



## 'Too much preoccupied with dole and dolour'

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**'Too much preoccupied with dole and dolour': Walter Greenwood's search for the radical and the popular in His Worship the Mayor**

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3 **'Too much preoccupied with dole and dolour': Walter Greenwood's**  
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6 **search for the radical and the popular in *His Worship the Mayor***  
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11 Phil O'Brien, University of Manchester  
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16 **Abstract:** This article reveals the cultural history of Walter Greenwood's second novel *His*  
17 *Worship the Mayor* (1934). It tracks its trajectory from being *Love on the Dole's* critically-  
18 acclaimed semi-sequel to a dismissed and subsequently forgotten work. New and extensive  
19 archival research uncovers the censorship history of *Give Us This Day*, the play the novel  
20 became. It details how the stage version attracted the attention of the Lord Chamberlain's  
21 office before an intervention from the BBC's Director-General in 1952 meant it was never  
22 performed again as a radio production. Further, the reasons why the various adaptations of  
23 *His Worship the Mayor* were not deemed as commercially attractive as *Love on the Dole* are  
24 analysed; finally, I argue that Greenwood struggled to find an acceptable mediation  
25 between popular appeal and political radicalism.  
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41 **Keywords:** Greenwood, 1930s, working class, dole, popular, radical.  
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45  
46 On the evening of Wednesday 20 February 1952, Walter Greenwood's radio play *Give Us*  
47 *This Day*, based on his second novel *His Worship the Mayor* (1934), aired for the final time  
48 on the BBC. Days later the corporation's Director-General Sir William Haley wrote to the  
49 Controller of Entertainment, Richard Howgill, to advise him of his misgivings concerning the  
50 broadcast. 'A governor informally at lunch yesterday felt that this play was now out of date  
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3 and unreal', reported Haley. 'It doesn't appear to have had a general theatrical run or to  
4  
5 have been made into a film'.<sup>1</sup> Howgill duly informed the drama script department, with the  
6  
7 proviso 'don't revise it' written by hand on his typed letter; a note was then placed on the  
8  
9 BBC's copy: 'If this play is broadcast again it must be preceded by appropriate presentation  
10  
11 concerning its out-of-dateness and unreality'.<sup>2</sup> It marked an inconspicuous end to a work  
12  
13 which, when it first appeared as a novel in 1934, had promised to eclipse the early success  
14  
15 achieved by Greenwood's first book *Love on the Dole* (1933). *His Worship the Mayor*  
16  
17 attained sales figures 'comparable' to its predecessor, according to the *Evening Chronicle*,<sup>3</sup>  
18  
19 and by 1937 had gone through five print runs, shifting close to 20,000 copies.<sup>4</sup> Like the  
20  
21 Salford author's famous debut, his follow-up was quickly adapted for the stage and toured  
22  
23 from 1936 to 1939; it was also performed in London in 1940, was the subject of attempted  
24  
25 yet unsuccessful screen adaptations,<sup>5</sup> and featured on the BBC Home Service in 1948 before  
26  
27 its final and fateful broadcast four years later. However, whereas *Love on the Dole* remains  
28  
29 in print and continues to attract considerable (although not always favourable) scholarly  
30  
31 attention, *His Worship the Mayor* has suffered both public and critical neglect. It was last in  
32  
33 print in the 1970s and, despite originally being billed as a 'semi-sequel' to *Love on the Dole*,  
34  
35 has garnered no substantial scholarship. This article reveals its cultural history, tracking its  
36  
37 trajectory from a critically-acclaimed follow-up, succeeding what has become one of the  
38  
39 defining texts of the 1930s, to a dismissed and subsequently forgotten work. Further, new  
40  
41 and extensive archival research uncovers the censorship history of *Give Us This Day*; I detail  
42  
43 how the play attracted the attention of the Lord Chamberlain's office before the BBC's fatal  
44  
45 intervention. And, in examining the political implications of Greenwood's revisions, I look at  
46  
47 why the various versions of his story were not deemed as commercially attractive as *Love on*  
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3 *the Dole*, arguing that the writer struggled to find an 'acceptable' mediation between  
4  
5 popular appeal and political radicalism.  
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## 8 9 10 **Reception**

11  
12 Stephen Constantine has described *Love on the Dole's* initial success as being reliant on the  
13  
14 enthusiasm of middle-class readers who 'could be concerned and yet not feel threatened'  
15  
16 due to the text's lack of negative portrayals of their own class.<sup>6</sup> He adds: 'Interestingly,  
17  
18 when Greenwood did portray middle-class characters as soulless oppressors of the poor in  
19  
20 his next novel, *His Worship the Mayor*, the reviewers were less kind: the *T.L.S* urged him to  
21  
22 seek "a little more detachment".<sup>7</sup> The response was more varied and complex than  
23  
24  
25 Constantine suggests, however; for instance, the most damning criticism came from the left.  
26  
27 Communist and folklorist A. L. Lloyd, writing in *Left Review*, complained of there being no  
28  
29 alternative in Greenwood's text. 'The novel lacks ultimate direction,' he said, 'and its most  
30  
31 serious fault is the complete absence of any suggestion of a solution'.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, there was  
32  
33 ample praise from the literary establishment. Graham Greene, writing for *The Spectator*,  
34  
35 said: 'Greenwood has followed up *Love on the Dole* with an even better second novel'.<sup>9</sup>  
36  
37 Edith Sitwell described both *Love on the Dole* and *His Worship the Mayor* as 'those two great  
38  
39 poignant novels'.<sup>10</sup> In a letter to Greenwood, after reading the latter book, she wrote: 'I  
40  
41 know you to be not only a born writer, but a great writer, (and I never use the word "great"  
42  
43 lightly)'.<sup>11</sup> The book was renamed *The Time Is Ripe* (taken from the James Russel Lowell  
44  
45 epigraph to *Love on the Dole*) for the American market in 1935 and reviewed for the *New*  
46  
47 *York Herald Tribune* by Iris Barry who welcomed Greenwood as a 'saviour' of contemporary  
48  
49 realism.<sup>12</sup> Further, S.E.R Wynne urged readers of *The New Nation* to 'Buy it, borrow it, beg  
50  
51 it, steal it – but for the love of literature and life, please read it'.<sup>13</sup> So, with some exceptions,  
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3 the dominant view was that Greenwood had produced a novel which rivalled if not bettered  
4  
5 *Love on the Dole*. Its focus on symbolic representatives of religious and political institutions  
6  
7 was particularly welcomed by Wynne:  
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10  
11  
12 The bishops and the bureaucrats, the high-hats and the politicians, who so  
13  
14 neatly arrange the destiny of the nation by taking adequate care of  
15  
16 themselves – how they will smart under Greenwood’s savage swingeing [...].  
17  
18 No political satirist of our time has equalled his merciless exposure of the  
19  
20 meannesses, petty conspiracies and callous indifference of provincial  
21  
22 politicians.<sup>14</sup>  
23  
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28 The petty and the callous are exemplified by one of *His Worship the Mayor’s* central  
29  
30 characters, Edgar Hargraves. Hargraves is a lower middle-class businessman who longs to  
31  
32 escape the tedium of his struggling clothing shop to become a ‘somebody’ within the local  
33  
34 community. He is desperate to be respected but, with mounting bills and decreasing  
35  
36 custom, has to face the ignominy of being identified with the ‘small shopkeeper class’.<sup>15</sup> The  
37  
38 novel, which straddles the Manchester and Salford border, is centred on the fortunes of the  
39  
40 Hargraves family and the working-class Shuttleworths. The latter live in the Peggytub Lane  
41  
42 area of Salford, a ‘slum’ district neighbouring Hanky Park (home to the Hardcastles from  
43  
44 *Love on the Dole*). Unemployed miner Joe Shuttleworth is reduced to picking discarded coal  
45  
46 on the slag heaps of Salford; his unemployment allowance ends after the allotted twenty-six  
47  
48 weeks and he is forced to apply for relief from the local council. ‘I’m scared o’ what’ll  
49  
50 happen when me dole runs out,’ he laments. ‘I’ll chuck meself into cut, I will’ (86). The men,  
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52  
53 as representatives of their respective classes, face contrasting challenges. While Hargraves  
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3 is saved from taking an 'irrevocable downward step in the social abyss' by the death of his  
4  
5 wealthy aunt (77), Shuttleworth is crushed by unemployment and poverty. The  
6  
7 transformative wealth Hargraves receives in inheritance from his aunt's estate launches his  
8  
9 political career, and he eventually and rather miraculously becomes Mayor of the fictional  
10  
11 Two Cities Council; Shuttleworth, meanwhile, receives no such salvation. His fortunes  
12  
13 plummet, at the same rate at which Hargraves' soar, and he dies in the workhouse.  
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16  
17         Despite key differences between *Love on the Dole* and *His Worship the Mayor*—the  
18  
19 positing of a 'villainous' middle class for example—a central feature of both novels is the  
20  
21 effect of the means test on a working-class family. And a key scene in the latter text involves  
22  
23 the appearance of Joe Shuttleworth before the Public Assistance Committee (PAC). The PAC  
24  
25 was originally set up in 1931 as unemployment levels approached a record high in Britain of  
26  
27 three million. It administered the means test, deciding if those seeking contribution-based  
28  
29 unemployment benefit were eligible for the maximum amount or if the payments were to  
30  
31 be reduced due to alternative sources of household income. The PAC was highly  
32  
33 controversial, as Selina Todd has described: 'The process of being means-tested was as  
34  
35 humiliating as the principle of the test was degrading'.<sup>16</sup> Further, Noreen Branson and  
36  
37 Margot Heinemann note: 'The new people [...] being means-tested included skilled men in  
38  
39 their fifties who had paid contributions for ten and even twenty years'.<sup>17</sup> Joe Shuttleworth is  
40  
41 one of these men. And the PAC, which includes Hargraves, cuts his money and orders his  
42  
43 son Jack to contribute to the household income. This experience became a common theme  
44  
45 within working-class fiction of the 1930s. Walter Brierley's *Means Test Man* (1935), for  
46  
47 example, is a powerful depiction of the pressures faced by the British working class during  
48  
49 the profound political and economic crises of the decade; as Ian Haywood notes, Brierley's  
50  
51 novel charts the 'emasculat[i]on' of a miner on the means test 'in order to make a protest  
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3 against unemployment and capitalist exploitation'.<sup>18</sup> Valentine Cunningham praises the  
4  
5 book for 'registering the mortal blows offered to the self-respect of working-people, their  
6  
7 deep sense of shame over being out of work and over the legalized snooping of the Means  
8  
9 Test inspector.<sup>19</sup> Chris Hopkins suggests that a number of such 'serious' 1930s writers were  
10  
11 concerned with 'negotiating a position for their writing somewhere between the consciously  
12  
13 "highbrow" and entertainment'.<sup>20</sup> This was imbued, Hopkins adds, with 'a sense of political  
14  
15 urgency, which often appears as the project of communicating to a wide national  
16  
17 readership'.<sup>21</sup> Further, Christopher Hilliard remarks that the turbulent interwar period saw a  
18  
19 'concerted search' by publishers for novels by working-class authors writing about  
20  
21 proletarian life.<sup>22</sup> '[T]he imperative to represent working-class culture to the more privileged  
22  
23 of the "two nations"', he argues, 'had both inspired working-class authors and been foisted  
24  
25 on them by middle-class editors and publishers'.<sup>23</sup> The concept of the 'two nations' is  
26  
27 important here. As Hilliard notes, there is a profound echo throughout much working-class  
28  
29 fiction from the thirties of the work of Elizabeth Gaskell, Charles Kingsley, Benjamin Disraeli,  
30  
31 and Charles Dickens: 'The Slump and industrial crises [...] prompted a series of "condition of  
32  
33 England" and "two nations" books revealing the suffering of working-class families in the  
34  
35 distressed areas'.<sup>24</sup> *His Worship the Mayor*, with its narrative structured by the rising  
36  
37 Hargraves family and the falling Shuttleworths, is a reshaping of this literary tradition,  
38  
39 evoking the social problem novel of the 1840s and in particular the work of Dickens.  
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### 49 **Satire and slumdom**

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51 Playwright Keith Dewhurst said of Greenwood: 'He is the only English novelist since Dickens  
52  
53 who has combined true mass appeal, passionate radicalism and bitterly honest  
54  
55 documentation with writing of high artistic quality'.<sup>25</sup> This is the challenge *His Worship the*  
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3 *Mayor* faced, in that it sought to combine popularity, radical politics, and authenticity; in  
4  
5 doing so it covers similar ground to *Hard Times* in particular.  
6

7 T.A. Jackson, a Marxist scholar and founding member of the Communist Party of  
8  
9 Great Britain, identified Dickens' industrial novel of 1854 as an 'attack upon the Manchester  
10  
11 School, *laissez faire*, economics and ethics'. 'Dickens presents the relation between  
12  
13 employers and employed faithfully and well,' said Jackson, 'and shatters the Manchester  
14  
15 school of philosophy as effectively as ever it has been done'.<sup>26</sup> Greenwood draws heavily on  
16  
17 this satirical tradition for *His Worship the Mayor* with its mix of local politicians, money  
18  
19 lenders, lawyers, shopkeepers, and funeral directors. For example, in his depiction of a trio  
20  
21 of local councillors, he writes:  
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28 Three more visitors were announced as Mr Hargraves reached for the whisky;  
29  
30 a very fat and greasy citizen with currant-like eyes and much jewellery; a  
31  
32 genial, red-complexioned, pop-eyed, eye-browless person who smoked a  
33  
34 cigar, and a flea-bitten, gaunt, ashen-faced man who wore an ancient  
35  
36 Homburg hat and carried an unrolled umbrella. 'Mr Hopewell, Mr Grumpole,  
37  
38 and Mr Price,' Stagge announced. (199)  
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44 Much like the way Dickens links privilege with corruption, Greenwood depicts the exploiting  
45  
46 class in *His Worship the Mayor* as farcical yet sinister. Their appearance reveals their  
47  
48 character and they are drawn in telling comparison to the working class: Mrs Shuttleworth is  
49  
50 introduced as a 'raw-boned woman [...] The irons of her clogs were perished, her skirt  
51  
52 threadbare at the hem' (41). This inflection of Dickens and the 'condition of England'  
53  
54 satirical tradition in Greenwood's novel, both in terms of form and content, suggests one  
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3 reason why *His Worship the Mayor* attracted the criticism it did. For Lloyd it was not just  
4  
5 what he perceived as Greenwood's lack of a radical political solution that warranted such  
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7 criticism but also that as a writer he was 'so determined', as Lloyd puts it, 'to be what his  
8  
9 publishers call "genial and satiric" that he fritters his chances away with a lot of  
10  
11 unconvincing caricature'.<sup>27</sup> However, one of the targets of Greenwood's political satire is  
12  
13 the same as that which Dickens in *Hard Times* attacks: the ideology of free trade economics.  
14  
15 In Greenwood's re-imagining of Salford and Manchester they are not 'Two Cities' at the  
16  
17 height of their industrial power; they are symbols of failure. Greenwood describes them  
18  
19 thus:  
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26 A couple of surly profligates brooding on a century of prosperity; a couple of  
27  
28 sprawling old drabs dreaming on a misspent youth, that is irrevocable. And  
29  
30 like ragged skirts the dreary acres of dilapidated slumdom spread out in all  
31  
32 directions, a mocking, derisive and damning indictment of the practical  
33  
34 application of that economic theory to which Manchester gave its name. (12)  
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39 Prosperity has made way for poverty, decadence for ghostly decay. Greenwood writes of  
40  
41 the 'mansions' of Swinbury Old Road and its adjoining streets which attracted the petty  
42  
43 bourgeoisie, such as William and Phoebe Harwood, uncle and aunt to Edgar Hargraves. Their  
44  
45 elaborate home, Brackenburn, gives a potent sense of historical and political context:  
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51 Cut into the keystone over the servants' entrance was a date '1840',  
52  
53 interesting to a historian in its significance that, about that time, the Hungry  
54  
55 Forties saw the tail end of a movement which herded the Lancashire hand-  
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3 loom weavers out of their garrets and cellars into the new factories to tend  
4  
5 the new-fangled looms driven by power. (29)  
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10 Here in Salford's middle-class district what was once the 'outward visible sign' of wealth has  
11 been consumed by 'slumdom' (28). Brackenburn, eventually divided up to house forty-seven  
12 families on the means test, is a metaphor for the failures of industrial capitalism. It is rotten  
13 and decaying: 'the paint had flaked and had fallen away, revealing patches of rust' (29). That  
14 this once 'civilised' social order is being threatened not only by the growth of the slum—the  
15 description of it as a 'ragged skirt' carries a compelling echo of Mrs Shuttleworth's  
16 'threadbare skirt'—but by the potential political organisation of the working class is the  
17 cause of increasing consternation amongst the novel's middle-class community; and here  
18 there is an illuminating link back to *Love on the Dole*.  
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30 Hargraves is outraged when he reads in the local newspaper of possible industrial  
31 action at Marlowe's factory. He fumes: 'How dare these working-men be dissatisfied? How  
32 dare they threaten to strike? [...] The blazing impertinence! Working men presuming to rule  
33 their betters!' (197). His recently acquired affluence is closely tied to Marlowe's; he inherits  
34 a fortune in bonds linked to the factory from his late aunt. Hargraves' indignation towards a  
35 potential strike demonstrates a symbolic departure from Greenwood's debut. Marlowe's is  
36 where Harry Hardcastle works in *Love on the Dole* but, as Constantine states, 'There is no  
37 employing class: Marlowe's is only a company name'.<sup>28</sup> However, in *His Worship the Mayor*,  
38 the same Marlowe's is not a faceless entity; it can be clearly linked to Hargraves. Therefore  
39 Greenwood's second novel clearly and explicitly figures who the broader working-class  
40 community view as the enemy. And tellingly, Hargraves is fearful of the radical political  
41 movements that this animosity could provoke. 'Labour men. Communists. Agitators [...]' he  
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3 grumbles. 'Why, if they were permitted a majority in parliament and the council chambers,  
4  
5 they'd take that which didn't rightfully belong to them' (206). So in contrast to *Love on the*  
6  
7 *Dole*, *His Worship the Mayor* posits the plight of the working-class Shuttleworths as  
8  
9 diametrically opposed to those middle-class characters who are complicit in the family's  
10  
11 downfall. The novel contrasts scenes depicting Hargraves' rise in social stature and wealth  
12  
13 with a despondent Shuttleworth struggling to comprehend the future. The unemployed  
14  
15 miner is bewildered by the changing landscape around him; Greenwood writes: 'It was too  
16  
17 much to ask a man to believe that the pit was closed finally and absolutely [...] It was as a  
18  
19 man who lives within sight of a mountain to dream the mountain gone' (162).  
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23  
24 Carole Snee has, somewhat unfairly, criticised Greenwood for reducing the  
25  
26 potentially radical subject matter of *Love on the Dole* to a traditional romance narrative. She  
27  
28 argues that the novel is 'marred by the structure of romance fiction which Greenwood  
29  
30 superimposes on his naturalistic fiction'.<sup>29</sup> In *His Worship the Mayor*, however, any happy  
31  
32 conclusion is resisted. The new life Jack Shuttleworth and his girlfriend Meg Teagle hope will  
33  
34 come after their marriage gives way to anger and resentment at the futility of any hope of  
35  
36 political or social change: 'He clenched his fists and teeth as there slowly dawned the  
37  
38 recognition that, as things now were, there was no escape for him from this bitter, endless  
39  
40 week-after-week struggle' (212). The idea of marriage and parenthood perpetuating the  
41  
42 plight of the working class is one which Greenwood focused on more closely when he  
43  
44 adapted his novel for the stage. It became, as I argue below, a major theme in the political  
45  
46 purpose of his writing.  
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### 53 **Stage**

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3 Greenwood returned to *His Worship the Mayor* in early 1936 when he adapted the novel for  
4  
5 the theatre. He wrote the stage adaptation of *Love on the Dole* with Ronald Gow so this next  
6  
7 production was to be the Salford author's first solo theatrical outing. He substantially  
8  
9 stripped the story and renamed it *Give Us This Day*. The lives of the middle-class community  
10  
11 are less of a direct focus as life on the means test for the Shuttleworth family becomes the  
12  
13 central theme. Edgar Hargraves' role is reduced to a brief appearance at the beginning of  
14  
15 the play, a key scene at the end, and a symbolic role on the PAC. Further, four of the six  
16  
17 scenes in the three acts are located in the working-class home of the Shuttleworths. The  
18  
19 manipulative Mrs Nettle, one of many who appear in both *Love on the Dole* and (as  
20  
21 peripheral characters) in *His Worship the Mayor*, takes a more central role on stage. Jack  
22  
23 Shuttleworth's increasing anger towards the class system remains while Hardman, an  
24  
25 unsuccessful Labour candidate in *His Worship the Mayor* who is defeated by Hargraves,  
26  
27 makes a fleeting appearance. There are also passing references to many of the characters  
28  
29 who frequent Greenwood's novel; however, only five of the twenty-three characters on  
30  
31 stage are middle class.  
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37 The adapted script was sent to the Lord Chamberlain with the play already in  
38  
39 rehearsal, and it was granted a licence only four days before the opening night in  
40  
41 Manchester. 'Another play about unemployment and poverty,' the Lord Chamberlain's  
42  
43 office reports, 'Didactally (sic), bitter and unconstructive; technically, crude and wanting in  
44  
45 originality. The action consists of the usual sequence of misfortunes'.<sup>30</sup> The language spoken  
46  
47 by the play's working-class characters attracted the most attention. The reader highlights  
48  
49 fourteen instances of the word 'bloody' along with two 'Christs'. Although three uses of  
50  
51 'bloody' were allowed to remain, the rest had to be cut. The censor was, on the whole,  
52  
53 dismissive of what was seen as an explicitly working-class play but one without any  
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3 subversive or politically sensitive elements, the report going so far as to state, hesitantly,  
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5 that 'the play ends with [...] the faintest glean of promise of a brighter future – perhaps'.<sup>31</sup>  
6  
7 *Give Us This Day* had its premiere on 19 March 1936 at Manchester Repertory Theatre,  
8  
9 Rusholme. Starring Eileen Draycott as Mrs Shuttleworth and Maurice Jones as her husband  
10  
11 Joe, the play was produced by Dominic Roche who also took the part of eldest son Jack. The  
12  
13 Mayor of Salford, Alderman George Sands, gave a commendatory speech after the premiere  
14  
15 and people had to be turned away from the sold-out theatre.<sup>32</sup> Greenwood was in New York  
16  
17 at the time, writing of 'the seamier side of this fabulous city' in a series of articles for the  
18  
19 *Evening Chronicle*,<sup>33</sup> and sent a cable to the cast back in Manchester urging them to '[b]e  
20  
21 bloody, bold, and resolute'.<sup>34</sup> Inevitable comparisons were drawn with the Salford writer's  
22  
23 earlier work. '*Give Us This Day* is not another *Love on the Dole*, I fear,' wrote the *Daily*  
24  
25 *Express*. 'But it is a play all England should and will see. They may not like it, but they cannot  
26  
27 fail to appreciate its purpose and sincerity'.<sup>35</sup> The *Evening Chronicle* described the  
28  
29 playwright's work as 'fiercely sincere, moving, and promising for his future as a solo writer  
30  
31 for the stage'.<sup>36</sup> On 2 April the BBC recognised this promise when a fifteen-minute excerpt  
32  
33 of the production was broadcast direct from Rusholme as part of the *North Region*  
34  
35 programme on the Home Service.  
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41  
42 Whereas the novel opens with a panoramic sweep of working-class Salford, followed  
43  
44 by a Sunday morning outing for local civic dignitaries at the parish church, the curtain goes  
45  
46 up on *Give Us This Day* to reveal the front of Hargraves' drapery and outfitting shop. As the  
47  
48 copy of the original script reveals, the stage version fast-forwards the action, with the  
49  
50 recommendation to 'see page 27 of *His Worship the Mayor*' for guidance.<sup>37</sup> A photograph  
51  
52 from the opening night provides an insight into the dichotomy portrayed by the  
53  
54 Shuttleworth and Hargraves families.<sup>38</sup> The desolate figure of Mrs Shuttleworth pleads with  
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3 a severe-looking Julia Hargraves for an advance in her cleaning wages to feed her children.  
4  
5 Joe Shuttleworth, holding his cap and with a look of desperation on his face, casts a ghostly  
6  
7 almost monstrous figure to the side of the women. Mrs Hargraves, depicted by Enid Hewitt,  
8  
9 warns Mrs Shuttleworth that she should not be 'bothering her master'. She adds: 'Your  
10  
11 husband is drawing the dole and we are paying you a wage. You ought to be able to  
12  
13 manage'.<sup>39</sup> Within a few minutes of being on stage, and given added emphasis by the stress  
14  
15 on 'we', a stark contrast between the working-class Shuttleworths and the middle-class  
16  
17 Hargraves family is drawn. Shuttleworth is in a state of confusion, muttering what will  
18  
19 become a familiar refrain: 'Why can't they open pit agen? All that coal down there and them  
20  
21 shuttin' it down'.<sup>40</sup> The singular theme of the play is established: the effect of  
22  
23 unemployment on a working-class family.  
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28 Crucially, the social aspirations of Edgar Hargraves are side-lined. On stage he is  
29  
30 presented as the employer of Mrs Shuttleworth, running a modest clothing shop and at the  
31  
32 mercy of his domineering wife. As a couple they represent the middle class and yet, unlike in  
33  
34 the novel, the audience is given little insight into their ways of thinking. Hargraves'  
35  
36 resentment due to his class status, the painful deference he exhibits to those he aspires to  
37  
38 be, and his pitiful longing for his elderly aunt's money do not feature. Neither does Swinbury  
39  
40 Old Road, Brackeburn, or any mention of the elections which set Hargraves off on his  
41  
42 political career. All of these in *His Worship the Mayor* provide a breadth and depth to the  
43  
44 portrayal of the middle class as well as a stark contrast to the lives of the working class. The  
45  
46 physical limitations of the theatre will have played some part in Greenwood's decision not  
47  
48 to feature, more substantially, this cross-section of Salford's middle-class community. And in  
49  
50 a choice between giving precedence to the Hargraves family or the Shuttleworths, the  
51  
52 writer chose to prioritise the latter. But it is an ideological decision as well as a practical one.  
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3 The Hargraveses become symbolic rather than tangible figures and audience sympathy is  
4  
5 shifted more emphatically onto the struggles faced by the Shuttleworths. This shift in focus  
6  
7 may, in turn, explain the criticism from some reviewers who complained that the play lacked  
8  
9 a cohesive structure. For example, the *Manchester Guardian* wrote: 'Character studies and  
10  
11 slices of life do not themselves make a workmanlike play, and this does not get beyond  
12  
13 them'.<sup>41</sup>  
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15

16  
17 Subsequently, these changes to the structure and content of Greenwood's story  
18  
19 result in greater emphasis being placed on what was already a key scene: Joe Shuttleworth  
20  
21 in front of the PAC. And it was this section of the play, performed across the entirety of act  
22  
23 two scene two, which drew praise from reviewers. 'There is a scene of old man  
24  
25 Shuttleworth appearing before the Public Assistance Committee,' wrote one reviewer,  
26  
27 'which should wring compassion and revolt from any audience'.<sup>42</sup> Such praise was despite  
28  
29 criticism for the play's lack of 'definition in form and development' as a whole. 'This scene is  
30  
31 intensely moving; so powerful is it that the rest of the play seems mere anti-climax,' wrote  
32  
33 *Daily Dispatch*.<sup>43</sup> The reasons for such responses are suggested by Greenwood and Roche's  
34  
35 commitment to a naturalistic portrayal of the means test. Crucially, they had a couple of  
36  
37 experts to call on, namely Walter Crabtree, who played Councillor Hopewell, and  
38  
39 Greenwood himself. The pair were both Labour councillors on Salford City Council in 1936.  
40  
41  
42 Greenwood later recalled how he had been on both sides of the table in the committee  
43  
44 room. 'This scene was "lifted" bodily from life', he revealed. 'You see, by a strange irony, the  
45  
46 years brought their changes and instead of being one of the "interviewed", I became a  
47  
48 member of a Public Assistance Committee so that I was now "an interviewer"'.<sup>44</sup> Through  
49  
50  
51 Crabtree's contacts, the cast were also able to watch the means test being applied a matter  
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3 of days before the play opened. As a result, one reviewer proclaimed: 'Realism has gone  
4 further than the text of the play'.<sup>45</sup>  
5  
6

7 The scene opens with an unnamed applicant for relief, referred to as 'MAN',  
8 appearing before the committee. On being told that his wife and children will have to go  
9 into the workhouse he launches into a violent rage. 'British justice, eh?' he fumes, 'An'  
10 think I fought in t' bloody trenches for the likes o' you [...] God! (Stamps out)'.<sup>46</sup> The  
11 intensity of the moment is caught in a second image which survives from the opening night;  
12 it shows the committee sat behind a large mahogany desk, against a wood-panelled wall,  
13 cowering.<sup>47</sup> The right fist of the applicant is clenched in anger, his left arm restrained by an  
14 usher. Whereas the 'MAN' earned no credit for fighting in the war, Shuttleworth appears  
15 and is castigated for not serving and for allegedly making a 'fortune' down the pit. Hopewell,  
16 echoing lines from *His Worship the Mayor*, says: 'Extravagance! What did they all do wi'  
17 their money when they got it? (Gazing at his colleagues). They spent it!'; 'They all take  
18 advantage of us just because we're public conveniences,' he adds, seemingly comparing  
19 himself to a toilet.<sup>48</sup> The committee scene is a telling rupture in the otherwise domestic-  
20 centred lives of the working-class characters. Whereas in the novel it is a small part of a  
21 wider probing of society, in the play it is the defining scene. The clash of classes seeks to  
22 illuminate the injustices which ultimately break Shuttleworth. Rather than stepping in to  
23 help him, the committee order once again that Jack must contribute to his father's upkeep.  
24 Shuttleworth leaves the room bewildered and broken. He is admitted to hospital after being  
25 found at the pit head of his old mine, waiting to start an imaginary shift, and dies shortly  
26 after.  
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## 56 Revisions

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3 Between 1936 and 1939 *Give Us This Day* underwent substantial alterations as Greenwood  
4  
5 reacted both to criticism of his work for its lack of coherence and to shifting political and  
6  
7 historical contexts. Alison Light has described the 'deep conservatism of British culture'  
8  
9 during this period.<sup>49</sup> She identifies an 'intimate and everyday species of conservatism which  
10  
11 caught the public imagination between the wars'.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, war, illegal abortion,  
12  
13 suicide, and class conflict were all themes which were to find greater prominence in  
14  
15 Greenwood's new adaptations; themes which ultimately, it seems, resulted in the second  
16  
17 version of the play starting to catch glimpses of the success *Love on the Dole* enjoyed. As the  
18  
19 latter play had done before its hugely successful transfer to the London in 1935, *Give Us This*  
20  
21 *Day* embarked on an extensive tour of regional theatres. After its run at Manchester  
22  
23 Repertory, it appeared at Salford Hippodrome in June 1936 before criss-crossing England  
24  
25 and Wales.<sup>51</sup> The Manchester cast also took it to New Cross in South East London but a West  
26  
27 End transfer proved elusive. In December 1936, Greenwood chose to revise the original  
28  
29 version, submitting a new adaptation to the Lord Chamberlain. Possibly feeling that the play  
30  
31 lacked the political bite of *His Worship the Mayor* with its depiction of middle-class 'villains',  
32  
33 Greenwood gave the councillors and shopkeepers of Salford more stage time. A row of  
34  
35 shops, rather than just Hargraves', act as a backdrop to the opening scene. Greenwood  
36  
37 describes in detail the 'business establishments' of pawnbrokers Price & Jones, herbalist  
38  
39 Joseph Barkle, and Hargraves. He re-establishes the presence of a broad middle-class  
40  
41 community who appear in person, not only during an extended PAC scene (now in act two  
42  
43 scene one), which features the bench of councillors as more substantial characters, but in an  
44  
45 additional new scene. In the latter (now act two scene two), workmen are outside the shops  
46  
47 on Bride Street when Mrs Gibbins, Harry Evans, and the 'MAN' congregate to discuss  
48  
49 poverty and unemployment. The 'MAN' fumes: 'What we need is a few concentration  
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3 camps to shove us all in. Bloomin' fascism that's what it is, the way they put us through it'.<sup>52</sup>  
4  
5 'They' then appear in the form of councillors Sir William Chetterby, Hopewell, and  
6  
7 Hargraves. The link between the actions of the middle class and the plight of the working  
8  
9 class is re-emphasised. A confused and distressed Joe Shuttleworth emerges. 'I allus told the  
10  
11 missus they'd open pit agen. And I'll have me job back,' he says, '(To Hargraves) Aye, and I'll  
12  
13 be in t' first cage down. D'y understand? I won't need no money from you – d'y hear – from  
14  
15 nobody'.<sup>53</sup> This renewed clash between the unemployed miner, talking of a job he will never  
16  
17 get back, and the newly-elected councillor Hargraves, having the road outside his shop fixed  
18  
19 by those he now employs, symbolises the return of a defining narrative feature of *His*  
20  
21 *Worship the Mayor*: the rise of the middle class and the fall of the working class.  
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25  
26 The second version of *Give Us This Day* first appeared in Scunthorpe in January 1937.  
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28 It was briefly renamed *Special Area* – a title which evokes the interwar name attributed to  
29  
30 'depressed' industrial towns and cities – but had reverted back to its original name when it  
31  
32 visited Wigan in March 1937. 'The play gives plenty food for thought,' wrote the *Wigan*  
33  
34 *Examiner*. 'To a great extent it is propaganda but withal it is a tensely moving document [...].  
35  
36 The play holds more realism than its predecessor (*Love on the Dole*)'.<sup>54</sup> A realistic depiction  
37  
38 of the means test was Greenwood's aim so he lamented that 'few people believed it'.  
39  
40 'Among the sceptical were some newspapers which ought to have known better. London  
41  
42 managements declined to show the piece in the West End because of its "bias";' he  
43  
44 claimed.<sup>55</sup> Despite some praise for the PAC scene (as noted above), the *Manchester*  
45  
46 *Guardian* dismissed the portrayal of the committee for 'piling on the agonies' and going  
47  
48 beyond the realms of reality: 'If the bullying chairman [...] and complacent colleagues were  
49  
50 typical of public assistance boards there would, and deservedly, have been revolution in this  
51  
52 country before now'.<sup>56</sup> And A. L. Lloyd questioned the author's dramatisation of the means  
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3 test: 'I wonder whether Mr Greenwood was ever before a Means Test Committee. If he was,  
4  
5 I feel sure he would admit it was a very different matter from that about which he writes'.<sup>57</sup>  
6  
7 So Greenwood's depiction was a step too far for some yet not far enough for others. Critics  
8  
9 took some convincing that he knew who and what he was dramatising, despite being a  
10  
11 writer with a unique experience of both sides of the PAC table. *Give Us This Day*, particularly  
12  
13 the PAC scene, demanded that the audience learn both what working-class life was like and  
14  
15 how members of that class were treated. And according to one reviewer, it was the first  
16  
17 time the workings of the means test committee had been portrayed on a British stage;<sup>58</sup> this  
18  
19 in itself acted as a 'gripping one-act play', according to another.<sup>59</sup>  
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## 26 London

27  
28 *Give Us This Day* underwent a second rewrite in late 1939 and it was this adaptation which  
29  
30 finally had a substantial run in London. The Torch, a 100-seat theatre in Knightsbridge,  
31  
32 opened in September 1938.<sup>60</sup> Being a private members' club, which also admitted Unity  
33  
34 Theatre members, it could feature plays without a licence from the Lord Chamberlain.  
35  
36 However, in April 1940, the same month *Give Us This Day* (which had a licence) arrived, the  
37  
38 theatre was fined for admitting two non-members (a police inspector and a Lord  
39  
40 Chamberlain official) to Louis Bromfield's *House of Women*.<sup>61</sup> This was a very different  
41  
42 theatre to the Garrick in the West End which performed *Love on the Dole* to such acclaim in  
43  
44 1935.  
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48  
49 Greenwood suggests a renewed focus on the working-class family by adding a suffix  
50  
51 to the play's title. Now named *Give Us This Day, or From One Generation to Another*, the  
52  
53 new adaptation was shortened by reducing act two to include just the PAC scene. There is  
54  
55 no longer a theft by Mrs Shuttleworth of one of Hargraves' shawls (an incident which  
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3 originates from the novel) while new characters are added both on and off stage. James  
4  
5 Shuttleworth returns from *His Worship the Mayor*, noticeably older and with a girlfriend  
6  
7 Elsie. There is also a third Shuttleworth son, Harry, who never makes an appearance but is  
8  
9 described in detail by his siblings. A Communist and autodidact, he is a figure who both  
10  
11 confuses and angers his brothers. 'Y'd think he'd been educated some o' the words he  
12  
13 comes out with,' says James.<sup>62</sup> The Shuttleworth home is awash with leaflets entitled 'Arms  
14  
15 for China' and 'Boycott Japan', much to Jack's disapproval. 'Not a bloomin' word about jobs  
16  
17 for Englishmen,' he says.<sup>63</sup> Harry is supported, however, by his family and they slowly come  
18  
19 to appreciate his 'bloomin' Communist talk'.<sup>64</sup> He leaves for Russia after being knocked off  
20  
21 the dole, not wanting to be an added burden on his parents. Jack reaches the conclusion  
22  
23 that 'our Harry was right after all',<sup>65</sup> and he turns his frustrations onto his fellow workers  
24  
25 and the system as a whole. Speaking of Harry, Jack says: 'A fine bloomin' thing it is when a  
26  
27 fellar's served seven years of his life learning a trade then he's made to look like he was no  
28  
29 better than a tramp. Yaa! Why the hell doesn't somebody do summat about it?'.<sup>66</sup> So here is  
30  
31 a return to another key theme of *Love on the Dole*, one which does not feature as  
32  
33 prominently in *His Worship the Mayor*: the injustices of the apprenticeship system which  
34  
35 young working-class men like Harry Hardcastle from Greenwood's debut endure. Further,  
36  
37 Harry Shuttleworth appears to have paid closer attention to the radical politics proposed by  
38  
39 Larry Meath from *Love on the Dole*: the message that by pursuing socialism the working  
40  
41 class can escape capitalist exploitation. Importantly, by 1939 the political climate in Britain  
42  
43 had also begun to shift. And as a result, the Second World War looms large in the  
44  
45 background of the play. For example, James Shuttleworth is conscripted, complaining 'I  
46  
47 don't want to be no soldier'.<sup>67</sup>  
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3 Despite numerous references to the 'services' rendered by Bugpowder Joe to  
4 women 'in trouble', it was only in the London version of *Give Us This Day* that mentions of  
5 back-street abortions attracted the attention of the censor's blue pencil. An intensified  
6 attack on the incompatibility of the family with the modern world is led by Nattle: 'You'd be  
7 surprised number a' married women in t' family way what come to me [to take 'em along to  
8 Bugpowder Joe to have it stifled]'.<sup>68</sup> The Lord Chamberlain demanded that the final part of  
9 Nattle's line, in square brackets, be removed.

10  
11  
12 A growing tension between the generations results in tragic consequences when  
13 Jack confronts his father over the PAC payments. Shuttleworth responds: 'You saw what  
14 happened to me and your mother before you got wed. You went into it with your eyes  
15 open. An' who the 'ell are you to think you're going' to be different from us?'.<sup>69</sup> He then hits  
16 his son and, shortly afterwards, commits suicide. So, in this adaptation Greenwood connects  
17 the PAC's actions more directly with the destruction of families (the death of a father, for  
18 example). Seemingly, as a result, the *Manchester Guardian* continued to question the  
19 validity of Greenwood's work: 'The distresses of unemployment are nothing to the disasters  
20 of war, and Mr Walter Greenwood's new play (is) [...] altogether too much preoccupied with  
21 dole and dolour'.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, shifting historical and political contexts (the 'disasters of war')  
22 meant that *Give Us This Day*, unlike *Love on the Dole* which as a film would be mobilised to  
23 aid the war effort, was viewed as carrying an inappropriate message at a time of national  
24 crisis. Tellingly, *Cavalcade* commented that '[t]ruth often becomes unacceptable when it is  
25 unpalatable',<sup>71</sup> while the *Daily Worker*, in labelling it 'one of the two best plays in London',  
26 explained the 'dole and dolour' criticisms: '[R]eferences to the last war with its promises of  
27 "homes for heroes" and its cameo of a Public Assistance Committee [...] have made the play  
28 unpopular with the "right people" – which may be taken as some indication of its merit'.<sup>72</sup>

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3 Ben Harker has described how the 'highly mediated authenticity' of *Love on the Dole's*  
4  
5 London production 'satisfied a liberal compulsion to face the facts, giving the impression of  
6  
7 getting behind ideology to present directly a distant social reality whilst consistently  
8  
9 constructing that reality in terms of dominant social logic'.<sup>73</sup> *Give Us This Day*, in its dramatic  
10  
11 portrayal of the means test in action, failed to achieve such a mediated authenticity which,  
12  
13 in turn, could have made it palatable to West End audiences and theatre critics alike.  
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### 19 **Radio**

20  
21 In 1948, some eight years after its last theatrical run, the BBC wrote to Greenwood seeking  
22  
23 his permission for a radio adaptation of *Give Us This Day*. Mollie Greenhalgh, from the  
24  
25 drama department, adapted the play from Greenwood's original 1936 script. Her version,  
26  
27 broadcast in the Home Service's *World Theatre* slot, featured no substantial alterations.  
28  
29 Although the PAC scene was shortened, the 85-minute play repeated the same sequence of  
30  
31 events as the original and included an identical list of characters. Edward Chapman, as Joe  
32  
33 Shuttleworth, and Belle Chrystall, as Meg Teagle, reprised their roles from the Torch. 'I  
34  
35 appreciated listening to your adaptation,' Greenwood wrote to Greenhalgh. 'You did an  
36  
37 excellent job'.<sup>74</sup> Greenhalgh replied: 'I am so glad to hear that you enjoyed it. I was in  
38  
39 Manchester myself throughout the time the play deals with, and I found it most movingly  
40  
41 reminiscent of those days'.<sup>75</sup> She was part of a strong Northern contingent within the BBC's  
42  
43 ranks. Wilfred Pickles, one of the most famous Northerners on the airwaves, took the part  
44  
45 of Harry Evans and, like Edward Chapman, was a Yorkshireman. Lancastrian Chrystall found  
46  
47 fame as Jenny Hawthorne in the 1931 film version of *Hindle Wakes* but had formally retired  
48  
49 by 1946. The pull of *Give Us This Day* was a strong one, however, as she came out of  
50  
51 retirement two years later to play Meg Teagle once more. Ever since the BBC first aired an  
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3 excerpt of *Love on the Dole*'s maiden run in 1934 at Manchester Repertory, Greenwood had  
4  
5 built up a strong, and profitable, relationship with the corporation. Prior to *Give Us This Day*,  
6  
7 *Love on the Dole* and *Cure for Love* had already undergone radio adaptations. Greenwood  
8  
9 enjoyed a close working relationship with Head of Radio Drama Val Gielgud throughout this  
10  
11 period and the BBC broadcast a number of the Salford writer's plays well into the 1980s.  
12  
13  
14 However, a second version of *Give Us This Day*, which ran as part of *Curtain Up* in 1952,  
15  
16 would be the last outing for the Shuttleworth and Hargraves families.  
17

18  
19 A number of broad shifts in the cultural terrain go some way to illuminating the  
20  
21 reasons behind the increasing hostility Greenwood's work encountered. And the early 1950s  
22  
23 represent an important conjuncture in post-war Britain. Raymond Williams describes 1951  
24  
25 as a 'turning-point', when 'the outlines of a successful post-war capitalism – the credit and  
26  
27 consumer society – were beginning to form'.<sup>76</sup> An 'awkward compromise' was struck by the  
28  
29 start of the decade, according to Ross McKibbin. '[A]n individualist but "progressive"  
30  
31 middle-class democracy was abandoned in the 1940s,' he notes, 'to be replaced by an all-  
32  
33 too-limited social democracy which had worked itself out even before the (Clement) Attlee  
34  
35 government left office in 1951'.<sup>77</sup> This was, in part, due to what Martin Francis has described  
36  
37 as Labour's 'constitutional conservatism in the immediate post-war years'.<sup>78</sup> Similarly,  
38  
39 McKibbin argues that Attlee's was a form of 'compartmentalized socialism' and that his  
40  
41 government made little to no attempt to tackle the 'citadels of class privilege'.<sup>79</sup> According  
42  
43 to both Francis and Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, this compartmentalisation included issues  
44  
45 pertaining to gender and resulted in what the former has labelled 'the essentially  
46  
47 "masculinist" disposition of Labour's socialism'.<sup>80</sup> Zweiniger-Bargielowska suggests that a  
48  
49 Tory mobilisation of the female vote was an important factor in the party's victory of 1951.  
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3 women, but there were significant differences in approach,' she argues, adding that the  
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5 'Conservatives attempted to exploit Labour's paternalist and gender-blind attitudes and  
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7 propaganda'.<sup>81</sup> Between the wars, the Labour hierarchy viewed 'class feeling as a problem  
8  
9 to overcome, not as an opportunity to exploit', Jon Lawrence has said, '[...] preferring [...] to  
10  
11 construct an alternative, more inclusive politics intended to transcend the visceral tensions  
12  
13 of class feeling'. Such an approach was 'vital to the Party's decisive breakthrough in 1940',  
14  
15 adds Lawrence.<sup>82</sup> So both gender, according to Zweiniger-Bargielowska, and community, as  
16  
17 noted by McKibbin,<sup>83</sup> emerge as equally if not more significant than class in the political  
18  
19 discourse of the immediate post-1945 period. And, as Ben Jackson has outlined, there was,  
20  
21 by the early 1950s, another shift within Labour away from questions of class and the  
22  
23 socialist aim of a truly classless society by the likes of Anthony Crosland. 'It is clear that  
24  
25 certain revisionist thinkers were keen to dispense with the socialist idea of community and  
26  
27 to focus on purely distributive objectives instead', Jackson says.<sup>84</sup> Compellingly, McKibbin  
28  
29 suggests that the working class were 'assimilated into the "moral consensus"' following (and  
30  
31 as a result of) the Second World War. The period between the Festival of Britain (summer  
32  
33 1951) and the coronation (June 1953) is important here; as McKibbin points out, both  
34  
35 events 'were celebrations of what contemporaries thought was a uniquely harmonious  
36  
37 society'.<sup>85</sup>

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44 Significantly, *Give Us This Day* was broadcast a fortnight after the death (on February  
45  
46 6 1952) of George VI, suggesting another reason why its content and themes were  
47  
48 problematic in the 'harmonious' early 1950s. And the BBC's listener report on the play  
49  
50 records a persistent complaint levelled at Greenwood's work: that it went too far politically.  
51  
52 'Several panel members found the story [...] unacceptable,' it says, 'because, they claimed, it  
53  
54 greatly exaggerated the distress of the period and [...] was "loaded with political hatred"'.<sup>86</sup>  
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3 A retired cotton mill manager, sharing Sir William Haley's reservations, described the play as  
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5 giving 'a very distorted picture of Lancashire life during the 1930's. The majority of working  
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7 people [...] were able to meet bad trade and unemployment with a stiff upper lip [...] I never  
8  
9 heard of anyone going into an institution'.<sup>87</sup> However, the majority of those interviewed  
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11 rated the play as 'A' or 'B' (thirty-six per cent in each case), only slightly below the average.  
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14 'This play appealed to me immensely,' reported one listener. 'To us who have lived in those  
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16 days of low wages and short time it brought back memories'.<sup>88</sup> Another thought it 'uncanny  
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18 how the author knows so much of the misery of being out of work in hard times and of  
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20 loving and marrying even under bitter hardship'.<sup>89</sup> And it had a profound impact on a biscuit  
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22 production trainee who suggests another reason why the story was gently suppressed: 'As  
23  
24 the play started I thought it was all rather out-dated but then I realised how complacent I  
25  
26 was.' 'It does no harm to be reminded of earlier struggles and it made me feel rather  
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28 ashamed of myself', the worker added.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, it seems that, to the last,  
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30 Greenwood's story was neither popular nor politically sensitive enough to endure; rather, it  
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32 was unpalatable for post-war Britain.  
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#### Notes

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39 <sup>1</sup> BBC Written Archives, Caversham, RCONT1 Walter Greenwood Scriptwriter File 1, 1936-62 (hereafter BBC  
40 WG 1936-62), Memo by William Haley, 28 February 1952.

41 <sup>2</sup> BBC WG 1936-62, Memo by Richard Howgill, 7 March 1952.

42 <sup>3</sup> Walter Greenwood Collection, University of Salford (hereafter WGC), WGC/3/2, 'Greenwood Book To Be  
43 Filmed', *Evening Chronicle*, 26 March 1939.

44 <sup>4</sup> Records of Jonathan Cape Ltd, University of Reading, MS 2446, Production Ledger D-H, 1934-1937.

45 <sup>5</sup> One of these involved a collaboration with leading left-wing director Ivor Montagu, friend to Sergei  
46 Eisenstein, which resulted in a completed yet never produced film script. Dated July 1939, this script is in the  
47 archive at Salford (WGC/1/3/3).

48 <sup>6</sup> Stephen Constantine, 'Love on the Dole and its Reception in the 1930s', *Literature & History*, 8:2 (1982), 239.

49 <sup>7</sup> Constantine, 'Reception', 237.

50 <sup>8</sup> A. L. Lloyd, 'New Novels Reviewed', *Left Review*, Vol. 1 No. 2, November 1934, p. 46.

51 <sup>9</sup> WGC/3/1, Graham Greene, 'Fiction', *Spectator*, 21 September 1934.

52 <sup>10</sup> WGC/3/34, Edith Sitwell, 'Here Is A Dickens Of Our Time', *Sunday Referee*, 24 March 1935.

53 <sup>11</sup> WGC/2/1, Letter from Sitwell to Greenwood, 25 March 1935.

54 <sup>12</sup> WGC/3/6, Iris Barry, 'This, After All, Is England', *New York Herald Tribune*, 10 March 1935.

55 <sup>13</sup> WGC/3/1, S.E.R Wynne, 'On – and off – the Dole', *The New Nation*, October 1934, p. 113.

56 <sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Walter Greenwood, *His Worship the Mayor* (London, 1937), p. 93. All subsequent page numbers are given in parentheses.

<sup>16</sup> Selina Todd, *The People: The Rise and Fall of the Working Class* (London, 2015), p. 69.

<sup>17</sup> Noreen Branson and Margot Heinemann, *Britain in the Nineteen Thirties* (St Albans, 1973), p. 33.

<sup>18</sup> Ian Haywood, *Working-Class Fiction from Chartism to Trainspotting* (Plymouth, 1997), p. 65.

<sup>19</sup> Cunningham asks: '(H)ow can a workless man hold up his head in a male-dominant community when his wife is in charge of the home and working hard whilst he hangs idly around?'. Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties* (Oxford, 1989), p. 314.

<sup>20</sup> Chris Hopkins, *English Fiction in the 1930s: Language, Genre, History* (London, 2006), p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 43. One way of engaging with the 'middle-class reader' was through the middlebrow mode.

Although it is, as Alison Light notes, 'a term always bordering on contempt', the middlebrow had a 'currency', Kristin Ewins argues, '[...] for engaging with social issues'. Ewins identifies a 'perceived need for a politicized middlebrow mode in the 1930s: the need for writers to communicate politics and to engage with society and the general reader' (266). Alison Light, *Forever England: Femininity, literature and conservatism between the wars* (London, 1991), p. 7; Kristin Ewins, "'Revolutionizing A Mode of Life": Leftist Middlebrow Fiction by Women in the 1930s', *ELH*, 82:1 (2015), p. 266.

<sup>22</sup> Christopher Hilliard, *To Exercise Our Talents: The Democratization of Writing in Britain* (Cambridge, MA, 2006), p. 253.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 255.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

<sup>25</sup> WGC/3/26, Keith Dewhurst, 'Greenwood's grass roots', *Guardian*, 2 April 1971.

<sup>26</sup> T. A. Jackson, *Charles Dickens: The Progress of a Radical* (New York, NY, 1938) p. 37, p. 35.

<sup>27</sup> Lloyd, *Left Review*, November 1934, p. 46.

<sup>28</sup> Constantine, 'Reception', 237.

<sup>29</sup> Carol Snee, 'Working-class literature or proletarian writing?' in Jon Clark (ed.), *Culture and Crisis in Britain in the Thirties* (London, 1979), p. 175. In contrast to Snee, I agree with Ian Haywood who describes *Love on the Dole* as an 'ironic reworking of the romance plot'. And, as Hopkins adds, Greenwood is 'playing with and against a romance plot' throughout his debut novel. Haywood, p. 49; Hopkins, p. 48.

<sup>30</sup> Lord Chamberlain's Plays Archive (hereafter LCP), British Library, London, LCP CORR 1936/14961, Reader's Report, 12 March 1936.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Grim Means Test Scenes in Greenwood Play', *Daily Herald*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>33</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Walter Greenwood Looks on America', *Evening Chronicle*, 4 April 1936. By April 1936, *Love on the Dole* was already a hit on Broadway.

<sup>34</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Youth And Grit Made This Play', *Daily Express*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Give Us This Day Is Heart-Searching', *Evening Chronicle*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>37</sup> LCP 1936/18, *Give Us This Day* script, p. 1.

<sup>38</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Means Test', *Daily Herald*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>39</sup> LCP 1936/18, p. 6.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Walter Greenwood's New Play at the Repertory', *Manchester Guardian*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>42</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Heart-Searching', *Evening Chronicle*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>43</sup> WGC/3/1, R. J. Finnemore, 'Walter Greenwood's New Dole Play', *Daily Dispatch*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>44</sup> WGC/3/1, Walter Greenwood, 'Smug Southerners by a Famous Northerner', *Tit-Bits*, 24 July 1937.

<sup>45</sup> WGC/3/1, C. T. Podmore, 'Another *Love on the Dole?*', *Era*, 25 March 1936.

<sup>46</sup> LCP 1936/18, p. 69.

<sup>47</sup> WGC/3/1, 'Provincial Productions', *The Stage*, 26 March 1936.

<sup>48</sup> LCP 1936/18, p. 75, p. 77.

<sup>49</sup> Light, p. 19.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11

<sup>51</sup> I have pieced together the following sporadic tour for *Give Us This Day* (occasionally titled *Special Area*): Salford (22 June 1936), Preston (6 July), Salford (13 July), Manchester (20 July), Hull (10 August), Burnley ( 24 August), St Helens (31 August), New Cross (28 September), Sheffield (5 October), Warrington (October), Swansea (November), Leeds (23 November), Manchester (December), Wolverhampton (14 December) then in

Scunthorpe (18 January 1937), Boscombe (8 February), Hulme (15 February), Wigan (8 March), Derby (22 March), Dewsbury (5 April), Blackpool (12 April) and Carlisle (June 1938).

<sup>52</sup> LCP 1936/60, *Give Us This Day* script, p. 8.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>54</sup> 'Walter Greenwood's Latest Success', *Wigan Examiner*, 9 March 1937, p. 6.

<sup>55</sup> WGC/3/1, Greenwood, *Tit-Bits*, 24 July 1937.

<sup>56</sup> WGC/3/1, *Manchester Guardian*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>57</sup> Lloyd, *Left Review*, November 1934, p. 46.

<sup>58</sup> John Humber, 'Hull Actress's New Role', *Hull Daily Mail*, 6 May 1940, p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> WGC/3/1, Finnemore, *Daily Dispatch*, 24 March 1936.

<sup>60</sup> 'New Ventures In The Theatres', *The Observer*, 5 March 1939, p. 10.

<sup>61</sup> 'Theatre Club Fined', *The Times*, 6 April 1940, p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> WGC/1/3/4, 'Lord Chamberlain's licensed copy of *Give Us This Day*', p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>70</sup> WGC/3/2, 'Give Us This Day', *Manchester Guardian*, 1 May 1940.

<sup>71</sup> WGC/3/2, 'Poverty Street Play', *Cavalcade*, 11 May 1940.

<sup>72</sup> WGC/3/2, 'Another Good Play', *Daily Worker*, 6 May 1940.

<sup>73</sup> Ben Harker, 'Adapting to the Conjuncture: Walter Greenwood, History and *Love on the Dole*', *Key Words* 7, (2009), 65.

<sup>74</sup> BBC WG 1936-62, 48, Letter from Greenwood to Greenhalgh, 1 July 1948.

<sup>75</sup> BBC WG 1936-62, 48, Letter from Greenhalgh to Greenwood, 5 July 1948.

<sup>76</sup> Raymond Williams, 'Notes on Marxism in Britain Since 1945', *New Left Review* 1/100 (1976), 86. Williams has said elsewhere: '[T]he failure to fund the working-class movement culturally when the channels of popular education and popular culture were there in the forties became a key factor in the very quick disintegration of Labour's position in the fifties'. Raymond Williams, *Politics and Letters: Interviews with New Left Review* (London, 1979), pp. 73-74.

<sup>77</sup> Ross McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures: England 1918-1951* (Oxford, 1998), p. 535.

<sup>78</sup> Martin Francis, *Ideas and policies under Labour, 1945-1951* (Manchester, 1997), p. vii.

<sup>79</sup> Ross McKibbin, *Parties and People: England 1914-1951* (Oxford, 2010), p. 164.

<sup>80</sup> Francis, p. 8.

<sup>81</sup> Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Austerity in Britain: Rationing, Controls and Consumption, 1939-1955* (Oxford, 2000), p. 231, p. 232. Although Labour lost the '51 election, the party received a record number of votes (just under fourteen million); this surpassed the Tories by some 230,000 but gave Labour twenty-six fewer seats.

<sup>82</sup> Jon Lawrence, 'Labour and the politics of class', in David Feldman and Jon Lawrence (eds), *Structures and Transformations in Modern British History* (Cambridge, 2011), p. 239. There is an echo of Hugh Gaitskill and Anthony Crosland here; as Steven Fielding has detailed: 'Revisionists believed the Labour Party had, as their journal *Socialist Commentary* put it in 1951, to "look beyond the old gospel of more and more nationalisation, 'workers control' or class appeals to 'soak the rich'". Steven Fielding, 'New Labour and the past', in Duncan Tanner, Pat Thane, and Nick Tiratsoo (eds), *Labour's First Century* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 379.

<sup>83</sup> See McKibbin *Parties and People*, pp. 146-147.

<sup>84</sup> Ben Jackson, *Equality and the British Left: a study in progressive political thought, 1900-64* (Manchester, 2007), p. 184.

<sup>85</sup> McKibbin, *Classes and Cultures*, p. 535.

<sup>86</sup> BBC Written Archives, Caversham, BBC LR/52/354, Listener Research Report – Curtain Up, 20 February 1952, p. 1.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*