal the historical force of the past in the present. In his analysis of selected black American writers Paul Gilroy argues that: 'new traditions have been invented in the jaws of modern experience' (50). The temporal direction of heritage and the heritage film is assumed to be back in time. Handsworth Songs questions this assumption formally, and Touch of the Tarbrush shows via Priestley's literary tradition, how a mixed race community looks to the past in order to affirm themselves in the present. These modes of articulating marginalized histories that cannot be incorporated into heritage suggests that the

relation of black to English reveals, in the terms of Gilles Deleuze - 'a history of what we are slowly stopping to be' (51). Handsworth Songs and Touch of the Tarbrush show at different times and in different ways, how the collective grammar of *we* that is presupposed by national heritage can be contested through the articulation of a hybrid inheritance.

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# Chapter Five

## Exile and Modernism in London and Robinson in Space

## Exile and Modernism in London and Robinson in Space

The narrator in London and Robinson in Space outlines the problems that his partner Robinson wishes to pursue in his research. These are the problem of London and the problem of England respectively. The problems can be summarized as how and why certain cultural political and economic aspects of the past prevail in London and England. The prevalence of the past is evinced out of the condition of contemporary London and England. Robinson - the fictional character created by Patrick Keiller at the centre of the narration of London and Robinson in Space, internalizes the relation he forms with the external environment that surrounds him. This is not manifest as the inherited ties of home and family but out of the dialogue he develops with the inherited meaning and value of public space. Robinson finds that he repeatedly encounters the inherited and overbearing influence of the past as he moves through contemporary London and England.

Keiller's mode of expression continues and departs from that of Jarman and Bennett where the condition of England is related as a personal condition. The difference is that the personal voice of self-recognition and self-identity is diffused by Keiller's construction of the film's narration. The narration is formed by a conspicuously self-conscious device comprised of the dialogue between the unseen pairing of Robinson and the narrator. This alliance is written by Keiller and draws upon his own experience and predilections. The dialogue between the narrator and Robinson is delivered through the distinctive voice of the stage actor Paul Scofield. This has the effect of distancing the singular, personal dimension of the voice without becoming completely detached and impersonal. This device enables Keiller to gather together in an essayistic style a number of modes of verbal articulation and types of single image. This results in films poised between documentary and fiction.

The past in Keiller's films is invoked through the physical appearance of the spaces encountered by the unseen narrator and his partner Robinson on their journeys around London and England. Bill Schwarz defines the cultural relation of past and future that is also addressed by Keiller's films. Schwarz argues that: 'England has always proclaimed itself a historic nation. With an unusual intensity the promise of its future has been overdetermined by its past' (1). In Keiller's films the intensity that Schwarz identifies is constitutive of Robinson's relation with the modernity that surrounds him. He wants to locate modern space in the city but is frequently frustrated by the predominance of the past or the degraded present represented by Conservative government and deregulated capitalism. Alan O'Shea argues that 'modernity has a reality as a form of cultural self-consciousness, and as lived experience of historical time' (2). The unseen figure of Robinson is described as a modernist but he is also expressive of and sensitive to, the temper of modernity, and the narration of the film elaborately articulates these relations.

Keiller's films articulate the relation between the inheritance of the English past and the context of modernity. John Corner and Sylvia Harvey point out that the cultural formation which advanced national heritage in the 1980s involved 'new ways of relating imaginatively to *continuity*, whilst admitting new principles of economic and cultural change' (3). The tension between continuity - the fact that England has historically remained a monarchy resistant to revolution and invested in tradition, and the effect of changes hastened by Thatcherism, are addressed by London and Robinson in Space.

Andrew Higson argues that the heritage film displays the features of a postmodern aesthetic where 'the past is displayed as visually spectacular pastiche, inviting a nostalgic gaze (4). Keiller's films do not exhibit the same self-consciousness of the postmodern aesthetic displayed in the fictional heritage film, but rather suggest, through the character of Robinson, and in the tension between documentary and

fiction, an ironic meeting between a modernist disposition and the postmodern condition. It is less an aesthetic representation than a self-conscious exposition of the postmodern condition in relation to the inheritance of an overdetermining past. For Robinson the possibilities of an imagined future can no longer be summoned with the same degree of surety that was previously possible, and he finds that these possibilities are increasingly found in the past. It is the consciousness of being unable to influence the future that describes the condition which I refer to as postmodernity but which, importantly, also retains the features of modernity defined by O'Shea. David Brett's consideration of the construction of heritage argues that 'we are now at the historical point at which a certain version of 'modernism' has come to seem a part of 'heritage' ' (5). However, what is important and paradoxical, is how Keiller's first full length films endeavour to interrogate, through the device of Robinson, the connections and tensions between England's overdetermining past, modernism and postmodernity.

The scope of the formation addressed by Keiller's films is facilitated by the form of the film. The distinctive style deployed by Keiller treats image and sound as separate registers. Predominantly exterior footage is shot as single images with a static camera and the narration is then written to accompany and structure the visually discontinuous images. The journey lends the individual images a degree of narrative progression which is otherwise absent from detached sound and image and the absence of continuity editing. The narration resembles a travelogue where the dates and places of arrival are detailed and punctuated by the interaction between Robinson and the narrator. The camera invokes the public gaze of documentary as the single images are composed in public space. Keiller is documenting a certain view of the spaces he moves through. However, the anonymous public gaze of the documentary image is not accompanied by the subordinate voice of commentary. As a result of the device of the figure of Robinson, Keiller creates a tension between sound and image and documentary and fiction. Robinson and the narrator

problematize the documentary project to the extent that the spectator must take up a position in relation to the construction of the narration. The offsetting of subordinate commentary enables the construction of an exegesis of the problems addressed by Robinson which is formed out of a range of verbal registers. The differing modes of articulation of sound and image can be summarized as follows:

Sound

i) describing a location through historical and statistical information

ii) subjective impression and quotation

iii) commenting on the state of the present

iv) silence

Image

i) pictorial views of rivers bridges, the demarcation of space and land

ii) antiquarian topography comprised of landmarks of official and unofficial commemoration

iii) architectural views of buildings

iv) aspects of everyday appearance

The range of verbal registers contrasts with the uniformity of the static images. The contents of the images emphasize a subjective relation with the appearance of public space. This relation is heightened and dramatized by the strategy of narration and range of verbal sources but at the same time the spectator is also aware of the degree of separation between sound and image.

Production context

Keiller's transition from making short films for the London Film-makers Co-op to making funded feature length films came through a combination of firstly the BFI and Channel 4 for London in 1993, and secondly the BBC for Robinson in Space in 1997. The transition that is represented by London was facilitated by two key

figures of independent and low budget productions - Keith Griffiths and Ben Gibson. Griffiths' production company Koninck backed London and Griffiths was sympathetic to Keiller's approach to the form of film and the theme of the English journey having produced Radio On (Chris Petit, Great Britain/West Germany, 1979). The executive producer Ben Gibson is frequently associated with facilitating the transition from self funded short films into funded productions and he succeeded Colin MacCabe as head of BFI Production in 1990 with Angela Topping part of the London production team, as head of department.

Gibson looked upon formal innovation favourably whilst also encouraging a greater awareness of the need for BFI funded films to find an audience. This is reflected in his assertion that - 'BFI Production is in the business of making investments and not simply providing grants' (6). Gibson also recognized that BFI funding would only flourish as investment within a British film industry that was underpinned by an infrastructure (7). Gibson argues that the British film industry was - 'without the sense of a viable centre' (8). The funding of Keiller's two feature films reflects this view. The funding of London was driven by BFI Production in association with Channel 4. By the time of Robinson in Space four years later Keiller found himself in the situation of being funded by a public television institution. During the intervening period the role of BFI Production declined. In 1995 funds for film-making were made available through the National Lottery Film Production Fund which was administered by the Arts Council (9). Mark Shivas was appointed Head of Drama at the BBC in 1988 and in 1993 he became Head of Films with responsibility for co-producing approximately five features per year and investing in other independently-produced British features (10). The aim of this strategy was for the BBC to be seen to be backing films destined for a cinema release. This represented an addition to the well established tradition of BBC television drama but it can also be viewed as a further consequence of the Broadcasting Bill and the increasing links between the BBC and independent producers. Shortly after

Robinson in Space in 1998 the provision of government funding for the BFI Production Board was ended (11). The implications of this decision and the appointment of Alan Parker as Chairman of the BFI in 1997 are made clear in his foreward to the BFI Film and Television Handbook in 1998:

> the departure of Jeremy Thomas as Chairman, Wilf Stevenson as Director and Jane Clarke as Deputy Director marked the end of an important phase of in the BFI's history and effectively provided a clean break with the past (12).

Between London in 1994 and Robinson in Space in 1997 there was an increasing decline in the role of the BFI in the provision of the conditions of production for formally innovative film-making. There is a certain degree of correspondence between the histories of the BBC and BFI through the 1980s and 1990s which is evident in the increasing necessity of amalgamating an increased commercial awareness with a national public service mandate. The implications of this changing production background is self-reflexivley integrated into Robinson in Space. The ability to fund his research makes Robinson's existence unpredictable and short term. In Robinson in Space he describes "receiving a letter from the representative of an international advertising agency to research the problem of England". The context of an increased budget from an increasingly commercialized BBC is translated into a contractual relation in the script of the film which makes Robinson increasingly paranoid and insecure.

The circumstances of production are refracted through the consciounsess of Robinson's relation to the environment that is revealed by the films. This produces a disposition towards England and a position within national film culture that Keiller sees as more likely to find an audience through export. He comments on London that - 'it was made for export, really. I didn't make it for a local audience, and I was

touched that so many people came to see it here' (13). Keiller inflects the context of the heritage film which is defined by the probability of exporting well to America. The combination of a marginal view of England and a distinct relation with film form that is informed by international modernism suggests that Keiller's films are more likely to export to a European audience. It is significant that London and Robinson in Space are intrinsically concerned with addressing the inherited condition of England but at the same time Keiller articulates this condition through an international lens which places the forces that shape English identity into relief.

The inscription of the production context into Keiller's films is representative of the shift from the 1980s to the 1990s. In the 1990s national heritage is increasingly discussed in relation to the context of modernity, rather than in isolation from it. In the book version of Robinson in Space one of Keiller's footnotes highlights the problem of constructing a modern image of Britain:

> *Nations for Sale*, a study of Britain's overseas image, was produced in 1994 by Anneke Elwes for the international advertising network DDB Needham. Patrick Wright reported in *The Guardian* (December 31st 1994) that Elwes found Britain 'a dated concept', difficult to reconcile with reality 'with a 'brand personality' entrenched in the past (14).

Keiller also highlights how in the later 1990s the preservation of the past that was constellated into heritage artefacts in the 1980s and early 1990s is now subject to a modified political discourse. The promotion of a brand image for Britain isolates the problem of reconciling the investment in the past with the more modern aspects of the national culture. London and Robinson in Space address a similar problem but the idea and awareness of the need to create a brand is replaced by Robinson's inclination towards an aesthetic cultural disposition.

London

London opens with an image of Tower Bridge and the QE2 is shown approaching the bridge. The narrator is a ship's photographer and has been summoned back to England by Robinson. An intertitle reads "The Great Malady ~ Horror of home" as the narrator begins a description of England:

> "Dirty old blighty, undereducated, economically backward, bizarre. A catalogue of modern miseries with its fake traditions, its Irish war, its militarism and secrecy, its silly old judges, its hatred of intellectuals, its ill-health and bad food, its sexual repression, its hypocrisy and racism, and its indolence, it's so exotic, so...home made"

This descriptive litany of England contrasts with the image that shows a tourist's landmark and an arriving vessel of exclusive tourism. The fluctuation between Robinson's and the narrator's liaison and the condition of the places they encounter is a key feature of the film's address. Paul Scofield adds an elevated tone to the narration that accentuates the ironic contrasts and plays on the distance of Robinson from the mass and the official meanings of the image. There is also a familiar and weary voice of the intellectual left conveyed in the tone of the litany of negative characteristics. The lofty disdain towards what England means, is heightened upon returning. The narrator displays a familiar trope of English dissent where the feeling provoked by returning to an England knowing that it will not have changed prompts a dissenting and resigned litany.

Robinson lives in London and he is described as an ailing and marginalized part-time lecturer and researcher. However, the surfeit of what Keiller describes as Robinson's 'neo-classical conceits' (15) become clear as the film proceeds. Robinson is clearly a figure who is constructed out of the historical traces of high cultural

capital available in London. Keiller's comic anti-hero continues a modernist tradition of male anguish and dissent described in the urban journeys of Chris Petit and Iain Sinclair (16). These oppositional figures express an anti-establishment opposition to the capitalist consequences of Conservative government, but they are ultimately atomized by the exclusivity of their distinctly metropolitan ire. This tradition of dissent which was intensified in the 1980s is also a response to the inherited English past. Jarman can be located within this tradition which consists of a deeply felt frustration with the unchanging nature of what England represents which was appropriated by Thatcherism. Keiller uses the artifice of Robinson to combine irony with ire, and Jarman is more direct in exorcising his personal grief over the condition of England. The consequence of this inheritance is a sense of cultivated internal exile.

Jarman's reaction to this displacement in The Last of England and The Garden is to turn to the past and the English landscape where he cultivates an idea of home from the garden that is reflected in the form of the home movie. The intimacy and proximity of the home movie or the family photograph in Bennett and Davies connote a desire to visually express the negotiation of belonging. This visual texture of home is absent from London where Keiller uses less personal and more abstract images. Robinson's relation with his environment is more reliant upon narration and looks to the past not to express where he came from, but to identify the historical possibilities of change through republicanism and modernism.

At Trafalgar Square the camera picks out a memorial to Charles I. Not only is the presence in public space of a memorial to a past figurehead important but also what it betrays about the present that is significant as the narrator describes:

> "It is the three hundred and forty third anniversary of the execution of Charles I by the revolutionary government of 1649. Every year groups

> of Anglo-Catholics and ultra-monarchists lay wreaths at his statue before holding a ceremony at the banqueting house where the King was beheaded".

The narrator points out that the historical event that is commemorated from the past is not the fact that there was an attempt to counter the monarchy by revolution but the fact that the continuity of the monarchy is preserved in the face of threat. The lack of consequence of Robinson's observations is reinforced by the people who pass by the monument. They bisect the camera's field of view and pass by without giving any attention to the significance of the object observed by the camera. The verbal emphasis of the narration is not affirmed by the image but dispersed. The public gaze of documentary is not affirmed by Keiller but deconstructed to reveal the distance between what Robinson selects for comment from the image and the public space occupied by the camera. Consequently, Robinson's modes of articulation become increasingly private and detached from the images of the city and its population.

The contrast established by the relation of sound to image is illuminated by Keiller's comments on Walter Benjamin's observations of Eugène Atget's photographs. Atget deployed the camera to produce - 'photographs that become standard evidence for historical occurrences, and acquire a hidden political significance' (17). Keiller attempts a similar technique with the film camera. The duration of the static single image brings a heightened temporality that is supplemented by the narration which frequently historicizes the ongoing present tense of the film image. The problem is that the observations of the photograph are static moments frozen in time and this characteristic is one of the reasons the photograph acquires resonance. By contrast the film image unfolds in time and the implications of choosing to use this low budget single camera technique of separate and static images as a substitute for the potential dynamic continuity of film is exposed over the length of the film's ninety

minutes. The limitations of Keiller's visual style puts an increasing emphasis upon the narration to elicit and sustain the attention of the spectator.

The narration in London articulates a marginalized point of view but the concern of the film is not primarily with issues of personal identity. The narrator confirms that he and Robinson "lived together for many years during which we intermittently maintained an uneasy, bickering, sexual relationship". However the personal identities of this pairing are not crucial to the bearing of the film. It is less important to know who these people are, than it is to think about and respond to the ideas and opinions that they express about the environment in which they live. The use of the fictional character Robinson and the range of verbal reference contrasts with the personal documentary and avant garde home movie style of Jarman. Jarman endeavours to articulate and claim his own cultural inheritance and this is clearly apparent in the form of his films. The inheritance that London refers to is comprised of a diversity of articulation that expresses ideas and knowledge from a wide range of sources. Keiller suggests a surrealism that is borne not out of manipulation of the image but through an imagined response to looking. This is asserted by the narrator with an image of the River Thames and Waterloo Bridge:

> "Robinson believed that if he looked at it hard enough, he could cause the surface of the city to reveal to him the molecular basis of historical events and in this way he hoped to see into the future"

The screen like quality of Keiller's images suggested by the static camera, deliberate framing of space and perspective, and the length of take, creates space and time for the spectator's gaze. The rhythm and irony created between image and narration also encourages the spectator to laugh at, disagree with, and become frustrated by Robinson through the narrator. Robinson personifies the opposition between the hackneyed familiarity of a *Blighty* steeped in the past, and the romantically imagined

modern culture found in France. This is illustrated when the camera shows the inside and outside of a supermarket. For Robinson "shopping is an experience of overwhelming poignancy as the labels on imported goods evoke such longing for the journeys abroad which he no longer feels able to make". Robinson's Francophile tendencies are delivered through the deep English voice of Scofield. Robinson is distanced from contemporary consumer culture in preference for the literary culture of France but the distinction of Scofield's voice brings his romantic longing back to the enduring class fissures of English life. The narrator states that - "Robinson reads Montaigne" and identifies with the French writers in exile. The cultural pretensions of Robinson's conceits are ironically undercut by the images that accompany them. The dilapidated surroundings of The Montaigne School of English does not so much confirm the aspiring internationalism of Robinson as affirm the hegemony of English Language. Robinson aligns himself with the exiled French writers as he is "wrestling with the problem of London". Influenced by France, Robinson continues to search for spatial traces of revolt and a potential English republicanism. What he repeatedly finds is that the remaining presence of the monarchy continues to articulate a tradition of England as a place of an unchanging and ancient inheritance:

> "Robinson is a modernist....Robinson's method is based on a belief that English culture had been irretrievably diverted by the English reaction to the French revolution.....His interest in Sterne and other English writers of the eighteenth century and in the French poets who followed Baudelaire, was an attempt to rebuild the city in which he found himself as if the nineteenth century had never happened".

Modernism allows Robinson to take imaginary flight away from the historical reality of England and into the resources of the literary imagination. The narration frequently states these ambitions but the accompanying and uniform style of the

images continually anchor the film in contemporary physical reality. As a result the impact of the narration becomes diminished as the film proceeds.

Robinson's imaginary project is frustrated by the contemporary events that the he and the narrator encounter as they move through London. The references to IRA bombs, the miner's strike and the re-election of the Conservative government, roots London in the time of its production. At the same time the despair felt by Robinson in response to the condition of the present feeds his turn to the past. Robinson is interested in the possibility of "travelling through time". Similarly, Keiller has commented that 'the aim is to depict the place as some sort of historical palimpsest, and/or the corollary of this, an exposition of a state of mind' (18). The past that Robinson imagines is based less on the identifiable inheritance of a historical epoch such as Jarman's pre-capitalist Renaissance England, than on a period where there was a possibility that England might change and become a modern republic rather than continue as a monarchy. It is not simply that Keiller documents the present and uses the fictional device of Robinson to access the past. The sources of modernism cannot be located in the present and future. Robinson makes this argument through history. The condition of present day London is explained by historical events and is *irretrievable*. In this way the inheritance of London presents a set of relations between past and present and fiction and documentary that problematize the presumed opposition between heritage fictions and real history.

At Leicester Square Robinson "imaginatively reconstructs" the space as "a monument to Laurence Sterne". There is an ironic contrast made between the linear construction of the London landmark that is Leicester Square and the circular shapes of Sterne's narrative technique. The image of Leicester Square that accompanies this speech is composed from three objects. The foreground is occupied by a memorial sculpture of Joshua Reynolds who painted Sterne and lived in Leicester Square. This is followed by a middle ground which is taken up by an

old tree that forms a natural perimeter to the public garden. In the background of the image is one of the cinemas that line the outside of the square and overlook and delimit the site of Robinson's imaginary reconstruction. The cinema is showing Basic Instinct (Paul Verhoeven, USA, 1992). There is a cultural differentiation in the composition of this image between the space and time of high art and literary modernism in the foreground and the mass culture of modernity in the background. The material distinction of a culture that is organic and simultaneously receptive to ideas from the European continent is set against the inorganic/mass culture of contemporary Hollywood cinema. The eighteenth century narrative modernism of Sterne is transplanted by Robinson onto the cinema. He accredits Sterne with the discovery of cinema: "the cinema in his description of duration is the succession of ideas which follow and succeed each other in our minds like the images on the inside of a lanthorn turned round by the heat of a candle". This reflexive panegyric on a modernist cinema, which was anticipated by European literary modernism is made peripheral by twentieth century modernity. The facades of the cinemas that form the outside of Leicester Square and are now a nodal point for popular cinema exceed the limits of the frame. These creations of reproduced culture interrupt Robinson's perspective that imagines a moment when it was possible to detect the natural bearing of a modern English culture. This modernism was more literary than filmic and this leaning is reflected in Robinson. Keiller endeavours through the self-reflexive device of Robinson, to make a self-consciously modernist film out of the quotation of sources of modernist literature.

The relation between past and present is shown to be uneven in different spaces and locations. Robinson has to gravitate away from the centre of London to find locations that where he can imagine a preferable modernity. The narrator describes how Robinson "loves the modernity of Brixton...Electric Avenue, the Bon Marché, the railways crossing over Atlantic Road". The image shows members of the black population of Brixton shopping in an arcade. Keiller sets up a contrast in the images

of Leicester Square and Brixton between modernity and postmodernity. At Leicester Square the recess between what Robinson imagines and the reality shown by the image renders such imagining archaic and static in comparison to the dynamic of capitalism. Brixton reveals a similar gap between Robinson's high cultural conceits and the less elevated everyday activities shown by the image which shows people shopping in an arcade. However, the difference is less pronounced because Brixton is less advanced in the cycle of commodified culture. The gap between what Robinson imagines through the past and the present shown by the image is less pronounced. But it is also because black English culture cannot lay claim to the commemoration of an eighteenth century modernist tradition because of the history of imperialism which is much less the subject of commemoration. The postmodern irony apparent in Leicester Square is not registered in the same way at Brixton because the cultural history of the black presence in Brixton has not been commemorated in the high cultural tradition but is detected through the more functional signification of the pub sign. As a result the irony that results occurs not from the postmodern contrast of past and present in the image but out of the privileged past of the *flâneur* that Robinson is able to summon.

London can be contrasted with the Black Audio films through their respective modes of articulation. The Black Audio Film Collective contest with conviction the idea of Englishness through hybridity. The formal modernism of Handsworth Songs and the experiential documentary of Touch of the Tarbrush articulate an ongoing project of a new ethnicity. The utilization in Handsworth Songs of the Handsworth riots functions as an anchoring point around which a history is assembled. Akomfrah and the Black Audio Film Collective recontextualize archival footage in order to reveal at the level of the image, a history that the inherited view of England obscures. The film's argument is much less reliant upon narration and is formed by the relations of juxtaposition constructed through the assembly of images. London is more digressive and random. The subject of the film is London and this enables

Keiller to survey the city and quote many sources. Keiller posits a modernism that is expressed formally but is outweighed by the verbosity of the narration and is also complicated by Robinson's encounters with the postmodern city. London is expressive less of a political project than of a state of mind that is the result of the perception that a historical possiblity of England changing has been lost. Robinson's cultural affiliations are simultaneously modernist and romantic and cannot be made new. He is a self-consciously anachronistic figure who like "most autodidacts is prone to misconceptions" and is in despair in a city where capitalism is well advanced and the condition of postmodernity seemingly all around him.

At Hammersmith Bridge near the house of William Morris the narrator states:

> "we remembered what we used to think of as the future, sophisticated engineering, low consumption, renewable energy, public transport, but just now London is all waste, without a future, its public spaces either void or the stage sets for spectacles of nineteenth century reaction endlessly re-enacted for television".

A close shot of the detritus lying on top of the Thames and various shots of the bridges and river traffic add to the disjunction that Robinson feels between past and present. Close, single perspective shots of rippling water, flowers and bushes stirred by the wind are a recurring motif that punctuate the film's urban images. The duration of these and the silence that of these images form moments where the contemplation of a different view of London is suggested. The decision to insert nature into the framed spaces that constitute the film represents a concern with the quality of the environment in London.

"Robinson's method" foregrounds his continental influences and the desire to intellectually, ironically and romantically oppose what is constructed as the *natural*

and empirical history of English culture and identity. Robinson's opposition is not achieved through a sustained or centred argument but through the juxtaposition of fragments of quoted ideas that traverse fiction, theory and historical actuality. Robinson is described as - "a materialist, his vision of the universe that of Lucretius, he brooded for weeks over the election result unable to reconcile the re-election of the government with his understanding of nature". The close shots of the plants and flowers refer to the grammar of classificatory photography to register the confluence of nature and culture in the city and Robinson's eighteenth century modernist notion of the 'belief in the perfectibility of life through reason' (19). The quotation of figures such as William Morris and the prominence of the Thames and its bridges indicate a romance with the idea of systematically combining nature and culture and the country and city as parts of an evolving modern vision.

Philip Dodd confirms that the nineteenth century which Robinson disavows is part of the period that was fundamental both to the modernity emerging in cities and English identity. Dodd points out that: 'during 1880-1920 the conviction that English culture was to be found in the past was stabilized' (20). As a result Robinson's identification of the moments in history when England might have become modern are increasingly romantic and nostalgic. Indeed the "pilgrimage to the sources of English romanticism" motivates Robinson's and the narrator's journey's around London. Historical landmarks where romantic fiction was written are ironically contrasted with the difficulty with locating sources of contemporary romanticism:

> "romanticism wrote Baudelaire is precisely situated neither in choice of subject nor in exact truth, but in a mode of feeling. For Robinson the essence of a romantic life is in the ability to get outside oneself, to see oneself as if from outside, to see oneself as it were, in a romance".

This narration is ironically juxtaposed with an image that looks across a busy road to a branch of McDonalds. Above the drive through restaurant a Union Jack flies in the wind and a large, inflatable clown figure is attached to the roof. Robinson's desire to reach the outside that Baudelaire describes is thwarted by the increasingly commodified public space he encounters on his journeys. The juxtaposition of the emblematic sign of an American multi-national corporation and the flag of the Union is indicative of the way in which a recurrent and taken for granted image actually reveals the condition of contemporary culture that Robinson is nominally inside. The scene at McDonalds is symptomatic of the modernity of the city and it is contrasted with the continuation of an ancient inheritance. The appearances of royalty are attended by Robinson and the narrator. The Queen is shown switching on a new electricity sub-station at Leicester Square, the Queen Mother unveils a statue of Bomber Harris, and Robinson and the narrator attend the Trooping of the Colour. The narrator comments: "I was amazed at the precision and splendour of the display and the squalor of the surrounding city and its suburbs". Robinson's outsider status is confirmed by the proximity of the camera to these scenes. It is frequently more distant than close. This outsider positioning also functions as critique because Robinson's perspective demonstrates an awareness of how such scenes appear to countries external to Britain and less invested in the rituals of monarchy. Scenes which show civic renewal such as at Leicester Square are offset by pageants such as like Trooping the Colour which affirm continuity through official tradition. It is the peculiar relation of this ancient inheritance to untrammelled capitalism that forms the temper of the modernity that Robinson finds impossible to step outside.

Anne Janowitz points to 'the internalization of ruin' (21) as a response to surrounding conditions that generated early romanticism. Robinson's despair increases as he moves through London and observes the disparities between rich and poor and opulence and squalor. Jarman uses the discarded wastelands of

London's docklands in The Last of England as a stage and a metaphor for what England has and will become, and also as a counterpoint for his romantic investment in the idea of England as a cultivated garden. Keiller draws upon a wide range of verbal reference and visual juxtaposition in order to reveal the state of London but without the visual dynamic that marks Jarman's collagist style. Both characterize the present as a time that is marked by loss but Jarman is differentiated from Robinson by his lack of irony in relation to speaking position. As a result where Jarman is personal and elegiac Keiller's Robinson is an artifice of literary quotation whose melancholy is neither unselfconscious nor unrelieved.

The first housing development of the London County Council is highlighted at Arnold Circus, the centre of the Boundary Estate in Shoreditch. The images are delineated by the lines of trees, bushes and architecture signifying the co-existence of nature and culture. Trees and bushes form a frame for the ruddy browns of the bricks that form the outside walls of the public housing. There are few cars in the images of this estate. The narrator describes the significance of the estate: "in Robinson's nostalgia it was a fragment of a golden age, a utopia, and he contemplated it for hours". Although Robinson's gaze is private it is connected to a historical site of public provision and is expressive of a romantic organicism that is both aesthetic and political. Robinson's romanticism becomes nostalgic as a result of what the present lacks. Shoreditch is on the edge of the city of London. Robinson contrasts two types of local authority. The virtually unnoticed council that administers the city of London and is overshadowed by the commerce of the city, is set against the trace of a leftist tradition of public provision for the local population of Shoreditch. The latter tradition after the abolition of the Greater London Council no longer plays a visibly significant role in the functioning of London. The cultivation of the right to buy for council tenants under the Conservative government, and the expanding financial services of the city overshadow and marginalize the public idea that underlies Robinson's utopia.

David Mellor identifies a neo-romantic tendency in the period between 1935-55 where during and after the second world war artists looked for - 'the recoverable signs of the text of British history which were inscribed upon the land' (22). Robinson can be located in a similar tradition except that his gestures towards the past are essentially insignificant. Token traces of consolation are found in the design of routemaster buses, a railing made from stretchers from the second world war, and the London Stone the site of an attack on London by the Kentish rebels. Keiller offers an insight into the effect of Robinson, - 'there's an element of bathos...which is why Robinson is essentially a comic figure because he's trying to do something unpractical' (23). The unpracticality that Keiller refers to is a result of the anachronism of Robinson's investments in the past. The postmodern paradox of Robinson's 'neo-classical conceits' is that they are motivated by his search for signs of a modern city.

Robinson's response to what he finds is a growing sense of internal exile. He aligns his own sense of exile with that of the Russian Formalist Alexander Herzen's response to life in London: "there is no town in the world which is more adapted for training one away from people and training one into solitude than London". Herzen lived initially in Trafalgar Square and the image that begins this sequence is of people from other countries who are gathered in the square. The displacement that Robinson feels in London is a response to the inheritance of England's overdetermining past. His sense of internal exile is confirmed not by other residents but through other visitors to London, other international outsiders such as Herzen. Robinson is not so much nostalgic for a lost object as for the historical moment when England might have become more modern and less traditional. He is nostalgic for an imagined possibility. Svetlana Boym argues that the modernist nostalgia of the Russian Formalists can be identified by its emphasis upon the effect of the condition rather than for a lost object: 'ironic nostalgia accepts the paradoxes of

exile and displacement. Estrangement, both as an artistic device and a way of life, is part and parcel of ironic nostalgia' (24).

In the absence of home as a structuring principle the journeys Robinson and the narrator undertake express a surveying and nomadic subjectivity. Robinson is exiled by the modernity he encounters in his own city into a romance with the past along with other exiled writers. Although the idea of home is omitted London does still express a sense of what it means to live in London, having not left it but feeling increasingly disconnected from it. Indeed, as Keiller states - 'making a *romantic* film about where one lives is quite a challenge. Its easy to go somewhere else and make a romantic film....but it is quite difficult to make one about where one lives' (25). Robinson is far from being at home in exile, he is resigned to his displaced relation to the city the narrator describes as *home made*. Consequently it is internal exile as a structure of feeling that characterizes London.

The inheritance that is manifest in Jarman and Davies embraces to different degrees the meaning of home. As a result their respective elegies are what Julia Kristeva describes as 'in mourning for the maternal object' (26). The particular backgrounds articulated in The Last of England and Distant Voices Still Lives forms the relation with England. The terms in which London can be understood are ultimately less personal and more general and connected to the time of its making. The degree of *pastness* that is expressed across these voices of inheritance is variable and also borne out a relation with contemporary experience.

Robinson's internal exile occurs as a response to the weight of the present condition of London. He concludes that London is a thoroughly privatized space that is: "too private for anyone to know, its social life invisible, its government abolished, its institutions at the discretion of either monarchy or state or the City, where at the historic centre there is nothing but a civic void". Robinson cannot recognize himself

in the identity of contemporary London. His dislocation indicates that the city has become a *terra incognita* (27): "the true identity of London is in its absence. As a city, it no longer exists. In this alone it is truly modern: London was the first metropolis to disappear".

Robinson in Space

Robinson in Space continues the formal style of London in relation to the whole of England. The idea of the city and metropolis which served as a focal point for a range of discourses in the earlier film is replaced by a survey of the industrial fabric of England. Robinson investigates the degree to which the state of industrial England is visible. He reads off Port Statistics which detail the annual amounts of imports and exports. The narrator describes this interest as "the authorship of appearances in the English countryside". The meaning and impressions of the urban flâneur that characterized London are replaced by the pressures of being contracted, on a short term basis to *employers*. The narrator learns from Robinson that - "he had received a letter from a well known international advertising agency inviting him to a meeting at the hotel. These people had heard of his study of London and wished to commission him to undertake a peripatetic study of the *problem* of England". The dissent that Robinson freely expresses as a part time academic in the earlier film is continued in Robinson in Space but within the modified context of his project being carried out on behalf of his employers. The necessity of this situation feeds Robinson's imagined role for himself not only as an outsider driven into internal exile, but also as a subversive and spy.

Robinson and the narrator undertake a series of journeys based upon Daniel Defoe's written account of his Tour through the whole Island of Great Britain "which is based on Defoe's travels as a spy for Robert Harley, the government minister in the reign of Queen Anne". The narration and visual economy of Robinson in Space are

equivalent to London but Robinson's enquiry is more focused. Early on in the film Robinson states his hypothesis that "the narrative of England since Defoe's time is the result of a particularly English type of capitalism". Robinson investigates the inherited nature of English capitalism and its peculiarly English character. He draws upon the British Marxist historical tradition which as Ellen Meiksins Wood points out begins with the observation 'the capitalist economy in England originated in the countryside' (28). This politically modernist mode of analysis is fused with observations on the modernity of the industrial landscape of the 1990s. Once more it is the disparity between Robinson's analysis and the inheritance of English capitalism that informs the direction of the film.

Keiller alludes to Defoe's study which includes travels in its title but it is the addition of *peripatetic* that directs emphasis away from travelling through space on a journey towards the more rooted and static observations of Robinson *in* space. Anne Wallace points out how the idea of peripatetic 'differs from the more general life-as-journey motif in specifying a particular mode of travel as the source of these benefits, and in insisting on physical process as fundamental to, literally of one piece with the journey's metaphorical goals....our word 'travel' originally derives from 'travail', which not only connotes but denotes suffering or labour or both' (29). The film is shot outdoors, in space, as the title suggests, but its prevailing tone carries none of the freedom from constraints that is associated with the movement through space in particular and the journey in general. It is rather the opposite relation of travailing through space that Wallace highlights which describes Robinson in Space. The physical travails provide the means for narrator and Robinson to articulate a geography of English capitalism that connects past with present through image and narration. The evaluation of this geography forms Robinson's increasingly paranoid reaction to the inheritance that forms English capitalism. Robinson's response to economic and political modernity is indicative of a cultural tradition that surveys change. London was marked by the high cultural disposition of the aesthete visiting

monuments to literary figureheads. In the latter film Robinson finds less diversion and confronts the changing nature of the national industrial landscape.

At the HMV shop in Reading Robinson comments that:

> "the music industry is one of the UK's most successful and brings in more money from abroad than motor manufacturing. Its products often characterized by sexual ambivalence and a traditional English contempt for petit-bourgeois England".

There is no delineation between mass and popular culture or of the historic relation between popular and classical music connoted in the brightly coloured facade of HMV - his majesty's voice. The irony of Robinson's observations is heightened by the grain of Scofield's voice. Robinson's aesthetic disposition undermines his dissenting outlook towards the appearance of the spaces in which he finds himself. There is a manifest relish of futility within Robinson's dissent. The combination of irony and impotence mark the archaism of Robinson as he is both part of and distant from the inheritance he encounters. It is the reticence of Robinson's dissent that is emblematic of a behavioural tradition noted by Russell Davies:

> reticence...represents the extremely English concept, widespread throughout our society, though most Europeans would call it aristocratically conservative, of appropriateness as an ideal in itself (30).

The economic project of Robinson results in an overdrawn opposition between the burgeoning leisure industries and the decline of industries that manufacture goods for export. The inscription of this opposition onto the landscape of England is repeatedly stated. A Warner Cinema complex is juxtaposed with an ailing Ford car factory in East London threatened by foreign competition, a roadsign for Toyota in

Derby with Rolls Royce, and the largest shopping centre in Europe at Merryhill occupies the site of a former steelworks. The images reveal how the appearance of England has fundamentally changed, and how industry is much less physically and economically indigenous. Robinson and the narrator struggle to make visible what English industry now produces. There is a repeated anxiety about the national cultural condition indicated by the ongoing rise of leisure and consumption. The decision to structure the narration around Defoe's journey is significant because Defoe's journey documented the first moments of the industrialization of the landscape and the relation between industry and the land was important to what was produced. Robinson cannot but endeavour to see contemporary England through the same lens. Inevitably what he finds is radically altered. The anxiety that is reproduced by evaluating the present through the past continues a tradition of English male cultural commentary that includes Matthew Arnold, T.S. Eliot, George Orwell, J.B. Priestley and Richard Hoggart. The project of John Akomfrah and Black Audio in Touch of the Tarbrush was to continue Priestley's tradition. The mode of articulation took the margin to the centre by seeking to hybridize Englishness. Keiller reverses this trajectory. Robinson is a contradictory figure who quotes a literary modernist tradition of the centre but occupies a position, in space, at the margins where he is able to voice his dissent.

Priestley articulated the changing appearance of England in 1934:

> the England of arterial and by-pass roads, of filling stations and factories that look like exhibition buildings, of giant cinemas and dance-halls and cafes, bungalows with tiny garages, cocktail bars, Woolworths.... (31).

Robinson continues the tradition articulated by Priestley, but his is also a response not just to Americanization and mass culture, but to the forces of global capitalism

upon the inherited particularity of English capitalism. Robinson's research interest lies less in cultural artefacts than with what the changed landscape reveals about the state of industrial England. Robinson and the narrator frequently encounter industrial sites where ownership and control lies outside of England and reveal how the accumulation of capital transcends national boundaries. The images do not divulge this information and it is the relation between the invisibility of economic change and the meanings that can be discerned from the physical appearance of space that is an ongoing concern of the film. This is illustrated at Horsell Common where Robinson takes the narrator to see the crater created by the Martian landing described by H.G. Wells:

> "he told me there were more than a hundred patents in microelectronics and nanotechnology and other fields for uses of buckminsterfullerenes, the large spherical carbon molecules discovered in cosmic dust by British and other scientists but they are all held abroad...the Martians destroyed most of Surrey"

The fictional register is used to highlight the connection how the landscape triggers a levity of registers that range from fact and fiction, reality and imagination. During this passage the camera pans along the outside of a clearing of empty land enclosed by trees. It is not simply that the boundaries between these opposites collapse, but more that a space is created between them for the spectator to connect to the images. The distance between a fictional and a real context is mitigated by the invisibility of what Robinson describes and the relative emptiness of the image. The quotation of fiction emphasizes the capitalist conspiracy behind Robinson's thinking but it also serves to highlight what meaning can be determined from the occupation of space. The images in the film do not simply show the exteriors of buildings, but also reveal how they are placed in relation to the land that surrounds them. The composition of the images describe how space is taken up and occupied. Keiller has

argued that - 'the appropriation of a (real) place in the service of a fiction is a political act, as the relation of private experience to public space is a political relation' (32). This fluctuation between modes of articulation means that Robinson and the narrator both comment on and respond to the condition of England that they encounter.

Keiller juxtaposes spaces where economic change is evident with those where the inheritance of English capitalism prevails. The endurance of old English capitalism is demonstrated at the nautical site of Portsmouth. The monument of the HMS Victory is not dismissed simply as another artefact of a mythical national heritage but is critiqued from the present:

> "HMS Victory is the principal monument of the eighteenth century British Navy. The largest industrial unit of its day in the western world on whose supremacy was built the capitalism of land, finance and commercial services centred on the city of London which dominates the economy of the south of England. Those of us aesthetes who view the passing of the visible industrial economy with regret and who long for an authenticity of appearance based on manufacturing and innovative modern design are inclined to view this English culture as a bizarre and damaging anachronism but if so it is not an unsuccessful one".

It is not only the pastness of the monument that is registered by the images that accompany this speech but the foregrounding of how that past inflects the present. The image shows the space where the commemoration of an historical artefact is staged. This particular history lacks the authenticity of manufacturing which is relatively visible in comparison with the capitalism that emerged in the south of England. A group of Sandhurst cadets and tourists occupy the foreground of the image reaffirming the distance and use of perspective that marks Keiller's images.

The narration reveals the historical implications that are not exhibited by the artefact of commemoration in the image. The narrator pinpoints the cultural and economic inheritance of the structures that established the nautical and imperial tradition of English capitalism.

The articulation of inheritance that is manifest across Jarman, Davies, Akomfrah and Bennett, can be characterized, to varying degrees, by relations of time. These relations are manifest visually through the currency of personal intimacy that is made available by family photographs and home movies. The act of remembering is a significant constituent of inheritance. Keiller does not match this pattern because the relations of time are articulated through a greater degree of historical rather than experiential reference which are primarily spoken and which Robinson does not own. One of the consequences of Keiller's single image style is a sense of visual absence because of what cannot be found and cannot be shown. Jarman's avant garde style in The Last of England is expressive of his excoriating disposition towards inherited England. The formalist modernism of Keiller results in a more distant, and more verbal articulation of inheritance.

The duration of the pictorial images denies the temporal motion of both continuity editing and montage. Keiller's lingering topographic style where each image replaces its predecessor would be temporally vacant without the device of the narration. The addition of the narration to the image suggests a formation of time identified by Henri Bergson and described by Ann Game:

> Bergson refers to preservation in connection with duration precisely to counter any idea of discrete moments past or present, as presences. In Bergson's theory the past lives, not in the sense of either going back to a past moment, or a representation of it, but in the permeation of moments that moves us forward (33).

The limits of this theory of time are exposed by the weight of the past that is confirmed by the image and the traditions that endure in England. Keiller brings together a philosophical conception of time with the cultural and historic implications of the appearance of the landscape. The tradition connoted by HMS Victory co-exists with the increasingly multi-national ownership and deregulated industry of the English economy. Robinson's analysis doesn't address the precise reasons for the structural changes that occurred during the 1980s but concentrates on what can be observed from the present state of England (34).

At sites such as Eton, Oxford and Cambridge the inherited continuities of political power are exposed. A shot of the inner courtyard of Eton College is accompanied by the observation that:

> "Between 1865 and 1955, of the 294 Cabinet ministers who held office, over a quarter attended Eton, so that either Eton is no longer what it was, or, more likely, government is no longer an occupation that it's necessary for Etonians to be concerned with"

The narrator observes the continuance of old corruption as a formative part of English capitalism. However, what is also apparent is the way in which this mode of analysis in the 1990s is, like the formation it describes, unchanged. The absence of the implied revolutionary consciousness remains unexplained. In The Last of England Jarman during the height of Thatcherism, expresses a vision of England that represents a personally felt response rather than a sophisticated argument. By contrast Keiller constructs a sophisticated argument about England but does not express a vision because Robinson's research defines a modern lack. He is more concerned with bringing together shifting levels of verbal sources. A shared

disposition towards the inherited past results in contrasting dispositions towards film.

The continuities of the capitalist inheritance are contrasted with sites that reveal the loss of the trace of challenges to the character of English capitalism. Keiller presents this argument through the occupation of space. Oxford is described as "the King's headquarters in the Civil War, and Hitler's preferred capital had he occupied England". These moments of past national conflict are juxtaposed with the ongoing corporate decisions that represent a conflict of value for Robinson and the narrator, but are an accepted part of capitalism in the 1990s. The conflicts that the narrator suggests are summoned by the value of the past: "the Morris motor works at Cowley was demolished in 1993 and the site is now a business park owned by British Aerospace who sold the Rover group to BMW in 1994". At Oxford Robinson revisits the legacy of William Morris in response to the repeated moments of industrial change. The loss of an organic tradition of innovative design and manufacture is registered by the Morris 1100. The authentic design of the former Morris 1100 is contrasted with the comparative facelessness of the current Rover car and the architecture of the business park. Keiller is not simply documenting the cession of the modern by the postmodern, but the decline and loss of an historically English product to a German competitor.

The spaces that contain the country house and which conserve the relation of property to power are found to be flourishing. Robinson and the narrator frequently encounter large country houses set in large expanses of verdant land. At Henley the camera looks across the surrounding lake at "the Henley management and research centre at Greenlands which offers degree and N.V.Q. courses for individuals and corporate groups", and at Stowe another large country house is "described by the National Trust as Britain's largest work of art. The house has been a public school since 1923". Cliveden is described as "the work of Sir Charles Barry the architect of

the Palace of Westminster". As the narrator declares this information there is a cut to a shot which shows the prospect which looks down and over the surrounding land from the house. The positioning of the camera from the point of view of the owner of the property is a rare occurrence and serves to combine the discourse of ownership, with the picturesque representation of the English landscape. The country house is generally shot from a distance which has the effect of emphasizing the amount of land which surrounds the houses. The positioning of the camera on the threshold between public and private space at Stowe reveals the discursive construction of a national (public) and rural landscape out of the public surveillance of private property. The image of Stowe is picturesque but because of the position of the camera, the focal length and the narration, it is not an innocent picturesque. John Taylor notes how 'the picturesque is enlisted in the definition of what the country means: it becomes a patriotic term, a touchstone of national characteristics' (35). The critique of the picturesque representation of the iconography of national heritage disputes the terms of the inheritance from which national heritage is constructed. Keiller also mobilizes the discourse of fact and fiction to show the movement from inheritance to heritage. The country house is not simply exposed as a mythical representation of national heritage but set in an economic and historical context through Robinson's persistent chronicle of occupation and ownership. This actuality is contrasted with the assertion made by the narrator that he and Robinson "knew of six Jane Austen adaptations underway, all involving country houses mostly in the west of England".

The country house at Henley is juxtaposed with the sign of a public house at Medmenham which is "near the abbey ruins where the Hellfire club held their nocturnal revels". The historical traces of dissent and opposition to the organization of English capitalism are registered through references to the Diggers and Tolpuddle Martyrs. However, these groups remain traces because they cannot assume significance within the visual iconography from which England is imagined

and inheritance is constructed. The expansive vistas which reveal the landscape of the country house contrast with the close and enclosed shots where dissent can be located. A sign specifying a private estate occupies a small space outside the unseen landmark named St. George's Hill:

> "on St. George's Day a group of campaigners occupied land...near St. George's Hill the private estate developed in 1911 on former common land where the Diggers had set up camp in 1649. We are challenging the government's whole philosophy about the pre-eminence of property rights said their spokesman, an Oxford University fellow"

The insignificance of opposition to a capitalism based upon land ownership is rendered through the irony that occurs out of the relation between past and present. The historical moment where the private ownership of land which established the terms of English capitalism was genuinely resisted is rendered inconsequential and naive in contemporary England. Doreen Massey states that the identity of place occurs through the '(re) telling the historical constitution of the present' (36). Massey's argument becomes part of an anti-capitalist polemic in Robinson in Space through a dialectic of public and private space and the relation between past and present. The exterior gaze of Keiller's camera establishes a topography which details the ownership of the terms of the English inheritance. The history of Empire is installed alongside the iconography of the country house in the agricultural south west of England. Charborough Park is revealed as the site where the economics of imperialism combine with the landed aristocracy:

> "Colonel Henry Drax left Yorkshire after the civil war and settled in Barbados where, in a few years, from £300 in sugar plantations, he acquired an estate of £8-9,000 a year. His successor married the heiress of the Earls of Charborough".

The crowded M3 motorway is replaced by an image of a private drive lined with stone ornaments. The camera is positioned outside the entrance of the gates to the drive that leads to the private house at Charborough Park. Keiller documents the continuation of the English capitalist inheritance where the economic interests of empire are coterminous with the private property of the aristocracy. The shot is comprised of the greenery, trees and shadows caused by the light falling on this scene of the English landscape. However, this pastoral innocence does not culminate with a view of the house. The Drax house is hidden from the view of the image. The construction of the country house shots shows the boundaries between looking in from outside and illicit trespass. Paul Dave describes this deliberate situating of the camera as the 'feeling of an enforced exclusion....an active, recalcitrant lurking' (37). Keiller surveys the relations of public, private and national within the English capitalist inheritance. This mode of articulation is less concerned with the degree to which a person identifies themselves within and against ideas of Englishness, than how the inheritance of land and property can be seen, understood and recognized in space from physical appearances. Keiller articulates a critique of the familiarity of *old* spaces of the English landscape. At an earlier moment in the film at West Green Robinson refers to a fictional source to back up his observations with a quote by Sherlock Holmes:

> " 'it is my belief Watson', said Holmes, 'founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside' "

The concentration upon the grammar of ownership in Robinson in Space suggests, in the absence of the idea of home, how, at a certain elevated level of social class, the degree to which a familial and economic inheritance based upon land is ultimately consonant with a national, cultural inheritance. The registering of

moments when this inheritance was genuinely contested is limited to an artefact commemorating the past. The contrast between private ownership of land and public, collective formations is made at the Methodist chapel which is dedicated to the Tolpuddle martyrs. The narrator comments that: "Following the enclosure acts agricultural wages in Dorset had dropped to 9 shillings a week. George Loveless and others tried to get the wages increased but they were lowered".

The continuity and renewal of English capitalism is represented through *new* spaces such as the large out of town Tesco supermarket in Dorset. "In England 1.1% of employees work in agriculture. A coffee shop assistant at Tesco earns £3.53. per hour". The juxtaposition of the supermarket with labour statistics that begin with agriculture suggest how the nature of the economy has altered but the imperatives of capitalism remain. Similarly, the external appearance of the supermarket which does not include a sizeable Tesco logo confirms the preservation of a tradition that is rooted in rural space rather than the heterogeneity of the urban city. The hybridity of the architecture of the supermarket is indicated by the large roof with a bell tower that denotes the civic functions of school, church, or town hall and preserves the aesthetic of the small town and the norm of the rural. Similarly, the sizeable gables that adorn the roof emphasize the resemblance to the country house as one of the functions extended by the supermarket. The overall design of the supermarket also suggests a continuation of the country house offering not only a place to shop but also a place to dwell. The privatization of public spaces through the gathering of consumption is confirmed by the list of services that the supermarket offers: "we very often ate in supermarkets...for anyone wanting petrol, parking, telephone, postal services, clean toilets and palatable food there is really no practical alternative". The absorption of what were once separate functions in a rural village into the suburban supermarket is underlined by the range rover that enters the approach to the supermarket. The strength of this extract lies in the way that Keiller sets out the contours of the relation between the English capitalist

inheritance and postmodernism. The appearance of the supermarket suggests the combination of the preservation of signifiers of the rural (the country) with the delivery of goods and services for an urban population (the city). The apparent postmodernity of Tesco is grounded by the historicization of change. The juxtaposition of the fortunes contained within Charborough Park with the wage offered to a coffee shop assistant at Tesco draws a correlation between the private ownership of land in England and the distribution of wealth under capitalism. The mode of argument articulated by the film is itself concomitant with the historical formation it describes. Robinson and the narrator embody an enduring refusal to adapt their mode of analysis. Their neo-Marxist stance is characterized by an implicit refusal to acknowledge the implications for the left of the changes introduced by Thatcherism in the 1980s. It is an argument for a modernist political project within an apparently postmodern formation.

The contrasts evident in the industrial landscape of the north of England do not affirm the assumed economic and "post-industrial" divide of north and south. Robinson and the narrator find that the industry in the north is changed but not extinct. At Liverpool Robinson discovers that "The Mersey Dock and Harbour Company enjoys the same level of traffic as in 1965, three times that in the early 1980s". The images of the dock show it working through technology. There are no signs of people working in the images. The narrator states that "Liverpool imports coal for Powergen from the USA and Colombia and exports enormous tonnages of scrap". Robinson finds that the materials that Defoe found were indigenous to the north of England such as iron ore and coal are now imported into the places where they were recently produced. As the camera lingers over a monument to the industrial revolution, an empty iron bridge that crosses the River Tees the narrator states that:

> "unemployment in Middlesborough is 17 per cent, the highest in the country, which has the least regulated labour market in the industrialized world and the highest prison population of any country in Europe"

Philip Dodd highlights the enduring literary trope of 'the settled iconography of the Lowryscape' (38) that functions as an identifying sign of the northern industrial landscape. Lowry's abundantly populated images are characterized by the depiction of the relation between place, work and community in an enclosed frame of space. Andrew Higson argues that in the British social realist films of the 1960s the collective grammar of the inheritance of the industrial revolution is represented by the long shots 'of our town from the hill' (39). Robinson in Space documents the visible dissolution of this iconography and connects it with the rest of England. The industry is still present and economically flourishing and still part of the landscape by which the north is recognized, but the working population are no longer visually configured in this relation but are largely absent. It is no longer a collective grammar of class which was observed within the British documentary tradition of the 1930s.

The new industrial architecture is found at vast distribution depots near motorways, business parks such as that Wynyard Park owned by the local entrepreneur John Hall. The horizontal hangar will produce microwave ovens and computer monitors for Samsung but this function is not indicated by its appearance. Keiller exposes the shift to this visually neutral industrial architecture,which transgresses the national boundaries established and ingrained into the landscape by the industrial revolution. Robinson in Space reveals that the particularity of the English capitalist inheritance has changed but at the same time certain founding facets remain. Having hinted at the implications of the concentration of ownership and control of industry for the

working population Robinson can offer little in the way of a solution other than the unlikely prospect of revolution his mode of analysis implies.

Robinson's reaction to his findings is one of deepening despair and insecurity. In London Robinson was gradually exiled by the void of the city yet there was a sense that he would remain in his city and find sources of refuge. By the time of Robinson in Space he becomes more exposed by the greater expanse of England. The topography of national security located in privatized prisons, detention centres, and locations of the defence industry, exacerbates Robinson's own paranoia and insecurity and feeds his fugitive sensibility. The amount of narration which accompanies the images declines as the film closes on a silent image of the Tyne Bridge shortly after the narrator has disclosed that "without warning, we were told that our contracts had been terminated".

The diversity of London's history provided Robinson with a means of locating a tradition of modernist literary exile in London. This is less apparent in Robinson in Space because the film moves through a greater expanse of space in order to reiterate the underlying argument of the film concerning the particularity of English capitalism. The argument that in the face of change, certain historically established facets of English capitalism remain in place, is more convincing than that proposed in London but it makes less of Keiller's formal style. The shifts in narrative tone in London were complemented by marked visual contrasts. This relative equilibrium between sound and image is less apparent in Robinson in Space. The book of Robinson in Space reveals the amount of collected, written information that Keiller has to impart to support his argument but is left out of the film. There are moments when the film becomes overburdened by the weight of verbal information being narrated. The words trail off towards the end of the film but this ratio does beg the question whether film is the most effective medium for the argument that Keiller wants to make in the later film. Michael O'Pray argues that 'the distinction between

avant-garde and art cinema seems not only opaque but perhaps meaningless' (40). However, the extra length of the feature film and the problem of visual redundancy, particularly in Robinson in Space, reveal through the extra viewing time, the limitations of Keiller's style and suggest the distinction between an innovative modernist/avant-garde film and art cinema are not quite as meaningless as O'Pray suggests.

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John Hill argues that the state of the nation film of the 1980s is notable for the 'strong sense of political impotence (and inability to effect change) and the relative absence of some kind of re-imagining, and envisioning, of human possibilities' (41).

Keiller at least endeavours to offer an explanation and traces of analysis for the condition of the nation which his figure Robinson inherits. However, there is a degree of continuation in Keiller's work that echoes the voices of Jarman and Bennett. It is a sense that the situation of England has become irretrievable and this shared melancholy is articulated through a common institutional context. The sanctioned public space from which these voices articulate their dissent is characteristic of that dissent. Robinson occupies a threatened space which not only represents a public ethos, but also secures the position where he can state what has become a familiar refrain. The underlying coherent constituency that is assumed by the public projects that Keiller and Bennett defend, or the lost England that Jarman mourns, are, by the time of the nineties beginning to resemble a tradition of left conservatism of British film and television. E.P. Thompson has identified a similar pattern in the history of the eighteenth century. He argues that - 'one of the characteristic paradoxes of the century: we have a *rebellious* traditional culture' (42). It is also a paradox of contemporary British cinema that manifestations of

formal innovation do not provide a means for defining future prospects rather than mourning a lost past.

Keiller's films continue in the 1990s the tradition of modernist film making. Keiller's modernist protagonist Robinson, reveals the postmodern and English problem of separating a modernist sensibility from an attachment to a romantic tradition. Peter Wollen has noted how the history of modernism in England is marked by 'arguments for modernism in frankly traditionalist terms' (43). However, the modernist form of Keiller's film yields a particular articulation of the relation between the inheritance of England's overdetermining past and the modernity of contemporary London and England. Keiller's films also show the endurance of the past from the position of a relative outsider. The moment in London where Robinson quotes Baudelaire on romanticism against an image of a branch of McDonald's flying the union jack, he crystallizes the desire to look at England through a bifurcated perspective - with a degree of intimacy, and with a view from outside, the view received by other nations. This articulation of inheritance suggests that a greater degree of cultural and historical perspective can be included in the relation between contemporary British film and heritage.

# Chapter Six

## Defending the Inheritance: Alan Bennett and the BBC

## Defending the Inheritance: Alan Bennett and the BBC

During the period of 1988-1995 Alan Bennett made three television documentaries with Jonathan Stedall for the BBC. In the documentaries Bennett draws upon his inheritance as a young boy growing up in Leeds. Bennett's inheritance accommodates his memories of an aspirant but ordinary, northern working class childhood in Leeds. This inheritance is inflected through the passage of the scholarship boy to an education at Oxford University and a subsequent career as a successful and popular writer and dramatist based in London. Bennett adopts the idioms of both south and north to combine his own private insights into his own self identity with the observation of the behaviour of people that surround him in public spaces. Bennett's remembered observations of his mother's observations of other people and the specificity of her language is a distinctive characteristic of Bennett's voice.

Within the changing public spaces of the hotel, the gallery and the abbey Bennett performs a role via BBC television which occupies the space between his personal inheritance and national, public discourse. Bennett is able to address this space where the present state of England is surveyed through the frame of personal memory because of the combination of his public persona and his voice as an author where the personal is made public through the mediating role of television.

Bennett initially became known in the 1960s through the Oxford satirical comedy of Beyond the Fringe. His later work as a writer of plays for radio and theatre is marked by a more earnest and less indifferent engagement with traditional sources of Englishness. During his career as a writer his work has become established within a high cultural tradition and simultaneously associated with the public voice of the BBC. However, his emergence in film, radio and television in the 1970s and 1980s, and the best seller status in 1994 of his autobiographical collection of essays and

diaries Writing Home, has culminated in a nationally prominent Bennett persona. A central element of the BBC's Christmas schedule in 1995 was comprised of a three part documentary The Abbey (tx 25/26/27/12/1995). This prestigious scheduling suggests a particular link between Bennett and the BBC and also affirms the prominence of his national persona. Bennett's rise in public prominence coincided with a period in which, following the Peacock Report in 1986 and the Broadcasting Act of 1990, the inherited and traditional idea of the BBC was being called into question (1).

The change in 1986 of Director General from the relatively Reithian Alasdair Milne to the more business orientated and former accountant Michael Checkland underlined the government pressure on the BBC to adopt a more commercial profile. When John Birt finally replaced Checkland as Director General in 1992 he assembled an internal market of producer choice within the BBC that changed the nature of the institution and the public's perception of it (2). The shift away from an institution dedicated to programmes and programme makers towards one governed by financial imperatives was accentuated by the growth in independent production. Following the Broadcasting Act the BBC was compelled to commission twenty five per cent of its programmes from external production companies. The career of the director and producer of the documentaries Jonathon Stedall mirrors these changes. In 1988 when Dinner at Noon was made for the BBC series Byline Stedall was employed by BBC Bristol. He had gained prior experience of the personal television documentary form through his collaboration with John Betjeman and he was able to continue this mode of working with Bennett. Subsequently he worked as a freelance film-maker in conjunction with independent production companies for Portrait or Bust and The Abbey. The effect of this changing production background upon publicly funded institutions is addressed by the documentaries which are products of this shifting formation. The local and national cultural value of public spaces and institutions forms part of the subject matter of the documentaries.

During the 1990s Bennett's views concerning the deregulation of what John Street terms 'public service culture' (3) began to assume national significance across the media. Commenting in 1997 on the commercial radio station Classic FM Bennett condemns its 'wholehearted endorsement of the post-Thatcher world, with medical insurance and Saga holidays rammed down your throat between every item' (4). The figure of Bennett represents a defence of the tradition and value of public service culture against the onset of commercialization and privatization in the 1980s and 1990s. The public pronouncements of the Bennett persona therefore find a home in a Reithian and pre-Thatcher notion of public service which was increasingly disappearing from the BBC. Bennett's documentaries for television are located within this political and cultural context and present a fusion of the public persona with the particularity of the personal, authorial voice.

Bennett represents a particular voice of Englishness that is traditionally aligned with the inherited tradition of public service broadcasting. Paddy Scannell generously characterizes this as the provision through broadcasting of a common culture, common knowledge and a shared public (5). It is not that Bennett necessarily embodies the historically paternalistic voice of the BBC that Scannell outlines, but rather that the distinctiveness of the combination of his persona and voice can be aligned with a public service culture whose future could no longer be guaranteed as unchanged. This relatively eminent position represents - as Sheila Johnston has identified in the context of New German Cinema - the author as public institution (6). Bennett occupies a position that has sufficient latitude to combine a dissenting position towards Thatcherism with an attachment to the institutional spaces where a fading view of the English public remains. The fading view is refracted through the past and its distinctiveness is imperilled by the increasingly commercialized contemporary world that Bennett resignedly refers to as "nowadays".

The specificity of Bennett's prominence emerges out of the conservative discourse that constitutes a cultural inheritance and ultimately a version of national heritage that both contests and confirms that which became a significant part of Conservative politics in the 1980s. Bennett is a figure who clearly personifies a certain tradition of Englishness that is pertinent to heritage but the nature of this relation has not yet featured within the debate concerning heritage and film and television.

Bennett's television documentaries occupy an intermediate position in relation to what Andrew Higson has defined in British cinema, as bourgeois heritage films and those films that suggest another version of national heritage (7). It is a simplification to suggest that certain cultural artefacts simply offer another version of either heritage cinema or national heritage. Bennett represents a more complex relation to the national heritage than is suggested by Higson's analysis of fictional films which affirms a generic label for the heritage film rather than suggesting how heritage might be broken down.

Bennett roams around public locations where certain cultural values which constitute heritage can be found and fused with his memories of childhood, and at the same time he expresses a certain level of dissent towards the present political caretakers of the national heritage in particular and the wider political establishment in general. Bennett's articulation of his personal inheritance is set against his observation of how the changing public and institutional spaces such as The Crown Hotel, Leeds City Art Gallery and Westminster Abbey, no longer correspond with his memories. Against this background Bennett surveys his identifications with his inheritance as an Englishman through his attachments to family, region and to the larger formation of England. Stuart Hall offers a means by which this inheritance can be ordered:

> ties of cultural identification and symbolic attachment 'above' the level of the nation-state (such as our links to Europe), or below the nation-state (one's locality, city, region, football club)... (8).

Bennett's personal documentaries express a connection between the attachment below the nation and at the level of the nation. The latter attachment is articulated through differing modalities across British film and television. Figures such as Jarman and Keiller signal via their metropolitan radicalism their distance from the official England that is consecrated by national heritage. Bennett takes a more consensual route via the BBC through the space between personal inheritance and national heritage. The wider significance of this route is demonstrated by Bennett's script for The Madness of King George (Nicholas Hytner, Great Britain, 1994). This Channel Four film represented an irreverent but not unsympathetic recreation of the life of the royal family, that also satisfied the central criterion of the British heritage film - to export well to America (9). The smaller focus of the television documentaries accommodates a more personal view but also contain the same tension that is revealed in The Madness of King George between a simultaneously dissenting and consenting disposition towards England. Rather than refusing the discourses of national culture or exposing the myths of their construction, Bennett performs the role of an appointed intermediary who endeavours to reconcile his own experience of public situations with the public he observes through television. A number of oppositions emerge out of his role as an intermediary and the space between personal inheritance and national heritage. The oppositions and differences include - public and private, high and low culture, classes and types, north and south, and unofficial and official points of view. Bennett's traversal of these tensions occurs within a variety of locations. Firstly, through the provincial and local settings of the Crown Hotel in Harrogate and Leeds City Art gallery, and latterly via the national centre of Westminster Abbey. These sites trigger childhood memories for Bennett which are recalled in relation to his observation of the people and public life

that surrounds him. The evaluation of past and present occurs against a background of institutional and cultural change. The hotel, the gallery and the abbey, no longer correspond to Bennett's memories of such spaces and this realisation precipitates Bennett's particular articulation and defence of his inheritance. I wish to examine the nature of Bennett's attachment to his inheritance across the three television documentries - Dinner at Noon (tx 17/4/1988), Portrait or Bust (4/4/1994) and The Abbey.

Dinner at Noon

The style of the documentaries is more personal and subjective than investigative and objective. They are formed out of a combination of Bennett addressing the camera, voice-over, and a roving, observing camera and microphone. Stedall has stressed the importance of the preparatory work in gaining the trust of the public in the face of the presence of the camera and microphone (10). The familiar tone of Bennett's voice established by his radio broadcasting is more than a commentary and generally takes precedence over the image. Bennett's voice connects the space revealed by the image with his own carefully chosen words but always ordinary language of his thoughts, recollections and comments on what he observes (11).

Dinner at Noon begins with Bennett sitting in a hotel bedroom looking away from the camera, towards a window and the outside. He reveals how his brother and he were probably conceived at the seaside in more lowly "rented accommodation" than the hotel. There is then a cut to an exterior shot of a street in Harrogate. It reveals the characteristic millstone buildings of Yorkshire and the county and countryside beyond. This pictorial composition typifies the setting as does Bennett's accompanying commentary: "town of teashops, a nice run out from Leeds, Harrogate, where hotels abound and always have". The next shot is taken from a position where the camera looks up and over a bed of flowers at the front of the Crown Hotel. The sound of a receptionist receiving a telephone call with the

greeting of the hotel name precedes the cut to the space behind the reception desk of the hotel. In this sequence Bennett establishes a relation between his personal, recollected past as a young boy, the present, public setting of the hotel in Harrogate which the audience is likely to recognize because of its typicality, and his own role in making connections between these discourses of recognition.

Harrogate is described in terms of past and present as a place where people used to come in order to "take the spa waters. Now it's a leisure break or a conference". Bennett's evaluation between the authenticity of the past and the commercialism of the present is further inflected by the social mobility implied by the movement between the respectable, rural spa town and the industrial city of Leeds, which was also home to the Bennett family. Bennett draws upon his experience of the prospective exclusivity of the hotel and its effect upon an ordinary, self-conscious and socially inhibited northern family moving into such an environment. The potential disjuncture of this relocation is confirmed by the title - *Dinner at Noon*. Bennett compares his own remembered experience of the hotel with that in evidence around him through a series of contrasts that are established between public and private, past and present. Observation is focused upon the effect of the setting of the hotel upon the behaviour of its guests. Bennett states that hotels are "a setting where you see people trying to behave which is always more interesting than them just behaving. When people are on their best behaviour they're not always at their best". The first setting for his observation is breakfast in the hotel restaurant: "for years hotels and restaurants were for me theatres of humiliation and the business of eating in public every bit as fraught with risk as taking one's clothes off". The image that accompanies this speech is a close-up of another diner eating his English breakfast. The close up is composed out of the interface between the food on the plate and the knife and fork held by the diner. The operation of manoeuvring a combination of egg and sausage on to the fork with the knife coinciding with Bennett's reference to undressing. As Bennett's sentence finishes

with the word "off", a small fragment of sausage accidentally falls off the diner's fork and back on to the plate. Bennett interrogates the transference of the private domestic *habitus* that is manifest in the manner of eating food, into the public setting of the hotel restaurant where domesticity is recast. For him there was a discrepancy between the way food was taken at home and the behaviour entailed when the shroud of privacy was removed. One of the characteristics of Bennett's inheritance is an anxiety over the process of transferring private facets of behaviour into the public realm.

Underlying the apparent control and composure of the restaurant diners there are the strict protocols of social performance. This was the subject of Erving Goffman's work in which Bennett had a prior interest (12). Goffman argues that - 'a status, a position, a social space is not a material thing to be possessed and then displayed; it is a pattern of appropriate conduct, coherent, embellished and well articulated' (13). Bennett interrogates the degree to which the conduct Goffman identifies as performative can be observed, and relishes those moments he remembers from his own experience, when performance becomes less transparent. Bennett's inheritance meant that his family could not readily and seamlessly assume the role of assured hotel diners. He describes the memory of how his mother would smuggle her own supplementary food into public eating places and dispense it under the table. Bennett looks for confirmation that a similar level of unease exists in the present day hotel. The visual motif of isolating through close up, the fixtures and fittings of the restaurant such as crockery and cutlery, connotes how these apparently familiar objects which we recognize and identify with domestic experience are not singularly owned. Instead, they become the transitory vehicles through which the private and domestic become public and subject to a wider process of denomination. Bennett begins to suggest the construction of a recognizable English collectivity that begins from his own past inheritance and attempts to identify points of connection with the present day public.

Bennett's observation is continued in the hotel lobby. Bennett is interested in a finer delineation of people than conventional sociological ideas of class allow. He states that in the hotel he can observe with particularity: - "not class which I don't like, but classes, types, which I do...". Bennett is interested in the public appearance of difference that is manifest through contrasting behaviour but he resists the need to explain it in terms of social division:

> "The foyers of American hotels are like station concourses or airport lounges they're really part of the street...here with the sofas and the fire we're still visibly related to the hall of the country house and people try to behave accordingly. For some, of course this isn't too big a jump".

This general sequence suggests how the foyer of the hotel apparently welcomes people and accommodates them as they are, as guests of the hotel. The hotel establishment strives to create a home in public that will attract clients who are culturally and socially competent at being at home in public space. However, the general public are not quite as homogeneous or equal as the traditional and prestigious Crown Hotel requires. The guiding commentary of Bennett allied with the presence of the camera and microphone reveal the particular ways in which people are socially and publicly located through accent, dress, choice of reading etc. This is confirmed when the camera isolates a hand holding Country Life magazine. The sound of voices and subsequent shots reveal a well to do youngish couple discussing the difference in the value of property between Notting Hill and "round here". They are contrasted with an elderly couple who come from the same generation as Bennett's parents. This couple pour over the racing pages of a newspaper and discuss the selection of a horse to bet on and the sweetness of their tea. They are smartly dressed and have an accent that connects them to the locality and to a lower class echelon. But for Bennett they are not simply working class or

lower middle class but are distinctive because they are idiosyncratic and connected with the locality and experience that Bennett remembers from childhood:

> "I've never been able to get worked up about class and its distinctions, I've never felt that the conventional three tier account of social divisions has much to do with the case. What class are these ? My mother would have called them a grand couple".

A cut to Bennett sitting in front of the hotel fire addressing the camera directly relieves the viewer from the incipient voyeurism of the visual and oral observation.

> "My mother's scheme of things admitted of much finer distinctions than are allowed by the sociologists. She'd talk about people being a better class, well off, nicely spoken, refined, educated, genuine, ordinary, and the ultimate condemnation - common".

Bennett adopts his mother's *ordinary* Yorkshire idiom. The list of labels is manifest socially but Bennett refuses a sociological analysis. They are more revealing of his mother's aspiration than of the antagonism suggested at the beginning of the sequence. Bennett's consciousness of class is less motivated by social inequality than by the social difference that is manifest in public behaviour. Class difference represents shades of Englishness that Bennett's voice moves within and between. He recognizes class privilege but he is less angered by its political implications than he is amused and curious about the enduring Englishness of it. However, it is clear where Bennett's allegiance lies. Daphne Turner argues that Bennett 'uses his experience of the North/South divide, including his experience of language, to examine the experience of being English, especially the English way of making a lot of Englishmen feel marginal' (14). Bennett's refusal of the language of sociological abstraction for the ordinary but closely observed register of everyday speech

functions to disguise the contradictions of his own position which are deflected by his adaptation of his mother's voice. Bennett's chosen idiom eschews the realist tradition of fictional post-war working class representations of the north of England where narratives are frequently concentrated upon issues of class. The non-fictional documenting of a hotel in the north of England in Dinner at Noon connects with the tradition of Richard Hoggart's The Uses of Literacy (15). Both Bennett and Hoggart are mourning the loss of the authentic past of northern England that is guaranteed by the figure of the scholarship boy's mother. The difference is that Bennett has left his past but he has formed a written voice out of returning to it. He is able to combine a parody of this cultural specificity with his remembrance of it. It is a testament of affection where - as Bennett comments: 'from this affection stems both the parody and the nostalgia; they are very close together' (16). Philip and Katherine Dodd's analysis of working class representation pinpoints the characteristics of the cultural language of The Uses of Literacy that are also evident in Bennett's Dinner at Noon:

> the general structure of feeling that pervades the representation of class in The Uses of Literacy is one of warm directness, together with a fierce sense of the local and the concrete, sustained at the expense of intellectual and 'bookish' pursuits (17).

It is precisely within the separation that Dodd and Dodd highlight between the local and concrete and the intellectual and bookish, but which Turner connects, that Bennett's documentaries can be situated. Bennett's role in the documentaries is an intermediary for the BBC, and the course he mediates is signalled through language. Bennett's role doesn't readily yield a politics of historic class alignment but, as Turner points out, he is acutely aware of how the use of language can determine the conspicuously ideological affiliations of Englishness. In the lobby scene Bennett makes a descriptive and informed observation and then offsets his suggestion of

social difference through his adoption of his mother's voice. It is Bennett's deployment of the language of the local and the everyday, via his mother, which enables him to draw upon his northern inheritance to articulate a mode of address that appears to be, to borrow Mrs Bennett's vocabulary - common.

Bennett continues to observe the variegations of Englishness via the associations of people who populate the function rooms. They range from the Goldsborough Hall nursing home tea party, Dr Barnado's Fashion Show, The Institute of Explosives Engineers, the manageresses of roadside eateries, The Road Hauliers Association, Boston Spa Tennis Club and a group of amateur gardeners attending the Harrogate flower show. Although Bennett likes to observe the rub of class and type manifest in behavioural difference, he is also capable of recognizing that the apparent homogeneity of the older women is specific to the locale:

> "when I see Mrs Baker and Miss Wood I don't think of them as old people. Just as Paris is geared to thirty five year old career women so is the north to women like these. In London they'd be displaced and fearful"

The ability to identity local types and then situate them in a non-local frame of reference reflects the cultural acuity which Bennett has attained by leaving his inheritance. The well heeled competence of social performance on show in the present is set against that his parents regretted they hadn't attained:

> "my parents never went to, still less gave a cocktail party. The education they regretted not having would have had cocktails on the syllabus and small talk, and the ability to converse, and the necessary accomplishment of saying things one doesn't mean. 'Your Dad and me can't mix we've not been educated'. They didn't see that what

> disqualified them was temperament, just as, though educated up to the hilt, it disqualifies me"

The act of recalling his parents' social unease leads Bennett to affirm an equivalence between his own perceived restraints and the insecurities felt by his parents. Bennett is not as disqualified as he would like the audience to think he is, but his written voice is predicated upon the detailing of these insecurities which are magnified by the proximity of other people. The role that Bennett performs in the documentary reveals the extent of his identification with his inheritance. Goffman identifies the necessities of public behaviour. Goffman argues that - 'the expressive coherence that is required in performances points out a crucial discrepancy between our all-too-human selves and our socialized selves' (18). Bennett externalizes the discrepancy identified by Goffman through his memories of his parents and in the process conceals his status as a writer. However, he is able to detect little evidence of the same discrepancy within the hotel environment. The guests are relatively relaxed and accomplished in their performances. Bennett's attachment to the terms of his inheritance is not confirmed by the present. Like Davies, Bennett is returning to his childhood and the articulation of this returning entails some acknowledgment of the route that eventually led away from the past being revisited. Bennett's route away from his inheritance was through the classical route of the scholarship boy. Bennett denies the effect of his education upon his public behaviour because his voice is dependent upon the preservation of his insecurities passed on from his parents and his self-presentation as The Writer in Disguise (19). The significance of the documentaries lies in the televised disclosure of this device, which is comprised from Bennett's public role and the fluctuation between voice, persona and observer.

Bennett's concluding thought on class remains is reflected in the behavioural terms which motivated his documentary:

> "the real solvent of class distinction is a proper measure of self esteem, a kind of unselfconsciousness. Some people are at ease with themselves so some people are at ease with them. What keeps us in our place is embarrassment"

Bennett refracts the divisions of social class through the voice and experience of his parents. Bennett's effacement of his role as writer also overlooks the social causes of the self-consciousness and embarrassment that can be induced by public performance. This is because Bennett is making a claim on behalf of his parents, but his claim demands that the audience see him as continuing the family way rather than acknowledging fully the implications of the route that has enabled him to articulate his inheritance through his chosen idiom. The embarrassment that Bennett refers to is not just self-esteem, but an awareness of the discrepancy between where one comes from and where one finds oneself socially located and positioned. Carolyn Steedman's autobiographical account makes a similar claim to Bennett on behalf of her mother, but it is expressed in the less equivocal terms of feminist politics (20). Similarly, the narrator expresses the same awareness of the unevenness of English society in Patrick Keiller's Stonebridge Park (Patrick Keiller, Great Britain, 1981):

> "even as a small boy I was always struck by the air of unassuming confidence that surrounds the children of comfortably wealthy parents and their enviable ignorance of the guilt that is the necessary corollary of their wealth".

The same self-awareness can be identified in Bennett but his politics are less overt and he expresses less injustice. Bennett locates himself via his parents as a relative outsider in public settings such as the hotel. Bennett's yearning for the ownership of social competence is derived from his memories of childhood. The formative,

politicizing period when Bennett might have acquired the political consciousness expressed by Keiller, is the time when he left home in the north of England to go to University in the south. Oxford University would surely have been a site where a person from an aspiring working class background becomes acutely aware of the privileges of social class described by Keiller. But this period, where childhood becomes adolescence and embarrassment is complicated by the conviction and self-belief that eventually produced the writer, does not enter the frame of Bennett's inheritance. His past remains contained within the time frame of the young boy whose primary frame of reference is his mother.

Bennett continues to find a discrepancy between the present day hotel and his remembered experience of these public venues. Consequently, Bennett is unable to render the present hotel as distinct as the hotel he remembers. It is the dominance and comparative uniformity of business and commerce that has consigned the richness of Bennett's experience to memory:

> "I can see that with their conferences and camaraderie and their leisure wear it's business people like these who are banishing class from hotels. The snobbish bit of me regrets this, but its a small regret....at home in hotels, at home everywhere, I envy them"

If hotels are seen by Bennett to be losing some of the distinction of their public culture then it is to a another formative childhood site - the gallery that he turns next.

Portrait or Bust

In the opening to Portrait or Bust Bennett is shown posing for the painter of his portrait before he turns to face the camera in close up and says: "he always says 'be

yourself', it's a baffling injunction, what they really mean is imitate yourself". This statement informs the underlying project of Portrait or Bust which continues Bennett's concern with the performance of self-disclosure and behaviour in public settings. The public venue is the art gallery in the centre of Leeds which is another site that is replete with Bennett's childhood memories. The sphere of cultural artefacts represented by the gallery adds to the documentary the televised exposure of the response of ordinary people to artefacts of art. Bennett and the television camera and microphone linger in the gallery observing other people responding to paintings and sculpture, as solitary individuals and within the proximity of other people. These transactions between art and public present Bennett with more acts of self-exposure than he encountered at the Crown Hotel.

Bennett supplements his inherited self-doubts concerning acts of public behaviour expressed in Dinner at Noon with the wider cultural inheritance provided by public facilities such as the local gallery and library. Bennett's investment in his inheritance, has the effect, as the opening to the documentary suggests to the audience that his childhood insecurities and perceived vulnerability prevail in his adult self, in spite of the elevated status of his persona. This relation with the past enables Bennett to empathize with the public, or more precisely - the women, whom he observes in the gallery.

Bennett's written narration of the interior deliberations that precede acts of public conduct reveal his own unease about trying to be himself, but it also illuminates the effect of the camera's presence upon the private individuals entering the public space of the gallery and revealing their immediate and unrehearsed responses to art. This is demonstrated when a group of local older women are gathered in front of a painting with a guide.

The guide discusses the response of the women to the painting individually. However, one woman feels marginalised because she feels that she hasn't had an opportunity to express her view. She makes this feeling known and this moment of public dispute is heightened by the close proximity of the camera and microphone just behind the group. The viewer is able to see the painting and the heads and faces of the women when they look aside. Bennett intervenes because he knows how this discomfort feels and has made an art out of its exposition through writing: "Oh dear, still, I know exactly how she feels, wishing one had the gift of the gab". Bennett's intervention is motivated by the recognition that the woman has brought attention upon herself involuntarily, even though she believes that her opinion is worth being made known to others. Bennett's desire to have the gift of the gab overlooks that in written language at least, he clearly possesses this gift. Bennett's role in public space is to mediate between the observing camera and the public, and this mediation is founded upon the relation between Bennett's inherited and acutely felt private anxieties and the exposition of similar tensions in the public.

Bennett's source of identification with art is through his boyhood. In front of the painting with the title Shadow of Death which depicts Mary's anticipation of the crucifixion he shifts the figurative meaning of the painting into his own experience:

> "what always used to puzzle me as a child was that apart from the hair on his head Jesus never had a stitch of hair anywhere else. God seemed to have sent his only begotten son into the world without any hair under his arms. This rang a bell with me though because I was a late developer and at fifteen I was longing for puberty, and Jesus' pose here was exactly how I felt crucified on the wallbars during PE, displaying to my much more hirsute classmates my still unsullied armpits".

The cutting alternates between close ups of the painting and Bennett talking in front of the painting. Bennett's vivid anecdote has a stronger resonance through television than the painting with which it is associated. His ability to translate the terms of painting into past boyhood *habitus* forms a contrast with the more visually intimate and immediate responses of the public. Bennett draws upon the trope of the PE lesson to illustrate the inequalities of early adolescence. It is an apparent feature of representations of English masculinity in the 1980s that the interval between the isolated, sensitive boy and surrounding overdetermined masculinity, cannot be filled because this binary opposition is a necessary condition for what I would term the nostalgia of the working class victim. Bennett does not parade his class identity but he invokes the harsh masculinity of working class experience to register his individual difference from the sameness of the surrounding group. The parallel with the young boy Bud in Davies' The Long Day Closes is clear. The difference is that Davies inscribes his flight from his inheritance into the form of the film. Bennett's voice articulates a relation to his inheritance that remains like that of a dependent son to his mother. This is confirmed by the predominance of women that are shown in the gallery. The Bennett persona occupies a speaking position in the wider public world but the voice of his personal experience remains wedded to a selected period of his past. Bennett's defence of his inheritance is predicated upon this apparent contradiction.

In another BBC documentary A Night in with Alan Bennett (tx 5/7/1992) Bennett recalls his first formative experience of radio and television. Bennett describes his identification with the comedy which is derived from an "accuracy of dialogue and precision of observation" which he prefers to gags. He shows a number of clips which show music hall comedians such as Norman Evans dressed as a woman and talking in that chatty manner which Bennett would later adapt for his own ends. Bennett's disavowal of the gruff voice of northern masculinity is confirmed when he declares:

> "men didn't talk like this, men didn't really talk at all in Leeds, but women did. Held firmly by my mother's hand and longing to get away I'd heard so many women tellin' tale as my father called it, and to hear Rob Wilton making fun of it was a kind of liberation"

Bennett's recognition of the language of his northern inheritance is feminine. In the same way that Davies signals his distance from heterosexual masculinity in The Long Day Closes, Bennett's clinging to the hand of his mother binds her within the iconography of the northern working class inheritance. One of the characteristics of British film and television 1980s and 1990s is that the reproduction of class tropes such as mother, no longer appear subservient to an inherited politics of class but are indicative of the asymmetry of gender experience.

The characteristics of the voice that Bennett generates from his inheritance signals the intermediate route he steers between legitimate culture and ordinary lives. Turner argues that this duality is regionally underpinned too and is intimately connected to the subjectivity of Bennett's mother:

> Life (lower case) is rooted in specific places in Leeds and in a spoken northern idiom, while the novels which his mother enjoyed suggested that making good invariably [took] the form of going Down South (21).

Bennett has made this transition but the particularity of his voice is predicated upon preserving his mother's point of view and observing the expression of the ordinary. It is through Bennett's ability to combine the expression of dualities of time, region and class that the people he observes are not reduced to documentary subjects. Bennett's specialism in performing the role of the cultural intermediary is extended to the television audience through the historical role of broadcasting and the BBC.

In this way Bennett's personal inheritance is articulated within the frame of national culture. The framework which Bennett occupies is conceptualized in terms of French cultural taste in the work of Pierre Bourdieu:

> the new cultural intermediaries have invented a whole series of genres half-way between legitimate culture and mass production ('letters', 'essays', 'eye-witness accounts') (22).

The middlebrow BBC address of Bennett cannot be completely understood by the antinomies of high/legitimate and low/mass culture or via what Higson calls bourgeois or popular heritage. Bennett and other intermediaries such as J.B. Priestley and John Betjeman perform the role of the appointed observer who conducts an assessment of the condition of the culture. This is expressed through their own distinctive voices but they also provide a means of national identification and recognition. This tradition is dependent upon a clear identification with inheritance and its expression in relation to change. The domestic media of radio and television are essential in delivering this cultural tradition to the national public and such media are conspicuously absent from Bourdieu's early work and from the heritage debate. Paddy Scannell observes of Bourdieu that:

> radio and television are significantly absent, precisely because the social distinctions maintained by the cultural distinctions of particular taste publics collapse in the common cultural domain of broadcasting (23).

This common utopianism that is historically assigned to the BBC by Scannell neglects both the political climate of the period under discussion and the specificity of television content. Nicholas Garnham takes a more guarded position on television than Scannell and he also highlights how television does not quite fit into the template adopted by Bourdieu:

> in Bourdieu, cultural production tends to be reduced to such a power struggle, with the result that..."cultural content" disappears...at least in the UK, we have observed in relation to television a significant breaking down of the class based distinctions among types of cultural consumption and their related hierarchy of social values (24).

The particularity of Bennett's television documentaries lies in their mediation of national culture. Television cannot be assigned to a particular category of taste in the same way as a musical preference for the Blue Danube or a national heritage site such as Chatsworth because the domestic location of television always supplements representation. The content of Portrait or Bust reveals the public encounter between the taste of local people, art, and the art gallery, through the apparatus of television. Bennett expresses a hope that art will continue to "rub off" on people like it did on himself when he was a boy. At this point Bennett's feminine voice disappears as he launches his defence of a public cultural inheritance. Because of television Bennett is not simply prescribing the value of legitimate culture over mass culture but he is expressing the value of the retention of free access to public culture. This is an argument that was particularly relevant to the institutional role of the BBC in the eighties and nineties. Bennett makes his argument against the privatizing trend strongly:

> "this isn't a popular philosophy nowadays with all the government think tanks, all those fourteen year old eunuchs who staff the Adam Smith Institute they believe that people are as single minded and driven by material considerations as they are themselves and if a means could be devised of doing a cost benefit analysis of art galleries then they would"

This argument is illustrated by the number of school groups that visit the gallery. Bourdieu's research concentrates attention on the expression of taste through cultural preferences. The role of cultural production is omitted. This is precisely the focus of Bennett's television. He gives voice to the production and reception of culture in a public space. Bennett's role in this process is dependent on the relations of equivalence that Bennett tends to assume through his childhood inheritance with the women in the gallery. As a result his later rise to a position of relative privilege is disguised by Bennett's fidelity to his northern past, and the viewer is requested to accept the terms of this disguise because Bennett's defence of his inheritance rests upon this. Bennett's direct and keenly observed northern voice combined with his comparatively outspoken persona enables him to occupy and perform his mediating role in public spaces for the BBC without simply reproducing the institutional paternalism which marks the history of the BBC. The middle-brow television programme emerges out of the conjuncture of legitimate culture (the gallery), people of apparently low cultural capital (the retired women) and the personal voice of the intermediary. Bennett's vague enlightenment hope rests upon the possibility that people have the capacity to exceed the coherence of social barriers of class and education and that these boundaries are slightly more fluid and negotiable than Bourdieu's research method is able to account for.

Bennett articulates through his own inheritance a defence of the tradition of public culture, and in turn an element of the national heritage, that is preserved from the economic pressures of market economics and in conflict with the ideology of Thatcherism. He represents a position that falls under the heading of Ernesto Laclau's idea of dissent which is not marginal but part of a shared point of view termed - 'the national popular' (25). Bennett reveals how the terms of articulation of heritage, do not only reproduce Higson's bourgeois or popular heritage, but reveals how these categories overlap through the ground between personal inheritance and national heritage. The local sites of Dinner at Noon and Portrait or

Bust enable Bennett to return to and identify his local, inherited idiom. In the final documentary he moves away from his personal inheritance and ventures south where he occupies a wider, national stage when he enters The Abbey.

The Abbey

Bennett's role in The Abbey resembles that of an appointed guide to a historical national monument that is described as "the pantheon of the kingdom". Bennett reveals and describes the functions and furnishing of the abbey, its history as a part of the state apparatus as a burial centre for monarchs and figures of national significance, as a centre for national and international tourists, and as a place for religious worship. The particularity of Bennett's voice and his persona situates these functions through his subjectivity as a national subject. Bennett is shown in a space with a greater visual scale than the hotel and gallery. The effect of this is to amend Bennett's relation with his inheritance that contrasts with that northern inheritance previously articulated and passed on through the grip of his mother's hand. The articulation of inheritance in The Abbey is predominantly national and Bennett, through his mediating role with the BBC, endeavours to negotiate a position for himself which is situated between assent and dissent. The continuation of Bennett's role as intermediary in The Abbey is confirmed by the scant attention given to the contradictions of Protestantism and Anglo-Catholicism contained within Anglicanism that Ross McKibbin has recently identified (26).

Bennett brings the particularity of his own voice to bear on the grandeur of antiquity and reverence induced by a public space with all the significance of Westminster Abbey. This is demonstrated in the first shot of the program where a soaring aerial view of Westminster abbey is undercut by Bennett's opening line which is anything but grandiose: "it looks such a straightforward place from the outside, too much so for me really, a bit plain". Bennett's deliberate use of scripted

epithets of ordinary language has the effect of connoting a certain level of distance from and irreverence towards the official symbols of national culture. The irreverence of the provincial voice from Leeds is balanced by a respect for religion, and the monarchy. Approval for institutions is contrasted with a suspicion of the lower motives of state politics and government. Bennett exploits his role as narrator of the documentary, rather than commentator, in order to politicize the past that is enshrined in the abbey:

> "what happened to the monasteries after all was simply a process of privatization. Their land and assets sold off at a quick short term profit. The beneficiaries largely those who are well disposed to the regime and the monks, - the employees, most of them made redundant. Well, more or less what happens today"

Bennett's continues his defence of a national cultural inheritance from appropriation by the despoiling intervention of government under the guise of market forces. The wider context of Westminster Abbey reveals more of the political terms of Bennett's defence of public institutions. This is demonstrated when Bennett encounters the Coronation Chair:

> "while not quite stripped pine it suits our present day fad for natural surfaces but when it was first made around 1300 it was wholly gilded and painted...and must have looked as much fairground as Gothic, perhaps even a bit common. What has brought it down to its present state is time and a series of terrible indignities. A suffragettes bomb that exploded at the back of it. The brief theft of the stone in 1950 by Scottish Nationalists...the Victorians varnished it so heavily that most of the original paintwork was destroyed. Generations of

> Westminster schoolboys have carved their names on it including one boy who slept in it in 1800 and left a message on the seat to say so".

Bennett's irreverence towards the politics of national government is counterbalanced by his sympathy for the monarchy. Bennett's dissent does not extend to a yearning for a republic. The historic moments of genuine national political conflict are rendered as moments of mischief refracted through the errant perspective of a young boy. The images that accompany this personal commentary mix together close ups with general shots from above that make Bennett look small and child-like as he clutches the mitred railings that fence off the chair. The close ups reveal the carvings that decorate the surface of the chair in combination with allusions to boyhood mischief, momentarily resemble the surface of a school desk rather than a national antiquity. These minor incursions against antiquity are set against the destruction of the French revolution:

> "as a royal burial place Westminster is unique. The only comparable spot the Abbey of St. Denis in Paris where the French kings are buried. The French revolution put paid to that: fifty royal tombs broken up in as many hours. Two days to destroy the work of twelve centuries. Nothing comparable happened here"

For Bennett the conservation of the past is a source of value even though it is filtered through a sense of what has not occurred during the course of national history. Bennett endeavours to maintain a separation between his attachment to a certain idea of England and the official political manifestation of the nation. This is demonstrated in Writing Home where Bennett claims the sentiments uttered by Anthony Burgess in An Englishman Abroad (John Schlesinger, Great Britain, 1983) as his own: 'I can say I love England. I can't say I love my country, because I don't know what that means' (27). The role that Bennett occupies in the documentaries as

a television mediator reveals the problems of maintaining this separation. Bennett's attachment to a stable, historic England concurs with a hegemonic consensus. However, the disturbance of the consensus by Thatcherism means that Bennett can signal his dissent towards the current political climate in the act of articulating and defending his relation to the national culture.

The historic moments Bennett highlights are rewritten through Bennett's distinctive voice. Lowenthal argues that one of the consequences of the rise of heritage is the endowment of history with 'revealed faith' (28). The source of Bennett's faith in Dinner at Noon and Portrait or Bust is his northern inheritance. From his remembered past Bennett makes connections with a wider public and national culture. However, The Abbey is notable for a direction of articulation that does not begin with his personal remembered inheritance. The effect of being positioned in a nationally significant public space is to reveal the terms of Bennett's identifications at the level of the nation. A tension emerges between Bennett's relation to artefacts of national culture such as the Coronation Chair and the overall frame of his childhood inheritance. This is demonstrated by Bennett's reaction to the pupils of the Abbey's public school at morning assembly. A keyhole frames the view of the assembly. Firstly, Bennett is seen peering through the hole and then the viewer is shown the view framed by the keyhole. The selection of the words from the sermon being read illustrates Bennett's political stance. The vicar states that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God". Bennett questions whether the value of remembered experience of childhood will endure with the current generation of youngsters he observes in the same way it has for himself:

> "when they're old will they remember these mornings in the abbey scanning the stalls for a particular face, will the hymns bring it back and the smell of cold stone and the voluntary ? "

He is content to form the answer to his query about memory from his own judgement as he abandons his northern voice to mimics the more socially elevated voices of the young boys he observes: "what was all that the eye of the needle stuff, didn't apply to us did it Jones, no, and anyway we're clever". Bennett points out the unevenness of inherited class experience and simultaneously asserts his investment in the monarchy. Bennett articulates his inheritance through points of identification below the nation and at the level of the nation that do not equate to a consistent political ideology. The vehemence of opposition to Thatcherism and its legacy in the 1980s and 1990s is clearly demonstrated through the unofficial films of Jarman and Keiller. Bennett's opposition is equally strong, but it is manifest not through an individual and outsider's politics of self-expression. Bennett's critique takes place much closer to the centre that was vacated by the polarisation of politics in the 1980s and is supplemented by the institution of BBC television. The reliance of childhood as a means of expression means that Bennett's implied critique of social inequality remains within the time frame when his sense of his own isolation was most acute.

Bennett's articulation of his inheritance reproduces a Benjaminian opposition between a past that is characterized by authenticity and a present that is notable only for the artifice of reproduction. Outside the abbey a uniformed commissionaire speaking with a broad Cockney lilt is shown promoting the celluloid version of an abbey tour. His repeated mantra is: "a thousand years of kings and queens, a multi-picture show...part of our queen's coronation...takes twenty minutes costs one pound". Bennett does not comment directly on this aspect of the abbey but he does later express his dislike of the "cor blimey strike a light guv tourist board notion of England". The following scenes imply a clear relation of authenticity to the preceding scenes. The next cut returns the viewer to the interior of the abbey. Here one of the Canons of the abbey describes to a tourist how his role as Chaplain to the

speaker of Parliament is a feature of the abbey has not changed. The following scene shows the ongoing process of restoration of the outer surface of the abbey. The sound of the commissionaire promoting the supertour can be heard from below. Bennett is moved to comment: "so much of the abbey has been restored over the years that little of the original outer stonework remains. So while not a fake its now a facsimile, a reproduction of itself". The reproduction of national culture is equated with the hordes of tourists who fill the abbey. The tourists are shown via a discreet camera puzzling over maps, struggling with English, and listening attentively to the abbey guides. During these scenes Bennett's unstated recognition of the guides animated inflections of English accent and class displace any visually suggested questions of how the tourists actually perceive England and the English. Bennett's expression of his inheritance cannot be extended to or reconciled with, the inscrutability of "the tribes of Nike, Adidas and Reebok" that flock to the abbey.

The documentaries reveal Bennett describing a process of recognition both personally and nationally. At the hotel in Dinner at Noon and the gallery in Portrait or Bust Bennett could observe the English public performing public roles that he could compare with the reference point of his childhood memories. The abbey exceeds these confines and Bennett is forced to comment less fondly upon the debased and standardized features of contemporary culture.

Not only is the abbey not part of Bennett's northern inheritance but it exists in a changing culture. Unlike Keiller's Robinson, Bennett does not demonstrate the same degree of will to use the documentary form to make sense of the characteristics of modernity. Bennett's reference to the facsimile and the supertour reveal a mistrust of the values that motivate modernization and effect the exhibition of cultural antiquity. Bennett states intransigently that:

> "inscribed over the portals of every English institution ought to be words of the seventeenth century Viscount Falkland if it's not necessary to change it's necessary not to change"

Bennett argues for resisting the pressure of change. Through his documentary Bennett is occupying a role where he is appointed to comment on the presentation and exhibition of an artefact of the national heritage. If the moment of the early 1980s and 1990s was marked by the rise of the heritage under the auspices of Thatcherism then Bennett makes a public stand against the reifying tendencies of the commercialization of national heritage. The combination of the Bennett persona the BBC and television form a case for the preservation and protection of an ongoing public tradition. This tradition is anti-Thatcherite but equally dependent upon looking back to the past to realize the value of preserving an institutionally embodied public heritage. J.B. Priestley like Bennett, can be situated in that tradition which represents a speaking position that is simultaneously part of the establishment yet also critical of the establishment. Their voices typify a national popular discourse where in the act of speaking for themselves they simultaneously make a collective register available for recognition. At the beginning of the 1960s, in an essay about television as a medium, Priestley argued from a similarly dissenting position against change. Priestley states that - 'in my heart I believe the world would be better without almost everything that has arrived since 1910' (29). For Priestley it is television itself rather than the packaged supertour that represents the artificiality of change. Priestley compares television with literature and is also sceptical of 'the establishment portentousness of the BBC' (30). Thirty years on the BBC's role and status as trusted mediator of the national culture can no longer be assumed. Bennett defends the critical ground between the public and middlebrow and the nadir of the simply commercial. Bennett's opposition to the privatizing pressures of commerce represents a tradition of individual dissent which at the same time enjoys an officially sanctioned position. Bennett's defence through television of

public culture occupies the ground between Elsaessar's denomination of British cinema as a polarisation of the reality of unofficial cinema and the myths of official cinema.

The religious ceremonies conducted in the abbey causes Bennett to appraise his current condition with his more devout childhood. At Evensong he describes how his previously held faith has not endured into adult life. He speaks of a situation of being unable to lay claim to a piety he doesn't feel but disclaims indifferent atheism as well. The vagueness of this loss is equated with the Anglican faith where "a fervent Anglican is a contradiction in terms". The context of a previously held faith renders Bennett's relation to his inheritance appear attenuated and mawkish. This general address is stated direct to camera and is followed by close ups of the choir boys singing at Evensong and then a shot from the back of the stalls which shows Bennett in silhouette sitting attentively along with others as he used to:

> "I remember the early morning services old ladies rigid with arthritis...the solemn, mounting ritual of the communion service...you sit says the priest when once upon a time one would have needed no telling"

Bennett sees himself as a boy through the images and sound of the abbey choir boys:

> "I used to know large chunks of the prayer book by heart...but that's not much use these days so I flounder through the service conscripted into the ranks of the unworshipping multitude whom as a boy I used to despise for not knowing the drill...one of those unaccustomed worshippers whom when I spotted them in difficulties I used to hand a prayer book open at the place...me now"

The lapsed Anglicanism of Bennett was anticipated in those people that surrounded him as a boy. This deprivation of self is experienced as an adult in the present, and the changed conditions of the present England. The distance between north and south begins to appear as the tone of Bennett's articulation of his inheritance shifts from the nostalgic idiom that is voiced through Bennett's recall of experience with his mother, towards a more isolated and melancholic mourning of a loss of a previously unquestioned piety. Bennett's articulation of his inheritance is dependent upon selected moments of his childhood memories. It appears nostalgic but it is also a relation to time that Bennett describes with reference to the biographical television programme Seven Up (Michael Apted, BBC, 1964) that periodically records the progress of a group of boys growing up:

> the march of envious and calumniating time.....time had made them sad you see. I think its seeing yourself as you were and comparing it with how you are now.....if only you'd known (31).

Bennett consistently refers back to his childhood as a source of value and authenticity. The inclination to look back also admits a less conspicuous recognition of age. As Lowenthal points out the nostalgia for the past is not a necessarily simply a heritage nostalgia that returns to a preferable past but involves a recognition of the distance created and the effect of the lapsed time since that past:

> what we are nostalgic for is not the past as it was or even as we wish it were; but for the condition of *having been*, with a concomitant integration and completeness lacking in any present (32).

The difference between then and now is never reconciled. Davies formally inscribed his departure from his Liverpool childhood in The Long Day Closes and this has

allowed his films to move on. For Jarman childhood and his estrangement from his father is a metonym for his problem with England and The Last of England and The Garden he displays this distance from his childhood and its attendant heterosexual conventions at the same time as yearning for an inheritance that could function as an equivalent. Bennett's voice does not fully acknowledge his departure because it permits him to continue to revisit it. Stephen Heath's delineation of the significance to adults of looking back to childhood bears close relation to Bennett's articulation of his inheritance:

> the end of childhood is heavily inscribed within the perspective of adult demands and desires and...seems always to turn on a requirement that the child *represent* something special (innocence, truth, the renewal of our selves of our past, the social security of some realm of simplicity, integrity...some authentic reality to which we can refer, in which we can find a certainty of value) (33).

There is a paradox in Bennett's attachment to childhood and the simultaneous recognition of the value of the stability of a country that did not go through a sustained revolution. Bennett looks back to a period of lost youth, and at the same time he surveys the continuity of national history that is apparent from the figureheads collected at Poets Corner, and which serves to define England as an old country. The history of national continuity is not experienced as a personally felt loss because it is experienced as preserved artefacts where as Bennett's personal inherited past is experienced through remembering and a more expressive relation with time. In both these manifestations of those aspects of the past that get passed on Bennett recognizes his own age and the age of the country.

Bennett interweaves his recognition of the distance of his childhood inheritance with the consolation that the abbey represents the continuity of a national inheritance in

the face of debased contemporary culture. At the end The Abbey Bennett stands within the frame of an external pictorial shot of the whole of the building viewed through a circular frame of trees against a deep blue sky. He concludes that: "this great building is a monument to tolerance and magnanimity". The return to an overall view of the landmark which is Westminster Abbey assists Bennett in reaching his generous conclusion on the values that are preserved by the building.

In these films Bennett combines his voice and his persona across the three public sites of the provincial (Harrogate), municipal (Leeds) and national (Westminster Abbey). These sites enable Bennett to occupy a role where he describes and authenticates those remembered moments of connection between private and public, and personal and national. The separation between north and south is significant to Bennett's mode of articulation. At the Abbey there is a greater distance between the national past that is conserved and the extent to which Bennett recognizes himself as belonging to this past and able to claim a sense of inheritance from this past. The provincial and municipal northern locations enabled Bennett to construct a relation between his remembered childhood and his observations of the public. The plausibility of this relation is dependent upon the viewer accepting the innocence of Bennett's childhood and the relative disguising of his status as a writer. Bennett combines the familiarity of these connections with a defence of the public institutions against the pressures of privatization. Bennett's defence of a public cultural inheritance is articulated through a feeling of national popular opposition towards the politics of Thatcherism and its legacy. As Laclau observes this opposition - 'constitutes an antagonism of 'the people' against the existing *power-bloc*, mobilizing certain *anti-statist* feelings and forces' (34). The difference is that Bennett is anti-Thatcherite but not necessarily anti-statist, left/liberal but not Marxist. Bennett does not challenge hegemony but occupies the role of an intermediary who is able to adress national popular feeling via the BBC, during a time of acute political polarisation. Jarman and Keiller demonstrate their dissent by

the occupation of apparently marginal positions which opens out the ground between the personal and the national. The less individualized voice of Bennett's inheritance suggests a closer relation between the personal and the national that belongs to an intellectual tradition described by Perry Anderson as: 'cultivated but distrustful of ideas, socially responsible but suspicious of politics...its members were decidedly Anglican in temper' (35). The separation of Bennett's voice and persona, becomes, over the course of the three BBC documentaries, less easily maintained because of his relation to his inheritance. The particularity and familiarity of Bennett's voice has become increasingly institutional. The image of Bennett that appears in the documentaries and on the cover of Writing Home is essentially unchanged. The familiar and seasoned combination of glasses, hair and clothing combined with his reticent posture suggest Bennett as the caretaker of a particular inherited and middlebrow relation to the national culture.

# Chapter Seven

## Negotiating the Lowryscape: Making Out, Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll

## Negotiating the Lowryscape: Making Out, Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll

Previous chapters in this thesis have explored work that has been clearly marked by a personal voice which has thus far been exclusively masculine. The degree to which women have access to and an investment in that inheritance articulated most clearly in Jarman and Bennett, which correlates both personal and national identification, remains an outstanding question. Nira Yuval-Davies argues that within the formation of national identity - 'women are often constructed as the cultural symbols of the collectivity, of its boundaries...and its intergenerational reproducers' (1). The position outlined by Yuval-Davies is replicated most clearly in Davies and Bennett through the embodying figure of the inheritance - the mother. The text which most resembles the experience of northern England articulated by Davies and Bennett is Jeanette Winterson's depiction of her childhood years in the television adaptation of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. The experience of negotiating with the inherited role of motherhood is also explored in Debbie Horsfield's fictional television dramas Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll.

The precise nature of the relation between women, the inherited discourse of Motherhood, and the critical debate concerning the heritage film has not been fully addressed. The configuration of Claire Monk's early research rests upon a mutually exclusive critical friction between the denigration of an anachronistic representation of the heritage film by left male critics and the reclaiming of such films on behalf of women and through popular taste and oppositional reading (2). The effect of this critical formation is to close off the construction and signification of heritage from the preferred trinity of taste, gender and sexuality. The implicit assumption that this opposition rests upon consecrates "women" with the capability of producing particular readings of the heritage film concentrated upon costume, decor, and issues of sexuality which take preference over the representation of an already

known, accepted and undisputed understanding of heritage. Consequently, it is assumed that these implied readers of the heritage film have no means or desire to express an affiliation with the formation of heritage which would conform to a liberal, progressive and populist critical agenda. I want to attempt to resist this separation and its consequences by extending the expressive range of the texts that I have thus far considered in connection with heritage. Rather than concentrating on how women read a heritage film I want to insist on broadening the argument by exploring the relation of women to the expression of cultural inheritance.

The difficulty of women assuming the position from which inheritance that is articulated by Lowenthal is worth repeating at this point:

> Heritage is traditionally a man's world, inheritance largely a matter of father's and son's....gender inequality is embedded in the very language of inheritance. It is *patrimony* never *matrimony*, that we get as persons and nations....Men alone also inherit the anxiety of patrimonial displacement, the classical urge to kill their fathers...women are not simply excluded from men's heritage: they belong to it (3).

Lowenthal's argument implies that women are necessary to guarantee a masculine inheritance and therefore cannot assume a position where they are able to articulate their own relation to inheritance. To express their inheritance implies at the same time a contestation of the terms in which inheritance is understood. In order to demonstrate this situation it becomes necessary and productive to construct a relation between women and inheritance that departs from the personal mode of expression established by Jarman and Bennett. I have selected three texts that critique motherhood and show women contesting the roles that inheritance bestows upon them. This formation is in evidence both explicitly as in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit (tx 10/1/1990-24/1/1990), Sex, Chips and Rock and Roll (tx

19/09/1999-10/10/99) and implicitly in Making Out (tx 6/1/1989-10/3/1989). The articulation of difference in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is intensified by the exaggerated representation of women who typify the inheritance that the young protagonist rejects. Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll show the negotiation of inheritance through a wider and less polarised range of experience.

Inheritance is manifest through the conventional narrative register of heritage television drama set in the past in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. This three part drama is an adaptation of the Whitbread Prize winning novel by the author Jeanette Winterson. Winterson's adaptation of her autobiographical novel is directed by Beeban Kidron whose first film Vroom (Beeban Kidron, Great Britain, 1988) also made use of location shooting in the north of England but importantly challenged the tradition of realism associated with British film and television set in this area of the country. The partnership of Winterson, Kidron and producer Phillipa Giles disperses the voice that is more directly expressed in the novel, but the experience of childhood, the emergence of the individual subject and the reconstitutive setting of post-war Lancashire places Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit within the expressive range of inheritance articulated by Terence Davies in Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes. Winterson contests the articulation of inheritance by forming a clear opposition between home, family and the strict religion that her adopted mother insisted upon and the expression of the daughter's lesbian sexuality.

Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll is similarly set in the past of 1960s Eccles in Lancashire and departs from the predominantly non-fictional register of inheritance. The writer Debbie Horsfield can be distinguished from Winterson because she is not primarily a novelist but a writer of scripts for television. Horsfield interrogates the inherited myths of the 1960s through a narrative that brings together the twin sisters of a patriarchal northern family and the sisters' experience of popular music. Horsfield forms a generational conflict about the future role the sisters will occupy

out of the tension between the cultural forces of continuity and transition. The writer of the drama comments on the period at the centre of her scenario:

> this was after all, the decade of feminism, free love, sexual liberation and the Pill. Or was it ? The more I delved, the more I became fascinated by the gulf between the myth and the reality of this period (4).

Making Out is also set in Lancashire but eschews the past for the contemporary setting of Greater Manchester. The drama features an ensemble of women's lives rather than the specificity and difference of the single individual life. Making Out articulates the relation between the northern industrial working class inheritance and the process of change which took place in the 1980s. The formative influences of the past are not referred to directly by remembering but the construction of character and the narrative situations these characters negotiate, imply a clear transition in gender relations between traditional and inherited working class culture and the economic and political change that took place in the 1980s.

All three texts use the location of a town within the northern industrial landscape in different ways. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll recreate the past through a combination of location shooting and reconstructed settings. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit uses long shots of the streets of a Lancashire mill town which maintain the look of the period of the narrative and the more expensive Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll uses a specially constructed set to authenticate the external town environment. Making Out uses the resonance of the mill town environment to form a cultural and social context of continuity and transition.

The distinctiveness of the northern landscape is derived from the history of the industrial revolution. The concentration of manufacturing industry and the peppering of the landscape with mills and terraced housing has resulted in a familiar political and cultural legacy that is apparent in representations of northern England from Coronation Street to Distant Voices Still Lives. Philip Dodd names the enduring iconographic resonance of this landscape as 'the Lowryscape' (5). The Lowryscape derived from the paintings of L. S. Lowry refers to the common and for Dodd overdetermining relation between the industrial mill, the terraced street and the people who move between these locations. According to Dodd this iconographic landscape which recurs within literary representations of the north of England is coded masculine and is defined in opposition to the South where - 'the North is masculine, working class and physical; the South, feminine, middle-class and spiritual' (6).

There is an equivalent tradition that exists within film and television and is based upon social realism. This tradition is represented by the kitchen sink films of the late 1950s and early 1960s, and the enduring presence on television of Coronation Street (7). The weight of this background amounts to a northern inheritance that can be defined by the relations of work and class. This is a predominantly masculine inheritance which associates women with the home and motherhood. The historical perspectives of Beatrix Campbell and Carolyn Steedman have highlighted in different ways how the working class tradition and iconography of the Lowryscape has denied women a presence and a voice, or fixed them within the role of mother. Campbell and Steedman confirm Lowenthal's argument that women belong to the language of inheritance (8). My analysis of selected texts is concentrated less upon critically re-evaluating the historical representation of this inheritance than investigating and recognizing its continuing but changing resonance within contemporary cultural representations of the north. The gradual post-war break up of the formation described as the Lowryscape which was accentuated by the decline

of manufacturing industry in the 1980s forms the context not only for the rise of heritage industry, but for challenges to the assumptions of the inheritance I have outlined. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit, Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll all contest the inheritance by concentrating upon the experience of women who are able, in different ways, to challenge the defining terms of the Lowryscape. The challenges emerge across the three texts because of the refusal to simply accept inherited roles and continue the inheritance. The degree to which the inheritance becomes historically ingrained is illustrated by Chris Waters. Waters historicizes Dodd's Lowryscape and highlights the passing on of the inheritance through an example from Shelagh Delaney's autobiography:

> By 1961 reproductions of Lowry's work were hung in schools throughout Salford...every child grew up, Delaney wrote, "as I grew up, with this artist's vision of their own particular world before them" (9).

Delaney pinpoints how schoolchildren of her generation inherited Lowry's view of Salford. It is the passing on of inheritance to women of succeeding generations and their negotiation with the terms of this inheritance which is represented by Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit, Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll.

There is a distinction to be made between the negotiation of inheritance and the more static formation of heritage that flourished in the 1980s. However, the contestation of the northern inheritance that is demonstrated by these texts is intimately bound to the context of the 1980s which gave rise to the Heritage Industry. It is during the 1980s that the Lowryscape increasingly became an artefact of the Heritage Industry (10). The decline in the traditional manufacturing industries of the north was accompanied by a tendency to preserve this industrial inheritance in museums. The heritage process turned a historic way of life experienced by

working class people in particular areas of Britain into artefacts of national heritage. Patrick Wright highlights a similar movement when he observed that the specificity of particular memory was liable to be caught up in a wider public process of cultural nationalisation (11). Wright's position is pertinent to the restorative look of Terence Davies' Distant Voices Still Lives and The Long Day Closes and Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. However, as Gill Davies argues in relation to an exhibition of the industrial past at Wigan Pier, the representative ground between a local, regional inheritance and national heritage is not necessarily seamless:

> might not the we in *The Way We Were* be addressing a different community, a shared experience that is not 'national' and spuriously unifying, and that is not so readily incorporated for reactionary political ends ? (12).

Davies argument is productive because it poses the question of where those modes of articulating the past, which obstruct the movement towards the formation of a national *we* can be located. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is a personal narrative constructed from memory but it is expressed without investing inheritance with the same degree of sentiment as Davies. The process of looking back to the place the subject has left behind, is given less priority and is less a source of sentiment in itself, than contesting the inheritance that is passed on within that place. Making Out contains no explicit reference to the past but it is concerned with the effect of the inherited past upon the lives of a group of working women. Rather than grouping texts in a relation of correspondence with heritage, I have highlighted two contrasting articulations of inheritance in order to explore the relation of women to the formation I have outlined.

Production context

Making Out was the result of the collaboration of the writer Debbie Horsfield and director Chris Bernard. Horsfield's writing for television is thus far critically overlooked and does not carry the significance of the literary adaptation. Horsfield emerges from a background of writing for the theatre and she is notable for being the first female author to have a play staged at the National Theatre in 1985 with True Dare Kiss. However, Horsfield's writing is notable for its regional inflection and this is demonstrated in her trilogy of plays Red Devils, True Dare Kiss and Command or Promise which was written and performed for the Liverpool Playhouse where she was writer in residence between 1982-83.

A strong regional emphasis in television production in the 1980s is underlined in the research of Bob Millington and Robin Nelson into the making of Boys From the Blackstuff (tx 10/10/1982-7/11/1982). Millington and Nelson reveal the significance of English Regions Drama which was one of the five departments that made up the BBC Drama Group in 1982 (13). This resulted in regionally voiced programs such as Boys From the Blackstuff that continued and modified the naturalist heritage of location shooting and authenticity pioneered in the 1960s by Tony Garnett and Ken Loach. By the time of the late 1980s Michael Checkland under pressure from the BBC governors and the Conservative government was introducing a greater degree of commercial awareness into the BBC. Steven Barnett and Andrew Curry point out that during the 1970s and early 1980s the BBC had enjoyed a continuing rise in licence fee income as viewers upgraded their sets from black and white to colour and paid for the more expensive licence as they did so (14). This situation had protected the BBC from the recession of the early 1980s but as the licence revenue levelled off Checkland looked to introduce a greater degree of financial rationalization into the BBC. Stuart Hood argues that one of the effects of the greater emphasis within the BBC managment upon financial imperatives and planning was a greater tendency to produce television series (15). The joint series and serials department created in the mid 1980s had created popular drama series

such as Casualty and Making Out. Making Out came out of a strong regional production base at BBC North West but it also reflects a shift towards combining regionally specific drama with the ongoing and possible wide range appeal of the continuing series. The associated presence of Television New Zealand in the production of Making Out is a result of the combination of BBC North West and BBC Television in London in the genesis of the series.

Making Out comes out of a changing regional tradition but it is also notable for the combination of contemporary issues that might otherwise be represented through a realist or naturalist form, with the intimacy of soap opera. The combination of humour with a direct and regionally specific register reflecting the lives of working women was demonstrated by the Channel 4 backed film Letter to Brezhnev (Chris Bernard, Great Britain, 1985). The casting of Margi Clark and the director Chris Bernard marry Horsfield's writing with the partnership established through the film set which was set in Liverpool. The presence of Clark as an emerging star attracted national publicity for the television series and its prime time slot on BBC1 (16).

Hilary Hinds locates Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit within a dual BBC tradition of realism and prestige. This begins with - 'the Wednesday Play in the 1960s, through Play for Today to the current Wednesday positioning dubbed by the press 'The Controversy Slot....The other line of the heritage is traceable through the long tradition of literary adaptations on television,' (17). The adaptation of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is also notable for the all female alliance of producer Phillipa Giles who commissioned Winterson to adapt her novel, and director Beeban Kidron. It is significant that the regionally specific Pennine setting of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit makes no credited use of regional production facilities even though the production did not go to an independent production company. The growth of independent commissions after the introduction of Producer Choice into the BBC and the Broadcasting Act in 1990 resulted in a marked contraction in

employees and resources. The structure of regional production was amended from eight regions to five regions and the amount of regional production was reduced. The changing nature of BBC production is reflected in the career of Phillipa Giles. At the time of the production of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit Giles was working for the BBC as a freelance producer in the Drama department after beginning her career there as a secretary in 1983 (18).

The scheduling of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit at 9.00 on BBC2 raised the possibility of controversy given that the production contained an explicit lesbian sex scene. The transmission of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit took place during a time when Section 28 which aimed to ban the 'promotion of homosexuality' had only recently passed through Parliament (19). The risk of potentially controversial sexual politics was offset by the relatively conservative and prestigious form of the literary adaptation set in the recent past and screened on BBC2.

The BBC's head of independent commissioning Tessa Ross commissioned Jane Root's former production company Wall to Wall in 1998 to make Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll along with the single drama A Rather English Marriage (tx 26/12/98), an adaptation of Angela Lambert's novel which featured the prestigious cast of Albert Finney, Joanna Lumley and Tom Courtenay (20). Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll was shot at Bray Studios and on location in Manchester and London. The commissioning of an independent production company to make what is quite clearly not low budget television drama and which also maintains the prestige of BBC Drama is indicative of not only Producer Choice but also the evolving relationship between the BBC and independent production companies. The ownership of the international rights to Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll by Itel confirms the increased commercial awareness that was brought to BBC Drama during the 1990s.

The decline of regional drama continued in the 1990s and was confirmed by the Resources Review in 1991 which was headed by John Birt and recommended wide ranging cuts and the closure of studios in Birmingham and Manchester (21). The full implementation of the cuts was resisted by Checkland. However, by the time of 1993 when Birt had taken over as Director General regional drama was further undermined by the formation of a single BBC Television Drama Group headed by Charles Denton in London. The new group would replace the previous structure of seven departments with three in London and four in the rest of the country (22).

There was a growing opposition from BBC writers and producers such as Kenneth Trodd, Alan Plater and Tony Garnett to the increasing control of lawyers, accountants, business affairs executives and policy unit staff who had proliferated under Birt (23). This was further underlined when the highly regarded commissioning editor Michael Wearing who had been head of Drama Serials since 1989 resigned in 1998 blaming a management style he claimed was stifling creativity (24).

Regional drama suffered further contraction in 1999 when the drama production was reduced by a fifth. BBC Pebble Mill at Birmingham lost fourteen of its thirty three full time drama staff (25). The increasing shrinkage brought a response from the Viewers and Listeners Association who expressed concern about the implications for the quality of British drama by the further cutting back on resources (26).

The increasing rationalization of BBC Drama in the 1980s and 1990s meant that the production of regional drama would not necessarily take place at regional production sites. Making Out, Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll reflect the pronounced shift away from the tradition of the single drama towards the proliferation of literary adaptations and the popular drama series.

Making Out

Making Out draws upon the generic conventions of soap opera to construct a television drama about a group of women who work at the ailing company Lyne Electronics in a Greater Manchester mill town. The drama centres upon a group of women and the delineation of their individual and collective lives across the spaces of their separate homes and shared place of work. The context for the women's lives is their negotiations within the spaces that they occupy with the changing economic and political conditions that are brought to bear on their locally situated lives.

The televisual form of Making Out emphasizes the exchange of dialogue within an ongoing narrative but the visual representation of the spaces in which the drama is set and the experience of the women within these spaces are significant to the themes the series explores. The past in Making Out is not seen nor is it visually restored in the way of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit but the points at which the negotiation of the northern inheritance takes place are created out of friction between the legacy of the past upon the present and future. The negotiation with inheritance is not seen through the single perspective of the young girl or boy, but distributed across a group of women who are differentiated by age, ethnicity and class but also share a set of particular circumstances.

The representation of the legacy of the industrial past which is visually condensed into the iconography established by Lowry is usually, and most poignant expressed non-fictionally through a relation between generations. This is demonstrated by Steedman's response to the Lowry she sees hanging on the wall during a final visit to her mother's house:

> As I went out past the shrouded furniture in the front room ...I saw hanging over the mantelpiece a Lowry reproduction that hadn't been

> there on my last visit.....Why did she go out and buy that obvious representation of a landscape she wanted to escape, the figures moving noiselessly under the shadow of the mill ? (27).

The relay between generations that Steedman describes is a primary characteristic of the expression of an inheritance. The temporal resonance and structure of feeling formed out of the relations between generations is absent from Making Out. However, the visual background for the series is the iconography of the northern mill town and its legacy. The interaction between the ensemble of women who feature in the drama and the environment they live within is significant to the ongoing narrative of Making Out. Each of the women move between the spaces of home and work and the negotiation of their inherited roles as women occurs through the variance between these spaces. This variance occurs as a result of the changes to the pattern of employment in the town caused by structural changes in an economy increasingly led by the reality of market forces. The women in Making Out inherit the voice and agency that Steedman wanted to claim for her mother. They do so against the background of northern England in the 1980s. Making Out represents the intersection between changing gender roles and the northern industrial working class inheritance that declined in the 1980s under Thatcherism. The political and cultural characteristics of the inheritance which is broken down most acutely in the 1980s is summarized by Stuart Hall:

> occupational communities, where work, labour process, family and community ties, leisure and recreation, loyalty to locality and place overlapped and mutually reinforced one another (28).

The significance of Making Out is that women are situated at the heart of this break up of a common way of life because they are shown moving between the working space of the mill and the domestic space of home. I will therefore concentrate my

analysis upon the representation of home and work and secondly upon the manifestation of change.

i) home and work

The representation of the inheritance of labour described by Hall is traditionally a male domain with a lineage that begins with the British films of the 1960s such as Saturday Night Sunday Morning (Karel Reisz, Great Britain, 1960) and continues through Coronation Street to the recent drama of unemployment in Liverpool Boys From the Blackstuff. Christine Geraghty has shown how the evolution of soap opera is a generic site that has began to redress this gender imbalance in the 1980s (29). Making Out advances the developments in soap opera by occupying the prime time post watershed slot on BBC1 and also by reworking the iconography of the Lowryscape.

The northern milieu is visually established at the beginning of the first episode of Making Out by a view of the town at the beginning of a working day and then by the journeys of the separate women to their shared workplace at Lyne Electronics. The opening scene of Saturday Night And Sunday Morning shows Arthur Seaton already working at his lathe in a Nottingham factory. The emphasis in this scene is on the repetitive nature of Arthur's work and the harsh surroundings of the factory it is carried out in. Making Out addresses the inherited meanings of work spatially established during the opening of Saturday Night And Sunday Morning. The drama occurs out of the transition from the new generation of angry young skilled working class *man* that was represented by Arthur in the 1960s, to a group of women who go to work at Lyne Electronics under changed circumstances of employment. Making Out reveals the implications of the decline in the inheritance of work in the 1980s when manufacturing industry has ceased to be a source of guaranteed employment for the skilled working class. The view of the townscape continues to

be dominated by the mill but the inheritance that it bequeaths has fundamentally altered. Making Out is indicative of Britain in the 1980s less through its confirmation of the political injustice of industrial decline, than with registering the cultural implications, which are not necessarily simply adverse, of this decline.

The first episode of Making Out opens in the interior of the mill as an employee of Lyne Electronics switches the lights on. A dissolve to an exterior shot of the townscape reveals not so much the organic relation between the land and the mill but rather the partial illumination provided by electric light within the mill. This is underlined by the electronically generated music made for the series by the Manchester band New Order. A dissolve to an image of the mill building against the background of a dark blue dawn sky lends an unexpected expanse of colour to this landscape.

This iconography is not simply the domain of Lowry's paintings but also refers to a visual documentary tradition of black and white photography demonstrated in the work of Bill Brandt. Waters plots a history of Lowry and the influence of Lowry upon representations of the northern industrial landscape that is missing from Dodd's static and ahistorical Lowryscape (30). Waters highlights the work of Shirley Baker whose photographs document firstly the street life of the working class communities of Manchester and Salford and the break up of those communities through demolition (31). The legacy of this inheritance is evident in Making Out through the contrast between the continuity of an organic industrial inheritance of cotton in Lancashire and change connoted by the electric light, electronic music and colour which surround the mill.

The reworking of the northern milieu is continued by the dissolve to the interior of Jill's bedroom where she awakes to see that her digital clock declares that the time is 6.17 am. It is Jill's first day of work at Lyne Electronics and her unemployed

husband Ray is preparing breakfast in bed for her. The reversal of gendered roles is confirmed as Sharon serves the breakfast on behalf of Ray and both of the children sit either side of their Mother as she eats her breakfast. Nicky enquires: "is my Dad to cook every day ? ". Jill appears to be rooted in domestic space despite the impending first day of her new job. Ray reminds her that time is short at the beginning of a working day: "hey, you wanna shift you, you know them days are over". Ray sits on the end of the bed in the space established by shot reverse shot cutting against a darkened background that distances him from the domestic and maternal bond between Jill and the two children. As Ray says this Nicky drops a sausage and makes a mess on the clean bed linen. Jill in the process of removing the mess replies: "what days ? ". Ray replies assertively: "laying in bed all day minding the world with your head in the pillows". Jill counters "you don't know the half of it yet d'you". Ray's judgement and assumptions about the role of housewife are visually undermined by the mess made by Nicky on the bed. It is unexpected and the work required to clean up the mess will no more than re-establish the way the bed is expected to appear unnoticed within the domestic economy. It is work that Ray assumes is both inferior to the work he used to do as a fitter and of little value. This incident also signals in advance the upheaval that reversing roles will entail. The following cut to a mirror in the kitchen shows Ray about to commence the washing up and Jill about to leave the house and begin her journey to work. The construction of this shot functions as a reflexive device that underlines the preceding display of domesticity has been shown in reverse.

The preceding establishing shots of the mill before the home of Jill and Ray reveal the environment and the cultural terms through which Jill will negotiate her role as a working mother. The space for negotiation of a life outside of home that is available to Jill in 1980s Greater Manchester is not available to Freda Dowie's mother in the 1950s Liverpool of Distant Voices Still Lives. The preserved look of Davies' Liverpool and Kidron's Lancashire mill town in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is

reduced to the semblance of traces in Making Out. These traces of inheritance registered through the mill environment and through character are not temporally lodged in the past but form part of a more dynamic mode of television than is evident in either Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit or the familiar and unchanging daily rhythm of the opening titles of Coronation Street (32). This dynamism is evident in the different journeys to work taken by the women. Jill says goodbye to the children outside their home and walks away down the hill towards the mill and the town centre. The camera continues to show the children's view of their mother. A cut to a general shot of the town shows a view that is dominated by the mill Jill walks into this view and gets on to a bus. The shared experience of making the daily journey to work is repeated for the other women Queenie, Carol May, Pauline and Klepto. The women share the same destination but their exits, routes and modes of transport are not the same. The decision not to edit out the movement of the women between home and workplace establishes a significant space between home and paid employment. Similarly, the decision to represent the women singularly rather than as part of a mass movement of people leaving for work at the beginning of the opening episode underlines the negotiation with inherited tradition that marks Making Out.

Charlotte Brunsdon, Julie D'Acci and Lynn Spigel point out that television 'has largely reproduced the ideology of the separate spheres which sees the home as a space of femininity and leisure and the public world as a place of masculinity and work' (33). Making Out presents an exception to this traditional spatial norm and at the same time makes the women who work at Lyne Electronics representative of women's experience. The group of women are differentiated along lines of class and ethnicity as well as being bound together by locality and circumstance. The band of women includes women who are single, living with a partner (Queenie), single and living with authoritarian brothers and father (Klepto), married with young children/child (Jill and Pauline), married and wanting children (Donna) or married

with children who are now adults (Carol May). In each case *home* is a site of ties of attachment (marriage and the role of wife, partner or daughter) that are problematic rather than idealized and exist in tension with the possibilities offered to the women outside of home. The homes where the women live are neither uniform nor are they particularly old, and are not represented as part of a visually significant street and community. As a result the disruption that occurs inside the home which was offset by the extended family and community within Davies' Liverpool, disturbs the stability and permanence that is associated with and often inherited through home. The independence that the women gain through going to work is represented as preferable to, and an escape from, home, and their differing domestic situations.

Making Out places less emphasis than soap opera on the locations and issues of community. There is a camaraderie between the working women that is not represented as unproblematically collectivist but borne of the shared circumstances of adversity. These circumstances include the social reality of male unemployment and the decline of the inherited tradition that work will exist in the north for the skilled working class man. Jill's husband Ray embodies this common situation. The plight of the working man is not represented through the party political terms of a free market Thatcherism which is opposed by an assumed but displaced northern socialism. Jill's roles in the family changes as a result of the decline in the northern industrial inheritance. Making Out registers the effect of this decline not through the British dramatic tradition of the naturalist exposure of political injustice but through the less politically absolute effect of industrial decline and transition upon domestic roles. The politics of the 1980s are registered not through the inherited rhetoric of the left but through the less masculine and less public axes of gender and family.

The reversal of role precipitated by unemployment is emphasized through the juxtaposition of Jill familiarizing herself with her new role at Line Electronics with Ray assuming the role of the person responsible for the housework. As Jill is shown

taking her place at work on the shopfloor a dissolve reveals a long shot of the mill taken through a domestic window. There is a clear relation being expressed in this scene between the previous and inherent meanings of mill and the domestic home and the circumstances that have precipitated Ray and Jill's current exchange of roles. It is a poignant scene of loss but it is offset by Jill's experience of her first day at work. A telephone conversation can be heard between Ray and his mother as Ray's shadow appears on the surface of the glass window. Ray's mother is checking to see if Ray is alright and offers to come over to help him with the housework. The visual relay between the family home and the mill as a place of paid work reveals not only how roles are being reversed but also how spheres of public and private working competence are gendered. Jill is welcomed by Rex the male manager and instructed by Bernie a male supervisor. Ray is instructed by his mother. This is underlined when Ray is shown resuming the hoovering and his mother telephones again to remind him to put bleach down the toilet. The audibility of Ray's mother's voice within the home and the preceding depiction of inside and outside that Jill and the other women traverse have the cumulative effect of fixing Ray within the domestic, familial space.

Male unemployment is not shown in the public spaces of the job centre or benefit office. The effect of unemployment is registered individually and internally in the space of the home. As Jill begins to relocate herself outside the home at Lyne Electronics Ray has to adjust to his amended role in the home. The agency of working class masculinity that has been asserted through a tradition of realism in British film and television, is shown to be in crisis in the 1980s. Ray is introduced in the home wearing the emblematic white t-shirt that fits closely the contours of his toned upper body and this physicality is complimented by his blue jeans. Despite his appearance Ray's plight contrasts with the tradition of the working class hero of Saturday Night and Sunday Morning that is examined by Christine Geraghty (34). Geraghty points out how Arthur exerts control of the film through his physical

presence. He is established at the very beginning of the film at work and there follows a number of displays of his physical prowess. Ray is displaced into a different sort of activity that takes place in the home where he is shown to be less competent. As Ray's disenchantment with his new role increases and Jill's enthusiasm for her role outside the home increases he is moved to defend his right to carry out what to him, is an inherited and lived experience of work:

> "I trained as a fitter, a bloody good fitter....and I'm not about to be palmed off playing tiddly winks with some microchip just because someone decides my job looks better as a bleedin' robot"

The human cost of deindustrialization is counterbalanced by the redress of the women's role in the home. Ray's appeal for the authentic work of manufacturing is intensified by his clothes and his gaze out of the window that overlooks the mill but his experience as a skilled fitter is not shown even though the legacy of this inheritance is inscribed upon the landscape that surrounds him. The work that takes place inside the mill is the assembly of electronic goods and it occupies only a fraction of the space available inside the mill. The manufacture of the components has been done elsewhere and the suggestion is that this final stage of the product process only takes place in Greater Manchester because labour is cheap and the traditional textile industry has declined.

Ray's solitary work in the home is contrasted with Jill's first lunchbreak where the women peruse Queenie's range of Valentine cards. The banter and bonhomie of the women produces comedy which offsets the loss indicated by Ray's predicament. This juxtaposition means that the inherited tradition of naturalistic acting and dialogue is set in relief by the more theatrical excesses of the women's exchanges. The combination of realism and theatrical excess is demonstrated in the contrast between the characters of Ray and Queenie. Ray is a figure from a tradition of a

realist tradition of film and television whereas Queenie comes out of a more theatrical tradition that often seems to overflow from the confined space of television drama.

The women's work is not merely a means of providing money for the domestic economy but it also fuels their appetite for life which is missing from the comparative stasis of their domestic lives. They are shown going out to the pub and to watch wrestling together to celebrate Carol's birthday. The economy between production and consumption is narratively secondary to the inversion of the gendered spaces of domestic and working environments. The shift in the relation between production and consumption within representations of the working class is a traditional source of masculine anxiety as Terry Lovell notes of J.B. Priestley's critical survey of English land and culture:

> where the older working class had been defined in terms of production and work relations, the terms of Priestley's observations of the new were typical in their focus on leisure and consumption (35).

In 1980s Greater Manchester it is less the relation between production and consumption than the decline in the availability of the work that forms the production side of Lovell's equation. The deep formation of working class culture identified by Hall is shown to be breaking down in Making Out and with it the indigenous industry marked by a clear authenticity of work which served a tradition of realist representation. This loss is registered throughout the series without settling into a familiar lament for the past because of the advancing narrative which concentrates upon the development of the women's individual and collective situation. Making Out represents not only the breaking down of a particular class inheritance but also the exposure of different lines of formation. The northern inheritance is not only re-gendered, and to a lesser degree ethnicized, but following

the developments of soap opera, the women are shown actively pursuing different aspirations which develop from their shared situation.

Horsfield's writing refuses the reproduction of a traditional politics of class that is also resisted by Bennett and the Black Audio Film Collective. Bennett's reluctance to invoke class to describe his experience was justified by the designation of equivalence where he observed and felt difference. Similarly, in Touch of the Tarbrush Akomfrah and Black Audio continue the tradition of Priestley's survey but also hybridize the inherited meaning of Englishness from the point of view of the black community in Liverpool. The breaking down of class by other inherited cultural determinants confirms Gareth Stedman-Jones' view that -

> in England more than in any other country, the word 'class' has acted as a congested point of intersection between many competing, overlapping or simply differing forms of discourse (36).

Horsfield represents lived experience through narrative development where Bennett and Akomfrah deploy personal commentary to convey the sense of how they came to recognize who they are. The direction of articulation in Making Out comes out of the inherited past and forward into the present and future via fictional narrative rather than looking back to particular moments and memories of the past. The narrative fiction of Making Out means that the situations the characters find themselves facing individually and collectively assume as much importance as who they are. Higson argues that the setting of the northern mill town 'authenticates the fiction' (37) of the 1960s British films. The visual representation of the town in Making Out conveys a less determining sense of place than a background to the local identity of the characters within their environment.

Home and work are also sites where the inherited meanings of public and private are subject to revision. Within the space of the working interior there is an articulation of space that separates the public from the private. Public space is the shared but individualized work at the bench where the women work and talk but also where the force and authority of Queenie's personality dominates and the supervisor is never far away. The women's toilets are inscribed as a space for feminine intimacy and disclosure. This is illustrated on various occasions where pairs of women share details about their lives that cannot be said in the proximity of the group. These moments of sensitive exchange take place within a harsh but private environment where there is graffiti on the walls and the sound of a dripping water cistern punctuates the women's dialogue. The domestic sphere is not represented as a feminine space for private intimacy. Instead the proximity of husband and wife caused by the enclosure of the home exposes disharmony. Carol May's husband is an enthusiastic fisherman and he shows his wife a bowl of the maggots he will use as bait. "Crackin' aren't they ? " he says to Carol as she attends to her make up in the mirror. This friction between masculine and feminine is such that moments of mutual understanding between married couples in the home are scarce. As Carol's husband leans down to kiss his wife goodbye she picks up the bowl of maggots and puts them in front of his face instead of her face. The symbol of bait presages the confirmation of Carol's ongoing affair with Rex.

ii) change

The characters of Making Out do not demonstrate a consciousness of modernity in the way that past and present are articulated through the device of the dialogue between Robinson and the narrator in Patrick Keiller's films. It is rather their ability to affect the course of their own individual and collective destinies in the face of changing economic and cultural circumstances that makes change a more appropriate term than modernity to describe Making Out. The future profitability of

Lyne Electronics is uncertain and they are owned by a Korean company. The ensuing uncertainty combined with Ray's experience of the shortage of the work for the skilled working class male encapsulates the changing milieu that is addressed by Making Out. This changing formation occurs within a locale that is culturally coded by traditions of representation which are broken down by the routes negotiated by the women. The traditional working life of the town is emblematized by the mill which dominates the landscape in Making Out. However, the mill does not remain within an unchanged Lowryscape. Certain shots show the mill in the background with the foreground not being the terraced street of back to back houses that is familiar from 'That Long Shot of Our Town from That Hill' but newer suburban semi-detached town housing. This spatial juxtaposition of tradition and change is evident when Ray leaves the family home for Folkestone and the chance to work on the Channel tunnel. The house has no chimney and no yard but a white picket fence and a garden. The bricks do not match the colour and texture of those that form the mill in the background suggesting that the relation between the mill and this new housing is attenuated. Making Out investigates the break up of the inheritance that is connoted by the mill and creates a relation between this break up and the women at the centre of the drama. This contrasts with the unchanging settings of soap opera where the inherited intimacies and disruptions to community create the narrative impetus within a relatively stable and unchanging environment. Christine Geraghty identifies the characteristics of the locations of British soap opera:

> the settings of Coronation Street and Eastenders refer to an architecture of the past which, because of its smaller scale and layout, has connotations of a lost neighbourliness and community of interest (38).

Making Out articulates an engagement with northern inheritance without the sentiments of loss but nevertheless demonstrate an awareness that this inheritance is diminishing rather than being reproduced as it is in Davies' Distant Voices Still

Lives. This is expressed not only as a relation of past to present but is extended into a relation between women, men and work shown through the differing fortunes of Ray and Jill. The long shots of the mill temporally express the relation of past to present. The relative immobility of the mill exterior signifies a *longue durée* that punctuates the narrative flow and temporal present of televisual dialogue that is expressed within interiors. The past that the mill represents is not directly referred to in Making Out. Steedman's autobiographical history sought to counter the tradition that fixed women within this landscape to the role of motherhood. The generational difference and the difference that is incurred by leaving to follow the path of the scholarship girl or scholarship boy which marks the written work of Richard Hoggart, Jeremy Seabrook and indeed Steedman, is entirely absent from Making Out (39). The different women are not only mothers but also move outside the role of mother and negotiate the terms of parenting. This negotiation occurs within a recognizably northern landscape which Dodd and other critical appraisals of the Lowryscape such as John Berger's lament as unchanging. Berger saw in Lowry's paintings a vision that 'exaggerates a feeling of changelessness' (40). Making Out demonstrates how in the 1980s the Lowryscape is less determining of the inherited and gendered pattern of northern lives.

Change is not only registered in the conditions of employment but also through specific character types that signify the emerging gap between tradition and change. This is registered through a recurring binary opposition between outsiders who are acquainted with discourses of the new and with transition, and local insiders who are exaggeratedly anachronistic in comparison with the non-local outsiders. This is illustrated when in the fifth episode Dr. Tamsen Carlyle, an expert in Human Resource Management, arrives in the office. Prior to her arrival Bernie expresses his scepticism as he drinks a cup of tea: "well Dr. Carlyle...whatever he is can keep from under my feet if he knows which side his cake's iced". The assumption that the expert will be male is continued by Rex as a woman knocks on the door of the

office and introduces herself. Neither Rex, Bernie or Norma recognize this woman or expect that she will be Dr. Carlyle. She shakes hands with Rex and immediately occupies and bisects the space of proximity to Rex in which women are usually subservient. Her relatively assured facial expression contrasts with the looks of absolute surprise that surround her. This has the effect of making Bernie and Norma marginal in the frame where they had previously been central. Dr. Carlyle sets up a counselling seminar with the women and the discourse of individual, self-realization is introduced: "my job is to help you to find ways in which you can develop your strengths, discover skills you didn't know you had". Initially Dr. Carlyle appears as a naive outsider. Her neutral, non-local accent and executive clothes distance her from the women who all wear the same overall. Queenie is sceptical but women like Klepto and Jill who do not have Queenie's degree of self-assertion and influence are receptive to Dr. Carlyle's theories and ideas. The contrast between the encouragement of individual self-awareness and the tradition of unity and collective bargaining is clear. Pauline and Queenie attempt to foster a collective voice. This dialectic of individualism and collectivism is not simply constructed along the mutually excluding axes of capital and labour, left and right, management and workers. The assumptions of tradition are interwoven with the modern discourses of independence and a nurturing of self. The sources of the new and of change enter the workplace from an unspecified outside. Klepto is encouraged to read more and take flight from her tyrannical family and Jill, in the absence of Ray becomes more aware of the possibilities of independence and recognizes why such possibilities were not clear to her before the seminar. She recognizes that Dr Carlyle is "independent, one of those feminist types" and describes her effect: "I feel as though someone's chucked a load of balls in the air and I'm stood here waiting to see where they land and whether I come out with big ideas or a cracked head". This recognition of the possibilities of change is visually confirmed when Jill is shown walking home from work. She walks along a broad alley with the mill in the background. Her hair is shorter now and she wears jeans.

flat shoes and a jacket with a small, functional handbag worn across her upper body. She carries a folder under her other arm and her expression is one of someone occupied with thought. She passes a younger couple who are standing furtively by one of the walls that border the alley. After Jill passes them they begin to kiss and one of them giggles causing Jill to look back and smile. Jill resembles less a working mother than a student who has the supplement of experience in relation to the unconstrained younger couple. Jill moves through a topography of northern heritage that isn't a cue for reminiscence or nostalgia but a suggestion that the younger generation will inherit the same milieu as she once did. The difference is that despite the continuity signified by the spectre of the mill, Jill is beginning to appreciate that there is the possibility that prospects might be different for a young woman in the following generation. This inscription of the relation between generations also reworks the terms in which a mother appears within an inherited formation. The cultural continuity signified by the mill is amended by Jill's negotiated route to independence. Jill is a mother but she has also experienced other possibilities. She looks at the younger generation not only as a mother but also through her recently expanded experience. Horsfield succeeds in rewriting the terms in which inheritance is expressed between generations.

Figures such as Davies, Jarman and Bennett express their inherited connections to family through the past register of childhood. This brings with it sentiment and a fixing of the mother within the vocabulary of inheritance as Lowenthal argues. Steedman endeavours to give a voice to her mother through the fully formed feminist consciousness of the scholarship girl. Thus when the daughter discovers the Lowry hanging above the mantelpiece at her mother's house she cannot understand why she would choose to be reminded of the landscape that dictated the terms of her life. Steedman's mother's picture confirms the endurance of inheritance and the ambiguous desire for both a connection to a memory of the place of childhood as well as a later desire to move away from it. The mothers of Jarman, Davies and

Bennett are notable for being fixed within the venerated and parental terms of their sons' remembering. However, Steedman, in her desire to propose a corrective to the tradition manifest in the working class elegies of Hoggart and Seabrook, denies her mother a means of connecting with her past. By reworking through fiction the tense of inheritance so that the direction of the gaze is not only back to the past, Making Out suggests that a negotiated route through this formation is possible in the changed north of the 1980s. The terms of address implied by 'That Long Shot of *Our* Town From That Hill' are unpacked by Jill's progress through the landscape (41). The scene suggests a generational questioning through gender of the assumed equality and common inheritance passed on by the angry protagonists of the 1960s.

The figures associated with change and the causes of change come from outside of the local. The contrast to this discourse of transition is formed by the exaggerated anachronism represented by a number of male characters. Bernie is a parody of the local, the provincial and the out of date. He only knows life at Lyne Electronics but is convinced that the firm is "at the forefront of technological efficiency". Similarly, the owner of the firm Mr. Beachcroft is a stereotypical northern capitalist. He too has no genuine insight into the modern face of commerce. Finally, Pauline's husband Frankie is a stereotypical militant labourist. He is brutally sexist, insensitive but politically committed to a socialist view of working class alignment defined in opposition to the ruling class. He is the antithesis of Bella Grout who with her tone of voice, hair and dress is constructed as a Margaret Thatcher clone who is appointed above Rex to cut costs and inefficiency but can also recognize Bernie's potential sexual harassment of Norma. The discourses of right and left are exaggerated which has the effect of highlighting the negotiated route the women take through their working and domestic lives.

The effect of these types is to reveal that the single axis of the politics of class can no longer guarantee the unified formation of the earlier years of industrialization.

The women go on strike to try and stop the workforce being reduced following a recommendation by the Korean owners. The strike is not motivated by a heightened class consciousness but as a gesture of resistance to outside forces. The anachronistic characters are invested in what Kevin Robins refers to as 'protective illusion' (42). Northern inheritance is no longer common and appears unadaptable in the face of change. Robins suggests that 'protective illusion...has been central to the obsessive construction of both enterprise and heritage cultures in these post-imperial days (43). Making Out presents an essentially local situation where protective illusion is taken up more readily by certain men who continue to invest in a way of life inherited from a normative past. The denial of the implications of change reverses the traditional gendered model of soap opera where as Andy Medhurst argues 'men dream of escaping routine and rut and it is women who unquestioningly accept or even, at worst, embody them' (44). Rex functions as the pragmatic mediator between anachronism, the working women, and the changes necessitated by the reality of market forces. The factor of gender has been integrated into the fictional representation of the reaction of local people to the friction created between a northern inheritance and a changing economic, political and cultural context.

Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit

During the opening scene of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit the young Jess is shown moving through the picturesque northern landscape of the small mill town. She passes along the terraced street and through an avenue of washing hung out to dry, into the sweet shop, up the clog worn steps past the mill and river back to home and her mother. The point of view of child and the synonymity of childhood with the lovingly restored setting of the past is confirmed by the low camera position, the small scale of the spaces shown, and the colourful period detail of the inside of the sweetshop. The apparent freedom of movement through the local

community enjoyed by Jess in this sequence is undercut by what follows. The voice over of an older Jess looking back states that "like most people I lived for a long time with my mother and father. My father liked to watch the wrestling and my mother liked to wrestle....At election time in a Labour mill town my mother put a picture of the Conservative candidate in the window". Already Jess is asserting the contrariety of her mother that is underpinned by unshakeable conviction that she is right. It is this belief in her own difference from the people who surround her which Jess inherits from her mother and which she will turn against her. However, although mother and daughter both possess this conviction which is palpably absent in the father, it is undercut in her mother. Geraldine McEwan's theatrical performance fluctuates between the parodic eccentricity of her religious beliefs and the harshness of her strict control of Jess. Her desire to exert control over Jess and her frequent aggressive handling of the child disturbs the ideal past of the childhood home embodied by the ideal mother and suggested by the restoration of the period home. As a result of her mother's treatment and her strength of belief Jess becomes less a passive victim of injustice than a struggling heroine. Jess takes the place of her mother as a figure the audience can sympathize with. As Hinds points out 'lesbianism becomes an otherness preferable to the unacceptable otherness of fundamentalism' (45). The sources of the mother's inheritance are not referred to and the absence of a blood tie between Jess and her adopted mother undermine the sense of the inherited past being reproduced through the family and home. These factors create a distance between Jess and her mother and create the conditions for Jess's struggle to express her sexuality. Inheritance in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is less embedded in the reproductive formations of class, community and culture than the inheritance that is articulated by Davies. Through childhood Jess develops an ability to recognize her self-identity that is above all different from the norms of her surroundings. The effect of this is that Jess uses her mother's strength of character against her as she moves outside the religious enclosure that her mother and her Pentecostal friends forcefully construct around her. This is

demonstrated as Jess expresses her sexuality in exterior but typically local spaces outside of her mother's control. At the fishmonger's stall at the local market Jess notices Melanie for the first time filleting fish under the eye of the stentorian fishmonger. In the cafe where Jess is working for Mrs Arkwright, Jess meets Melanie, and at Blackpool on the step of a caravan Katy seduces Jess. Sexual difference is articulated within locations of traditional and inherited cultural meaning synonymous with the uniformity of working class experience. Jess is not an outsider within these public spaces in the way that the younger Bud is in The Long Day Closes. Jess strives to overcome her doubt and fear in order to express her sexuality within these spaces. Jess's own interpretation of Pentecostal religion is not in conflict with her sexuality which contrasts with the sensitivity and isolated Catholic guilt and sexual anxiety of the younger Bud in The Long Day Closes. Davies situates the embryonic homosexuality of Bud within the past specificities and attachments of inherited family and class experience of Liverpool. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is set in the past but this past forms a background for representing the process of individual emergence from that past.

Jess is supported by other independent, single women. Relative outsider figures such as Elsie, Miss Jewsbury and Cissy have the capacity to think independently and are critical of the cruelty meted out to Jess by the Pastor and his parodic but fanatical cohorts. Elsie is a former suffragette and when she dies Jess inherits her capacity for resistance. Miss Jewsbury is Scottish and a person who carries the burden of "loving the wrong people". She is described as unholy because she has not married. Cissy confesses to Jess her feeling of relief when her husband died and offers Jess the refuge of the funeral parlour. These women are neither mothers nor are they associated with the religious fanaticism that marks Jess's mother and the rest of the Pastor's cohorts. They are women with insight and understanding unattached to homes, families and men. The maturing movement by Jess outside of her role as dutiful daughter of a mother gripped by over zealous religious belief is

signalled as being more significant than a phase of teenage rebellion as a result of the presence of these other women. Margaret Marshment and Julia Hallam attribute this support to a specifically women's inheritance:

> history has made women's inheritance invisible. Oranges portrays aspects of our history. Jess inherits generations of women's experience through her elderly friend Elsie, through Cissy who gives her a home and a job in the funeral parlour after the break with her mother, and above all through the mother herself...both novel and television program create narratives that bypass the official histories of men to dwell upon the intimate histories of women (46).

Hallam and Marshment restrict women to a private and intimate inheritance which they set against an official and public inheritance. The women they mark with intimacy are distanced from dominant modes of femininity but they also provide Jess with a degree of public and private sympathy that she might otherwise expect to receive from her mother. The separation of public and private is precisely what Carolyn Steedman endeavoured to avoid when she was writing on behalf of her mother and women like her. Steedman's polemic was justified by the 'search in the mid-twentieth century for a public language that allowed her (mother) to want' (47). Giving a voice to mothers is not within the proposition of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. However, Steedman's aim serves to reveal how Hallam and Marshment overlook how the process of television in the 1990s increasingly makes the intimate public. The critical reception of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit was marked by anticipation of the sexuality portrayed. The narrative means of reversal that serve to elicit sympathy for Jess suggest that consigning her and the inheritance of women to the sphere of the private and intimate is problematic.

Jess's struggle for the comparative freedom to determine her own role and identity results in her moving away from the inheritance embodied by her mother and her religious circle. Making Out and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll fictionally represent the experience of women who do not necessarily follow the path of the scholarship girl but negotiate with the constraints of a northern inheritance. Across these texts the women's inheritance outlined by Hallam and Marshment, though intimate, is made visible outside of the spaces and conventions of home and family. Hallam and Marshment's claim that women's inheritance is historical in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit overlooks the role of Jeanette Winterson's memories. This is because the television drama does not resonate with time and can be contrasted with the temporal aesthetic of Distant Voices Still Lives which formally inscribes the ungovernability of memory. Because the women's inheritance is made visible from a position outside of the language of heritage that Lowenthal argues circumscribes women, it appears to go against the grain of time that manifests the structure of feeling that is recognized as nostalgia.

Jess's emergence is demonstrated through Higson's 'That Long Shot of Our Town from That Hill'. The shot of the northern industrial town and the surrounding landscape of which it is a part is a constituent of the Lowryscape which Dodd associates with the inherited, and realist tradition of representing the north. At the top of the hill that overlooks the town Jess and her mother look down at the town. A tall wooden cross in turn overlooks them, breaks the vertical limits of the frame and intervenes between mother and daughter and their view of the town. The view of the town is not lit to aestheticize its appearance but is rather murky and the architectural features of the town are not very clearly defined. A cut to a close up of Jess's mother's face shows her telling Jess that "this world is full of sin....you can change the world". Rather than this shot confirming the inherited tradition of a relation of the individual to the collective it conveys the destiny of an exceptional individual being able to change the many through the mediating force of religion. By

the time of the end of the third episode the grammar of this shot is further amended. The cross no longer frames the view of the town and Jess looks down over the town without her mother. She has earned her place at Oxford and the opportunity to leave the town. The unmediated view of the town she enjoys and the preceding shots where she announces to the people she encounters on the street and in the sweet shop, imply that the opportunity of departure enables Jess to feel more reconciled with the people of the town. A similar tendency of impending flight is manifest in the final shot of A Long Day Closes as the camera shows the view over the shoulder of Bud and his friend as they look out through the bedroom window up to the stars. Davies' emergence from his inheritance is implicit in the form of his films but not the narrative subject of the films. The mother and son axis of The Long Day Closes is, as it is in Bennett, a source of reverence rather than conflict and appears in stark contrast to the mother and daughter axis of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit. It appears that personal sentiments of inheritance are predicated upon a connection between son and mother and this manifests a mode of articulation that resonates with memory.

Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit has the overall visual look of a conventional heritage television drama set within a particular time and location but its narrative works against the veneration of inheritance. As a result the period setting becomes a mere background as emphasis is concentrated upon the plight of Jess. The formation of a distinctive temporality is not a significant part of the narration of the television drama. In this way Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit articulates a narrative of emergence away from the constraints of a northern inheritance. The advance to the position of scholarship girl that Jess earns occurs out of the women's inheritance identified by Hallam and Marshment and in conflict with the inheritance of mother and home and belonging that is ultimately rendered sacred in Distant Voices Still Lives.

The making visible of the inheritance identified by Hallam and Marshment raises the question of who will recognize the inheritance that they isolate. Steedman recognized her own experience of belonging and the pathos of the absence of the possibility of change in Distant Voices Still Lives. Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit offers different terms of recognition that are founded upon difference within a formation where sameness is expected. This reversal of sympathies and questioning of the terms of inheritance is highlighted by Hinds quotation of a review from The Lancashire Evening Telegraph:

> what will make people most angry is a feeling that they have been manipulated because it is very difficult *not* to be sympathetic with Jess...Finding themselves in complete sympathy with Jess (rather than family or church) is what some will find most difficult (48).

The issue raised by this review is precisely what Hallam and Marshment find radical about the text. However, the radicalism of narrative strategy and sexual identity takes place within a visually conservative and institutionally sanctioned style. Kidron's departure from the realist tradition is apparent in the opening title sequence and within scenes of courtship but the overall impression is of a restored past of a Lancashire mill town that serves as a background which ultimately becomes secondary to dialogue and the singular emergence of Jess. The inheritance of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is articulated without a personal grammar, and without sentiment seemingly because it is a narrative that gives priority to individual emergence and leaving a northern inheritance. Rosalind Brunt does not singularly identify with the radical portrayal of sexuality and concludes that Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit is:

> full of northern naturalism and Lancashire accents...cautious and solemn acting, it produces a sort of elegiac naturalism....stultified by an ambience of tasteful poignancy and expensive production values (49).

It is significant that Brunt's summary identifies a semblance of elegy that is manifest as television genre and a dramatic tradition rather than as an effect of the content. Brunt's reading posits a deadlock between two traditions of BBC television drama. The most recent is the heritage aesthetic and the former is the inherited tradition of northern naturalism. Brunt's review highlights the lack of an effective mode of articulation for the women's inheritance that Hallam and Marshment pinpoint. The intimate and unofficial histories of certain women that Hallam and Marshment highlight are offset by and sit uneasily with the repeated and overloaded and theatrical exaggeration of the Evangelists. This lack of a televisual register Brunt suggests would be filled by soap opera which would serve as a more effective vocabulary for the televising of Winterson's narrative. Making Out uses the conventions of soap opera to reverse the terms of the northern inheritance but also reveals the less one sided negotiations made by the group of women whose experience the drama portrays. The women's inheritance that Hallam and Marshment assign to Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit sits rather awkwardly in between Elsaessar's opposition between official and unofficial cinema. The unofficial aspects of Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit occur within a relatively official BBC aesthetic and contrast with the earlier and often overdetermined unofficial marginality that is apparent in Jarman's The Last of England in general and 1980s British cinema in general.

## Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll

Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll has the look of a period drama. The combination of a studio set for the town and location shooting conveys an authentication of time and

place. However, this is not an equivalent authentication to the Edwardian period which has become the staple of the heritage film but a restoration of a more recent past which is more recognizable and familiar because of the received images of England in the 1960s.

This is demonstrated in the opening scene of the first episode when the camera overlooks a view of a red brick mill in the background and a red brick terraced street in the foreground which is bisected horizontally by lines of washing drying in the wind. An intertitle states that this is Eccles in 1965 as the camera moves in closer and lower to show a young girl in school uniform reading a book by the school playground which adjoins the terraced street. As the bell rings another girl appears from behind the bikesheds with a boy. This introduction of the contrasting twin sisters Ellie and Arden situates the hopes and expectations of the two young girls within an environment - the Lowryscape of the north in the 1960s, where the possibilities offered by the future are largely determined by what has gone before. This critique of the inherited view of northern life can be differentiated from the past represented by the heritage film because of the reference to a known iconography of place within a significant period made familiar by a tradition of representation.

Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll signals its departure from the tradition of working class realism through the contrast between the different aspirations of the twin sisters. Ellie's love of books and the poetry of Yeats is set against the libidinous desires of Arden. The clash between the hopes and desires of the sisters and the determining environment of a small Lancashire town where grandmother's dictum that "I want doesn't get", is established when the girls are summoned by the school careers officer from a queue of pupils. The old furnishing of the classroom, the list of occupations on the blackboard that women would be expected to pursue, and the routine speech of the aging male careers officer signify the definition of an

established set of horizons. When asked by the careers officer what she would like to do Arden replies: "I'm going to London. In six months time see me walking down the Kings Road in red PVC and black shiny boots...". Ellie is taking four A levels which prompts the careers officer to encourage her: "clever girl like you should be aiming high. Top class secretarial college. Typing, shorthand, deportment, elocution". Ellie replies - "I was wondering about University. I was thinking about English lit., and maybe music". She receives a sceptical reply: "I think you're in the wrong place young lady, this is a careers office not cloud cuckoo land". This scene shows how Ellie and Arden's desires conflict with the inherited roles that they are assigned. Their resistance to the environment they belong to occurs through the cultural context of popular music. The relation between girls from a small northern town and the received myths of the 1960s music scene provide the context for the resistance of inheritance.

John Hill's formative text on British cinema Sex, Class and Realism establishes the relevant terms for critically approaching the English new wave films of the 1960s (50). However, the northern locales featured in this tradition did not significantly engage with the relation between the north and the growth of popular music. Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll annexes the myths of popular music in the 1960s on behalf of girls growing up in a small northern town. As the writer of the series, Horsfield, states: 'the British girl group scene of the sixties was always conspicuous by its absence. While America had the Shirelles, the Chiffons, the Shangri-Las, the Ronettes, we had the Ladybirds' (51). Horsfield's drama does not feature a girl group but it does pose the question of the relation between girls and popular music within the form of the period drama.

The girls contestation of the roles assigned to them occurs across contrasting spaces. The opposition between the old and the new, tradition and modernity, is established in the spaces of transience - The Carlton, the chip shop and the

permanence of the Brooks' home which is owned and strictly controlled by Irma who is grandmother to the girls and mother to their widowed father Howard. The aesthetic of gradual decline through time is signified in the dim light of the home by the fixtures of the ticking clock, a photograph of a younger Irma and her husband which stands above the piano, the aged pattern on the curtains and wallpaper and the period look of Irma and Howard's hair and clothes which contrasts with the more expressive appearance of the girls.

The tension between the repressive grandmother and the youthful energy of the girls and the time is demonstrated at the girls eighteenth birthday party when Norman's assistant begins playing the piano and the girls sing "I only wanna' be with you" to open their party. Irma disallows the playing of the piano because it is a testament to her lofty alliance with the absent man she alleges was her husband. This atmosphere of restraint is contrasted with a shot of the girls riding their bikes up a tree lined street and singing in unison about a dream of young love. In the background and to the left of their ascending progress is a view of the local mill that dominates the view of the town and a group of boys playing football in the foreground. The collective grammar of 'our town from the hill' is bisected by gender as the girls ride away from both the mill and the gaze of the boys who stop their game as they ride past. The agency of the girls is emphasized by their movement away from the determining landscape of the mill.

The distance between the girls' inheritance from their home environment and the external and transient spaces of The Carlton and the neon-lit chip shop occurs because Irma presides over a house that is bound to the past of her generation. In Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit Jess is much less situated within the culture of the period because her contestation with her inheritance occurs through the singular conflict between her sexuality and her mother's religious fanaticism. The cultural separation that exists between grandmother and granddaughters in Sex, Chips and

Rock 'n' Roll can be contrasted with the integrated and personal mode of articulation evident in Davies. Davies expresses a more integrated and aestheticized common culture of class and community that crosses generations through rituals such as the popular song. There is a clear delineation of the tension between a felt personal identity and collective identity which becomes more acute in Horsfield's representation of Eccles in the 1960s. There is a further contrast evident in the difference in the articulation of inheritance that occurs between grandmothers and granddaughters or mothers and daughters in Oranges Are Not The Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll and the nostalgic affection of mother and sons that is evident in Davies and Bennett. It is clear that the contestation of a northern inheritance breaks down the shared and recognized affinities which ensure the continuation of inheritance.

The presence of the boys band The Ice Cubes is significant in alerting Ellie and Arden to the pursuit of aspirations beyond those traditionally assigned to school leaving girls. Upon leaving school Ellie is destined to marry the much older Norman and Arden is hoping for a similar opportunity to leave home. Howard has recognized that Ellie might want something other than the role that awaits her as the wife of Norman. When he sees Irma looking at herself in the mirror in between ironing he recognizes and comments on her resemblance to Ellie. He is moved to express this to his mother and describes to her the extent of the sacrifice motherhood has demanded and the life she hasn't had. Above all Howard points out that it should not be inevitable that Ellie should follow the same inherited path: "I hope she gets a better crack at the whip than you did...its not been much of a party has it ? ". Irma looks troubled and defensively replies: "I've managed". Howard senses his mother's defensiveness and aware of his role in between two generations he asserts that: "I don't want her to manage. I want someone to see what she is, not what he'd like her to be". Irma returns to the ironing, the pressing of garments into place and replies: "I dare say Norman's got it all under control". This exchange is

juxtaposed with the flat where the band are staying. The decor of the flat reflects the issues and spirit of the times. There are posters for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Cuba, and versions of paintings of Michaelangelo, Picasso and Van Gogh painted on to the walls and ceiling of the flat. Inside the flat music is written as part of the creative and spontaneous lifestyle of former art school students. The tropes of the 1960s as a time of free expression and a break from the 1950s are restored but also critiqued from the point of view of provincial girls from Eccles. It within the terms of these oppositions between spaces, generations, roles and aspirations that Ellie and Arden will contest the inheritance that they are compelled to accept by the patriarchal figures of Irma and Norman.

Dallas and Arden are shown at the Odeon cinema going to see Darling (John Schlesinger, Great Britain, 1965). The quotation of this film not only anticipates the importance of London to the narrative of the girls flight from home but is also suggestive of the relation between the Free Cinema tradition of the 1960s and BBC television drama in the 1990s. Firstly, Arden displays little identification with either the film or Julie Christie despite her desire to go to London that she expressed to the careers officer. The gap between the perspective of a young girl from Eccles and the shallow character at the centre of Darling is apparent from the scene in the cinema. The indifference of the young audience to the film demonstrates how much less resonant British cinema of the 1960s was in comparison with popular music. This is heightened by the reference to a British film that unsuccessfully aspired to the status and cultural capital of European Art cinema. It is ironic that the fault lines within British culture between an aspirant Europeanism and the immediacy of American influenced popular music/rock and roll are played out within what is regarded as the conservative form of the period television drama.

Cultural oppositions also underline the differences between generations. James Callis' character the Wolf decides to deploy his aristocratic roots to win over Irma

as a means to winning over Ellie. He invites them to a classical concert of Brahms and this presents Irma with an opportunity to relive the memory of her brief liaison with the man she is with on the photograph that stands above the piano. Irma reminds Ellie of the importance of appearance within the forum of the concert: "this is a public concert Eloise, not the rear stalls at the Gaumont, and quite frankly I'd be a lot happier if Norman's tastes extended beyond the coconut shies". Ellie's introduction to the legitimate culture of classical music is juxtaposed with an exchange between Arden and her father in the kitchen. Arden is miserable and Howard endeavours to raise her spirits by turning on the radio. The music emitted by the radio is Helen Shapiro singing Walking Back to Happiness and Howard begins to do the Twist. The decorum of the concert hall is contrasted with the spontaneity displayed in the kitchen in Irma's absence. The contrast between the difficulty of classical music and the immediacy of rock and roll refracts the conflict between the girls aspirations and the roles they are expected to follow. Even though Ellie has the education if not the social background to make her eligible to appreciate Brahms she does not share her grandmother's inclination towards the legitimate culture that she is encouraging her to follow.

Ellie does not easily recognize that is entitled to pursue her dreams. Ellie's contestation of her inheritance is more convincingly realized than Jess' assertion of her sexuality in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit because she is situated within the context of northern England in the 1960s. Outside the family home she declares to the Wolf that she has accepted her role as wife to Norman:

> "you lot made me think maybe, maybe there was something else, something more than this. But there isn't. This is what's down for me, getting married, having kids, keeping house, a quiet life, that's what down for me"

Ellie and Arden's connection with the rock and roll band presents them with the possibility of breaking away from the roles being offered to them in their home town and going to London with the Ice Cubes who have been offered a record contract. Just as Ellie is about to commit herself to a life as the wife of Norman she changes her mind and flees from her husband on her wedding night. Arden alleges she is pregnant by Dallas and she goes as his second choice partner. Howard eventually follows the girls to London leaving Norman and Irma behind in Eccles. The allure of London is not only important to the mythology of the sixties it also expands the terms of the narrative beyond the small northern town. The act of leaving which underlies the personal articulation of inheritance in Jarman, Davies and Bennett is necessarily incorporated into the fiction of Horsfield's narrative. The structure of feeling precipitated by returning home and to mother that is prevalent in Davies and Bennett is reversed in Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll because of Irma's reaction to the emptying of the family home.

Ellie attempts to leave London for Scotland and is interrupted by Norman who forces her to returns home where she is incarcerated in her room. Since Ellie is pregnant and approaching motherhood she begins to question her grandmother about the course of her own life and why she never remarried. Irma replies: "when he died I had a child to bring up then later you girls. When children come into the picture you stop thinking about yourself.....you learn to be content with less". Ellie presses her further: " but after, when they're older, when they've left home". Irma replies: "your time's gone. you're past it. You can't do the things a young girl would do, you'd look ludicrous, you'd be ridiculed, people would laugh at you". Ellie continues to probe her and exposes the void in her grandmother's life. "But you could do some things....like music. Playing the piano". As Ellie suggests this Irma's hands slide across the wooden edge of Ellie's bed. Ellie succeeds in getting the self-denying Irma to recognize that the sacrifices of motherhood need not be eternal. The next shot shows Irma sat at the piano and then the glass in the frame that

preserves the photograph above the piano reflect's Irma's anguished gaze back at her. As she begins to play the piano she stares into the photograph again and her anguish intensifies with the music as tears enter her eyes. The act of returning to the piano exposes the artifice of Irma's memory that she has maintained in the core of the family home for so long. Ellie's turns her entrapment on to her grandmother. The photograph which testifies to Irma's courtship and her ensuing family has served as a sacred commemoration in the home because of the alleged death of the man that Irma is pictured with. The presence of the photograph should consummate the family in the way Bourdieu has previously described. However, when Howard returns looking for Ellie Irma breaks down and the photograph is exposed as preserving a false memory. Irma confesses that Howard was conceived during a relationship that lasted only one night. She resists Howard's need to share their respective grief as she repels his approach insisting that she "can manage". Howard's response is indicative of his long held need to exchange feelings with his mother: "well maybe I can't. Maybe it'll take more than a couple of minutes to get used to the idea that my mother spent the last thirty eight years defending a gutless, a philandering bastard".

The photograph is a formal repository of commemoration and usually functions in the way Bourdieu describes. However, it is the narrative that Irma has constructed around the image that is revealed as false. Irma has cherished the photograph to compensate for the loss and absence of Howard's father. Irma's apocryphal alliance with the photograph is fortified by the capacity of the photograph to manifest the patina of time as Roland Barthes described:

> the photograph does not call up the past. The effect it produces upon me is not to restore what has been abolished (by time, by distance) but to attest that what I see has indeed existed...the important thing is that the photograph possesses an evidential force, and that its testimony

> bears not on the object but on time. From a phenomenological viewpoint, in the Photograph, the power of authentication exceeds the power of representation (52).

It is the events that the photograph allows Irma to keep hidden that are finally disclosed to Howard. The fictional mode of articulating a northern inheritance in Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll reverses the hallowed quality of the family photograph that is articulated in Distant Voices Still Lives. The family photograph is frequently the locus of inheritance and testament to the son's loss of his mother. This formation is inverted in Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll. Ellie, despite facing impending motherhood herself does not want to reproduce her mother's sacrificial life. Ellie succeeds to a degree in fulfilling Steedman's wish for her mother. Motherhood does not stop Ellie from allowing herself to want and it is this contestation of her inherited role that reveals the possibility of change and breaks down the facade maintained for so long by her grandmother. The language of inheritance that fixes the mother in the personal articulations of Davies and Bennett is reversed to give a voice to mothers in the fictional mode.

Steedman described the feeling of recognition she experienced when she saw Tony crying outside the family home in Distant Voices Still Lives. A different kind of recognition is manifest in Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll, which achieves a representation of a feeling between daughter and grandmother rather than son and mother. Ellie written from the perspective of a writer wanting to critique the inherited myths of the 1960s, recognizes that she wants to do more than simply reproduce her grandmother's sacrificial role. By the end of the final part of Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll Ellie achieves this ambition as she flees to Iona with her child to be joined by Dallas. The initial movement by Ellie, Arden and the members of the band away from the confining circumstances of Eccles possibilities precipitates the loosening of the stranglehold of "I want doesn't get".

Making Out, Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll reveal contrasting relations between women and inheritance. The two texts which represent the past through a preserved location reveal within the form of the BBC prestige drama two dissenting dispositions towards inheritance. In Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll there is the articulation of a movement away from an inherited formation firstly by the conflict between sexual difference and the conformity demanded by religion and secondly through the negotiation with inherited roles.

This need not simply be the assertion of individual difference against the overdrawn lines of religious intolerance as in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit, but also, the expression of the differences between generations that is manifest within the connection between Ellie and her grandmother and their shared but contrasting experience of motherhood. This mode of articulation does not yield a structure of feeling predicated upon loss but is still resonant as an address of the past and a negotiation with inheritance rather than a clear rejection of it. The women who address the language of inheritance that Lowenthal argues confines women extend the representation of women beyond the mothers of inheritance that guarantee the elegies of Jarman, Davies and Bennett.

The number of women involved in the production, writing and direction of these texts for the BBC suggests how the heritage television drama in the 1990s can no longer be defined and consigned as a generically one-dimensional object and also cannot be sufficiently understood through the designation of post-heritage (53). As the periods of the more recent past are increasingly re-articulated or expressed as in Making Out through the friction between the continuity of inherited tradition and change, then the need to extend and to historicize the critical vocabulary of heritage increases.

## Conclusion

The texts I have selected for further critical scrutiny reveal that the representation through film and television of what is passed on from the past is not necessarily limited to the heritage film as it is currently identified. The rise to prominence of national heritage that occurred in the 1980s and the representations of the past that accompanied this tendency were not necessarily uniformly reproduced across film and television during the 1980s and 1990s. The expressive tendency I have described is not consistent enough to be demarcated as a sub-genre of heritage. A more productive relation between the voices of inheritance that I have identified and what has come to be recognized as heritage lies in locating the contrasting attachments to the values that are discursively aggregated under the umbrella of heritage. The engagement with what is passed on and manifest as different articulations of inheritance produces an enriched and wider debate that questions the formation of the relation between heritage and contemporary film and television. The use of the predicating term inheritance and the dispositions towards England which this yields expands the range of texts that can be considered in relation to the heritage film and the range of the debate that surrounds these texts.

The difference between an archetypal heritage film such as Howards End (James Ivory, Great Britain, 1992) and what Higson refers to as the different heritage of films such as Distant Voices Still Lives is best described as a mode of articulation that recurs across British film and television of the 1980s and 1990s, not necessarily as a generically consistent film style, but as a means of engaging with the cultural formations that a positioned subject inherits. Jarman's personal differentiation of the cultural inheritance he claims through The Last of England is manifest through the different modes of articulation represented by my corpus. The corpus reveals that the movement between inherited sources of personal and national identity is not reproduced in the same terms as those set out by Jarman.

Probing the limits of what has come to be taken for granted as the heritage film has the potential to open up other levels of discussion and areas of research which had previously been closed down around contested readings of a very restricted set of films. The resonance of inheritance across British film and television in the 1980s and 1990s raises questions of the precise nature of the representation of the inheritances that form heritage. A broader sample of engagements with the past suggests that greater consideration needs to be given to the means by which sources of personal and collective memory and wider historical reference points become recognizable as heritage. These are not necessarily questions that textually concentrated film studies can answer but such questions cannot be omitted from a wider cultural consideration of the relation between British film and television and heritage.

There is evidence across the corpus of a working through, a process of coming to terms with what has been inherited which produces evidence of a common feeling expressed through formally divergent modes. The voices of Jarman, Bennett and Davies articulate their inheritance by remembering where they have come from and this manifests an elegiac structure of feeling. This is continued in the documentaries of Keiller where the inheritance is less personal and articulated from a wider range of reference that transgresses the boundaries of non-fiction. These masculine voices share a sense of loss, not only of the formative time of childhood, but also a loss of the ability to express a sense of belonging to contemporary England. The degree to which the voices of Jarman, Bennett and Keiller are *personal* is indicative of the demise of the collective political formations that became evident in the 1980s. In an interview the television producer John McGrath argues that - 'the radicalism of the right has made the posture of the left more one of a kind of nostalgia and conservatism than it really ought to be' (1). The condition that McGrath identifies is most apparent in London and Robinson in Space where Robinson epitomizes the

anomie brought on by the inability to renew arguments for change. The transparency of access to this sense of loss is made visible by the hybridizing of Englishness which is articulated in the Black Audio documentaries. The Black Audio documentaries are expressive of a greater degree of collective consciousness which brings into view the ethnicity of the terms and boundaries of the inheritance addressed by Jarman, Davies, Bennett and Keiller.

In Making Out, Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit and Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll the northern home and family is critiqued without the sentiment that is so often formed when it is left behind. The significance of personal expression in the articulation of inheritance, even in the adaptation of Winterson's novel, is reduced in these texts because they involve women and girls contesting and moving away from the inheritance of motherhood, home and family. The role of the inherited past within these texts is not the temporal resonance of personal memory, nor the preserved correspondence which marks the heritage aesthetic, but a reworking of the iconographic and enduring features of the north and a questioning of the myths that are passed on relating to life in the 1960s.

The discursive boundaries of these inheritances reveal that the representative terrain between the personal and the national is unevenly distributed and contested. At the level of the nation it is the condition of England in the present that feeds the tendency to look back to the past. The equation of heritage with postmodernity assumes that the inability to renew modernism that is evident in London and Robinson in Space is equally registered across all subjects. The ire of The Last of England and the racial redress of Handsworth Songs that are so characteristic of the 1980s create a temporality of past, present and future. In the 1990s Black Audio reveal a distinct maturity and desire to address the past in order to look forward in Touch of the Tarbrush.

The voices of inheritance reveal the fault lines of English culture not simply across the axes of identity but also in terms of the expression of the relation with the past. There is a significant difference between the particularity of claiming a selected cultural inheritance from the past as Jarman desires, and at the other end of the scale of access there is the issue of the degree to which the experience of black British people must first be represented historically which is addressed by Handsworth Songs. This uneven distribution of access to the past reveals the distance between the connections made with the past from different inherited speaking positions and the sealed and completed object that represents heritage. It is not enough to suggest that heritage can be pluralized to accommodate these marginalized voices. It is rather the case that the means of access to the past is determined by those historical, social and political factors which are closed off, not by the heritage film, but by the heritage that has been constructed within film studies to form the relation with film. When this relation of correspondence that underpins heritage cinema is not followed other texts that engage with the past reveal the cultural context and history that surrounds the salience of heritage.

The evocation of the past in Distant Voices Still Lives, Handsworth Songs and London and Robinson in Space occurs through a formal modernism, and Jarman's mode of expression leans more towards the avant garde. The paradox of this English modernism is that it is accompanied by the enduring English romantic inclination to look back to an overdetermining past, and, particularly in Keiller, demonstrates the problem of looking forward to the future with optimism under the postmodern condition. The political statement of Handsworth Songs suggests, contra Wollen, and despite the condition of England in the 1980s, an ongoing collective project rather than something that has already happened and been absorbed (2). The different articulations of inheritance refer to the context of modernity which gave rise to heritage. The constitution of this modernity need not necessarily be expressed through modernism. The television texts of Bennett,

Winterson/Kidron and Horsfield/Bernard address in different modes, the friction between inherited tradition and change. These texts represent the contestation of inheritance and the defence of a particular public service heritage by Bennett which argues against the political formation which produced and mobilized heritage in the 1980s.

The film and television of inheritances that inflects the relation with heritage is not necessarily manifest, or best understood, as a visible artefact such as the country house is, but is, rather an expression of those internalized relations that are passed on. These can be manifest as either a state of mind, an imagined possibility, a recognition of age, an expiation, or a rejection of the oppressive pastness of these states. The response to what is passed on from the past prefigures what has come to be recognized very clearly as the national heritage, and it is one of the prefiguring factors that is at stake in its construction. Clearly, the inheritances I have selected operate below the hegemony of national heritage but they suggest that there were other dispositions evident across British film and television in the 1980s and 1990s.

The inheritances I have identified require that we respond, not simply at the level of an empirically asserted and debated set of images, but more discursively. It is out of the various evocations of the past that the passionately felt responses to what has been inherited are located. The strongest expressions of feeling are found in the male voices of Jarman, Davies, Keiller and Bennett. To describe the elegiac sensibility of these older voices as simply nostalgic for a lost past is reductive. The privation of Jarman, the mourning of Davies and the different degrees of irony in Bennett and Keiller suggest modes of feeling that combine elegy, romanticism, melancholy, age and nostalgia that are borne out of inheritance. Paternal relations are critical to the elegies of Jarman, Davies and Bennett. These sons have not continued the family way, and where Jarman questions the patriarchal and heterosexual relations of inheritance, Davies and Bennett consecrate the centrality

of motherhood and local cultural identity within these relations. It is evident that across the work of Jarman, Davies and Bennett, there is a need to express an attachment to this inheritance which is unresolved in the light of their subsequent departures and routes toward self-expression.

The context the articulation of inheritance is indicative of a response to modernity and the texts of Bennett, Davies and Keiller resonate with other marked moments of twentieth century cultural assessment found in the written accounts of J.B. Priestley and Richard Hoggart. These appraisers of the national culture associate the present with the decline and loss of authenticity. Keiller and Black Audio show how this mode of articulation can no longer be contained solely within the borders of England. A distinction emerges between this wider context and the debate about heritage. The latter can be characterized as a dispute about the manner of reproducing and exhibiting the past and the exclusivity of what and who is exhibited. Inheritance helps to reflect the wider cultural and political conditions which surround the polarized and gendered critical response to the ascent of the heritage film.

The mourning of the past is a position more readily taken up by the masculine voices. This disposition is less prevalent in the Black Audio documentaries because the ground from which this look to the past takes place is only just beginning to be assumed by black British film makers such as John Akomfrah and occurs out of ongoing political struggle in the present. It is clearly rejected in Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit where sexuality and the exaggerated mother, daughter relationship are mutually exclusive. This suggests that the ground between the personal and national pasts remain exclusively masculine within British film and television but this would be premature. It is perhaps more the case that this has not been a primary concern or a source of anxiety for women working in British film and television. Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll and the earlier Orlando (Sally Potter, Great Britain,

1993) are notable fictional and biographical exceptions. These texts begin to suggest how women are positioned and how they contest this representative terrain.

The inheritance texts represent less a case of reading and interpreting an assumed set of iconographic visual qualities than identifying how the articulation of the past inflects the relation between British film and television and heritage. The heritage film continues to arguably confirm the official cinema defined by Thomas Elsaessar. However, other inherited pasts which contest this seemingly closed area of British film and television are suggested by examining a set of predominantly unofficial texts through the official theme of heritage. The inheritance texts reveal the sources of not necessarily other, finished heritages, but those inheritances that were part of the polarised but contested political culture that characterized the 1980s and British film and television in the 1980s and early 1990s.

The heritage debate and the set of inheritances I have identified represents an older film and television that looks back through experience and often expresses a response to the condition of England. It is the apparently cinematic other of younger Scottish, English, Northern Irish and Welsh films such as Shopping (Paul Anderson, Great Britain, 1993), Trainspotting (Danny Boyle, Great Britain, 1996), Divorcing Jack (David Caffrey, Great Britain/France, 1998) or Human Traffic (Justin Kerrigan, Great Britain, 1999) but importantly, all of these films share a tradition of wilful resistance and dissent in relation to official national culture. This has to some extent become an expected and differential norm of British film and television and national culture. The peripheral voices of the unofficial films derided by Norman Stone in 1988 have moved towards what is in the 1990s is a more pluralized but less formally distinct centre.

A connection can be made between the articulation of inheritance expressed across my corpus and the institutional relation of production that makes a space available

for the more marginal of these voices to be heard. The institutional contexts for these dissenting and independent voices such as the Black Workshops and the BFI Production fund increasingly represent a national cultural heritage in danger of passing into history. The withdrawal of funding from the BFI Production Fund in 1998 and the increased commercial pressures upon the BBC and Channel 4 problematically co-exist with the traditional public service mandate of these bodies. Public tradition and private commercial sources continue to overlap and one of the effects of this convergence is the increasing importance of individual producers able to negotiate and adapt to the changed conditions. There remains a tendency to resist and insist upon a contestation of the sources of expression in national culture. The significant difference is this tendency can no longer reside in an assured production space. The past that is inherited both personally and nationally is not static and will continue to contribute to the cultural dialogue with the changing present. This seems particularly true of British culture. This mode of expression which is poised between the antinomies of past and present, documentary and fiction, and unofficial cinema and official cinema offers the possibility of opening up what has thus far been a closed category of British film and television.

The low budget marginally produced films such as The Last of England, Distant Voices Still Lives, Robinson in Space and to a lesser extent Handsworth Songs appear to confirm John Hill's dichotomy of British cinema in which he identifies two major strands comprised of - 'a *cinema d'auteur* which circulates in Europe and the heritage film which appeals to the US' (3). John Caughie supplements Hill's summary by pointing out the effect of a production background in which film and television begin to converge. Caughie argues that the gaining of international prestige for British art cinema circulating within an aesthetic and cultural sphere may be at the expense of the local specificities and diversities of a complexly national television (4). Hill's opposition tends to suggest that a concern with the past is the concern of the heritage film and the European auteur film can be

identified by a self-conscious and frequently urban engagement with modernity. Caughie's tracing of the path of Ken Loach film from the 1960s to the 1990s inserts television into the argument. However, the voices of inheritance also show that an engagement with the past is a commonly manifest aspect of national culture which can be expressed with a degree of innovation that bears the residual traces of British modernism and circulates as European art cinema. There is a distinction to be made between the familiarity of the inheritance that is manifest and its destination as exported film and television. It is clear that heritage is an international cultural phenomenon but a sustained examination through inheritance of the national culture that produces heritage challenges the formal and generic unity of heritage cinema. The precursory notion of inheritance suggests that too many critical and contesting voices are closed out of the frame by defining a homologous relation between heritage and film and television.

## Footnotes

### INTRODUCTION

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## Filmography

***The Last of England*** **(1987)**

Anglo International Films for British Screen, Channel 4 and ZDF

Director: Derek Jarman

Editors: Peter Cartwright, Angus Cook, John Maybury, Sally Yeadon,
Production Designer: Christopher Hobbs
Producer: James MacKay, Don Boyd
Photography: Derek Jarman, Christopher Hughes, Cerith Wyn Evans, Richard Heslop, Tim Burke
Lighting Design: Christopher Hughes
Special Effects: Tony Neale
Musical arrangements: Simon Turner

**Cast:**
Gerard McCarthur (Spring)
John Philips
Gay Gaynor
Matthew Hawkins
Tilda Swinton
Spencer Leigh
Nigel Terry (Voice over).

***The Garden*** **(1990)**

Channel 4 and British Screen in association with ZDF and Uplink

Director: Derek Jarman

Lighting Cameraman: Christopher Hughes
Editor: Peter Cartwright
Original Music: Simon Fisher Turner
Producer: James Mackay

**Cast**:
Tilda Swinton (Madonna)
Johnny Mills and Kevin Collins (lovers)
Pete Lee-Wilson (Devil)
Spencer Leigh (Mary Magdalene/Adam)
Jody Graber (young boy)
Roger Cook (Christ)
Jessica Martin (Singer)
Philip MacDonald (Joseph/Jesus)
Dawn Archibald (Nature Spirit)
Michael Gough (Voice overs)

Maribelle La Manchega (Spanish Dancer)
Orlando (Pontius Pilate)
Mike Tezcan and Matthew Wilde (Policemen).

***Distant Voices Still Lives* (1988)**

BFI Production in association with Channel 4/ZDF

Director: Terence Davies

Executive Producer: Colin MacCabe
Producer: Jennifer Howarth
Photography: William Diver, Patrick Duval
Camera Operator: Harriet Cox
Editor: William Diver
Costume Design: Monica Howe

**Cast:**
Freda Dowie (Mother)
Pete Postlethwaite (Father)
Angela Walsh (Eileen)
Dean Williams (Tony)
Lorraine Ashbourne (Maisie)
Sally Davies (Eileen as child)
Michael Starke (Dave)
Vincent Maguire (George)
Antonia Mallen: (Rose)
Debi Jones (Micky)
Chris Darwin (Red)
Marie Jelliman (Jingles)
Andrew Schofield (Les)
Anny Dyson (Granny)
Jean Boht (Aunty Nell)

***The Long Day Closes* (1992)**

Film Four International in Association with the British Film Institute

Director: Terence Davies

Executive Producers: Ben Gibson Colin MacCabe
Producer: Olivia Stewart
Screenplay: Terence Davies
Director of Photography: Michael Coulter in colour
Camera Operator: Harriet Cox
Editor: William Diver
Production Designer: Christopher Hobbs
Art Director: Kave Naylor

Costume Design: Monica Howe
Wardrobe Supervisor: Patrick Wheatley
Make-up: Aileen Seaton Heather Jones

**Cast:**
Marjorie Yates (Mother)
Leigh McCormack (Bud)
Anthony Watson (Kevin)
Nicholas Lamont (John)
Ayse Owens (Helen)
Tina Malone (Edna)
Jimmy Wilde (Curly)
Robin Polley (Mr Nicholls)
Peter Ivatts (Mr Bushell)
Joy Blakeman (Frances)
Denise Thomas (Jean)
Patricia Morrison (Amy)
Gavin Mawdsley (Billy)

***Handsworth Songs* (1986)**

Black Audio Film Collective

Director: John Akomfrah
Camera: Sebastian Shah
Additional photography: John Akomfrah, Ray Cornwall
Sound: Trevor Mathison
Assistant Sound: Avril Johnson
Rostrum: Douglas Hines
Production Assitants: Clare Joseph Reece Auguiste
Additional Crew: Don Shaw Joseph Burgundy
Props: Lina Gopaul
Supervising Editor: Brand Thumin
Editor: Anna Liebschner
Assistant Editor: Avril Johnson, Rosalind Haber
Video Editor: Hugh Williams
Music: Trevor Mathison
Lighting: John Akomfrah
Voice-Over: Pervais Kahn, Meera Syal, Yvonne Weekes,
Music: Trevor Mathison
Interviewees: Handsworth and Aston Welfare Association, Asian Youth Movement (Birmingham), Sachkhand Nanak Dham, Mr McClean, Soho Road Temple
Archive Sources: Archive Film Agency, Birmingham Central Library, BBC, British Movietonenews Ltd., Central Independent Television plc, Granada Television Ltd., Pathe Film Library, Yorkshire Television
Additional material: A.V.M. Ceddo Film and Video Workship, Macro Film and Video

Script: Black Audio Film Collective
Producer: Lina Gopaul

***Touch of the Tarbrush* (1991)**

Black Audio Film Collective

Director: John Akomfrah

Series consultant: Philip Dodd
Photography: David Scott
Sound: Trevor Mathison
Video camera: Mick Duffield
Graphic Designer: Paul Bond
Production Assistants: David Lawson Alexandra Briggs
Production Secretaries: Avril Johnson Raymond Oaka
Researcher: Jefferson Bannis
Assistant Editor: Michelle Baughan
Dubbing Mixer: Peter Hodges
Editor: Robert Hargreaves
Producer: Lina Gopaul
Series Producer: Sam Orgar

Lay of the Land Series
A Production for BBC television by Black Audio Film Collective

***London* (1994)**

Koninck/BFI production in association with Channel Four Television

Director: Patrick Keiller

Executive in Charge of Production: Angela Topping
Executive Producer: Ben Gibson
Producer: Keith Griffiths
Production Manager: Jacqui Timberlake
Assistant Director: Julie Norris
Screenplay: Patrick Keiller
Director of Photography: Patrick Keiller in colour
Editor: Larry Sider
Sound Design: Larry Sider
Sound Editor: Kate O'Neill
Sound Re-recordist: Hugh Strain
Narrator: Paul Scofield

***Robinson in Space* (1997)**

Production Companies: BBC Films in Association with The British Film Institute and Koninck

Director: Patrick Keiller

Producer: Keith Griffiths
Executive Producers: Tessa Ross, Ben Gibson
Associate Producer: Julie Norris
Production Manager: Jacqui Timberlake
Narrator: Paul Scofield
Screenplay: Patrick Keiller
Script Editor: Roger Hyams
Director of Photography: Patrick Keiller
Editor: Larry Sider
Sound: Larry Sider
Dubbing Editor: Joakim Sundström
Dubbing Mixer: Colin Martin.

***Dinner at Noon (1988)***

Written and Presented by: Alan Bennett

Producer and Director: Jonathan Stedall

Research Assistant: Alison Kelly, Emma D'Eath
Production Assistant: Glenys Davies
Photography: Mike Fox, Paola Ribeiro
Sound Recordist: Keith Rodgerson
Dubbing Mixer: Stuart Greig
Film Editing: Ian Pitch, Peter Brownlee
Executive Producer: David Pearson

BBC Bristol 1988.

***Portrait or Bust* (1993)**

Written and Presented by: Alan Bennett

Produced and Directed by: Jonathan Stedall

Photography: Mike Fox, Tania Hoser
Sound recordist: Keith Rodgerson,
Dubbing Mixer: Andrew Wilson
On-line editor: Steve Olive
Music: Ian Butcher, The Little London Primary School Leeds
Graphics: 4:2:2 Videographics
Production assistants: Mitch Turnbull, Rachel Pinnock
Production Manager: Christine Owen
Film editor: Pip Heywood, Ali Merryweather

Research: Daniel Percival
Executive Producer: Anne Scorer

Scorer Associates. A Production for BBC Bristol 1993.

***The Abbey (1995)***

Written and Presented by: Alan Bennett

Director: Jonathan Stedall

Producer for the Abbey: Emma St John Smith
Music Consultant: Martin Neary
Organist: Stephen Le Provost
Location Researcher: Rob Mitchell
Graphic Designer: Richard Morrison
Stills Photographer: Paola Ribiero
Finance Manager: Jill Ryan
Clapper Leader: Matthew Fox
Lighting: Terry Hunt
Camera Grip: Alfred C. Williams
Audio Engineer: Mark Parry
On-Line Editor: Adam Grant
Telecine: Luke Rainey & Colin Peters
Dubbing Mixer: Nick Rogers
Production Assistant: Diane Holmes
Location Manager: Toby Freeman
Associate Producer: Alison Carter
Second Unit Cameraman: Michael Robinson
Sound Recordist: Keith Rodgerson
Film Editor: Pip Heywood
Executive Producer for the BBC John Drury
Director of Photography: Mike Fox
Producer: Andrew Holmes

Holmes Associates Production for BBC North 1995.

***Making Out* (1989)**

Written by: Debbie Horsfield

Director: Chris Bernard

**Cast:**
Melanie Kilburn (Jill)
Margi Clarke (Queenie)
Rachel Davies (Pauline)
Shirley Stelfox (Carol May)
Moya Brady (Klepto)
Heather Tobias (Donna)
Keith Allen (Rex)
Alan David (Bernie)
Gary Beadle (Simon)
Tracie Bennett (Norma)
Barbara Keogh (Sally)
Tim Dantay (Ray)
Brian Hibbard (Chunky)
Claire Quigley (Sharon)
William Ash (Nicky)
Billy Bean (Mick)
Don Henderson (Mr. Beachcroft)

Series devised by: Franc Roddam
Music: New Order
Production Associate: Josephine Ward
Production Manager: Roger Gartland
Location Manager: Jim Thomson
Production Assistant: Hilary Binner
Assistant Floor Managers: Martin Coates Stan Royle
Technical Co-ordinator: Ron Clare
Vision Engineer: George Bowler
Chief Electrician: Alan Parker
Properties Buyer: Lena Kelsall
Graphic Designer: Mark Allen
Costume Designer: Inez Nordell
Make up designer: Joyce Dean
Videotape Editor: Ian O'Shaughnessy
Sound: Malcolm Hill Tony Greenwood
Executive Producer: Franc Roddam
Script Editor: Susan Harrison
Designer: John Coleman
Lighting cameraman: Graham Veeners
Producer: John Chapman

BBC North West 1989
A BBC TV Production in association with Television New Zealand.

***Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit*** **(1990)**

Adapted from her novel by: Jeanette Winterson

Director: Beeban Kidron

**Cast:**
Emily Ashton (Small Jess)
Geraldine McEwan (Mother)
Peter Gordon (William)
Barbara Hicks (Cissy)
Margery Withers (Elsie)
Elizabeth Spriggs (May)
Freda Dowie (Mrs Green)
Celia Imrie (Miss Jewsbury)
Sophie Thursfield (Jess' Real Mother)
Kenneth Cranham (Pastor Finch)
Pam Ferris (Mrs Arkwright)
Katy Murphy (Mrs Virtue)
Sharon Bower (Mrs Vole)
Cathryn Bradshaw (Melanie)
Charlotte Coleman (Jess)

Music Composed by: Rachel Portman
Conducted by: David Snell
First Assistant: Maurice Hunter
Production Manager: Liz Mace
Location Manager: Paul Brodrick
Production Assistant: Frances Alcock
Assistant Floor Managers: Fiona Elrington Richard Laxton
Casting: Michelle Guish
Make-up Designer: Linda McInnes
Costume Designer: Les Lansdown
Production Associate: Glyn Edwards
Designer: Cecilia Brereton
Photographer: Ian Punter
Film Editor: John Strickland

***Sex, Chips and Rock 'n' Roll*** **(1999)**

Written by Debbie Horsfield

Director: John Woods

**Cast:**
Sue Johnston (Irma)
Gillian Kearney (Ellie)
Emma Cooke (Arden)

David Threlfall (Norman)
Joseph McFadden (Dallas)
Julian Kerridge (Tex)
James Callis (The Wolf)
Phil Daniels (Larry)
Nicholas Farrell (Howard)
Jim Harper (Clifford)

Script Executive: Roger Hyams
Production Co-ordinator: Joanna Timms
Accountant: Vivien Philpot
Casting Assistant: Chrissie McMurrich
Stills Photographer: Steve Morley
Unit Publicist: David Burns
Choreographer: Quinny Sacks
Location Manager: Adam Browne
Location Assistant: Caroline McCarthy
1st Assistant Director: Howard Arundel
2nd Assistant Director: Justine Moakes
3rd Assistant Director: Karen Thrussell
Editor: Paul Garrick
Producer: Liz Trubridge
Executive Producer BBC: Tessa Ross
Executive Producers Wall to Wall: Alex Graham Gina Cronk.