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THE MARXIAN UNDERPINNINGS OF THE EARLY
WORKING-CLASS FICTION OF WALTER GREENWOOD

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THE MARXIAN UNDERPINNINGS OF THE EARLY
WORKING-CLASS FICTION OF WALTER GREENWOOD

By

Kevin G. Asman

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ABSTRACT

THE MARXIAN UNDERPINNINGS OF THE EARLY
WORKING-CLASS FICTION OF WALTER GREENWOOD

By

Kevin G. Asman

In the limited critical discourse on British working-class fiction, there have emerged many debates over the distinctions between writing that is descriptive of the working-class and committed socialist literature. One such debate surrounds the novel Love on the Dole (1933) by Walter Greenwood. The purpose of this study is to expand on this debate by drawing into it later works by Greenwood which have not factored substantively into the critical discourse on his work. Through the application of a Marxist methodology, this project explicates the Marxian underpinnings of three early works by Greenwood with the purpose of arguing that he deserves to be viewed as a committed Marxist writer.

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For my wife who made it all possible.

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In writing this, I hope to pass on a gift that was given to me by Victor N. Paananen, Professor and Chair of the English department at Michigan State University. It was he who showed me that to have a future engagement in the study of literature I did not have to discard my working-class background. Perhaps I can repay him by showing someone else the same thing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION . . . 1.

Walter Greenwood: Working-Class Author . . . 8.

The Centrality of the Labor Process in the Working-Class
Fiction of Walter Greenwood . . . 28.

Conclusion: Form and Fabianism . . . 67.

APPENDIX . . . 75.

BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . 77.

INTRODUCTION

In a 1979 interview with J. Halperin, Alan Sillitoe said, "The whole proletarian movement in literature before the war or between the wars really failed--with the possible exception of Walter Greenwood's Love on the Dole" (Halperin 178). Despite Sillitoe's praise for Greenwood's first novel, like most other texts by working-class authors, the critical community has virtually ignored his work. There is a limited number of critics doing research on the writings of a few twentieth-century authors who have had, at some point in their lives, significant engagement in the cultural practices of the British working-class. Nigel Gray's The Silent Majority (1973) attempts to establish the authenticity of the practices of working-class characters in the works of several post-war British novelists--most notably Alan Sillitoe, Barry Hines, and David Storey--by relating them to his own historical experience with working-class culture. H. Gustav Klaus's more recent history of working-class writing, The Literature of Labour (1985), presents a fragmented and historically incomplete though compelling account of the emergence of a working-class literary discourse from

the latter part of the eighteenth century up to what is arguably the most significant period in the history of working-class political and artistic expression, the nineteen thirties. Other significant texts, such as the anthology The Working-Class Novel in the Twentieth Century (1984) edited by Jeremy Hawthorn, deal with many of the same authors and works. There has been an emerging critical discourse involving what the above critics, and others, have come to identify as the literary expressions of the British working-class.

Walter Greenwood has not been excluded from this discourse. Stephen Constantine's "Love on the Dole and Its Reception in the Thirties" is a useful and much needed examination of the early history of Greenwood's first novel. He notes, for example, that there was a Hebrew translation of Love on the Dole in 1933, the same year that the first British edition was published by Jonathan Cape and a year prior to the first American edition of the text (Constantine 233). Constantine's main focus is, however, on the initial readership of the novel which he claims must have been middle-class because "Love on the Dole cost 7s 6d and even the cheap 'florin' edition [1935] was a not inconsiderable outlay for most wage-earners" (234). Working from this supposition, he argues that Greenwood wrote the novel in a way that would not alienate this middle-class readership: "Not only did Greenwood avoid offending the

middle class by leaving them out of the story of Love on the Dole, but he also left them unalarmed by his portrayal of working-class political activity" (Constantine 237). If there is one concern which needs to be noted about Constantine's essay, it is that he centers his discussion of the text around the issue of class but never cogently establishes what the parameters of class are. He goes so far as to claim that Price, the pawn broker in Love on the Dole for whom Harry Hardcastle works, cannot be considered a member of the "middle-class" because his continual social relations with inhabitants of "Hanky Park" and his prominence there "made [him] part of that working-class community" (Constantine 237). He makes this claim though Price is "a magistrate and high official at the local chapel" and by Marxist standards is at least petty bourgeois, an accumulator of labor (Constantine 237). In Constantine's opinion, "the story is set in a virtual single-class society" (237).

A. V. Subiotto's essay "Kleiner Mann--was nun? and Love on the Dole: Two Novels of the Depression" also deals with the early history of Greenwood's text. In particular, Subiotto is responding to a 1932 rejection letter which Greenwood received from a publisher and which he partially reprints in his 1967 autobiography There was a Time:

Dear Sir,

We have read your novel with great interest. Unfortunately our Spring List is to include a book on a similar theme translated from the German, Mr. Hans Fallada's Little Man, What Now . . . (249).

From this letter, Subiotto finds justification for writing a comparative study of the two novels. He says, "This [the letter] suggests that despite vast differences in their social backgrounds, a disparity of political enthusiasm, dissimilar methods of writing and literary traditions, . . . these two novelists shared a burning thematic interest that transcended the diversity of their depictions" (Subiotto 77). Subiotto's main concern is how both novels depict the depression but from different class perspectives, Greenwood's from a working-class and Fallada's from a middle-class (88).

Perhaps the most controversial essay on working-class literature is Carole Snee's "Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" which is an examination of three 1930's working-class authors, Lewis Jones, Walter Brierley, and Walter Greenwood. Though I will take issue with her reading of Love on the Dole throughout most of this study, I applaud her for a forceful and sophisticated recovery of texts that warrant critical debate. Her essay is an attempt to make meaningful distinctions between literature with a working-class subject and politically committed proletarian writing. In his introduction to the 1990 Merlin reprint of Walter Brierley's novel Sandwichman

(1937), Philip Gorski says of Snee's analysis of Brierley's work that it is "an inattentive reading" because she characterizes Brierley's prose style as "consciously literary" (xii). Snee makes a similar qualitative judgment of Greenwood's Love on the Dole: "Greenwood may have been a working class novelist writing about working class life, but he never challenges the form of the bourgeois novel, nor its underlying ideology" (Snee, "Working Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 171). Roger Webster challenges Snee's analysis in his compelling and sophisticated "Love on the Dole and the Aesthetic of Contradiction." He is particularly interested in looking at the ways in which Greenwood subverts bourgeois ideology in his aesthetics by examining the contradictions of writing about the working class in a traditionally bourgeois form, the novel.

With the exception of Sylvia Sklar's essay on D. H. Lawrence's play My Son's My Son, which Greenwood completed from an unfinished manuscript in 1936, the above four articles represent the entire corpus of published criticism on the works of Walter Greenwood (Sklar 256). If one takes into account Alan Sillitoe's praise for Love on the Dole, this is a scandalously small number of critical essays for a text which is characterized by the most renowned British working-class author as the only successful working-class novel of the

inter-war years. Equally disturbing is that no one has ever attempted to go beyond Love on the Dole in their studies though Greenwood's career as a writer spanned more than forty years and includes an extensive bibliography. In its broadest sense, the purpose of this essay is to engage the critical debate that surrounds Greenwood's work in a way that helps expand its parameters by introducing new material and ideas for consideration. I intend to demonstrate that there are Marxist underpinnings in three of Greenwood's early texts. Perhaps mostly significantly, I join Alan Plater, the author of Close the Coal House Door, in wanting to dispel a misconception about Greenwood's work:

Among the critical consensus, the mythology is familiar and simple-minded. It runs along the lines that Walter Greenwood wrote a passionate and stunningly successful first novel and thereafter everything went a little soft. This is acceptable as instant pigeonhole journalism but several light years away from the truth ("Walter Greenwood" 394).

Walter Greenwood: Working-Class Author

Far too many critics use the term working-class literature freely without identifying its parameters because, I feel, they are unwilling to engage the problematic notion of class. Unlike gender or race, one cannot delineate class in terms of an author's biological attributes. It is a notion relative to the historical situation out of which a text arose. Class is not static. Everything is derivative of the dialectical movement of history and is, therefore, by its very nature in a continual state of becoming. It is possible, however, to declare that the existence of a social hierarchy is a consistent aspect of the current historical epoch. No one has better delineated the class distinction in the modern age than Karl Marx. In "The Manifesto of the Communist Party" he states, "Our epoch, the epoch of the Bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms: Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (Marx 480). The distinction between those who control the means of production and those who produce, between those who employ and those who are

employed, and between those who purchase labor and those who must sell it in order to exist is as real for British society in the twentieth-century as it was for the nineteenth. It would be facile to suggest that there are not gradations on each side of this social dichotomy, but these gradations do not subvert the very existence of the dichotomy. Nor do these gradations lessen the clear disparity between the material conditions of the working-class and the employing-class.

At least in its most basic sense, a working-class text is a work by an individual who has by necessity had substantive formative engagement in the cultural practices of the majority class in British society who possess no wealth of any consequence and who must depend on the continuing sale of their labor in order to physically survive. To couch this in the terminology of Raymond Williams, an author's working-class "alignment" is a fundamental consideration when identifying a text as working-class literature.¹ As Williams argues in Marxism and Literature, all texts are in a sense aligned (199). Authors exist in particular social situations, and their narratives cannot be told in a manner that is inconsistent with the views and conceptions that they have achieved as a result of specific historic, and in Marxist terms, class relations. This does not mean, however, that any text composed by a member of this class must necessarily be classified as working-class.

Texts exist which are, as Carole Snee points out, " . . . about working-class life by . . . member[s] of the working-class," texts, in other words, which not only reflect a working-class alignment but also convey a sense of working-class experience ("Walter Brierley . . ." 11).

Despite the scarcity of biographical material available on Walter Greenwood, there is enough evidence to indicate that he did have significant formative engagement in the cultural practices of the British working-class. His compelling, if somewhat sentimental, autobiography There was a Time (1967) is a representation of the first thirty years of his life, from his birth December 17, 1903 to the publication of, Love on the Dole, in 1933 (13). Greenwood lived in the Hankison Park region of Salford, the "Hanky Park" of Love on the Dole (Constantine 233). In his 1951 book Lancashire, Greenwood says of his native Salford, "Not having been given a choice in the matter I first saw the light of day in Pendleton which is now part of the drab and sluttish city of Salford (136). It was in this "sluttish city" that Greenwood lived amid the industrial and urban hell which is the setting for some of his early works. In There was a Time, Greenwood's account of his life in Salford lacks specific temporal references, but it is, nonetheless, the most articulate and colorful non-fictional explication of social

relations in a working-class community that I have ever encountered. It is a text that was written from the inside by one who knew what it meant to be of the working-class because, at least for the first thirty years of his life, he lived it every day. His father, Tom Greenwood, "a hairdresser by profession and operatic singer by inclination," died at the age of forty-five when Greenwood was nine (Greenwood, There was a Time 67; "The Old School" 203,208). His mother Elizabeth was then the sole provider of sustenance for her and her two children, Walter and his younger sister Betty. The family was financially devastated by his father's death. His mother even had to appeal to the local "Guardians" for relief, but when they only offered her half a crown, she refused their aide and endeavored to support her family as best she could by working two jobs--though he notes elsewhere that they were relieved by the "Guardians" to the effect of eight shillings a week (Greenwood, There was a Time 69; "The Old School" 208):

The money she earned at the restaurant being inadequate, she resumed casual employment with the firm of contracting caterers. Postcards arrived irregularly asking her to report at this or that town hall or assembly rooms to help serve a dinner or banquet. This meant that, immediately her work at the restaurant was finished, she had to rush to wherever the function had been arranged to help unpack all the crockery and cutlery, lay the tables, serve the food, then wash and pack everything afterwards, by which time

the midnight hour had struck and all public transport stopped.

On these occasions our instructions were invariable: "Now listen, children, both of you. No later than half past eight Understand? Bed, the pair of you. You are not to have anybody in and if anybody knocks on the door ignore them." She looked at me: "Before you go to bed bolt the front and back doors top and bottom and don't forget to put the string out of the window . . .".

The window string was, literally a leg pull. Having had to walk home after the banquet and with doors bolted from the inside Mother, as the parish church clock struck half past one or two o'clock, reached for the string weighted with a chip of wood which hung from my bedroom window and gave it several tugs. The other end, tied to my ankle, did the needful and I came down to open the door . . .
(Greenwood, There was a Time 71-2).²

We define class by the relationship of the individuals who comprise a class to the labor process. The identity of the working-class lies in the necessity of its constituents to sell their labor. What the above passage illustrates most forcefully is that the Greenwoods were a family whose precarious existence was predicated on the ability of Elizabeth Greenwood to sell her labor. They were, in short, a working-class family.

Walter Greenwood learned at a young age what it meant to sell his labor. On December 17, 1916 at the age of thirteen, by his own account, he left the Langworthy Road Council School shouting, "I've left! I've left!" (Greenwood, "The Old School" 202). He tells of his experiences at the "Langy Road" school in his

brief autobiographical sketch "The Old School" which was published in his collection of short stories The Cleft Stick in 1938 but was previously printed as "Langy Road" in an anthology of short recollections on educational experiences by "divers hand," edited by Graham Greene and entitled The Old School (1935). In this sketch, which is, outside of There was a Time, the only significant published biographical information available on Greenwood, he mentions that prior to leaving school he had begun work as an assistant in a pawn shop, not unlike Harry Hardcastle from Love on the Dole (Greenwood, "The Old School" 202). Greenwood gives a more detailed account of the pawn shop experience in There was a Time:

Weekdays were bad enough, but to be imprisoned in the pawnshop until nine o'clock of a Saturday night was excruciating. I knew the time when, on this night, my friends would be off and away. Around seven o'clock, peering through the peepholes of the shop's upstairs windows, I watched them all go by in a chattering, happy bunch. Nobby, Mickmac, the Seeley brothers and Alfie off to the excitement of Manchester's live poultry market at Shudehill and the entertaining cheapjack stalls and quack doctors of Smithfield (89).

Greenwood left the imprisonment of the pawn shop for the drudgery of the Cooperative Society office where he served as a clerk and had "ten shillings a week and a job for life!" (Greenwood, There was a Time 109). Despite this security, Greenwood could not be content in

a place that "was a graveyard of discarded books of accounts, hundreds of thick leather-bound ledgers thrown in anyhow for mites to feed on" (Greenwood, There was a Time 123). He therefore took a job as a stable-hand on the estate of a Swinton cotton merchant. Greenwood does not specify when he took the job, nor is he explicit as to how long he worked there. He does say, however, that he thinks he was twenty when he left the job for a much more adventurous engagement as a horse attendant at a race track in Shropshire (Greenwood, There was a Time 139; "Walter Greenwood" 78). One significant fact about this new job was that it was not in Salford, and Greenwood says of his first journey to the track:

What should have been the pleasure of the train journey and my first glimpse of England's green and pleasant land, was quite effaced by a severe attack of first-night nerves and the knowledge of the fact that, on arrival, I would be a stranger in a strange land (Greenwood, There was a Time 142).

The importance of this passage cannot be overemphasized. Walter Greenwood never left the industrial landscape of Salford in the first twenty years of his life. He, like most working-class individuals, was trapped by a system that segregated people according to their relationship to the labor process. The England of canonical literature was not the England of Walter Greenwood. When he did see "the green and pleasant land," it was impossible to have any sort of pleasurable

identification with it because, in his words, "he was a stranger."

Greenwood is not specific as to when it happened, but he was made redundant by the race track because "the post-war boom was beginning to crack" (Greenwood, There was a Time 157). He returned to Salford where he was able to find employment with a former neighborhood friend whom he calls Nobby Clarke in the autobiography. His responsibilities were two-fold. They included renovating packing crates at a piece-rate of three pence a box and clerking in the office (Greenwood, There was a Time 157). Sometime after Nobby cut the piece-rate, Greenwood found employment in the firm of Battersby & Co. Ltd., a departmental store (Greenwood, There was a Time 177). Again, Greenwood does not offer the exact length of tenure at the store, but he does mention that he worked there during the General Strike of 1926 which would have made him twenty-two at the time (Greenwood, There was a Time 183). Sometime after this date, he was again made redundant:

Messrs. Battersby, in company with other firms which felt the draught of the contraction of commerce, merged some of their departments, and those of us who were declared surplus to requirement exchanged our status as Gentlemen for membership of the growing brotherhood of the dole.

By my going, Messrs. Battersby saved my twenty-eight shillings a week wages. By attending, twice weekly, a crumbling building that once had been a Reformatory School

for erring boys and which now had been taken over by the Ministry of Labour, I was given eighteen shillings weekly for autographing a declaration that I was "capable of and available for work" (Greenwood, There was a Time 183).

The subsequent period of Greenwood's life was his first extensive time of unemployment. It was during this stretch that he began to think seriously about his prospects of becoming a writer, but his full-time commitment to writing was cut short by an unexpected interlude as a touch-typist at a motor works in the Trafford Park area of Manchester (Greenwood, There was a Time 188). In There was a Time, Greenwood does not say specifically for which company he worked. The context does suggest, however, that it was the Ford Motor Company. He says of the company's founder:

"He" was the Great Mogul himself, enthroned thousands of miles away in the land of the free. Those who were his managerial watchdogs trembled when, from afar, came rumours that a sudden visit from Him was imminent and this nervousness affected all the underlings of our branch of His far-flung empire. When the threatened descent did not materialize the rank and file muttered that this cry of "Wolf" was a ruse to keep the watchdogs on the snap and snarl.

This time, though, all doubt was banished. He was on his way. All the newspapers carried photographs of Him stepping aboard a transatlantic liner, the King of Mass Production accompanied by his Baronage . . . Greenwood, There was a Time 192).

The references to the "King of Mass Production" and "the land of the free" lend credence to the hypothesis that the individual being discussed is Henry Ford. This supposition is especially cogent because Greenwood says that "when an employee of the Motor Works passed through the works' gates to the clocking on machines he stepped from Britain to Detroit . . . " (There was a Time, 189).³ In his "Postscript to Author's Preface" from The Cleft Stick, He confirms this deduction (xii). Greenwood's metaphorical journeys from Manchester to Detroit ended. He does not, however, give the details. Nor does he indicate how long was the time of unemployment that preceded his being taken on as a clerk for a Manchester firm of "Estate and Business Transfers Agents and Valuers" (Greenwood, There was a Time 195). The proprietors of the firm were apparently involved in getting people whose businesses were in financial difficulties to sign the exclusive rights of agency over to them through methods of questionable legality. Greenwood does not say in which year it happened, but on Christmas Eve of the year in which he worked for the agency, he went to the office, packed up the firm's typewriter, and collected his cards because the agents had not appeared in the office for several weeks. During that time, Greenwood had not been paid (Greenwood, There was a Time 198-99).

The subsequent time of unemployment was extensive. There is indication in There was a Time that Greenwood saw both the establishment of the Labour government in 1929 and the formation of the National Government in 1931 while on the dole (215-16; Morton 524-25). During this period, Greenwood also saw the publication of his first piece of fiction. He sold "Maker of Books" for twenty-five guineas to The Storyteller Magazine (Greenwood, There was a Time, 214). The story was reprinted in The Cleft Stick (1938). This beginning as a professional writer was not, however, the end of his life on the dole. He continued on public assistance until his benefit expired. Greenwood then applied to the Public Assistance Committee for relief, but like so many others who were submitted to the humiliation of the Means Test, he fell through the social safety net. As he says, " . . . but for the good fortune of free board and lodgings at home, I was but this step removed from beggary" (Greenwood, There was a Time 227).

Unlike many in the early thirties, Greenwood was never forced to beg. He was fortunate to find a job as a door to door salesman for Jackson's Emporium, a Manchester retail chain which specialized in selling inferior goods to the working-class on installment (Greenwood, There was a Time 232). It was while working for Jackson's that he wrote Love on the Dole, and it is with the acceptance of his novel by Jonathan Cape that

his autobiography effectively ends. The material on the remaining forty years of his life is inadequate to really get a sense of what it was like. Some time after the publication of Love on the Dole, Greenwood was elected to the Salford town council ("Walter Greenwood" 78). In January 1936, he was sued by his former fiancée Alice Miles for breach of promise evidently because he declined to follow through on his offer of marriage ("Walter Greenwood" 78). Later in that year, he made his first journey to the United States where he met his wife, Pearl Osgood, an American actress ("Walter Greenwood" 78; Greenwood, "Postscript to Author's Preface" xii; Locher 194). He continued to write professionally until his death, September 13, 1974 at Doulgas on the Isle of Man ("Walter Greenwood, Author . . ." 16e). Regardless of what became of Greenwood's life after 1933, previously, he had by necessity had significant engagement in the cultural practices of the British working-class. He had a working-class alignment.

Love on the Dole is about working-class experience. It is not, however, Greenwood's only novel about working-class life. His second novel, His Worship the Mayor, or It's Only Human Nature after All which was published in the United States as The Time is Ripe, came out in 1934. It is the story of two Salford families; the Shuttleworths and the Hargraves. The former is a

working-class family whose economic circumstances force them into the lumpenproletariat, and the latter is a petty bourgeois family that moves into the bourgeoisie after the "fortuitous" death of a miserly aunt leaves them with a fortune in stocks and property. It was after the publication of this novel that Greenwood moved into other modes of discourse. In 1934, he and the Manchester playwright Ronald Gow adapted Love on the Dole for the stage. The play's successful opening in Manchester led to a run at the Garrick theater in London (Trewin 207). In his introduction to a 1986 edition of the play, Ray Speakman says of it:

By the end of 1935 a million people had seen the play on the stage, reviewers talked of it as having been "conceived and written in blood", of being "sincere and powerful" and "admirable and extremely moving". In the country at large, the Reverend Pat McCormick of St. Martin's said that after seeing the play he could not sleep and God was calling on him to "do something . . . " (7).

Love on the Dole was also made into a movie in 1940, and Greenwood contributed to the writing of the script (Trewin 207). Greenwood actually wrote his first film script for the 1935 George Formby film No Limit. In the 1936, Jonathan Cape published Greenwood 's Standing Room Only, or a Laugh in every Line, a novel with many autobiographical undertones about a young Salford playwright whose play makes it big on the London scene.

In 1938, Greenwood saw three texts published, including the one novel of his from the thirties which I have not yet been able to locate, The Secret Kingdom. Only Mugs Work, a Soho Melodrama is the story of an inept gang of criminals led by Gino Gorelli, an evil Italian and former waiter whose motto is "Only Mugs Work," who dominates the seedy underworld of London's infamous Soho district. The gang uses witty repartee such as "one move out of you, Hanson, and you'll be playing a harp instead of a piano" (168). 1938 also saw the publication of The Cleft Stick, or It's the Same the World Over, a collection of short stories about working-class life in Salford that feature many of the same characters as Love on the Dole and The Time is Ripe. Greenwood says of this collection in the preface, "When most of these stories were written I was what is known as one of the 'unemployed'" (vii), and he adds, "'Patriotism' and 'Any Bread, Cake or Pie?' are of recent vintage, having been written to complete this volume; the others belong to, I think, 1928-1931, and were the products of the 'prentice hand" (ix). In other words, most of the stories pre-date Love on the Dole. It is worthwhile to note that this text also includes a brief bibliography in which Greenwood lists two plays that I have not seen, Give Us this Day and The Practiced Hand. The latter was at some time adapted from the short story of the same title included in the collection

(Greenwood, Cleft Stick 184).⁴ I have had the good fortune of finding Greenwood's extremely rare 1939 study of working-class life, How the Other Man Lives. I have not, however, found secondary references to this text, even in Greenwood's works, so I have no information on its history. The text is a collection of interviews in which people describe for Greenwood their relationship to and engagement in the labor process. It was published by the Labour Book Service which, according to Betty Reid, was started by the Labour Party in 1939 in opposition to the communist dominated Left Book Club (197).

Due to the time constraints placed on this project and the difficulty in finding Greenwood's works, I limited my study of his primary texts to those published during the thirties. With the exclusion of the plays adapted from them, three of these texts qualify as working-class literature in the way I have defined it in this essay, Love on the Dole, The Time is Ripe, and The Cleft Stick. These are texts about working-class life written by an individual aligned with that class, and they will, therefore, be the focus of the remainder of this study.

In an essay on the fiction of British miners, Graham Holderness discusses some of the central dilemmas about political methodology facing critics of working-class literature: "Necessary theoretical

distinctions have been attempted but not yet carried through: between working-class and proletarian literature; between class-conscious and politically committed socialist literature . . ." (19-20). Carole Snee attempts to make such a distinction in her reading of Love on the Dole in "Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?", and as I noted above her main contention is that "Greenwood may have been a working class novelist writing about working class life, but he never challenges the form of the bourgeois novel, nor its underlying ideology" (Snee, "Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 171). There are two serious flaws in Snee's argument. While she acknowledges Greenwood's class situation, she challenges the underlying politicality of the text on the assumption that Greenwood should be living up to the ideals of a commitment which his consciousness may or may not have achieved.⁵ She never establishes with any cogency if it does. In other words, she makes no attempt to go outside the text to locate Greenwood in his political milieu.

In her defense, it is difficult to understand Greenwood's politicality because there are some apparent contradictions concerning the left in his early writings. On the one hand, from Love on the Dole, Larry Meath is a socialist who, much like Owen from Tressell's

The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists, is limited in his effectiveness by his lack of physical stamina:

Larry Meath appeared on the rostrum, cleared his throat, and surveyed the crowd as he wiped his moist brow with his hand kerchief. He wished all this over so that he might return home to go to bed. This present indisposition, this severe cold, was a nuisance; it left him enervated. He had been foolish to come (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 198).

Larry is hardly a tireless worker for the cause. He does not live up to the ideal that Greenwood celebrates in How the Other Man Lives where he says of the Labor Party Agent:

He rang me up to say that he would be calling to see me at two o'clock. Precisely at that time, though he had driven eighty miles, he appeared, middle-aged muscular man with strong teeth and mild blue eyes. . . . He did not look his age which was fifty-ish (Greenwood, How the Other Man Lives 251).

The latter is an image of vibrant health and ambitious commitment to activism. The latter is a man who says, "Anything to do with the movement became my great interest in life. My whole heart was in it--and still is" (Greenwood, How the Other Man Lives 252). Larry is a man of wavering commitment. He says of the working-class: "It's driving me barmy living among such idiotic folk" Greenwood, Love on the Dole 187). These oppositional images make it difficult to fix Greenwood's attitudes toward left activists based on a comparative

study of these two texts. Fortunately, Greenwood is explicit about his commitment elsewhere.

In There was a Time, Greenwood discusses his Grandfather and Mother as political influences. He recalls his mother saying:

"Yes," she said, pride and defiance in her voice, "thirty years and more ago when I was a young woman he'd have us all out at I.L.P. meetings selling Blatchford's Merrie England. But it was like talking to that wall where some working people were concerned. Yes, fifteen to eighteen shillings a week, that's all some of them were bringing home --if they got in a full week's work. 'Here he is,' some of the idiots said. 'One of those Socialists that wants us to share all we've got.'" She shook her head. 'It was enough to turn your hair grey--and him earning three times what they were getting. It used to madden me, it did, really, but I never saw him lose his patience once" (172).

Greenwood also tells of that period of unemployment between the estate agents and Jackson's Emporium when he began to write fiction seriously and also wrote for a local labour organization newspaper. He became involved in this through an activist named Jim Moleyns.

Greenwood recalls Moleyns saying: "We don't favour the Workers' Education Association--biased the wrong way. National Council of Labour Colleges, Marxist Slant, that's us" (Greenwood, There was a Time, 175).

Greenwood's involvement in this Marxist organization lasted for years, and the time that he speaks of

interacting with Moleyns encompasses the period when he would have been writing Love on the Dole and the stories which later comprised The Cleft Stick . As late as 1938, Greenwood was still willing to make publicly known his commitment to Marxism. When speaking of his childhood encounter with alienation and economic exploitation in the "The Old School" he says:

School became a sort of inconvenient necessity, an interruption in the earning of a livelihood. Perhaps this explains why I have so little to say about it. All was mean and shabby and without color. Sooty school, smoky street, the trudge homeward to the cold house and empty grate. A swig of tea a bite of such food as was in the house, then to the pawn-broker's until closing time

Subconsciously I was being educated, at least, preparing to be educated. It was not until years later that a study of Marxian economics satisfactorily explained the true causes of my predicament (211).

The period in which he wrote the three texts that I have identified as working-class was a time of public commitment to Marxism for Greenwood. His texts deserve to be read with this in mind.

Snee's second error is that she dismisses any possibility that Greenwood does subvert bourgeois ideology because as she claims:

Greenwood shows people living in close proximity to each other, but they exist in isolated pockets of space, as individual consciousness

separated by their common experience, rather than united by it. He is a working-class novelist totally trapped by liberal ideology both as an explanation of the world, and as it shaped the novel form. Perhaps this offers at least a partial explanation as to why Love on the Dole has been accepted as "Literature" . . . (Snee, "Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 176).

Snee qualifies Greenwood's consciousness as "Liberal" because he does not show the working-class in Love On the Dole in a successful, unified resistance to bourgeois hegemony. He does not, in short, portray them in the same way that Lewis Jones does in We Live where the persecuted laborers of a Welsh mining village rise-up in unison to protest the union breaking and general anti-labor activities of Lord Cwmardy, local coal merchant (253-302). Showing a group with class consciousness acting in a unified manner to oppose the mechanisms of alienation and exploitation is a laudable goal for motivated Marxist fiction. Not showing a group with such a level of consciousness does not, however, preclude an author from attempting to raise the consciousness of those who purport to champion the cause of working-class liberation. Nor does it preclude a text from having Marxian underpinnings. There are such underpinnings in Walter Greenwood's Love on the Dole, The Time is Ripe, and The Cleft Stick.

The Centrality of the Labor Process
in the Working-Class Fiction of Walter Greenwood

In Marxism and Literature, Raymond Williams declares that "Marxism without some concept of determination is in effect worthless" (83), and it is so because if we deny that human consciousness is a social construct the identity of which is determined by the formative historical process out of which it arises, then we are culpable in the propagation of the bourgeois ideological notion that there is fixity in both how we think and how society is structured. As Marx says, "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness" ("Marx on his Early Opinions" 4). While every activity shapes consciousness, there is an ordering of human activity in social being:

The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends first of all on the nature of the actual means of subsistence they find in existence and have to reproduce. This mode of production must not be considered simply as being the reproduction of the physical existence of the individuals. Rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals, a definite form of expressing their life, a definite *mode of life* on their part. As individuals express their life, so

they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and with how they produce. The nature of individuals thus depends on the material conditions determining their production (Marx, "The German Ideology" 150).

One of the most significant realizations of Marxism is the primacy of the labor process as a formative determinant. As Walter Greenwood demonstrates in Love on the Dole, The Time is Ripe, and the stories which comprise The Cleft Stick, work and the relationship to work are primary formative engagements which determine the development of consciousness and the types of social relations humans enter.⁶

The stories of The Cleft Stick are vignettes. They are individual portraits of working-class life that when grouped form an amazingly coherent panoramic view of the cultural engagements of the working-class as there were in the late twenties and early thirties. There are many things which provide these stories with coherence, and not the least of which are the obvious factors that they are set in Salford and deal with characters who, at some point, have by necessity had significant engagement in the cultural practices of the working-class. There is, however, a much more complex thematic interrelationship among these texts because, to varying degrees, they all demonstrate the centrality of the labor process as a formative determinant.

Including the autobiographical sketch "The Old School," The Cleft Stick contains fifteen stories. It would not be reasonable to attempt to deal with all fifteen in the course of this study. I will, however, focus on those that I found the most compelling and worthy of analysis. "A Maker of Books" is one such story. As noted above, it was Greenwood's first published work of fiction. It is the story of Ted Munter, a foreman in Love on the Dole but in this story a clerk with a fascination for wealth. Greenwood's inspiration for this story was Sandy Sinclair, a clerk with whom he worked at the Ford plant in Trafford Park. Greenwood says of Sinclair in There was a Time, "He button holed me during lunch break to enlarge on the intensity of his agony. 'Only ten to one chance, that's all I need.' . . . 'I tell you, ten on a winning ten to one chance. A hundred quid' . . . 'then I'd be the bookie'" (191). According to Greenwood, Sinclair's fascination with winning a ten to one bet arose out of his dissatisfaction with his job at the Ford plant which he called a "stinkin', rotten, lousy, bastard hole" (There was a Time 191). Ted Munter has the same pre-occupation with the acquisition of a hundred quid. He says to a work mate, "'Only a 'undred, Jack.' Pausing, staring into space, then, with sudden fervor: 'Once let me get hold of that and you'll never see my face in this rotten hole again!'" (Greenwood, "A Maker

of Books" 2). He too believes that he can raise the "'undred" by placing bets, and he views this as a means of changing his relationship to the labor process or, as he puts it, getting out of the "rotten hole." It is his need to get out of this hole, brought about by the intolerability of alienation, that determines his desire for a hundred pounds. The irony of the story is that he has an opportunity to change his relationship to the labor process. His mother, the "aged Mrs. Munter," dies and leaves him a shop worth a hundred pounds, but, instead of working in the shop he decides to sell for an easy "'undred quid" (Greenwood, "A Maker of Books" 9). The implication is that he sees the store as a potential continuation of the same type of relationship to the labor process that he has been engaged in while clerking. Munter says to his wife when they are discussing the sale of the shop, "It's no use talking. I'm a man of business, Jane" (Greenwood, "A Maker of Books, 11). He defines himself so in an attempt to distance himself from his current position of selling his labor as a clerk. It is because he wishes to be "a man of business," or an accumulator of capital with no investment of his own labor, that he refuses to keep the shop. What distinguishes the petty bourgeoisie from the bourgeoisie is that the latter must invest a degree of their own labor to make use of their property in a manner that allows them to accumulate capital. Munter

desires not to work in any capacity. He therefore rejects the shift from the working-class to the petty bourgeoisie that taking over the shop would represent.

He instead wishes to become "a maker of books," a position which he sees as a way to achieve the leisurely existence like that of Sam Grundy, Greenwood's ubiquitous bookmaker. He decides that a hundred quid are not enough to begin such a venture. To raise the capital to start making a book, he places several large wagers with a London bookmaking firm. As one might predict, he loses the money that he had inherited and is forced to continue with his position as a clerk. The irony of this episode is that while trying to change his relationship to the labor process, he ends up perpetuating it. Throughout the story, he sees gambling as a means of changing his relationship to the labor process. Because there is no change in this relationship, there is no corresponding shift in consciousness. At the end of the story, he still conceives of gambling as his out: "'Rotten hole,' he muttered, 'rotten, stinking hole' . . . 'Twelve months from now I'll be going out of those doors and I'll never put my foot on them again,'" and he says this whilst he "opened the newspaper at the page devoted to the next day's racing programs and sauntered off, his eyes roving the columns with feverish absorption" (Greenwood, "A Maker of Books" 17). The reader is left with the

Marxian notion that to change consciousness one's place in the labor process must be changed.

One of the most powerful stories from The Cleft Stick is the title story about Mrs. Cranford, a mother who contemplates suicide because the poverty under which she lives is unbearable and is tearing apart the very structure of her family. She and her husband discuss the situation: "'Dole,' she muttered. 'Dole. Thirty shillings, and you want some spending out of it' . . . 'Tain't my fault I was on the dole,' he grunted . . . 'I don't know what's come over you lately. Allus moanin' and groanin'. . . . Strikes me as your doing too much of tha there washin''" (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 53). She takes on the washing because it is necessary to do so if her family is to be fed, but, by taking it on, the amount of work that is required of her effectively doubles. Her primary job is that of mother and housekeeper. She cares for a husband who is "the kind of man who would not get up until the last possible moment, then he would play the devil with her for his being late" (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 49). For her, he is as much of a labor as are their children: "Half-past four! The kids would be home from school soon. If only she had not to be bothered with them for several hours. She resented their boisterousness and their petty quarrels, and wondered how they found their energy since they were nearly half starved" (Greenwood,

"The Cleft Stick" 49). It is not them, however, who prompt her forthcoming suicide attempt. She sees in death a means of ending her relationship to the labor process: "Mrs. Cranford could feel the luxurious carefulness of death. No work, worry, pains of debts" (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 59). It is because she desires no work, or at least a change in her relationship to the labor process, that "she opened the door, wrapped the shawl about her head and laid it in the oven, sighing deeply" (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 60). Her actions, in short, are determined by the unbearability of her engagement in the labor process, both in how she sells her labor and the investment of her labor that is necessary to maintain the physical existence of her family.

Mrs. Cranford's suicide attempt fails because "she had not turned on the gas" (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 60). She does not turn on the gas because she does not have the penny that is necessary for her to do so, and she does not have this penny because her relationship to the labor process does not allow her the material conditions with the luxury of an extra penny. Just as her relationship to the labor process had determined her desire to end her existence, it also determines her inability to do so. Greenwood demonstrates the narrowness of the scope of activity for the working-class and shows that this narrowness is a

limitation imposed on this community by the way in which the labor process is configured under capitalism. To widen the scope of that activity, one must change the configuration of the labor process.

"The Little Gold Mine" is the story of Mr. Hulkington, a prominent grocer in a working-class community who pursues a younger woman named Nance Glynne. Nance works at Regents Mill where the eighteen shillings a week for three days work which she earns goes to support the entire Glynne household. In spite of Hulkington's advances, Nance is attracted to a young man named Harry Blake who has little regard for her utter devotion to him. She eventually tires of Blake's uninterestedness and decides to accept Hulkington's offer. As the narrator says, "That huge mountain of a man was her husband" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 80). With her marriage, there is a change in her relationship to the labor process. Not only does she no longer sell her labor, but neither does she work within a domestic context: "She made him hire a girl to do the rough cleaning" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 83). With the change in Nance's relationship to the labor process, there is a corresponding shift in her consciousness. Before her marriage, Nance's modes of entertainment had been "a copy of a woman's cheap magazine" and the fun to be had "at the local dance hall at eight-thirty" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine"

74-77). After her marriage, Nance turns her attention to expensive clothing and the theater:

Her wardrobe now was wide and varied and, finding that she could bully him with impunity, and, being fond of entertainment, saw no reason why she could not take advantage of her circumstances, so she began to pay frequent visits to the Manchester theaters and cinemas (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 83).

There is a change in the type of cultural engagement in which she can participate now that she has both the time and the material conditions necessary to do so. At the very least, Greenwood suggests that it is not an innate lack of intellectuality on the part of working-class individuals that keeps them from engaging in bourgeois cultural endeavors; it is rather that the manner in which they engage in the labor process neither gives them the time nor material conditions necessary to do so.

Nance's change in her relationship to the labor process is not the only such shift in circumstances in the story. Blake undergoes one as well. Hulkington dies, and Nance, who had been having an affair with Blake, marries him. She in turn gives him possession of the shop and all of Hulkington's former real estate. Previously, Blake had sold his labor for "three ten a week at the foundry" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 90). When he takes over the shop, he moves from the working-class into the petty bourgeoisie (he owns

property but must invest a degree of his labor to maintain its profitability). His consciousness changes as well: "After they were married Nance was pleasantly surprised at the change in Harry Her mother had reminded her of Harry's reputation as a spendthrift Her fears were unfounded: he was taking the running of the shop very seriously" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 91). As he takes on the role of grocer, his conception of community changes. Before the change in his relationship to the labor process, Blake was an individual secure in his role as a member of the working-class community. He even looked for ways to strengthen his social ties with other members of the working-class. He says to Nance before he marries her, "I go in pubs because people are more sociable" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 86). After he takes over the shop, it matters little to him if he displaces a member of that class in his desire to increase the amount of surplus labor which he can accumulate: "His thoughts drifted. There were the Jacksons who lived next door. They were three weeks behind in their rent. Now if he gave them notice to quit, the shop could be enlarged: he could open a credit drapery like old Schwartz's place" (Greenwood, "The Little Gold Mine" 86). As with the other characters from the stories of The Cleft Stick, Blake's social relations are determined by his relationship to the labor process. He

no longer sells his labor and does not, therefore, conceive of himself as a member of a class made up of people who do. Nor does the lasting cohesiveness of that community matter to him.

There are very few stories about the experiences of children in working-class communities. Brendan Behan's wonderful autobiographical text Borstal Boy and Barry Hines's "almost flawless" (to quote Nigel Gray) A Kestrel for a Knave are two of the very best (25). Greenwood's short story "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" is not far out their league. As noted above, it was written by Greenwood to complete the collection of short stories. He had matured as a writer by the time that he wrote it, and it stands out from the stories that surround it. It is the story of "Young Harry Waring," a thirteen year old Salfordian boy whose family lives in bitter poverty. The story begins by stating that "YOUNG HARRY WARING WAS RAVENOUSLY HUNGRY" and details from there the quests of Harry and his friends for food (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 173). Harry Waring understands that the poverty under which he lives and the hunger which he is trying to appease are results of his father's relationship to the labor process: " . . . his father was someone to be despised, someone who was always on the cadge for a pint of beer, who never worked, who slunk in and out of the house as a trespasser" (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 175).

Harry Waring also realizes that he can change his circumstances by changing his relationship to the labor process: "Two months from now he would be fourteen and free to go to work. Already he had decided on Marlowe's engineering works: maybe then when he was earning wages--real wages, not two shillings a week delivering newspapers--his days of hunger would be over" (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 173). Even at the age of thirteen, he understands that when his relationship to the labor process changes his material conditions will change as well.

His relationship to the labor process cannot change, however, for another two months, and since there seems little prospect of his father finding employment, Harry Waring must conceive of other means of assuaging his poverty and thereby his hunger. His first method is begging outside factories: "Harry and the other urchins began to make appeals to the men, monotonously repetitive: 'Any bread, cake or pie? Any bread, cake or pie. . . . ?'" (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 177). When this fails to result in the necessary sustenance, Harry Waring and his friends turn to petty theft. He steals a purse from a woman in a bakery in hopes of gaining a fortune, but he ends up with "three half-pennies, and . . . pawn tickets" (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 181). His theft fails to gain him any thing substantive and the story ends with him saying

"I'm 'ungery I'm 'ungery" (Greenwood, "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?" 183). Harry Waring does not steal because of an innate criminality. He steals because there is no other way for him to appease his hunger. He cannot yet change his own relationship to the labor process to improve his material conditions, and, for the time being, his material conditions are determined by his father's unemployment. He is a product of the historic forces around him, and to change his situation we, as readers, are left with the very Marxian challenge to change these historic factors, beginning with his and his family members' relationships to the labor process.

* * * *

In the early parts of the text, Love on the Dole also deals with the relationship between a working-class youth and the labor process as a formative determinant. On the day which the story begins, Harry Hardcastle leaves early for his job at the pawnshop so that he will have time to go to Marlowe's where he hopes to be taken on as an "engineer's" apprentice. On the way, he sees "a great procession of heavily booted men all wearing overalls and all marching in the same direction" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 19). For Harry, the overalls are signifiers of what type of relationship these "booted men" have to the labor process. Harry contrasts his signifiers with theirs: "He had no right

to be there with these men . . . he wore the uniform of the offices, Eton collar, stud bow and those abominable knickerbockers. He felt ashamed of himself All these men and boys wore overalls; . . . they were men, engaged in men's work" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 19). Harry's engagement in the labor process determines his conception of where he belongs in his community. Because his relationship to that process is different from those that he sees around him, and because his clothing is an outward representation of this difference, he believes that he has no place in the community of "booted men."

His conception of himself and his place within his community changes when his relationship to the labor process changes. Once he is taken on at Marlowe's, his first thought is "What would the boys think of this?" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 26). Where before Harry had questioned his legitimacy as a member of the community, he now expresses a sense of camaraderie. Those who had been "men, engaged in men's work" were now boys at the same level of maturation as Harry. The hierarchical distinction that Harry makes between himself and those others evaporates. As it does so, Harry's sense of alienation within his environment disappears as well. Before, he had a sense that "he had no right to be there," but upon leaving Marlowe's "he went outside the gates thrilled, spirits soaring, paused

and turned to survey the great place, enthralled as a child in a Christmas toy shop" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 27). On Harry's part, there is now an identification with the physical landscape because he perceives that his relationship to the labor process is no longer incongruous with that which both exists and plays a determining role in the construction of that landscape. In short, Harry's conceptions of his social relations and his identification with his physical surroundings are determined by his relationship to the labor process.

Harry's initial duties at Marlowe's include running errands and placing bets for the older apprentices, but "when wanting a few months of his sixteenth birthday" his responsibilities change (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 69). He is placed in charge of a capstan lathe, and his initial reaction to this change in his relation to the labor process is a conception of mature superiority: "Promotion! After wanting so long its coming found him quite unprepared . . . And the day the batch of new boys came into the machine shops all wearing brand new overalls, all self-conscious and awed by all they saw, he found no difficulty in demeaning himself in mature superiority" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 70). Once again, as his relation to the labor process changes, his conception of his social relations change. Where before his employment at Marlowe's he was insecure as to

whether he belonged in the community of "men, engaged in men's work," he now sees himself as an arbiter of power because he can "hand over brass checks to raw apprentices" and send them scurrying after tools and supplies (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 73).

The promotion, or change in relationship to the labor process, results in a second shift in consciousness for Harry:

No longer would he run errands for the men; the new boys would do that, and, at weekend, they would receive those coppers which had made all the difference to his life. Incredulously, he asked himself to imagine the fact that, for the future, he would only have the shilling spending money his mother gave to him. Two packets of Woodbines, admission to the pictures of a Saturday, a two penn'orth of sweets, a threepenny bet, and, lo! he would be penniless until the following Saturday. It was monstrous. Nor would there be any relief until four years had elapsed, until he had concluded his apprenticeship and found another place where he would receive the full rate of pay. "Blimey!" he muttered, and repeated: "Blimey, Ah ne'er thought o' this" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 73).

Where the initial synthesis of Harry's consciousness had been a reaction to the change in his social relations, the subsequent shift in consciousness is a realization that his material conditions have changed, ironically from his perspective, for the worse. By constructing Harry's relationship to the labor process in this way, Greenwood illustrates one of the fundamental

contradictions of capitalism. Material conditions do not necessarily increase when the relationship to the labor process places more demands on the physicality and intellectuality of the individual selling their labor. In other words, it is the propensity of bourgeoisie to extract the most labor for the least amount of capital. As successfully as any other committed socialist author, Greenwood explicates this mechanism of oppression.

After seven years, Harry's apprenticeship ends, and because the owners of Marlowe's have no need to pay him an adult wage to do the same job he has been doing, he joins the ranks of the unemployed. His relationship to the labor process changes, and, as with every change in this relationship, there is a corresponding change in consciousness. Harry's most immediate realization is the primacy of work in his life: "'God, let me gerrra job, will y?' So much depended on it, nay everything depended on it. Phew! suppose he was unsuccessful. He wouldn't have the nerve to tell Helen" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 158). In the working-class community, people are classified the way they are by how they sell their labor. It is Harry's fear that, because he is no longer selling his labor, he will not be viewed by Helen as a suitable partner. He thinks, "Aw, God, just let me get a job. Ah don't care if it's on'y half pay . . . Blimey suppose she gets fed up wi' me if I'm out of collar long. Suppose she gets another bloke that's

workin' . . . " (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 159).

Harry questions the legitimacy of his engaging in social relations with Helen because he is aware, at some level of consciousness, that the types of social relations that he can enter are determined by his relationship to the labor process. When he is cut off from that process, when he is no longer in the position of selling his labor, and when, after several attempts, he is not allowed to re-enter the labor process, Harry can only conceive of his social being as incongruous with acceptable human behavior: "He trudged homewards, staring, a strangulating sensation in his throat, a feeling in his heart as though he had committed some awful crime in which he was sure to be found out"

(Greenwood, Love on the Dole 159). Whether right or wrong, with his promotion to the capstan lathe Harry had conceived of himself as an arbiter of power, not only engaged in the labor process but determining how others engaged in it as well. With unemployment, Harry views himself as a social deviant. He equates unemployment with criminality which implies that he not only sees himself as being beyond the purview of the labor process and the social relations derived therefrom, but it is his conception that he is subverting the very process and community from which he is excluded through no fault of his own. The irony is sublime. Greenwood juxtaposes Harry's sense of his own criminality with the actual

criminality of Marlowe's in their duplicitous method of extracting labor from children under the pretense of training them to be "engineers" and disposing of them when they can no longer justify paying them apprentice wages for skilled work. When he does so, he demonstrates the fallacy of viewing the unemployed as social deviants responsible for their own plights and thereby implies that to end unemployment, the practices of the bourgeoisie must be changed and not the willingness of the unemployed to work. If he is nothing else, Harry Hardcastle is eager to work because he understands that "everything depended on it."

There is additional irony related to Harry's unemployment. As two of the above quotations indicate, within a short span of time, Harry appeals twice to a god for employment. The irony is that when he finally does get employment, it is not because some benevolent deity decided to give it to him. It is because his sister Sally is willing to accept reification in its most extreme and exploitative form in order to incur the favor of Sam Grundy (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 251). She had been a weaver at a mill, but she is willing to prostitute herself to the bookmaker to ensure that she and her family have some sense of lasting security in the form of a settlement from Grundy. As Mrs. Bull says to her, "Though Ah'd get Sam Grundy t' mek me a sekklement on y'. There's nowt like havin the brass in

your own name" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 245). The sale of her labor comes in the form of the sale of her sexuality to Grundy. It is because she is willing to change her relationship to the labor process (shift from weaver to prostitute) that she changes the material conditions of her family. Her relationship to the labor process determines Harry's relationship to it. She gets him and their father jobs as bus drivers. In having her do so, Greenwood challenges one of the most abstract bourgeois ideological assumptions, that of deity. He demonstrates the very Marxist notion that who we are and what we do is determined in a social context, and most particularly by our relationship to the labor process, not by a patriarchal deity. He demonstrates once again that to change our circumstances, we need to, as Sally does, change our relationship to the labor process. Greenwood suggests that this can never be done in a positive manner as long as the Sam Grundys of the world control that process.

* * * *

The Sam Grundys of the world do control the labor process in The Time is Ripe as well, but in Greenwood's second novel Sam Grundy is not the dominant representative of bourgeois intellectuality that he is in Love on the Dole. In the second novel, Grundy is merely a wealthy bookmaker who "is standing as Progressive candidate for [councilor of] Meadow Ward," a position to

which he is elected (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 194). The primary task of representing bourgeois intellectuality falls to Edgar Hargraves, a gentleman's outfitter, clothier, haberdasher, and draper by trade (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 15). Edgar is characterized as a man with the singular ambition of moving from the petty bourgeoisie into the bourgeoisie because, in his own words, "'If you haven't got any money,' he said, 'you're a nobody'" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 15). It is Edgar's conception that, within the framework of his own bourgeois community, he is a nobody. When he attends the Progressive Club meetings with the likes of Sam Grundy and Alderman Grumpole (owner of the Good Samaritan Clothing Club and Loan Office in Love on the Dole and The Time is Ripe), he finds himself among "the smaller fry of the shopkeeping and artisan world" who are segregated from their more prosperous brethren at club meetings:

Despite the fact of its being, ostensibly, a common room, it was divided by a glazed partition. The partition was fixed across the room's lower quarter, so that three quarters of the room's area--and the part most comfortably furnished, was shut off. And it, as by tacit consent, was sacrosanct to those whom it had pleased providence to call to a state of comfortable prosperity municipal eminence, influence and privilege or a mixture of all four. In a word, this could be said to be a most uncommon common room. The partition really was unnecessary since none of those whom it had pleased providence not to call to a state of comfortable

prosperity ever would have dared to trespass (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 61).

Not unlike Harry Hardcastle from Love on the Dole, Edgar Hargraves's conception of his place in his community is determined by his relationship to the labor process. He is an owner of private property who, not unlike Harry Blake of "The Little Gold Mine," must invest a degree of his labor in order to use that property in a way that will enable him and his family to subsist. He is, therefore, a member of the petty bourgeoisie, and his most immediate social relations are with other members of this group. At the club he interacts with "Mr. Arthur Chigwell, fishmonger and fruiterer," "A bow-legged insurance agent by the name of Mr. William Turge, who perpetually wore bicycle clips," and (my personal favorite) "Joseph Barkle, Esq." a druggist known for his pesticides and given the appellation of "Bugpowder Joe" by "the denizens of the slums" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 62-63). All of these individuals engage the labor process in a like manner, and they interact on this basis.

Also not unlike Harry Hardcastle, when Edgar Hargraves interacts with individuals of his community whose relationship to the labor process is different from his own, he questions the legitimacy of such interaction. When he needs to cross the glazed partition at the progressive club to seek the advice of

Sir William Chetterby as to what he should do regarding the theft of a shawl from his shop by his charwoman, Mrs. Shuttleworth, he possesses no identification with the landscape of that beyond the partition: "Mr. Hargraves stood motionless staring through the glazing. That room: those chairs! lor' millionaires sat in them! Titled people! Strange how sight of the room always affected him. So desirable, so remote (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 63). It is remote because he identifies the room beyond the partition with individuals who own private property but do not need to invest their own labor into that property in order to subsist. On the other side of the partition sit "Alderman Brodie, the wealthy and philanthropic miller and baker" and "Alderman Sir Arthur Hepburn, the millionaire cotton merchant" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 63). As the narrator indicates above, there is no need for the glazed barrier which separates Hargraves and the "smaller fries" of the shopkeeping class from the millionaires, and the transparency of this glazed barrier symbolizes its meaninglessness. The real barrier is the labor process which is a primary determinant of how these men conceive of themselves and the types of social relations into which they can legitimately enter. In Edgar's case, there is indignation when he crosses that barrier from members of his group: "Mr. Barkle was arrested in the act of

raising a frothy glass to his heavily mustached lips; arrested, astounded by the amazing spectacle of Mr. Hargraves having the audacity to go around the partition, and, not only that but to approach none other than Alderman Sir William Chetterby" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 63).

It is not until Edgar's relationship to the labor process changes that he can cross this barrier without evoking incredulity in those with whom he has, as both he and they conceive, legitimate social relations. His relationship to the labor process changes with the "fortuitous" death of his aunt Phoebe, a reclusive miser who, until she dies, is believed by Edgar to possess five thousand pounds which he hopes to inherit. After her death, Edgar discovers that she has for years been sitting on a fortune in stock and securities.

Immediately after finding her dead, he rummages through her possessions in the hopes of gaining a sense of her material conditions. In a locked bureau, he finds bound packets of documents, and "[he] picked out the first document and opened it: 'Marlowe's Limited. 7½ percent first Mortgage Debenture £100.' He counted how many there were to a packet. Twenty-five. He counted how many packets there were, One, two, three, four, five, six He felt giddy" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 115). Although his aunt who had been dead for several days is still moldering on the bed a few feet away,

Edgar cannot suppress his joy at the discovery of his inheritance. The possession of stock in Marlowe's means that Edgar's relationship to the labor process changes. It is no longer necessary for him to invest his own labor in his property to maintain his subsistence. He is, as he notes repeatedly, "free" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 115, 151). He moves into the bourgeoisie. With this change, there is a corresponding shift in consciousness. In particular, Edgar no longer views the area on the other the side of the partition at the Progressive Club as remote: "It was with a sense of utter well-being, of complete self-complacency that Mr. Hargraves crossed the threshold of the partition's door in the club's uncommon common room. He savoured, for the first time, the flavour of privilege, of the elevation of social status" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 151). With the change in his relationship to the labor process, there is now an identification with the physical landscape beyond the partition because he perceives that his relationship to the labor process is no longer incongruous to that landscape.

It is not incongruous precisely because his relation to the labor process is typical of the individuals on the "privileged" side of the partition. He can, therefore, engage in social relations with these individuals. In his shopkeeper days, Edgar had been shunned by Councilor Fogley, a member of the Progressive

Club, when he approached him about making a donation for the candidate in a forthcoming election provided that he would be given some consideration for the position.

Fogley's response does not acknowledge the legitimacy of Edgar's desire for political candidacy. His only reply is "thank y', Hargraves. Send it to the secretary, He'll give you a receipt" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 18). Yet after Edgar receives his inheritance, it is Fogley who approaches him about taking on party, civic, and governmental duties: "Has it occurred to you, Edgar, that the party requires, *constantly* requires new blood" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 153). Prior to the change in his relationship to the labor process, Edgar could not engage in substantive social relations with the Fogleys of the text. After he moves into the bourgeoisie, Edgar is an acceptable candidate to become a representative of its main superstructural apparatus, government. By the end of the text he occupies the unparalleled position of lord mayor. There is no shift in his intellectuality. He does not incur the favor of the Progressive Club leaders through meritorious service to that organization. The only difference in Edgar is that he no longer must invest his labor in his private property to subsist. The only difference is in his relationship to the labor process.

As Edgar's consciousness changes as a result of the change in his relationship to the labor process, his

conception of that process changes as well. On the morning when Edgar sees the headline "Strike Action Threatened at Marlowe's," he comes to the realization that his relationship to the labor process is now significantly different:

Strikes. Working men grumbling; these hunger marchers, restive, dissatisfied. Until now these things had been items of news to be glanced at, skipped: strikes had been regarded in the light of consequences they would have on the small profits of the shop. And whenever strikes affecting the locality had been on the carpet he, secretly, had been in sympathy with the strikers since, he argued with himself, less wages for them meant less money they could spend in the shop (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 248-49).

The working-class had been Edgar's customers. It was from them that he extracted as much capital as possible, and when they had more capital, the possibility of his extracting it grew. As an owner of the means of production, it is now in his interest to see that his company can purchase labor as cheaply as possible because the source of his wealth is the excess labor which he is able to accumulate. When the workers demand more of their own, the very foundation of all that Edgar has become is threatened, and he inwardly lashes out in anger at this threat: "Indignation coloured his cheeks. How dare these working men be dissatisfied? How dare they threaten to strike" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe

248). Greenwood makes two very Marxist observations at this point in the text. As noted in the above discussion of Harry Hardcastle from Love on the Dole, it is the propensity of the bourgeoisie to seek cheaper labor because the wealth, or capital, that they possess "is accumulated labor" (Marx, "Economic and Philosophic . . . " 98). Greenwood also observes that consciousness is never static even for the bourgeoisie although it is a common bourgeois ideological conception that there is fixity in how humans think. Greenwood demonstrates that how Edgar Hargraves conceives of the working class, whether as ally or foe, is determined in a social context, and most prominently by his relationship to the labor process.

If Edgar Hargraves ends up at one extreme of the social spectrum in The Time is Ripe, Joe Shuttleworth ends up at the other. He is an unemployed coal-miner whose family lives in the deepest poverty. They live only because of the dole and the money that Mrs. Shuttleworth can earn charring for the Hargraves. When she is desperate to feed her family, she steals a shawl which she pawns for five shillings. She subsequently ends up in prison for three months. While she is in prison, the Shuttleworths depend mostly on the charity of their working-class neighbors for their survival and any small luxuries they might acquire. When he interacts with these neighbors, Joe Shuttleworth is

conscious that his engagement in the labor process is different from theirs, and this makes him question the legitimacy of this interaction. Judy Evans, the most solicitous of the neighbors, says of her husband to Joe, "Y'd better be puttin' on y' hat and coat, Joe. . . . he's schemin' to surprise you. Only don't tell him I've told y'. Him and Bill Cragle are gunna tek y' out boozin', being as it's Christmas" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 133). Joe responds, "Ay, I don't like keep bein' treated, Judy. Ay, I wish I wus workin' so's I could pay me corner" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 133-34). Joe questions his inclusion in the Christmas eve festivities because he does not have a job that will allow him to interact in a like manner with Evans and Cragle. Not unlike Harry Hardcastle from Love on the Dole, how Jack conceives of his social relations is determined by his relationship to the labor process.

It his relationship to the labor process that also determines how his family interacts within the community. Mrs. Shuttleworth notes of the local grocer, "Him at corner shop won't let me have owt else on tick until I've paid summat off what I owe. An' bread mug's empty; Him at shop's ne'er bin same wi' me since they stopped me husband at pit" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 42). Mrs. Shuttleworth is aware that how the grocer conceives of her is determined by her husband's relationship to the labor process. This is an

affirmation of what Hargraves noted was his attitude toward the working-class when he ran his shop. The more capital that they derived from the labor process, the more favorable they are to those who wish to extract that capital from them. Joe Shuttleworth is unemployed, and he is, therefore, no use to the "smaller fries of the shopkeeping world," so both he and his family are denied the ability to interact on a commercial level with individuals of this group.

Mrs. Shuttleworth is also aware that their material conditions are determined by her husband's relationship to the labor process. Since they have no capital, they cannot buy food. Yet she must find some way to feed her family because, not unlike Harry Waring from "Any Bread, Cake or Pie?", "They've such big appetites" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 42). She does have some money from her charring and the extra washing that Mrs. Evan's sends to her, but it is not enough to feed her family. Her husband cannot change his relationship to the labor process; she is already engaged in work to the fullest extent of her capacity. When one takes into account her domestic labor, she has three jobs. She perceives that her only recourse is to steal in order to eat. When she is cleaning Hargraves's store, she takes bits of food that are left out after a Wednesday dinner. When this fails to assuage the "gnawing pain in her stomach" she decides to steal the aforementioned shawl from one of

the many that Hargraves has in stock because "Price would lend five shillings on it," (perhaps Harry Hardcastle wrote her ticket) and for her family five shillings would mean that "they'd have a beano at tea time . . . Bacon, eggs, butter. She visualized herself bending over the fire in the luxury of preparing the meal" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 47). She takes the shawl and is seen doing so by Edgar Hargraves's son, who follows her to Price's where he sees her pawn it. As noted above, she is later convicted of the theft that, according to Joe Shuttleworth, " . . . wouldn't have happened if I'd bin workin'" (Greenwood, The Time s Ripe 77). He understands that she steals because neither of them can change their relationships to the labor process. By showing that her theft is socially determined, Greenwood calls into question the very relativity of criminality, and throughout the text he juxtaposes her supposed criminality with the behavior of capitalists such as Price who takes, as he also does in Love on the Dole, "Owld Age Pension books i' pawn" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 96). If one looks at it in terms of the amount of capital obtained, her crime is not nearly as heinous as his, but because of her working-class status, because she sells her labor when and where she can, she gets three months hard labor. Price, on the other hand, gets a seat on the local council and a life time position of respectability on

the better side of the partition at the Progressive Club. The law works differently for individuals on each side of the labor process, and the reader is left with the very Marxist notion that to change this relativity the labor process itself must be restructured so that there is no longer a distinction between those who sell their labor and those who accumulate labor.

* * * *

The most important social institution in the working-class community is the family, and the most significant social relations a member of the working-class will enter are familial. Richard Hoggart discusses the importance of the family and community to the working-class in The Uses of Literacy:

The more we look at working-class life, the more we try to reach the core of working-class attitudes, the more surely does it appear that the course is a sense of the personal, concrete, the local: it is embodied in the ideas of, first, the family and, second, the neighborhood. This remains, though much works against it, and partly because so much works against (Hoggart 33).

In the British working-class community, familial relations are traditionally extensive. Carole Snee comments on the lack of such families in Love on the Dole:

The Hardcastle family led a self-enclosed existence. There are no uncles or aunts or grandparents close by--a strange phenomenon in a working-class community. Conse-

quently, an important part of working-class culture, the supportive action of family and friends is missing from the novel. Greenwood shows people living in close proximity to each other, but they exist in isolated pockets of space, as individual consciousnesses separated by their common experience, rather than united by it. . . . ("Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 176).

Snee is correct in her observation about the lack of extended familial interaction in Greenwood's novel. She does not, however, allow for the possibility that Greenwood's purpose is to demonstrate that, as with all types of social relations, it is the relationship to the labor process which determines the structure of the family.

In Love on the Dole, for example, Greenwood explores the dynamics of marriage, and, in particular, describes the physical effects that domestic labor has on working-class women. The narrator describes the women in front of Price's pawn shop: "Marriage scored on their faces a kind of preoccupied, faded, lack-lustre air as they were constantly being plagued by some problem. As they were. How to get a shilling. . . . Though it was not so much a problem as a whole-time occupation to which no salary was attached" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 31). With this concern for the effects of marriage, there is also an exploration of why it is that people do or do not enter into conjugal relations. Larry Meath and Sally Hardcastle discuss the

appropriateness of marriage given Larry's current engagement in the labor process:

"No, no, Sal, you misunderstand me. It isn't this marriage business that matters: marriage is only for hogs anyway. It's this damned poverty. My wages. What are they? Forty-five shillings a week. How on earth could we live decently on that? It isn't enough to keep us decently clothed and fed: it means a life of doing without the things that make life worth while. And-" a gesture of helplessness: "It can't be explained, Sal. If you don't see it as I then you just don't see it, that's all" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 140).

The sale of his labor does not provide Larry with the means for a comfortable existence, and he is unwilling to enter conjugal relations with Sal if he cannot provide her with the material conditions he desires. In a very direct way, his relationship to work determines the familial relations he will or will not enter.

Greenwood explores a similar situation in The Time is Ripe. Jack Shuttleworth, the eldest son of Joe and Mrs. Shuttleworth, and Meg Teagle "who everybody knew was Jack['s] . . . 'intended,'" want to marry, and whether or not they do is determined by Jack's relationships to the labor process (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 74). Jack says to Meg:

"D' y' realize it? Gosh, allus we want's a house. Nowt to stop us from gettin' wed as soon as me time's finished. By heck, y' don't know how pleased I was when boss told me he's keepin' me on and payin' me full rate when me time's up. Gosh, if we only

can find house, aye, if only we can. I don't mind rooms, even." The prospect seemed so full of promise, so new and unspoilt, so like a fresh start, a new epoch with nothing in it of the old (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 138).

There is an awareness on Jack's part that the types of social relations which he can enter depend upon his engagement in the labor process and that marriage is a legitimate social relation only for an individual on "full rate." There is no shift in the emotional investment of either Jack or Meg. The only change which facilitates their ability to enter conjugal relations is his relationship to the labor process.

Just as the labor process determines whether or not people will enter into familial relations, as Greenwood shows with regularity in his three early working-class texts, it also determines the roles of individuals within a familial unit. Because these roles are determined within a social context, Greenwood challenges bourgeois notions of gender which suppose that male economic dominance within the family is an inherent part of male superiority. I have already discussed Mrs. Shuttleworth's economic dominance in The Time is Ripe, and I will just add, that after she returns from prison, she continues as the primary source of income for her family. She "earns a few shillings a week makin' overalls" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 214). A similar situation exists in the Hardcastle family of Love on the

Dole. For a substantial portion of the text, Sal Hardcastle occupies a level of economic dominance that the bourgeois conception of the family normally reserves for the parental male figure. However, the parental male Hardcastle is unemployed and dependent on Sal for sustenance. It is she who "pulled three one pound notes out of her bag and offered them to her mother," not the elder Harry Hardcastle (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 245). The situation is the same for the younger Harry Hardcastle and Helen after they are married. She is the only one engaged in the labor process and therefore the economically dominant partner. Because Hellen works, she and Harry are able to maintain familial cohesion--the family is nothing if it is not foremost an economic unit. To underscore her economic dominance, Greenwood has her send Harry for her wages when she goes into labor: "'Go for Mrs. Bull,' said Helen, weakly: 'An' go t' t' mill at five o'clock for me wages, Me number's 215'" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 235). By showing the economic dominance of women in working-class households, Greenwood affirms an observation that Engels makes in his essay "The Origin of Family, Private Property, and State":

Moreover, since large-scale industry has transferred the woman from the house to the labour market and the factory, and makes her, often enough, the bread-winner, the last remnants of male domination in the proletarian home have lost all foundation--except, perhaps, for some of that

brutality towards women which became firmly rooted with the establishment of monogamy (742).

Sal, Helen, and Mrs. Shuttleworth occupy the roles that they do because the labor process is configured so that the males within their respective families cannot sell their labor in a market where the labor of children and women can be and is exploited more cheaply, and, as Greenwood demonstrates repeatedly, for the working-class the ability of one to sell one's labor determines the nature of social relations, even within the familial unit.

For the working-class family it is the labor process which determines its cohesiveness. In Love on the Dole the structure of the Hardcastle family alters significantly when Sal Hardcastle changes her relationship to the labor process. When Sally enters into her prostituting relationship with Sam Grundy, she removes herself from the everyday interaction of the Hardcastle family. She is so removed from social relations with her family that her mother is left to wail "What'll become of her.[sic] Oh What'll become of her?" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 253). For the Shuttleworths of The Time is Ripe, the loss of familial cohesion because of Joe's continuing unemployment is equally dramatic. They cannot afford to raise their young daughter Molly so she must live with her older brother Jack. When the Shuttleworths prepare to leave

their house on "Peggytub Lane" to take lodgings in a single room on "Traverse Street," Jack Shuttleworth says to his parents, "And you can leave Molly here too. Ay and We'll do all that we can to help you. You Know Meg" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 162). Molly, not unlike Sal Hardcastle, is removed from daily social relations with her parents. The Shuttleworths are divided into two distinct familial units, one characterized by Joe's unemployment and the other by Jack's employment.

Greenwood affirms an observation which Marx makes in "The Manifesto of the Communist Party": "The bourgeois clap-trap about the family and education, about the hallowed co-relation of parent and child, becomes all the more disgusting, the more, by the actions of Modern Industry, all family ties among the proletariat are torn asunder . . . " (488-89). They are torn asunder because it is the relationship of the individuals in the familial unit to the labor process, or "Modern Industry" which determines the structure of the family.

If individuals within familial units are divided into groups based on their relationship to the labor process, then it is not realistic to expect that individuals interacting in a larger social context will not be subject to these distinctions. This is, however, an expectation which Snee takes into her reading of Love on the Dole when she criticizes Greenwood for showing "individual consciousnesses separated by their common

experience, rather than united by it." When the narrator notes of Harry Hardcastle that "someone else had his place at Marlowe's and no other firm required him. He was out. He felt icily alone," one must question how common Harry's experience is (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 160). He does not feel lonely because he is surrounded by the unemployed but because he is surrounded by people who work. He is an isolated consciousness, but his isolation arises out of a sense that social relations with individuals who are employed are problematic. "He is," as the narrator notes, "a solitary figure surrounded by commerce" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 160). If Greenwood presents, the working-class as factious and fractured, he does so because he shows that what makes it such is the division between those who sell their labor and those who cannot. The unemployed are further factionalized by their competition for the few jobs in existence, and the novel concludes by showing, that as the system now stands, one of the only ways to procure a job is to satisfy the lascivious desires of the bourgeoisie. Sal obtains a job for her brother by prostituting herself to Sam Grundy.

Conclusion: Form and Fabianism

For Snee, a major failing of Love on the Dole is that it represents the situation of the working-class as static by virtue of its very form:

Although Greenwood locates the problems facing the inhabitants of Hanky Park at a specific historic moment, and shows they are the result of specific historic forces, the fictional world of Hanky Park and all it symbolizes is presented as unchanging, and indeed incapable of change. This pessimism about working-class life is most clearly revealed in the formal structure of the novel, and in particular in its beginning and end ("Working- Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 171).

She is referring to the circularity of novel through which, at the end, Greenwood recreates the scene with which the novel effectively begins, with Blind Joe Riley the knocker-up:

5.30 A.M.

A drizzle was falling.

The policeman on his beat paused awhile at the corner of North Street halting under a street lamp. Its staring beams lit the million globules of fine rain powdering his cape. A cat sitting on the doorstep of Mr. Hulkington's, the grocer's shop, blinked sleepily.

"Tsh-tsh-tsh-tsh-tsh" said the bobby and stooped to scratch the animal's head. It rose, crooked its



back, cocked its tail, pushed its body against his hand and miowed.

The melancholy hoot of a ship's siren sounded from the Salford Docks.

A man wearing clogs and carrying a long pole tipped with a bunch of wires came clattering down Hankinson Street (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 13).

And as the novel ends:

5.30 A.M.

A drizzle was falling.

Ned Narkey, on his beat, paused under the street lamp at the corner of North Street. Its staring beams lit the million globules of fine rain powdering his cape. A cat, sitting on the doorstep of Mr. Hullkington's, the grocer's shop, blinked at Ned, rose, tail in air, and pushed its body against Ned's legs.

"Gaaa-cher bloody thing," he muttered, and lifted it a couple of yards with his boot. . . .

A man wearing clogs and carrying a long pole tipped with a bunch of wires came clattering into north street. . . .

The Melancholy hoot of a ship's siren sound from the Salford docks . . . (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 255-56).

There is a circularity to Love on the Dole which goes beyond the parallels that exist between these two scenes. At the end of the text, Greenwood returns the characters to circumstances not unlike those in which he places them at the beginning. In particular, both of the Hardcastle men have employment. Their relationships to the labor process at the end of the novel are largely what they were at the beginning.

This pattern of circularity exists within much of his early working-class fiction. I have already noted briefly that there is a circularity to "Maker of Books," where Ted Munter finds himself in the same position at the end of the text which he had been so desperate to get out from the very beginning of his narrative. In "The Cleft Stick," Mrs. Cranford is also in much the same position at the end of her story as she is at the beginning. She still has boisterous children and a child-like husband, and her engagement in the labor process has not changed. She must still launder the clothing, and, in fact, her dependence on the income from washing increases because she pawns an article of clothing in order to get drunk. She must work so she can eventually take the article out of pawn (Greenwood, "The Cleft Stick" 60). There is also a circularity to The Time is Ripe. The story both begins and ends with lengthy descriptions of interactions between members of the petty bourgeoisie and bourgeoisie. In particular, the text begins by showing "the rebuking [of] the Hargraves" at their local church by individuals who occupy places on the privileged side of the partition at the Progressive Club (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 13). Similarly, the text ends by showing Edgar, who now holds a place on the privileged side of the partition, rebuking his successor in the haberdashery and drapery shop, Mr. Snigget. When Snigget holds out his hand and

offers it to Hargraves as he enters the same church where Edgar had previously been handing out booklets, the latter ignores him: "But . . . What was this? There was a fellow here. Somebody small, anonymous, nobody, holding out a hand. And *smiling*. Really. Edgar fixed his gaze on the sunlit stained glass window over the alter, passed Mister Snigget and halted . . . "

(Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 323). By creating this parallel between beginning and end, Greenwood emphasizes that, despite the very dynamic circumstances of individual consciousnesses in this text, the very structure of society is relatively static. The petty bourgeoisie and the bourgeoisie are still entrenched in their hierarchical positions as accumulators of excess labor just as in Love on the Dole the working-class is still trapped in its cycle of exploitation.

If the use of this circular structure in Love on the Dole and The Time is Ripe has a thematic purpose, it is not, as Snee argues, to suggest the incapability of the working-class to alter its circumstances; it is to signify that the actions needed to alter those circumstances have not yet been taken by those who purport to be working toward that end. The revolution does not occur within these texts, but not because the working-class fails the movement in its lack of intellectuality as Snee suggests ("Working-Class Literature or Proletarian Writing?" 173). Greenwood

does nothing if he does not instill the language of the working-class with an intellectual depth and range that is at the very least equivalent to their bourgeois counterparts, and, unless we forget, Greenwood's own co-optation of the bourgeois language and fictional form is a testament in itself to working-class intellectuality. The revolution does not occur within these two novels because the revolutionaries fail the people, and the function of the circularity is to emphasize their failure.

In The Time is Ripe, there is a labor activist named Hardman who proposes to help the Shuttleworths to fight the system which has put them off the dole and forced them to live in slum housing at extortionate rates. When Jack initially brings Hardman to meet his parents he says, "This is Mr. Hardman . . . Him as stood for Labour in St. Margaret's Ward. He's gunna see about exposing these landlords," and Hardman adds, "Wait till I've finished with 'em" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 244). We find out later, however, that Hardman will announce his "resignation from all political activity soon . . . in consequence of his acceptance of a berth in the Public Assistance Department at one hundred and seventy pounds per annum" (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 257). As a consequence of this sellout, Jack loses all faith in the prospect of revolution:

All that talk of revolution. All that
hot argument that occurred at lunch

hour at work appeared suddenly to be of urgent necessity. Energy coursed through his arms; he clenched his fists and teeth as there slowly dawned on him the recognition that, as things now were, there was no escape for him from this bitter, endless week-after-week struggle. No escape. There stood the prospect in all its obscene, thread-bare futility. Revolt. Then he remembered Hardman. His confidence trickled away (Greenwood, The Time is Ripe 269).

Jack Shuttleworth recognizes the need for revolt because he understands that he is trapped in a system which at its very heart is predicated on his exploitation, but when he sees that the most ardent proponent of change is willing to prostitute himself to the bourgeoisie for a profitable engagement in the labor process, he loses faith in the ability of the working-class to liberate itself with its existing leadership. When he gives up, he is caught in a continuing circle of exploitation, and the circular form of the novel underscores this at the same time that it critiques left activists who fail to carry through on their promise to break this circle.

Larry Meath is such an activist. He does not overtly sell out to the system as Hardman does, but then he never really gives it up either. A. V. Subiotto notes that "the gentle Fabian vision of a socialist future full of peace and plenty haunts the pages of Love on the Dole where it is blotted out by the raw harshness of families and communities struggling for food, clothing, shelter" (78). Larry embodies this Fabian

vision, and organizing for him becomes very much like a Fabian picnic. He says to Sal Hardcastle, "Why not join us at the Labor club? . . . There's the Sunday rambles into Derbyshire; they should interest you; and they're a jolly crowd . . . "(Greenwood, Love on the Dole 87).

Though he speaks the rhetoric at times, there is an unwillingness on his part to confront the realities of the working-class situation. When he is pushed into a confrontational mode, he is not willing to meet the bourgeoisie on anything but its own terms. When Larry is concerned about being late for the meeting at city hall, he says to a more radical speaker at the rally who is attempting to incite a rebellion, "D'y' know what time it is? We'll have to take a tram to keep our appointment," but the organizer responds, "They'll wait our pleasure" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 200). When the march begins to turn violent, it pushes Larry's conception of radicalism to its limit: "Larry, heart fluttering with apprehension, trembling with incredulity, faced a part of the crowd, held up his arms and enjoined them to reform the ranks" (Greenwood, Love on the Dole 202). At the moment when the might of the working-class is ready to confront a military apparatus of the state, Larry has apprehensions, and he attempts to re-impose an order on the working-class that does not threaten that state apparatus. Larry is subsequently brutalized by the system that he was not willing to let

the crowd confront. He dies. The confrontation fails, and the situation of the working-class continues. The circle is not broken.

In both of these texts, there is a call for revolution, and in each that call falls short because of the lack of commitment of people who volunteer to lead that revolt. Greenwood presents his reader with a demand for a radicalism that will not go unheeded, and he goes beyond this in showing where this radicalism should be directed, at the labor process. He takes great care to illustrate that everything about life is determined by the relationship of those who live to the labor process, and to fundamentally change how we live, or in Greenwoodian terms, to break the circle, the very structure of that process needs to be altered. Ramon Lopez Ortega notes that many historians have given Love on the Dole documentary status (128). This reading is not uncharacteristic of early reactions to the text as the review from the Times Literary Supplement of 1933 shows: "As a novel it stands very high, but it is in its qualities as a 'social document' that its great value lies" (444). But its greatest value lies in its Marxist quality as a document calling for social change.

APPENDIX

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1. Raymond Williams says, "Alignment in this sense is no more than a recognition of specific men in specific (and in Marxist terms class) relations to specific situations and experiences" (Marxism and Literature 199).

2. In an interesting aside, in There was a Time Greenwood notes that his mother was so overworked by her two jobs that she suffered from a burst varicose vein in her leg (79). In his history of Salford (which is more a cultural history of the working-class), The Classic Slum, Robert Roberts notes that this was a common occurrence among the working-class women of the city (16).

3. As a person who grew up in the working-class areas of Flint, the most working-class city in industrial southeastern lower Michigan, I can attest to the hideousness of this prospect.

4. In a note from The Cleft Stick, Greenwood says "A one act play has been adapted by the Author from this story and is available for professional and amateur performance. Application should be made to the Author's agents, Messrs. A. P. Watt & Son, Hastings House, 10 Norfolk Street, Strand, London" (184). According to J.

C. Trewin, Give Us this Day is an adaptation of The Time is Ripe (206).

5. Williams defines commitment as, "Conscious alignment" (Marxism and Literature 204).

6. I am using determinism in the way Williams defines it in Marxism and Literature: He says, "The root sense of determine is 'setting bounds' or 'setting limits'" (84). Determinism, within this essay, at no time signifies a "necessary" synthesis arising from dialectic process. A determinant, therefore, is something which sets "bounds" or "limits" on the formative nature of any process.

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