

**Authorship, Collaboration and
National Identity:
Lindsay Anderson's
Directorial Practice in the Cinema**

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DECLARATION:

I hereby confirm that the following work has been composed by myself,

The work it embodies has been done by myself and has not been included or submitted as part of another thesis or degree,

All references to the use of work published in press and/or submitted for publication by myself have been duly acknowledged,

All references and verbatim quotes from archive sources and other material have been duly acknowledged and listed accordingly,

Stirling, January 18th , 2014

Isabelle Gourdin-Sangouard

ABSTRACT:

The thesis investigates the directorial practice of Lindsay Anderson in the cinema. This includes a study of his work as a feature film director, documentary filmmaker and film critic. From his formative years as a film critic and documentary filmmaker, Anderson developed a distinctive vision for the role of the director. As the study of his critical writings and personal correspondence will show, his vision translated into a celebration of the concept of artistic integrity, which he located at the level of both the production and reception of the film. In turn, this implied a belief in the integrated nature of the filmmaking process with the director in a central but reactive function.

The use of archive material – mostly from the Lindsay Anderson Archive located at Stirling University – will uncover the existence of a tension: the study of the tension will be attached to the conceptualisation of a dialogue that I see as underpinning Anderson's directorial practice in the cinema. It will become apparent for instance, that the practice of diary writing that Anderson maintained for over 50 years, echoed his working relationships with his close collaborators during and after the making of his films.

I aim to uncover the sites of convergence as well as of tension between Anderson's films and the context of their production. In order to do so, I have identified three themes which the director's life and career in the cinema suggest: authorship, collaboration and national identity will provide the basis for a study of Anderson's work in relation to their national and cultural context as well as the wider academic context in which his legacy will be assessed.

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Notes:

When referring to The Lindsay Anderson Archive, I follow the cataloguing system in use in the Special Collections. Anderson's Archive correspondence will read for instance, LA/ 5/01/. For the personal diaries, the reference starts with LA/6/. For material relating to the production of films, LA/1/01 for the early documentaries, LA/1/03 for *This Sporting Life* (1963), and so on.

In addition, the archivists at Stirling University identified extra archive material about Anderson held at the BFI and ensured a copy was made available in the Anderson Archive. I also have a digital copy of a letter sent by Anderson to François Truffaut that a researcher at the BFI forwarded me.

I will also mention material that originates from the Cinémathèque Française, more specifically, la Bibliothèque du Film – BiFi – located in Paris, France.

Either I reference material that corresponds to folders held in the archive section of the library: this type of documents consists of personal correspondence from, to or about Anderson as well as promotional material originating from film festivals. I also use press reviews – French or international – that can be consulted freely in the on-site digital library; I list this material by author and/or title.

All quotes are verbatim – this includes the correspondence between Anderson and his friends and colleagues in Poland and the former Czechoslovakia, which was often conducted in French and at time – *fran-GLISH* (!)

I have, overall, followed the Harvard Referencing system – however, for ease of reference, I have opted for footnotes as opposed to endnotes in individual chapters.

Introduction:

The thesis investigates the directorial practice of Lindsay Anderson in the cinema. This includes a study of his work as a feature film director, documentary filmmaker and film critic. The main focus for the thesis is the conceptualisation of an on-going dialogue that underpins Anderson's vision for and practice of his role as a film director on and off the set.

The concept of an ongoing dialogue arises from three considerations: first, Anderson's life-long commitment to recording his personal feelings about friends and colleagues, as well as his vision of filmmaking that gives both a central and collaborative role to the director. The second consideration follows on from the first: the use of archive material, mostly from the director's personal Archive, uncovers the existence of a tension that I see as central to the study of Anderson's work in the cinema. The concept of a tension often overlaps with that of the dialogue that underpins Anderson's relation with his own writings. It also encompasses the director's view of his directorial practice as well as the critical and public reception of his work. Lastly, the question of the context in which Anderson wrote and directed films can be extended to include the academic framework in which his work will here be assessed. That last aspect brings out the existence of a dialogue between the researcher – myself – and the archive material used.

As I will develop in the literature review, the Lindsay Anderson Archive that is held at the University of Stirling, mostly comprises of the director's diaries, personal correspondence and files pertaining to the production of his films and plays. Anderson also kept newspaper, journal and magazine clippings documenting the critical and public reception of his work, which the archivists have catalogued, along with his personal book and video library.

The cross-referencing of the Archive material makes it possible to privilege an outward approach to my intended study of Anderson's directorial practice: diaries, personal letters that Anderson exchanged with friends, colleagues and film critics, as well as the documentation on film – his or others' – which the director accumulated over his career – all put into context his directorial practice. The nature of this context is of particular relevance here as this forces the researcher to distinguish between two types of contextual study surrounding Anderson's films: one that focuses on existing academic works dealing either with the director's films or British cinema in general; and the other, that treats Archive material as first-hand testimony or primary data on Anderson's career and as such, yielding their own context. As will become apparent in the literature review, working primarily with the Archive does not completely exclude reviewing and reflecting on existing academic publications on Anderson. Rather, this points towards an approach that seeks to uncover new reading strategies.

Sarah Street in *British Cinema in Documents* (2000) explores the nature of the process involved when using film-related documents that she labels 'intertexts'. (ibid.: 5) She places her analysis in the context of Postmodernist debates on the distinction between past and history: one referring to "something that did occur"; the other to "the interpretative construct" that makes the historical event accessible to us. (ibid.: 1)

Within the field of film studies, this implies ridding the film of the layers of critical discourses that have shaped the public's and scholars' perception of its meaning and value. (ibid.: 3) Street's intended framework involves a dynamic that aims to reinstate discourses that have been marginalised due to their ephemeral status – she mentions for instance, the voice of the audience that is less likely to be recorded than the “voice of truth”, that is formed by the reviews on record. (ibid.: 6) Within the context of my own thesis, I aim to identify and make new connections between three key themes in film studies. The choice of the title illustrates the proposed dynamic.

The title of the thesis defines Anderson's directorial practice as threefold: authorship, collaboration and national identity constitute the defining themes at the heart of the director's working pattern. The first two themes, authorship and collaboration, will connect Anderson's directorial practice with the theoretical framework which originated in France in the pages of *La Revue du Cinéma* in the late 1940s, and its successor, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, in the early 1950s. This framework of reference is usually labelled *La Politique des Auteurs*. (Bordwell 1996: 4-5; Gerstner 2003: 6-7; Hillier 1985: 5-8; Marie 1997: 38-40) This is the scholarly context that frames Anderson's early years as a film critic and director. This is also a cultural and social point of reference that is presented as having far-reaching consequences for Anderson's own approach to his work and that of fellow film practitioners. (Hedling 2003)

Finally, this is the context in which he first achieved domestic and international recognition. He won an Academy Award in 1954 for a documentary that he co-directed with an Oxford friend, about a school caring for deaf children – *Thursday's Children* (1954). He was also one of the driving forces behind the screening of a

series of short films at the National Film Theatre in London, in February 1956. The Free Cinema programmes, as they became known, helped Anderson to gain a foothold amongst the British artistic community at the time, which ultimately led to his directing *This Sporting Life*, his first full-length feature film, in 1963.

The last of my three themes, national identity, addresses the question of Anderson's legacy: Anderson maintained a largely adversarial relationship in the course of his career with his national film industry. The correspondence files in the Archive contribute to create the perception of an undervalued and largely rejected artist in his home country. Throughout his life, Anderson kept an active correspondence with fellow film critics and practitioners, many of whom also became close friends. As I will develop further, the question of Britishness and his own national identity ran through many letters, especially in the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s. The British national context is overall presented as hostile to the production of films challenging the social and cultural consensus. Anderson's own projects at the time became for him a platform to voice his disillusionment with the industry, the critics, and to an extent, audiences as well.

Anderson's account of the difficulties he encountered in making *Britannia Hospital* (1983), along with the eventual rejection of the film by critics and audiences alike, provide an example of the need to define a reading strategy. To return to Street's introduction, the challenge consists of acknowledging the existence of a convergence between existing literature on the British cinema of the period and Anderson's own view of the context in which he made his film. Street refers to Foucault's view of history as made up of layers of discourse: to him, "effective history" exposes the documents as fabrications. There is an imperative for the historian to disentangle

these same documents from the “underlying ideology” or “hidden agenda” of those who preserved them in the first place. (Foucault in Street 2000: 6) In the context of the thesis, this requires a balancing act between acknowledging the value that existing industrial, social and cultural readings offer and providing a coherent commentary on and around Anderson’s first-hand experience of that same context.

Chapter 1, the Literature Review, is divided into three main parts: the first part presents the holdings of the Archive, which includes the two books that Anderson authored and copies of the film journal *Sequence* that he co-founded and edited from 1946 until 1952. The books in question are *Making a Film: the Story of ‘Secret People’* (1952) and *About John Ford* (1981). The second part will introduce the publications that deal more or less exclusively with Anderson’s career, as a film critic and director as well as theatre director – although I will leave that last aspect out, as this is not part of my research topic. One main consideration will inform my review of these publications: the fact that all the authors knew Anderson personally and that to a lesser or greater extent, this created a bond that impacted on the presentation of the director’s work. The last part of the chapter will contextualise a number of key concepts that have informed the study of British film, mostly since the 1970s, and that are of direct relevance to the thesis. These revolve around the nature of the critical discourse that has appraised the British film industry since the Second World War and the question of the British film aesthetic. As I will develop, the concept of a British cinema has proved a contentious subject for film critics and scholars since the 1920s when the question of film as an art form started to arise. The notions of cinematic realism and national identity in British film are an integral part of that discourse. They also feature in Anderson’s critical writings and constitute a framework of reference for his own film aesthetic.

I mentioned earlier the central role that La Politique des Auteurs plays both as a theoretical framework of reference for the field of film studies and socio-cultural context for Anderson's career in the cinema. Chapter 2 relies on this premise to introduce Anderson's own approach to the concept of authorship in the cinema, more specifically his vision of the role that the film director assumes within the filmmaking process. I will focus the discussion on his most influential writings, including a selection of his early essays for *Sequence* and the pivotal "Stand Up! Stand Up" published in *Sight and Sound* in 1956. References to François Truffaut's "Une Certaine Tendance du Cinéma Français" (1954) will help bring out the distinctiveness of Anderson's critical discourse on authorship and further introduce the concept of a collaborative working pattern that constitutes a key feature of his directorial practice.

Chapter 3 follows up on the issue of authorial agency within the filmmaking process. I will frame and explore the concept of balance that I see as arising from Anderson's concept of a fluid authorship, within the context of the filming of the industrial documentaries that he directed between 1948 and 1952 for the Richard Sutcliffe Limited Firm. I will relate the circumstances of the filming and the documentaries themselves to a selection of extracts from Anderson's diaries for the period. The objective is to provide a figurative and literal illustration of the dialogue with his collaborators which Anderson places at the heart of his directorial practice and film aesthetic.

Chapter 4 explores further the concept of a creative dialogue by placing it into the context of the production of Anderson's first full-length feature film, *This Sporting Life* (1963). The circumstances that led to Anderson directing the film as well as the emotionally fraught relationship that developed between the director and his lead

actor on-set, illustrate its different facets over the production of a film, from the scripting to the filming stage.

Chapter 5 focuses on *The White Bus* (1966) and *If....* (1968). I will look into the production and reception of both films with two objectives in mind: first, these films provide extensive examples of Anderson's distinctive working pattern with his key collaborators during production. Second, the production and reception of these films also help to contextualise the relation between the three themes underpinning the thesis. Authorship, collaboration and national identity refer to the practical side of filmmaking – from the structure of the film industry at the time in terms of funding opportunities especially, to Anderson's directorial practice and working relationship with his scriptwriters and actors.

Both films also foreground the extent to which the critical reception of films upon their release shapes the subsequent academic discourse on their aesthetic value. *The White Bus* for instance, has been mostly looked at from the perspective of an Art film. (Hedling 1998; Silet 1979). The film was produced on the independent circuit and only ever had a limited release. Its highly subjective storyline and stylised look further contributed to giving it the status of an experiment within Anderson's career and marginal place within the history of British film. By focusing on the film itself and the process that underpinned its writing and filming, it becomes possible to rethink the relation between a film's aesthetics and the industrial context in which it was produced. By contrast, *If* that shares many stylistic features with *The White Bus*, won the Palme d'Or at the 1969 International Cannes Film Festival. The film received American funding, which places it in the context of a national industry that was largely funded by U.S. investments in the 1960s. (Walker 1974)

The chapter as a whole, aims to provide a new frame of reference for those two films by highlighting the impact which both the industrial context and the critical reception had on their aesthetic appraisal. To use Street's formulation, by returning to Anderson's experience of making these films, I will aim to initiate a process of "dissecting" rather than "accumulating" the layers attached to their accepted meanings.

Chapter 6 also deals with the production side of Anderson's films: I will look at the issue of national identity such as it relates to Anderson's experience of directing films in his country and abroad. The selection includes *Thursday's Children* (1954), the Free Cinema programmes (1956-9), *Raz, Dwa, Trzy/The Singing Lesson* (1967), which Anderson directed in Poland at the request of the Documentary Studio in Warsaw, and finally, *Britannia Hospital* (1982), the last feature film that he made in Britain. The chapter lays out the ground for the notion of critical impasse surrounding Anderson's legacy by stressing the director's disillusionment and feeling of rejection from his national film industry.

Chapter 7 takes as a starting point the concept of a critical impasse that represents the lack of critical recognition which British cinema suffered until the mid-1970s – early 1980s. Taking as a point of reference Anderson's own feeling of rejection and disillusionment towards his film industry, I will attempt to locate an origin for what I perceive to be a lack of a coherent critical discourse about his film aesthetic. I will explore a selection of French reviews and archive documents covering the Free Cinema series in order to foreground the process of interpreting archive material on the one hand, and published commentaries on the other. I will refer to the work of a leading French academic on British cinema, Philippe Pilard, as well as articles from

Cahiers du Cinéma and *Positif*. I will also refer to archive material on Anderson that is held at the Bibliothèque du Film – the Bifi – in Paris.

In Chapter 8, I will focus on the distinctive relation between narration and narrative in *O Lucky Man!* (1973), in order to introduce the concept of engagement. Engagement refers to the active negotiation of the context in which a film is both produced and received. The concept draws from Anderson's documented interest in and use of Brechtian principles in his work. Within the context of the thesis, engagement confirms a defining feature of Anderson's work: the existence of a duality that expresses the director's acknowledgement of the industrial, social and cultural context in which he operates and his willingness to transcend it.

Chapter 1:

Literature Review

The Lindsay Anderson Archive:

The following literature review will present the nature of the material that informs the research.

The thesis draws significantly upon archive material: mostly from the Lindsay Anderson Archive – which I term throughout the thesis, the Archive – which as I said, is stored at the University of Stirling. A significant part of the Archive consists of folders organised thematically and chronologically. A folder covering the making of a given film comprises the correspondence mentioning the film as well as any production or promotional material and press or film critics' reviews published upon its release. The said material can be further cross-referenced with the diaries covering the relevant periods or the folders dealing with all financial matters relating to the production of a given film. A total of 90 volumes make up Anderson's personal diaries: they range from actual journals to note books in which he recorded his thoughts about family, friends and fellow film practitioners – from actors to film critics. Anderson also used his diaries to document the production of his film and theatre projects.

Since September 2010, there exists an itemised catalogue of the Archive. A few diaries have been itemised at page level. This is notably the case for the period covering the production of *O Lucky Man!* (1973), which gives the researcher the

opportunity to look into the successive stages of the film production, which supplements Paul Sutton's own selection in the published *Diaries* (2004).

Gaining access to the actual diaries is invaluable but can also prove a painstaking exercise. As noted above, Anderson recorded his thoughts in notebooks or desk diaries, but often cramming too much into the available space. In many instances, Anderson also used red or blue-ink pens that made his handwriting even harder to decipher. This is for instance the case with the diary covering his 1965 stay in Czechoslovakia. (Anderson 1965: LA 6/1/48/81-6) These entries provide evidence of Anderson's interest in the Czechoslovakian New Wave, then in full bloom, and of the links which he initiated with its leading film directors. His remarks following the screenings of rushes or recent releases, contextualise a number of his writings on the Czechoslovakian New Wave aesthetic, as for instance, his article, "Nothing Illusory About the Young Prague Film-Makers", published in *The Times* in May 1965.

Overall, however, Anderson kept a meticulous account of his day-to-day activities: crossed-over words on the page are almost non-existent, which tends to suggest that he had considered the possibility of public scrutiny. As will become helpful in subsequent sections, access to the unabridged version of Anderson's personal diaries enables the researcher to appreciate more fully the complexity of the director's dealings with personal and professional matters. Sutton's heavy editing of Anderson's stays with Serge Reggiani in the early 1950s in Paris, for instance, keeps largely hidden the existence of a romantic attachment whose obsessive nature is deeply reminiscent of his subsequently troubled relationship with Richard Harris.

The Archive also holds a large collection of photographs either from family and friends or relating to the production of the films and plays which Anderson directed

throughout his career. Access to the collection has proved of value to comprehend the centrality of human relations in his working pattern. I have personally used photos of Anderson and Sherwin on the set of *If....* (1968) – in a published article – to illustrate the distinct working partnership that made the film possible. Similarly, photos taken during the filming of *This Sporting Life* (1963), provide a visual testimony to the strong relationship between Anderson and Harris: as I will develop in a subsequent chapter, the blurring of the boundaries between the personal and the professional had a measurable impact on the style of the film and occasioned many hurdles during production.

The Archive also holds copies of all Anderson's documentary films, short films and full-length feature films – with the exception of the short film which Anderson made for the Documentary School in Warsaw in 1967 and a documentary directed by the cameraman, John Fletcher, documenting the filming of *The White Bus* in 1966. All full-length feature films are now commercially available on DVD in Britain and Europe with the exception of *The Whales of August* (1987) that can only be rented or bought in limited formats – DVD region one or via the online iTunes Store. The Anderson Archive holds a copy of *The White Bus* on video; the film is not currently available on general release. The copy of *The Singing Lesson* I watched is held in the BFI National Archives; it is a recorded 1994 broadcast from *BBC Television*. I also refer in the last chapter, to the documentary that Anderson wrote and directed for *BBC Scotland, Is That All There is?* (1994). The Archive holds a copy on DVD that was provided by *BBC Scotland* as the documentary is not commercially available either.

Finally, Anderson owned many books, over 2,000 of which are now stored in the Archive. Amongst those, the researcher can find the two books that the British

director wrote as well as copies of the film journal *Sequence* of which he was a founder and editor between 1946 and 1952.

Anderson's writings and publications

Making a Film: The Story of 'Secret People' (1952)

The first book which Anderson published in 1952, *Making a Film: The Story of 'Secret People'*, documents the 11 weeks of the production of Thorold Dickinson's *Secret People* (1952). The Archive holds one copy of the book as well as the press clippings that Anderson compiled and that reviewed it upon its publication. (Anderson 1952a: LA 4/2/9/1)

Most reviews issued at the time of the book's release stress the distinctiveness of Anderson's project: this is a detailed, behind-the-scenes account of the making of a film at an English studio. One review published in a regional newspaper, *The Evening Express* in March 1952, highlights the sense of immediacy achieved by the book: the reader follows Anderson's exclusive access to the shoot and gains in the process a comprehensive knowledge of the creative, technical as well as human side of filmmaking. (Woodman 1952: LA 4/2/6/6)

Similarly, in a newsletter to the BFI members, the then director of the British Film Institute, Denis Forman, praises Anderson's extreme attention to details:

The result is a unique work, factually sound and fully documented, yet reading with the excitement of an adventure story as the hero, the film itself, avoids or surmounts successive obstacles, goes on the floor, is brought within the limits of the budget, reaches the cutting room and eventually reaches the screen. (Forman 1952: LA 4/2/6/3)

Making a Film makes the process of filmmaking as a whole tangible to the reader, which places the book in a specific context: that of the film critic recently turned

documentary filmmaker. At the time of publication, Anderson had completed his first three documentaries for the Richard Sutcliffe Limited firm, and the last issue of *Sequence* had come out in January 1952. His acknowledgement of all the aspects of the work – both creative and technical – that go into producing a film, is reminiscent of his article, “Creative Elements”, published in *Sequence* in 1948. In that article, he provides a precise account of the respective contributions that each member of the film crew makes to the finished film: Anderson’s article culminates in the proclamation that the filmmaking process is a miraculous fusion of creative elements. (Anderson 1948: 199)

Forman’s Newsletter mentions Anderson’s background as the editor of *Sequence*: he does so in a way that illuminates the professional transition which the director was going through at the time. (Forman 1952: LA 4/2/6/3) *Making a Film* confirms that Anderson still held as fundamental the principles he had put forth as a critic in *Sequence*: the technical expertise and general craftsmanship that characterise the studio film practitioners’ work is not overlooked but rather celebrated as the central trigger of artistic creation. Forman mentions the warm welcome with which the ‘Ealing People’ greeted Anderson’s presentation of their work: the perception was that, in a move contrary to most film critics that too often dismiss the value of their work, Anderson had opened up “the window of the [critics’] ivory tower” to unravel the reality of the filmmaking process. Another clipping published in the *Sunday Mercury* reads: “Watching the Heart-Beat of an Embryo Film”, thereby confirming the critical trend that appraised the book. (*Sunday Mercury* 1952: LA 4/2/6/4)

The exhaustive list of the studio unit assigned to the making of *Secret People*, examples of production sheets detailing the technical requirements – props, lighting,

etc ...– also betray the fledgling director’s awe of the complexity and precarious balance that underpin the making of a film: for each scene, a complete scheduling table summing up all the dates and location (mostly studio-based) where each actor will be needed, all alongside Anderson’s own account of the day-to-day routine of a working studio.

The attention to details extends to the observation of human interactions on-set. Anderson records every single event punctuating each day of the shoot as he would in his personal diary: a typical entry combines a factual listing, transcribed exchanges between the protagonists and Anderson’s own take on the event described. Page 41 for example, takes the reader through the pre-production stage involving the two leads, Serge Reggiani and Valentina Cortese, and their first days of work at the Studio. First discussion of the script with the director, Thorold Dickinson, was followed by the induction meeting with the make-up department to decide on Cortese’s “two looks” – as in the film, she plays a woman who undergoes plastic surgery as a result of serious injuries in the wake of a terrorist attack. (Anderson 1952: LA 4/2/9/1 -41)

Making a Film represents Anderson’s negotiation of his relationship with the filmmaking process: he fully integrates the transition from the role of a critic to that of a film director, which likens his experience to that of the leading figures of the French New Wave, as Charles L.P. Silet noted in his study of the director’s work. (Silet 1979: 2-3) At the same time however, *Making a Film* also proclaimed his difference from his French counterparts who opted for a celebration of the director’s role to the detriment of the film practitioners involved in the successive stages of production.

I will develop this aspect in the subsequent chapters, as this remains a defining feature of the practice of film criticism associated with La Politique des Auteurs. In the wake of François Truffaut's seminal article, "Une Certaine Tendance du Cinéma Français" (1954), critics associated with *Cahiers du Cinéma*, sought to oppose 'screen adaptors' – 'metteurs-en-scène' – with auteurs – that is, directors whose mastery of the medium comes across in the repetition of thematic and stylistic features, all combining to promote a distinctive worldview. (Hillier 1985)

Anderson had strong reservations about the validity of such an approach: throughout his own career as a film critic, he challenged what he perceived to be a highly subjective way of categorising film directors. To quote from his book on John Ford, to which I will return, "once a director [has] been identified as an auteur, he [can] by definition do nothing wrong". (Anderson 1981: 196)

In that sense, *Making a Film* testifies to Anderson's ambivalence towards his national film industry: while his book acknowledged the extensive work that goes into the production of a film, and Ealing's track record in producing "films of quality and enterprise" (Anderson 1952: LA 4/2/9 -14), it also re-affirms the imperative for an artistic drive and unity. A friend and French film critic, Jean Quéval, perceived the underlying tension in Anderson's account of the making of *Secret People*.

Quéval was struck by what he perceived to be a stark contrast in between Anderson's passion for recording all the details pertaining to the film's production and the lack of incisiveness that he thought also characterised his review of its creative and artistic aspects – such as the script review meetings. (Quéval 1952: 43-52) The French critic felt compelled to mention what *Cahiers du Cinéma* usually read as *Sequence's*

excessive anglophobia as a counterpoint to Anderson's perceived subdued tone in his book. (ibid.: 44)

The published *Diaries* – compiled and annotated by Paul Sutton in 2004 – quote a letter which Anderson wrote to Broderick Miller in 1990, and which appears to confirm the tension:

The book I wrote is not exactly dishonest, but I had to suppress all the critical thoughts I had, because of the nature of the book and the fact that Thorold [Dickinson] was my patron. (Anderson 1990: 56)

The Archive holds a letter from *Secret People*'s male lead – Serge Reggiani – to Anderson which could vouch for the truthfulness of the statement made to Miller nearly 40 years after the writing of *Making a Film*. Reggiani states that the film is but a distant memory, and further expresses commiseration for his friend's ambivalent feelings towards that same book he is struggling to compile. (Reggiani 1951: LA 4/2/4/1)

The apparent ambivalence is worth noting: on the one hand, Anderson saw Dickinson as a mentor, which his respectful and meticulous account of the day-to-day filming of *Secret People* illustrates. The Archive also holds evidence of Dickinson's support for Anderson's early attempts to gain entry into the British film industry. (Anderson 1953: LA 6/1/33) Anderson's "The Director's Cinema?" that was published in *Sequence* when *Secret People*'s was in its pre-production stage, also testifies to the bond between the two filmmakers. Anderson quotes from Dickinson's *Sight and Sound* article, "The Filmwright and the Audience", thereby highlighting the central creative role which Dickinson argues, the director holds. (Anderson 1950: 204)

Anderson's article relies on the juxtaposition of two opposite views of the origin of

the creative impetus behind a film. The opposition of the writer with the director is an interesting one in Dickinson's case, as he had been involved in the scripting of *Secret People*. In the article Anderson mentions his correspondence with one of John Ford's key scriptwriters, Nunnally Johnson, who had expressed his reservations about what he perceived as Anderson's unfounded cult of the director. The second exchange of views, this time between Thorold Dickinson, the *Secret People*'s director, and another Hollywood scriptwriter – Howard Koch – comes as reinforcement. Anderson, joining forces with Dickinson, sees Koch as restricting the director's role; allowing for "no independent response to [the] material ..." (ibid.: 207)

On the other hand, Anderson's subsequent undermining of the value of *Secret People* echoes his conflicting view of the British studio system. In *Sequence 3*, "A Possible Solution", he praises the value of small-scale, independent productions over the costly but, in his opinion, flawed feature films coming out of the studios. (Anderson 1948b: 340) A similar tension emerges in this article: Anderson contrasts the efficiency with which British studios are run – here, he refers to Pinewood – with the lack of creative and artistic unity that they paradoxically yield. (ibid.: 336)

The second, "British Cinema: The Descending Spiral", published the year after in *Sequence 7*, follows up on the idea of "stagnation" and "deficiencies" plaguing the national industry, which Anderson mentioned in his previous article. (Anderson 1948b: 336) In this article he calls for a better integration of the resources of the film industry: to him no output of quality can be achieved without the fruitful collaboration of talented and committed directors, scriptwriters and film technicians (Anderson 1949: 347)

In an elaborate review of contemporary releases, mostly by directors who had been affiliated with the Crown Film Unit during the War, he exposes the staleness at the heart of their production. From Anderson's writing, there is a sense that studios, such as Ealing, manufactured films that failed to successfully integrate artistry and craftsmanship:

It is ironic that, for all their determination to avoid hokum, their sense of social and artistic responsibility, these directors end up making films whose predominant characteristic is their unreality. It is not that they lack an eye for realism, but that through inexperience or incapacity each shows inadequate grasp of what is even more important – the technique of drama. (ibid.: 344)

Anderson extends his attack on the lack of artistic proficiency to established directors such as David Lean or Michael Powell, who, in tandem with Emeric Pressburger, produced films under the name of the Archers: he defines them as apt craftsmen but ones who lack a flair for committed artistry: in the case of Lean's *The Passionate Friends* (1949), characterisation would remain shallow, while Powell and Pressburger's *The Small Back Room* (1949), would amount to a flawed adaptation of the novel and a misguided use of expressionistic aesthetic. (ibid.: 344-5)

In 1949 Anderson wrote a piece for *Film and Theatre Today: the European Scene*, in which he discusses the same selection of directors and the films they made at Ealing. "The Studio That Begg to Differ" sounds more measured than its *Sequence* counterparts: the criticism levied at the safe, middle-of-the-road aesthetic privileged by the Ealing brand of filmmaking, is almost justified by the personality of Sir Michael Balcon. Anderson depicts Balcon as a man of integrity whose past experience as head of production in Britain for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer and founder of Gainsborough Pictures, equipped with the conviction that measure and good craftsmanship should constitute the ethos of a successful studio. It is worth noting that

films such as *Scott of the Antarctic* (1948), and especially *The Captive Heart* (1946) – which Anderson had heavily criticised in both “Angles of Approach” (1947) and “The Descending Spiral” (1949) – here become as many examples of a fruitful collaborative work and a coherent studio policy. (Anderson 1949: 350-1) In that respect, the inclusion of the studio’s slogan – “The Studio with the Team Spirit” (ibid.: 351) – prefigures Anderson’s subsequent celebration of the Ealing films formula in his book *Making a Film* and further highlights the existence of an underlying duality when discussing the legacy of these films. The apparent duality of discourse manifests itself at the end of the 1949 article itself: if Anderson moderates his dislike of *The Captive Heart*, he nonetheless castigates Ealing’s “halfway house” choice of catering to the tastes of middle-brow audiences and critics by declaring that “the good must also be the enemy of the best”. (ibid.: 352)

In the 1980s and early 1990s, Anderson often appeared to give a more forgiving account of the War and immediate post-war British film output. In “British Cinema: The Historical Imperative”, for instance, he speaks of the “confidence and [the] sense of identity” which British cinema experienced for the first time in the post-war period. (Anderson 1984: 393) Lean’s *Great Expectations* (1946) and Powell and Pressburger’s *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946) are almost praised. However, Anderson is also quick to conclude that British cinema owed its vitality to the nation’s own fighting spirit as opposed to “creating” it. (ibid.)

Anderson’s reviews of Michael Powell’s two volumes of autobiography, *A Life in Movies* (1986; 1992), feature a similarly ambiguous response to the British director’s work. Anderson sees the films Powell made with Pressburger as the Archers in the 1940s as the best in the director’s career. (1987: 376; 1992: 377) In the 1992 review,

he praises *A Matter of Life and Death*, *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943) and *The Red Shoes* (1948) as “brilliant, wilful and idiosyncratic films” (1992: 377). However, when read within the context of both reviews, the Archers’ films still come across as shallow – technically innovative, but ultimately flawed from an artistic point of view. (1987: 376; 1992: 377) Anderson’s ambivalence here confirms two points: first, his own ambivalent attitude towards the centrality that film technique ought to play in filmmaking and aesthetic, which he would maintain throughout his career as a director and critic. Second, his own conflicting feelings towards the British film industry and the wish for recognition by his peers. Both reviews convey Anderson’s sympathy towards Powell’s own personal struggles with the industry and critics alike in the years that followed the end of his partnership with Pressburger, and more especially, the critical and commercial failure of *Peeping Tom* (1960). Anderson’s writing style brings out the irony that saw fit for his generation of filmmakers to look down on the Archers’ films while Powell’s autobiography ignores the contribution that Anderson and the British New Wave made in the late 50s and early 60s.

Anderson’s writings on British cinema help appreciate the impact which the integrated structure that underpinned the making of films at Ealing Studios notably has had on the critical reception of these films. His articles for *Sequence* highlight the existence of a complex network of directors, writers, musicians and technicians who worked together on a number of films often made over a relatively short period of time. In that respect, Anderson’s monograph, *Making a Film*, illustrates the nature of the collaborative pattern and active exchange of expertise that have contributed to the shaping of a legacy for Ealing Studios. Charles Barr’s study of Ealing Studios along with recently published monographs or essays on British studios confirm the view. (Barr 1977; 1993; 1998; Walden 2013) Quoting Barr for instance, Walden discusses

Ealing's recognisable style as a "set of films expressing a tight continuity over a period of 20 years". (Barr in Walden 2013: 56)

About John Ford (1981)

About John Ford (1981) stands as the most perfect example of Anderson's belief in an integrated but artistically committed model of filmmaking. The book achieves this in two distinctive ways: first in the history of its composition and second, at the level of its account of Ford's work. This "labour of love", as Anderson himself calls his book, is a 35-year long project that started as a commissioned monograph for *Sight and Sound*. Gavin Lambert, who was then the editor of the publication, had planned to run a series of studies on leading film directors. (Lambert 1971: 2-3)

By 1955 Anderson had met Ford, initiated a sustained correspondence with the American director's key writers and contributed a number of articles on his films for *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound*. *Cahiers du Cinéma* also published his critical biography of the American director in August 1958. The project eventually fell through but not Anderson's resolve to publish a book on the American director. (Anderson 1981: 9-10)

About John Ford testifies to the personal dimension that underlies the genesis of the 1955 monograph by documenting Anderson's discovery of Ford, which is presented as the result of a chance screening of *My Darling Clementine* (1946) at the Odeon in Leicester Square, in London. (ibid.: 13) The ensuing "discipleship" of Ford soon became an encounter between master and student: Anderson wrote to Ford directly and received a reply from the director, who invited his young fan to give him his opinion on his latest film, *The Fugitive* (1947). Anderson indicates that he did so, but disliked the film:

I did write to Ford, and I told him, as respectfully as I could, that I did not feel *The Fugitive* was successful. Naturally, our correspondence ended. (ibid.: 15)

They Were Expendable (1945) is mentioned as the first film which Anderson felt confident enough to write about – the piece appeared in *Sequence 11*, in 1950.

(Anderson 1950b: 452-65; 1981: 16)

In *About John Ford*, Anderson associates his training as a Ford critic with his budding career as a still “modest and hesitant” director. (1981: 16) The association is worth noting as this places Ford in a unique position both as a mentor when it comes to filmmaking skills and a source of inspiration in matters relating to artistic integrity. The latter proclaims the interconnectedness between the director’s commitment to his work and the moral responsibility that the critic shares in its appraisal.

The Introduction to *About John Ford* provides a link with “Angles of Approach”. The 1947 article to which I will return in the subsequent pages, exhorts the critic to rise above the temptation of middle-brow criticism, thereby acknowledging that s/he is also bound by a moral duty to the artistic process at the heart of filmmaking.

Anderson’s life-long admiration for Ford and the unusual circumstances that led to their actual encounter and friendship, stretch out the scenario suggested by his 1947 article, “Angles of Approach”, in which the boundaries between film creation and appreciation are both collapsed and simultaneously reaffirmed.

This finds confirmation in Anderson’s defence of his negative verdict on *The Fugitive* and conversely, his praise of *They Were Expendable*. The first chapter gives much prominence to the debate that took place between Anderson and Ford on the value of the film during their first meeting in Dublin in 1950. (Anderson 1981: 1921-2) It includes direct speech quotes recreating the exchange of views between the two men,

which echoes the format Anderson adopted for *Making a Film* – in which conversations between members of the crew appeared to be faithfully transcribed or even caught unbeknownst to their authors.

Here, the animated dialogue acts as a masterclass on Ford's film directing technique as well as highlighting the complex nature of the artistic process: the most obvious is when Anderson mentions the episode involving the old boat-builder as evidence of a clear Fordian input into a film that had been commissioned by the US Navy.

(Anderson 1981: 21) A dialectic emerges whereby knowledge is acquired through the confrontation of views: Anderson was unaware of the conditions under which the filming took place whereas Ford fails to fully appreciate the impact which his directorial role exerts on the film. Anderson includes a postscript in which he informs the reader that Ford did screen again *They Were Expendable* and agreed with him on the artistic qualities of the film. (ibid.: 26)

The presentation as much as the content of this chapter give us the clearest example of the dynamic that underpins Anderson's writings and relation to these writings: the attention to time and place, the inclusion of the human dimension – such as the protagonists' respective mood and look – the transcription of conversations, all these elements form the backbone of the British director's approach to film. (ibid.: 19-25)

At the level of form, the diary or letter format recreate the backdrop against which a film is produced. At the level of content, the information or attempt to gain it, to which the dialogue aims, represents the affirmation of the director's central role while also acknowledging the difficulty of delineating precisely the boundaries of that role.

(ibid.: 19-29; 137-44; 186-8) This open duality – form and content – expresses Anderson's dislike of theory as this largely implies privileging one framework over

the other. *About John Ford*'s layout confirms it by integrating the meetings between the two men within the flow of the biographical and critical overview of Ford's career. This creates a sense of continuity between Anderson's life-long project of gathering material and writing about the American director's work and his own development as a film critic and director. All the successive stages are acknowledged but presented as part of a whole: Anderson the film director does not exist without Anderson the-critic-and-Ford's biographer.

It follows that *About John Ford* exposes the constitutive layers of Anderson's discourse about film and his own relation to the medium as a director. This further suggests a reading pattern to the researcher on Anderson as a carefully balanced investigation which makes the process as well as the end result equally visible.

The Introduction, for instance, mentions Anderson's correspondence with Nunnally Johnson, who along with Dudley Nichols and Frank S. Nugent, wrote the scripts of Ford's most famous and most analysed films. (ibid.: 16-7) As Anderson recalls, Johnson refuted the notion that the director was the main creative drive behind the film. To him, the films they made owed just as much if not more, to production constraints, the imperatives laid out in the script and, in the case of *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940), for instance, the novel the film was based on. (ibid.: 16)

Anderson in an echo to "The Director's Cinema?", here appears to take a stance that parallels the auteurist writings of the 1950s *Cahiers'* critics. The Introduction labels Johnson's rejection of the centrality of the director's role as well as his dismissal of the creative input of the collaborators, a "lack of perception". (ibid.) John Caughie in his edited collection of essays on authorship, stresses the extent to which Anderson's writings on Ford – in his articles for *Sequence, Sight and Sound* – present strong

similarities with the auteurist critical practice of ascribing the authorship of a film to its director. (Caughie 1981: 15) The Introduction along with the 1950 *Sequence* article reinforce the view. However, the rest of the book, particularly Chapter 5, “Ford and His Critics: Auteur or Poet?”, shows the complexity of Anderson’s approach to this issue. (Anderson 1981: 191-208)

The intricately written chapter juxtaposes the constitutive periods in Ford’s cinematic career with the key shifts in critical writing that presided over the evaluation of his films. (ibid.: 191-6) The 1930s, notably, correspond to a period in which Ford criticised the studios’ control over the filmmakers’ creativity more openly. In Anderson’s words, this is a decade during which film reviews commented on and praised what they saw as the emergence of a distinctive style. (ibid.: 191-2)

The chapter also includes Anderson’s thoughts on other Ford researchers, mostly French film historians and critics: Jean Mitry, Georges Sadoul, Roger Leenhardt as well as André Bazin, see their respective contributions to a biography on Ford, deconstructed with a painstaking attention to detail. Titles of articles and dates of publication, filmographies of directors associated with the name of Ford in French film criticism are specified. (ibid.: 193-6)

Anderson is mostly critical of the research carried out by his French counterparts: just as in the Preface in which Anderson accused the French film historian Jean Mitry of imagining a new ending to *The Grapes of Wrath* to fit his purpose (ibid.: 10-1), he accuses French critics such as Roger Leenhardt and André Bazin of intellectual dishonesty. (ibid.: 193) That entire section constitutes a strong indictment of auteurism such as it originated in the pages of *Cahiers* and was subsequently

appropriated and labelled “auteur theory” by the American film critic Andrew Sarris. (ibid.: 194-5)

Anderson’s rejection of the *Cahiers*’ director-as-auteur paradigm has been noted by researchers but without developing further the implications that his extensive knowledge of the French critics’ writings bears. (Hedling 1998; Silet 1979) This is an aspect that also extends to other works dealing with the *Sequence* contributors, such as the recent critical overview of Karel Reisz’s career. Colin Gardner gives a detailed account of the type of articles that *Sequence* published – giving titles and authors – but leaves aside the question of the influence of French cinema on the contributors’ critical discourse. This is an interesting feature as in the same section, he mentions the impact that Leavis’s thought exerted on the contributors’ approach to film aesthetic, and further down, their stark rejection of the French critical discourse, such as *Cahiers* epitomised. (Gardner 2006: 19-20)

In *About John Ford*, Anderson demonstrates a keen awareness of the philosophical and social context in which the French critics wrote their reviews. He mentions the impact that Existentialism on the one hand and the rejection of “literary” cinema on the other, exerted on their appraisal of Ford’s films. (ibid.: 195) His practice of intertextual reading was already evident in his early writings.

A general context that favoured a cinema of “moral neutrality if not despair” (ibid.), is a central theme in Anderson’s review of *Paisà* which he published in *Sequence* (Anderson 1947b: 546-7) He praises the “tremendous sense of reality” which Rossellini achieves through a meticulous naturalistic approach to his chosen material and precise handling of his actors – professional and non-professional alike. (ibid.) However, Anderson concludes his article by differentiating between directorial

control and artistic sensibility: to him, Rossellini sacrificed the duty that any true director has of committing his vision to his film to a misguided conception of realism. (ibid.: 547)

Similarly, Anderson believed the French critics associated with *Cahiers* especially, were wrong to discard Ford's championing of traditional values and Humanist outlook. The example he gives of Bazin's attack on Ford's "strong, unmistakably composed image" (Anderson 1981: 195), is worth noting as it connects the British director's criticism of Rossellini's lack of directorial commitment with Bazin's own praise of Neo-realism.

To Bazin, Neo-realism along with the use of deep-focus photography in Orson Welles's *Citizen Kane* (1940), signalled a shift towards a more mature film directing style. It allows a greater latitude to the audience, which the long-established cross-cutting editing technique prohibits: by a process of selection and emphasis, cross-cutting editing decides what to show and what to leave hidden. In his words, Neo-realism and Welles's modernist directorial film style redefined the relation between the film and its audience.

Anderson's first part of his Chapter 5 makes explicit the existence of a connection between the authorship model that was promulgated by Truffaut's 1954 "Une Certaine Tendance du Cinéma Français", the centrality of the concept of realism in film criticism, and the issue of directorial commitment. (Anderson 1981: 191-6) As the genesis of the book lies in the articles and research he started to compile at the time of *Sequence*, it makes sense to look for the origin of Anderson's strong interest in French film criticism there too.

Sequence

I will explore further the 6-year period in which Anderson co-edited the journal in the next chapter. Each issue of *Sequence* featured an editorial section that gave much prominence to contemporary French film directors and latest feature releases. The diaries suggest that Anderson took an active editorial role in shaping each issue of the magazine. In a number of entries written at the time of *Sequence*'s publication, Anderson goes as far as claiming sole authorship of most articles: he maintains that he would let other contributors take an author's credit when in actual fact he was responsible for most of the content and editing work. (Anderson 1948i: LA 6/1/10/46)

Sequence 5, published in 1948, features a two-page long editorial section – 'Free Comment' – that gives an overview of the current situation in which the respective American, British and French film industries find themselves. A number of trenchant remarks pertaining to British attitude to political and cultural life, makes it possible to detect Anderson's editorial intervention. These concern mostly a tendency to praise the British film industry for purely financial considerations as well as a general lack of commitment to support true artists. The mention of the witch hunt that takes place in Hollywood – the McCarthy trials – and the reprehensible conspiracy of silence over the matter in the British press as well as the difficulty for French film directors to find funds to see their projects through due to their government inefficiency, all evoke an Andersonian sub-text. Words used all convey a sense of incomprehension and revolt at the isolation suffered by talented filmmakers – "[T]he plight of the most gifted film directors is the same everywhere". (*Sequence 5* 1948: 4)

Another 'Free Comment' – *Sequence 8*, 1949 – praises the work of film societies which give British film-goers access to foreign, mostly non-Hollywood, films. A

selection of the films recently presented in those societies is included: French films predominate but the mention of Vittorio de Sica's *Sciuscià* (1946) and Rossellini's *Roma: Città Aperta/Open City* (1945) makes it possible to attribute the selection to Anderson who also reviewed *Paisa*.

The subsequent paragraphs that explicitly link together the value of film societies' initiative with the lack of appropriate newsreel journalism in Britain, strengthen the view. The "appalling uniformity of present standards" becomes a cry to dismantle the monopoly exerted by the Newsreel Association, which is controlled by a number of film production companies and studios such as Universal and Gaumont-British. The style recalls "Angles of Approach", the 1947 *Sequence* article in which Anderson deplores the British critics' uniform rejection of what they deem to be inappropriate or unsuitable cinema. In this 'Free Comment' the mentions of facetiousness or philistinism play a similar role by attacking the newsreel's political bias and lack of investigative integrity (*Sequence* 8 1949: 48)

I will return later to this idea of a fluid definition of authorship as a central tenet of Anderson's directorial practice. Within the context of the literature review, this introduces a common thread amongst the books written about his life and career: the existence of an active exchange that presided over their conception. *About John Ford* testifies to the circular dimension which is involved in researching the work of the British filmmaker.

Anderson opted for a presentation of Ford's work that integrates his own experience as a film critic and gradual transition to becoming a film director. The account of his meetings with Ford signals the importance of externalising an actual or figurative dialogue with the individual perceived to act as a mentor. The section that reproduces

the letters exchanged with the actors and film practitioners who worked with Ford, brings out the attempt and resolve to shape a critical discourse about film. Finally, the use of Anderson's own archive material comments on his understanding of the context that surrounded the production and evaluation of Ford's film.

Books on Anderson's life and career:

Elizabeth Sussex contributed the first critical and comprehensive overview of Anderson's work. Her book, *Lindsay Anderson*, was published in 1970, not long after the British director won the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival for *If....* (1968). Sussex acknowledges the direct contribution that Anderson made to the writing by inserting excerpts of interviews she conducted with him into the flow of her own narrative. As she does not provide precise references as to the origin or context for each of these direct quotes, this gives this otherwise comprehensive account of Anderson's work the dimension of a running commentary led by the director himself. Her book has proved of particular interest when looking into Anderson's transition from film critic to film director: as it was published at a relatively early stage in his career, there is a strong emphasis on the narrative and stylistic features of Anderson's short films and documentaries. Her analysis takes into account influences that other works exerted – such as Vigo's *Zéro de Conduite* (1933) or Humphrey Jennings's *Fires Were Started* (1943) and *A Diary for Timothy* (1944) for instance – but is not as explicitly intertextual as Erik Hedling's, for instance, which allows for a re-evaluation of the impact that these early works had on Anderson's film aesthetic.

In 1979 Charles L.P. Silet published a critical compilation of Anderson's work to date, entitled, *Lindsay Anderson: A Guide to References and Resources*. The book consists of five sections that provide an extensive overview of Anderson's life and career: the first section contains biographical information; the second is a 'critical survey' of Anderson's work that focuses mostly on his years as a critic, documentary filmmaker and subsequently feature film director. The last three sections constitute the first truly comprehensive archive of Anderson's work: one section provides a

summary and all the technical information pertaining to each of Anderson's films or short films. (Silet 1979: 35-67) The following one lists all publications dealing with Anderson's work; this includes critical reviews or essays written about his films and published in cinema journals, daily newspapers or magazines. This is an impressive account as it comprises publications of English and non-English speaking countries: Silet provides the references of articles published in The United Kingdom, France, Sweden, Poland, The United States, etc... (ibid.: 69-113) The last section in the book offers a chronological list of Anderson's own writings as well as of his other projects, for the theatre or television. (ibid.: 115-41)

This is a remarkable achievement that, to this day, is an invaluable supplement to existing publications on Anderson. Silet provides for each entry as much background information as possible: for films, this includes the list of the technical crew, producers and actors involved as well as a detailed summary of the plot. For publications, he highlights the key themes developed and cross-references them with previous or contemporaneous articles. His book has helped identify journal articles and reviews about Anderson's films that are not necessarily listed in existing publications on the director.

Silet's book features another interesting characteristic: in spite of an undeniable degree of objectivity – achieved through the comprehensive listing of all material pertaining to Anderson's work – the book is also the end-result of a close interaction with the director himself. A remark in the preface captures the dynamic that underpins the form and content of the book: Silet acknowledges a debt of gratitude to Anderson for his input thereby implying a limitation to the value of the material he had gathered on his own initiative. (ibid.: xi) There is a sense that Anderson's intervention was key

in ensuring that the different strands uncovered by Silet, would come together in a meaningful way. Silet uses the term “infelicities in style” when referring to potential remaining gaps in his research; in other words, sections that would not have been edited by Anderson. (ibid.) The close interaction is further confirmed by an exchange of letters held in the Archive: one in particular has Anderson apologising to Silet – whom he calls by his preferred first name, Loring – for the “temperamental itches” that accompany his extended annotations. (Anderson 1978: LA 5/1/2/51/17)

Similarly, the other authors of critical surveys of Anderson’s works have stressed the importance that the director’s input assumed: the suggestion that the analysis of the material alone, without Anderson’s personal input, would prove inadequate is often strong, as the preface to Hedling’s own book indicates:

[Anderson] was extremely helpful while always expressing a charmingly ironic attitude towards my attempts at analysing his films or understanding his career within the framework of British cinema (Hedling 1998: vii).

Similarly, Silet justifies the methodology underpinning his auteurist reading of the themes and style in Anderson’s films by putting forth the reliability of the biographical sources that inform his argument: Anderson’s assistance with “a number of errors of fact as well as some of inference”, becomes a methodological tool in its own right. (Silet 1979: xi) In the case of Silet’s as well as Allison Graham’s work, this is presented as a compensation for a perceived cultural gap between the authors – both American – and the object of their study. To quote Graham’s *Lindsay Anderson*:

Anderson’s own passion for understanding his countrymen is a fact which simply cannot be overlooked, and whatever cultural biases appear in this study, it should be remembered that they stem primarily from the director’s well-publicized pronouncements over the past three decades.

Since I do not claim to be an expert on British popular culture, my emphasis is always on the films themselves as visual experiences ... (Graham 1981: 11).

Graham further aligns her research with previous books on Anderson by stating her intention of neither duplicating Sussex's study of "Anderson's early career and writings", nor challenging Alexander Walker's or Alan Lovell's respective investigation into his involvement in the Free Cinema Movement. (Graham 1981: Preface)

Hedling published *Lindsay Anderson: Maverick Filmmaker*, in 1998. His study is a rich intertextual analysis of Anderson's films: his insight into the Brechtian influences on the director's film aesthetic for instance, acknowledges Anderson's own interest in the German playwright's theatre. This also connects the readings of *The White Bus* (1966) and *O Lucky Man!* with the Archive, and indirectly, the researcher. As I will develop in a subsequent chapter, Hedling shared his frustration with Anderson following the negative reception of his Brechtian approach to *O Lucky Man!*. (Hedling 1988: LA 5/1/2/21/11) This is another example of the line between primary and secondary material being crossed as the Archive documents Anderson's proclaimed indebtedness to Brecht. (Anderson 1981e: LA 4/3/21/4)

Allison Graham also refers to a Brechtian framework to read both *The White Bus* (1966) and *O Lucky Man!*, which provides a useful complement to Hedling's work.

Hedling deconstructs the nature of the discourse about film favoured by *Sequence*, which also takes into account its impact on the conception and subsequent style of *About John Ford*. (Hedling 1998: 12-4; 16-20). I mentioned the prominence that Anderson gave French film historians and critics in his study of Ford: Hedling notes the extent to which the vision for the role of the director in *Sequence* prefigures its

French counterpart's *Politique des Auteurs*. (ibid.: 13) The combination of the two, elitism and a connection with French film criticism, provides the initial impulse for an exploration of the discourse that surrounds the issue of Anderson's legacy on both sides of the Channel.

As aforementioned, I have also found the connection helpful to conceptualise the origin of the active collaborative pattern that underpins Anderson's directorial practice; especially as regards the role of the film critic as both the artist's disciple and integral part of the filmmaking process.

2004 saw the publication of two essential collections, compiling Anderson's writings and spanning a period of over fifty years. First, Sutton's *The Diaries: Lindsay Anderson*, which are the result of an extensive selective process. Anderson kept a diary for most of his adult life, from the early 1940s until his death in 1994. *The Diaries* give a unique insight into the British director's years at Oxford University, his experience of being an officer during the Second World War,¹ the founding of *Sequence*, the making of the documentaries for the Richard Sutcliffe Ltd firm and the Free Cinema in the 1950s, as well as the progression of his film-directing career.

The Diaries also cover Anderson's work with The Royal Court Theatre in London, his years as a film critic – for *Sight and Sound*, the *New Statesman*, amongst others – and allow for a more intimate look at the man himself. Entries covering the making of *This Sporting Life* (1963), for instance, expose Anderson's love for his lead actor,

¹ See entry for March 6, 1942: "I am now a member of His Majesty's army, having today been formally attested to the Queen's Royal Regiment ...". In Anderson (2004a: 25). The entry for January 19, 1943 has Anderson recall how he almost ended up serving with the Rifle Brigade following a recruiting visit to his public School, Cheltenham. He also mentions his then desire to join the Navy as a result of his seeing David Lean's *In Which We Serve* – a remark that contrasts with his subsequently well-documented distaste for Lean's achievements as a film director. Sutton also includes entries detailing Anderson's stay in Delhi, as an Intelligence Officer, from November 1944 until early 1946. See Sutton (2004: 37).

Richard Harris, and the often emotionally abusive relationship that developed between the two men during the production of the film. (Anderson 2004a: 73-95)

This is an invaluable collection as it provides detailed information about both the personal and professional sides of Anderson's life. The collection complements the actual archive material – the notebooks, desk diaries and loose pages that Anderson kept – by grouping together the diaries' entries as well as organising them in chronological order. Sutton divides the entries into sections, each covering a key period in Anderson's career; he further introduces each section with an overview of the salient projects and personal events that characterise any given period. Sutton does not include all available diaries' entries but instead, provides a summary for the missing time lapses.

Malcolm McDowell wrote the preface to Sutton's collection. This is a deeply felt overview of Anderson's career that includes insights into their life-long friendship and many collaborative projects. The tone anticipates the format adopted for the documentary *Never Apologize*, released in 2007, in which McDowell recreates the dynamic that informed his relationship with the film director: the documentary revolves around McDowell's stage performance at the 2004 Edinburgh International Film Festival during which he played out exchanges with Anderson that occurred at key moments in his own career. His preface to Sutton's collection similarly expresses the different facets of their relationship: father to son, teacher to student, platonic love and life-long friendship. (McDowell 2004: 9-11)

As a consequence the literal dialogue that preceded and informed the writing of these books becomes just as relevant as the amount of background material compiled.

Ryan's 2004 own edited compilation of Anderson's writings constitutes the most recent example of the latter's mediation between the editor and the raw material.

Although published after Anderson's death, *Never Apologise: The Collected Writings, Lindsay Anderson*, still testifies to the existence of a high degree of interaction between the British director and any material published about his work. Ryan's collection groups together key writings produced by Anderson from his days as the editor of *Sequence* up until the 1990s reviews that he would submit regularly to British daily newspapers. These writings already had, at the time of publication, an archival status as Anderson had passed away 10 years prior. The notion that the material is dated in some way is belied by the presence of a running commentary that links together Anderson's past essays and film reviews throughout the book. This so-called 'commentary' is the transcription of notes and conversations that Ryan shared with Anderson during the conception of the book. The significance of this commentary, arbitrarily dated 1994 throughout, comes across in the "Editor's Note" that opens the collection. (Ryan 2004: ix-x) Ryan accounts for the origin of the running commentary: it soon transpires that this is the result of a compromise. In view of Anderson's reluctance to write his memoirs, Ryan took up David Thompson's suggestion of taping their conversations. David Thompson produced art documentaries for the BBC which, as Ryan indicates, Anderson "much admired" (Ryan 2004: ix). He also admits that he had hoped for Anderson to edit these recordings thereby ensuring that the director would remain the narrator of his own story. (ibid.: x)

The suggestion that Ryan's questions and prompts impacted to some extent on the authenticity and significance of the material transcribed, confirms the existence of a

trend also adopted by Anderson's other biographers: producing a critical overview of the director's work implies initiating a dialogue that vouches for the integrity of that same process.

Gavin Lambert's *Mainly about Lindsay Anderson: A Memoir* (2000) and David Sherwin's *Going Mad in Hollywood, and Life with Lindsay Anderson* (1997) also testify to the presence of Anderson's imprint on critical surveys of his work, but in a slightly different way. For obvious reasons, both sets of recollections privilege the voice of their authors: as agents of their own narratives, they introduce elements of Anderson's personal biography when these interact with their own. The authors' close relationships with Anderson, however, give their reminiscences a value that goes beyond that of a mere testimony: they confirm the existence of an on-going dialogue between Anderson and his close friends and collaborators that all shaped the director's projects in the course of his life and is now also shaping his work's legacy.

I will develop one aspect that this dialogue assumed in a subsequent section – dealing with Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration on *If....* (1968) – which brings out the element of emotional dependency that pervades so many instances of the director's personal and professional interactions. Lambert's memoirs verbalise another, less obvious side of this dialogue: the two men's lifelong friendship awarded Lambert a deep insight into the British director's personal and professional aspirations.² The section on *This Sporting Life* (1963) to which I will return in a subsequent chapter,

² Lambert's Memoir provides a detailed account of their schooldays at Cheltenham College, their shared love of the cinema, their filmmaking projects while Anderson was at Oxford – which included an adaptation of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* and setting up their own production company called Parthenon – their active involvement in film criticism, first for the university journal *Sequence* – until 1951 for Lambert and 1952 for Anderson at which point the publication was discontinued – and then *Sight and Sound*. Lambert became the director of publication for the BFI film journal and then its editor until 1956. Anderson also contributed many articles to the journal, including *Stand up! Stand Up!* in 1956. Lambert's book also relates the final days of Anderson's life preceding his sudden death on September 3rd, 1994 while he was on holiday in France with his friend Lois Sutcliffe.

comprises first and second-hand accounts of the circumstances that surrounded the making of the film. Lambert replicates the dual pattern when it comes to relating Anderson's experience of directing the film: he includes excerpts from Anderson's then unpublished diaries alongside transcribed conversations he initiated with the director's friends and colleagues while he was composing the book. (2000: 94-5) The technique places Anderson's diary entries in the context in which they originated. It adds another dimension also, as the commentary is provided by the people – here Karel Reisz – who interacted with Anderson at the time the diary entries were being composed. In that respect, it provides the researcher with a sense of perspective that the reading of the Archive diaries or the published ones alone makes harder to achieve.

On a more personal level, Lambert's acceptance of his own sexuality contrasted strongly with Anderson's: his memoir presents the realisation and integration of his homosexuality into his life as a natural process that often evolves in parallel with his professional aspirations – such as his relationship with the American director Nicholas Ray exemplifies. Lambert conveys Anderson's conflicted feelings towards his homosexual attachments with a great concern for accuracy – both in terms of recalling the actual events and accounting for his friend's mindset. (Lambert 2000: 10-11; 16; 20)

This proves again of great value, as the published *Diaries* do not leave enough room to appreciate the scope of Anderson's inner struggle. Lambert's understanding of the social context of the time that still outlawed overt homosexual relationships along with his accepting and intuitive knowledge of Anderson's personality, act as a welcome counterpart to the raw, uninhibited sexual content of the archive diaries. It

can prove difficult for the researcher to decide how to approach and use this material: the most obvious course is to analyse the intimate content in connection with the form in which it is expressed: the diary becomes a confidante to which Anderson can externalise thoughts and feelings while he himself is still only processing their implications both personally and socially.³

The deep emotional bond that linked Anderson and Lambert and the way in which it informs the memoir's narrative helps make tangible the strong connection that existed between Anderson and his biographers. Sherwin's own reminiscences externalise it by playing out the periods of personal and professional crises that affected his life and that Anderson witnessed first hand. (Sherwin 1998)

As the scriptwriter of Anderson's trilogy – *If....* (1968), *O Lucky Man!* (1973) and *Britannia Hospital* (1982) – Sherwin also contributes his own insight into the work of the director. *Going Mad In Hollywood* accounts for the production of all three films from Sherwin's point of view. In the case of both *If....* and *O Lucky Man!*, this lends my research into these films the added benefit of unravelling the production process from a vantage point that does not necessarily place Anderson in a central position. Sherwin and a school friend, John Howlett, had produced the first draft of *If....*, based on their memories from their days at Tonbridge, an English public school in Kent. Similarly, the starting point for *O Lucky Man!* was Malcolm McDowell's experience of working in a coffee factory before his acting career materialised. The initial draft was the product of the collaboration between McDowell and Sherwin who developed a script while promoting *If....* in New York. (Anderson 2004a: 246; Sherwin 1973:

³ See Lambert (2000: 12) for instance: "[The headmaster at Cheltenham] encouraged us to associate 'these things' with guilt and secrecy when he engaged a school doctor who gave classes in sex education ... the good doctor issued all the bad old warnings. Masturbation led to disease and madness, boys who 'played with each other' committed a crime against God and nature. Brought up on this kind of reality, how could Lindsay and I not prefer the illusion of movies ...?"

11-7) This proves of utmost relevance, as the mechanisms underpinning the collaborative side of the filmmaking process, with an emphasis on Anderson's own vision of that process, are central to the thesis.

The Archive in context

The Archive is large: over 10, 000 items were catalogued over a period of three years by Kathryn Hannan, the archivist and research assistant working on the *Lindsay Anderson: Cinema Authorship Project* (2007-2010). The cataloguing has involved a process of cross-referencing names, film titles, professional affiliations, on-going projects, etc..., which helps the researcher identify recurring patterns. One struck me as particularly useful both thematically and structurally: the degree of professional despondency and resentment towards the British national film industry which Anderson expressed in his correspondence starting in the 1970s and throughout the 1980s. I will refer to specific letters throughout the thesis; chiefly amongst these features the correspondence between Anderson and the French film critic and historian, Louis Marcorelles.

This feature draws attention to the question of the contextualisation of the material in the Archive: a number of key texts dealing with British cinema, give a distinctive picture of the industry as one fraught with challenges – whether at the industrial and economic level or in terms of its critical and commercial appreciation. Their presentation of the history of British film in the period during which Anderson was working, has provided me with a frame of reference for the British director's own negotiation of his film aesthetic and national identity.

The selection of these titles reflects two considerations: first, they comment directly on Anderson's work – whether as a critic or film director; second, their authors are recurrent names within the contemporary field of British film studies, and have exerted a measurable impact on the discourse about the British film industry. I will not give a comprehensive list of all the titles that these authors published, or mention all the scholars who have researched the period in question. Rather, I will identify key features underpinning the prevailing discourse on British cinema.

John Hill published two books which address two recurrent features in the Archive: the issue of realism and the question of a distinctive film aesthetic for British cinema. The books in question are *Sex, Class and Realism: British Cinema 1956-1963*, (1986) and *British Cinema in the 1980s*, (1999). Both look at historically determined periods of British cinema: firstly, the late fifties and early sixties, and secondly, the decade during which Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government was in power – the eighties.

Sex, Class and Realism combines two aspects: first, it studies the films in relation to the context of significant social and cultural change in which they were made – that is, a time of increased access to leisure and disposable income for the working class and relative political and economic consensus, also referred to as Butskellism, from the names of the previous Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Gaitskell, and his current Conservative counterpart, Rab Butler. (Hill 1986: 5-6) Many contemporary critics perceived the new social climate as fertile ground for a celebration of mass consumerism to the detriment of class struggle and the fight against economic inequalities. (ibid.: 9-10)

Second, it interrogates the concept of realism such as it operates within these films: the objective is to investigate the ways in which the concept is articulated – from the point of view of the motifs and style it generates, as well as its ability to address and challenge social and cultural norms. In his chapter “Narrative and Realism” for instance, Hill relates the convention of narrative closure – associated mostly with mainstream cinema – to the structuring role of realism within the film narrative. The issue of how realistic a film is becomes linked with its presentation of the events and the motivations that underpin the protagonists’ psychology, which are traditionally regarded as instrumental in driving the story forward. (ibid.: 57-8) By pointing to the culturally informed connection between what pertains to the film’s structure and the audience’s expectations, Hill allows for a deeper consideration of the Social Realist films’ aesthetic. He does so, however, by re-affirming the necessity of inscribing the film within the context in which it was produced and received. (ibid.: 64-5) This firmly anchors the Social Realist film and, by implication, the New Wave films made between 1959 and 1963, within a sociological perspective.

This is worth noting as much of the focus of that chapter was on the aesthetic features of the films, and the way in which they undermine the conventional relation between narrative and narration. (ibid.: 64) Hill for instance, perceives a tension that arises from the British New Wave films’ relation to the concept of motivation behind the use of narrative elements. To him, these films challenge the principle of “anonymous enunciation”. (ibid.) What he appears to value, however, is the ideological dimension attached to the films’ renegotiation of form and content. (ibid.: 64-5) This places the study of their aesthetic within a perspective that finds many echoes in the Archive: the question of the film’s relation with and ability to challenge the social and political context from which they originate.

Hill's study of *O Dreamland* (1953) and *Every Day Except Christmas* (1957) relies on the principle of Anderson's authorial intervention into the narration of his shorts, in order to comment on the film director's ideological motive as well as the context in which these shorts were made. (ibid.: 151-2) As a result, there arises a degree of uncertainty about their aesthetic value: the evidence of narrative excess, such as Hill defines it, is only addressed insofar as it is able to support the reading of the Free Cinema's directors' intent of standing up against the cultural vacuum created by mass consumerism and entertainment.

Similarly, the aesthetic significance of *This Sporting Life* becomes subordinated to the question of the point of view in the film. (ibid.: 133-6) Parallels with the French New Wave's fusion of the objective and the subjective – Hill here quotes Terry Lovell (ibid.: 134) – are helpful as they confirm an implicit consensus of approach to the films made during this period. This also brings out the extent to which the British New Wave struggles to find a discourse capable – or willing – to identify and articulate its aesthetic. The references to the background in documentary filmmaking with the Free Cinema initiative, confirm that films such as *This Sporting Life*, can be appraised primarily through their contextualisation: one that involves a debt to the Documentary Movement of John Grierson, as well as an incomplete renegotiation of filmic techniques. The question of subjectivity, that is, the extent to which the New Wave films grant their working class protagonists a distinctive voice, captures the tension at hand (ibid.: 134-6): on the one hand, there is evidence of a move away from the voice-over technique favoured in the documentary approach, thereby stretching further the field of narrational possibilities. On the other, the directorial play with voices – from the director's to the protagonists' own – undermines any claim these films could make of upsetting traditional modes of representation. Quoting from

Walter Benjamin, Hill argues that these films move into pure aestheticism, thereby emptying the images from their actual meaning. (ibid.: 135-6)

As a result, Hill betrays some ambiguity towards the films' treatment of the individual's relationship with the working class community that these films explore at a thematic level. He refers, for instance, to the elusive portrayal of the workplace which these films favour. (ibid.: 138) He then makes the suggestion that such an approach is innovative as it implicitly acknowledges the incompatibility between realism as a narrative tool and mainstream cinema. (ibid.: 139) However, Hill still sees the narrative focus on the protagonists' respective journey – what he calls the “individuality of actions” – as limiting the scope of the aesthetic novelty. (ibid.: 140)

Hill does not refer much to *This Sporting Life* to make the point about the structuring role which the protagonists' individuality assumes within these films' treatment of realistic topics. It seems that Anderson's portrayal of a former miner turned professional rugby player does not fit either of the frameworks of reference privileged by the book: the challenge to the definition of what is real in mainstream cinema, and the “structure of feeling” – term coined by Alan Lovell in his study of Free Cinema and quoted by Hill. (ibid.: 151) The uneasy categorisation of *This Sporting Life* will help me frame my discussion of the film in relation to Anderson's model of authorship and his need for strong and creative collaborative working patterns during the production stage. It will also inform the notion of a critical impasse which I develop in relation to Anderson's aesthetic in the Free Cinema series.

In his *British Cinema in the 1980s*, Hill presents his aim as one of “cultural politics”.

To quote:

[I]t is a book ... about the ways in which the practice of filmmaking in the 1980s both grew out of, and responded to, the social, economic, and cultural circumstances characteristic of the period ... the primary aim is to examine how (some of) the meanings ‘spoken’ by films during this period connected to broader patterns of social and cultural life”. (Hill 1999: xi)

His continued focus on the relation between the content of the films and the context of their production and reception, confirms a reading pattern that I also see as underpinning his analysis of the New Wave films. Their aesthetic novelty is to an extent absorbed within the social context of the time. In the case of *Britannia Hospital* (1982) to which Hill devotes a section of his book (Hill 1999: 137-41), this involves an assimilation of plot and filming style into the function of social commentary: characters are seen as types and the episodic structure gives each depicted event the value of “metaphors for the state of Britain”. (ibid.: 138)

As I will develop in a subsequent chapter, Hill provides a view of the film that matches the majority of reviews published at the time: what has drawn my attention is the impact which the social fabric exerts on his analysis. It is not so much that Anderson should choose to depict the state of British society at the time which is interesting. Rather, it is the nature of the critical appraisal that underlies Anderson’s verdict, which confirms the still prevailing interconnection between the aesthetic and the social in the study of British film.

Hill further contrasts Anderson’s depiction of the community spirit in *Every Day Except Christmas* with the self-serving behaviour of *Britannia Hospital*’s protagonists. (ibid.: 138) The reference to Free Cinema recalls his contextualisation of the British New Wave films in *Sex Class and Realism*. Here, the mention of

community extends beyond a consideration of the working class's attitude to changing times and mass consumerism. Instead, it represents the nation as a whole: citing Arthur Lowe's declamation from Shakespeare's *Richard II*, Hill contends that the film is in keeping with "a tradition of representing 'Englishness' [as well as] establishes [its] key themes of the disintegration of the national community and the 'death' of traditional English virtues". (ibid.)

The shift from using Free Cinema – and *Every Day* in particular – as a representation of the film directors' attitudes to the British working class to a wider consideration of the national community, brings out the fluid nature of Hill's discourse about film and more particularly, the interchangeable dimension which the notions of society, culture and nation take in relation to the definition of film aesthetic. What is more, nation is an unstable notion as it stands for both English and British. (ibid.) Arguably, all film histories or critical reviews will include a combination of these notions; however, in the case of British cinema, they become defining, or indeed problematic, features of film aesthetic.

Charles Barr's *Ealing Studios* (1977) and his edited collection of essays, *All Our Yesterdays: 90 Years of British Cinema*, (1986), have become works of reference in British film studies. They highlight the extent to which the nation is an aesthetic marker in the study of British film. In the case of *Ealing Studios*, the idea of nation that Britain has of itself, and the central place that Englishness occupies in its definition, come to the fore.

The first chapter is entitled "Projecting Britain" and links together Sir Michael Balcon's executive and creative decisions at the studio with the concept of the national. It does so by stressing Balcon's innate ability to connect film production – in

terms of their style and content – with the mood and preoccupations of the nation. The inscription that Balcon had put on a plaque when the studio was sold in 1955 – referring to films that projected “Britain and the British character” (Barr 1977/1993: 7) – makes explicit the studio’s belief in a direct connection between the political, social and cultural fabric of the country and the films they produced.

Furthermore, there is the suggestion that the films made at Ealing imply the assimilation of England and the English with the nation as a whole. Barr allows for a certain ambiguity towards his presentation of Ealing’s production as the direct expression of an existing national consensus. To Pam Cook in her *Fashioning the Nation: Costume and Identity in British Cinema*, (1996), the meaning is clear: Barr proclaims Ealing as a repository for a stable sense of Britishness, which would account for the impact that his publication has exerted on subsequent British cinema studies.

The terms “England”, “English Tradition” are used in reference to the Dickensian motifs in Ealing comedies. The reference to the 1939 Ealing film, *Cheer Boys Cheer*, explicitly presents the brewery – Greenleaf – as a metaphor for Ealing, and in turn, for England as a whole (ibid.: 6) Barr here quotes Monja Danischewsky’s first impression of Ealing when he was appointed head of publicity in 1938. His description of the studio matched the presentation of the brewery in the film. Barr further engages with Balcon’s notion that the films produced at Ealing reflected the nation’s character by referring to Raymond Durgnat’s *A Mirror for England: British Movies from Austerity to Affluence* (1970/2011). The book openly assimilates England with Britain in terms of cinematic output – one chapter for instance, is entitled “Our Glorious Heritage” (1970/2011: 131-61) – and is regarded as a work of significance on British film. The

film historian Kevin Gough-Yates wrote the foreword to the 2011 reprint in which he claims that “there has been no skirting round *A Mirror for England* since its first appearance”. (2011: vii) He also unquestioningly links the wording of the title with the author’s goal of “rescu[ing] the concept of British cinema from the contempt of auteur critics who slavishly followed *Cahiers du Cinéma*”. (ibid.: viii)

Gough-Yates also mentions Hill’s *Sex, Class and Realism* and his rejection of the ‘reflection’ model which Durnat would have adopted as a reading procedure. (ibid.: vii) The concept of reflection implies that films are a mirror-image of the society they portray onscreen. Similarly, Barr likens both Balcon and Durnat in their belief that film is capable of projecting an image of the nation back to itself, in an unmediated way. (Barr 1977/1993: 7-8) What is striking is the use of the concept of the national which here helps facilitate the discussion of the aesthetic dimension of the selected film or films. In the case of Barr’s study of the Ealing brand, the national is the expression of a consensus about the way Britain sees itself and that has successfully been put into dramatic form. (ibid.: 8) For Durnat, as reported by Gough-Yates, this is almost the expression of a patriotic stirring – one which every Briton is capable of. As quoted in the foreword:

Our criterion has to be rather arbitrary and subjective; is it about Britain, about British attitudes, or if not, does it feel British? (Durnat in Gough-Yates, 2011: viii)

The relation between the national and the aesthetic finds its most overt manifestation in the central role which the Documentary Movement plays— especially, through the references to John Grierson and Humphrey Jennings. Durnat, for instance, uses both to largely disparage the Free Cinema programmes – either comparing Grierson’s relentless self-promoting campaigns to Anderson and his colleagues’ own publicity

stunt, or to stress the lack of professionalism exhibited by Free Cinema films.

(Durgnat 1970/2011: 154) He also mentions Jennings as a way of validating the ‘sensitive’ treatment of “minority groups with problems of communication”, such as *Thursday’s Children* (1954) exemplifies. (ibid.: 158)

In an earlier version of the chapter, published as “‘Projecting Britain and the British Character: Ealing Studios’, Part I”, in *Screen*, Barr makes visible the connection between a man’s personality, an institution – whether the Documentary Movement with Grierson, Ealing with Balcon, or the *BBC* with Reith – and the shaping of an aesthetic born out of their own image of the nation. (1974: 87) Within the context of my thesis, this will assist me in bringing out the issue of the national and transnational in relation to the critical discourse about British film. Barr, using Richard Roud’s 1980 *Cinema: A Critical Dictionary* as an example, speaks of ‘dichotomy’ to characterise the discourse underpinning these works: there is a manifest tendency to exclude British film from the realm of the aesthetically worthy. (Barr 1986: 2-3) From an international point of view, a similarly dismissive attitude can be found in film criticism and attributed to a belief in an inferior capacity for British filmmakers to handle the possibilities of the medium. (ibid.: 24)

I mentioned above the name of Jean Quéval, an early contributor to *Cahiers*, whose name is featured in the Archive and to whom I will return later. He devoted a large part of his overview of British cinema in 1952 to the Festival of Britain. (1952: 33-52) His analysis brings out another aspect Barr mentions in relation to the dismissal of British film; that is, its perceived insularity. (Barr 1986: 3) Quéval notes the impact that the documentary, both as a genre and an institution, has had on the industry. He

further postulates that the closing of the Crown Film Unit that same year, will also affect the industry negatively. (Quéval 1952: 38)

In that same article Quéval also reviews a number of short films that premiered at the festival. Amongst these features Jennings's *Family Portrait* (1950) which the British documentary filmmaker made shortly before his untimely death. (ibid.: 36) Quéval gives a highly contrasted verdict: on the one hand, he argues that his own knowledge of British documentary tradition contributed to his appreciation of the work. To him, this portrait of 1950 Britain through the nation's achievements in the areas of science, politics and culture, is in keeping with the aesthetic vision that made Jennings's War documentaries so distinctive. However, he also believes that its undeniable aesthetic qualities remain alien to a non-British audience. He gives the example of a screening he attended in which the French and German spectators did not respond to the documentary. (ibid.) The implication is that a set of pre-determined codes underpin the aesthetic specificity of the work – here, the notion of national consensus, that is, the sense of belonging to the British community, which would not translate to other audiences.

Cook also addresses what she sees as a defensive stance in this concern with Britishness and national consensus. (ibid.: 13) The tension she identifies at the heart of projects that establish a correlation between the nation – its aspirations and mood – and the type of films produced, both in terms of storyline and style, helps frame a core aspect of my own research. Anderson made films that openly confronted topical issues in British society but overall, received little critical or commercial recognition – especially in his own country. In that same section Cook also mentions Barr's

Introduction to *All Our Yesterdays* in which he discusses the critical contempt or ignorance with which British films have overall been met. (Barr 1986: 1-14)

That Introduction connects three strands together: the existence of a well-established tradition in film criticism in Britain, its tendency to rate poorly its own national cinema, and the defining role which the Documentary Movement has played in shaping the resulting discourse. (ibid.: 3-11) Barr mentions a number of titles dealing with the history of world and British cinema that were published shortly before *All Our Yesterdays* and which in their majority, are dismissive of the national output. (ibid.: 1-3) Letters which Anderson wrote at the time, confirm that he had also read those titles: he was extremely critical of these works, arguing that they were incomplete and often inaccurate accounts of the structure of the British film industry and the directors and movements that had shaped it.

Barr also gives a chronological and critical overview of the main film journals in Britain, including *Sequence*, which helps contextualise Anderson's life-long commitment to film criticism. (ibid.: 4-7) This helps confirm two factors of relevance to my research: first, Anderson's writings are in keeping with a long-standing tradition in British film criticism that consists of challenging, if not openly disparaging, contemporaneous British films and any attempt on the part of the industry to set up or claim a distinctive national cinema. Second, Anderson also demonstrates a keen awareness of the specificity of the industry setup and of the consequences that overlooking its structure has had on much film reviewing and criticism.

In 1983 Andrew Higson wrote a review of two recent publications on British cinema. His approach prefigures his analysis of British realism published in Barr's edited

collection, which as the latter notes, exposes the label ‘British realism’ as a critical construction. (Barr 1986: 15) Higson provides a framework for his review that addresses the critical impasse or paradox, which as Barr suggests, British cinema finds itself in. (ibid.: 9; 15)

Drawing on Christian Metz’s definition of the institution of cinema as a three-tier machine, Higson argues that British film criticism is one of the constitutive parts of the national cinema. In this context, the question of the realist legacy and the shaping of national consensus become institutional factors that preside over the production of British cinema – as opposed to a purely sociological or aesthetic approach to the film texts. Higson gives the example of *Gainsborough Melodrama*, and the way in which its editors – Sue Aspinall and Robert Murphy – “theorise the institution of cinema” by foregrounding the active role which film criticism plays in “determining the image which [these] melodramas have in British cinema history”. (Higson 1983: 82)

His reading of Aspinall and Murphy’s approach highlights the discrepancy between the discourse on British cinema and its social reality. In keeping with his interest in the industrial structure of British cinema, Murphy, for instance, shows that Gainsborough melodramas were very popular in the 1940s, and benefited - in terms of production and distribution – from the links between the studio and the Rank organisation. (ibid.) This directly contradicts the critical discourse appraising these films which up to that point, had largely confined them to the margins of what is representative of the national film output.

In *Waving the Flag*, Higson suggests a fourfold definition for the concept of the national as it relates to a film industry. (Higson 1995: 4-6) Within the context of my thesis, I find useful his application of the Metzian framework to the definition of a

national cinema. In a way that echoes his review of the books I mentioned above, he systematises all aspects linked with film production, distribution, exhibition as well as consumption and cultural policies to shape those same consumption patterns.

Arguably, the documentary tradition – starting with Grierson’s Documentary Movement and culminating with its leading practitioners working for the Crown Film Unit during World War II – fits each of the four categories that underpin Higson’s definition of a national cinema. Barr in *All Our Yesterdays* quotes Grierson who in 1939, presented a view of the documentary movement that fits the definition:

The documentary film ... was an essentially British development. Its characteristic was the idea of social use ... If it came to develop in England there were good reasons for it ... It permitted the national talent for understatement to operate in a medium not given to understatement. (Grierson in Barr 1986: 10)

Higson’s essay on the contribution which the documentary movement made to British film, and featuring in Barr’s edited collection, connects this definition of the documentary with the notion of a critical construct. More specifically, he shows how the convergence of the historical and social context along with the format of the documentary generated a specific kind of critical response: one that made realism an integral part of the critical discourse that celebrates the national consensus visible in film. (Higson 1986: 72; 74)

In these circumstances, it is probably no coincidence that, in *Waving the Flag*, Higson leads on to his definition of national cinema by first referring to Durgnat’s *A Mirror for England* – specifically, his use of Britishness as a criterion of value when reading films. To Higson, exposing the critical construct that informs the definition of British film becomes a matter of ‘negotiations’: it is a concept that can be appropriated to fit the pre-determined needs of institutional representatives – whether economic, political

or cultural. (Higson 1995: 4) The reference to Durnat and his reflectionist model, becomes the expression of an attempt to tackle the legacy of British film criticism itself which – within the context of my thesis – draws attention to Anderson's own active involvement in film criticism.

More recent work on British cinema – published in Britain – acknowledges Anderson's contribution to the national industry. In the latest edition of *The British Cinema Book*, edited by Robert Murphy in 2009, Peter Hutchings added an analysis of *This Sporting Life* to his essay on realism and the British New Wave. (306) In his case study, he highlights the singularity of Anderson's film, both at the narrative and stylistic levels. His approach is not unique: B.F. Taylor in *The British New Wave: A Certain Tendency?*, (2006), relies similarly on the film's treatment of space and its relation to the characters' inner motivations to illustrate its originality. What is more, Hutchings also quotes from Anderson and Sussex's 1970 study of the director that at the time, already stressed the ways in which David Storey and his novel did not fit the more conventional working class drama. (Hutchings 2009: 306) What is worth noting, however, is the extent to which his inclusion of *This Sporting Life* as a case study for his essay, betrays a persistent uneasiness with the concept of social realism as it relates to British film. More specifically, Hutchings's claim that the British New Wave cycle of films provides an example of an active deconstruction of cinematic realism, also foregrounds the evolution of the British critical discourse on the national output and its concern with the issue of Britishness.

That same 2009 collection features an essay by Alan Lovell entitled "*The British Cinema: The Known Cinema?*". (5-12) This is of course, a deliberate nod to his 1972 article, "*The Unknown Cinema of Britain*", in which he deplored the lack of a

systematic study of the genres, movements and directors of British national cinema. This more recent analysis of British film focuses on the issue of realism and its historical development on-screen. (ibid.: 5) Lovell also refers to Anderson's writings in the mid-1950s – "Get Out and Push!" (1957), especially – his involvement in the Free Cinema programmes and his contribution to the New Wave of the late 1950s – early 1960s with *This Sporting Life*. (ibid.: 6) Lovell gives obvious prominence to Anderson's work – both as a critic and film director – which he had also done in his 1972 essay. What Anderson represents, which he also did in the earlier essay, is the possibility of identifying a point in the history of British film when the kind of films produced draw attention to the discourse that appraises them. It is in this sense that Lovell integrates the British director's call for a more committed filmmaking and criticism.

As the subsequent overview of the New Wave films shows, the manifestation of this convergence is both necessary and problematic in its relation to the critical discourse on British film. Problematic as not easy to pinpoint: Lovell, like Hutchings (2009) or B.F. Taylor (2006), stresses the existence of a tension underlying the film directors' depiction of working class life. (ibid.) The tension is a product of a latent contradiction: on the one hand, there is a push to label these films as progressive; on the other, as aesthetically inferior to other contemporary New Waves, which involves an ultimately failed challenge to prevailing modes of representation and the British social order. B.F. Taylor allows both to inform the structure of his study of the British New Wave: he integrates the attack by the *Movie* journal, and more specifically by V.F. Perkins, on the value of these films into his own extensive aesthetic discourse that seeks to bring out their distinctive style.

The underlying tension comes across in the recent use of key works on the films of that era and the issue of national cinema. That same tension remains largely latent as the number of scholars involved is limited. As Hutchings's essay and B.F. Taylor's own study, for instance, show, John Hill and Andrew Higson are the references in terms of the New Wave's aesthetic and its use of space and landscape as a privileged site to deconstruct cinematic realism. Both names are also closely associated with questions of national identity and cinema. (Higson 1989; 1995; 2000; Hill 1986; 1992; 2010) However, as Higson's often quoted essay, "Space, Place, Spectacle: Landscape and Townscape in the 'Kitchen Sink' Film", illustrates, selecting *This Sporting Life* as a key example of social realism in British film is not an obvious choice. (1996: 134) Higson indicates he aims to apply the term 'realism' with a view to bringing out its use and connotations in British film discourse, as well as exploring the tension between the "drabness of the settings ... and their 'poetic' quality". (ibid) His selection of Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960) as a main case study, reinforces the view of a film movement that never fully negotiated the transition from the sociological concern of the Documentary Movement to the integration of realism within a distinctively new aesthetic approach. In that sense, the quote from Reisz himself with which Colin Gardner chose to open his chapter on that same film, is revealing: "There's nothing more elegant than beautifully shot poverty". (Reisz in Gardner, 2006: 99)

Within the context of his critical study of Reisz's career, Gardner locates the origins of the British New Wave – that he also categorises under the label of 'Kitchen Sink' – in the Free Cinema initiative. (ibid.: 92-3) To him, the Free Cinema's ultimate failure to upset the structure of the British film industry and effect social change, stems from a "lack of clear and practical definition", which likened their initiative to

other contemporary artistic and intellectual movements, such as the French New Wave, The Angry Young Men and the American Beat Generation. (ibid.) The pervasiveness of the Documentary Movement in the book – both as an aesthetic referent and illustration of the impact that Grierson and his fellow directors had on the industry – confirms the permanence of the connection between realism, aesthetic and national identity in British film.

Sarah Street represents one of the other key references in the field of British film studies today. Her latest edition of *British National Cinema* (2009), opens on a quote from Hill's 1992 essay dealing with questions of national cinema. The selected quote highlights the dilemma that underlies the concept of a national cinema as one that also needs to openly question the terms of its definition. (Hill in Street 2009: 1) To Street, the critical debate has largely benefited from the wider range of representations of the British community available on the screen. (ibid.: 2) The resulting idea of an active exchange is in keeping with a generalised move towards acknowledging the heterogeneity underlying the concept of British national cinema. (Higson 1995; 2000; Hill: 1992; 2010; Street: 2009) However, the tendency of substituting a fluid definition of what constitutes Britishness – to include factors such as ethnic and religious origins as well as geography and trans-nationality with the impact of the Northern-Irish, Scottish and Welsh respective models of devolution – for the defining role played by realism and the Documentary Movement, complicates rather than answers the main dilemma underlying that same definition: has the critical shift from the concept of reflection to that of representation enabled a more accurate definition of the British identity such as it operates in film to emerge? Or, rather, has the deconstruction of the codes underpinning the representation of British identity on-screen, led to the dismissal of the central role that realism plays in the definition of

British film aesthetic? Within the context of my thesis, Street's comprehensive review of the film genres that have shaped the history of British cinema will help frame Anderson's reviews of individual British directors and films. In addition, I find helpful her shift of emphasis from the concept of national cinema to production as a reading strategy for British film output. (Street 2009: 2-3) This provides a frame of reference for Anderson's own unstable relation with his national film industry.

Murphy's *Sixties British Cinema*, (1992) relates the critical discourse that appraised the British film production of the decade to the structure of the national industry itself. In the case of Anderson's own involvement in the British New Wave film cycle, this brings out an interesting feature: Murphy argues that *This Sporting Life*'s failure at the Box Office and the subsequent rejection of the social realist genre by the industry, has impacted on the critical discourse reviewing the films: more specifically, there is a tendency to overlook the actual aesthetic diversity these films exhibited as well as ignore the commercial success with which the more naturalistic ones met. (Murphy 1992: 22-3; 26-8) It is worth noting that Murphy's name, and this study of 1960s British films in particular, often comes back as a counterpoint to a reading placing these films mostly within a cultural and intertextual framework – such as Hill's deconstruction of cinematic realism. (Street 2009: 94)

It is useful to stress the diversity of representations that British identity takes on the screen, as well as the increasingly trans-national nature of film production and exhibition setups within the film industry (Street 2009: 3-5) Murphy and Street also take into account the impact which British academic discourse has exerted on literature about the industry's history to the extent that it has also influenced popular perception of the national output. (Murphy 2009: 1-2; Street 2009: 242-3) It is

however noticeable that the often contradictory connotations which the concept of realism has borne in relation to the structure of the British film industry and aesthetic are not more fully explored. As Murphy's work has shown for instance, both the British industry and the public have supported or rejected in equal measures films with a realistic topic or treatment. (Murphy 1983; 1992) Street in her introduction, mentions Elsaesser's statement that defines British cinema as predicated upon a "polarization" – the 'official' and 'unofficial' cinema. (Street 2009: 3) Within the context of my own thesis, it appears that Anderson's own film output appears to be the product of a similar tension. He produced films within the framework of the industry but also as an independent filmmaker. He also benefited from the American interest and investment in British film projects in the 1960s. (Murphy 1992; Walker 1974) However, as the entry to the Social-problem films and Kitchen Sink dramas chapter in Street's *British National Cinema* (2009: 90-4) or Hutchings's case study on *This Sporting Life* in Murphy's anthology show (Hutchings 2009: 306), the analysis of his film aesthetic and the nature of his relation to the national film industry have not been fully apprehended.

Chapter 2:

Anderson's Authorship

The following chapter aims to uncover Anderson's distinctive approach to directorial authorship. His writings for *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound*, in the late 1940s and 1950s, will provide the background to understanding the relevance of the concept to his work as a film director.

It will become apparent that the specificity of his critical discourse lies in the active role that he lends the film critic. To Anderson, film criticism does not operate in isolation from the filmmaking process. We will see that his writings insist upon the importance which true knowledge of and respect for a given director's film have; to the extent that, the critic becomes associated with the filmmaking process per se.

By contrast, the model of authorship that emerged from François Truffaut's influential article, "Une Certain Tendance du Cinéma Français" (1954), establishes the critic as a polemicist: the 'entretiens' or interviews, that characterised the editorial practice of the *Cahiers du Cinéma*' first decade, signal the critic's exclusion from the filmmaking process. (de Baecque 1991: 127-31) Whereas in Anderson's articles, the critic takes an active part, the *Cahiers*' counterpart admits his/her exteriority to that process by initiating a search for stylistic and thematic features relating to the film. Anderson's critic, however, represents the last stage of artistic creation by granting the director's work its integrity.

The following section will identify and explore the definition of authorship that arose from the figurative dialogue Anderson established between director and critic.

The *Sequence* years (1946-1952)

While at Oxford, Anderson joined the *Oxford University Film Society*, which soon afterwards granted him, Peter Ericsson and John Boud the permission to start off their own magazine. The archive holds a copy of the editorial which Anderson wrote in the mid-1980s detailing the early days of *Sequence*: we learn for instance that John Boud suggested the name and that the first *Sequence* to bear the true imprint of its editors was the second issue – featuring a still from John Ford’s *My Darling Clementine* (1946) on the cover. (Anderson 1991: LA 4/1/18)

Sequence has a well-established reputation in the history of film criticism: although it never achieved the fame of its competitor on British soil, *Sight and Sound*, or French counterpart, *Cahiers du Cinéma*, it has been and is still regarded today as one of the most influential critical publications on film. (Barr 1986; Drazin 2008)

There is evidence of an actual interaction between the French and the British film journals: this interaction involved an active exchange of critical views on film. At the time of *Sequence*’s publication – between 1946 and 1952 – *Cahiers du Cinéma* included regular reviews of editorials or articles that had appeared in the British magazine. When *Sequence* ran out of money and was forced to suspend publication, the *Cahiers* editors expressed their sadness by stressing the distinct contribution to the appreciation of film that their British counterparts had made. (*Cahiers* 1952: 66)

The archive holds a copy of that collective editorial (LA 4/1/9/17): the tone and editorial policy of *Sequence* is summarised – high standards in terms of intellectual

integrity that was reflected in the magazine's refusal to include any form of external publicity – along with an overview of the articles that featured in the last issue. The *Cahiers* editors mentioned Anderson's review of John Ford's *The Quiet Man* (1952), stressing notably the thoroughness with which the British critic had discussed the film in relation to Ford's film ethic. (ibid.) An overview of the film releases worldwide written by Gavin Lambert, is also an opportunity for the *Cahiers* editors to stress their kinship with *Sequence*'s championing of film as a distinct art form. (ibid.) Of note, Lambert often acted as the "London correspondent" for *Cahiers du Cinéma*, reporting mostly on the latest British releases. (Lambert 1952: 42-5; 1952b: 19-22)

There is also evidence that the film critics from both magazines maintained professional links after the demise of *Sequence*: Anderson contributed a critical overview of the works of Jacques Becker and John Ford, in 1953 and 1958 respectively. (Anderson 1953: *Cahiers* 28; 1958: *Cahiers* 86) André Bazin even later credited Anderson's review of Becker's *Casque d'Or* (1952) with his change of heart over the film, which he had initially disparaged.

Similarly, *Sight and Sound* published the works of a number of critics whose contributions appeared regularly in the pages of the French magazine. Louis Marcorelles, who as I said, was one of Anderson's life-long friend, features prominently. I will refer in a subsequent chapter to a critical overview of British cinema which Marcorelles wrote in 1958 and that features a detailed account of the Free Cinema programmes.

As noted in the Literature Review, Anderson was not a supporter of the French school of film criticism that emerged from the pages of *Cahiers*. One of the main criticisms he targeted at the publication, can be found in the approach that the French critics

took to the evaluation of a film director's work: to Anderson, a misguided emphasis is applied to the personality of the film director, which translates into a critical focus on the overall body of films as opposed to a careful attention to the dynamic underpinning the production of each of them. Anderson has throughout his career rejected the critics' predilection for recurring patterns of *mise-en-scène* or thematic motifs as a reading procedure to evaluate the greatness of a director's work. Reviewing *Cahiers du Cinéma* and *Positif* in *Sight and Sound* in the mid-50s, for instance:

A basic weakness in most French writing on the cinema of this kind seems to be this extraordinary unawareness of the fact that films have to be written before they can be directed; that comparatively few American directors have actually *conceived* the films they have made; that there are such people as producers, who often assign directors to subjects which do not necessarily suit them, but who at their best can exercise considerable creative influence on their pictures. (Anderson 1955: 255)

Similarly, in his "Introduction to the planned reprint of *Sequence*" in the 1990s:

We [*Sequence*'s contributors] certainly had no time for the *auteur* theory. From the start we knew that the film director was the essential artist of cinema; but we also knew that films have to be written, designed, acted, photographed, edited and given sound. We tried to look for the creative elements". (Anderson 1991: 48)

The Andersonian film ethic finds its most overt formulation in the 1956 *Sight and Sound* article, "Stand up! Stand Up!" which revolves around the concept of integrity in film criticism. Anderson first developed his view of a committed film critic in the 1947 *Sequence* article, "Angles of Approach". (189-93)

Artistic Integrity:

In his early writings about film, Anderson placed an emphasis on the concept of artistic integrity that he defined in terms of opposition to the detrimental role he

believed the British film critic too often played in the appreciation of film as an art form.⁴

In “Angles of Approach” Anderson set forth a vision for the cinematic artist whereby the true measure of artistic value lies in the artist’s ability to achieve his/her goals within the completed film.⁵ He privileged a vision for the role of the film director which promotes the idea of creative freedom and consequently calls for the film critic’s open-mindedness: he argued notably for the need on the part of the film critic to set aside prejudices or preconceived ideas as to what role the film ought to play within society:

The first duty of the artist is not to interpret, nor to propagandise, but to create. And to appreciate that a genuinely creative work of art involves the willingness to jettison our own prejudices and viewpoints, and to accept those of the artist. (1947: 193)

His call upon the critic to apply a discerning eye to the appreciation of film, contributes to creating a complementary definition of the concept of artistic integrity. An artist should aim at materialising his/her artistic vision, notwithstanding the society’s demands or expectations; similarly the critic ought to develop a set of aesthetic criteria that rest upon the highest standard of artistic accountability.

⁴ Anderson (2004b: 215): “I persist in believing that film people get the worst of it. Other critics may be wrong; but at least they rarely boast of their ignorance. Films seem to make them aggressive: they want to attack, not merely the craftsmen, but the art itself ... The cinema, it is clear, is anybody’s game”.

Anderson (1956: 221): “ There is another kind of philistinism , timorous rather than pugnacious, which shrinks from art because art presents a challenge ... Miss Lejeune, having just declared that a film is nothing but ‘bits of celluloid and wire’, ‘I am not intending to belittle the screen.’ And I do not suppose that this is the conscious intention of the other critics I have quoted, either. But this is what they are doing”.

⁵ Anderson (1947: 193): “It means allowing every film to justify itself by its own standards, not by our preconceptions”.

In that sense “Angles of Approach” provides an early template for Anderson’s aesthetic principles: these parallel his classification of films on the basis of a first-rate or second-rate system. (ibid.: 190; 193) For Anderson these are mutually exclusive categories, and as a result, critical appreciation of the cinema also precludes the assimilation of one type of film with the other:

If you *enjoy* [sic] *L’Eternel Retour*, you may enjoy also *King Kong*, but not *Black Narcissus*. If you enjoy *Black Narcissus*, you cannot enjoy *L’Eternel Retour*. (If you think you enjoyed both, you are wrong.) There is ultimately, only one angle of approach; it will cover all that is good, but it cannot be broadened to include the second-rate. ‘Prove all things: hold fast that which is good.’ ... (ibid.: 193)

The references to Jean Delannoy’s *L’Eternel Retour* (1943) and Powell and Pressburger’s *Black Narcissus* (1947), also help identify the connection between film appreciation and film creation. To Anderson, the failure to appreciate true mastery of the dramatic composition of film ultimately compromises the future of artistically challenging films which, in the absence of support for competent artists and technicians, will not be made.

As previously mentioned, he expanded on the notion of the critic’s accountability to the filmmaking process in the subsequent articles, “A Possible Solution” (1948) and “British Cinema: The Descending Spiral” (1949). In these articles, he argues that the exaggerated praise of the Post-War British film production has far-reaching consequences: it allows British directors who have become household names within the studio system, to carry on producing films with flawed scenarios and poorly handled stylistic features.

Independently of the validity of such a claim, Anderson’s categorisation of films heralds a critical practice which amounts to a political manifesto: the critic and by

extension the public at large, are expected to take a side. In other words, just as a given film reflects the degree of integrity displayed by the artist/filmmaker, the critic and the public are similarly urged to commit to the films they choose to see.

The film critic William Whitebait, writing in November 1947 for the *New Statesman and Nation*, captured the revolutionary and uncompromising spirit that pervades the pages of *Sequence*.

No compromise! On the necessity for being highbrow *Sequence* has no doubts whatever. The old class distinctions of high, middle, and low are revived, with the middle brow, of course, as the arch-enemy.
(Whitebait 1947: LA 4/1/9/1)

Roughly a decade later in 1956, Anderson contributed an article for *Sight and Sound*, “Stand up! Stand Up!” (218-32) which once more, takes as its central argument the dynamic underpinning the filmmaker-film critic relationship. Speaking of ‘an implicit standard of judgement’ in his own writings about film,⁶ Anderson offered a definition of artistic integrity that explicitly connects the artist himself/herself to the aesthetic visible in the work:

Style is important [...] and in the best art, anyway, style and commitment are inseparable. (1956: 219)

In order to clarify the nature of the link that underlies style and commitment in film, Anderson also relies on the role that in his opinion, the film critic should play in the process of defining film as an art form. Echoing the argument he developed in “Angles of Approach” in 1947, Anderson underlined the film critic’s tendency to thwart the cinema’s aspirations to be treated as an art form. Quoting from established

⁶ Anderson (1956: 218): “I am happy that Mr. Taylor should have sensed an ‘implicit standard of judgement’ in my writing on films...”

film reviewers for the British press such as C.A. Lejeune who in *The Observer* declared that “film is nothing but ‘bits of celluloid and wire’” or Kenneth Pearson, who in *The Sunday Times*, defined film as a ‘craft, capable on rare occasions, of producing a work of some significance” (1956: 221), Anderson contributed his own definition of the medium:

It is a matter of fact, not of opinion, that the cinema is an art. (ibid.: 224)

For Anderson, granting the cinema the status of an art form is tantamount to acknowledging the true challenges that underpin the filmmaking process both for the director/artist and for the film critic who appraises the finished film. This is where Anderson’s key concept of the ‘poetic’ of film comes in:

... I find this distinction between form and content somewhat naïf. It is the essence of poetry (in any medium) that the thing said cannot be critically distinguished from the way of saying it. (ibid.: 227)

In other words, just as the first rate cannot be assimilated to the second rate in the cinema, the practice of film criticism should not be predicated upon the mere study of the style that manifests itself in the film, mostly through the chosen mise-en-scène. According to Anderson, the majority of film critics regard “analytical criticism [as] unwise, abnormal – even when it exposes covert propaganda ...” (ibid.: 228)

Anderson’s call for commitment in film criticism has been perceived as a departure from the spirit of his 1947 article: Alan Lovell saw “Angles of Approach” as advocating a total aesthetic freedom for the artist, which he argued, contrasts with the

central role that the defence of liberal values takes on in “Stand up! Stand Up!”.

(1972: 153-4))⁷

Anderson’s definition of the poetic underlying the artist’s project, however, implies a display of integrity both on the part of the artist and the critic evaluating the work: the only way this can operate is when both the artist and the critic acknowledge the existence of external parameters that will shape and/or influence the artist’s work – both in terms of production and reception.

Artistic integrity and commitment as active exchange:

In the summer of 1948, Anderson reviewed a book about the making of a feature film for *Sequence 4*: he argues that John W. Collier’s account of the production of *It Always Rains on Sunday* (1947), ultimately fails to uncover the dynamic that informed the making of the film. (1948b: LA 4/1 – 4: 44-5) Anderson stresses the relevance that the study of the interaction between each phase of the filmmaking process bears. Amongst the range of examples he gives of such interactions, he evokes the nature of the bond between the film director and his subject that, in the book, needs further investigating, and the influence that censorship exerted over the final form of the film.

It Always Rains on Sunday is an Ealing film, directed by Robert Hamer: Anderson mentioned him in his 1949 overview of the Ealing Studios’ output, “The Studio That Begg to Differ”. Hamer is cited as an example of the studios’ practice of “moving” their staff up the filmmaking chain of command. Hamer, along with Charles Crichton,

⁷ Anderson (1956: 231): “Everyone believes in social and artistic liberty, even if we differ about the means of achieving them ... The fact that it is almost impossible to express these beliefs except in terms of platitude does not in itself discredit them ... But this only means that belief has to be rescued, not that it must be abandoned”.

and Charles Frend went from “the cutting rooms” to taking on directing roles.

(Anderson 1949: 350)

In his *A Film in the Making* (1947), Collier brings out the collaborative but also lonely dimension that underpins film directorship: he mentions Dickinson’s “dictum that when a film director commences shooting, he enter a long, dark tunnel down which he battles his way week after week”. (1947: 55) Collier also notes that Hamer was involved in the different stages of production: from scriptwriting to editing. The director’s active involvement in “a large cooperative team” and the need for leadership skills” lie, in Collier’s estimation, at the heart of the filmmaking process. (ibid.: 56)

Collier’s presentation of the production of a film at Ealing helps contextualise Anderson’s articles about British filmmaking. This confirms the integrated nature of filmmaking within the studio framework, as well as the impact that the War had on British film output. Collier quotes Balcon as stressing the studio’s commitment to draw on real events for inspiration. (ibid.: 52) Dickinson’s *Secret People* (1952) had its roots in an earlier film he made during the War, *The Next of Kin* (1942). *Secret People*’s storyline involves the planned assassination of a foreign dignitary by exiles and the resulting violence and loss of moral values incurred by the protagonists. In *The Next of Kin* the study of human behaviour during conflict centres around a woman whose careless talk revealed the existence of traitors working for the other side.

The film output during the War reinforced the bond between the industrial framework in which British film studios were made and their aesthetic. In that respect, the articles Anderson wrote in the late 40s about the British film studios and their production

values, betray the complexity that underlies any attempt at fully appraising their aesthetic contribution to the national cinema. As previously mentioned, Anderson showed more enthusiasm later in life towards the film directors of that era, as his review of Carol Reed's work illustrates. (Anderson 1988: 369-73) His own conflicting relationship with the British film industry probably accounts for his willingness to reassess the value of the aesthetic contribution made by these films. Reed, the Archers – whose 40s films are also praised in the article (ibid.: 372) – represent Anderson's own struggles to affirm a distinctive aesthetic within the constraints of the film industry. The films and the critical success with which these directors met stand for the ideal negotiation of the context with the artistic. As Ian Christie noted in his study of the Archers' work, the financial arrangement concluded between Powell and Pressburger with The Rank Organisation in 1942 granted the directors the freedom to make the films they wanted. (Christie 1985/1992: 42)

Anderson's review of Collier's book highlights the commonality between "Angles of Approach" (1947) and "Stand up! Stand Up!" (1956): the duty for the critic to uncover the reasons that push a film director to select a particular film, recalls the definition that Anderson gives of the first duty of the artist: "the first duty of the artist is not to interpret, nor to propagandise, but to create". (1947: 193)

Anderson wrote that sentence the year before his review of Collier's book, which confirms the notion of artistic integrity as an almost untenable proposition: on the one hand, the artist cannot be held back by social definitions of acceptability; on the other, true creativity implies a high degree of social awareness, which often involves a confrontation with that same society.

In an article Anderson wrote for *The Observer* around the time of the release of *If...* (1968) in Britain, he gives an account of what it means to create, to be an artist while also being a part of society:

The system which permitted (probably by accident) [the film's] creation, has no real idea how to use it ... You have only two alternatives. You can retire from the scene, asserting the right of the artist not to be a salesman. Or try, despairingly, to beat the system ... You give interviews ... knowing that neither you nor your work is of interest to the press for what it is, only for what entertainment, high-brow or low, they can be made to provide ... Perhaps in our anxiety, we underestimate art and even the public. While there are still minds to be moved, imaginations to be stirred, a true film may yet perform its explosive, life-enhancing function. We may yet be revenged. (Anderson 1968: 115)

“Stand up! Stand Up!” (1956), by defining liberalism in terms of a humanist approach to social and cultural life, provides the background against which Anderson’s aesthetic as a film director can be understood. Just as he insists upon the co-existence but absence of commonality between first and second-rate films in the cinema, his aesthetic is also based on a concept of duality, that which opposes the exercise of true artistic integrity to the more conventional support for well-established film conventions:

Our ideals – moral, social and poetic – must be defended with intelligence as well as emotion; and also with intransigence. (Anderson 1956:)

In his review of *Sequence 2*, William Whitebait already perceived the contributors’ – especially Anderson’s – longing for a film output that would match *Sequence*’s aesthetic ideals. He also expressed reservations about the magazine’s actual power to initiate the avant-garde that he believed the British cinema needed. (1947: LA

4/1/9/1)⁸ Whitebait's remark confirms the existence of an almost didactic role for *Sequence* and further echoes Anderson's own support for the notion of a British avant-garde; one that can only be achieved through the active exchange and support between artists, critics and an informed audience. (Anderson 1948; 1949)

The back cover of the third issue of the magazine, for instance, reads:

ITS PURPOSE:

We aim to produce a film magazine which can be read by intelligent film-goers with a clear conscience. (LA 4/1)

Anderson maintained his discourse of committed liberalism throughout his later career as a feature film director: in a letter that he wrote to his friend, Marcorelles, in 1982, he confirmed the existence of a vital link between his ethic as a film critic and as a working film director:

I'm sorry if you find me difficult to interview. It is very difficult to talk about oneself in this situation – I mean when one is so acutely aware of the critical response to one's work, its importance in commercial terms, and the "political" situation in which one finds oneself. (Film-political, I mean, of course).

...

For myself, I naturally feel isolated. It seems to me that although things have obviously changed mightily since 1956 and the days of the New Left etc., a new conformism has asserted itself, or re-asserted itself, and that indeed societies everywhere are getting more conformist, less open to the individual radical voice or talent, which the "Media" more and more supplanting art. (Anderson 1982: LA 5/1/2/33/24)

Anderson's insistence on the link between the practice of film criticism and that of filmmaking – the "Film-political" he refers to in his letter to Marcorelles – is central to the appreciation of his work. In that respect, "Stand up! Stand Up!" is more than a

⁸ "English film-making in fact, lacks an *avant-garde*, without which the work of art, good or bad, will never be more than a remarkable intrusion. *Sequence* cannot perhaps in itself initiate an *avant-garde*; it can only in its particular line adopt the tone without the functions of such a taste-former as *New Verse*". (Whitebait 1947: LA 4/1/9/1)

study of commitment in film criticism: it verbalises the extent to which Anderson assimilates the practice of reviewing a film to the development of his own aesthetic or style as a director. (1956: 219).

He remained faithful to this opinion as a later interview demonstrates: the 1963 interview to the British film critic and author, John Russell Taylor, constitutes an indictment of the lack of artistic commitment that the French New Wave exemplifies. (Anderson 1963: 94) In Anderson's opinion, the film critics turned film directors, opted for a mode of film practice that privileges style over content: their betrayal of the balance underpinning the work of art parallels the mode of film practice where the artist's commitment is absent.

In that same 1963 interview Anderson expanded on the vision of the work of art he advocated in "Angles of Approach" (1947) and "Stand up! Stand Up!" (1956). To him, the political dimension of a work of art is a logical consequence of its artistic status: it is the product of an individual and artful negotiation of both form and content. (Anderson 1963: 98)

His view of commitment in art – relating to both film criticism and filmmaking – can be likened to a pact of integrity that would bind the artist to the critic and by extension, the audience as well. To quote "Angles of Approach":

The truth is, that though British films have improved, not many of them have had enough imagination or integrity to achieve anything approaching artistic success. It is important that we should not try to delude ourselves or each other as to their real value; complacency is no friend to progress, and at the moment we are much too complacent about our films. (Anderson 1947: 191)

The link that Anderson established between the practice of filmmaking and film reviewing suggests a parallel with Truffaut's seminal essay, "Une Certaine Tendance

du Cinéma Français” (1954). Truffaut’s essay also invoked the integrity of the medium with a view to discuss the implications that the directors’ chosen modes of film practice bear on our appreciation of film.

Truffaut’s uncompromising attack on the French cinema’s Tradition de Qualité is commonly seen as heralding the Politique des Auteurs, and as such championing the film director as the primary creative force behind the filmmaking process. (Caughie ed. 1981: 35) The polemic that presided over its publication, both amongst the journal’s contributors and fellow film critics in other reviews, bring out *Cahiers*’ defining characteristic: a gathering of film enthusiasts that embraced divergence of opinion in their midst and welcomed the controversy that their views would excite. (de Baecque 1991: 99-104)

Whitebait’s 1947 review of *Sequence 2* in the *New Statesman* comes to mind and establishes a parallel between the critical discourse that defined *Sequence* in the late 1940s and was to become the trademark of *Cahiers* in the early 1950s. To quote Whitebait on *Sequence*’s film criticism:

The class war is on ... for the revolutionary there can be no intermediate places, no gradualism of taste. Heretics must be hunted down ... (ibid.: LA 4/1/9/1)

The actual connection that existed between the two journals, which I noted above, suggests a commonality of approach in relation to the existence of a figurative dialogue between film director and critic.

Authorship as dialogue:

As Anderson argued in “Creative Elements”, each constitutive phase has relevance as it contributes ‘to form something new, something individual, a whole greater than its

parts'. (Anderson 1948: 199) As a result, the role played by the director is presented as both central – "for it is under the director's guidance that the film is created, transformed from the inadequately expressed idea of the script to a living sequence of sound and images" (ibid.: 198) – and as interdependent of the other members of the filming crew – "he cannot stand alone". (ibid.: 199)

The apparent contradiction in terms accounts for the role that a figurative dialogue between director and critic performs within the filmmaking process. His early writings on John Ford provide an illustration of that dialogue: first, as mentioned in the Literature Review, two of the articles he wrote for *Sequence* are the direct result of an actual correspondence as well as a meeting with the American director. Second, Anderson identifies films as proof of Ford's distinctive directorial talent that are not amongst the most critically acclaimed. (Anderson 1950b: 452) To him, a film like *They Were Expendable* (1945) combines a flair for dramatic composition along with a depth of characterisation that proclaim the director's sustained commitment to his personal set of values. (ibid.: 452; 455)

The 1950 article on *They Were Expendable*, presents similarities in tone with the *Cahiers'* search for recurring patterns of themes and style in a given director's work. (ibid.) It also seeks to establish the value of a director's work based on a re-evaluation of previously dismissed works. In that regard, the 1952 *Sequence* article which Anderson wrote following his meeting with Ford in Dublin, comes across as a forerunner to Truffaut's own series of recorded conversations with Alfred Hitchcock in the 1960s.

Anderson includes his observations on the significance of talking about films with the man who directed them: Ford's body language and varying reactions to his questions

are carefully recorded. Anderson's unravelling of the filmmaking process is here analysed in relation to both Ford and himself: more specifically, he exposes the significance that the pre-conceived ideas they had formed about the films at hand bears. (Anderson 1952: 445-6) Their discussion of the use of music reveals Ford's own control over this aspect of his films, while also confirming the unavoidable subjective element in any critical overview of a director's work. Anderson for instance, had noted a continuity of meaning in the choice of music for *They Were Expendable*; as Ford explained, however, the score was rather the result of a compromise between the studio executives and himself. (ibid.: 446-8)

The echo with the 1948 "Creative Elements" highlights the ambiguity underpinning Anderson's view of the filmmaking process and the role of the director in it. *Sequence 6* features an article by Helen van Dongen who edited, amongst others, Joris Ivens's *New Earth* (1933) and Robert Flaherty's *Louisiana Story* (1948). Her article is in direct response to Anderson's "Creative Elements" and his championing of a trinity in filmmaking – between the director, writer and cameraman. While van Dongen is not challenging his view of a collaborative process in which the director is expected to play a central role, she also argues that Anderson overlooked the editor's own impact on the final shape of the film. (LA 4/1/ - 6:48) The form of her apology for the editor's role is worth noting: she postulates that a single film with a single director but edited by three different editors, would still "interpret [the director's] style and form". (ibid.) However, "the personal stamp of the individual editor" would be visible when analysing the film shot by shot. (ibid.)

Her formulation of film authorship makes it tempting to presume Anderson's editorial intervention in her article. More to the point, there is evidence of a pull between

contradictory positions: one that acknowledges the collaborative nature of filmmaking and the other that seeks to ascribe authorial control to the director.

Anderson's writings on Ford provide examples of this tension: In "The Director's Cinema", as noted in the Literature Review, Ford's writer, Nunnally Johnson, reproached Anderson for his unfounded cult of the director to the detriment of the scriptwriter's central role in filmmaking. (Anderson 1950: 203) In "*They Were Expendable* and John Ford", Anderson sets out to identify the themes, values as well as actual collaborators that best allowed Ford to realise his vision. He singles out for instance, "the works of expert writers" – such as Nunnally Johnson and Lamar Trotti for *Young Mister Lincoln* – whose "scripts [left] Ford free to tell stories at his leisure, to enrich and enliven them through his own humane inspiration". (1950b: 461) The question of the control of the medium, proof of Ford's talent, is presented as the result of his long years of apprenticeship during the silent cinema era along with a distinctive use of composition. (ibid.: 462) The latter aspect signals Ford's distinctive input and unifying drive into his films: his mastery of composition accounts directly for the potency of characterisation.

Anderson's view of what constitutes successful characterisation in film shows similarities with the *Cahiers'* search for a director's unified worldview in a given body of films. A connection with "Une Certaine Tendance" can even be detected in Anderson's dismissal of the critically acclaimed *The Informer* (1935) and *The Long Voyage Home* (1940): his criticism of the perceived pretentiousness displayed by Nichols's screen adaptation of the novels, recalls Truffaut's own attack on the *littérateurs* of French cinema and their flawed conception of the rules governing screen transpositions. (Truffaut 1954: 234)

Anderson's criticism of these films however, serves a distinct purpose: he establishes the essential nature of a fruitful collaboration between the director and his closest collaborators – here the scriptwriter. The artificiality of a film like *The Informer* betrays, in his opinion, the director's pact of integrity between themes and values that are familiar to him and the authenticity of feeling with which he fleshes out his films' protagonists. A clear connection is established between authenticity, poetry and realism by the repeated mentions of the integrity of Ford's "response to life" in his films (Anderson 1950b: 461; 463): the depth of characterisation stems from a refusal of artifice in favour of a camera style that allows the film protagonists' humanity to express itself fully. (ibid.)

It follows that in Anderson's critical discourse there co-exist two types of celebration: the possibility of a distinct directorial signature as well as an apology for the artistic contributions made by the director's collaborators. Bazin's article, "De La Politique des Auteurs" (1957), helps to understand the extent to which Anderson's championing of both connects his discourse to the auteurist model developed in *Cahiers* while also proclaiming its difference.

In this essay Bazin expressed his reservations about the validity of the reading strategy adopted by his fellow contributors to the journal. He regards what he deems to be a highly subjective analysis of directors and their films as the expression of a flawed conception of authorship. To him, the film transcends the director, which is the opposite view to the most influential writers for the journal. He mentions Truffaut and Eric Rohmer's strong belief in reading films as the expression of the director's personality and worldview. By reversing the hierarchy director-film, Bazin also suggests an approach that acknowledges the unavoidable historical and cultural

dimension that the notion of authorship assumes as well as includes a proper consideration of the nature of filmmaking and its artistic significance.

Anderson similarly challenged *Cahiers'* critical approach to the works of their favourite directors. To quote from an article that was published in *Sight and Sound* the same year as “Une Certaine Tendance”:

Much of the reviewing in both *Cahiers* and *Positif* tends unhappily towards the dithyrambic; the younger critics especially seem short on analytical capacity, anxious to establish themselves as *littérateurs* ... The adulation of directors like Howard Hawks, Preminger, Hitchcock, even Robert Wise seriously vitiates much of the writing in *Cahiers* ... (Anderson 1954: 254)

What distances Anderson and *Sequence* from their counterparts at *Cahiers* is their actual attempt at negotiating the individualistic dimension attached to film criticism – hence its subjective nature – and the collaborative nature of filmmaking. A clipping featuring in the Archive illustrates Anderson and *Sequence's* distinctiveness:

But here the *Sequence* school steps in, usually in threes. To meet a multiple art comes the multiple critic ... It was even rumoured at one time, that a *Sequence* triad always distributed its attentions, one member of it looking to the photography, another to the script, and so on ... (Whitebait 1950: LA 4/1/9/8)

Whitebait's bemused tone nevertheless captures a key feature of *Sequence's* editorial practice: the columnist's mention of “the multiple critic” suggests an alternative definition of authorship – one that seeks unity through diversity.

The strong presence of French cinema in *Sequence* also helps to appreciate the contributors' unified view concerning dramatic composition and good directorial practice. The Poetic Realism of the 1930s for instance, becomes an opportunity to

discuss the extent to which these films combined an effective treatment of narrative and depth of characterisation with an innovative filming style. The use of a recurrent jargon to oppose the more mature handling of the French directors' "technique of drama" with their British counterparts' lack of flair (Anderson 1949: 344), brings out what Colin Gardner calls *Sequence*'s "collective accord". (Gardner 2006: 18) An entry in Anderson's diary, dated 1948, also contributes to shaping this idea of an exchange of expertise: he praises Lambert's critical skills that he judges better than his own. He mentions Lambert's article about René Clair as an example, then proceeds to reassert his own superiority in terms of "editorial ability". (1948: LA 6/1/10/47) Here the overt references to a French director help substantiate the notion of a fluid authorship given the predominance that French cinema had in *Sequence*'s editorials.

The label here enables me to introduce the following chapter that will explore Anderson's first practical experience as a film director. It is worth noting that his first directorial projects were conducted while he was still actively editing *Sequence*. I will argue that his working partnership with his *Sequence* contributors influenced his handling of the filming of the documentaries.

Chapter 3:

The Diaries and the Sutcliffes' Documentaries

Anderson started his career as a documentary filmmaker: not by deliberate choice but through the direct intervention of a woman, Lois Sutcliffe, who had set up the Wakefield Film Society in Yorkshire. Her husband, Desmond Sutcliffe, ran a firm that made conveyor belts – The Richard Sutcliffe Limited.

She had met Anderson in Oxford on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Federation of Film Societies – hosted by the Oxford University Film Society of which Anderson was a member. (Anderson 1994: 50) They took an instant liking to each other through a shared love of American cinema and, westerns in particular. Lois was dissatisfied with the outlines that professional documentary film companies had submitted to her husband. She felt that they all failed to present an adequate picture of her husband's company, which led her to approach Anderson directly and commission him for the job.⁹

Meet the Pioneers (1948) was the first documentary out of a series of four that Anderson filmed for the Sutcliffes between 1948 and 1952. The others are: *Idlers that Work* (1949), *Three Installations* (1952), and *Trunk Conveyor* (1952). There are no entries documenting the filming of *Meet the Pioneers* as it happened. In its stead,

⁹ See Anderson (1994: 50-5); Hedling (2010: 313-27), Lambert (2000: 45-7); Lois Smith in the DVD extras featuring on the 2008 Criterion release of *This Sporting Life* (1963).

Anderson provides a few brief remarks about what he believes are the aesthetic limitations of the completed film.

I don't know if *Meet the Pioneers* is any good; by intuition I feel that it is quite interesting, rather scrappy and also rather too conventional in approach. Certain sequences – the Drawing Office for instance – are right out of the stock book; and generally the treatment is on the obvious side. (Anderson 1948e: LA 6/1/10/37)

Anderson had no prior filming experience. It is easy to see his references to conventional aesthetic approaches as drawing on his theoretical knowledge of documentary filmmaking, more specifically the sociological model of documentary filmmaking which John Grierson and his collaborators launched in the 1930s. It is also worth noting that “A Possible Solution” (1948) and “British Cinema: A Descending Spiral” (1949), are contemporaneous with the making of *Meet the Pioneers*. Both articles are critical of the trend then exhibited by film directors and studios alike to proclaim their allegiance to the documentary-inspired realist aesthetic.

Hedling, in his recent study of Anderson's early documentaries, also remarks on the uneasy relationship between Anderson, the critic, and Anderson, the fledgling film director commissioned to make industrial documentaries. (Hedling 2010: 316) The perceived tension allows Hedling to frame his re-evaluation of Anderson's early work within a dual perspective: on the one hand, these documentaries could exhibit the early signs of a distinct film aesthetic and, on the other, they also testify to the significance that sponsored documentary filmmaking played in Post-War Britain's film industry. (ibid.: 313; 316)

Anderson's own diary entry on *Meet the Pioneers*, appears to address the paradox that such a situation presented for a critic who was also calling in his writings, for a new

avant-garde for British film. While deploring his lack of creativity for sequences such as “The Drawing Office, for instance, [that looked] right out of the stock book”, Anderson also asserted his authorial imprint on the finished film – “after all, I did the whole thing myself”. (Anderson 1948e: LA 6/1/10/37)

The diaries however, add another perspective to our reading of these years of apprenticeship for Anderson; one which is largely overlooked by Hedling. He refers to the diaries to give us an insight into Anderson’s view of his short films: the latter’s mixed feelings about the degree of artistry achieved for *Meet the Pioneers* for instance, or still, his satisfaction with the last in the series, *Trunk Conveyor* (1952). (Hedling 2010: 316; 318) The quotes work well to instantiate the implications of applying an auteurist reading for Anderson’s work as a whole, and a necessary acknowledgement of the nature of sponsored documentary filmmaking at the time. It leaves out, however, a distinctive feature of those same diary entries: Anderson’s remarks on the documentaries are part of a wider consideration of his emotional mindset at the time of filming, and are indistinguishable from his directorial practice.

In the case of *Meet the Pioneers*, for instance, that same May 1948 entry sees Anderson commenting on his growing attachment to the cameraman, John Jones, who was the local schoolmaster. He expresses disappointment at Jones’s aloofness and manifest reluctance at forming any stronger bond. Anderson then betrays similar feelings of bitterness towards Lois Sutcliffe and his *Sequence* co-editors, Gavin Lambert and Peter Ericsson: in both instances, he reproaches them for their failure to offer the emotional or, in the case of Lois, logistic support he expects from them. (Anderson 1948e: LA 6/1/10/37) That part of the entry does not feature in the published diaries.

I believe that Anderson's quasi-obsession with the recording of the personal interactions that he would initiate on-and off-set, constitutes a defining feature of his directorial practice; one whose implications have been largely ignored. Consequently, the chapter will explore the nature of the diary-writing exercise that took place at the time of the filming of the Sutcliffe's documentaries. The objective is to offer a complementary light on Hedling's own recent assessment of the significance that these early works bear on our understanding of Anderson's style and legacy as a British film director. It is revealing that comprehensive critical surveys such as Silet's, for instance, regard the documentaries as essentially formative: the use of a voice-over is seen as an echo of the Griersonian informative and educational ethos, or the lunch sequence in *Meet the Pioneers*, as further proof of Anderson's admiration for Jennings's work. (Silet 1979: 18)

Similarly, Sutton's editing of these entries often obscures the original dynamic of the diaries covering the period, which impacts on our appraisal of the documentaries. Between May 1948 and January 1949 for instance, Anderson relies primarily on the perception he has of his friends and colleagues' reaction to his work: the entry for May 27, 1948 – which is not reproduced in the published diaries – links explicitly the lack of emotional and practical support that he received from Ericsson and Lambert to his hesitations about his proficiency as a film director. (Anderson 1948f: LA 6/1/10/39) In his own words, he does not feel able to cope alone with “the world of action” into which he has just stepped. (ibid.) This is a point which he reiterates, in one form or another, in all subsequent entries during that period: Anderson measures up his ability and willingness to work as a professional film director against his capacity to sustain meaningful relationships.

The content of these diaries witness the shift from the critic to the film director: the shift consists in Anderson's trying to work out the changing nature of his relationship with films: the attempt at establishing meaningful relationships with actors and collaborators mirror the gradual process that underpins his search for a film aesthetic. To a large extent, Anderson needed to verbalise the frustrations he experienced with his collaborators, both for the journal *Sequence* and during the filming of the documentaries. His inability to express and act on his feelings is an echo of the creative constraints which derive from the nature of the material he was working with.

Authorial intent in a collaborative process:

The nature of the attachments that Anderson describes in the entries for this period is not straightforward to define: the original entries contain more overt references to his sexual frustration and overall desire to come to terms with his own homosexuality:

If paradise is not for the sex-obsessed, nor is the kingdom of this world. I am unable to make up my mind what (of those things which are within my reach) I want. A celibate life, sexual frustration compensated by friendship, activity, creation? Or sexual release accomplished by lavatory-encounters? ... For the moment this dilemma remains unresolved. (Anderson 1948g: LA 6/1/10/40)

That August 1948 entry features in the published diaries but without the above passage. The edited version keeps hidden the more intimate aspects of Anderson's life, but, as a result, leaves open to speculation the reasons underlying his feeling of a lack of achievement. (Anderson 2004a: 54) Anderson's "dissatisfaction" can only be attributed to his thirst for recognition, which he suspects, will not be answered quickly. (ibid.)

The entry for December 19th, 1948 has a similar structure: it confirms that Anderson values the completion of his first documentary for the Sutcliffes while still expressing

a general feeling of “dissatisfaction”. (Anderson 1948i: LA 6/1/10/44) The entry features in the published diaries: the expurgated version does give an insight into Anderson’s state of mind and relationship with his *Sequence* collaborators. (ibid. 2004a: 54-5) Gavin Lambert and Peter Ericsson are depicted as insensitive and unsupportive, while his love for Ford’s films and hope to meet with him provide him with the otherwise lacking emotional and intellectual fulfilment. Missing however, are Anderson’s interrogations about Ford’s own sexuality (ibid.)

The original entry also develops further Anderson’s view of his working relationship with his *Sequence* co-editors: in a way that echoes his authorial claim over the ultimate form of *Meet the Pioneers*, he defines himself as the “leading spirit, editorially the one with most flair”. (Anderson 1948i: LA 6/1/10/46) Anderson then proceeds to list the extent of his editorial control by giving examples of the sections he either wrote single-handed or modified substantially before they went to press. (ibid.) However, instead of deriving a sense of pride or even intellectual ownership over the journal, Anderson appears to use these examples as proof of his inability to lead:

Why do I write this? To force myself to accept the fact of my pre-eminence in at least one aspect of the combination. Perhaps I am getting down to a fundamental of my character – a shrinking from leadership, from responsibility. (ibid.)

A contradictory view of his authorship credentials emerges: Anderson measures the value of his involvement against the level of support that his collaborators show him. His appraisal of *Three Installations* in 1951, for instance, highlights the consequences of a lack of a meaningful working relationship:

To this extent, the films are truly personal. I refuse to indulge in the flashy for its own sake ... but in their place can be found only an

utterly conventional conception, proceeding in a number of unadventurous, if tastefully arranged, set-ups. I suppose it's still possible that *Three Installations* will constitute an advance; but I feel that any progression in it is comparative – no liberation. Which is not surprising, since I am not liberated in any, any sense. (Anderson 1951b: LA 6/1/11/10)

It is interesting to note that Hedling uses this quote to illustrate the lack of any distinctive film aesthetic in these documentaries. (Hedling 2010: 317) Here the feelings of dejection are linked once again to sexual and intellectual frustrations. Mentions of a “lively interest in a stocky workman”, as well as a quote from Amiel, verbalising his longing for personal and artistic fulfilment, illustrate the fact. (Anderson 1951b: LA 6/1/11/10) They also recall Anderson's lashing out against Lambert and Ericsson's indifference to his filming of the Sutcliffe's documentaries. (Anderson 2004a: 55)

In that same October 1951 entry, there is a reference to Reggiani which does not appear in the published diary: Anderson in keeping with the lyrical tone of Amiel's quotation, states that “the one in your thoughts is not the real one”. (Anderson 1951b: LA 6/1/11/13) The original diaries confirm the extent of Anderson's obsession with *Secret People*'s lead. A visit to Paris in late 1951 is presented as an escape from professional frustration: he speaks of “physical and mental exhaustion” as a result of creative differences with Derek York over the editing of *Three Installations*.

This entry features in the published diaries – Anderson 2004a: 58. The unpublished follow-up entry is in French. (Anderson 1951c: LA 6/1/11/51) Anderson addresses Reggiani directly in the form of a mock dialogue that reproduces conversations they would have shared. Reggiani would have told him that he lives in a box – “je semble à toi vivre dans une boîte!” – thereby confirming Anderson's mental anguish and

longing for self-actualisation. (ibid.) The entry concludes on his resolve to take a more active stance, which he likens to the experience of tightrope walking – “marcher sur une corde”. (ibid.)

Anderson’s expression of his feelings for Reggiani in his diaries, finds an echo in the 19 December 1948 entry. The original entry is over four pages long, and includes similar interrogations about the possibility of a future with a man whose heterosexuality and marital status place him beyond Anderson’s reach. (Anderson 1948i: LA 6/1/10/45)

The context in which his thoughts about Ford’s sexuality emerge, has been retained in the published diaries: we learn that Anderson had eventually heard back from the American director through Jack Beddington, the former Head of the Films Division of the Ministry of Information. In the note sent to Beddington, Ford indicated he would hire Anderson, in the event of his coming to England. (Anderson 2004a: 54) In the original entry Anderson integrates his hopes of working with Ford alongside a larger consideration of the director’s film aesthetic. He mentions seeing *Fort Apache* (1948) again with Ericsson and includes references to *The Fugitive* (1947) and *They Were Expendable* (1945). Anderson still sees *Fort Apache* as flawed: he deems “unforgivable” the interior photography, “the careless matching” – especially the “serenade sequence” – “and almost all the acting”. (Anderson 1948i: LA 6/1/10/44) He also betrays his anguish over the lack of direct contact with Ford, following the letter he had sent the director and in which he criticised *Fort Apache*. (ibid.)

A similar urge to reconsider a verdict on a previously disliked film can also be noted in later entries in which Reggiani appears. On 12 October 1951, Anderson mentions

seeing *Les Portes de la Nuit* again and experiencing the same disappointment as in previous viewings. (Anderson 1951: LA 6/1/11/2) However, in both instances, he also finds in his attachment and admiration for the two men's respective talent, an opportunity to develop a greater insight into his own film aesthetic. This is one that blends the personal and the professional as his reflections on Prévert's text for *Les Portes de la Nuit* show:

Serge spoke of Prévert's love for men and women, and that is there in the film, together with his special poetic vision on life. It has that quality: through the images and words, a man is talking to us, trying to talk to us about life ... I am far from being attuned to Prévert's way of speaking, feeling about things; to a certain extent because of my complete lack of sexual experience. For Prévert ... draws his inspiration to a large degree from love. (Anderson 1951: LA 6/1/11/4)

Going back to the 19 December 1948 entry, the connections between love, homosexuality and artistic creation are explicitly made to question Ford's sexuality. In turn, this leads Anderson to ponder on his own personal and professional future, and the role which his deep attachment for these unattainable figures will play in it. However, his appraisal of male characterisation in Ford's films can easily be seen in parallel with the later consideration of Prévert's writing and Reggiani's passionate acting in *Les Portes de la Nuit*. It also prefigures his subsequent articles in *Sequence* about Ford's directorial style: The "special poetic vision on life" in Prévert's work (Anderson 1951: LA 6/1/11/4), parallels the "absolute integrity of feeling", the "affirmative response to life" which Anderson sees as underpinning Ford's camera-style and dramatic composition in his films. (Anderson 1950b: 463)

It is worth noting that Anderson wrote his two major articles on Ford in *Sequence* during the period in which he was involved in the filming of the Sutcliffe's documentaries. By the time he had completed his article *The Quiet Man* in *Sequence*

14, in 1952, he had also met Ford in Dublin and developed a close relationship with Reggiani.

Taking into account the nature of Anderson's writings at the time of the making of these documentaries, allows me to adopt a third approach: one that is not seeking to establish with certainty the traces of an emerging film aesthetic but rather, one that highlights the measurable impact which Anderson's emotional mindset had upon his work. To him, building a close network of personal support and professional expertise was central to the actualisation of his authorial voice. In that sense, filming these documentaries in which there was little creative latitude possible, gave him the opportunity to experience what he admired in Jennings's work: "the idea of connection, by contrast or juxtaposition". (Anderson 1953: 363).

The Sutcliffes' documentaries:

At the time of the 19 December 1948 entry, Anderson had finished shooting *Meet The Pioneers*: as noted above, he does not provide much insight into the day-to-day filming routine. If we turn our attention to the documentary itself, the focus is on the conveyor belts, how they operate and the potential they hold to increase the profitability of the companies that use them, Richard Sutcliffe's own company featuring chiefly amongst them.

The documentary starts by detailing how the driving heads ensure movement is achieved: shots of fast-moving conveyor belts illustrate how 300 tons of coal are being carried back up to the surface every day. The filming style is dynamic: longer takes of the moving conveyor belts alternate with close shots of the complex machinery at work. More than one point of view is also given to the audience: low-

angle shots help visualise the ascent that the coal is making while deep-focus photography highlights the intricacy at the heart of the daily operations.

This last aspect is interesting as it captures Anderson's negotiation of his directorial intervention: the documentary emphasises the high degree of efficiency achieved through the use of the conveyor belts while also showing the amount of planning and the complexity of design that make the feat of industrial technology possible. The deep-focus photography Anderson applies for the filming of the drawing office sequence for instance, parallels the close shots of the technical drawings on which the camera lingers: the camera work here conveys a sense of the density of composition that contrasts with the photography used for the sequences involving the workers at Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. The latter consistently tips the balance within the composition of the shot in favour of the human element: one sequence, for instance, shows three workers using the conveyor belts as means of transportation. The earlier shots filming the moving coal stressed the idea of speed and effectiveness of the machinery by showing the large quantity of coal transported. By contrast, a limited number of workers is present in any given sequence: the three I have mentioned before or, alternatively, the pair of workers having their lunch "leaning up against their machines".

This phrase that is spoken by Anderson himself, makes it possible to visualise the distinctive dramatic composition at play: the camera-work favours a dual approach when it comes to both the treatment of the theme and the way it structures each shot and sequence within the documentary itself. The lunch hour becomes a visual token of the constant balancing act between humans and machinery that pervades the theme and look of *Meet the Pioneers* as a whole. The high-angle shots that punctuate the

sequence at regular intervals, do not alter the nature of the relationship between the workers and the machines against which they lean for comfort. Their presence is a reminder of their central function within the workers' lives; as guaranteeing their livelihoods. Moreover, their dehumanising potential is countered by Anderson's directorial intervention: the use of a potentially destabilising camera angle compensates for the thematic importance that the machinery holds in the documentary. Similarly, any sequence or shot dealing specifically with the technical aspects of the conveyor belts only selects conspicuous camera work for narrative purposes: the use of close shots or deep-focus photography is purely functional. This is about transmitting the right information at the appropriate speed.

Anderson's self-professed connection with Jennings's work provides a frame of reference: in "Only Connect" (1953: 358-65), Anderson argues that the strength of Jennings's work does not lie in its flawless control over form but rather in the implicit and explicit connections that each shot or sequence establish with one another. (ibid.: 362) Jennings's distinctiveness lies in his ability to modulate his directorial intervention: the editing complements what Jennings has already initiated and made visible at the level of shot composition, and through the use of music and voice-over commentary. The editing assists by complementing the director's shaping of the form and content underlying the structure of the documentary, while allowing it to retain its distinctive dramatic composition. (ibid.: 362-3)

Trunk Conveyor (1952) and *Wakefield Express* (1952) follow a similar pattern by balancing out the degree of Anderson's directorial intervention. The latter documentary was not commissioned by the Sutcliffes. As Anderson reports it, he was by then working on his third documentary, *Three Installations*. The local newspaper

approached the Sutcliffes to enquire whether Anderson would be interested in filming an informative documentary about their daily work; this also coincided with the 100th anniversary of the paper. The short film which Anderson shot with Walter Lassally and John Fletcher, became *Wakefield Express* (1952). (Anderson 1994: 53)

In the case of *Trunk Conveyor*, long takes to convey the reality of the subterranean world to the audience are used alongside deep-focus photography that introduces the men who are in charge of that world. The parallel with *Meet the Pioneers* finds further confirmation in the editing for that section of the film: cuts take the spectator back and forth between the conception stage – the drawing room with technical prints, the boardroom where the engineers, surveyors and fitters meet – and the execution phase. At the thematic level, the meaning is clear: a fruitful collaboration between all parties involved ensures the successful fitting of the conveyor belts as well as their subsequent use by the miners.

At the stylistic level, Anderson uses both the camera-work and the editing to negotiate the extent of his directorial intervention: the lunch sequence features one of the two folk songs used in the film: here *Sixteen Tons* complements the slower pace of the editing. That same use of folk songs in the sections showing the work of the engineers, fitters and miners first appears out of tone with the theme being developed. This however, serves a distinct purpose: the folksong underscores the sense of a tight-knit community that the lunch sequence had captured all by itself within the structure of the image itself. The use of deep-focus photography further brings out the idea of collaboration and unity of purpose: the sequence filmed involves the engineers, surveyors and fitters taking precise measurement underground in order to trace the route that the conveyor belts will follow. Here, the folk music duplicates the effect

achieved by the camera work and reaffirms the sense of community and tradition, which the lunch sequence also portrays.

The way in which Anderson highlights his negotiation of form and content – visually, aurally and thematically – draws attention to his view of the British Documentary movement and its legacy. As previously stated, he admired Jennings for his ‘poetic’ treatment of topical issues. (Anderson 1953: 358-9) This is the implied confrontation between the individuality of the artist and the constraints of the documentary format that inspired Anderson, both as a critic and a documentary filmmaker. Hedling documented the high degree of enthusiasm which *Sequence*’s contributors showed for Jennings’s work. (Hedling 1998: 28-9) Anderson’s subsequent article published in *Sight and Sound* in 1953, as well as later articles and essays, confirm the impact which Jennings’s aesthetic had on him. (Anderson: 1953; 1982; 1994) This impact can be felt in his diaries as well.

In the 2 January 1949 entry, Anderson records his thoughts about the filming of *Idlers that Work*, which it is about to start. He expresses conflicting feelings about the prospect: on the one hand, he is unsure about his ability to effectively convey the assembly and disassembly of the Goliath Gearhead, the idler, on-screen; and on the other, he sounds confident that he can replicate the success of *Meet the Pioneers*. (Anderson 1949: LA 6/1/10/49) The rest of the entry helps understand the apparent contradiction: Anderson indicates that he feels uncomfortable filming unless he has invested what he perceives to be the right amount of preparation. His mention of “envisaging a completed film” brings out a sense of his awareness that the mediation he exerts has a measurable impact on the filmmaking process. (ibid.) The nature of this mediation itself is twofold: one that involves handling the technical side

underpinning the exercise of his directorial practice; and the other that consists of defining the degree of personal input which he will invest into the work.

Wakefield Express stands as another example of Anderson's tackling of the question underpinning the director's individuality: the credit titles at the beginning for instance, show a hand arranging individual letters into the names and roles of the persons involved in the making of the documentary, thereby confirming his directorial input. However, just as the newspaper relies on the work of his journalists, going out in the field to meet the people who make this community, Anderson needs his collaborators to bring the filming to fruition. Their necessary role is conveyed through the many shots that show them listening and taking the notes that will in turn make the news. At the same time, the scarcity of point-of-view shots, coupled with the cross-cutting taking us back to the newspaper office, balance out that power. Their role as mediators between the inside – the newspaper reporting on the daily events – and the outside community is crucial, but also part of a bigger whole.

The documentary as a whole, also adopts a dual structure. It can roughly be divided into two parts: one that details the life of the community on which the *Wakefield Express* reports daily. The filming replicates the pattern by privileging a more interactional style when showing the life of the community: the people are always filmed while taking part in an activity or event that is of immediate relevance to their lives – from the 'nosy' neighbour with his pet budgie to the unveiling of a plaque to commemorate the soldiers who died during the Second World War. The filming style does not indicate any judgement of value. All items of the community's life are treated with an equal amount of respect, which the balance between the long takes to

report on the event described and shorter ones – often close-ups or medium shots – of the protagonists at the heart of these stories, shows.

The filming of the expertise that goes behind the work of the journalists and technicians responsible for the production of the newspaper privileges a more observational style: the voice-over and the camerawork adopt an informative function by making the information accessible for an audience. However, Anderson's filming of this sequence also adopts a cross cutting technique that reminds that same audience of the community that lies behind the news. That last aspect brings out the complex relationship which Anderson had with the British Documentary movement and its legacy.

As his later essay "Going It Alone: The British Documentarists" shows, Anderson expressed an interest in the documentarists-turned feature film directors' treatment of military and civil life during World War II. (Anderson 1994: 353-8) More specifically, Anderson notes the constant juxtaposition of the factual with the fictional: what was a logical choice – selecting real airmen or factory workers to re-enact a realistic account of their experience of life in wartime Britain – also became an aesthetic trademark for the Crown Film Unit. (ibid.: 354-5) To Anderson, in Jennings's case – as well as Paul Rotha's (ibid.: 356-7) – the individuality of the filmmakers involved was stronger, which makes their contribution of particular aesthetic and critical value. (ibid.: 355-7) The way in which he opposes what he sees as Jennings's distinctive aesthetic sensibility with Rotha's direct and minimalist style, is worth noting. Just as Elizabeth Sussex's own study of the Documentary Movement¹⁰ and more recent works on the subject show, assessing the legacy of the

¹⁰ Anderson's essay acknowledges and openly quotes from Sussex's *The Rise and Fall of British Documentary*.

movement implies acknowledging the existence of an inner duality: on the one hand, the movement gained strength on the basis of a shared belief in its social function; on the other, its members – starting with Grierson in his “First Principles of Documentary” (1932) – had diverse and often conflicting views on the role which they ought to give to a film aesthetic for the movement.

The next chapter will look into the production of Anderson’s first full-length feature film, *This Sporting Life* (1963). I will explore the ways in which his troubled relationship with the main lead, Richard Harris, confirms the director’s search for an aesthetic identity by privileging an emotionally charged working pattern with his collaborators during production.

Chapter 4:

Anderson's Directorial Practice

The following chapter investigates the extent to which the filming of Anderson's first feature film, *This Sporting Life* (1963), exemplifies the pattern that developed out of the early exercise of his directorial practice. The contention is that the formative experience which the industrial documentaries represented along with his first acquaintance with John Ford and Serge Reggiani respectively, which all occurred in close succession to each other, in turn shaped what was to become his directorial practice for the years to come in the cinema.

I will rely mostly on the Archive, the published *Diaries* as well as Lambert's memoir to account for the production of the film.

The production team:

This Sporting Life is commonly associated with the British New Wave of the late 1950s and early 1960s. (Hedling 1998; Hill 1986; Izod et al. 2012)

This Sporting Life relies upon the metaphor of organised sports – rugby – to carry its narrative forward. The storyline involves a miner turned successful professional rugby player – Frank Machin – who falls in love with his landlady. In spite of their mutual attraction, the emotional turmoil they are each experiencing, prevents them from

communicating their feelings for one other. The film concludes on Mrs Hammond's sudden death of a brain haemorrhage.

In the previous chapters I have stressed the weight that Anderson lends the input of each member of the film's creative team, with a special emphasis on the trio formed by the director, the scriptwriter and the cameraman – what Anderson sees as the 'trinity' of filmmaking. (Anderson 1948: 198) The chapters have also brought out the conflicting feelings born out of his vision of filmmaking as a collaborative process. An entry in his diary before *This Sporting Life* went into production, further illustrates the director's desire for sole control over the process; it also confirms the extent to which his artistic process fed off a sustained interaction with his collaborators during the production of a film. (Anderson 2004a: 69-71)

The entry describes the New Year's Eve Party of 1961 that Anderson attended along with Karel Reisz. Reisz was supposed to direct *This Sporting Life*: following Woodfall Films' inability to secure the book rights, the project was taken over by Independent Artists who felt confident Reisz had the required experience to direct the film. In 1960 Reisz had directed *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, a film that successfully overcame the hurdles of a hostile film trade, securing both critical and public acclaim and further enabling Tony Richardson's newly founded Woodfall Films company to achieve financial viability (Murphy 1992: 21). Reisz turned down the offer of directing the film and suggested Anderson's name in his stead. He took on the role of producer for *This Sporting Life* instead.

The connection that Anderson makes between the financial haggle that preceded the making of *This Sporting Life* and his first steps as a film director, assumes an even more potent dimension in Lambert's own account of the events. (Lambert 2000: 91-

102) Lambert's memoir privileges the human element by placing the status of Anderson's career in the context of the Woodfall Films community in the early 1960s. We learn notably that Richardson intended to direct the film himself and had therefore rejected Anderson's request to take on the project. (ibid.: 109) Richardson justified his decision by advocating Anderson's lack of experience as a film director. However, still according to Lambert, this betrays instead Richardson's compulsion to claim ownership of any project that happened to cross Woodfall's path. (ibid.) He also mentions the 1961 New Year's Eve entry in Anderson's diary that relates Reisz's anger at Richardson for cheating him out of his share of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*'s return profits. (ibid.: 92) As Lambert had just mentioned Richardson's gradual appropriation of Woodfall Films' management – and by implication, of its profits (ibid.: 91-2) – the general background to Anderson's initial exclusion from the project becomes apparent.

In the case of the filmmakers working with Woodfall Films, financial dealings reflected the degree of personal affinity with the company, and more particularly with Richardson. The higher the degree of personal affinity, the more the artistic credential of the filmmaker was valued, and therefore backed up financially. Anderson had known both Reisz and Richardson since the Free Cinema days; however as his diary entry suggests, there was more of an affinity with Reisz. (Anderson 2004a: 70)

Anderson's relationship with Richardson further underlines the existence of an emotional dimension that attaches itself to the reality of the film business. This is a feature that also carries strong implications for the making of another of Anderson's films, *The White Bus* (1966). To go back to Lambert's memoir:

... [A]n offer from Tony Richardson, whose duplicity over *This Sporting Life* had been not exactly forgiven or forgotten, but shrugged off. Like almost everyone else, Lindsay realised that Tony's 'continual exercise of power' had on the whole done him a power of good. With his flair for 'casting' other people's talent, he'd already opened the door to Lindsay's career in the theatre, and was about to open another door for Lindsay the film director. (Lambert 2000: 109).

Richardson's shrewd business sense contrasts strongly with the apparently subdued approach that Anderson then adopted towards his career. In his interview with John Russell Taylor, he insists upon his reservations as to his ability to direct the film: he sees his decision to recommend the film to Woodfall more as an indication of his deep appreciation of the book, and further characterises his acceptance of the job as 'impetuous' (Anderson 1963: 90). The 1961 diary entry confirms the fledgling director's state of mind (Anderson 2004a: 70).

On the way back from the party, Reisz confides in Anderson the extent to which Antonioni's *L'Avventura* affected him. (ibid.) This revelation prompts an exchange between the two men in which they address both personal and professional issues – their aspirations and disillusionments on both counts. Anderson lends Reisz's outburst against Richardson and Harry Saltzman a creative potential by clearly stating that their conversation led him to consider his own aspirations as a filmmaker. (ibid.)

This entry offers a template of how his mind works: by associating his artistic tastes and aspirations with his current state of frustration, Reisz enabled Anderson to formulate his own goals in professional and aesthetic terms, which Anderson's reference to the cinema d'auteur appears to confirm: his definition of the 'film d'auteur' as a 'first-hand work' as opposed to 'a dramatic construction well directed

by somebody' replicates his own creative process.¹¹ Anderson here betrays a desire for single-handedly assuming control over the making of *This Sporting Life* – “I can get inside it and make it a personal allegory” (ibid.) – while conceding his ultimate inability or unwillingness to do so.

The existence of conflicting feelings towards the practice of the film director's role helps uncover the dual approach that Anderson adopts in relation to filmmaking.

While regarding the process as essentially a collaborative one, Anderson also strives to establish his position within that very process: in order to do so, he heralds a dual process whereby the actual production of the film finds itself duplicated through the high degree of interaction – both personal and professional – that he initiates with his collaborators throughout the process. The entries in Anderson's diaries covering the pre-production and filming of *This Sporting Life* as well as Lambert's memoir provide ample proof of the interaction at work. (Anderson 2004a: 73-81; Lambert 2000: 92-103)

The scriptwriter:

David Storey played a strong role in the production of the film. As both the author of the original novel and the main contributor to the script, Storey demonstrated a high degree of personal investment in the project. There is first of all the professional side to his contribution; one that involves adapting his skills as a writer to the specific task of bringing about a script that transposed the story on to the screen.

¹¹ Anderson (2004a: 70): “This was obviously the way *L'Avventura* affected Karel – what the *Cahiers* people call *film d'auteur* [sic], a first-hand work, not a dramatic construction well directed by somebody ... the other kind of film of course [film d'auteur] can only be written – or at least conceived by its director”.

To quote Anderson:

[T]he original conception is David Storey's, and so is the construction of the script. (Anderson 1978: LA 5/1/2/51/17)

Then comes the extent of his personal commitment to the film, which in turn sheds an unexpected light upon the nature of his working collaboration with Anderson.

In the 1963 interview with Taylor, Anderson details the mindset of each of the collaborators involved in the production of the film. Storey is presented as a reluctant collaborator who initially required the emotional support of the director to find his place in the project (ibid.: 90-1). Storey's characterisation falls in line with Anderson's own vision of his role in the making of *This Sporting Life* at the time: the will to produce a work of artistic value predominates, but an overwhelming sense of professional limitations also induces a high degree of self denigration. The letter to Silet illustrates the ambivalence:

I think the most credit I could claim would be the manipulation [original emphasis] of the structure imagined by David. In fact, his placing of the flashbacks showed great dramaturgic and filmic instinct. (Anderson 1978: LA 5/1/2/51/17)

Not surprisingly, Anderson stressed at the time, the value of the team effort that went into the making of the film (1963: 91-2). In the case of Storey, this translates into an active collaboration with both Anderson and Reisz contributing their comments at regular intervals throughout the scripting stage (ibid.: 91). The archive holds letters which Storey sent Anderson during the pre-production phase of the film: they convey the scriptwriter's lingering doubts as to his ability to write the script. A postcard dated October 1961, for instance, allows us an insight into Storey's mindset at the time:

Yes – still [four months later] working. Another two years should see it done. And THEN [sic] – The film script! Yet another daring adaptation of that hard selling novel by [sic]. (Storey 1961: LA 5/1/2/56/1)

The letters highlight the existence of a bond that the drafting stage gradually built between the two men: the letter-writing exercise became tantamount to casting away their fears and gaining the necessary artistic drive to complete the project. The pervasive notion of the need for collaborative work soon moved one step further with the mention of Richard Harris's contribution.

The lead actor:

It is only fitting that Anderson should have held such a high opinion of his first encounter with Richard Harris:

There are many images connected with *This Sporting Life* which will not soon be erased from my memory. One of the most cherished is not from the film at all: it is of being met at five o'clock in the morning at Tahiti airport by Richard Harris, his eighteenth-century seaman's hair down to his shoulders, bursting to tell me what he thought of the script we had sent him. (Anderson 1963: 92)

Harris was on location in Tahiti for the filming of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Anderson had seen his performance in a production of *The Ginger Man* and thought he was perfectly suited for the role of Frank Machin in *This Sporting Life*.¹² The 1963 interview with Taylor I aforementioned, reveals that Harris reacted enthusiastically to the offer of the part, which prompted Anderson and Storey to forward him a first draft of the script. However, they subsequently 'heard no more' (ibid.: 91-2). Anderson attributed his decision to fly off to Tahiti to the lack of reply from Harris and to his deep dissatisfaction with the script – dissatisfaction that he then shared with Storey and Reisz (ibid.: 92). The decision to fly halfway across the world to meet with Harris

¹² The name of Storey's leading male character was changed from Arthur in the novel to Frank in the film for fear of confusion with the *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*'s hero, Arthur Seaton.

is in itself indicative of how much weight Anderson attached to his contribution. His recollection of their work on the script of the film only confirms it.

Harris's input is presented as instrumental in helping shape up the script in its final form. Anderson speaks of 'passionate intransigence' to describe Harris's intervention at the drafting stage. (ibid.) We learn that Harris advocated a greater faithfulness to the book: Lambert's memoir provides more detailed information as to the nature of Harris's recommendations. Apparently, Storey and Anderson had opted for a linear structure when first drafting the script of *This Sporting Life*, thereby removing the flashbacks punctuating the narrative of the novel. In Harris's opinion, this proved a 'major mistake' (Lambert 2000: 96): '[t]he screenplay lacked the novel's intensity ... particularly in the central relationship between Machin and Mrs Hammond' (ibid.).

Both the 1963 *Films and Filming* interview with Taylor and Lambert's memoir state quite plainly that Anderson and more specifically Storey, followed Harris's suggestion:¹³ Anderson's 1978 letter to Silet confirms it.¹⁴ As a result, the final script re-instated the flashbacks, which had a significant influence upon the critical reception of the film. In our present context, the presentation of Harris's intervention as a crucial one exposes the nature of the dynamic at play in Anderson's directorial practice: one that feeds off the personal involvement of his collaborators in the project and in turn lays out the ground for the actuality of their participation in the filmmaking process.

¹³ See Anderson (1963: 92): "So I came home, and went to see David with the notes which Richard and I had made. He agreed as quickly as I had done, and set to work again with renewed energy". And Lambert (2000: 96): "Lindsay passed on [Richard's] comments to David, who wrote a second draft that preserved the novel's original structure ...".

¹⁴ Anderson (1978: LA 5/1/2/51/17): "It was Richard Harris as much as anyone else who protested against [dropping the flash-back technique] and encouraged me to goad David into returning to the original structure of the novel".

Anderson's working pattern:

The nature of Anderson's respective working relationships with Storey and Harris presents striking similarities: both relationships involved a close connection with Anderson that reflects a corresponding need within the filmmaking process: in other words, the degree of interaction with Storey was at its greatest during the drafting stage while Harris was most needed during filming. The diaries, Anderson's personal correspondence and Lambert's memoir all contribute to give a precise picture of the interaction between the director and his collaborators. It soon becomes apparent that Anderson conceives of this interaction on an oppositional mode. A kind of push-and-pull dynamic establishes itself whereby the primary collaborator sees his input shaped so as to reflect and to an extent, answer the needs of the director's mindset.

In the case of Harris's input, this translates into an almost absolute emotional dependency on Anderson's part:

The most striking feature of it all, I suppose, has been the splendour and the misery of my work and relationship with I. I think that his performance is marvellous ... Certainly he is acting with a strength and a simplicity that I have never seen from him before on the screen. I have grown to love him dearly – too dearly of course – with the result that I lack absolutely the detachment that would allow me to weather the storms of his temperament without suffering ... These have been fierce and shattering. (Anderson 2004a: 75)

One entry before the filming started – dated 21 August 1961 (Anderson 2004a: 73-74) – and three subsequent entries written during the filming of *This Sporting Life* – between April and July 1962 (2004a: 74-77) – appear in the published Diaries. They all convey the intrinsic connection between Anderson's physical attraction and emotional subservience to Harris with the quality of the performance achieved. It is as if the self-confessed sado-masochistic nature of their relationship had become an

indispensable component of the filming process: Harris's interaction with Anderson, albeit destructive, was valued for the active part it played in the director's practice of filmmaking.

Anderson, five weeks into the shooting, confessed his lack of confidence at tackling the job. (Anderson 2004a: 74-5) Already running two weeks behind schedule, he expressed his fear that the Rank Organisation would soon have him replaced. (ibid.: 75) In these conditions, the state of interdependency that prevailed between Anderson and Harris during the filming phase, signals a process of transfer whereby the director transposes his general feeling of inadequacy onto the function that the main lead is expected to perform: Harris's outbursts of anger and capricious behaviour are as a result, presented as either hampering or accounting for the film's progress.

Anderson in his entry for July 4th, 1962 – two weeks after the filming was completed – plainly states that Harris's temperament had shaped the artistic content of the film. (ibid.: 76-7) He then relates the effect of his leading actor's temperament to his own experience of directing *This Sporting Life*: the description of Harris's change of attitude towards Anderson brings out the director's own process of gaining confidence in the expected exercise of his authority on the set. (ibid.) In a way that parallels Harris's identification with his role in the film, Anderson undergoes a transformative process that involves both accepting and handling the responsibilities that are inherent to his function as a film director.

In the course of that same summer 1962, Anderson recorded his thoughts at the emotional challenge that Harris presented for him:

For I need to mature just as much as he does; and this is where, in a strange way, our natures, our problems coincide. In both there is an immaturity, an insecurity [that] reflects a childhood rejection: in my own case the lack of a

father, which results, when I meet a personality of strength, and of a certain inaccessibility, in my wanting that personality to love me and to father me ... While Richard wants the same, though with the addition of a violent suspicion of betrayal, a readiness to resent, an incapacity really and truly to give himself to anyone. (Anderson 2004a: 80)

Here the duality gives way to a manifestation of unity of purpose that puts forward the ultimate manifestation of Anderson's directorial practice: the director posits his main collaborators as the figure of the other; the figure that he opposes and simultaneously integrates into his artistic process.

Collaboration and opposition:

Lambert provides an illustration of that figure of otherness that underpins Anderson's process: relying upon Storey's recollection of the filming, he stresses the equally aggressive behaviour that Anderson demonstrated towards Harris. (Lambert 2000: 97)

The new light that is shed upon the balance of power characterising the relation between the director and his lead actor, however, also unravels another dimension to the dynamic at work: Anderson's propensity for verbal violence and cruelty would in Storey's words, parallel Mrs Hammond's relation with Frank Machin. (ibid.) Seen in the context of the film, this confirms the unbridgeable gap between the two main protagonists; in relation to Anderson, it reinforces the idea of the role of the other that Harris needed to assume.

Still in Lambert's memoir, we find further confirmation of the highly emotionally charged relationship that Anderson and Harris shared on the set. Lambert's account provides an insight into the perspective that Anderson's other collaborators held on the situation. He reports Reisz's recollection of the early filming stages:

The situation with Richard, and Lindsay's technical inexperience, created many problems. The camera crew was hostile, particularly the very conservative, old-school operator. Julian Wintle disliked the early rushes and wanted me to take over. (ibid.)

Reisz's words confirm the nature of the dynamic at play: what unites the director and his lead actor also feeds their antagonism. Their violent outbursts of temper point to the inexperience of the director while simultaneously signalling the major influence that the lead actor exerted on the final version of the film.

Lambert commented on the consequences this dynamic bears for the style of the film: he stresses the extent to which Anderson has transposed his feelings for the lead actor onto his vision for the film. Taking as a main example Rachel Roberts's character – Mrs Hammond – he attributes the decision of making the central female role even more withdrawn and beyond the reach of Frank Machin to Anderson's obsession with Harris. (ibid.: 99-100) In other words, *This Sporting Life's* script mirrors the alienation that characterises the director and his leading actor's relationship on the set: in spite of the fact that in the film one character precipitates the downfall of the other, these same characters are also dependent upon one another for any hope of personal fulfilment.

Anderson's published Diaries do not provide any account of the location-scouting trip that the director, his scriptwriter and his producer took in late 1961. Instead, in one entry dated 21 August 1961, Anderson shares his sense of emotional kinship with Harris: he contrasts Harris's 'lively, emotional, extravagant and poetic responses' with the reserve and emotional unavailability that he perceives to be characteristic of his colleagues coming from the North of England. (Anderson 2004a: 74) Anderson includes Storey in the list while indicating that this does not affect the bond that unites

the two men. The same entry reports Storey's own conclusion concerning Anderson's true personality:

As David [Storey], with his extraordinary perception, has pointed out – I really do exist, or at least only *act*, by relationship with others. Whereas he, I suppose, though genuinely friendly as far as he can be, is essentially a solitary. (Anderson 2004a: 73)

Anderson's words echo the love-hate relationship that underpins the narrative of *This Sporting Life* and further confirm the director's propensity to elevate his close collaborators to the status of 'other'. It might seem far-fetched or indeed pointless, to suggest any parallel between Storey and Harris; the making of *This Sporting Life* however, suggests otherwise.

Lambert's memoir provides some insight into the events that took place during the location scouting trip: more specifically, Anderson's somewhat abusive treatment of Storey on more than one occasion:

David found Lindsay 'very difficult and puzzling to deal with'. 'We had three terrible rows', he remembered, 'and I could never quite make out why they erupted' ... The third and most alarming row erupted in the lounge of their hotel, where they had been talking amicably (or so David thought) after dinner. But when David announced he was going to bed ... a 'scream of rage' made him turn back ... Lindsay ... '[t]hen, white in the face, he shouted at me. "Come back here, you cunt!"'. (Lambert 2000: 92-3)

It is striking that Anderson should have been prone to the same outbursts of verbal violence that were to also characterise Harris's behaviour on the set of *This Sporting Life*. Lambert's account outlines a similar use of offensive vocabulary in situations that involved one party's willingness to assert control over the other. In the diaries Anderson provides examples of Harris's repeated summons on the set demanding complete subordination on the part of the director. (Anderson 2004a: 75-9) Based

upon Lambert's account, it appears that Anderson predicated his working relationship with Storey upon a similarly aggressive technique.

As a consequence, it appears that Anderson's working pattern with his close collaborators is the product of a duality: he needs their input or support – professional or even emotional – but at the same time, favours a day-to-day relationship that is characterised by a high level of antagonism. The confrontational mode extended beyond the production of a film as his relationship with Reisz demonstrates.

Reisz as previously mentioned, supported Anderson on more than one occasion during the making of *This Sporting Life*; this however failed to translate into any real fondness for his Free Cinema colleague. Lambert mentions one of Anderson's diary entries that puts across the extent of Anderson's condescension and even occasional lack of respect for the *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*'s director: from describing Reisz as a 'happy and intelligent conformist', Anderson according to Storey, would have poked fun at the director on the occasion of *Morgan*'s screening, 'humming "Isn't It Romantic" right in front of Karel'. (Lambert 2000: 98)

In the case of Storey, Anderson had repeatedly praised the book and actively sought to have it adapted for the cinema. The 1963 interview with Taylor conveys both warmth of feelings and respect for the novelist. (Anderson 1963: 90-1) However, as the incident with Storey illustrates, the strains of the production phase also unleashed a high degree of animosity towards his scriptwriter. Again, in Lambert's memoir, Anderson is quoted as labelling Storey a 'cautious, defensive, emotionally ungenerous northerner' (Lambert 2000: 92).

As for Harris, the admiration for his talent as an actor soon translated into a physical and emotional attraction that was to outlive the making of *This Sporting Life*.

Anderson subsequently directed *The Diary of a Madman* with Harris in the lead role, which based on the content of the diary entries for that period, led the director to replicate the same confrontational pattern:

With *Diary of a Madman* ... further explorations of love-hate between us. Rehearsals for *The Diary* varied between friendship and creativity on the one hand, and resentment, fear, compulsive talking and nervous bullying on the other. (Anderson 2004a: 91)

Anderson's compulsion to work with Harris prompted him to initiate the project of a filmed adaptation of *Wuthering Heights* that never materialised as well as casting the Irish actor in the title role in Storey's *Julius Caesar*. (Lambert 2000: 103-4)¹⁵ Harris however quit two weeks into rehearsals. (Anderson 2004a: 95) Of note, both projects involved Storey as [script]writer; the diaries testify to Anderson's acknowledgement of and respect for the professionalism and talent of his collaborator. (Anderson 2004a: 104) This contrasts sharply with the director's own ambivalence towards Harris's behaviour both as an individual and actor:

[I]t is a clear indication that one is dealing with a neurotic personality that one knows that his behaviour does not even necessarily postulate motives so clear and rational ... He can trust no one. He wants everything. And he wants to pay for nothing. The pattern is, literally, 'infantile'. (ibid.: 94).

What is significant here is the existence of a discourse that is linked to Anderson's way of exercising his directorial practice: the nature of this discourse involves a sustained confrontation of opposites – introvert/extrovert, dominant/dominated, experienced/inexperienced – the function of which lies in their capacity to trigger the director's creative process.

¹⁵ See also Anderson (2004a: 86, 88-9, 95, 100, 101, 103, 104, 113, 123).

As a consequence, Anderson's behaviour towards his closest collaborators varies with the phase of production of the film: the more acute the need for that precise collaborator, the more potent the antagonism. Conversely, once the need for collaboration has waned, the degree of tension decreases. It is significant for instance, that Anderson and Storey became friends following the production of *This Sporting Life* and went on to collaborate on many other projects that also necessitated a close working partnership between director and scriptwriter. The pattern brings out Anderson's propensity for turning the progress of his career into a discourse. More specifically, the nature of his professional relationships – the way in which he related to his collaborators – proved to him inadequate to capture the whole experience of being a film director: as a consequence Anderson felt the need to fill in the gaps by adding a more personal perspective. *This Sporting Life* provides a fitting metaphor with the use of flashbacks that punctuate the spectator's journey into Frank Machin's emotional mindset.

The archive holds a copy of a short interview that Anderson must have granted at the time of the film's presentation at the Cannes International Film Festival in 1963 (Anderson 1963: LA 1/3/5/3). The unidentified interviewer first questions the choice of rugby as a theme for the film and then proceeds to ask about the perceived homosexual undertone of the film. Anderson's answers to these questions illustrate the workings of his discourse: the personal underlies the professional while avoiding the temptation to reduce one to the other. For instance, Anderson is keen to stress the autobiographical dimension of the story by reminding the interviewer that the film was adapted from Storey's novel that drew itself heavily upon the writer's Yorkshire working-class background. (ibid.)

Anderson's answer shows the extent to which the personal elements – Storey's experience as a working class rugby player – inform his professional handling of the theme. Here, the director's intention to treat a specific theme – 'the tragedy of a human nature' – is materialised through the encounter of two interdependent but opposite areas: the personal or subjective and the professional or objective.

Anderson's answer to the possible homosexual theme underlying *This Sporting Life* shows that the obverse held true as well. Frank Machin's perceived inability to relate to women and form any meaningful relationship could also be read in conjunction with Anderson's own personal life.

In these circumstances, the director's insistence upon the 'ambiguity' at the heart of the film functions as a reminder of the boundary not to be crossed: that is, 'la vie est ambiguë' (ibid.), also refers to the film's refusal to reduce the characters to types and their story to blunt generalisations about social class and human emotions. In relation to Anderson's handling of personal and professional matters, this interview is a reminder of a sustained willingness on the director's part to maintain the status quo; a belief in the need to strike a balance between seeing personal and professional as absolute opposites and allowing them to assimilate.

This Sporting Life stands as the perfect template from which to approach Anderson's career as a film director and his working relationships with other film practitioners.

His collaboration with Richard Harris notably epitomises the personal discourse that the director associated throughout his career with other film practitioners in Europe as well as in The United States. Before moving on to the impact that the cultural background had upon Anderson's directorial practice, I will look at the progression of the director's working pattern on his three subsequent projects.

Chapter 5:

Anderson's Directorial Practice – part 2

This chapter will delve deeper into Anderson's working pattern with his collaborators by taking a closer look at the context in and around the production of the films and its connection with the respective storylines. First, *The White Bus* (1966) will provide a key example of both the positive outcomes and obstacles that Anderson's directorial practice encountered throughout his career. *If....* (1968) will account for the first collaboration between Anderson and Sherwin thereby providing the necessary background to understand the impact that the film which won the British director a Palme d'Or at the 1969 Cannes Film Festival, exerted on his working pattern.

The White Bus (1966)¹⁶

Anderson referred to *The White Bus* as an 'unknown' film (Anderson 1994: 107): it was never widely distributed or exhibited. Positive auspices however saw the birth of the project. In 1965 Oscar Lewenstein, an artistic director in the theatre turned film producer and personal friend of Anderson's, initiated a three-film project for

¹⁶ This section draws upon an article that I wrote and was published in *Networking Knowledge*, the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network Journal in June 2010: "The Cinema Authorship of Lindsay Anderson: Anderson's Directorial Practice", *Networking Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network*, Vol. 3:1.

Woodfall Films that aimed to reunite the three leading figures of the Free Cinema movement. In Anderson's words:

[Lewenstein] wanted to bring three directors of original personality together, to make a film in three segments. His first idea was that these pictures should not be related in any way, except that each should represent the free choice of its director. (Anderson 1979: LA 1/4/5/1)

Anderson opted to work on a short story by Shelagh Delaney (1964), entitled *The White Bus*. It was not the first time that Delaney had teamed up with Woodfall as back in 1961, her novel *A Taste of Honey* had been turned into a film directed by Tony Richardson.¹⁷

The White Bus was originally published in 1964 as part of a collection entitled *Sweetly Sings the Donkey*. The film's narrative follows a young woman over a period of two days, starting in London at the end of her day's work before she sets out on a journey to an unnamed city. Reviews typically referred to this city as being the Girl's hometown, Salford in the north of England, inferring that Delaney and Anderson had kept the same location as in the short story. (Hedling 1998: 62; Sussex 1970: 58; Lambert 2000: 130) However, based on archival evidence, there is also a strong indication that part of the shooting took place in Manchester. (Ondricek 1965: LA 5/1/3/12) There, she boards a white touring bus displaying a big 'See Your City' sign on the side, which takes her on a guided tour of its key sites. She travels with the mayor and his mace-bearer – in full regalia – and a group of anonymous passengers wearing their national costumes or a stylised version of their best clothes. At the end of the day, involving a trip to a foundry, local school, the library, the museum, and the art gallery and ending with a civil defence demonstration, the Girl works her way

¹⁷ *A Taste of Honey* (1961) won 4 BAFTA Awards in 1962: Best British Film for Tony Richardson, Best British Screenplay for Tony Richardson and Shelagh Delaney, Best British Actress for Dora Bryan, and Most Promising Newcomer to Leading Film Roles for Rita Tushingham.

back through the empty streets and stops at a fish-and-chip shop. The scene of her eating alone while the couple managing the shop are clearing the tables, concludes the film.

Creative latitude:

Publicly, Anderson consistently professed a great fondness for *The White Bus*.¹⁸ The degree of creative latitude he was granted on the project plays a significant part in his positive evaluation of the film:

I was very lucky in that Oscar [Lewenstein] gave me complete freedom. Looking back on things, I now realise that I have only been any good ... when making films entirely freely and in my own way ... (Anderson 1994: 105)

When looking at Anderson's diaries for the period covering the scripting phase of *The White Bus*, a similar pattern emerges whereby Anderson demonstrates the confidence to actively contribute his own ideas to the project, even before filming is due to begin:

13 March 1965: Shelagh [Delaney] arrives ... We talk about the project ... She is sympathetic, direct, and I feel creative. Wish something could happen to make it more real for me. We agree to do it – I am encouraged by her liking the 'Songs of the Tyne', and even suggesting 'Blaydon Races' for the picture. (Anderson 2004a: 105)

Another entry into Anderson's diary for 1965 sheds a complementary light upon the dynamic that characterises his partnership with Delaney:

6 May 1965: SHELAGH at 11 – she has worked on the story – but hadn't brought her papers! Our chat remained vague, yet creative I think – suggestive rather, and I have confidence (hopeful) that something concrete and individual and poetic will emerge. I showed her THE DREAMLAND Express: which she understood: and we chatted about the style – the beginning – the end – the crucial mid-point where the bus arrives and a sort of realism (however personal)

¹⁸ Sussex (1970: 58): "*The White Bus* ... is the kind of film I wanted to make and am quite proud of having made".

changes into a sort of fantasy (however concrete). I long just to 'do it'.
No use at discussing scripts really. (Anderson 1965: LA 6/1/48)

Anderson appears to attribute the initiative of the scripting stage to Delaney – *she has worked on the story* – while at the same time, asserting a form of authorial control over the result – *our chat remained vague ... I have confidence that something concrete and individual and poetic will emerge*. In other words, to Anderson it is HER story, she is the one working on it, but THEIR creative meetings shaped that same story into the filmable script.

Collaboration and authorial control:

The tension between what Anderson wants to control and what he knows he can effectively control, illustrates a fundamental aspect of his directorial practice: a claim to authorial control that expresses itself through a contrary pull. The origin can be traced back to the documentaries he filmed for the Sutcliffes: he had at the time no actual experience of filmmaking. As I developed in a previous chapter, his feelings of inadequacy led him to form strong emotional attachments with the members of the filming crew, often the cameraman. At the end of each project, however, Anderson inevitably reclaimed full authorship of the documentary while disguising any remaining doubt as to the artistic value of his work as the expression of unrequited love or unreturned friendship.

Anderson acknowledges Delaney's area of expertise and thereby predicates his own upon her successful and timely input in order for him to play his part: the more effective the collaboration, the clearer his authorial input becomes and therefore the more effectively he can perform and claim the role of film director as his own alone.

A letter to Silet illustrates the point fully:

... I feel that you have overstressed my contribution frequently, at the expense of some of my collaborators. Particularly in the case of the writers with whom I have worked ... the original idea of *THE WHITE BUS* [original emphasis] was Shelagh Delaney's ... We worked on the script together and perhaps what is most interesting is to see how her original, very subjective conception (also very poetic) was pushed towards the epic as a result of my imaginative contribution ... There is very much a tendency today to overstress ... the contribution of the director. There is certainly no need to do this by underemphasising the contribution of the screenwriter. (Anderson 1978: LA 5/1/2/51/17)

Anderson's working pattern comes across fully in the circumstances that led him and Delaney to work together.

As previously mentioned, Lewenstein brought in Anderson, Reisz and Richardson to work on the project. Soon after giving the directors free rein as to the choice of subject, the project began to shape up around the idea of releasing a triptych of short films all using Delaney material as their common thread.¹⁹ Anderson asserted his authorship over the project through an initial resistance to Lewenstein's suggestion, which later translated into a similar pattern of *constructive* reluctance when he eventually started work with Delaney. (Anderson 2004a: 112; 116; 121; 124; 133; 134; 136) Once more, Anderson asserts his authorial control over the filmmaking process by shaping the collaborative work it entails according to his vision for the film. This aspect of Anderson's directorial practice is key to understanding the view that he holds of his role as a film director. The ultimate failure of the project illustrates this further.

¹⁹ The Programme Notes for Gary Sweet's Showing of *The White Bus* at the North Texas State University in December 1979 in Denton, Texas, US, account for the shift from the initial creative freedom Oscar Lewenstein gave Karel Reisz, Tony Richardson and Lindsay Anderson, to the eventual decision of using Shelagh Delaney's book of short stories as a common source of inspiration: "... I liked the story and I liked Shelagh, and I agreed to do it. Tony Richardson hit on another story from the same collection, and it was decided that the "trilogy" should take a more defined form, of three different directors working on material provided by Shelagh Delaney". Anderson (1979: LA 1/4/5/1)

Reisz withdrew at an early stage and Peter Brook stepped up in his place. (Anderson 1979: LA 1/4/5/1; Sussex 1970: 55)²⁰ According to the archival and published material accounting for that period of Anderson's career, Richardson and Brook started work on their respective segments also using Delaney as a primary source. (Sussex 1970: 55; Lambert 2000: 134; Anderson 2004b: 107; Anderson 1979: LA 1/4/5/1)

Anderson completed his segment in 1966, ahead of his colleagues. A screening of *The White Bus* was arranged, which Anderson claimed, prompted his fellow-directors to re-evaluate the nature of their contribution to the project.²¹ He attributes the failure of the project – in creative terms – to his fellow directors' decision to abandon Delaney's material. In that respect, the programme notes which Anderson wrote in 1979 on the occasion of a screening of *The White Bus* at the North Texas State University, provide an illustration of his belief that the absence of commonality in the directors' choice of subject caused the ultimate failure of the project:

... We (that is, Shelagh Delaney and I) heard that both Tony [Richardson] and Peter [Brook] had decided to jettison their Delaney subjects and go for something more striking and original. (I have never known whether to take this as a compliment, or the reverse). In the end, Tony made a forty-minute musical, in which Vanessa Redgrave sang six or seven songs; and Peter made a two-reel "homage" to Buster Keaton with *Zero Mostel*. Neither of these efforts was very successful in itself – and when the three films were put together, the result was a mysterious and uneven mish-mash. I suggested the title of RED, WHITE AND ZERO for the completed work, Tony's film being called "Red and Blue", mine "The White Bus", and Peter's starring *Zero Mostel*. United Artists took delivery, and the rest was (understandably) silence. (Anderson 1979: LA 1/4/5/1)

²⁰ Anderson in his interviews with Paul Ryan in the 1990s however, skips Karel Reisz's initial participation and suggests Oscar Lewenstein only invited him, Tony Richardson and Peter Brook to contribute a segment to the project. See Anderson (1994: 105).

²¹ When Tony Richardson and Peter Brook saw *The White Bus* they immediately decided that they should try and make something more remarkable and they jettisoned Shelagh Delaney. See Anderson (1994: 107)

Anderson's ultimate condemnation of Richardson's and Brook's creative licence²² brings out the distinctiveness of his vision for the director's function: one that acknowledges his limitations within the filmmaking process and by implication expects the highest degree of commitment on the part of his collaborators.

In the aforementioned programme notes, Anderson gives an insight into his working pattern as a director: he describes the nature of his collaboration with the scriptwriter, which uncovers the point at which the tension characterising his directorial style, becomes apparent. In those notes, Anderson describes the process whereby he switches from the collaborative to the individual: the collaborative work in which he engages on his filmmaking projects, acts as a trigger for his directorial practice, the point at which he asserts his directorial authority. To quote him:

Shelagh and I worked closely together to produce a script which derived closely from the original story, but which went a good way beyond it... I think it was while we were working on the script that the idea came of injecting short bursts of colour into an otherwise black-and-white narrative ... Clearly what I was groping towards was a style that would be poetically expressive rather than naturalistically faithful to "real life". (ibid.)

It follows that Anderson conceives of his aesthetic as a film director as the result of a collaborative process, which the subtle shift from the 'we' to the 'I' personal pronoun indicates. While the recognition of the collaborative nature of the filmmaking process is not in itself unusual on the part of a film director, Anderson's acute awareness of the existence of a creative interaction that operates during his filmmaking projects is. This finds confirmation in his subsequent mention of Miroslav Ondricek's work on *The White Bus*:

²² Anderson (1994: 107): "... The whole thing made no sense. I certainly don't blame United Artists for not distributing it".

...And so began a collaboration which was to be of the greatest importance for me, personally as well as creatively... (ibid.)

Collaboration and creation:

Around the time of *The White Bus*'s release, Anderson vented his frustration at the lack of commercial prospect for his film by attacking the narrow-mindedness of the film industry whose financial considerations in his opinion, stifled the creative potential of more daring filmmakers. (Sussex 1970: 57) In his attack Anderson compared the film distributors with the film critics that he judged just as incapable or unwilling to commit to the truly artistic as their bias in favour of the commercially tried and safe demonstrates.²³ Anderson's reaction to the critical appraisal of *The White Bus* parallels his presentation of the filmmaking process in his critical writings as one that involved both creative latitude and interdependence. (Anderson 1947; 1948; 1950)

In her study of Anderson's work, Sussex (1970) quoted the director as stressing his interest in the dynamic that the opposition of the individual to the society generates.²⁴ For him, this constitutes a source of inspiration for his films, just as his criticism of the lack of foresight exhibited by the film critics and distributors alike, provides the impetus behind his writings about film and the cinema in general. The resulting sense of a confrontation coupled with a need for integration, stressing the position that the individual adopts with reference to the group, fits in very well with a sequence taken from *The White Bus*.

²³ Sussex (1970: 57): "Critics are simply the equivalents in journalism of the film distributors in the industry".

²⁴ Sussex (1970: 58): "[Anderson] draws attention to the theme recurring throughout his work – 'the tension between being alone and an almost nostalgic feeling of belonging to a group or community'"

Towards the end of the film, the main protagonist, the Girl, attends a civil defence demonstration along with the other bus passengers. The sequence involves a series of reaction shots of the group as the invited audience of the demonstration. Their reaction remains for the most part subdued throughout a series of simulated emergency scenarios involving amongst others, civil unrest and a nuclear attack. A sense of contrast pervades the sequence. On the soundtrack loud sounds of exploding bombshells, screaming civilians, emergency rescue teams, all contrast starkly with the mute reaction of the White Bus group. Their stillness clashes with the commotion and scenes of panic in the civil demonstration. The sequence culminates in the Girl's companions turning to lifeless dummies while she is seen sitting amongst them. When she stands up to leave, the spot where the demonstration took place has been engulfed in absolute silence. This play on contrasts, involving the film's photography as well as the diegetic and non-diegetic soundtrack, echoes an earlier scene in the city's art gallery to which I will subsequently return. Both scenes foreground the state of interdependence that characterises the relationship between narrative and narrational marks. The action depicted on-screen enacts their reliance upon one another when it comes to conveying the storyline but also figuratively highlights the site where they diverge. In other words, the doubling of the audience – the White Bus group and the spectators off screen – as well as the irruption of fantasy into the action – when the Girl's companions turned into dummies – betray the existence of a tension between the constitutive elements of a film.

In "Creative Elements" which he wrote for *Sequence 5*, Anderson explores the successive stages inherent to the filmmaking process. (1948: 194-9) He gives a detailed and precise account of the contribution which each person involved in the production of a film makes, from the producer, the composer, the cameraman, to the

scriptwriter and finally the director. The main purpose of the article is to identify the source of creative force(s) behind the film, or as Anderson puts it, ‘... who precisely is responsible for the excellence of any particular film’. (ibid.: 194)

The originality of the article lies in the dual approach that Anderson adopts: he assesses the function that each contributor makes to the filmmaking process, while resisting the temptation to isolate and therefore to privilege one over the others. Even when dealing with the role of the film director, Anderson defines his function as the product of a tension, to the extent that he almost contradicts himself. By simultaneously proclaiming the centrality of the director’s role and defining the filmmaking process as a fusion of creative elements – interdependent of one another – Anderson presents a precarious view of the directorial practice defining the filmmaking process as the ‘rare, almost miraculous fusion of many and various creative elements’ (ibid.: 199).

His statement works on more than one level: the relevance of the concept of an integrated process applies in Anderson’s view to the team involved in the production of a film, with the film director as the creative impetus that fully supports it. To quote him more fully:

It is a complex series of relationships, susceptible to so many changes of emphasis that all generalisations are sooner or later falsified. But one constant truth emerges – that the evolution of a whole and consistent film demands a rare, almost miraculous fusion of many and various creative elements. Inevitably, perhaps, some critics, soured by prolonged exposure to the second-rate, sell out at last; and proclaim with the loud, self-assuring accents of those who resign from an honourable but fatiguing struggle, that the film is not an art. Only one answer is necessary – that it has been done. It is by their instinctive appreciation of what the critic distils by careful analysis, that the few great men of the cinema have made those rare and treasured works which are to the cinemane ... ‘like an amulet against disaster’ (ibid.)

In that respect, the aforementioned scene from *The White Bus* provides a metaphor by which to comprehend Anderson's vision of the filmmaking process. By implication, the scene can also be read as capturing the director's own interrogation about his place within and control over the process: in these circumstances, it becomes conceivable to regard the character of the Girl as the on-screen extension of the director. She is the only one that remains life-like once the action of the narrative – the civil unrest demonstration – stops, as if to emphasise her ability to move freely between the constitutive layers of the film. Conversely, her loneliness at the end of the scene, and subsequently at the conclusion of the film – when she sits alone in a deserted fish-and-chip restaurant – brings out the degree of alienation inherent to the creative process. As I indicated earlier, another scene in the film explores the relationship that the constitutive elements underpinning the filmmaking process entertain with the director.

Collaboration and tension:

The scene in question takes places two-thirds into the film and involves the group of tourists, still led by the mayor, attending a production of Bertolt Brecht's *Days of the Commune*. The song being performed remains unidentified throughout the sequence, and the audience shows virtually no interest in the performance.²⁵ The other noticeable feature is the acting practice that the performer is adopting on-stage. The song is in German and there is no indication given to the audience as to its origin; furthermore the performer is wearing a rifle strapped around his chest but hanging at his back. The resulting effect is one of contrast as the spectator gradually becomes

²⁵ Anderson (2004a: 138): Note 1: "Anthony Hopkins makes his film debut singing ['Song of Resolution']...". Erik Hedling (1998: 66) however disagrees with the note and indicates that 'Brecht's last original drama, written in Zuerich [between] 1948 [and 1949] had not then been translated into English and had never been performed in Britain'.

aware that the different components of the film confront one another while simultaneously providing a unified vision for the sequence as a whole. The performer embodies the resulting effect of contrast by allowing the structure underlying his performance to become visible.

In an article written for *Screen* Alan Lovell (1975/6) discusses the perceived Brechtian sub-text in Anderson's work. Lovell provides a definition of Brecht's own understanding of his role and relationship to the audience as a playwright: he argues that Brecht's work betrays an awareness of the self-defeating nature of the socialist artist's role: any serious attempt at exposing the inner mechanisms that underlie all works of art implies using the avant-garde art as a platform. However, in doing so, the artist dissociates himself/herself from the 'mass audience' whose passive acceptance of the traditional Western techniques of representation he or she wants to challenge. (ibid.: 62)

Still according to Lovell, Brecht opts to acknowledge the paradox, or tension, inherent to the artist's position and, to that end, allows 'his work [to be] pulled in both directions, [never refusing] the pull of either side'. (ibid.: 62-3) Similarly, Anderson's awareness of his directorial practice works towards acknowledging the existence of the contrary pull and at the same time, implies, on his part, an attempt at resolving the inherent tension.

In *The White Bus*, the actor performing the Song of Resolution carries the prop central to the storyline being represented – the rifle as symbol of the uprising in the 1870 Paris Commune – in a manner that challenges the naturalistic depiction of the event that the audience would expect. The historical accuracy of his costume and prop which the lyrics of the song complement, comes into stark contrast with the actor's

un-naturalistic performance of the scene. Just as the audience within the diegesis of *The White Bus* remains indifferent to the representation taking place on-stage, the performer wears the costume and produces a verbal rendition of the lyrics given to him but does not allow for an assimilation between narrative and narration to occur. The resulting tension conceptualises the paradox that informs the relationship between the director and his/her film: producing meaning on-screen involves both a unifying and potentially destructive process.

The place of the director:

Anderson conceptualises the tension that threatens the unity of the creative process and simultaneously proclaims the authorial presence of the director when he asserts in “Creative Elements” that the director is ‘a central figure that cannot stand alone’.²⁶

If.... (1968) is Anderson’s next feature film: it shares with *The White Bus* a similar concern for experimenting with the narrative and narrational marks.²⁷ Both films feature sequences that alternate between black-and-white and colour photography. The irruption of fantasy-like elements echoing a similar practice in *The White Bus*, signals the director’s interest in challenging the audience’s expectations in terms of a realistic delivery of the storyline.

Within the present context, the unravelling of the narrative structure and narration techniques also invite a consideration of Anderson’s view of his place within the process. I will here focus on Anderson’s working partnership with his scriptwriter,

²⁶ Anderson (1948:199)“So, in this gathering together, this fusion, there must be a central figure, one man conscious of the relative significance of every shot, the shape and flow of every sequence. But he cannot stand alone; he stands with, dependent on, his author and his cameraman”.

²⁷ See Bordwell (1979: 98) and (1985: 42-3) for the contextualisation of the concept of ‘narrational marks’.

David Sherwin. It is however worth mentioning that a number of features pertaining to their working relationship can also be found in Anderson and David Gladwell's own collaboration on *If....*

Gladwell had a background in editing documentaries. His assessment of his collaboration with Anderson juxtaposes the context in which this feature film was made with the director's view of his role within the creative process.²⁸ He comments for instance, on the highly personal dimension that underpins the film, which to Gladwell, is unusual for a film with a big budget – *If....* received finance from Paramount Pictures. (Gladwell 1969: 24) Gladwell almost sees as a contradiction the high degree of authorial control that Anderson exerted on all stages of production: he opposes the director's insistence on "absolute control" to the number of film artists and technicians involved. (ibid.) Gladwell also concludes that Anderson's dictatorial attitude is predicated upon the need for strong "human relationships". (ibid.: 33) In a way that echoes Anderson's diaries when filming the Sutcliffes' documentaries, Gladwell's account confirms the director's respect and need for the expertise of his collaborators. Gladwell's mention of Anderson's need for an ear to think aloud into at every stage of the process. (ibid.) Anderson's reliance on both the technical and the emotional input of his collaborators also comes across in his *Notes from Sherwood*. In this article he wrote for *Sight and Sound* in 1956, Anderson discusses the human richness involved in the filmmaking process. Similarly that article highlights the constraints which the context in which the production takes place, exert on creative latitude. Just as for the making of the Sutcliffes Documentaries, he came to the conclusion that working in television requires strong technical support and committed

²⁸ David Gladwell (1969), "Editing Anderson's *If....*", *Screen* 10 (1), March-April, 24-33.

collaborators to meet the strict production budget and deadlines. (Anderson 1956: 66-9)

The reviews that greeted *If....* at Cannes in 1969, help visualise the director's concern with his potential for unifying or undermining the film's structure. The reviewers, in their majority, attributed to the film – the daily life at a fictional English public school where three senior students launch their own revolution on the occasion of their school's Founders' Day and end up shooting at the parents, teachers, chaplain and students alike²⁹ – a dual structure: part documentary, part tragedy, the chosen structure would account, depending on the critic, for the film's perceived success or failure. (Der Tagesspiegel 1969: FIFP312-B12; Frankfurter Rundschau 1969: FIFP312-B12; L'Unita 1969: FIFP312-B12)

Two reviews are particularly indicative of this tendency to read the film as a two-tier work: the first was published in the French daily newspaper, *Le Figaro* on 10 May 1969 (Chauvet 1969: FIFP312-B12), shortly before *If....* was awarded the Palme d'Or. The reviewer, Louis Chauvet, located the film's failure in the director's 'sudden rupture of tone' between the 'subtle and reserved *reportage* on the ups and downs of school life' and the sudden twist leading to a 'full-blown tragedy'. The second review, published in *Le Canard Enchaîné* (Duran 1969: *Le Canard Enchaîné*) three days after the close of the Festival, conversely praised the dual structure of the film which the reviewer, Michel Duran, termed 'document et pamphlet'. In Duran's estimation, the duality that underpinned *If....*'s structure, constituted the strength of the film:

²⁹ Sussex (1970) only provides a very succinct summary of the action (70-1: "*If...* [sic] is set in what Anderson has described as 'a fictitious, but extremely authentic public school', and shows how three rebels are finally driven into staging a violent revolt against everything the place stands for". Mark Sinker (2004) offers a comprehensive overview of the main themes and stylistic concerns underlying *If....*, as well as provides an extensive background to the scripting and making of the film. His study however does not include a summary of the narrative.

Anderson does not deny himself access to fantasy. He blends the outmost realism with the vagaries of his imagination, just as he mixes together black and white and colour [shots]. In the process he throws off the rational spectator but delights the true cinema lover. (ibid.)³⁰

An explicit connection between the dual structure of the film and the director himself becomes the focus of another review: François Gault writing for the now defunct newspaper *Le Coopérateur de France* in June 1969, highlights the autobiographical current informing the narrative, which in his opinion, contributes to give the film a ‘confounding degree of exactitude and veracity’ (Gault 1969: *Le Coopérateur de France*).

The reference to the director’s years as a student at Oxford is meant to vouch for the documentary value of the film: here however, the critic’s confusion over Anderson’s educational past³¹ uncovers the site of the tension that underpins the film’s structure as well as the director’s relationship to his film. It soon becomes apparent that the review alternates between two views of the film: one that regards *If...* as a unique insight into the life of an English public school, and another that seeks to establish a connection with the 1960s worldwide context of youth contestation. (ibid.)

In other words, Gault struggled to decide whether the film’s value lies in the depiction of a world with its own rules and therefore alien to outsiders, or conversely testifies to the director’s acute understanding of the social realities of the day. The critic solved

³⁰ ... Lindsay Anderson ne se prive pas de fantaisie, mêlant le réalisme absolu au délire de l’imagination, comme il mêle le blanc et le noir à la couleur, déroutant le spectateur trop cartésien, mais possédant l’amateur de cinéma.

³¹ The location for the film is Cheltenham College where Anderson went to school in the late thirties until he secured a scholarship to Oxford in 1941 (Anderson 1994: 36-7). The script itself is based on the schooling experience of David Sherwin and John Howlett who frequented Tonbridge School in Kent. Anderson was keen to use his old school as the location for the fictional public school in which the action takes place. In order to be granted permission to shoot at Cheltenham, he and Sherwin produced a ‘laundered’ version of the script (Lambert 2000: 141).

the degree of uncertainty by praising Anderson's distinctive style: well-timed humour that counterbalances the shocking value underpinning the depiction of the emotional and physical violence occurring daily at the school, the effective use of a hand-held camera to convey the oppressive atmosphere, all these elements still enable Gault to confidently assert the originality of the film. (ibid.)

The review works well as an illustration of the unifying power of the director's figure: a strong link of causality is established between what happened on the screen and Anderson's directorial input. *If....* foregrounds the issue even further as a result of the connection between the setting for the story and the director's own life. This provides an interesting counterpart to the film's apparent connection with the general context of student revolts and social unrest affecting Europe at the time and the May 1968 events in France, more specifically. That latter aspect seemed to have generated a greater amount of interest for the reviewers in Britain. (Izod et al. 2012)

In an interview for the French cinema journal, *Jeune Cinéma*, the following question was put to Anderson:

You are undoubtedly aware that black and red flags floated over Paris last May; in that respect, I have noticed that both the scarves floating in the wind in the motorbike escapade scene are also black and red. Is that a coincidence? (Delmas 1969: 3)³²

His answer captures the essence of his vision for the intended meaning of the film.

Speaking of 'significant correspondence', Anderson insists upon the timelessness of the themes covered in *If....*, while highlighting the fact that his film was scripted well

³² Vous savez sans doute que les drapeaux rouge et noir ont flotté à Paris en mai; or j'ai remarqué que lors de la fugue à moto, les deux écharpes qui flottent au vent sont justement rouge et noire; est-ce une coincidence ? (ibid.)

before the May 1968 events in France.³³ This is a pattern that repeated itself in subsequent interviews: whenever asked to comment on the social and cultural acuity of his film, Anderson would consistently give an ambiguous answer: ambiguous in the sense that his answer acknowledged the relevance of timing to the understanding of *If....*, while denying that the general context was at the origin of the film or even that it informed directly its meaning. The “Notes for a Preface to the Published Script”, illustrate the point most convincingly.³⁴

Essentially the Public School milieu of the film provides material for a metaphor. Even the coincidence of its making and release with the world-wide phenomenon of student revolt was fortuitous. The basic tensions, between hierarchy and anarchy, independence and tradition, liberty and law, are always with us. (Anderson/Sherwin 1969: 120-3)

The British director, Stephen Frears, who was Anderson’s assistant director on *If....*, provided a similar account of the relation between the film and the events unfolding at the time: *If....* – its scripting and making – preceded the 1968 events in Paris thereby lending the film a prophetic quality while still bearing witness to the social and cultural upheavals as they were happening:

If.... wasn't about the '68 events except that they were happening while we were filming. I remember Bobby Kennedy being shot and cutting out a picture to go on Malcolm's wall of someone putting a flower into a gun. The film was very of the moment. (Frears, 21 May 2010)

The ensuing paradox finds its expression – and resolution – in Anderson’s claim to universality for his film: referring to Dr. Johnson’s aesthetic concern to strike the right balance between the portrayal of the too familiar – as limited by its temporality – and

³³ Anderson in Delmas (1969: 3): “... la correspondance n’en est pas moins significative. Mais il faut que je précise que *If* [sic] a été conçu avant les événements de mai ...”

³⁴ See also Anderson (1970: 106): “*If* was not created in any way with a conscious knowledge or analysis of student movements in France, Berlin, Tokyo, London, and Columbia University ... In that sense, the film is in a way prophetic. But it was a sort of personal myth that was being worked out in the film’.

the outright alien – as pertaining to man’s ideal of transcendence³⁵ – he claimed that his films aspire to the grandeur of generality. Anderson declared in 1968, in an interview for *The Observer*:

Any school – particularly any boarding school – is a microcosm; another inducement for anyone who hankers, as I always do, for that kind of poetry which can claim ‘the grandeur of generality’. (Anderson 1968: 113)

The connection that is inferred between Anderson’s personal life, the social context surrounding the making of the film and the storyline itself, invites further consideration of the director’s place in relation to his collaborators.

A scene in *If....* illustrates the nature of the relationship by putting forward the correspondence between narrative, narration and the creative process that shaped them. The so-called ‘chaplain-in-the-drawer’ scene, carries a clear narrative function: it prefigures the violent shoot-out sequence at the end of the film when the ‘Crusaders’³⁶ set the chapel on fire and proceed to gun down the whole school, teachers, students and parents alike. (Anderson 1989: 168; Anderson 1994: 118)

The scene also includes a fantastic component – ‘a subjective fantasy’ (Gelmis 1970: 107) – whose function is twofold: first, the shot of the chaplain literally put away inside a drawer, is meant to illustrate the nature of the relationship that links the main social and political institutions together. In that sense, Mike’s killing of the chaplain constitutes his first attack on the system. (Anderson 1970: 107-8) Second, the irruption of fantasy into the storyline brings a fundamental aspect of Anderson’s

³⁵ Sachs (1965: 491-2): “Perhaps the first thing to notice concerning the role of generality and particularity in Johnson’s view of man is the idea that ... man’s real being, unlike that of beasts, is essentially defined by the contradiction between a transcendence and its employments in time”.

³⁶ The group of students who constitute the focus of the story and who lead the revolt. They are: Michael ‘Mick’ Travis, Johnny Knightly, Wallace, the Girl and Bobby Philips. See Sinker (2004: 86).

directorial practice to the fore: to him, the distinction between what is real and what constitutes fantasy is irrelevant. In his words:

In returning to a kind of basic realism which can accommodate both naturalism *and* fantasy or poetry or whatever you like, we're only getting back to a tradition which silent filmmakers enjoyed quite freely. I wouldn't like to say, "Now it's *fantasy*. Now it's *real*". Because the whole point of fantasy is that it *is* real. And that there aren't in life any rigid distinctions between what is real and what is fantasy. Our fantasies are *part* of our reality. (ibid.: 106).

In other words, elements inherent to the filmmaking process itself can appear as opposite while at the same time perform a complementary function. In that sense, the sense of contrast that pervades the scene from *The White Bus* playing out the Song of Resolution, here finds a parallel manifestation: a constant switch operates between the two that nevertheless preserves the integrity of each element in play. The working relationship that Anderson and David Sherwin shared during the making of *If....*, shows that the pattern is mirrored at the level of the conception and realisation of the film itself.

The active-passive exchange dynamic:³⁷

Frears contributed the following insight into the nature of the collaboration between the director and his scriptwriter:

Lindsay was collaborative but in a Colonel-like peppery way. He had a very idiosyncratic taste but was very funny with it. I presume the relationship was unequal but I doubt if David complained. He would have been arguing with someone who was absolutely on his side. Collaborative, un-collaborative, equality as an issue didn't really arise. (Frears, 6 May 2010)

³⁷ This section draws upon an article I wrote for the *Journal of Screenwriting* – Intellect Journals – and that was published in January 2010: "Creating Authorship? Lindsay Anderson and David Sherwin's Collaboration on *If....* (1968)", *Journal of Screenwriting* 1:1., pp. 131-148.

Evidence from both Anderson's and Sherwin's published diaries confirms the ascendancy that the director exerted upon his scriptwriter. Initially, Sherwin located his own strength in his capacity for imagination, but also professed a need for containment, which he believed, the director's proclaimed synthetic and analytical skills provided.³⁸ Anderson also appears to have accepted his role as the more experienced practitioner. The letter which he wrote Sherwin from Poland in November 1966, while working on another project, illustrates the point fully:

You have (excuse me writing like a school report) a fecundity of imagination, but it seems to operate rather without organic sense, like a series of prose poems: or jottings for a script. Sometimes a whole idea is valuable, sometimes a couple of lines, sometimes nothing. (Anderson 2004a: 171)

Not surprisingly Sherwin's entries recording the redrafting process betray a high degree of emotional turmoil. Between July 1966 and June 1967 his mood seems to oscillate between extremes of exultation and depression. In his published diaries two entries, for December 1966 immediately followed by one for Spring 1967, are an indication of the emotional strain experienced by the scriptwriter:

December 1966: I get so carried away by this letter that I produce a script which is complete rubbish.

Christmas Eve 1966: Lindsay tells me the script is awful. I have failed. 'Go away and write simply. Remember Georg Buechner,' he says.

Spring 1967: [...] finish the new draft in April. In trepidation I post it off to Lindsay. He rings me at the crack of dawn to say it's brilliant. (Sherwin 1997: 15)

What is noteworthy here is the positive light that both Sherwin and his editor on those same diaries, Charles Drazin, cast upon the same period. Drazin regards their collaboration as an 'organic relationship of two equal collaborators'. (Drazin 2008:

³⁸ See Drazin 2008: 331: "Anderson [...] possessed a formidable sense of structure and the analytical ability to push a dramatic situation to its logical conclusion".

331) Sherwin similarly adopts the view that their working relationship produced a ‘creative dynamics’, which he defines as a process akin to a ‘Thesis’, ‘Antithesis’, ‘Synthesis’ approach. (Drazin 2008: 331) In so arguing, however, Sherwin also opens up the possibility of a more negative approach to their collaboration.

If no feeling of resentment permeates the narrative of his published diaries – merely the sense of an emotionally driven creative spirit in need of critical support – the recent interview which Sherwin granted Drazin (2008) appears to undermine, ever so slightly, the view of their collaboration. For instance, Sherwin recalls his attempts at regaining control over the drafting process and his subsequent strategy of privileging afternoons for their working sessions – in all likelihood due to Anderson’s self-proclaimed aversion to working in the morning:³⁹

[Sherwin set out to learn] how to trigger Anderson’s sub-conscious: ‘The best thing I found – it was no good in the mornings, but in the afternoon he quite liked whisky – I would give him half a glass of whisky every half an hour until by the end of the evening [Anderson] was firing with creative thoughts’. (Drazin 2008: 332).

It is somewhat tempting to argue that the only way for this young scriptwriter to ever see his script transposed onto the screen was to agree to a tacit denial of his artistic impulses. Sherwin betrayed an apparent desire to redress the balance; ‘Anderson was a containing influence for a highly inventive mind...’ (Drazin 2008: 331) Sherwin recalls the warning that the director would often issue during their work together: ‘David, bread as well as jam. And you’re too much jam’. (ibid.)

In these circumstances the dual dimension underpinning the partners’ working dynamic would point to the precarious position in which a scriptwriter finds himself,

³⁹ Anderson: ‘David Sherwin arrives early morning – well 10.00: but I am not up... the idea of getting down to discussing *Crusaders*, rewrites, etc. is really alarming and distasteful’ (Anderson 2004a: 177).

whenever allowing the director to become involved in the drafting process. Instead of the fruitful collaboration that Sherwin appears keen to emphasize, a struggle for creative dominance (for which Anderson's and Sherwin's respective set of artistic skills would provide a metaphor) asserts itself. An entry in Sherwin's diaries, from around the same time as Anderson's remarks quoted above, encapsulates this idea of a contrary pull that can prove detrimental to the scriptwriter.

On 15 May 1967 Anderson pronounced the draft to be complete. Sherwin recalls 'Our draft of *Crusaders* is finished. Lindsay is pleased...' (Sherwin 1997: 17)

However, the following morning Sherwin found himself in a state of panic – 'The script is rubbish'. (ibid.) What is interesting about Sherwin's outburst is that it seems to act as a question mark over his claim of the authorship of the script. In this regard, his own published diaries do not make any mention of the redrafting that subsequently took place at Anderson's flat in London; an account of this phase can however be found in Anderson's diaries. (2004a: 177–80)

Drazin (2008) contributed his own insight into the question of who could rightfully claim the authorship of the final script in assimilating script and filmed version.

Instead of establishing a clear divide between the author of the written script and the director of the film, Drazin reinforces the idea of a common artistic goal that would have been attained through a collaborative effort throughout. He declares for instance, 'the film was an example of the key creators in effect pooling their authorship through shared values. *If....* was neither Anderson's film nor Sherwin's film; it was their film'. (Drazin 2008: 333)

The compromise position, which Drazin seems to have privileged, finds its manifestation in the tone of the interviews at the time of the film's release and the

subsequent publication of the script in 1969. In an interview for *The Observer* in December 1968 Anderson clearly attributed all decisions in terms of narrative and style to both Sherwin and himself. (Anderson 1968: 114) Similarly in the 'Notes for a Preface' to the published script of *If....*, the director discussed the background to the storyline as well as any decision pertaining to style or any meaning to be inferred from their working partnership. (Anderson 1969: 120–3)

Furthermore, given that Anderson's subsequent two feature films as well as an unrealized sequel to *If....* were scripted by Sherwin as well, the picture of a particularly productive and mutually beneficial partnership appears most convincing. Sherwin did not seem intent on directly claiming the authorship of the script for himself. In his published diaries he refers to 'our script', or talks about his 'contribution to *If....*' (Sherwin 1997: 17; 23) The closest he came to proclaiming the script as his own creation was his mention of the British Writers' Guild Award, which he won for the 1968 Best British Original Screenplay. (Sherwin 1997: 26)⁴⁰

Within our present context Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration on *If....* works well to illustrate the nature of the dynamic that underpins the filmmaking process: both a process of inclusion and exclusion, this is a pattern that by implication highlights the director's unifying and potentially disruptive function. Sherwin contributed the following diary entry the day before the filming is due to start:

The night before shooting starts at Cheltenham College. Lindsay calls me round to his flat in Greencroft Gardens. He admits to me point-blank that he's terrified. Lost. He doesn't even know where he's going to put the camera. We drink a whisky and listen to the Beach Boys one last time before the battle begins. (Sherwin 1997: 21)

⁴⁰ 'I stare at the story in *Variety*, not quite believing that it is true: SHERWIN WINS BRITISH WRITERS' GUILD AWARD' (Sherwin 1997: 26).

This entry is significant in two ways; first, it establishes the emotional bond which was an intrinsic component of their collaboration on the film. Second, it hints at their ability to transcend the usual boundaries between each other's assumed areas of expertise. This would in turn suggest the existence of an interchangeable dynamic between the two – a dynamic which lies at the heart of their artistic drive. In that quote Sherwin writes himself into the role of dominant partner, referring to Anderson by his first name and further recounting their meeting that night by simply using the third person pronoun, and thereby asserting his control over the situation.

Of note, Sinker regards the sequence during which the three main protagonists in *If...* are being whipped, as evidence of an underlying S&M motif, for which the public school's etiquette works as an allegory. (2004: 62–3) He further argues that this reading would account for Mick Travis's subsequent rebellion as in S&M practice “[...] the bottom *is* running [the] scene”. (ibid.: 63) With regard to the present argument highlighting the degree of emotional dependency displayed in turn by both Anderson and Sherwin, it is tempting to regard the sequence in the film as a fictional re-creation of their own artistic process; the apparent teacher/student relation that established itself during the drafting process is indicative of a pre-established hierarchy necessary to the production of the story but by no means impervious to change and/or challenge.

Here, the recourse to a drink and some music mentioned by Sherwin, functions as a much-needed reprieve from having to face the consequences of their artistic endeavour. A ritual establishes itself between the two partners; whoever happens to find himself exposed to outside scrutiny can rely upon the emotional comfort and temporary leadership granted by the other. Both Anderson's and Sherwin's diaries

support this view by providing examples of the same pattern repeating itself on numerous occasions. In the case of *If....*'s pre-production and filming stages Sherwin's diary entries, referring to his stay at Anderson's family cottage, mirror the account of the director's breakdown on the eve of shooting.⁴¹ Similarly, Anderson documented his location-scouting trip to Charterhouse, at the end of which he reported Sherwin experiencing his own case of anxiety attack:

As we left, David announced himself as feeling quite ill and intimidated by the whole experience... we recovered a bit with teas and a Kit-Kat and records on the juke box in a chara caff on the road home... (Anderson 2004a: 185)

The working pattern between the two men also provides an illustration of the human dimension underpinning the coming-into-existence of the script. It further lends legitimacy to Anderson's vision of the filmmaking process as a fusion of many and various creative elements; the script becomes an intrinsic part of the production of the film. Neither a compilation of filming guidelines for the director, nor the transposition of a novel, the script is the product of a creative dynamic which, in turn, makes the film possible.

A fusion of creative elements:

Two episodes further illustrate the relevance of the dynamic that underpins Anderson and Sherwin's partnership. The first involves the writing stage: the second, the passage from script to screen. In the early 1990s Anderson recalled a key instance of a scene 'which seem[ed] entirely right within the film but which [was] not in the original script' at the start of filming. (Anderson 1994: 117) The scene in question

⁴¹ Entries in April and May 1967 note: 'We settle into a routine... Lindsay insists on two walks a day... then along the stony beach and into – JOY! – a wonderful seaside pub called the "Broadmark". Here in the public bar we play the jukebox and listen to the Beach Boys. If I've been a good writer, Lindsay allows me a second glass of barley wine' (Sherwin 1997: 16).

occurs straight after the sequence during which the three main protagonists and friends – Mick, Johnny and Wallace – go through the ritualistic flogging by the school’s prefects. Anderson reports that he did not think the scene ‘worked’ as scripted, so instead he relied upon his intuition and devised an entirely new scene. (ibid.) For the director the new scene, showing Mick shooting darts at a collage of newspaper cuttings, ‘solved the transition after the beating’. (ibid.)

The background to the filming of this unscripted scene reinforces Anderson’s distinctive championing of the existence of creative elements at the heart of the filmmaking process. Anderson’s account, justifying the suppression of one scene and its substitution by another conceived by the director himself, initially seems to echo François Truffaut’s own directorial practice on *Les Quatre-Cents Coups/ 400 Blows* (1959), a film which has often been cited alongside Anderson’s *If.....* for their common homage to Vigo’s *Zéro de Conduite*. (1933)

Roger Manvell quoted Truffaut as advocating a directorial practice liberated from the constraints of a written script and thereby opening up fully the cinematic potential of a film. (Manvell 1966: 69)⁴² While the French New Wave representatives were keen to suggest that a gradual dismissal of the screenwriter’s input ought to operate when moving from the page to the screen,⁴³ the collage scene constitutes another manifestation of the dynamic underlying Anderson and Sherwin’s collaboration.

⁴² ‘I work practically without a shooting script; all I prepare is the dialogue [...] You can’t put the best moments of a film down in a script’ (Truffaut in Manvell 1966: 69).

⁴³ See for instance Louis Marcorelles: ‘The credits of *A Bout de Souffle* list François Truffaut as screenwriter and Claude Chabrol as “artistic supervisor”; but this was done for the benefit of the technicians’ union and, in fact... Truffaut’s contribution was the discovery of a news snippet which became the starting point of the plot. *A Bout de Souffle* is therefore a genuine *film d’auteur* – more so than either *Les Quatre-Cents Coups* or *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*, to which the screenwriters made powerful contributions’ (Marcorelles 1960: 84).

This visual token illustrates the process of exchange that supersedes any traditional definition of authorship. Anderson provides an illustration of this process such as it applies to the two men's working pattern and, in this instance, to the collage scene:

[A]s the script developed we were consciously determined *not* to appear to be reflecting, in journalistic style, upon the revolutionary student action in France or in America. That was one reason why [...] we eliminated all the fashionable iconography of revolt from the walls of the boys' studies. (Anderson 2004b: 109)

Anderson's quote highlights the extent to which the development of the script and its transposition on to the screen function interdependently of each other. The decision to take out a scripted scene from the film does not constitute a challenge to the validity of the screenwriter's work. Instead, the main protagonist 'firing darts into the collages broadens the impact' intended by the film, and reaffirms the collaborative dimension of the pair's work because, as Sherwin explained; 'we worked through the night, arranging the pictures in different patterns on the floor, until finally we ha[d] highly charged collages for our heroes'. (Sherwin 1997: 23)

This mention in Sherwin's diaries of the collage scene assumes further significance when seen in parallel with an incident that took place barely a month beforehand. Sherwin was present for the shooting of the sequence showing the three friends carrying out their punishment for killing the chaplain. Just as the camera was supposed to start rolling, Anderson started reproaching Sherwin for not having written one single line of dialogue between the protagonists from that place in the story until the very end of the film. At that point the director appears to have foregone all claim of authorship over the script and instead started castigating his scriptwriter for his alleged laziness.

Sherwin's rebuke – 'It's called poetry, Lindsay – the poetry of cinema' (Sherwin 1997: 23) – undermines the traditional notion of authorship being limited to particular stages of the film-making process. A more fluid definition takes precedence: one which acknowledges the area of expertise of each person involved in the film-making process, while at the same time emphasising the existence of a continuous exchange inherent to that same process. Sherwin's active contribution to the preparation for the scene, which came into existence as a result of directorial involvement, puts forward the interdependence of both.

There is no journal or shooting diary of the film itself; as far as we know, Anderson did not keep a record of his day-to-day experience of shooting *If....*. He did, though, give a significant number of interviews at the time of *If....*'s release in 1968, as well as on the occasion of the film's presentation at the 1969 Cannes International Film Festival. These interviews suggest that Anderson, the director, went beyond the normal and expected practice of marketing a film: it brings out Anderson's view of his function as a director, that is, how this function translates into the practice of film-making.

For instance, in the 1969 interview to the French cinema journal, *Jeune Cinéma*, Anderson defined his role as film director as an integral part of the creative process underpinning filmmaking, as opposed to being the film's sole or main originator of meaning:

It is only when you make [the film], you write it, you film it, you edit it that all the creative process sets in, and that you reach a conclusion which is the film per se. (Anderson 1969b: 9)⁴⁴

⁴⁴ C'est quand on le fait, qu'on l'écrit, qu'on le tourne, qu'on fait le montage que s'opère tout le processus créateur et au bout on arrive à une conclusion qui est le film.

Anderson's published diaries provide another example of his view; the editor, Paul Sutton, noted the presence in Anderson's notebooks of a mock interview featuring both the questions and the answers. (2004: 193)⁴⁵ One of the mock questions outlines the relevance of the film to the trends and concerns of 1960s' youth. Anderson's corresponding answer is consistent with the interviews the director gave at the time of the film's release in which he would emphasise the film's claim to thematic and stylistic universality. In other words, both the storyline and the adopted filming style illustrate the principle of Dr Johnson's 'grandeur of generality' (Anderson 1968: 113): the core example, which underpins the director's argument, involves a systematic reference – with varying degrees of openness – to the collage artwork episode.

Anderson's consistent use of the personal pronoun 'we' to explain the rationale behind the selection process of each photograph and/or any item relating to the students' possessions and surroundings, implies a direct correlation between the written intention present in the script and its visual realisation onscreen. A scene becomes a reality as the result of a process – simultaneously active and passive in nature – whereby the role of the director and that of the scriptwriter become indistinguishable. An instance of this process occurred when Anderson's directorial decision generated an unscripted scene that, however, only became 'filmable' through the intervention of the scriptwriter. Sherwin intervened twice in the process: intellectually as cognisant of the script and in a literal capacity by taking over the role of the art department.

Another example of this notion of active/passive exchange between script and screen, that is, between the scriptwriter's wording and the director's visualisation in the case

⁴⁵ The notebooks themselves are held in the Archive.

of Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration, involves the aforementioned episode of the 'Chaplain-in-the-Drawer'. We learn about the genesis of this scene in Sherwin's diaries. During the working holiday in April and May 1967 at Anderson's family cottage, he reported the circumstances that saw the birth of one of the key scenes in *If....*:

It happens like this. I am lying on the floor with a pad and Lindsay is walking around the large wardrobe. We are running through the scene where the Crusaders are being 'punished' by the Headmaster for 'murdering' the Chaplain. And I blurt out: 'Cut from the screaming Chaplain... to the Headmaster... Now, Lindsay, at this moment the Headmaster slides open the large chest of drawers and there is the Chaplain! He sits up and the Crusaders each shake his hand one by one. Then the Chaplain lies down and the Headmaster shuts the drawer...' (Sherwin 1997: 17)

For anyone who has seen the film, the correspondence between script and screen is striking. It further uncovers the nature of this active/passive input by accounting for the genesis of a scene for which the director later assumed responsibility when it came to defending its aesthetic and narrative value. (Anderson 1970: 107; 1989: 168)

It follows that Anderson and Sherwin's collaboration on *If....* can be seen as challenging the traditional notions of authorship within the filmmaking process: through the director's and scriptwriter's open acknowledgment and sustained exchange with the constitutive stages of the process, a more fluid understanding as to who is making/writing/ creating the film becomes possible. When Anderson, as a director, defended *his* choice of literally 'putting the Chaplain in the Drawer' (Anderson 1994: 118), he provided evidence of the dialectic which he placed at the heart of his artistic practice as a whole:

I used to throw myself against reality out of which I can create something – but to create that reality is very hard for me. I only seem able to work through some kind of dialectic. (Anderson 2004a: 174)

Chapter 6: Britishness and National Cinemas

As I argued in the Literature Review, Anderson maintained a highly adversarial relationship with the British film industry.⁴⁶ First as a film critic and subsequently as a film director, he deemed the environment in which films were produced and received in Britain to be hostile to a viable industry both in artistic and economic terms. Conversely, the issue of Britishness became an asset for Anderson when his films reached the international scene: as early as 1954, he received an Oscar with Guy Brenton, a fellow Oxford graduate, for *Thursday's Children* (1953), a documentary short. Similarly, as mentioned in the previous chapter, *If....* (1968) was awarded the Palme D'Or at the 1969 Cannes International Film Festival.

This chapter will explore three key stages in Anderson's career that illustrate the complex relationship between the director's negotiation of his own national background and the imposition of a national identity in the critical reception of his work. First, I will look briefly at Anderson's early directorial career as a documentary filmmaker: by using references to the Free Cinema movement and *Thursday's Children*, I will show that, in

⁴⁶ A slightly extended version of this chapter was published as an article in the online journal *Alphaville*. See Gourdin-Sangouard, I (2011), "Lindsay Anderson: Britishness and National Cinemas", *Alphaville: Journal of Film and Screen Media*, issue 1 (University College Cork).

both instances, the question of artistic impact and critical reception took on a transnational dimension. I will then discuss the production of a documentary short in Poland, which Anderson filmed at the request of the Documentary Studio in Warsaw in 1967, and which constitutes the director's first experience of working in a foreign film industry. Finally, I will discuss *Britannia Hospital* (1982), the last feature film that Anderson made in Britain.

The Artist and the Nation

The notion of national identity resonates distinctively throughout Anderson's career. In an interview with Ryan, who as I mentioned previously, edited his writings in the early 1990s, Anderson defined himself as "a child of the British Empire" (Anderson 1994: 35). He had previously used the phrase in an article that he wrote in 1988 for the *Sunday Telegraph Magazine*, in which he presents his family history as the determining factor in his lack of a clearly defined sense of national identity and the resulting impact that this had had upon his career:

My father, a Scot and a soldier, was born in Nassik, North India. My mother (born in Queenstown, South Africa) was a Bell. I was born in Bangalore, a child of Empire. Did these antecedents make for an alienation, long unrecognised? (Anderson 1988: 33)

Anderson sees his early love of the arts—here, theatre and cinema—as indicative of a "[v]ery un-English" personality. (ibid.: 34) He uses these very words in the article in order to stress the extent of the gulf that separates him from his fellow country men and women. Anderson describes his character as impulsive and driven by an absolute belief in the value of commitment—intellectual or otherwise (ibid.) – which in his opinion, places

him at odds with the cultural consensus over the place of the artist in English society. I use the word 'English' here as opposed to 'British' in keeping with Anderson's choice to exclude any other adjective that would refer to Britain in its entirety. In fact, he assimilates the two—English and British—at the end of his article, thereby relating the British nation as a whole to the cultural model he explicitly defines as English. (ibid.) In other words, Anderson equates the political entity known as Britain with what he perceives to underpin the essence of English culture: a patronising attitude towards the arts and an inability to do away with the class system. (ibid.) The resulting definition of the national character rests upon the pairing on unequal terms of one cultural model with the political entity it is a part of. As made apparent in many of his articles written in the 1940s and 1950s, the concept of national identity for Anderson became intrinsically linked with Britain's treatment of the arts and, by implication, the artist.

An unexpected win at the Academy Awards in Hollywood for Best Documentary Short in 1954 proved for Anderson the first instance of a confrontation between different national perspectives over his work. In this instance, the American recognition of the value of *Thursday's Children* contrasted strongly with the indifference with which the work had been met in Britain. (Anderson 1956: 56-8) The Oscar was awarded for a documentary about the everyday life and education of deaf children at a school in Margate in South East England.

While shooting *Thursday's Children*, Anderson also filmed a short documentary of his own in a nearby amusement park. Although Anderson enlisted the help of John Fletcher for the cinematography, *O Dreamland* (1953) remains a personal initiative as he made all of the creative decisions, including the editing of the footage, and financed it. (Anderson

1994: 60) The short film did not generate much interest nationally. The situation changed dramatically when Lindsay Anderson, Karel Reisz and Tony Richardson decided to group their films together and show them at the National Film Theatre in London.

(Anderson 1957: 74) *O Dreamland* constitutes the first true instance for the director of a convergence between a personal vision and established professional connections, which enabled the project to come to fruition by allowing for the possibility of both critical appraisal and public scrutiny. These occurred both at a national and transnational level.

Free Cinema and Transnationalism

According to Anderson, the label Free Cinema was used as a publicity stunt. (1970: 97-8) Karel Reisz, Tony Richardson and Lindsay Anderson wanted to make films; however, none of them was a member of the British Film Industry's Technicians' Union (ACTT, Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians, formerly ACT until March 1956), or linked with a British studio (ibid.: 54). They decided to join forces and grouped their shorts into a single programme, prefaced by a manifesto outlining their objectives as documentary filmmakers (Anderson 1957: 74) Reisz was in charge of programming at the National Film Theatre at the time, which guaranteed a screening of their shorts at the cinema. The resounding success with which their initiative was met secured a further five Free Cinema programmes until 1959.

Matt McCarthy, a filmmaker who had once been technical officer of the British Film Institute, contributed an article discussing the Free Cinema shorts, to the British journal *Films and Filming* in 1959. This article is highly critical of the value of the initiative. To him, the fledgling directors missed an opportunity to enrich British cinema by depriving it of its 'voice':

Perfection must be the aim, mastery of the medium, and pride in craftsmanship. They are vital to the development of every art form, and can alone grant the British film-makers the eloquence they lack. (1959: 17)

McCarthy's verdict does not however, express a consensus over the legacy of Free Cinema: *The Times*, for instance, showed a high degree of enthusiasm for the initiative and covered each programme shown at the National Film Theatre. When the Free Cinema movement disbanded in 1959, the newspaper provided a comprehensive overview of its impact abroad (*The Times* 1959: 13). It argued that the experiment had inspired similar initiatives—in the United States, notably—that testified to the vitality of young British filmmakers and further vouched for the cultural validity of the project (ibid.; *The Times* 1958: 3).

These contrasting views bring out one key feature of Free Cinema: by allowing the contributors complete creative freedom—both in terms of style and content—the movement offered a template for a transnational, transcultural approach to filmmaking. In other words, *The Times*'s appraisal illustrates the extent to which the movement managed to operate outside of the artistic and technical framework provided by the national film industry, thereby suggesting new criteria to evaluate the value of their work. This can be summed up in Richardson's contribution to the Free Cinema manifesto—"Perfection is not an aim" (qtd. in Sussex 1970: 31)—to which McCarthy undoubtedly was referring in his article.

The 1957 programme, Free Cinema 4, entitled "Look at Britain!," which included a documentary made by Swiss filmmakers Claude Goretta and Alain Tanner and a short film written and co-directed by Lorenza Mazzetti, an Italian artist, captures the spirit of

the artistic endeavour. The cultural markers constitutive of the works transcend the question of national origin by challenging both the artistic and technical norms that govern their respective film industries. The three Free Cinema programmes that followed until March 1959, constitute a good example of the propensity for the movement to reach a transnational dimension. In September 1958, two programmes were screened in rapid succession at the National Film Theatre: the first showcased recently produced shorts from Poland, including Roman Polanski's 1957 *Two Men and a Wardrobe*. The second, entitled French Renewal, presented for the first time in Britain, the works of two representatives of the French New Wave, François Truffaut's *Les Mistons* (*Brats*, 1957), and Claude Chabrol's *Le Beau Serge* (1958). A letter that Anderson wrote to Truffaut after the screening of *Brats* brings out the creative and liberating dimension that the initiative took for the filmmakers involved:

LES MISTONS/BRATS has been well received. With great warmth, and I believe that the movement CAHIERS – CINEASTES is off to a great start here in England ... It's really fantastic what you've been doing—you and your fellow film directors—in France. And so important. In this country with a moribund cinema it all seems miraculous. (Anderson 1958: "Letter Truffaut")⁴⁷

Anderson's comment about the state of the British film industry highlights the impact that the tension between the artistic and the national had on his work. In his opinion, a distinct cultural vision can be either supported or hampered by the national context in which it originates. *O Dreamland* constitutes a manifestation of this tension: with distinct echoes of Jennings's *Spare Time* (1939) and Vigo's *A Propos de Nice* (1930), Anderson's

⁴⁷ LES MISTONS sont passés très bien. Très chaleureusement reçu, et je crois que le mouvement CAHIERS – CINEASTES est bien lancé en Angleterre ... C'est vraiment formidable, tout ce que vous faites, toi et les autres, en France maintenant. Et très important. Dans ce pays de cinéma mort tout cela semble miraculeux.

first contribution to the Free Cinema movement both acknowledges a sense of national legacy and a willingness to transcend it.

An article published in *The Times* on the occasion of the short's screening at the National Film Theatre betrays an awareness of the nature of the artistic fabric underpinning *O Dreamland*: the cultural subtext derives from as well as undermines the stamp of the national that the Documentary Movement of the 1930s exemplifies (*The Times* 1956: 10). The full title of the article is "Realism in British Films: The Personal Approach," which evokes Anderson's life-long admiration for Jennings and his ability to create a highly individual work within the constraints of the Griersonian documentary aesthetic.

Transnational Experiences:

Roughly twenty years before he made *The Whales of August* (1987) and *Glory! Glory!* (1989), Anderson filmed *Raz, Dwa, Trzy* (*The Singing Lesson*, 1967) in Poland at the invitation of the documentary studio in Warsaw. (Sussex 1969: 61)

The film represents the director's first experience of working abroad in a foreign film industry. This is also an experience that assumed a great deal of significance in Anderson's career, but which has received little critical consideration overall.⁴⁸ In a letter written to Marcorelles in April 1987, Anderson betrays his fondness for the short film: he regards *The Singing Lesson* as one of his best works and as representative of his career-long striving for a "poetic-lyric" style:

⁴⁸ Sussex (1970: 61-7) presents a substantial account of the conditions that led to the production of the short film. She also provides a detailed analysis of the songs performed by the students and the themes and filming style adopted by Anderson. By contrast, Hedling's otherwise extremely thorough overview of Anderson's work in the cinema provides very little commentary on the Polish project.

[T]he little film I made in Warsaw ... I only mention it because I think it's one of the best things I've done ... Not of course a "documentary" in the classic English style, more poetic-lyric than social ... I think I shall ask for it to be shown at my funeral service. (Anderson 1987: LA 5/1/2/33/59)

Prior to *The Singing Lesson*, Anderson had begun to work with film professionals outside the British national industry, as instanced by his collaboration with the cinematographer Miroslav Ondricek on *The White Bus* (1966).

Anderson was in Warsaw in 1966 to direct a production in Polish of John Osborne's play *Inadmissible Evidence* (1964). During this time, he met the director of the Documentary Studio who invited him to make a film about "anything [he'd] like" (Anderson 1/5/5/1) Joanna Nawrocka, his assistant at the Contemporary Theatre, advised him to go and watch the classes run by a well-established musical theatre performer, Professor Ludwik Simpolinski. (ibid.) Anderson decided to use the professor's fourth-year students as the focus of his new project and returned to Warsaw in April 1967 to film what was to become *The Singing Lesson*.

Anderson's central idea behind the project was to create a "sketchbook, or a poem" that would offer a dual vision of life in 1960s Poland. (Anderson 1/5/5/1) He set out to contrast the innocence and youthful spirit of the students to the harsher reality of the outside world of which the students would soon be a part:

Into this sequence of songs will be cut images from 'real life'—evoking the past and life today: a street memorial ... flowers dedicated to a fallen soldier of yesterday—relics of wartime agony—faces in the crowded streets of today ... shoppers buying food, workers crowding on to transport on their way home. The purpose of these shots is not to show an exotic, picturesque or 'tourist' view of Warsaw. But rather to contrast the fantasy of the songs with the reality of everyday existence—the unromantic facts of life with the freshness of youth that has still to come to terms with it. (ibid.: LA 1/5/2)

The idea of contrast between two worlds, two realities, found itself replicated in Anderson's own experience of the filming. A pattern involving a sense of both frustration and artistic fulfilment soon established itself. Whereas the students of the Warsaw Dramatic Academy appear to have provided Anderson with the motivation he needed to complete the project, he saw the film crew, on the other hand, as the source of a continuous creative struggle:

The selection of students was by chance, but I was struck by their enthusiasm, their ability and the freshness of their work. Even their mistakes had charm... (ibid.)

....

Shootings: Pierre sings 'The Coat', which I find very poetic and suggestive the more I hear it, and the enchanting Andrzej Nardelli sings 'Groszki' ['Sweet Peas'] ... unit discipline and communication become impossible, climaxing in the disappearance of the entire unit after the first song—which has involved endless delays and unnecessary retakes. I blow my top, and hate doing so, since it has to be at Sigmund... (Anderson 2004a: 175)

In his two accounts of the making of the film, recorded over 20 years apart, he comes close to contradicting himself. Anderson praises the creative latitude he enjoyed while stressing the technical as well as the political restrictions that were affecting the Polish film industry at the time (Anderson 1994: 103-4; Sussex 1969: 62).⁴⁹

An incident that occurred on the occasion of the screening of *The Singing Lesson* at the Documentary Studio demonstrates the nature of the relationship that Anderson established with the local film industry. Anderson relates the incident in a book review that he wrote for *The Guardian* in 1984. He describes how the Polish film director, Jerzy

⁴⁹ See article by Moskowitz, *Sight and Sound*, Winter 1957/58 for a detailed account of the working conditions under the state-controlled film industry in Poland after World War II.

Bossak, then in charge of production at the Documentary Studio, expressed his dismay at the view of the “harassed faces from the Warsaw streets”. (Anderson 1984: 587).

Bossak’s concern stemmed from Anderson’s choice to alternate shots of stern faces on the streets of the capital with those of Professor Simpolinski’s carefree students. What had been a purely creative decision on Anderson’s part soon translated into a potentially dangerous situation for the Studio’s executives who had invited the British filmmaker to work for them:

‘Why is nobody smiling?’ asked Jerzy Bossak ... There was no point, I realised, in my saying that I had just felt like that ... Around me I heard voices whispering that this sequence was surely designed to evoke the finale of Wyspiansky’s *The Wedding*, ‘The symbol’ (this is Michalek quoting Professor Kazimierz Wyka), ‘of a society drugged by inertia and incapable of action...’ Vainly I protested that I had neither seen nor read *The Wedding*. Even if the evocation was unintentional, it would certainly be remarked and condemned by the censorship. Everyone would get into trouble. (ibid.).

His 1984 article emphasises the political implication of the incident. Anderson describes the circumstances under which he worked in 1960s Poland in order to shed light on the nature of the oppressive context that was then presiding over all artistic creation in the country. He mentions that his film was subjected to censorship while downplaying the impact it had upon him:

I got away with my sequence, just. When the censor arrived at the studio the next day, it was in the person of a nice, elderly lady. She thought my singing lesson was ‘charming’. (ibid.)

Interviews with Sussex and Ryan in 1970 and the early 1990s, respectively, also acknowledge the relevance of the political context but relate it more explicitly to Anderson’s own creative process. In his interviews with Sussex, for instance, Anderson

compares the “frustrations” that the respective film industries represented for him. (Sussex 1969: 62) Furthermore, while stressing the impact that the ‘political pressures’ had on the Polish film production, he also criticises the over-regulated nature of the British film industry, thereby implying that his work in Poland gave him more creative latitude. (ibid.)

Anderson reiterates the point in his interviews with Ryan, comparing the enthusiasm and professionalism of his Polish cast to their British counterparts whom the British director regarded as incapable of that same “spontaneous” spirit (Anderson 1994: 103). This is not to say, however, that Anderson placed his own artistic demands over the harsh reality that characterised the working conditions of his fellow film directors in Poland at the time. Rather, he found in the genuine social and political alienation that pervaded the life of Polish citizens a way of externalising his own feelings towards the British film industry.

National Cinema and the Transnational Artist

A letter written by the Czech film director Jaromil Jires, to Anderson in January 1965 illustrates the nature of the creative alienation that the British director experienced in his own country. In that letter, Jires encourages Anderson to disregard the opinion of the critics who had given negative reviews of the British director’s production of *Julius Caesar* for the London Royal Court. Jires then establishes an implicit parallel between the fickleness and lack of vision of the critics with the actor Richard Harris’s decision to leave the play two weeks into rehearsals. He contrasts Anderson’s artistic ideals, which he sees as impervious to any notion of compromise, to the fallibility of the film industry that Harris and the critics embody. Anderson’s quest for the absolute in a relative world—“Tu veux faire les choses absolus, les choses absolus dans ce monde absolument

rélatif!” [You are striving for the absolute in an absolutely relative world] (Jires 1965: LA 5/01/3/12) – become the expression of the director’s work ethic. In other words, just as the shots of the students at the Warsaw Dramatic Academy placed youth, innocence and a creative spirit in opposition to the drab reality of 1960s Poland (Anderson 1994: 104), Anderson’s artistic ideals found themselves besieged in a national film industry that undervalued the role of the artist.

Graham notes the centrality of the debate surrounding the definition of national identity in Anderson’s work. She establishes a direct correlation between the director’s claim that “the failure of British cinema [is] the failure of national self-belief”, and the impact that “political and cultural limitations” have, in his opinion, upon the artistic potential of film in society. (1981: 20-1) Graham includes Anderson’s contribution to the Free Cinema experiment in the director’s exploration of British cinema’s national identity. She quotes from an article by Gavin Lambert written on the occasion of the screening of the first Free Cinema Programme at the National Film Theatre in London in February 1956. Lambert highlights the films’ concern with the “[i]solation of the individual, isolation of the crowd, isolation of escape” (qtd. in Graham: 28). Graham, echoing Lambert’s review, argues that the Free Cinema films present the image of a broken British society. More specifically, she evokes the “depth of social division in England” that these films convey. (ibid.)

Similarly, Anderson experienced a sustained sense of alienation while working as part of the British film industry. To him, there appears to be a gap between the style and content of his films and the cultural model they should be a part of:

I would say all my films have been sore thumbs as far as the British film industry is concerned. I don't know how to make a British film which the British want to see. I've never felt part of the film industry here, and I don't think I am. Read the film books—I'm rarely there ... I don't exist anymore as a British film-maker. I have never had a nomination, not that I give a damn, from the British Film Academy. That is perfectly ok because I know what I do is not to the English taste—Fuck' em. (Anderson 1991b: 55)

In other words, the lack of interest that he perceived in his films stem from their absence of commonality with the prevailing cultural model of filmmaking: *If....* (1968) became a symbol of the director's estrangement from his own country's cultural identity, which proves ironical as the film is set in an English public school. To quote Anderson:

I don't think *If....* was influential at all. *Another Country* is to me much more like a British film, it's glossy, and photographed in that seductive way. There's all the difference in the world between *If....* and *Another Country*. *If....* is a sort of sore thumb. (ibid.)

Anderson's overview of the British filmmakers' community subsumes the question of national identity under an allegiance to a model of directorial practice. In his view, being a British film director translates into a strong command of the technical side of filmmaking to the detriment of the artistic dimension. In that sense, British equals English and David Lean's work epitomises this lack of commitment to art. The interview with Hacker and Price confirms the conflation of national markers: Anderson appears to establish a correlation between Lean's Englishness as a film director ("David Lean is a very 'English' film-maker") and the latter's strong mastery of technique and form. (ibid.) This is a point that he makes throughout the interview in different ways, thereby implying an inherently British – that is, English – focus on the technical aspect of film directing in the country. (ibid.: 54-5)

The practice of locating the director's artistic prerogative in the abstract rather than the technical finds a definition: it becomes an issue of control over the medium and the process itself:

I want total control working with extremely good, skilled, and sympathetic collaborators, which is of course difficult; and of course, 'control' means 'responsibility'. (ibid.: 46)

In other words, Anderson, in spite of an apparent lack of interest in the technical aspects of filmmaking, does not advocate an amateur approach to his craft.⁵⁰ The notion of control that he introduces here, functions as an acknowledgement of the un-English/British character of his directorial practice.

Although Anderson sees the active input of each collaborator as essential, he also believes that this does not absolve the film director of his artistic responsibility for the work. As stated previously, he defined the filmmaking process as a fusion of creative elements with "a central figure, one man conscious of the relative significance of every shot ..." (Anderson 1948: 199) His definition of the term control further recalls the artistic and critical integrity that he saw as an essential part of the filmmaking process in "Angles of Approach". (1947: 189-93)

Britannia Hospital and the National Identity of Anderson's Cinema

Britannia Hospital tells the story of a British hospital gradually falling into a state of absolute chaos: the ancillary staff is on strike; they call for the end of all privileges

⁵⁰ See also Anderson (1970: 101): "I myself have always been strongly biased in the direction of form and discipline ... these principles apply whatever your means ... that is what is missing in the work of a lot of young people today. Direct cinema, or *cinéma vérité*, has resulted in a lack of artistic form and discipline. It's become very loose and self-indulgent often."

granted to the hospital's private patients. Outside demonstrators blocking the access to the emergency ward also denounce the two-tier health care system as well as the morally reprehensible presence of an exiled African dictator. The whole situation threatens the visit of a member of the royal family invited to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the founding of the hospital. The film culminates with the angry mob storming onto the grounds and into the brand new building adjacent to the hospital where Dr. Millar supervises the secretive project 'Genesis'. At that point, Dr. Millar invites the demonstrators to join the lecture he was about to give to a panel of special guests on his plan to create a better mankind. The film concludes with a shot of the Genesis machine that proclaims in a synthetic voice the redundancy of the human race.

The Anderson Archive contains a collage that Anderson made around the time of the production of *Britannia Hospital* (1982). (LA 1/9/6/3/1) This collection of newspaper cuttings, mostly from the British press, features articles that all dwell on social or cultural anomalies. There is a particular emphasis on the British health care system that is presented as being in a state of total disarray. The connection with *Britannia Hospital*'s storyline comes to light in the form of an article reporting the case of a dead patient left in the hospital breakfast room overnight due to a staff shortage. Anderson's collage also echoes an earlier one made on the set of *If....* (1968). They both form part of his directorial practice and, as such, comment on the context surrounding the making of his films. In the case of *If....*, Anderson stresses that the photos and slogans were selected so that they could not be connected to any specific date or event. The element of atemporality helps shift the definition of Britishness to a consideration of the community itself—understood as a delineated space where individuals share common cultural

markers—here manifested through the regulations that govern the everyday life of a London hospital.

When *Britannia Hospital* was screened at the 1982 Cannes Festival, film reviews focused on the idea of a film functioning as a metaphor for the state of the United Kingdom as a whole. (Die Zeit 1982: LA 1/9/6/11; Cinéma de France 1982: LA 1/9/6/7/17) Hill when analysing the film in his book on 1980s British Cinema, read the plot and style in this light as well. (1999: 137-41) To Graham, *Britannia Hospital* achieves this through a storyline that simultaneously proclaims and undermines the relationship between the particular and the universal, which is a defining characteristic of Anderson's work in general:

Anderson's films remain the brightest examples of the potential of British cinema. They deal honestly and intimately with their social environment, yet transcend it to capture, in E.M. Forster's words, 'that peculiar pushful quality' of universal works of art: 'the excitement that attended their creation hangs about them, and makes minor artists out of those who have felt their power'. (1981: 152)

The action of the film is restricted to the hospital building and the adjoining research centre. Marcorelles in a review of the film written for *Le Monde*, highlights the analogy that Anderson made between the location of his film and the social and historical context of the country. (1982, *Le Monde*). The hospital becomes the space where the glory of the past is celebrated and takes precedence over the reality of the present. Conversely, the research centre where Professor Millar operates represents a future without any historical or social dimension: a disembodied voice coming out of a giant, brain-like machine fails, for instance, to complete a monologue taken from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, celebrating Man's greatness. (ibid.) The apparent contrast between the two places serves only to

reinforce their sameness: the workers occupying the hospital building and the members of the Royal family visiting it follow the rituals that correspond to an outdated conception of their country. Dr. Millar and his team of scientists on the other hand, do not relate to any pre-determined social order. The advancement of science defines their sense of identity and purpose.

In January 1981, Anderson wrote a letter to Erwin Axer, a friend and Polish theatre director, in which he conveys his frustration with the British film industry and the state of his film career. (LA 5/1/3/14) The letter alternates between his fear that he might not be able to raise the financing for *Britannia Hospital* and a growing desire to accept a film offer from the United States. Anderson's unhappiness is the result of a very personal dilemma: on the one hand, he saw the situation in which the British cinema found itself as the main factor underlying the lack of financial backing for the film; on the other, the acceptance of any offer originating from the United States was then perceived more as a betrayal of his artistic principles than a true professional opportunity. He comments to Axer:

I have been offered a film in America, quite an interesting subject, and of course very well paid. I would prefer to make a film in Britain, which I can make more out of my personal experience and conviction [sic]. But the British do not seem too anxious to support me in this idea. (ibid.)

Anderson's resentment towards the British film industry was not new: letters written to Gene Moskowitz in the 70s and early 80s expressed a similar dismay at the lack of opportunities made available to filmmakers who, like himself, still had not left for America. (LA 5/1/2/37/9; LA 5/1/2/37/31)

However, in the case of *Britannia Hospital*, a sense of urgency emerged: in the January 1981 letter to Erwin Axer, Anderson likens the fate of the British film industry to the anticipated conclusion to his own film directing career. The cause for their respective doom, however, lies in opposite directions. An entry in Anderson's diaries, dated 30 December 1980, contrasts the narrow-mindedness of one with the revolutionary and, therefore, suicidal spirit of the other:

From one angle *Britannia Hospital* is the logical, courageous development of my own style, my own thoughts and feelings. From another it is a stubborn repetition of ideas which have already proved unpopular, unwelcome, unacceptable to all except an increasingly shrinking minority. (Anderson 2004a: 389)

Anderson's last British film is unique in the extent to which it betrays the director's awareness that *Britannia Hospital* implicitly projects onscreen what it meant for Anderson to work within the framework of the British film industry at the time. The connection between the storyline—the state of a country in the final throes of a terminal illness—and the state of the British film industry was noted in the French press following the film's presentation at Cannes in 1982.

The film critic Serge Daney, for instance, regards the surgery scene involving Professor Millar as a modern-day Dr. Frankenstein, as a projection of what Anderson thought of the film industry in his country (Daney 1982: *Libération*). Daney opens his article by stating that the British director rolls two metaphors into one: the first equating the state of the country with a hospital in a state of total disarray and the second implying that the situation extends to the ill-health of the British cinema. Furthermore, Daney sees Professor Millar as the onscreen equivalent of the director. For him, Anderson exhibits all

the signs of the mad scientist/doctor who persists in operating on a patient long past any hope of recovery, symbolising both the state of the British cinema—here labelled as “le cinéma anglais” (ibid.)—and the director’s growing loss of interest in defending its cause. In other words, the frenzy with which Professor Millar sews back together human body parts belonging to two different bodies is meaningless: the storyline in the film confirms this as the whole surgery fails, culminating in the death of Millar’s assistant and the, by-then, headless patient biting the hand of his creator.

Daney associates the imagery pervading the scene with Stanley Kubrick’s metaphysical signature in *2001: Space Odyssey* – “un exit métaphysique à la Kubrick” [A Kubrickian metaphysical exit] – but argues that Anderson fails to convince. He suggests instead that the British director look into the causes underlying the ill-health of British cinema, as opposed to reluctantly attempting to save it. (ibid.) It is worth noting that the reviewer judges the pertinence of Anderson’s project in the light of the director’s own interrogation about his national background. Daney highlights the fact that fighting for the cause of British cinema had become a lonely affair—most of Anderson’s contemporaries having left to work in the United States. (ibid.)

In “The Concept of National Cinema,” Andrew Higson situates the concept of a national identity for films at the intersection between production and consumption (Higson 1989: 132). His intention is to focus on the conditions under which a given audience—defined according to economic, social and cultural factors—experiences a specific national cinema. Higson offers a definition of national cinema that includes economic factors (national cinema understood as domestic film production), aesthetic considerations (“what are these films about? Do they share a common style or worldview?” (ibid.)) and

the significance of “consumption” patterns (ibid.: 133). In other words, a national cinema is situated at a crossroads between economic, social and cultural influences. Here, Higson’s definition provides a frame for the feeling of rift that informed Anderson’s approach to the question of national identity in his films. To quote Anderson discussing the “rush to conformism” (Anderson 1989: 165), that underpinned filmmaking in his country:

[T]he possibilities of filmmaking in Britain for someone of my temperament are very difficult, very limited ... The violent rejection of my last British film, *Britannia Hospital*, is evidence of this ... We’re accustomed ... to a film culture in which absurdly grotesque horror is a part of a tradition. My film was so satirical that it demanded a sense of humor. Of course, the trouble is that people have begun to think in clichés. If they think they’re going to see a satirical social film, then they’re not prepared for the kind of extended satire present in *Britannia Hospital*. (Ibid.: 170)

Britannia Hospital highlights the extent to which Anderson conceived of his filmmaking career as a source of perpetual conflict. In a letter to Marcorelles written shortly before the film was shown at the 1982 Cannes Festival, he likens his situation to the struggles that dissidents encountered on a daily basis behind the Iron Curtain. (LA 5/01/2/33/24)⁵¹ He regards conformism as a cultural tool of oppression and the media as the state police in charge of its enforcement. (ibid.) Dissidence for Anderson became a guarantee of artistic value and, by implication, a marker of his marginalisation from the British national industry. Anderson’s reference to George Orwell’s *1984* suggests the connection between the two:

⁵¹ Anderson (28 April 1982: LA 5/01/2/33/24): “I feel it is more and more important that individual, dissident talents should survive and be supported in the cinema. Because we do have our dissidents here in the West – though not perhaps as many of them as they have in the East ...”

1984 has come—or is coming—but in very different clothes from the drab grey designed for it by George Orwell. On the contrary, it is lavishly costumed and subsidised. And media-celebrated. (ibid.)

A comment made by Anderson's friend, the Polish director Andrzej Wajda about *Britannia Hospital* further confirms the connection between artistic value and dissidence from the national norm.⁵² Wajda told Anderson that it was the most Polish film he had seen in years,⁵³ thereby drawing a parallel between the national context in which their respective films were made and their own inherent artistic merit.

To conclude, Higson, in *Waving The Flag*, insists on the discursive aspect that underlies the construction of a national cinema. In an echo of Benedict Anderson's view that the cultural is a historical anomaly, he argues that the "critical discourses" that describe a national cinema also by implication construct its identity. (1995: 1) Higson further defines the Britishness that underlies the form and content of British films as "a publicly imagined sense of community and cultural space". (ibid.) The representation of Britishness for Anderson stems from a permanent conflict: he acknowledged the cultural and social legacy that had framed his work but regarded it as essentially oppressive. The director's predilection for selecting institutions as settings for the action of his films—school, hospital, organised sports, the military, the justice system—constitutes the external manifestation of the duality that informed his vision.

⁵² Anderson became aware of Wajda's work on the occasion of the screening of *A Generation* at the 1957 Cannes Film Festival. He subsequently wrote a review in the *New Statesman* praising the film. His review of Wajda's film eclipsed Lean's entry to the festival – *The Bridge of the River Kwai* – which led to Anderson's contract being terminated. Wajda and Anderson became friends in the 1960s following the British director's visits to Poland and their joint attendance at film festivals, notably the first competitive international film festival to be held in Delhi, India in 1965. They exchanged a regular correspondence until Anderson's death in 1994.

⁵³ Anderson mentions Wajda's comment in a letter to Marc Corelles – LA 5/1/2/33/37: "Britannia Hospital est le film le plus Polonais qui a été produit depuis plusieurs années."

Chapter 7:

The National and the Cultural

In the previous chapter as well as in the literature review, I mentioned Anderson's feeling of dejection in the face of the little critical and commercial appreciation his work received in his country. This feeling proved particularly strong in the last decade of his life and career in the cinema.

The following chapter aims to relate this aspect of Anderson's career – that which establishes him as an underrated artist in his country – with the notion of 'impasse' that has been coined to refer to the lack of critical recognition for British cinema. (Barr 1986; Street 2000) In Anderson's case, the term would designate both the relative marginalisation of his contribution to the British film industry and the nature of the critical discourse appraising his film aesthetic.

I mentioned in the Literature Review Hedling's comment on the 1950s and 1980s as representing the two most significant decades of Anderson's activity as a critic. In this chapter, they help identify the origin of a tension in the British director's approach to his own work: on the one hand, his writings for *Sequence* and *Sight and Sound* in the 1940s and 50s, reinforced the view of British cinema as an inferior one; on the other, his work as a documentary-filmmaker and theatre director, established him as an intrinsic part of the British counter-cultural scene of the 1950s. The 1980s can be said to replicate the pattern as Anderson longed for recognition and acceptance in his country as well as

rejected the prevailing idea of a renaissance for British film. However, the critical and commercial failure of *Britannia Hospital* (1982), prevented another association with a cultural renewal such as his work for the Royal Court Theatre in the late 1950s and the making of *This Sporting Life* (1963) had made possible.

As I said previously, the Archive correspondence in the 1980s features many examples of Anderson's resentment towards the film industry and the critics who, in his opinion, consistently overlooked his work. As in most cases, the exchange took place with friends who were film critics or practitioners themselves, it becomes tempting to see the British director as being somewhat complicit in the building of a discourse of failure attached to his name.

The chapter will be divided into three parts: the first takes as a starting point the archiving of material covering the production and reception of *Every Day Except Christmas* (1957) at the Bibliothèque du Film – BiFi – in Paris. The objective is to illustrate a facet of the process that positions Anderson's film aesthetic in a critical impasse. The second part will rely on the period of the Free Cinema and a selection of reviews from Britain and France to demonstrate that there is a tendency to inscribe the origin of his film aesthetic through a tacit acknowledgement of that same critical impasse. The last part connects the ambiguity around the nature of Anderson's early film aesthetic with the director's negotiation of the British cultural and national markers on his work.

***Every Day Except Christmas* and Free Cinema:**

The BiFi holds a significant amount of material covering Anderson's career in the cinema: most of it consists of film reviews that the French and foreign press wrote on the occasion of the films' presentations at successive Cannes Film Festivals. As previously stated, digital copies of these reviews are available on-site. Material relating to Anderson's early work, on the other hand, is mostly held in the BiFi special collections or archive section.

This includes notably, a number of documents that pertain to the production, promotion and reception of *Every Day Except Christmas* (1957). These documents are split across three folders or 'fonds' – one dealing with the Cannes Film Festival correspondence for the period 1956-57, one titled "Free Cinema" and the other entitled, "Every Day Except Christmas", which is part of a larger folder containing material donated by Georges Sadoul's heirs. Photos taken on the occasion of the 1957 Venice Film Festival where Anderson won the Grand Prize in the television category for *Every Day*, bear handwritten notes by Gene Moskowitz to Anderson that indicate the British director originally donated these documents to Sadoul.

The first document I will look at is a letter – held in the folder grouping together the correspondence attached to the 1956-57 Cannes Film Festival. (Anderson 1957: FIFA474-B83) In a letter dated April 1957, Anderson pleads with Favre Le Bret, the then Délégué Général of the Festival in order to have his documentary –*Every Day* – included as an official entry. At first glance, the informative value is limited: Anderson's description in French of the aesthetic features of *Every Day* gives a confusing account of

what the documentary is about. Two features are of most immediate concern for the researcher: Anderson's mention of their mutual acquaintance with the Paris correspondent and film reviewer for the American show-business publication *Variety*, Moskowitz, along with his planned attendance as a film critic.

Anderson uses a rather idiosyncratic version of French: although mostly grammatically correct, his erratic respect of the rules governing French syntax accentuates the gap between the initial meaning of the message and the process of interpretation carried out by its intended recipient. Anderson's attempt at preserving his well-established trenchant criticism of the British film industry, obscures the presentation of his film aesthetic in French. To quote from the letter:

[M]on film, Every Day Except Christmas ... Il s'agit d'un film de 35 minutes – anglais – documentaire en noir-et-blanc – tourne sur le marche a Covent Garden (Londres) – une production de cette compagnie pour the Ford Motor Company. Non pas publicitaire; ni “information” – plutot “Documentaire Lyrique”. Comme vous savez, le comitie anglais chargé de faire le selection a choisi un dessin anime. Ils ont bien le droit. Mais ils ont fait ce choix sans voir mon film. Et en plus – je ne crois pas que c'est vraiment possible a faire comparaison entr' un dessin anime et un documentaire! (Anderson 1957e: FIFA474-B83)

My entry – Every Day Except Christmas – is a 35-minute black and white documentary film shot on location in Covent Garden (London). This is a [Graphic Films Limited] production for the Ford Motor Company. It is neither commercial nor educational – rather a ‘lyrical documentary’. As you know, the English selecting committee has chosen an animated feature, which is absolutely their right. However, they did so without viewing my film. And what is more, I do not believe that an animated feature and a documentary should reasonably be expected to compete with one other.

There is a sense that Anderson's unforgiving attitude towards his national film industry simply does not translate. His request was denied: the office of Favre Le Bret sent him a

letter that was typed and bore no overt indication that Le Bret wrote or even saw it. (Le Bret 1957: FIFA474-B83)

In the “Free Cinema” folder, there is a copy of the Free Cinema Three Advance Programme advertising *Every Day*. The first paragraph features a sentence that echoes very closely Anderson’s letter to Le Bret: the director describes his work as ‘a lyrical documentary’ – an attempt to ‘bring poetry and humanity back into this kind of film-making, and to break with the technical-informational-travelogue tradition’ that in the past few years has made documentary synonymous with ‘dullness’ and ‘conformism’. (Anderson 1957d: CJ1969-B254)

The file also contains production notes that Anderson made at the time of filming: the scribbled notes give background information on the shooting of *Every Day*, more specifically the degree of personal involvement demonstrated by Anderson. (Anderson 1957c: *ibid.*) For the researcher familiar with his work, the annotated documents recall the diary entries written at the time of the filming of the Sutcliffes’ documentaries. The picture of an author-director who actively controls each stage of the filmmaking process emerges. Anderson’s handwriting betrays his close monitoring of the composition of every shot: details of the number of protagonists taking part, the types of fruits and vegetables that appear in any given sequence are all described with the utmost care. The pattern repeats itself for the background music – the director lists methodically the type of music he intends to use and the order in which each individual piece comes in. The same goes for the voice-over commentary that is segmented into the scenes and sequences it accompanies. (*ibid.*)

In that same folder, a clipping from *The Times* can also be found. The last two paragraphs of the article account for the theme and style of the documentary as well as the context in which it was produced: the sponsorship of the Ford Motor Company is mentioned and related to the figure of Karel Reisz who was then in charge of Ford's promotional film department. To quote:

[I]t must be the first time for many years – in this country at least – that such sponsorship has been extended to a film neither technical nor informative in style, but avowedly humanistic and poetic. (*The Times* in Anderson 1957c: CJ1969-B254)

There is a striking echo between *The Times*' presentation of the documentary and Anderson's own in his letter to Le Bret. It is interesting to note that the clipping is actually unidentified in the folder. Its physical presence alongside Anderson's own production notes, leads the researcher to believe in a perfect continuity of tone between the presentation of his documentary's aesthetics and its subsequent critical reception. In that context, the letter to Le Bret, also confirms what a researcher on Anderson assumes she will find: evidence of the British director's struggle to have his films duly acknowledged. Moskowitz's hand-written notes on the photos taken at the Venice Film Festival, reinforce the vision of an artist whose work is only begrudgingly celebrated. I will argue that the origin of this perception can be traced back to the critical discourse that appraised Free Cinema.

Reviewing Free Cinema:

The reviews of the Free Cinema series that were published at the time by close friends and critics or collaborators contribute to shape up the view of an initiative that stood

against the grain: more specifically, Marcorelles's study of the British film industry that appeared in *Cahiers* in 1958 (24-9), and Lambert's own review of the first programme in *Sight and Sound* (1956: 173-7). Both Marcorelles and Lambert stress the filmmakers' willingness to shake the conformism of British cinema to its roots (Lambert 1956: 174; Marcorelles 1958: 28). Their respective account of the documentaries' focus on the everyday life of ordinary British citizens favours a similar wording: the ideas of commitment to the truth, the significance of the gestures of the everyday, and a belief in a humanist function for the cinema, permeate their reviews. Quotations marks are also in evidence, thereby accentuating the proclaimed authenticity of the reviews: these are based on actual interviews with the filmmakers who were given an opportunity to explain what their works are about.

The value of these contemporaneous pieces is not in any doubt, as in both cases, the reviewers were established film critics and as I have already mentioned, close friends with Anderson himself. The question of their impact on the critical appraisals these documentaries have received since, however, proves central. As I will show by selecting a few examples from French commentaries of those same documentaries, the wording of Lambert's and Marcorelles's struck a chord with other reviewers who did not know the British director personally. The resulting consensus over the features of Anderson's aesthetic obscures another reality: there has been little attempt since the 1960s to evaluate the duality that characterises his shorts.

I already mentioned Graham's reference to Lambert's article on the "Free Cinema" to instantiate Anderson's aesthetic concern with the isolation of the individual in society. (Graham 1981: 28) Across the Channel, Marcorelles's 1958 review published in *Cahiers*,

is quoted in Philippe Pilard's *Histoire Du Cinéma Britannique* with a similar objective, that of presenting Anderson's aesthetic. (Pilard 1996: 70) However, this achieves mixed results: in spite of a manifest respect for Anderson's career, Pilard gives an ambiguous picture of the director's contribution to the Free Cinema series: he never fully accounts for the significance of the dual influence which Grierson and Jennings exerts. More specifically, there is no social or cultural commentary provided to explain why they work well together as well as for Anderson's manifest preference of one over the other. The duality in Anderson's aesthetics in other words, leads to the ambiguity of response in the French commentator.

Pilard is a French author, film director and academic who, to this day, has written the most comprehensive history of the British film industry. (1996; 2010) As he notes in his bibliography, other studies of specific genres or periods in the history of British cinema, were published in French before his: the most notable are Freddy Buache's 1978 *Le Cinéma Anglais*, published in Switzerland, and Georges Sadoul's *Histoire Générale du Cinéma* that as Ian Christie recently noted, informed the *Cahiers'* views on British film. (2010: 144, 146)

In both his 1996 and 2010 editions, Pilard devotes a significant section to Free Cinema. Quotes from Marc Corelles 1958 *Cahiers* article along with Anderson's *Sequence 3* "A Possible Solution" (1948), provide the background to understanding the cultural significance of the documentaries. Once more, the prevailing theme stresses the filmmakers' disillusionment with their film industry and the lack of originality and relevance of their country's film and documentary production. Pilard's choice of direct quotes confirms Anderson's strong involvement in the Free Cinema initiative. The

French author's commentary on the thematic and technical novelty these documentaries showed, appears to privilege a detached stance; one which is assumed possible as a result of the national and cultural gap between himself the filmmakers and their first reviewers.

This apparently fresh reading of Anderson's work can be challenged on closer inspection. Pilard's often ambiguous compilation of his sources betrays an overreliance on pre-existing readings of the films. In the case of Anderson's *Every Day*, there is a clear wish to assert Anderson's originality of treatment. In the same paragraph, however, he refers to *Night Mail* (1936) and Jennings as sources for *Every Day*, but does not justify the parallel. By contrast, in another chapter, in which he discusses *Brief Encounter* (1945), he mentions *Night Mail* again. However, this time the reference to Watt and Wright's 1936 documentary is unambiguous for the reader: it accounts convincingly for the critical consensus over the aesthetic value of the string of Post-War films that relied on a realistic treatment of their topic directly inherited from the British Documentary movement and subsequent War documentaries.

In the section on Free Cinema, however, the mention of the Documentary Movement becomes associated with the idea of a fledgling aesthetic for *Every Day*. The following quote originally from Marcorelles's 1958 article, reinforces this: the use of a voice-over – Alun Owen's – is criticised as indicative of a middle-class patronising attitude towards the working class. (Marcorelles in Pilard 1996: 69-70) For a researcher on Anderson, the ambiguous nature of the commentary is confirmed when Pilard then seamlessly refers to Lambert's *Sight and Sound* 1956 article: the combined references to Grierson and Jennings suggest the perfect mix of documentary realism and poetic treatment. (Pilard 1996: 69)

Pilard's commentary suggests a lack of differentiation between what pertains to a pre-existing critical discourse and his own analysis of archive material such as press and film critics' reviews from the period. His review of *Together* bears similarities with Lambert's: a realistic rendition of life in a poor neighbourhood of London that also transcends its documentary value to become an allegorical reflection on human condition (ibid.: 68). In the words of Lambert, the Free Cinema documentaries show "real people [in] dramatised situations, conveying their own truth and illuminating human behaviour in a way that ... has never (Jennings excepted) appeared on British screen". Lambert (1956: 177)

Pilard's review of *We Are the Lambeth Boys*, similarly stresses the value of the insights the audience gains into the community's lives. His mention of the creative latitude which the recent availability of portable cameras made possible, is also in keeping with *The Times* 1957 review. He identifies what he perceives to be an ironical take on the social divisions of the period, which he also sees in *Momma Don't Allow*. His use of the word 'irony' suggests a continuity of vision with Anderson's *O Dreamland*. The presentation of that same documentary however, contradicts his own reading.

O Dreamland features prominently in the section on Free Cinema: the "biting irony" which Pilard sees as underpinning Anderson's treatment of the amusement fair in Margate, highlights its distinctiveness. It signals the British director's originality of approach while also marginalising his work from the rest of the other contributors to the series of shorts. (1996: 67-9) *Momma Don't Allow*, *Together* and *The Lambeth Boys* are noted for their minute attention to the daily lives of sections of the population rarely seen on-screen. The documentaries are presented as forerunners to the thematic and stylistic

concerns of the British New Wave. (ibid.: 70) In Anderson's case, his contribution to the first programme soon becomes a source of ambiguity, which the 2010 edition confirms.

In his more recent overview of Free Cinema, Pilard is torn between praising the idiosyncratic style of *O Dreamland* (1953) and stressing the subtlety of feelings with which *Wakefield Express* (1952), *Thursday's Children* (1953) and *Every Day* are filmed. The problem lies in the fact that out of the four mentioned, only the first one – *O Dreamland* – was an entirely personal initiative; the other three had been commissioned. Furthermore, as Jennings's imprint is more noticeable with the commissioned documentaries, the nature of Anderson's aesthetic is not explained: Pilard never addresses the impact of Anderson's duality of treatment on our reading of these documentaries. On the one hand, he highlights the director's ability to shape a material that allowed him little creative latitude while also paying tribute to Jennings's style. On the other, with *O Dreamland*, Pilard sees the marks of a more individual work whose thematic and stylistic approach is closer to the feature films he went on to direct. The French author does not account openly for the way in which the two aesthetics co-exist or relate with each other in Anderson's work. Except in one respect: Anderson's willingness to remain independent from the mainstream and his subsequent disillusionment with both British society and film industry that would account for the perceived bitterness of *O Dreamland* and its influence over the style of later works. (ibid.: 76-7)

In that sense, Pilard appears to hint at an earlier critical assessment of the significance that *O Dreamland* played in the evolution of Anderson's film aesthetic. John Russell Taylor locates the roots for the distinctive blend of realism and emotional drama that characterises *This Sporting Life* in the style of *O Dreamland*. To him, the recreation of

reality is the first stage towards a deeper investigation into the rich and distinctive array of human emotions and responses to life. (Taylor 1976: 84-5) Taylor even regards *O Dreamland* as demonstrating a superior grasp of film aesthetic compared to *Every Day*. He especially reproaches Anderson for his self-conscious references to Jennings's style of filming, which in his opinion, lead to a "cunning assemblage of vivid ... details [but a] little bit too bland and rosy to be altogether true". (ibid.: 80) By contrast, Pilard does not clearly state which stylistic choice constitutes Anderson's strength: the warmth of feelings towards the communities Anderson conveys in *Wakefield*, *Thursday's* and *Every Day* or the ambiguity that characterises his reaction to the passive acceptance and perverse enjoyment of the crowds in *O Dreamland*.

An ambiguous discourse concerning Anderson's early film aesthetic is not new: the French film journal *Positif* reviewed the Free Cinema programmes in the early 1960s, and produced a similar ambiguity. In his 1962 article, Jean-Paul Torok identifies thematic and stylistic features in *O Dreamland* that he would also praise in his subsequent review of *This Sporting Life*. (Torok 1962: 13-20)

He notes the duality that informs Anderson's vision of the amusement fair and its visitors: the sadness and compassion that he feels towards the people is systematically counterbalanced by the uncompromising condemnation of this form of mass leisure from which there is no real escape. (ibid.: 15) Similarly, in his review of *This Sporting Life*, Torok shows that the painstaking attention to details in his picture of the Yorkshire town, of its social strictures and the world of professional rugby, all oppose and complement Anderson's characterisation of his male protagonist. (ibid. 1963: 98) Machin's attempts at social betterment and personal happiness are bound to fail as he is an intrinsic part of

the social environment he is rejecting. What is worth noting, however, is that Torok does not mention *O Dreamland* when accounting for the origins of the style Anderson adopted in *This Sporting Life*. Instead, he relies on *Every Day* that he sees as confirming the British director's natural talent for observation and the recreation of human interactions. (ibid.: 98-9)

The two reviews are less than a year apart – December 1962 and Summer 1963, which makes the absence of reference to *O Dreamland* in the review on *This Sporting Life* all the more conspicuous. Torok privileges an approach that seeks to link the documentaries together both thematically and stylistically. He explicitly refers to Lambert's 1956 review of the first Free Cinema programme that provides the framework for his investigation of what he sees as a "new cinema" – "la naissance d'un cinéma nouveau". (ibid.: 1962: 13)

Although Torok acknowledges the documentaries do not aim to present a common political message, he still relies on an integrated view of their thematic and stylistic features to bring out their moral stance. To him, this is where the distinctiveness of these amateur filmmakers lies: the picture of socially alienated protagonists mirrors their own marginalisation from the film industry mainstream. At the same time, however, Torok is quick to stress the directors' refusal to pass judgement on the social groups they filmed. He speaks of an initiative that remains at the level of an 'empirical investigation into the real' to which they contribute a film technique and aesthetic devoid of all artificiality and preconceived ideas as to form and content. (ibid.)

The last aspect fits in well with the 1956 Free Cinema manifesto that stated that perfection is not an aim; that their respective attitude to their subject-matter vouches for their style alone. (Anderson 1991: 42) In the case of *O Dreamland*, the question of the

film director's attitude becomes either an opportunity to identify an early example of Anderson's juxtaposition of extremes or the confirmation of a long-standing embittered relationship with British society. Lambert in *Sight and Sound* and Torok in *Positif* effectively argue in favour of the first. Film historians, such as Buache or Raymond Durgnat in *A Mirror for England*, stress what they see as the amateur filming style – Buache speaks of “pochade nerveuse” or nervous sketch (1978: 185) – and the exaggerated attack on the working class leisure tastes. The commonality of views between two film historians writing 8 years apart and in different countries and language, is worth noting: it confirms the existence of an almost inescapable duality in the way *O Dreamland* and *Every Day* shape the critical discourse on Anderson's film aesthetic: they both instantiate Anderson's definition of the poetic – as the irruption of the subjective, the emotional into everyday reality – but their respective negotiation of form and content cannot be reconciled.

Lambert's review is exempt from this ambiguity as it was written before the making of *Every Day*. The parallels that he establishes between *O Dreamland* and *Together* in their neo-realist-inspired treatment of the individual's social isolation give Anderson's documentary a scope that the British director largely overlooked too. In his interviews with Ryan in the early 1990s, as well as in his 1957 article for *Universities and Left Review*, Anderson presents *O Dreamland* as an almost spontaneous endeavour, made on left-over stock and self-financed. (Anderson 1957: 76 ; *ibid.*: 1994: 54-5) And, he also opposes its style to *Thursday's* – the song of experience meeting the song of innocence. (*ibid.* 1994: 59) It is understandable that he should refer to the documentary he was shooting at the same time with Guy Brenton. However, as he also insists on their shared

creative input, this places *O Dreamland* in an uneasy position: it becomes difficult to assess the aesthetic significance of a piece whose own creator claims complete authorship while also connecting it with the style of another work this time explicitly collaborative in nature.

In these circumstances, it is perhaps not surprising to find many references to the shared technical as well as creative expertise amongst the contributors to the first Free Cinema programme. Lambert (1956), Marcorelles (1958), then Torok (1962) and Pilard (1996; 2010), all point to the collaborative dimension that the initiative took: Anderson helped with the editing of *Together*, and John Fletcher was the cameraman on *O Dreamland*. He had previously worked with Anderson on the sound recording for *Wakefield*, along with Walter Lassally as cameraman. The latter had also filmed *Three Installations*, then worked on *Thursday's* for Anderson and Brenton and, subsequently on *Every Day* in 1957.

This aspect likens their works to those of the French new wave directors, a number of whom showed their first films in Britain on the occasion of a Free Cinema programme. Those amongst Anderson's critics who became his biographers, often noted that point but used it as a way of separating out the two movements. Marcorelles, in an article for *Le Monde* in the 1980s for instance, contrasted the degree of social awareness the Free Cinema directors demonstrated with the self-serving interests of their French counterparts' close-knit group. (Marcorelles 1987: LA 5/1/2/33/54) Anderson adopted a similarly dismissive discourse in those years: in his entry for the 1984 *International Film Guide*, he opposes what he sees as two ethical approaches to film criticism and filmmaking. To him, *Cahiers* and the French New Wave directors in its wake,

represented a purely theoretical and intellectual stance whereas the Free Cinema contributors sought social reform through a moral attitude to their style. (Anderson 1984b: 394-5) This comment intervenes within the context of a larger overview of British cinema in the 1980s. Anderson's disillusionment with his national film industry takes as focal point the failure of Free Cinema to uphold its legacy: to the collaborative spirit that made the films possible – from the cooperation and exchange of expertise during filming to the sponsorship of the BFI and the Ford motor company – he opposes the pervasive quest for commercial success that has since then predominated.

The national and the cultural: Anderson's critical impasse

Anderson associates key contributors to Free Cinema with this idea of failure: Tony Richardson and Karel Reisz more specifically. As it has been noted, their collaboration went back to *Sequence*, and in the late 50s-early 60s, led to Anderson's joining The Royal Court in London, as a director for the English Stage Company, and ultimately his directing *This Sporting Life* on Reisz's recommendation. The correspondence with his friends and the film historians and critics who documented his career, makes many overt references to Anderson's bitterness towards the different paths their careers took: in a letter to Marcorelles, for instance, he expresses mixed feelings in the face of Reisz's ability to secure funding and a big Hollywood name actress such as Meryl Streep for *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1981). (Anderson 1981: LA 5/1/2/33/18)

What Anderson perceived as the failure of the original contributors to Free Cinema to live up to the principles they had erected, mirrors his own marginalisation from the British film industry in the 1980s. To Anderson, the difficulty in securing funding for *Britannia Hospital*, soon followed by the pressure to do well in the box office, was the

most overt manifestation of an industry that was prejudiced against him. In a letter to Robinson (Anderson 1982: LA 5/1/2/48/16), he shows a propensity for including even his films that had achieved recognition – whether critical or commercial – into this idea of exclusion. His choice of mentioning Penelope Houston’s critical review of *If....*, brings out the extent of his distrust, as Houston had been an active contributor to *Sequence*.

The Lindsay Anderson Archive correspondence further suggests that Anderson cultivated his status as an outsider with the friends and critics researching his work. The letters he exchanged with Marcorelles are particularly revealing of a pattern in which the critic and friend is expected to both acknowledge and help him challenge that marginalisation. The letters written at the time of *Britannia Hospital*, for instance, feature many instances where Anderson speaks of an ‘ordeal’ or ‘battle’ when referring to his work alongside injunctions for Marcorelles to write and thereby actively support him. The 7 August 1981 letter, for instance, reads:

One feels oneself more and more isolated in trying to approach either cinema or theatre with the kind of seriousness, the kind of commitment which alone can justify our continued concern – whether critical or creative ... your decision to write nothing [about Anderson’s production of *Hamlet*] may do credit to your intellectual scrupulosity and profondeur, but it didn’t provide much gratification or encouragement to your friends ... We start shooting BRITANNIA HOSPITAL on Monday. I approach the ordeal (too little time, too little money, apart from all the usual creative uncertainty) with fear, trembling, but a certain desperate firmness of resolve. Good or bad, at least it will be about something! And therefore safe from the attention of auteurs?! (Anderson 1981: LA 5/1/2/33/17)

A letter to Robinson written shortly before *Britannia Hospital* was released, similarly deplored his lack of critical response. (Anderson 1982: LA 5/1/2/48/15) Once Robinson

published his review, it was attacked for the perceived “shallowness” of analysis it betrayed. (ibid.: LA 5/1/2/48/16)

The Archive holds further letters from critics and friends that confirm the idea that Anderson is an underrated artist in his own country: Hedling in 1988 for instance, attributes the negative feedback his lecture on the Brechtian motifs in *O Lucky Man!* received to the hostile climate in which Anderson’s work is usually appraised. (Hedling 1988: LA 5/1/2/21/11) Earlier, in the late 1970s, Silet urged Anderson to consider a formal compilation of his early film criticism, drawing his attention to the then difficulty in accessing his writings and further stressing their value to students and researchers on British cinema. (Silet 1977: LA 5/1/2/51/10) The pattern that subsequently developed between Anderson and Silet as well as with Hedling, also features examples of that dual dynamic characterised by the British director’s expression of disillusionment on the one hand, and exhortations to do justice to his work on the other. (Anderson 1978: LA 5/1/2/51/13; ibid. 1989: LA 5/1/2/1/19)

I would argue that Anderson’s early trans-national recognition – when he won the Academy Award in 1955 for *Thursday’s* – initiated a process of dissociation in his discourse about his work between what pertains to the national and what is cultural. This process of dissociation however, also implies a constant negotiation of both aspects: just as he equates Britishness with the upper middle-class and Southern England’s attitude to the arts, he similarly conflates the national with the financial control the industry exerts over the artist. His oft-repeated mention of his Scottish ancestry provides an example of an obsessive pattern of self-exclusion from the national industry. (Anderson 1988: 33)

The interview that he gave to the BBC the year following his award, illustrates how the cultural and the national are both distinct and overlapping realities in his discourse:

Anderson reaffirms the central role which documentary plays within the British film industry while also criticising the lack of support for newcomers. (Anderson 1956b: 56-8)

As he develops, the choice lies between independent, self-funded projects or commissioned documentaries for the industrial sector. It is worth noting however, that he does not equate the prospect of working on commissioned documentaries with a necessarily stifled creativity. Anderson gives the example of a project about “Industrial Rehabilitation” he was asked to do as a result of his newly acquired notoriety: he is quick to show how his personal imprint could have shaped the subject-matter which he also found of utmost social relevance. (ibid.: 58)

The apparent ambiguity of discourse that surrounds the definition of Anderson’s film aesthetic in the Free Cinema shorts, replicates the dual pattern: on the one hand, it values the high degree of creative experimentation which *O Dreamland* exhibits; on the other, it finds significant the director’s negotiation of his style in *Every Day* within the framework of industrial filmmaking. (Hedling 1998: 44-46; Silet 1979: 19-20)

Lovell in “The Unknown Cinema of Britain” (1972), relies on a similar duality: he notes the central role which the Documentary Movement plays within the definition of a distinct national cinema for Britain while stressing its implications on the question of the existence of an art cinema. Lovell gives a special prominence to Anderson’s work: he believes that his films represent a unique negotiation of Hollywood’s legacy and a distinct film aesthetic. The opposition and simultaneous conflation of two apparently distinct approaches to the question of film aesthetic was also a feature of *Sequence*’s

discourse, as noted amongst others, by Hedling (1998: 45). It led Hill to detect a lack of commitment in *O Dreamland*'s proclaimed subject matter through the use of a film aesthetic that to him, failed to measure up to its chosen polemical tone. (Hill 1986: 152)

This also provides the link to the last chapter that explores further the question of distinct but interrelated layers of discourse in our approach to Anderson's work. *O Lucky Man!* (1973) in my opinion, represents an artful negotiation of form and content alongside an active engagement on the part of the director, to account for his directorial choices.

Chapter 8:

Engagement and Authorial Intent:

The last chapter focuses primarily on *O Lucky Man!* (1973) with references to *Is That All There Is?* (1994) to conclude the section. I will here transpose the discussion of the dichotomy between the national and the cultural, which underpins my view of Anderson's directorial practice and the critical appraisal of his work, on to the dynamic between the narrative and narration in film.

I mentioned the existence of distinct but interrelated layers of discourse that appraise Anderson's work. The dynamic that is involved in the director's negotiation of the context in which his films are produced along with the nature of the filmmaking process itself, presupposes an active exchange between interrelated parties. The concept of engagement inspired by Anderson's interest in the Brechtian aesthetic, brings out the nature of the process and allows for an examination of the parties at work.

The first example of such an exchange occurs at the level of plot and narration in *O Lucky Man!*. I will first look at the treatment of realism in the film by investigating the nature of the relation between the director and his film. I will refer to François Truffaut's

La Nuit Américaine/Day For Night (1973) as a counterpart to Anderson's own negotiation of the narrative and narration features within *O Lucky Man!*

Recent overviews of the definitions and applications of the concept of authorship in film stress the permanence of an underlying tension: theoretical attempts at killing off the figure of the author also guarantee the survival of that same concept. The introduction of Levi-Straussian Structuralism in the Humanities, first in France in the late 1950s and subsequently in Anglo-Saxon academia roughly a decade later, signalled a shift of emphasis: from an initial focus on the visible impact which the character of an author – in the sense of an externalised biography – exerts on a work of art, interpretation and criticism in literature and film moved to a consideration of the processes underlying enunciation. (Bordwell 1996: 5-6; Wright Wexman 2003: 1, 4-7)

For film this implies challenging the centrality of the director within the filmmaking process and at the level of the critical and public reception of the work.

The directorial manipulation of reality in the narrative

The second film in Anderson's trilogy about Mick Travis's journey through life came out in 1973. That same year in France Truffaut presented *La Nuit Américaine/Day for Night* at the Cannes Film Festival. Anderson's film was also shown at Cannes that year and rumoured to be a strong contender for the Palme d'Or. As Hedling notes, *O Lucky Man!* had been selected as Britain's official entry to the festival even before it was due for release back home. (1998: 116) In spite of a great deal of media attention, both in Britain and at Cannes, *O Lucky Man!* did not, however, give another win to his director,

garnering instead mixed reviews and subsequently disappointing box office receipts (Hedling 1998: 116-7; Sutton 2004: 306).

Truffaut's *Day for Night* (1973) met with a very different fate: both a massive critical and public success it firmly established the director as the leading man of French cinema. (Therrien 2002: 175-6) The film was awarded amongst other prizes, two BAFTAs for Best Film, Best Direction, and the Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film in 1974. Within our present context, the professional connection that the two directors shared allows for an examination of their respective directorial practice,⁵⁴ which constitutes the first example of a convergence of enunciative sources, that is, an active discursive exchange between the director and his film: I will select two sequences – one from each film – that foreground the relationship between the director, his respective collaborators and the resulting film.

The two sequences in question foreground the question of authorial intent and control within the filmmaking process. This involves the use of a visual 'token' that signals the irruption of one world – that of the industrial context in which the film director and his collaborators work – into the other – that of the fictional or artistic plane, the film-within-the film.

First, it should be noted that Truffaut's *Day for Night* tells the story, literally, of the making of a film: cast and crew experience throughout the film, a series of personal and professional crises that echo the director's own struggle with his artistic process.

⁵⁴ Anderson and Truffaut first met in 1949 on the occasion of the Festival du Film Maudit in Biarritz (Lydie Mahias 1985: 46). As I indicated in Chapter 6, Truffaut presented *Les Mistons* during the Free Cinema 5 programme, in September 1958.

Similarly, the human dimension of filmmaking comments on the industrial constraints, which any film is faced with at the stage of production. At one point in the film, the fictional director Ferrand – Truffaut’s alter-ego – ‘borrows’ a vase from the hotel where the film crew is based. An article published in *Cahiers du Cinéma* on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Truffaut’s death, stresses the fact that the vase is never to be seen again, either in the fictional world – the film-within-the-film – or its counterpart – the real world for which Truffaut’s film as a whole, stands. (Burdeau 2004: 12-3) The author of the article further argues that Truffaut foregrounds the act of merging the presumed world of the real with that of the fictional when Ferrand gives away the flowers that were in the vase to the script-girl. The scene plays out the point where the two planes converge:

What does the episode tell us? The cinema ceaselessly outgrows its own limits. It requires a documentary source for its sustenance: in the manner of a robber, it draws upon reality. More precisely, the cinema enables a meeting between life and the films themselves, just as the vase and the bouquet sequence exemplifies. The cinema both partakes in and of the very act of sharing as demonstrated by the film *La Nuit Américaine* which celebrates in its own right this ritual by allowing two experiences of the film to meet and merge: the film for the audience and the film within the film. A two-way lesson in short: it appears the cinema has burst from life itself, and it retains the trace of this very act of robbery within itself. (Burdeau 2004: 12)⁵⁵

This act of compensation that the director performs has a dual function: first it ascertains the centrality of the director’s role by leaving the motivation behind the gesture performed by Truffaut’s alter-ego unexplained. Second, it provides an analogy for the

⁵⁵ Que nous dit cet épisode? Que le cinéma déborde sans cesse hors de son enclos. Qu’il s’alimente à une source documentaire. Qu’il puise, vandale, dans la réalité. Mieux: qu’entre la vie et les films un partage s’opère – par exemple, celui d’un vase et de son bouquet. Partage dont le cinéma procède tout en le recueillant, puisque *La Nuit Américaine* combine film et film-dans-le-film. Leçon croisée: bien qu’arraché à la vie, le cinéma garde trace, à l’intérieur de lui-même, du rapt qu’il est.

director's desire and potential to manipulate reality. Burdeau sees Truffaut's choice of a vase as a reference to Bazin's famous metaphor according to which the art of cinema can be seen as moulding time (Bazin 1958: 16; Burdeau 2004: 14; Narboni 2008). Here the vase also represents the director's manipulation of reality and artifice, the real and the fictional.

Anderson's *O Lucky Man!* relates the journey of a man who sets out to make a place for himself in the world. The main protagonist, Mick Travis, starts off as a salesman, travelling around Britain selling coffee beans. He comes across the representatives of key British institutions along the way who occasionally offer a helping hand, and more often than not, hinder him in his progress. Travis for instance, finds himself in a secret military facility after his car broke down and is subsequently subjected to a rough questioning. Later in the film, he stays overnight in a medical research facility where, it turns out, drastic genetic experiments are carried out on unsuspecting patients. Soon after a narrow escape from death at the hands of the mad scientist, Travis meets the daughter of an influential businessman with key political connections. He secures a job as the businessman's personal assistant, which leads on to charges of corruption being wrongly laid upon him. Upon release from prison, he attempts to cure social evils before, eventually, resolving to accept the world on its own terms.

The final sequence of the film sees him going to an audition. Anderson himself plays the part of the director: like Truffaut's film, there is no attempt at altering his appearance with make-up. Unlike *Day For Night*, however, Anderson does not have a fictional name;

the implication is that he acts as himself in the sequence.⁵⁶ One scene in particular highlights both the connection with Truffaut's film and the way in which the respective directors diverged in approach: the so-termed 'illumination' scene sees Anderson stepping into the frame and literally slapping his lead actor into giving him a smile. (Anderson 1973: 136)

As I said, Malcolm McDowell, as Mick Travis, goes to an audition following the failures of his other ventures. There, he is asked to smile for the camera, which he initially refuses to do. The scene is repeated six times, which involves six individual shots in quick successions of McDowell who, as Travis, plays another fictional part being slapped in front of the camera. Visually, the sequence is effective at raising the spectator's awareness of the ongoing filmmaking process: the rapid editing, the succession of close-ups, the sound effect foregrounding the harshness of the slap, all these elements suggest the director's intent to deconstruct the process of representation at the heart of storytelling.

In a review of the film for the American arts review *Crimmer*, the critic Elissa Durwood establishes a direct connection between Anderson's foregrounding of his role as a director and similar on-camera self-reflective studies by European directors, such as Jean-Luc Godard, Ingmar Bergman and of course Truffaut:

What Anderson is doing in *O Lucky Man!* is like Godard throwing an egg in the camera's face in *Contempt*, like Bergman interviewing his actors in *Persona*, like Truffaut playing himself in *Day for Night* ... (Durwood 1976: LA 1/7/6/7/1).

⁵⁶It should be noted that the name of Truffaut's character is Ferrand; no doubt a reference to his mother's maiden name 'de Monferrand' which was also one of his aliases while a critic at *Cahiers du Cinéma*.

Durwood's review confirms a possible connection between the respective aesthetic projects that characterised the works of these European film directors and the evolution of Anderson's own directorial practice:

... Anderson sets up an intricate dialectic between the real world and the filmic world – yet he is creating it within the context of film. Anderson is able to sustain this paradox, establishing a projected universe in which we watch a film and simultaneously believe in a peculiar distinction between the real life and movie life of the characters. (ibid.)

The context in which Durwood wrote accounts for the quick assimilation between the styles of the directors she mentions. It is of value in our context as this confirms the dichotomy which film critics establish between post-Second World War art cinema – that is the filmic output coming out of Europe and imported into the United States under that label – and Hollywood's own production. The article also was published within the context of an American practice of film criticism on which the auteur theory promulgated by Andrew Sarris, had left its mark since the early 1960s. (Grant 2008: 35; Sarris 1977: 21-3)

An interview with David Robinson published in *The Times* in 1973, uncovers the connection: the issue of determining how realistic *O Lucky Man!* is, becomes an expression of Anderson's authorial claim over the narrative and narration processes at work in his film:

... I think that this is a realistic film. According to the definition that was so well provided by Brecht: 'Realism is not a matter of showing real things, but of showing how things really are'. (Anderson 1973: 131)

The director's interest in the Brechtian challenge of the conventions underpinning realistic representation in art is by the time he directed the film, well established.

(Hedling 1998; Izod *et al.* 2010; Sussex 1969) Here, the foregrounding of the narration process becomes an integral part of the story, which *The White Bus* (1966) and *If....* (1968) had also relied on but to a lesser degree. In *O Lucky Man!* the narrational manipulation largely accounts for the mixed critical reviews, which recalls the divided reception at Cannes around the blend of fantasy and documentary style that underpinned *If....* (1968). (Malcolm 1973: LA 1/7/6/2/16; Wilson 1973: LA 1/7/6/2/29)

As Bordwell shows in his analysis of the features of art cinema, intrusions into the narrative flow function as deliberate authorial marks. *O Lucky Man!* presents such instances of unrealistic interventions: Alan Price's band and the final sequence featuring Anderson himself constitute the two most prominent aspects of the break with narrational conventions. The first two sequences opening the film put forth the central role that both the band and Anderson will play in the story to come: they first come on to the screen following a few-minute long and apparently self-contained narrative, about impoverished coffee farmers working the fields in an unnamed South American dictatorship. The structure of the initial sequence can be seen as preparing the audience for the estrangement that they are about to experience throughout the remainder of the film.

The whole sequence is silent: the narrative conventions that traditionally govern the American melodramas of the Silent Cinema era are here distorted to accentuate the unnaturalistic feel of the story depicted on-screen. The camera focuses on the facial expressions of the male lead thereby making the audience aware of their emotional response to the unfolding story: the farmer is suspected of stealing coffee beans, then arrested and eventually has his hands cut-off. The exaggerated causal relationship that lies between the events presented to the audience, forces that same audience to dismiss

both their emotional response and the storyline as equally inadequate. The artificial quality of the whole sequence finds further confirmation in the use of intertitles that complement the choice of filming this chain of events in black-and-white.

The sequence that follows takes the audience to what appears to be a recording studio: Alan Price and his band are playing the main title song of the film, *O Lucky Man!*.

Anderson also features in the sequence: in an echo to the ending of the film, the camera crew can be seen in a mirror reflection behind Price performing the song. Should this sequence have opened the film, the parallel with Truffaut's *Day for Night* would have proved straightforward: the director steps in front of the camera as a personal tribute to the filmmaking process. In Truffaut's film, this act becomes part of the storyline and does not seek to upset the relationship between narrative and narration any further: Truffaut's alter-ego, Ferrand, takes over by committing both himself and the audience to the fictional world of the making of the film-within-the film. The cast of that film does not interfere with the camera crew in charge of filming *Day for Night*; only Truffaut was allowed to cross over in between the two planes.

By contrast, *O Lucky Man!* blurs the boundaries between the parallel worlds of the two films being made: the introductory sequence allows the audience to recognise McDowell as playing the part of the South American farmer. The almost farcical disguise makes visible the actor behind the character acting in the sequence, which prepares the audience for the seemingly unwarranted interventions of the director, his crew and the musicians playing the film's soundtrack. Durwood in her aforementioned review of the film, highlights the lack of distinction between narrative and narration in *O Lucky Man!*:

Artistic intrusion and the absence of a narrator/persona integration are key components in the nature of *O Lucky Man!* ... That sacred line between actors playing characters and actors as themselves is continually crossed ... There is little or no perceptual gap between the way [Anderson] is presented on screen and the way he really is, and we must assume this is to support a continuum, helping bridge the chasm from the screen to the audience. (Durwood 1976: LA 1/7/6/7/1).

Her remarks posit Anderson the director as the unifying element: in that sense, *O Lucky Man!* conforms to the Bordwellian template for comprehending art cinema: the director through an overt manipulation of the narrative and narrational marks, makes the film intelligible to the audience while signalling its deviation from a tacit norm of storytelling. This is a reading that echoes Anderson's own view, as the director's interview with Robinson in *The Times* confirms, as well as, the fact that Durwood's review features in the Archive – and non-annotated!

In that interview, Anderson confirms his intention of collapsing the hierarchical structure that traditional filmmaking practice has established between narrative and narration. Notably, he castigates Robinson for failing to establish the connection between Travis's slapping in the final sequence and an earlier allusion to the occurrence of the moment of illumination preached in Zen philosophy:

Anderson: There is, of course, an interesting pointer, way back in the film, when he has set out on his [Travis] first job of selling coffee, and we hear over his car radio this little talk about Zen and about living in the moment and about how illumination may come suddenly.

...

Robinson: ... seeing this film, [I have] failed to make the relation I should have made.

Anderson: well you're lazy. You've just stepped over that bit, without bothering to work it out. That's not good enough in your job, which is to help people see a film in the right perspective, not just sit back and tell me

that they're not going to understand it ... (Anderson/Robinson 1973: 135-6).

Anderson's reminder of the value that he grants the critic's input within the artistic process, lends a specific meaning to the initial and final sequences of *O Lucky Man!* The sustained connection between the film director and the film's narrative – as the reference to the moment of illumination illustrates – as well as that between the actors and the characters they play – a link that is emphasised through Anderson's use of one actor to embody more than one character – all culminate in the staging of the film audition at the end. Just as the intervention of the director at the start of the film launches the storyline, his overt meddling with the main character's fate at the conclusion of Travis's journey vouches for the validity of the endeavour. The centrality of Anderson's function comes across at the level of both narrative and narration techniques, which gives us the most accomplished instantiation of his vision for the filmmaking process that he initially developed in "Creative Elements" (1948).

The reference to "Creative Elements" also uncovers the site of a constitutive tension: as previously mentioned, Anderson saw the role of the director as both central and integrated within the chain of creative contributions that makes up the filmmaking process. In *O Lucky Man!* the film proclaims from the start the significance of his crew's input: Alan Price is filmed performing the songs that comment on and accompany the storyline while the main lead appears in a part that similarly foregrounds the themes that underpin Travis's subsequent journey. Exploitation, greed, human misery and resourcefulness all become more than allegories: Anderson allows them to take on a

visible presence on the screen when they materialise first in the part of the farmer and then in the lyrics that Price performs live for the audience.

By implication the director appears to acknowledge the existence of a limit to his authorial control over the film structure: The literal presence of Price as well as the inscription of his role as the film's composer within the narrative and the narration themselves parallels Travis's encounter with Anderson at the conclusion of *O Lucky Man!* In the audition sequence Travis the main character of the film becomes indistinguishable from McDowell the lead actor on whom Anderson relies to tell the story.

Price's distinct but complementary roles inside and outside of the film's structure, confirm the trend: Anderson acknowledges the significance of his composer/performer's input by lending him more than a collaborative role during the production of the film. Price becomes an actor, a character within the storyline while retaining a degree of control over the filmmaking process as Anderson's mention of Price's function as a chorus illustrates:

... Mick encounters [Price] about half-way in his progress through illusion; and it is an encounter that perhaps gives you some foretaste of the position Mick is going to arrive at after many trials and tribulations. There's this funny double thing, that he doesn't play a real function as a character apart from his function as a Chorus; and yet you feel the character there. (Anderson 1973: 130)

Anderson's depiction of Price's role both in terms of the advancement of narrative and narration, brings out an idea of balance: the director states his willingness to challenge the audience's expectations in terms of a realistic delivery of the storyline while

simultaneously offering his own act of compensation for the narrative disruption. On the one hand, Price performs a Brechtian function by laying bare the trappings underpinning the dominant Aristotelian conventions of artistic representation, but on the other, the singer/composer approximates what an audience sees in a film's character – he offers the hero guidance at a critical point in the storyline.

Murray Smith in “Logic and Legacy of Brechtianism”, defines Brecht's aesthetic project as one intent on exposing the centrality of emotion in representation: the audience's empathy with the characters obscures the true source of enunciation for the unfolding narrative. (1996: 130) This implies a choice for the storyteller: either use the narrative to reinforce the prevailing ideology – that is located in the existing political and social order – or acknowledge your impact on the narrative by declaring your presence and thereby interacting with the intended recipient. A review in the American press, which also features in the Archive, illustrates the tension: the critic sums up the functions that Anderson's key collaborators within the filmmaking process have and their respective relation to the telling of the story:

... Through his personal style and songs [Price] conveys the film's intentions with greater clarity than Anderson, Sherwin and McDowell combined. (Landau 1973: LA 1/7/6/4/96)

The review also puts forth the tension that lies at the heart of Anderson's aesthetic and how this translated into his directorial practice. On the one hand, his direct intervention into the flow of the film's narrative likens his project to other European art cinema directors: in line with Bordwell's definition of art cinema, Anderson overtly manipulates narrative and narration features in order to compensate for the highly subjective nature of

the film's structure. On the other, the Brechtian dimension that informs Anderson's aesthetic project also highlights a desire to engage with the audience in a way that art cinema does not necessarily. The second part of the quote confirms the reference to Brecht who, as Alan Lovell noted in *Screen* (1975/6: 62), was himself aware of the limits which a process of distancing the audience from the narrative carries with it:

... I'm very happy for people to take what they will from [the film]. If you ask me what there is in it to be taken, I will tell you. It may be that other people will take different things. Perhaps they'll just have a good time. That doesn't matter. That's good. You can't engage your audience purely intellectually because that's not what they're there for. They're there to feel, to laugh and to enjoy themselves. (Anderson 1973: 136).

The many references to the audience's range of emotions and the extent of Anderson's control over them, confirms the recurrence of a pattern within the director's aesthetic: a commitment to engage with the audience overtly as the processes of distanciation he employs illustrate, coupled with a desire to follow in the footsteps of directors from the Hollywood studio era.

Lovell in his seminal 1972 article on the typology of British film, notes the duality underlying Anderson's work: he characterises the British director's aesthetic as presenting features of both art and classical Hollywood narrative cinema. (1972: 8) Anderson's acknowledgement and celebration of the tension within his aesthetic finds an echo in his admiration for John Ford. As I previously argued, *About John Ford* (1981) lays out the ground for the definition of Ford's aesthetic by providing an extensive insight into the American director's life and career. To Anderson, the director has the rare ability to cross over the barrier that separates out two distinctive directorial practices: Anderson regards directors as usually falling into either one of two categories, the professional or

the poet. His characterisation of Ford as resting on an inner duality launches the last section of the chapter: the structuring function of a lingering opposition.

The material in the Archive covering the production of *O Lucky Man!* includes early drafts of the script: amongst these, there is a scene which does not feature in the filmed version. This scene would have taken place straight after Travis is sentenced to a prison term: a new character, a film producer working for a pan-European film production company, is introduced. He acts as a narrator, filling the audience in on what happens to Travis during his stay in prison.

I mentioned earlier the features that liken *O Lucky Man!* to the Bordwellian definition of art cinema: the unifying function of the film director comes across through an overt manipulation of the narrative and narration features. At the same time, Anderson favours a narrational approach that foregrounds the contribution of his actors and collaborators in the film. The blurring of the distinction between the persona of the actors as themselves in civil life and the parts that they play within the film, confirms the trend: Anderson both proclaims and undermines the centrality of his role within the making of *O Lucky Man!*. This produces a tension that arises from the combination of a conventional example of authorial intent on the part of Anderson coupled with the open acknowledgement of his actors' and collaborators' respective impact on the film. This tension is akin to a dialogue, for which the actors' different guises and roles provide a visual manifestation. In that sense, the resulting dialogue between all parties involved – the director, the composer, the actors and the audience – can also be likened to a discourse. The part of Richard H. Slogul functions as a reminder of the assimilation between discourse and practice within Anderson's directorial practice.

The self-proclaimed narrator represents the context that makes possible the filming: he is a producer whose job is “to control costs” (LA 1/7/1/3) while also telling the audience what happens next in the film. The assimilation between the artistic and the industrial sides of filmmaking also recalls the dual nature of the discourse that I see as commenting on Anderson’s work: Slogul as the “Vice-President in charge of European Film Production”, deems his direct intervention into the director’s film as wholly justified. The script reads:

‘Because of fiscal considerations, I prevailed upon the director to film our hero’s incarceration on an economic style. To achieve this ... I agreed not only to address you directly and honestly but also to act as chorus. I thank you.’ The light changes. RHS is held in a spot. He picks up a leather-bound script and reads. (ibid.)

Slogul is the money and as such, decides on what is viable for Anderson to do with his film. On the other hand, he works for an institution of a trans-national nature, which is reminiscent of the film festivals that will, in turn, appraise Anderson’s aesthetic signature. There operates an assimilation between the industrial – that usually ties the director’s work in with the national – and the artistic – Slogul’s profession and his overt meddling with the fabric of the film. Slogul becomes a function of discourse in the Foucauldian sense of the term: his name is unimportant; his profession alone justifies his intervention into the film. Foucault commented on society’s need for authorial sources: here the arbitrary dimension of the process finds its illustration in the equally contingent character whom Slogul embodies. He does not have a fictional equivalent within the storyline, and contrary to Anderson and Price whose alter-egos interact with the characters within *O Lucky Man!*, he remains *unattached*. The fact that his part was eventually dropped from the final cut, further underlines his alienated state: he also

echoes, in this sense, the central tenet of the Brechtian aesthetic, which aims to draw the audience's attention to the discursive dimension of representation.

Authorial intent and discursive engagement:

The connection which Brecht makes apparent between discourse and artistic representation through the operation of ideology, helps introduce the concept of authorship as a site of discourses. I am borrowing the phrase from Janet Staiger's 2003 overview of the authorship debate in film studies. (46-9) In that section of her essay she relates the post-structuralist undermining of agency as a structuring feature of authorship, to the works of Foucault, MacCabe, and, by implication, Barthes and his 1968 essay, "The Death of the Author". Within this theoretical framework the author is a symptom of the historical and social context from which he/she originates, as opposed to a free agent who could potentially undermine its structure. (ibid.: 46) As Staiger stresses, the main frame of reference lies in Barthes's formulation of the death of the author. (ibid.: 46-7)

To go back to the essay itself, Barthes establishes a reversed hierarchy between the author and the genesis of a text: the act of writing instead of vouching for the existence of the author, denies its existence. To quote Barthes:

[W]riting is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away ... As soon as a fact is *narrated* ... the voice loses its origin, the author enters into his own death, writing begins. (1968: 97)

The supremacy of enunciation seen as an autonomous process, implies a lack of engagement which is of particular relevance to the chapter. *O Lucky Man!* foregrounds its

underlying structure by breaking down the function of each contributor into multiple units, each serving a distinct but overlapping purpose: the actualisation of the film as a series of interrelated discourses. As such, Anderson's film can be read in the light of a Barthesian removal of a single authorial intent: in that sense, the oft-attributed Brechtian dimension to *O Lucky Man!* comes to the fore. (Graham 1979; Hedling 1998; Izod *et al.* 2010; Sussex 1969) Barthes himself equates his concept of the removal of the author to Brecht's "distancing principle". (1968: 98)

Staiger in the aforementioned essay, cites two examples of post-structuralist negotiations of individual agency as "dodges": these are what she defines as "authorship as a site of discourses" and "authorship as reading strategy" and they both unfold from applying the Barthesian concept of removal of the author. (2003: 45- 9) The idea of *dodging* authorship is presented as a corollary to the celebration of discursive supremacy: as Barthes notes, "the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text". (1968: 99) The Barthesian model of discourse implies the possibility of a self-generating process that has no origin and no end. Enunciation becomes apparent when an attempt at appropriating that process occurs.

Staiger, to an extent, challenges the Barthesian along with the Foucauldian, concepts of textual production: to her, emphasising the discursive nature of the text makes it possible to relegate the concept of a textual source to the margins, which she sees as ultimately dodging the question of agency. In that context, the concept of an authorial source is shifted onto the site of production: what makes the text is what surrounds the text. (Staiger 2003: 45-7)

The idea of an intersection between a text and a context sheds a complementary light on the conflicting enunciations I mentioned at the start of the chapter. The discourse about Anderson's work involves a tension between the national – the institutionalised Britishness – and the trans-national that is the critical appraisal of his film aesthetic. Similarly, *O Lucky Man!* derives its meaning from a self-conscious negotiation of narrative and narration. Within an approach to authorship in which the socio-cultural context actualises the source of enunciation, the idea of conflict makes the author. In that respect, Jean-Louis Comolli and Jean Narboni's "Cinema/Ideology/Criticism" provides a template that brings out the dynamic between enunciation understood as a process, and enunciation as the symptom of an individual's discourse.

The essay was published in 1969 in *Cahiers*: along with the collective "John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln*" (1970), the essay signals a major shift in the journal's critical practice. The director becomes a suspicious notion; his/her worldview ceases to be a central criterion for artistic value. What contemporary studies of authorship see as marking the end of La Politique des Auteurs, constitutes a crisis of faith: both of *Cahiers'* articles, in that respect, betray a deep mistrust of the context in which the film comes into being. The introductory remarks to the Comolli/Narboni's article make this clear by stating the authors' intent to deconstruct and then analyse the successive layers of discourse that underpin both the film in focus and their subsequent discussion of it. The common factor that informs their approach is the acknowledgement of a pervasive force in society: that of ideology. (1969: 22-3)

As a result, their article sets out to uncover the existence of a potential gap that would make the presence of ideology within the film-text visible. The dynamic that the search

heralds, takes on the form of a figurative dialogue between the critics, the director and the film-text. An example of the dialogue lies the famous e-category, which is frequently quoted in academic literature on authorship (Grant 2008: 4, 212; Staiger 2003: 47-8; Wright Wexman 2003: 5)

The so-called e-category corresponds to films that have an underlying tension within their structure: Comolli and Narboni argue that the films in question appropriate ideology in such a way that this becomes a feature of narration within the films themselves. (1969: 27) To the French critics, these films acknowledge the context in which they are produced while setting out to reframe it: they refer to Hollywood as a site in which such an interaction occurs. Their argument revolves around the notion that a conscious negotiation of ideology at the level of the film's imagery deals a more effective blow to the external socio-cultural context than films with an overt political agenda. In that respect, the films that are seen to overall constitute the f-category – the *cinéma-direct* – come across as less subversive as they tend to concentrate their attack on the system at the level of narrative only. (ibid.) Comolli and Narboni argue that only a minority of these political shorts successfully challenge the prevailing order: they do so by calling into question the tools of representation they use. (ibid.: 28)

In relation to Anderson's work the formulation of *Cahiers'* e-category provides the counterpart to the paradigm that *La Politique des Auteurs* represents and, as I mentioned in the introduction, frames the socio-cultural context in which Anderson started his work both as a critic and a film director. The dichotomy which both frames of reference constitute, uncovers the significance of Anderson's formulation of the artist's and film critic's respective integrity. Within a context of production that makes complete

independence from the institutional side of filmmaking largely illusory, Anderson's figurative answer to *Cahiers'* e-category lies in his negotiation of opposites.

Beyond the death of the author: Anderson's negotiation of opposites

Throughout his career, Anderson championed Ford's dual legacy as a film director who achieved a distinctive vision while reaffirming the values of a socio-cultural system that also framed his work. In 1992 Anderson directed a short film for *BBC Scotland*: it was commissioned by John Archer and part of a series of documentaries in which film directors reflected on their craft.⁵⁷ Anderson's contribution, entitled *Is That All There Is?*, features Anderson reflecting on Ford whom he defines as the poet whose heart lies with *The Quiet Man* (1952) while also being Ford, the Studio director, who gave us *The Searchers* (1956). Anderson was never fond of the film, but never sought to marginalise it from the rest of the American director's output. To quote from *About John Ford*:

There is always the risk that when one has grown to know and love an artist's work, one may find an unforeseen development or a radical departure unacceptable ... After seeing the film again, more than once, and examining it on the editing table, I have to say not. *The Searchers* is an impressive work, the work of a great director; but it is not among John Ford's masterpieces. (1981: 152)

Also in *About John Ford*, Anderson justifies the validity of his dual approach to Ford's legacy. He shows the extent to which Ford's favourable reputation in the American film industry also worked against him. (ibid.: 194-5) Openly criticising *Cahiers'* auteurist dismissal of Ford's films, Anderson argues that Ford's promotion of established values such as integrity and bravery, proved a stronger example of artistic commitment than the

⁵⁷ First broadcast in 1994, shortly after Anderson died, the documentary was aired again to mark the 10th anniversary of the director's death. ("Artworks Scotland" – aired on BBC Scotland on 22 August)

more fashionable “moral neutrality if not despair” angle favoured by film critics. (ibid.: 195) In that respect he anticipates the work undertaken by the second generation of *Cahiers’* critics who, as I mentioned above, relied on Ford’s films to define their own methodology. The structure of *Young Mr. Lincoln* (1939), notably, provided the critics with the filmic equivalent of their own relationship to film: just as Ford is one code within a series of codes, their own critical discourse operates alongside a pervasive socio-cultural context.

Is That All opens on a dark screen, which recalls the episodic structure of *If....* (1968) and *O Lucky Man!* (1973): the title reads, “Perfection is not an aim”. The phrase is from the Free Cinema Manifesto (1956) and as such, invites the next intertitle, also on a dark screen: “Everyday”. What follows is an insider’s look into the director’s day-to-day life. Anderson privileges a dual approach that parallels Comolli and Narboni’s account of the methodology that underpins *Cahiers’* editorial line: the French critics acknowledge the reality of an almost untenable goal while maintaining that their line constitutes the only valid approach. (1969: 23) The introductory sequence to Anderson’s *Is That All* similarly comments on the director’s career: where the *Cahiers’* critics formulate their position vis-à-vis the system, Anderson sees his career as a process involving the impossible negotiation of the context in which his work was produced and received and his belief in the duty as an artist to retain his integrity. The documentary provides a fitting metaphor when an extract from a soft-porn film is shown: a half-naked woman threatens a man at gun-point into performing a cunnilingus. It is easy enough to find a Marxist connotation of capitalism in the unfolding imagery of domination and exploitation.

The extract also illustrates another prominent feature: Anderson's use of extraneous footage as part of his narration technique. Such examples abound in the film: extracts from TV commercials illustrating the excesses of our consumer society clash with footage from documentaries or news reports on human misery brought on by war or natural disasters. It soon appears that the "external" material has a dual function: on the one hand, it punctuates the flow of the narrative in a way that echoes the intertitles that introduce each new episode. On the other, the footage material confirms a divide between Anderson's life and the rules the outside world lives by.

One sequence confirms the trend: towards the beginning of the film Anderson leaves his flat to run a few errands. We see him going to the dry cleaner's, a neighbourhood bookshop and a local wineshop. On each occasion, Anderson hails the shop assistant with the same address: "I want to ask you a question". To which they each reply by stressing their position within the wider structure, by and large, implying a lack of control over the rules that control their business. The bookshop sales assistant for instance, turns down Anderson's offer to sign copies of *About John Ford* on display, arguing that these copies tend not to sell as well. The shop assistant at the dry cleaner's confirms to Anderson that she is aware he is a shareholder and provides him readily enough with details of the services they offer. She shows, however, complete ignorance when it comes to topical issues that make the headlines and affect the lives of working people thereby confirming the divide between the rulers and the ruled.

The confrontation of these two worlds put forth the central duality that informs Anderson's own artistic ethics: integrity versus conformism, which finds its expression in the line from one of Yeats's poems Anderson wished as an epitaph – "A revolutionary

soldier kneeling to be blessed”. (in Ryan 2004: 29) The presentation of Anderson’s subsequent meetings with friends and colleagues all culminate into a final celebration of the value of commitment: the farewell to Jill Bennett and Rachel Roberts allegorises the artistic ethics that Anderson built and applied throughout his career. In an echo of *O Lucky Man!* Anderson has gathered the main protagonists in his personal and artistic life: the studio of the audition has turned into a boat on the Thames, but the presence of Alan Price and his performance of the very title of the documentary confirms the parallel. The episodic structure, which also mirrors that underpinning *O Lucky Man!*, becomes the expression of the director’s active negotiations of conflicting sources of enunciations. The memorial to Anderson’s deceased friends, Jill Bennett and Rachel Roberts, illustrates the central function that the interaction between these enunciations or discourses assumes. The presence as well as ultimate absence of the two actresses recalls Durwood’s review of *O Lucky Man!* in the American arts journal, *Crimmer*: Anderson’s aesthetic favours a continuous crossing between the different components of the filmmaking process, which he sees as a combination of creative elements. However, at the same time, he retains ultimate authorial control, for which his key role in the memorial and funeral service for two actresses and friends provide an allegorical illustration. This is where Anderson’s distinctive approach to authorial intent lies: the constant negotiation of opposite and complementary dynamics.

I mentioned the shift in the discursive practice adopted by the *Cahiers*’ critics in the late 1960s. The inclusion of the director as well as the critic into the network of discourses that the film generates, relegates the question of authorial intent to the margins: the processes underpinning the conception, production and reception of a film become *free-*

floating enunciations, that is here, discourses without a declared point of origin or destination. These discourses have a performative value, which an article written by Gilles Deleuze in 1976, also for *Cahiers*, illustrates.

Deleuze wrote that article about a television programme which Jean-Luc Godard wrote and directed for a French channel that same year, entitled: “6x2”. The relevance to the section lies in the emphasis on language and discourse that Deleuze puts. He relies on the format which Godard adopted for the programme to bring out the director’s own relation to the discourse generated by his films. Deleuze argues that Godard challenges the dominant French philosophical thought by acknowledging the duality inherent to the use of language. (1976: 11) Godard, in his opinion, transcends the French reflex of attribution or judgement, for which the use of the verb *être* – to be – stands, in order to establish a principle of otherness. (ibid.: 12) Deleuze plays on the homonymy between the French words *être* and *et* – respectively *to be* and *and* – in order to stress the significance of the shift. Deleuze further argues that Anglo-Saxon thought by contrast, conceives more readily of duality and integrates the concept into its discourse. (ibid.: 11)

Deleuze presents Godard’s work as distinctive through the director’s open acknowledgement and integration of the concept of a fundamental duality. The French philosopher, however, stresses Godard’s refusal of a dialectic model: Godard, instead, seeks to uncover the site of liminality, that is, the possibility for radically other discourses and practices. (ibid.: 12) By contrast, Anderson’s acknowledgement of the principle of duality that underpins the social and cultural use of language as discourse, manifests itself as a dialectic. The dialectic finds an allegorical expression through the episodic structure that underpins most of his films or still, the manifesto-inspired format he adopted for his

writings. In both instances, the objective is to ascertain its place within a network of discourses that can exist without an originator but whose input can make them distinctive. *As Is That All* proclaims, “Perfection is not an Aim”. That same phrase is an *episode* taken from a larger *series*, the Free Cinema manifesto; another line of which reads, “an Attitude means a Style; a Style means an Attitude”.

Conclusion:

The thesis set out to explore Lindsay Anderson's directorial practice in the cinema. As a way of acknowledging my involvement in the *Lindsay Anderson: Cinema Authorship Project*, I have aimed to include the question of my use of the Archive material held at Stirling, into my answer to the research topic. As a result, my study of Anderson's directorial practice has also documented my goal of identifying and commenting on documents that Anderson either wrote himself or kept a record of. The study has also reflected on the nature of the task involved.

The first conclusion that I have reached is the difficulty for the researcher in framing the present study within an argument that brings out the Lindsay Anderson Archive's distinctive nature as well as acknowledges and re-examines the wider scholarly context. I mentioned Street's introduction to her own use of archive material: quoting from scholars who define history as a social and cultural construct, she places her work in the context of a reorganisation of the hierarchy of discourses that underpin our reading of the films she selected. (2000: 5-6)

Her process involves reinstating the minority discourses; those that conventional film history has failed to make a record of. In that sense, her approach reflects current practices in the field of British cinema studies that acknowledge the heterogeneity of British national identity by looking at films from various angles including representation,

production, reception and performance. Street seeks to use archive material to uncover new meanings behind audiences' actual cinema-going habits – as based on empirical evidence as opposed to the theoretical concept of a film audience.

Within the context of my thesis, accessing the Archive has also meant trying to identify the minority discourse or discourses in need of reinstatement. As I developed in the literature review, existing publications testify to a close interaction between their authors and their subject of study – Anderson. As I have shown, there is evidence of Anderson supplying extensive background information about the production of his films to Silet, for instance. Lambert and Sutton used the actual diaries and had access to the correspondence when they compiled their own work about the director. In other words, I cannot claim to be exposing these documents to scholarly scrutiny for the first time. Instead of a process of discovery or unearthing of evidence, my thesis has involved a constant negotiation of discourses. I have used the word discourse throughout to represent all material that has both an identified author and a space or context.

As I said previously, the Archive material has been cross-referenced and can now be searched at item-level on the online catalogue. This confirms the Foucauldian use of the word as standing for society's need to assign a name and role to any utterance or piece of work it generates. Within the context of my thesis the negotiation of discourses has entailed identifying their distinctive natures and the roles they perform. I have worked with different types of discourses, but two main patterns have emerged: I have been dealing mostly with discourses involving one author but different contexts, or the reverse. Anderson's personal diaries and correspondence, of course, represent these discourses.

The use of the diaries and correspondence is a primary example of an area in which my research has brought something new: I was able to identify a recurring pattern in both those contexts: Anderson needs to generate a dialogue as part of his creative process – whether as a film critic or director. I reached this conclusion through an open access to the unabridged diaries as well as the archiving of the material. Over the course of my research more and more items were cross-referenced, which in the case of the correspondence especially, meant the possibility of comparing and contrasting the different types of behaviour that Anderson adopted with his friends and fellow critics or film practitioners.

Access and a facilitated use of the Archive have enabled me to formulate a layer of discourse that is distinct from those originating from the publications dealing directly with the director. The importance of a literal or figurative dialogue in Anderson's directorial practice constitutes an example of a minority discourse that was made possible through a return to the Archive material. Paradoxically, however, this new layer of discourse or reading strategy, also becomes a part of the wider context it seeks to comment on. Identifying the nature of the relation between what pertains to my use and interpretation of the Archive material and that wider context has represented the self-reflexive part of my research project.

Anderson's films and critical writings are a central part of that wider context. They constitute examples of discourses that collapse the boundaries between the reading strategy that originated from a return to Archive material and the context that surrounds it. I have illustrated this dynamic at a figurative level by stressing the duality that informs Anderson's films. In *If....* (1968), this came across through the alternate use of black-and-

white and colour sequences. In *O Lucky Man!* (1973), Anderson blurred the distinction between fiction and reality by introducing characters who exist both inside and outside of the film's fictional world.

Anderson's critical writings similarly undermine the distinction between the reading strategy and the context. The dialogue which he initiated between himself and the critics and, by implication, the audience, has helped me locate the origin of the assimilation between practice and discourse. The denunciation of the uncommitted critic as well as film director – through their emphasis on technique as opposed to preserving the balance between the creative and technical aspects of filmmaking – illustrates both facets of the dialogue. The first pertains to the context to which Anderson refers: the British film industry, its class-bound cinema and the need to educate critics and audiences alike. The second refers to the reading strategy that has identified the discursive pattern in Anderson's writings; a pattern that can also be found in films such as *O Lucky Man!* for instance, in which characters both reflect on and are part of the filmmaking process.

I stated that the question of contextualising my use of the Archive in relation to the wider academic debate on British cinema and authorship represented a challenge. That challenge has resided in determining the meaning to give Anderson's rejection of existing theoretical frames of reference – such as *Cahiers'* model of authorship and the question of the identity of British national cinema. As I have argued, there is ample evidence of Anderson's dislike of theoretical models applied to film: his critical writings along with material from the Archive document the fact. In these circumstances, is it possible to say that a return to the Archive, which involves reading Anderson's words unmediated by his

biographers, has brought to life an alternative way of thinking about film authorship, or what constitutes a good British film?

Within the scope of my thesis, I would argue that the negotiation of discourses that has framed my discussion, brings about a mixed conclusion. On the one hand, my access and use of the Archive material has been only partially unmediated: I have relied on the documented existence of a bond or dialogue between Anderson and fellow critics and film practitioners to formulate my own unmediated reading strategy. Similarly, the Archive material itself favours a dialectical approach: Anderson has consistently shaped his thoughts and comments on his life, career and film in the form of a dialogue. From the polemical style of *Sequence*, the diary format of *Making a Film*, the diary, letter and archive-retrieval exercise in *About John Ford*, to the diaries and correspondence themselves.

On the other, my reading strategy, that is, the creative dialogue, has enabled a reversal of the hierarchy of discourses that Street mentions in relation to her own research methodology. (Street 2000: 5) In my case, this has involved initiating, in part at least, a dialogue with Anderson, as opposed to responding to it. By emphasising the importance of his model of collaborative authorship and exchange, I have also been able to shed a different light on his rejection of French auteurism and conflicting view of British directors who have otherwise been critically praised – David Lean, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger come to mind. They represent the other side of the dialogue Anderson spent his life initiating both as a film critic and practitioner.

Anderson, in line with the creative – or active-reactive – dialogue that underpins his directorial practice, is the product of a tension. By Anderson, I mean the man himself and the director – or in the words of Hedling, the “biographical legend” (1998: 4-6). His direct involvement in the building of his Archive has generated a process of distantiation that blocks off the reading of his legacy by voices outside of the network he set up.

I reviewed a selection of publications dealing with British cinema in the literature review. What they overall have in common is their ambiguous attitude towards Anderson: there is an acknowledgement of his involvement in key periods of British cinema but far less consensus over the nature and extent of his contribution to the aesthetic of British film. Hedling stands out as championing Anderson’s distinctive aesthetic legacy. He does so, however, by confirming the director’s status as an outsider. In his most recent publications, Hedling reaffirmed the affiliation that Anderson’s work both as a critic and director shows with European art cinema, such as it emerged in the Post-War era in the form of state policies that aimed to counter Hollywood hegemony. (2003; 2009)

I would argue that my approach to Anderson’s directorial practice undermines the oppositional discourse in which both the director and his biographers and critics had placed him. The concept of a dialogue that I have been able to apply to his writings and film directing practice, contributes to reinstating Anderson into the mainstream of British cinema. It does so by emphasising the impact which the conditions of production had on his work – these include the pre-production, the filming, editing as well as the ways in which Anderson took charge of his films’ legacy through his participation in film festivals and sustained correspondence with critics and fans. Within this context, the question of auteurism as a cultural reference to evaluate the aesthetic of Anderson’s films

loses its potency. Instead, the unique and often challenging context in which Anderson secured funding and filmed his projects becomes a framework that stresses the complexity of the factors involved in film production and reception.

As Murphy's (2009) and Street's (2009) recent publications show, discourses dealing with the issue of the national identity of British cinema still tend to position British film as a problematic notion. However, by focusing on the production of these films, they argue that its complex status takes on a positive light. Similarly, by acknowledging the existence of the constitutive dialogue or tension within Anderson's directorial practice, the issue of his legacy shifts ground: it becomes instead the study of a critic-turned-director's performance; one who stands in between both the industry and the area of film criticism he spent much of his career prompting to improve their craft.

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Le Corbeau/The Raven. Dir. Henri-Georges Clouzot. Continental Films. 1943. Film.

Les Mistons/Brats. Dir. François Truffaut. Gala Film Distributors, Les Films de la Pléiade, 1957. Film.

Les Quatre-Cents Coups/400 Blows. Dir: François Truffaut. Les Films du Carrosse, Sédif Productions. 1959. Film.

Louisiana Story. Dir. Robert J. Flaherty. Robert Flaherty Productions Inc. 1948. Film

Meet The Pioneers. Wr/Dir : Lindsay Anderson. Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. 1948. Film.

Millions Like Us. Dir. Sidney Gilliat & Frank Launder. Gainsborough Pictures. 1943. Film.

Momma Don't Allow. Dir. Karel Reisz, Tony Richardson. 1956. Documentary.

Mutiny on the Bounty. Dir: Lewis Milestone, Carol Reed (some scenes/ uncredited). 1962. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), Arcola Pictures. Film.

My Darling Clementine. Dir. John Ford. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. 1946. Film

Never Apologize. Dir. Mike Kaplan. 2007. Documentary.

Night Mail. Dir. Harry Watt/Basil Wright. GPO (General Post Office) Film Unit. 1936. Film.

Odd Man Out. Dir. Carol Reed. Two Cities Films. 1947. Film.

O Dreamland. Wr/Dir. Lindsay Anderson. A Sequence Film, 1953. Film.

O Lucky Man!. Dir. Lindsay Anderson. Memorial Enterprises, Warner Bros. Pictures, Warner Columbia Film. 1973. Film.

Oliver Twist. Dir. David Lean. Cineguild. 1948. Film

Peeping Tom. Dir. Michael Powell. Michael Powell (Theatre). 1960. Film.

Paisà. Dir. Roberto Rossellini. Organizzazione Film Internazionali. 1946. Film

Passport to Pimlico. Dir. Henry Cornelius. J. Arthur Rank Organisation, Ealing Studios. 1949. Film

Pokolenie/A Generation. Dir: Andrzej Wajda. Zespol Filmowy Kadr. 1955. Film.

Rashômon. Dir. Akira Kurosawa. Daiei Motion Picture Company. 1950. Film.

Raz, Dwa, Trzy/The Singing Lesson. Dir. Lindsay Anderson, Piotr Szulkin. Contemporary Films (Warsaw Documentary Studio), 1967. Film.

Roma Città Aperta/Rome Open City. Dir. Roberto Rossellini. Excelsa Film. 1945. Film.

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning. Dir. Karel Reisz. Woodfall Film Productions. 1960. Film.

Sciuscià/Shoeshine. Dir. Vittorio de Sica. Societa Cooperativa Alfa Cinematografica. 1946. Film

Scott of the Antarctic. Dir. Charles Frend. Ealing Studios. 1948. Film.

Secret People. Dir: Thorold Dickinson. Ealing Studios. 1952. Film.

Spare Time. Dir. Humphrey Jennings. GPO (General Post Office) Film Unit. 1939. Film.

The Bridge on the River Kwai. Dir. David Lean. Columbia Pictures, Warner Bros, 1957. Film.

The Captive Heart. Dir. Basil Dearden. Ealing Studios. 1946. Film.

The Fallen Idol. Dir. Carol Reed. London Film Productions. 1948. Film

The French Lieutenant's Woman. Dir. Karel Reisz. 1981. Film.

The Fugitive. Dir. John Ford. RKO. Radio Pictures, Argosy Pictures 1947. Film.

The Informer. Dir. John Ford. RKO. Radio Pictures 1935. Film.

The Grapes of Wrath. Dir. John Ford. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. 1940. Film

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp. Dir. Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. The Archers, Independent Producers. 1943. Film.

The Long Voyage Home. Dir. John Ford. Argosy Pictures, Walter Wanger Productions. 1940. Film.

The Man in the White Suit. Dir. Alexander Mackendrick. J. Arthur Rank Organisation, Ealing Studios. 1951. Film.

The Passionate Friends. Dir. David Lean. Cineguild. 1949. Film.

The Quiet Man. Dir. John Ford. Republic Pictures, Argosy Pictures. 1952. Film.

The Red Shoes. Dir. Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. The Archers, Independent Producers. 1948. Film.

The Searchers. Dir. John Ford. Warner Bros. Pictures. 1956. Film.

The Small Back Room. Dir. Michael Powell, Emeric Pressburger. The Archers, London Film Productions. 1949. Film.

The Third Man. Dir. Carol Reed. Carol Reed's Production, London Film Productions. 1949. Film.

The Way Ahead. Dir. Carol Reed. Two Cities Films. 1944. Film.

The Whales of August. Dir. Lindsay Anderson, Nelson Entertainment, Finnkino, Alive Films. 1987. Film.

The White Bus. Dir. Lindsay Anderson. United Artists Corporation, EMC. 1967. Film.

They Were Expendable. Dir. John Ford. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). 1945. Film.

This Sporting Life. Dir. Lindsay Anderson. J. Arthur Rank Film Distributors, Continental Distributing. 1963. Film.

Thursday's Children. Dir. Guy Brenton, Lindsay Anderson. World Wide Pictures, A Morse Productions, 1954. Film.

Three Installations. Wr/Dir : Lindsay Anderson. Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. 1952. Film.

Together. Dir. Lorenza Mazetti. 1956. Documentary.

Trunk Conveyor. Wr/Dir : Lindsay Anderson. Richard Sutcliffe Ltd. 1954. Film.

Wakefield Express. Wr/Dir : Lindsay Anderson. Wakefield Express Pictures. 1952. Film.

We Are the Lambeth Boys. Dir. Karel Reisz. 1956. Documentary.

We Dive At Dawn. Dir. Anthony Asquith. Gainsborough Pictures. Gaumont British Picture Corporation. 1943. Film.

Went the Day Well ?. Dir. Alberto Cavalcanti. Ealing Studios. 1942. Film.

Zéro de Conduite: Jeunes Diables au Collège/Zero for Conduct. Wr/Dir: Jean Vigo.
Franfilmdis, Argui-Film. 1933. Film

