

A Loser in the Rain: Alan Bleasdale's Story of Yosser Hughes

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“By 1979, it had become clear that Britain's economy was being gravely damaged by union militancy. Throughout Europe, it had become a commonplace to talk of industrial action as the 'British Disease'.”

—*The Tory Campaign Guide 1987*¹

‘I think it is very important right now to write about the dole as seen from the point of view of those who are on it, and to side with them against the people and the papers who would like us to believe . . . that the majority of the unemployed are malingerers and rogues.’”

— Alan Bleasdale²

(1) Reassessment of the Boys

Alan Bleasdale's *Boys from the Blackstuff* is undoubtedly a masterpiece of TV drama, to which John McGrath paid his homage at the time the series was to be repeated with unprecedented speed on BBC 1 in January 1983.

With *Boys from the Blackstuff*, television drama finally came of age. In its five plays, the realities of being alive in our time are recorded in images that are stronger, more accurate, more memorable, and surely longer-lasting than any images so far produced in poetry, novel, cinema or theatre.³

McGrath's enthusiasm is somewhat embarrassing now in the 1990s. Andrew

Rissik, for example, already had “nagging suspicions” in 1987. He began to realise “something moist-eyed and self-righteous” in Yosser’s “dead-eyed despair” which he had missed before.⁴

It is difficult to give a precise reassessment to a work of art of a particular period, especially when we deal with mass culture. This is not because we are not allowed to return to that period and live it again. We can do so if we read the text, watch the video tapes, and look at other materials relating to the text and its time that, work on our imagination. The difficulty lies in our way of seeing which is conditioned by ever-changing society, history and culture. You can meet your old lover, but you cannot love him/her again in the same way you did in the past.

What I attempt to do here is limited. Like any artefact, *Boys from the Blackstuff* has its own value and meaning. This autonomy, so to speak, will provide considerable freedom for my discussion. What follows is an endeavour to see, temporary and tentative though it may be, what truly happened to the boys and their community. Special attention is given to Yosser and his story. This man is doomed to experience the misery of a working-class male when capitalist society changes its form. He is to lose his job, his family, and even his community.

(2) Misdirected Buttings: The Story of Yosser

“Yosser’s Story” opens with a beautiful scene. The place is a lake in a Liverpool park. It is presumably a summer evening. Yosser and his three children fully dressed approach the water. They do not seem to care. Yosser looks straight ahead. You may wonder: “What are they doing?” Or it might be put this way: “What is he doing, with children obediently following their grim-faced father?” Yosser goes on with his eyes directed forward. What on

earth is Yosser staring at with his dark, tough-looking eyes?

But the stout Scouse curmudgeon remains indifferent. He looks determined, but still we cannot see what he is staring at. Now they are in the water. Still they do not care. They begin to swim. Human beings cannot fly, but they can swim. In the water we are different creatures. First of all, we cannot control our bodies as we do on the ground. In the water the law of gravitation operates somewhat differently. This affects our consciousness. Our mind does not work as quickly as it does when we are sitting at a desk or talking in the pub. Everything becomes slow and soft. It should be comfortable but not always, especially when water suggests death by drowning.

While we indulge in this kind of metaphysics, our man turns back, and seeing a little crowd of people starting to gather on the shore, utters a cry, "I am Yosser Hughes."⁵

This is the first voice we hear from this tight-lipped lad. Then a rowing boat is slowly passing by. Another one comes up, and then another. His friends and his wife are there, but they are unequivocally unconcerned. Meanwhile, Yosser is losing his children one by one. He is helpless and hopeless, and finally alone in the empty, dark water. His eyes seem to be saying: "Is this real or is it a dream? If it's a dream, it's too real, and if it's real, then I cannot accept it." Then we find out that it was Yosser's nightmare.

The dream we have at the beginning is as frustrating as any dream is. A dream often robs us of our voluntary physical movements. We lose control over the body while still retaining our perceptions. The world will not listen, respond to us. What we suppose we see in a dream is not an object. It is a picture, elusive as it is, to be interpreted. It is a world of semiotics. Only by interpretation, however, can we participate in it. Our consciousness, half-awake, busily calculates every moment and tries to give a meaning or meanings

to an irrational sequence of pictures. This consciousness often gives us selfish reasoning and reveals our insidious intent. This is why our lasting horror or ephemeral joy obtained from a dream means nothing to others. It is extraordinarily difficult to give a plausible explanation of our experience in a dream because we cannot precisely locate its context. In addition to this limitation, our discourse may be subject to censorship. We are not totally free from social conventions and collective ethics. Basically, a dream is an individualistic freedom containing both joy and horror. It is powerful only within our consciousness. Thus the magnetic force of a dream draws you into 'the other world'. It is 'other', but still it is a 'world'.

The opening scene is powerful and almost surreal. It is a dream within a dream. Yosser's dream is projected on the TV screen. He is an agent of our dream. Fredric Jameson has called movies a physical experience.⁶ By extension we can say any visual experience is physical in that it directly works on our senses, rather than on our thinking mind.

At the end of the story, however, we are to see a comical ending in contrast to the dreary and dreamy opening. The word 'comical' may require some qualification. It is realistically comical rather than absurdly comical. Ironically enough, Yosser's nightmare comes true almost exactly as it is prophesied at the beginning. Although destitute, he himself survives, thanks to a couple of courageous and dutiful police officers, one of whom has been badly butted by Yosser. The surrealistically beautiful opening dream is transformed into a desolate realistic ending.

The police car is carrying Yosser and a Scottish drunkard to the police station after 'they' smashed the shop window with a rock. When the car is passing by the lake in Sefton Park, Yosser sees something out of the car window. In the script it is not specified what Yosser sees at this moment. It might be a

vision of his children. In any case it is certain that his and/or our memory of the nightmare in the opening scene is evoked here. Yosser jumps into the pond, but this time the lake and the park are deserted and Yosser is absolutely alone except for the two policemen who come running after him. Between the nightmarish opening scene under the bright summer sky and this somewhat comical but dismal wintry ending, a pile of pathetic episodes are sandwiched. They appear fragmentary and are told in different manners: sometimes with a quasi-documentary touch, often in the comical mode, and always with powerful gags and memorable lines. One episode is terminated by Yosser's punctual headbutting before another ensues. Painful buttings symbolize Yosser's frustration. He is, like many other people on the dole, at a loss to find an outlet for his anger.

Now rewinding the video tape back to the opening scene, let us see what happened there. With the knowledge of the later bleak episodes, and of Yosser having lost everything and gone 'insane', the dream in the opening scene ceases to be irrational. A succession of rowing boats with his friends and wife on top of them reminds us of a train of people giving a last look in turn at a dead person in a coffin. The camera eye becomes the eye of a deceased person who still retains 'its' consciousness. As he sees and recognises the people he used to know in life, the compelling consciousness tortures him. He is not allowed to die a death even though he is entitled to it. After the drama, after we live to see it, now we begin to interpret this living death as a metaphor of the condition of unemployment. Hell is not a particular place which can be located, but it is a state of mind.

Life is hell when you are a loser. It is not until the end of your life that you realise how many agents and institutions have controlled and regulated your daily existence. When Yosser's social death, i.e. his bankruptcy and

incompetence, is declared, agents from various social institutions begin to visit him one after another.

First, a school attendance officer arrives. He is completely ignored and an envelope containing some official document is rejected. Yosser does not share a common belief that children have the right to learn, a right that must be protected at all costs. Then a health visitor, who is described as “a lady of brisk, pleasant, matronly authority”, intrudes into Yosser’s house. She seems to be interested only in checking the condition of a house she is inspecting. She always jots down something in her file. Apparently it has become her unconscious habit. This typical bureaucratic manner invites Yosser’s straightforward response. He barks at the lady, “I know what you’ve come for. Wash your hands, my arse.” (p.193)

Yosser again rejects a commonly shared and universally approved idea that children deserve proper care and attention. It is interesting, however, to note that while Yosser pays absolutely no attention to an officer from the school, he is very much concerned with the health visitor. The former official only gives a warning and he does not seem to take any further procedure, but the latter is always scribbling something. She is evidently reporting the terrible condition of Yosser’s house to her senior officers. As we see, her examination is arbitrary and her records represent only the temporary situation of Yosser’s home, but it is nonetheless going to be an official report, which worries Yosser. She is just like a traffic warden giving a ticket to an illegally parked car. It is sad to see Yosser start cleaning up his kitchen immediately after the inspector leaves his house. Yosser is trying his best to protect his children in his own way.

Now we see that Yosser is threatened with losing his children. But his life is undermined from another side. An electrician comes to disconnect the

power. The man seems understanding and sympathetic when he hears Yosser's nice greeting: "Have y' got a good dentist?" But soon we come to know that he is quite foxy. He is the kind of person who does not hesitate to disconnect people if he does not encounter a threatening protest. In fact this electrician walks away saying:

But I tell you what though pal, if y' don't pay up, it gets nasty
y' know. They bring men in. I'm just warning y', that's all.
(p.197)

Two more men follow the electrician: a rent collector and his minder who carries a briefcase. Yosser is busy giving his responses to these agents, but this time he is almost comical. He grabs the minder's arm and says: "Gizza job, go on, gizzit. I could do that. I can carry things. I've had practice." (p.197)

Yosser's simple but precise speech tells his situation most powerfully. But the worst finally happens. Two people from Social Services, a young woman named Veronica and a young man called Morgan. They are the worst because of their hypocrisy. They are gentle and try to be friendly, but they do not understand what they are doing. Veronica and Morgan are actually taking away the children from their father and both of them believe in the goodness of their mission.

At death you come to realize how your organic life has been supported by a chain of physical conditions. Likewise, you will notice how your social life has been controlled by a network of social management. Central government, local authority, and other administrative institutions impose contracts with which your life is tightly bound. Yosser is the worst manager of his situation

in this complicated society. It is easy to blame Yosser's incompetence, but it is not easy to see *how* Yosser has been put into such a miserable plight. All of us are apparently trapped in this social network. Under certain circumstances, we ourselves might find ourselves in the same situation Yosser was thrown into. Let us see, then, how an individual can be 'disposed of', once he or she is considered 'unproductive'.

First and foremost, it is the bureaucracy, its language and rhetoric, and its indifference to real human beings with flesh and blood, which changed Yosser's fate. Without them Yosser might not have been in such a miserable plight. After the nightmare, Yosser visits the DoE office (Department of Employment, now abolished) where he is told he is entitled to draw more benefit. But he "fails" to understand it. Let us review the scene quickly. The counter-clerk behind a grille is talking to Yosser. He stares at her, apparently in a mood of manic calm:

Mr. Hughes ...I can't help you if you don't tell me what you want. I have your details here, but if you won't speak to me... is it ... is it your children, their mother ... it's not my job to ... but you don't seem to be drawing your full entitled ... benefits ... would you like to talk to anyone else about your ... position?
Mr Hughes? (p.185)

Sophisticated bureaucracy has 1) polite language ("Mr Hughes", "Would you like ...", etc.), 2) clear territory ("It's not my job"), 3) jargon ("drawing your full entitled ... benefits"), and unwillingness to offer help to people unless people are responding as they wish ("I can't help you if you don't tell me what you want") even though they all know about the people they are "dealing

with” (“I have your details here”). Polite language tends to make messages unnecessarily complicated and unclear. More importantly, it distances bureaucrats from people who need their help. Lacking clear language, they refuse mutual communication. It follows that the response they expect to have is not a real response, but a form of conformity. Bureaucracy is, par excellence, a device of selecting a bunch of individuals who are ready to conform to their system. It rejects another bunch who are not cooperative. Therefore, “Mr Hughes” has been rejected. Perhaps the scene at the DoE office is not convincing for those who are not familiar with bureaucracy or those who did not see the previous episodes of this series in which the inhuman atmosphere of the DoE office has been repeatedly mocked. But it is enough for Yosser and others. It is not that Yosser fails to understand the message. The message has not been delivered.

On their second visit, the officers from the Social Services bring with them ‘an army’ which Yosser ‘demanded’ last time. No matter how decent these two people think themselves, no matter how gentle, polite, understanding and sympathetic they try to present themselves, and no matter what their natural dispositions are, no one can deny the fact that they are agents of bureaucracy and they are simply exercising its power. This is clear from the first sentences they deliver to Yosser.

Mr Hughes, I’m sorry but we do have authority under the Children’s Act and Young People’s Act of 1969 to remove your children regardless of your permission or not. (p.213)

Note the language they use. Morgan, a fresh agent of bureaucracy, is only concerned with law and its application to those who go against it. The

bureaucrats' preoccupation with legislation often becomes absurd and the way they fail to recognise human nature is even comical. This is a universal phenomenon, not unique in Britain. Let me give one example from the United States so that I can make some justification for my criticism of British bureaucracy:

I dreamed
the Department of Social Services
came to the door and said:
“We understand
you have a baby,
a goat, and a pig living here
in a two-room apartment.
This is illegal.
We have to take the baby away,
unless you eat the goat.”

“The pig’s OK?” I asked.

“The pig’s OK,” they said.⁷

But this is no laughing matter. We are reminded here of a public secret that children are the property of the State. This is exactly what happened to Malcolm X and his family when Malcolm was a young boy. After his father was killed by racists, their economic situation quickly deteriorated and finally the State took away Malcolm X and his siblings from their mother, who became deranged and was sent to a mental hospital.

(3) The Birth of Class Consciousness

I am aware of the argument that policing in this episode is too stereotypical. But it does not matter. Everybody knows a rebellious guy like Yosser will be battered by the police. *Boys from the Blackstuff* was set in Liverpool about the time of the Toxteth riots. On the night of July 3, 1981, the police in Toxteth tried to arrest a young black boy who they believed had stolen a motor bike. One version of the incident states that:

The bike in fact was his own which led his friends to impede this arrest and to stone police vehicles. The following day, therefore, the police displayed themselves in force but were attacked with a variety of missiles. Worse still, many shops and buildings were set alight and looting took place. This provoked tough counter-measures and, for the first time ever in Britain, CS gas was fired at rioters. Since the police used cartridges, however, which were meant to penetrate doors, many bystanders and rioters were injured.⁸

The "American-style" riots shocked the British, who traditionally had respected, and had even been proud of, their police. The riots revealed the identity of the government's law enforcers. The story continues:

In 1983 when a report on the Metropolitan police by the Policy Studies Institute, a 400-page document had been commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner himself, condemned them as bigoted, racist, sexist, bored, dishonest, and often drunk.⁹

What is worse, there was the accusation that “there was no democratic control over the police, nor even a means whereby locally elected representatives could influence police policy within their localities. All this meant that the Government came under increasing pressure to protect the public from the police as much as from criminals.”¹⁰ I am not saying that the stereotypical depiction of policing in Yosser’s story can be justified in any sense. The excessive ‘militancy’ on both sides of a conflict appears most shocking on TV screens and this is what TV always looks for. What Alan Bleasdale does here, however, is simply stress the fact that the policemen’s job is to exercise physical violence, just as the social worker’s job is to deceive naive people. In this case the job of Scarface and his men is to knock out Yosser, while the mission of Veronica and Morgan is to persuade Yosser to give up his children so subtly that Yosser cannot realise the mental pressure. They are agents of words just as Scarface and his men are agents of clubs.

As far as Yosser is concerned, he prefers physical action and reaction. When a doctor asks why he attacked Maureen and her lover, and whether he was physically provoked, his answer is simple: “mental’s worse”. (p.210) Hence Yosser chooses “physical” reaction, which is much more straightforward to him, against the police led by Scarface, who triumphantly says to the social workers, “Leave it to me, all right? Otherwise we’ll be here all day. Y’ don’t get anywhere bein’ pleasant to shite.” (p.215) In short, Scarface and his men are more professional than the two social workers.

We are moved by Yosser’s fighting spirit. He neither compromises nor steps back from the confrontation. However, he fails to see that violence functions best to those who, being protected by “law” and its enforcers, deny violence and can only say to Scarface, ‘Well, you bastard!’. For the policemen as for Yosser, “mental’s worse”. In this sense, the boy who shot Scarface

from his window is courageous, but he too misdirected his courage. The majority of viewers in the 1990s will see the boy's shooting as a gag. But according to the article in *The Times* of July 6 1981, which reported the riot on the streets of Liverpool, the rioters included "some little more than children".¹¹ In truth, the tension at the time was more critical than we would imagine today.

The only attack that hit the target in the bull's eye was the one by Yosser's daughter, Anne Marie. She was carried away to the mini-van by Veronica, a social worker, who smiles at her reassuringly. The girl who has stopped struggling returns the smile. Here it looks as if everything had been settled, and peace and happiness restored. But the next moment, Anne Marie butts Veronica in the face. The daughter has inherited a class resentment. The story seems to be saying that class consciousness is neither formed by the media, nor by formal education. It is not created by a separate culture, and certainly not by tradition. Media and education may help to amplify class consciousness, but they do not generate it. It is the direct confrontation between the people belonging to the working classes and the agents of the State that gives birth to class consciousness.

(4) "Us" and "Them": The British Working Classes Today

I wrote in the previous section that Yosser does his best to protect his children, but he does not succeed. Like other boys (Loggo, Chrissie, and George), Yosser belongs to the generation who know nothing of feminism. They have lived in a society in which men go to work and wives bring up children. Once this socio-economic structure is shattered, there is no role left for them to play. While Yosser is on the dole, Maureen gets the feeling that the children do not belong to her any more. It is easy to blame a man like

Yosser from the feminist point of view. Men are defenseless. They have every defect to be accused of by women, particularly by their wives.¹² It is difficult for them to refute what Maureen says:

He hit me. A lot. All the time as a matter of fact. That's why I went out. But when I came back in, he'd hit me again. So I started not coming in at all. Look. I know it sounds awful, but it was him. He made me. (p. 202)

And many more accusations follow. She talks on while smoking heavily just like a figure popping out of a scene of “World in Action”, a popular British TV documentary series. As a matter of fact, Maureen’s delivery in the interview room is the only clue given in the whole drama to any “reasonable” interpretation of the series of irrational and mindless actions by Yosser. Much of what Maureen says here coincides with Bleasdale's own account of Yosser.

‘Basically’, says Bleasdale, ‘Yosser is the complete indictment of capitalist society!’ He laughs. ‘He’s the man who wants to make it, who believes he’s gonna get to the top. He’s got conviction and energy, and immense power, and lunatic self-belief, and absolutely no talent whatsoever to achieve what the capitalist society says you must have – whether it’s shopping at Habitat or buying videos or a big house on the hill. And that’s what he thinks life is all about – until he goes down into that trip into hell in Episode 4 – he thinks you can only be truly happy if you are truly rich.’¹³

Jameson is right in saying that “social class is not merely a structural fact

but also very significantly a function of class consciousness."¹⁴ It is true that the male chauvinist consciousness has created the male-oriented society, but in dialectic thinking we can also argue that this male chauvinist consciousness was a product of a fundamental economic structure. Men were made the dominant work force at factories when capitalists brought heavy industry into being.

Autonomy of the working classes, as well as the middle and upper, or the lower middle, the upper middle, or whatever, was to go through a period of profound socio-political transition or transformation in the late 1970s and early 1980s. This transformation was brought about by an economic shift from the traditional heavy industry to technology and service-oriented industries. This phenomenon took place in many industrialised countries including Britain. "We are," Bleasdale says, "at the arse-end of the Industrial Revolution."¹⁵ Needless to say this change of wind hit the north much harder than the south.

The drunkenness, wife-beating, readiness to resort to violence (all of which can be applied to Yosser when we accept Maureen's denunciation), lack of tactics, contempt of bureaucracy (because it naturally exploits them), failure of verbal communication outside their own community, and many more, all these are well calculated in the story of Yosser in order to present a stereotypical working-class male. And we are told how Yosser is losing his role in society as well as in the family. This is why Yosser has to repeat, "I'm Yosser Hughes." This phrase is as often heard as that of "Gizza job, I can do it." Each time he faces a vacancy, he must identify himself. But we are left with a lot of unanswered questions. One of the biggest is why Yosser had to fight alone all the time. Where have all the "fellas" gone?

The truth is painful. Like Yosser, everybody else is fighting a lonely battle.

In the second episode Dixie is humiliated to death. In the third, Chrissie shot his pets while his neighbour “shot” him. Unemployment stripped all the boys naked. Their family collapses. The church is of no help. Even mutual trust is gone in the community. Only George and his wife can manage to keep their relationship as it was. George is “the patriarch in the community” and his presence “offers an ideal model of working-class masculinity.”¹⁶ Mrs Malone is “a staunch socialist who has fought alongside her trade-unionist husband all her life.”¹⁷ But what George represented is all dead now and Mrs Malone cannot be a model any longer.

In the final episode, “George’s Last Ride”, we see the decaying Liverpool landscape which functions as a metaphor for the dead working-class community. It is beautifully portrayed and it evokes even a sort of nostalgia. But the story does not end here. Shortly after, we are led to the slapstick commotion in the local pub, which may upset the viewer. Richard Paterson maintains that:

But no new nostrums are offered as the mood of the story changes to madness in a pub taken over by the unemployed workers spending their redundancy money and ends with Chrissie and Loggo wondering ‘What’s gone wrong?’¹⁸

It appears that Bleasdale has avoided the sentimental ending. Bob Millington and Robin Nelson state that “a distinctive feature of *Boys from the Blackstuff*’s narrative structure is the deliberate under-cutting of the anticipated dramatic climax.”¹⁹ Yet it is not without rhyme or reason that the desolate Liverpool landscape is portrayed very emotionally, and then is taken over by the madness of the pub scene. Nostalgia is an energy as anarchic as sexuality, and it is even

more powerful insofar as this emotion is based on the conviction that all is lost and nothing can be regained in our lifetime. Thus the pub scene symbolizes the accumulated energy of the British working classes, which is tremendously huge, but lost.

(5) End of History?

It is not my task here to predict the future of the British working classes, but as François Bédarida rightly argues, "there was no 'embourgeoisement' of manual workers any more than there was 'proletarianization' of white-collar workers."²⁰ Belief in a classless society is a misconception in capitalist society. While the idea of mass consumption and the brainwashing by mega mass media are daily and nightly producing a series of illusions about class integration, as Jameson insists, "we have to begin to sense the abstract truth of class through the tangible medium of daily life in vivid and experiential ways."²¹

Yosser's story is bleak. If you lose your job, your family and your friends, what would you do? How can you carry on? This is a question Yosser asks. Under the Conservative governments of the 80s, the working-class community was obliterated from British society. The idea of the working classes was made obsolete. Yosser's trip to hell is a recorded history of this process. What Bleasdale achieved with this TV series was somewhat similar to what Thomas Hardy did with his novels some hundred years ago, in which farming communities disappeared without knowing what was happening to them. This time it was the factory workers.

Notes

- 1 Alistair B. Cooke (ed.), *The Campaign Guide 1987* (Conservative and Unionist Central Office, 1987), p.135.
- 2 Quoted in Martyn Auty, 'Boys from the Blackstuff', *Monthly Film Bulletin*, 602 (March 1984), 92-4 (p.93).
- 3 John McGrath, 'The Boys Are Back', *The Listener*, 13 January 1983, 28.
- 4 Andrew Rissik, 'Retro Repeats', *Drama*, 163 (1987), 45-46 (p.46).
- 5 Alan Bleasdale, *Boys from the Blackstuff* (Studio Scripts), ed. by David Self (Cheltenham: Stanley Thornes, 1990), p.183. Further references to this edition are given after quotations in the text.
- 6 Fredric Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p.1.
- 7 Martin Espada, "DSS Dream", from a pamphlet published by Augusta Savage Gallery in Amherst, Massachusetts.
- 8 Alan Sked and Chris Cook, *Post-War Britain* (London: Penguin, 1993), p.352.
- 9 *Ibid.*, p.353.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p.354.
- 11 Arthur Marwick, *British Society since 1945* (London: Penguin, 1990), p.273.
- 12 It should be noted, however, that men suffer as much as women. John Naughton writes: "we live in a society where the work ethic is still deeply ingrained, whatever *Daily Telegraph* readers may think, and in which to be without work is still, for most people, a deeply humiliating experience." See his 'Wiping Out Work' in *The Listener*, 21 October 1982, 25.
- 13 Paul du Noyer, 'England Today, Uglier by Far' in '*Boys from the Blackstuff*': *BFI Dossier 20*, ed. by Richard Paterson (London: British Film Institute, 1984), p.66.
- 14 Jameson, *op. cit.*, p.37.
- 15 Paterson (ed.), *op. cit.*, p.65.
- 16 Bob Millington, '*Boys from the Blackstuff*' (Alan Bleasdale)', in *British Television Drama in the 1980s*, ed. by George W. Brandt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.133.
- 17 Auty, *op. cit.*, p.93.
- 18 Richard Paterson, 'Restyling Masculinity: The Impact of *Boys from the Blackstuff* in *Impacts and Influences: Essays on Media Power in the Twenty Century*, ed. by James Curran, et al. (London: Methuen, 1987), p.222.
- 19 Bob Millington and Robin Nelson, *Boys from the Blackstuff: The Making a TV*

- Drama* (London: Comedia, 1986), p.20.
- 20 François Bédarida, *A Social History of England 1851-1975*, trans. by A. S. Forster (London: Methuen, 1979), p.284.
- 21 Jameson, op.cit., p.38.

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