Landscape Research

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/clar20

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To cite this article: David Forrest & Sue Vice (2021): Barry Hines's palimpsestic city, Landscape Research, DOI: 10.1080/01426397.2021.1899149

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2021.1899149

Published online: 19 Apr 2021.

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH
https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2021.1899149

landscape research group
Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

Barry Hines's palimpsestic city

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ABSTRACT

This article examines a range of Barry Hines's works set in Sheffield to argue for the city's palimpsestic function, in relation to its spatial and temporal identity and broader symbolic role. Throughout, we will draw on sources including material from Hines's archive, held at the University of Sheffield, and that of his long-term collaborator Ken Loach, from London's BFI, to reveal the layered nature of the image of the city in three of his films. We conclude by arguing that the historical layering of Sheffield and its history as revealed by these three films is the result of careful and politicised artistry rather than documentary observation.

KEYWORDS

Barry Hines; Sheffield; unemployment; school; tower blocks; council housing

Barry Hines was a screenwriter and novelist who was born and raised in Barnsley in South Yorkshire. The son and grandson of a miner, Hines's commitment to his community is felt throughout his oeuvre and is particularly evident in the film that made his name, *Kes* (Ken Loach, 1969), which draws evocatively and lyrically on the very landscapes in which Hines himself played as a boy. *Kes* was adapted by Loach, Hines, and the producer, Tony Garnett, from Hines's novel *A Kestrel for a Knave* (1968), and examines themes that would persist throughout Hines's career: the poetry and politics of the working-class landscape, the relationships between labour and education, and a sense of freedom tasted and then curtailed by economic and social forces.

The prominence of *Kes* in the national imaginary has, however, marginalised Hines as a cultural figure because of the persistent privileging of the filmic auteur (in this case, Loach) in popular and academic discourse at the expense of the screenwriter. Our previous work on Hines (Forrest & Vice, 2017), drawing on explorations of both his and Loach's archives, has revealed the central role that Hines played in shaping the visual elements of the filmic adaptations of his work and the original screenplays he produced. This writerly approach to the construction of *mise-en-scene* is felt most prominently at the level of landscape, partly, as we have suggested in the earlier work, because the locations of almost all of Hines's films and plays for television cohered with his own lived experience, and because the meaning-making of his literary craft was often directed by what Tony Garnett describes as 'arresting similes, a product of his detailed observation, particularly of the flora and fauna of the Yorkshire countryside' (Garnett as cited in Forrest & Vice, 2017, p. ix).

However, this conjoined literary and filmic examination of Hines's personal and political geographies is not limited to his iconic association with Barnsley. Once Hines passed his 11-plus examination, an experience he saw as central to the shaping of his class politics, he was sent to Ecclesfield Grammar School in Sheffield, and he lived and worked in the city throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s—consequently, it was Sheffield that provided the central arena for Hines's work for the screen. His most prominent film after *Kes*, the nuclear-war play *Threads* (1984), which won a BAFTA for best single drama, is not only set in the city but draws much of its chilling power and political immediacy from it. Sheffield is depicted as a typical northern English city, reliant on interdependent networks, or

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'threads', to maintain its everyday functions and deeper social networks, as the opening voiceover sets out over a high-angled shot of the city:

> In an urban society, everything connects. Each person's needs are fed by the skills of many others. Our lives are woven together in a fabric. But the connections that make society strong, also make it vulnerable (*Threads*, 1984).

The precariousness of this social, political and economic contract is revealed in vivid terms as the film unfolds and the effects of the nuclear bomb are shown with shocking candour. The very concept of 'place' is shown to be decimated by an irreversible crisis of unfettered, abstract power which creates meaning at the hypothetical, speculative level in its analysis of the contemporary Cold War context, and allegorically, with reference to the more localised political and economic landscape in Britain during the period. In this way, David Rolinson has suggested that the film's 'post-apocalyptic wastelands [. . .] could be read as a metaphor for social collapse in Thatcher's Britain' (Rolinson, n.d.).

The specificity of Sheffield as an industrial, working-class city is thus central to the film's political resonance, but this naming of location is the exception rather than the rule for Hines. Indeed, while most of his novels and screenplays are set in and around Sheffield, the city is usually unnamed. As we will show, the universal potential of the specific landscape of South Yorkshire has a figurative meaning as well as a personal, psychogeographical one for Hines. In Hines's Sheffield, the combination of great wealth, visible in the form of country houses and landed estates, alongside the poverty of council estates, steel mills and coal-mines, makes it metonymic of Britain and its class system as a whole. Moreover, this approach to writing and filming the city, while keeping the locations anonymous, has an archival function: it preserves the imagery of such Sheffield features now destroyed or transformed through gentrification as the Hole in the Road, a shopping precinct built under a roundabout; the Brutalist housing estates of Hyde Park, Park Hill and Kelvin; steelworks in Attercliffe and Tinsley that were once the life-blood of the city; and the former 'eggbox' town hall annexe, which housed local government workers. The very fact that these places no longer exist evokes a sense of loss when viewed through the lens of the contemporary moment and within a present-tense experience of Sheffield and its (now) post-industrial landscapes.

We argue that Hines, the local screenwriter, saw location as the central source of his symbiotic poetic and political energy. In the collaborations with Loach, with John Goldschmidt, discussed below, and with Mick Jackson in *Threads*, the common element remains the screenwriter's multi-layered and conspicuous treatment of South Yorkshire and Sheffield locations as both general and specific. Thus, location is one of the ties that binds Hines's authorship across his relationships with several directors of differing political hues. The precise nature of this emphasis is revealed through an archival engagement with the screenplay in a form that reveals the writing of place and space as a precursor to its filmic realisation, and as a resource which, at least in Hines's case, makes visible the careful considerations given to the artistic use of this city.

We will begin by examining one of Hines's lesser known works for the screen, the Sheffield-set *Speech Day*, a BBC Play for Today from 1973, directed by John Goldschmidt, which sees Hines, himself a former teacher, continue his exploration of the politics of education from *A Kestrel for a Knave* and *Kes*. As the title of this play shows, it is set on a school speech day, at which the pupils are divided between those who have won prizes, and those for whom, like the protagonist, 16-year-old Ronnie Warboys (David Smith), 'a Dinky van'd be too big' for what he will be awarded. The name of the Sheffield school in which filming took place, Ashleigh School in Gleadless, is transformed with revealing ambivalence into the political and symbolic name it has in the television drama, Attlee School. Next, we will turn to *The Gamekeeper* of 1980, a television film directed by Ken Loach, and based on Hines's 1975 novel of the same name. The eponymous gamekeeper is George Purse (Phil Askham), a former steel worker who now lives and works on a ducal estate. The film documents a year in the life of its protagonist, as he interacts with his family and the estate, with its human and non-human inhabitants. In the process, the film quietly but devastatingly reveals the extent of his exploitation at the hands of the Duke (Willoughby Gray), who owns both the land and, ultimately,

George. Finally, we turn to Loach's last film with Hines, *Looks and Smiles* (Ken Loach, 1981), which won the prize for contemporary cinema at Cannes, but was broadcast on television in the United Kingdom. The film, shot in black and white and located in urban Sheffield, rather than the rural fringes of the city shown in *The Gamekeeper*, follows three school leavers, Mick (Graham Green), Alan (Tony Pitts), and Karen (Carolyn Nicholson), as they struggle to find meaningful work in a city in the throes of an economic recession. The film is linked to *The Gamekeeper* in multiple ways, sharing with the earlier work a focus on the landscape to reveal the deterministic and economically dependent relationship between environment and identity, and, in more practical and intertextually specific ways, sharing actors: Phil Askham, who plays George, and Rita May, who plays his wife, re-appear here. A stalwart in four of Hines's films, Askham's presence is particularly significant, since in *Looks and Smiles* he appears as Mick's father, a steel worker (Purse's former job in *The Gamekeeper*)—indeed, Hines's archive reveals that earlier versions would have made the connection even more explicit, with Mr Walsh losing his job so that his precarious economic position mirrored that of his son (Hines, n.d. C).

Class and the city

Despite *Speech Day*'s possessing a charismatic lead actor in David Smith, who had been a child star alongside David Bradley in the Yorkshire-set ITV series *The Flaxton Boys* (1969–73), an engaging non-professional cast and a South Yorkshire location, as well as sharing concerns with *Kes* and anticipating *Looks and Smiles*, it has never had a commercial release. While the play was praised on its broadcast by one reviewer as 'a glorious satire—better than *Kes*' (Reffell, 1973), others commented on the fact that it was too didactic (Reynolds, 1973). However, such a verdict fails to acknowledge either the complex role of the imagery and setting, or the fact that the device of making clear the play's message by means of the characters' 'didactic' speeches is a self-conscious compositional effect, one that matches the play's subject.

The origin of such an innovative mode lies in the fact that *Speech Day* was the first drama by its director, the documentarist John Goldschmidt. He was commissioned for the role on the strength of the radical non-fiction films he had made for ATV, particularly *The Dead End Lads* (John Goldschmidt, 1972), in which a group of Merseyside teenage school-leavers dramatise their own likely future of unemployment and time in prison (Goldschmidt, 2019). Nearly twenty years later, Goldschmidt was able to return the favour by inviting Hines to complete an unfinished script by Dixie Williams for Granada, which became the television play *Shooting Stars* (Chris Bernard, 1990), once more on the subject of the dismal prospects for young people (Goldschmidt & Interview with the authors, 31 January, 2019). However, *Speech Day* also shows a continuity with Hines's Loach collaborations, as is clear not only in the consistency of its focus and setting with those works, but in the casting. Both Brian Glover and Bill Dean reappear from *Kes*, their earlier roles as tyrannical PE teacher and hostile chip-shop owner redeemed here as they take on the parts of sympathetic father and politically engaged school handyman, respectively.

The play's early 1970s setting might make its evocation of this period, between the social change of the 1960s and the onset of Thatcherism in the early 1980s, appear transitional and less clearly identifiable than that of the other two films. Yet the 1970s moment of *Speech Day*, evident in relation to the schoolboys' long hair and preference for jeans and leather jackets, has a specificity in historical and geographical terms that exists, here as elsewhere in Hines's works, for the sake of a more universal ethical meaning. This gives the unnamed Sheffield setting, with its juxtaposition of Victorian and post-war industry and architecture, a strikingly symbolic visual role.

Like *Kes*, this play follows the fortunes of a teenage pupil, in this case, Ronnie Warboys (David Smith), who is at odds with his school's ethos and whose older brother Danny (Andrew Beaumont) is already at work in the heavy industry for which Ronnie also seems destined. The awarding of prizes for academic achievement on the eponymous day at Attlee School, and the undervaluing of pupils in

the lower streams, including Ronnie's class of 5G1, not only symbolises but enacts the social divisions of late-capitalist life. As Nancy Banks-Smith puts it in an enthusiastic review, setting the play in a school shows it 'literally' to be about 'class distinctions', as well as figuratively so (Banks-Smith, 1973). These pupils' future in manual labour is prefigured in their being made to do work even at school by 'gardening and shifting chairs' (Hines, 1977, p. 98), in order to prepare for the speech day at which they will be awarded nothing.

Visually, this irony culminates in a sequence in which the two classes of pupils are present together in the school hall, one group rehearsing the award of their prizes, the other having been told to stop their work of moving furniture because they are making a noise. In an instance of the play's frequent use of non-simultaneous sound, we hear the unseen teacher's rehearsal instructions while the camera pans slowly across the faces of Ronnie and his classmates, who are waiting to resume work while seated fittingly '*at the other end of the hall*' (Hines, 1977, p. 92). The injustice of their overlooked individuality is emphasised by the camera, in the wake of our having seen each one of Ronnie's friends mount a comic retort to the teachers' efforts to enforce rules about clothing and behaviour. By the means of the 'winningly sharp dialogue' (TV Cream, 2009) on their part, the value of the boys' 'subjugated knowledges' is highlighted, despite the location of their competences 'low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity' (Foucault, 1980, pp. 81–2). Later, this clash of different 'level[s] of cognition' is the subject of an exchange between Ronnie and his friends Wally (Kevin Jenkinson) and Robson (Glen Dalby) when they invent an alternative list of school prizes, one of which seems already to exist:

> Wally: What about a prize for the biggest creep?
>
> Ronnie: Stacey'd win that easy.
>
> Robson: He's won it. He's getting a prize for special services to the school or summat like that. (Hines, 1977, p. 94)

The mode of *Speech Day* as one that is deceptively light-hearted is especially clear when seen in relation to its intertextual layering. Like *Kes*, the later play opens on a bedroom shared by brothers at different stages in life. As Jacob Leigh argues of this scene in *Kes*, it immediately establishes the power relations in Billy's relationship with his half-brother Jud (Freddie Fletcher) which underlie the rest of the film's narrative (2002, p. 62). Yet the corresponding scene in *Speech Day*, in which Danny's work-related timetable means that he has to get up before Ronnie, has a different focus. As much as Hines later regretted not presenting Jud more sympathetically, and indeed screenplay amendments to do so were ultimately discarded, the alienation and resentment on the part of Billy's brother give *Kes* the dramatic sense of internecine conflict and tension that is absent from *Speech Day*. In the latter, the emphasis lies instead on the lack of difference between the brothers, to make clear that school functions so effectively to create a future labour-force that it is little different from the realm of work. The sound of Ronnie's alarm-clock ticking over our view of Danny clocking in at work registers this by means of a visual pun.

Despite the films' intertextual connections, the 3 years between the release of *Kes* and the broadcast of *Speech Day* are crucial ones, affecting the plot as well as the *mise-en-scene*. Not only is the criterion of academic achievement even more exaggeratedly used in *Speech Day* to divide those destined for manual labour from the others, but the scarce and insecure nature of just such work is a new element. The arduous and repetitive nature of this labour is made clear in scenes of Mr Warboys and Danny at work in dark and noisy steelwork settings, filmed in now-vanished Sheffield factories, and in the form of a speech by the chorus figure George (Bill Dean), now the school handyman, who claims that his 'blood still boils' to think of his former colleagues, 'them lads in the moulding bay, at it from half-past four in the morning … Callouses on their hands as big as eggs; burns on their arms from metal splashes' (Hines, 1977, p. 106). Yet the paradox, which comes more obviously to fruition in *Looks and Smiles*, is equally clear here, that the one thing worse than such 'filthy, dangerous work', as Hines put it of mining (1979, p. v), is its absence. While Mr Warboys asks of a fellow worker, 'What about this two pound limit on rises then, Joe?', we gain a sense of the wider

context from Ronnie, as he tells George about the threat of redundancy hanging over his father at the local steelworks Leonard and Wolfe: 'They're laying them off left right and centre just now', and at Brightside Steel: 'I was thinking of going there, but our Danny says there's no chance' (Hines, 1977, p. 91). Hines's vision seems prophetic, since the mid-1970s recession, with its oil crisis, inflation and industrial disputes over pay as part of the decline of traditional industries, began in earnest just after his play was written. However, rather than contributing to a documentary representation of the political situation of the early 1970s, these details are dramatic versions of the more general contradictions of late capitalism. The different ways in which these contradictions are shown, by filmic and intertextual means alike, involve the features of what Max Silverman calls 'palimpsestic memory', including 'the superimposition of traces of different histories' by revealing their 'multiple connections across time and space' (2013, p. 4).

Further visual evidence of the crucial 4 years between *Kes* and *Speech Day* takes the form of the latter's location in Sheffield, rather than semi-rural Hoyland, and the appearance of a 'futuristic' (Goldschmidt & Interview with the authors, 31 January, 2019) yet already decaying architecture in this urban setting. Instead of the dilapidated Victorian terraced house backing onto fields in which Billy lives with his neglectful mother and bullying brother, in *Speech Day* Ronnie's warm and cohesive family life is conducted in what is shown to be the alienating conditions of a modern block of flats. An early handwritten draft of the screenplay presents the Warboys family home as simply a 'council house, cluttered, comfortable' (Hines, n.d. A), revealing that Hines's sense of the precise nature of the family's habitat in an apartment in a newly built Brutalist block developed gradually during the writing process. There is little possibility of Ronnie's encountering the natural world in the temporarily inspiring way that Billy does in *Kes*, and as a result, the former's unacknowledged expertise is not embodied in the way Billy's is by the kestrel. The implicit claims made by the play on Ronnie's behalf are thus in a sense more radical, given his representation in this way as possessing everyday schoolboy concerns, with football, girls, joking and playing truant with friends.

The filming of Ronnie's home took place in Sheffield's now-demolished housing development, Hyde Park Flats. The distinctively looming presence of this large estate, which consisted of 1313 flats in four high-rise blocks, is exploited in the play's *mise-en-scene* alongside interior sequences which emphasise the contrastingly cramped and flimsy living-quarters. Thus, while a double mattress fills the entirety of the Warboys parents' bedroom, Mr Warboys has only to knock on the wall to wake Danny. The estate is first shown at night, as a black monolith dotted with the lit-up squares of windows. It fills the screen as the camera pans to the right, then pans back to the left, without ever reaching the edge of a wall or glimpse of the sky, as if in imitation of an onlooker amazed at the building's size. We see that the 'exceptional prominence' envisaged by John Womersley, the city architect of the time, for Hyde Park flats in its 'dominant position', has indeed 'radically affect[ed] the visual aspect of the city', as he predicted in 1960 (Sheffield Archives, 2010, p. 21). In the morning, Ronnie's figure as he sets off for school is dwarfed by the blocks around him.

Although an enthusiastic Sheffield *Telegraph* description of the night-time view on the estate's opening described it as 'a kaleidoscope of lights' (Sheffield Archives, 2010, p. 22), the effect here, as determined by the way it is filmed, is instead one of a dystopian bleakness, so that the flats function in the play as a visual signifier of a late phase of urban industrial history. Rather than embodying a 'revolutionary' modernity, the estate is shown instead to look restrictively institutional by its being shot straight-on rather than, for instance, from the side. The implication is that although these buildings may be new, the story of inequality and inadequate social provision that they tell is an old one. In this way, the significance of this kind of Brutalist architecture in Hines's filmic works is at odds with its role in other films of the era, where it is 'a signifier of social disorder and the premise of violence', as Pete Collard (2017) puts it of the appearance of Newcastle's Trinity Square multistorey carpark in *Get Carter* (Mike Hodges, 1971) and London's Thamesmead Estate in *A Clockwork Orange* (Stanley Kubrick, 1971). The responsibility for the unsuitability of such buildings in Hines's plays lies not with those who use or inhabit them, as it does in the other two films, but with those who, it is implied, view them instrumentally as suitable for a workforce. As Mr Warboys says of his job, 'I bet the

bugger who invented shifts never had to work them' (Hines, 1977, p. 99), suggesting that his living-quarters too embody structural condescension and exploitation.

In this way, a strand of its political judgement is made in *Speech Day* in entirely visual terms. This effect was arrived at by Hines's process of cutting away dialogue from draft versions of the screenplay, in which these concerns were made more explicitly. Thus, in an early version Professor Jessup (Wilfred Harrison), one of the visiting 'big-wigs', as Ronnie puts it, for the awarding of prizes, gives a speech which was later discarded, describing his return to the local council estate of his youth. Jessup's account of the 'hostility' of former friends who have stayed behind is followed by a monologue in which his bad faith is made plain:

> But you can imagine my astonishment when I arrived at Mossbank. I did not recognize the old place. There were no streets. All those tiny back-to-backs razed to the ground, and in their place clean modern tower blocks with clean spaces and trees. Yes, as your lord mayor said earlier this afternoon, things have certainly changed since he and I were young people in this city. (Hines, n.d. B, p. 48)

Such a view of modern progress and 'cleanliness' is discredited by its coming from a man who is shown to look down on those he used to live among, and whose current living conditions he does not understand. The way in which things have 'changed' might not constitute the improvement Jessup implies. Hines's removal of this speech means that the sense of a satirical view of sentiments like Jessup's exists in the final version of *Speech Day* in the form of traces of the earlier screenplay, although these are now unvoiced.

Jessup's role is much reduced, in order to place greater emphasis on the other 'big-wig' at the awards ceremony, the mayor and one-time union 'firebrand' Joe Brannigan (John Rolls). This is in keeping with Hines's preoccupation at the time with the notion of 'selling out' on the part of politically active people on the left (Goldschmidt & Interview with the authors, 31 January, 2019). The consistent effect of reducing utterance and relying instead on visual imagery is equally evident in a draft screenplay where George gives long 'voice-over' commentaries on the detail of Brannigan's address to the school to draw attention to its hypocrisy. In the broadcast play, George simply listens in silence, then turns and leaves the hall.

An example of the reliance on the visual that takes the place of utterance appears in the use of a significant detail which flashes back to *Kes* and forward to *Threads*. In *Speech Day*, a high-angle long-shot of Sheffield in the early morning, just one-and-a-half minutes into the film, reveals the layered history on which the drama's plot depends. Visible from this elevated perspective is the spire of the late-eighteenth-century church St Johns, and beyond it a vista of the factories of the then-industrial suburb of Attercliffe. This establishing cityscape shot is followed by a slow zoom back in through the window of the Warboys' flat, revealing a frame around this view as if someone is looking out at the historicised panorama. All the while, despite being at a considerable height above the city, we hear the sound of bottles clinking, summoning up the early-morning domestic ritual of the milk being delivered. Yet the soundtrack here alerts us to space rather than time. There follows a cut to a long-shot revealing the source of the sound, in the form of the surreal sight of a milk-float several storeys up on the walkway of the apartment-block. Hines's handwritten note on the typed screenplay makes clear the effect that he envisaged: 'panoramic view of industrial area—pan round—see long balcony—lots of doors—milkman' (Hines, n.d. B, p. 3). The clearly late addition of this wholly cinematic instruction reveals the accretion over time of Hines's vision that there should be such an unmistakeable and visual link between industry and living-conditions.

The shift to a long-shot of the estate's walkway, showing the milk-float in the mid-distance as the milkman delivers the bottles to each door, emphasises the unnatural and entrapping nature of the concrete corridor. This is a conception at odds with the utopian plan of 'streets in the sky' imagined by Womersley, who declared before the flats were built that the inhabitants would benefit from these '"streets" within the building along which prams can be pushed and milk trolleys wheeled.' He concluded that this sense of 'long views' and 'pleasant surroundings' would be a way to avoid 'the oppressive, overpowering feeling sometimes produced by large schemes of multi-storey flats'

(Sheffield Archives, 2010, p. 18). Hines's vision implicitly answers back to this claim on behalf of the inhabitants, by attempting to show from within the alienating sensation of the outdoors being turned into indoor space. The image of the milk-float on the flats' balcony is a grim successor to that of the same vehicle in *Kes*, from which Billy sustains himself by a friendly exchange with the milkman (Duggie Brown), and by filching a pint and some orange-juice before running off through the village streets on his paper-round. A decade later, in *Threads*, the nurturing yet fragile nature of social bonds is conveyed by the same symbol of urban milk delivery, witnessed in the film's opening moments, while the destruction of such bonds after the atomic blast is summed up in an image of milk-bottles melting. As these examples suggest, the palimpsestic nature of *Speech Day* is a diverse one, drawing on the viewer's intertextual awareness of Hines's oeuvre, as well as the ways in which the architectural history of the city both seals and conveys the fate of its inhabitants.

From the country to the town

The Gamekeeper might appear to offer an alternative to the alienating forms of education, living-space and work in a city setting, since it centres on a former steelworker now living in the countryside. In line with our identification of Hines's balancing of the highly specific with the universal, the film contrasts a documentary appearance, as the seasonal episodic narrative imposes a sense of quotidian rhythm, with a highly aesthetic and symbolic reality. *The Gamekeeper* was filmed at Wortley Hall and its village, one of the last of Sheffield as the city bleeds into Barnsley, yet Hines undertook his research over the border in Barnsley at Wentworth Woodhouse, once the largest privately owned house in Europe (Rawlinson, 2017), by shadowing the gamekeeper there.

Purse frequently reminds his wife and sons that his life is much better than the years he spent in 'purgatory' at the (invented) Brightside Steel, but, despite George's and the film's knowing distancing from the city, *The Gamekeeper* is in fact all about Sheffield, in its archival and symbolic sense—indeed, Brightside is the name of a prominent industrial area in the city. Despite the film's setting in what Loach called 'luminous' countryside (Loach as cited in Hayward, 2004, p. 156), the class relations of the steel mills are just as present in the countryside, whose landowners are often the very ironmasters who own the factories. Sheffield appears in visual form only fleetingly, in an over-exposed and confusing 'travelling shot' as George and his fellow gamekeepers drive through the city en route to the grouse shooting on the Hallam Moors in Derbyshire. This route is illogical in actual terms, a fact which further illustrates the film's collage-like, and highly selective approach to the city and its symbolic and literal formation. Although Loach's production schedule shows that the Sheffield locations were chosen very precisely, including Petre Street and Brightside Lane, the scene's look is both abstract and part of a non-realist geography, since the director and writer have reduced the city to its binary core. The characters move seamlessly between sites of ownership and of exploitation: from the ducal estate, to the steel mills, to the moors, for the shooting of grouse. Here real locations are re-cast so that their political functions are concentrated and made explicit, as Loach puts it: 'the images were so concrete—it's about ownership and who does what for whose benefit' (Loach as cited in Leigh, 2002, p. 118).

While *The Gamekeeper* is therefore lean and focused, Ken Loach was critical of *Looks and Smiles* on the basis that it was too 'gently paced' (Loach as cited in Fuller, 1998, p. 60). The director has dismissed the film for its apparent 'self-indulgence' (Loach as cited in Fuller, 1998, p. 60) and 'lethargy' (Kerr as cited in Leigh, 2002, p. 118), saying he wished he could 'give it a kick up the arse' (Loach as cited in Fuller, 1998, p. 60). As Loach suggests, the film is stylistically more experimental and in narrative terms more dispersed than its predecessor, with its lack of direction mirroring that of its protagonists. As Jacob Leigh has put it, the film 'has such a loose, open-ended quality that it could end anywhere' (Leigh, 2002, p. 131). The long takes and painterly, lingering treatment of landscape, however, persist from *The Gamekeeper*, and, just as with the earlier film, the alienation of working-class life is presented as cyclical—the film ends just as it began, with Mick in the dole office.

The elements of the film that Loach has decried are, however, precisely those that make it successful, particularly as an archival document about its city and as an example of Hines's broader oeuvre. Indeed, Hines wrote a novelised version of *Looks and Smiles* alongside the film, and here he elaborates on the mental turmoil and shame of his protagonists as a result of their unemployed state, describing how Mick's seemingly endless search for work 'made him feel ashamed: like a beggar' (Hines, 1981, p. 73). It was thus necessary for Hines to capture the deadening aimlessness of this corrosive process by evoking a parallel sense of slowness and repetition in the film. The decision to shoot without colour, a factor that contributes to the stylisation that Loach criticises, might also be better understood in terms of the film's relationship with the unavoidable politics of its industrial landscape. The Sheffield location is here presented as a visual elegy, with its industrial spaces at once evoking their past as sites of labour and now, in the present, as retrograde spaces in terminal decline.

The film's title sequence establishes its distinctive brand of landscape poetics through a series of five fixed long takes filmed from high angles. Each shot observes a different location in the city, alongside the opening titles. The static shots range from 13 to 16 seconds, and thus work to establish the sense of overwhelming stasis that pervades *Looks and Smiles*. Just as in Hines's other Sheffield-set works, his notes on the script indicate both a specific knowledge of the city's locations and a recognition of their lyrical potential:

> roofs & flats above; Attercliffe: industrial scene, houses flattened; Karen's block of flats: w.s.; Karen's block of flats: bridges seen through opening; New houses amongst industrial scene; Town Centre shot? (Hines, n.d. D).

The first shot of the series shows the now demolished Brown Bayley Steel works, next to a defunct train track and the Tinsley canal, which was previously central to the city's prosperity, but here appears shallow and empty. The image is therefore particularly illustrative of the sense of post-industrial decay that underpins the film's treatment of the city. Its photographic stasis, all the more apparent in black and white, has the effect of making a contemporary image appear as a period composition, so that the present-tense industrial landscape appears already haunted by its past, and the memories of its inhabitants. It suggests the suspension of journeys and a decaying industrial infrastructure frozen in time; our only sense that the image is not a still photograph comes from the flickering of a bush on the lower third of the frame.

The second shot stays with the canal but is now focused on living space, showing a row of terraced houses on Shirland Street. It is significant for its signposting of a tension between modern high-rise housing and more traditional working-class homes, a tension we shall return to. The next shot takes us, as Hines prescribes in his stage directions, to a scene of 'houses flattened' (Hines, n.d. C, p. 4). The image is a visual articulation of the wasteland imagery that recurs frequently throughout the film and particularly in the novel. Indeed, early on in the screenplay, Hines describes 'a stretch of wasteland on the edge of Mick's estate which the council is clearing for new housing. It looks like a bomb site with parts of the old terraced houses still standing and heaps of rubble everywhere' (Hines, n.d. C, p. 4). Later on, in both the film and the novel, this wasteland acts as Mick's reference point as he begins to recognise the wider political context of his unemployment, and in an angry exchange with a job-centre worker, he exclaims:

> There's a piece of spare land near us where they've knocked some old houses down to build some new ones, and it's been left like that for ages now. My dad says they can't afford to build them now because of expenditure cuts. It's daft. What about all the money they're paying out on the dole, and to send people on these courses and work experience schemes? Why don't they give you that money to be in a proper job? Just think of all the apprentices they'd need if they started building houses at the end of our street. It doesn't make sense. (Hines, 1981, p. 87)

The wasteland motif, therefore, functions as a marker of futures that have been suspended, and its first articulation in the title sequence once more suggests a sense of frozen time; the only visibility of life comes in the form of weeds blowing back and forth in the wind. The next shot is the most arresting. It contains the now-demolished, vast Hyde Park flats development, and next to it the iconic Park Hill estate, now regenerated by Urban Splash with apartments highly sought after and

sold privately. The concrete estates dominate the frame and the older houses and shops beneath them, further deepening the temporal palimpsest. As we saw in relation to *Speech Day*, throughout *Looks and Smiles*, the modernity of the Brutalist high-rise is conflated with the film's sense of post-industrial dread. Karen resides unhappily in a similar complex, the now-demolished Kelvin Flats, with her single-parent mother, and Hines instructs Loach similarly to linger on its imposing nature, with his annotations on a later scene stating that we should see the 'architecture' and that the shots of Karen's flat should function as 'a still pause' to the narrative (Hines, n.d. D). In the corresponding section of the novel, the view from the high rise is aligned explicitly with the city's decline:

> The sky was brightening a little and a break in the clouds released a slanting shaft of sunlight. It illuminated the cathedral, vacant office blocks and in the distance, the jagged silhouettes of the steel mills. The air was so clear over the industrial side of the city, that it was more like Sunday than Monday afternoon.. (Hines, 1981, p. 204)

A decade earlier in Hines's politically charged novel *First Signs* (1972), the protagonist Tom Renshaw visits a similar tower block. It is the home of family friends Mrs Straw and her son, Roy, and Tom is told: 'It's like a palace compared with what I was used to. But it's the flats I don't like. Well, I mean it's not natural living up in the air is it? . . . you just don't feel as though you belong anywhere' (Hines, 1972, p. 207). We learn that she has moved to the flats after her husband was killed in a mining accident (Hines, 1972, p. 213) and that he himself had originally moved from the 'declining Durham coalfield' in search of work. Just as in *Looks and Smiles*, then, Hines explicitly associates post-war social housing with economic precariousness, the fragmentation of the family and a sense of geographical instability. Here, the utopian promise of the flats has been replaced by a sense of irrecoverable loss.

Conclusion

In their chapter on 'Slow Heritage Cinema', Rob Stone and Paul Cooke return to Gilles Deleuze's concept of the 'crystal image', describing 'its fusion of the past tense of what is filmed with the present tense of its viewing, and a resultant ongoing exchange between the virtual and the actual'. In the process they identify a strain of meditative heritage cinema that might work to oppose "what Fredric Jameson describes as 'the disappearance of a sense of history [and] the way in which our entire contemporary social system has little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its own past"' (Cooke & Stone, 2012, p. 312). We are suggesting that, in rendering visible the pastness of the present-day city in *Speech Day* and *Looks and Smiles*, Barry Hines effects a similar recognition of Sheffield itself as a contemporary heritage text, composed of a filmic palimpsest of temporal and spatial markers which enable for the viewer a critical engagement with the layers of history that shape it. As is suggested by the evidence from a wide range of other texts, including draft screen-plays, shooting scripts and novels, the visual image of Sheffield represented in these three plays is carefully constructed in order to give such an impression. Our engagement with such layering and mediation therefore takes on new meaning in the present moment: in drawing attention to the post-industrial city haunted by its industrial past and scarred indelibly by 1970s recession and early Thatcherism at the turn of 1980s, we view the films several decades later with a sense of their continuing contemporaneity. Experiencing Sheffield today with *Speech Day, The Gamekeeper* and *Looks and Smiles* as our points of reference enables a critical awareness of the city's complex memorialisation of its lost futures. In this way, the filmed city reframes our lived experience of Sheffield and the history of the country in which it is located. As Siegfried Kracauer puts it of cinema's unique ability to effect a critical engagement with our material environment, we are "assisted in discovering" the "psychophysical correspondences" of those familiar landscapes we might otherwise take for granted (Kracauer, 1960, p. 300).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Filmography

A Clockwork Orange (Stanley Kubrick, 1971)
The Dead End Lads (John Goldschmidt, 1972)
The Gamekeeper (Ken Loach, 1980)
Get Carter (Mike Hodges, 1971)
Kes (Ken Loach, 1969)
Looks and Smiles (Ken Loach, 1981)
Speech Day (John Goldschmidt, 1973)
Shooting Stars (Chris Bernard, 1990)