

Barry Hines has observed: 'My political viewpoint is the mainspring of my work. It fuels my energy' (2009: v). Such a comment will not surprise readers of Hines' novel *A Kestrel for a Knave* and viewers of its film version *Kes* (1969). This was the first of many films written by Hines and directed by Ken Loach which include *The Price of Coal* (BBC, 1977), *The Gamekeeper* (ATV, 1980) and the feature film *Looks and Smiles* (1981). Among Hines' other works are *Threads* (BBC, 1984), his television film about a nuclear strike against Britain, as well as the BBC Plays for Today *Billy's Last Stand* (1971), about the coal industry, and *Speech Day* (1973), about school-leavers. Given this preoccupation with politics as they affect everyday life, and the fact that all of Hines' work is set in his native South Yorkshire among its working-class communities, it seems surprising that none of these plays is about the miners' strike of 1984–5. *The Price of Coal*, a pair of Plays for Today, is set in 1977; with hindsight it is fittingly prophetic that in the first play, *Meet the People*, the daubing of Arthur Scargill's name on a wall threatens to disrupt preparations for an impending royal visit to Milton Colliery. The lock-outs and state-sponsored violence against people clamouring for food after the nuclear attack in *Threads* also appear prescient since the script was completed before the miners' strike began. However, exploration of the unproduced plays collected in Hines' archive reveals that the 1984–5 strike remained a political and dramatic preoccupation of the playwright for over twenty years.

In this essay, I will analyse the representation of the strike in three of Hines' screenplays for films that were never made. These works are *After the Strike* (1985), which, as its title suggests, takes a look back at the previous year's industrial dispute from the viewpoint of a miner who has not been able to return to work; *The Diggers* (1994a), in which the events of the strike are shown after a decade, cross-cut with the tale of the fortunes of the eponymous pop group; and *Follow the Sun* (2003), a play that centres on the tragic romance of a miner's wife.¹ I will contrast these unproduced screenplays with Hines' novel *The Heart of It* (1994b), in which the strike does appear in published form: here, the son of a striking miner returns to his native pit-village ten years after the strike to attempt reconciliation with his dying father. Despite the 'inherent drama' of the strike with its opposing perspectives (Dent 2009) and the fact that Hines began discussions about a film of *The Heart of It* to be produced by Loach and Rebecca O'Brien's production company Sixteen Films, a film version was never made. Hines' account of the strike appears in the public realm only in novelistic form.

Shirley Dent argues persuasively in favour of the urgency of contemporary depictions of the strike in which the unknowability of outcomes sat alongside dramatic immediacy. She contrasts the collision of 'anger and history' (2009) in the miners' own poems, in collections such as the 1984 anthology from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) *Against All the Odds* as well as Tony Harrison's *V* (1985), with more recent examples such as the less compelling 'carefully poised retro vignette' of the Battle of Orgreave in Philip Hensher's novel *The Northern Clemency* (2008) and the 'thoroughly retrospective' allegorical history presented in David Peace's 2004 novel *GB84*. Patricia Holland adds that the best-known films of the strike, *Brassed Off* (1996) and *Billy Elliot* (2000), subordinate the strike itself to the concerns of the late 1990s. These are 'optimistic' narratives about 'personal success' and 'performance' superseding the 'old virtues of masculine solidarity through physical labour' (2009: 109); for John Hill (2000), such narratives devolve into fantasies of a utopianism in which male solidarity substitutes for unemployment. These films take for granted the strike's failure, its location amid archaic social formations and its fundamental pastness. In the case of Hines' three plays and his novel, retrospection is both a political and an aesthetic matter.

Hines spent a decade revisiting and rewriting the events of the strike, during which time the balance alters in his work between representation of the strike itself and its effects on the protagonists' lives. This does not necessarily mean that the central events of 1984–5 are lost to sight or that their

significance is dimmed. Indeed, the haunting, long-term effects of the strike are emphasised in this way, as the gap between past and present increases. For instance, in 1985's *After the Strike* the schoolgirl Michelle argues speculatively with her schoolteacher who is married to a working miner: 'If the scabs break this strike, where does [your husband] think he's going to work then?', while in *The Diggers* of 1994, Scott's similar words to his father, who is a scab – 'You'll not even be able to sell the house cos nobody'll want to come to a place with no jobs' – resonate with the authority of hindsight on the part of implied author and audience.

Hines' screenplay *After the Strike* was written in 1985 and its proximity to the events of 1984 is both its strength and its liability. Hines had picketed throughout the strike, often alongside Sheffield Women Against Pit Closures, and his experience, both as first-hand witness and as party to anecdotes, is the source of many of the incidents that continued to haunt his work over the next two decades. As he did in the case of *The Price of Coal: Meet the People*, inspired by a royal visit to Silverwood Colliery in 1973, and its sequel, *Back to Reality*, based on the fatal explosion at Houghton Main Colliery in 1975, Hines also researched contemporary media coverage of the strike. Versions of some central details in *After the Strike*, such as a miner's demand during a phone call that the 'listening bank' really listen to his tale of inability to pay his bills, insults directed by police at miners' wives, women pickets who pretended to be strippers being allowed by police to travel to Nottingham and the wording on an Italian poster of support for the miners, are drawn from the North Yorkshire Women Against Pit Closures anthology *Strike 84–85* (1985) and preserve the immediacy of ironic detail.

One can imagine Dent praising Hines' *After the Strike* for representing the Battle of Orgreave in a way that is far from being a 'retro vignette'. However, the 'after' that we see in Hines' play is only one year on from the events of the strike and its full consequences were not yet known. By contrast with the 're-enactment' in Mike Figgis' 2002 film for Channel 4, *Battle of Orgreave*, the incarnation of the battle in Hines' play is dramatically pared down. The detailed stage directions offer a combination of a general view, in which mounted and riot police charge the striking miners, committing acts of random brutality, and coverage of the fate of three individual miners, Eddie, Bonk and Pete, who are involved in the action. We see mounted and riot police pursue the pickets into the village and down narrow streets; Eddie flees through a house, while a mounted policeman almost follows him through. The striking miner Pete is a dramatic synecdoche for the 93 miners arrested and charged with riot during the battle; all of the charges were later dismissed on the basis of unsubstantiated evidence. In the play, Pete's counsel in court ridicules the charge that a brick he threw could possibly have 'bounced' up to hit a policeman in the mouth. Thus, in *After the Strike*, the battle takes the form of first-hand evidence presented to the audience of police brutality which inspires disbelief even in those characters sympathetic to the miners' plight and gives the lie to the miner's wife Joan's comment on the universality of media bias against the striking miners: 'It's not only the *Sun*, though, is it? They're all against us, including radio and TV'. However, there is no real implication that the audience needs such information, in contrast to *The Diggers*, written ten years later, in which the stage directions include radio broadcasts about failed talks between the National Coal Board (NCB) and NUM to remind those watching about the events and the atmosphere of the time.

After the Strike opens on a scene in which the protagonist, Eddie Wragg, is collecting money for sacked, rather than striking, miners at the gates of Foxmoor Colliery. Despite the play's fidelity to contemporary detail, its stage directions deliberately withhold temporal markers and references to the precise moment of its historical setting, except as they occur in the dialogue, or anything equivalent to intertitles. Such markers are unnecessary from the viewpoint of a contemporary audience for whom the events had barely concluded, but also for a current one, accustomed to the signifiers and tropes of

the strike: we know that the play's present moment must be 1985. From the very first, it is made clear that the consequence of the strike is another strike, this time for the sake of Eddie, who has not been reinstated at the colliery despite a court judgement of wrongful dismissal in his favour. Part of the reason that the pit manager Tom McLintock will not take Eddie back is because of his role as union branch manager during the strike, the effects of which continue to reverberate in the present.

This opening is followed by two further scenes which also sum up what appeared in 1985 to be the indelible social and familial changes taking place in the wake of the strike. Joyce, Eddie's wife, is seen at the local FE college studying for a Sociology A level. Not only has her experience with the Women Against Pit Closures action group prompted her to change her life, but her object of study is, however indirectly, also the strike: we read the legend 'Stratification' written on the blackboard, followed by '(a) Social Mobility (b) Class Inequalities'. We see the family at home in the evening: Eddie cooks dinner (he calls this 'retraining' as part of the new 'enterprise culture') while Joyce works on her homework alongside her teenage daughter Michelle. This framing narrative, set during the present time of the strike's aftermath, structures the play, yet its main concern is not really 'after' the strike but the strike itself and its status as an event in the continuing history of British class inequalities. The play is torn between precise historical detail and the more generalising tendency lamented by Dent in her description of Peace's *GB84* as 'political gothic'. Towards the play's end, Eddie watches another industrial dispute on the television news and the stage direction in its very indeterminacy signals its view of 1984 as just one part of a history of revolutionary action: 'Wapping perhaps, with scenes reminiscent of Orgreave?' As the miner Bonk puts it to McLintock about the industrial action in support of Eddie, the 1984 strike simply confirmed that 'there's nowt you can frighten us with now', while Eddie himself tells the miners, about to return to work at the strike's end, that 'it's only the end of a chapter. There's a lot more to be written yet.'

In his statement about the politics that inform his work, Hines argues that his aim is that his characters do not 'degenerate into dummies merely mouthing my own beliefs. However, I would rather risk being didactic than lapsing into blandness' (2009: v). Yet there is a tendency towards a heavy-handed use of televisual resources in the screenplay of *After the Strike* that arises, paradoxically, from its immediacy. The violence of the Battle of Orgreave is followed by a cut to a very different scene at the University of Cologne, where Joyce is giving a talk about the strike to university staff and students. One of the latter observes how hard it is to credit stories of police brutality, 'because everyone knows that the British bobby is world famous for his tolerance and fairness. Are these stories exaggerated by political elements in order to discredit the police?' Rather than leaving unspoken the irony of the juxtaposition between a scene of 'colonial-style' police violence and German disbelief at it, Hines has Joyce launch into a long response about media bias, the formerly law-abiding mining communities and the excessive behaviour of the police force during the strike. The play's implied audience is not sufficiently distinguished here from Joyce's uninformed university audience.

In *After the Strike* we witness public events acted out in the lives of individuals and characters represent in almost allegorical fashion wider social phenomena. Pete, who wishes never to return to the pit and eventually leaves his family, stands for those miners and Joyce for those miners' wives who, as a result of the strike, no longer see their lives 'through blinkers'; Mrs Walton, the village schoolteacher, is the conflicted wife of a working miner; a policeman guarding a scab's house confesses his ambivalence as a local man whose brother is a miner. As the exchange between Joyce and the German student suggests, at times the play's characters sound simply like mouthpieces for overly polarised political positions. A CID officer claims that the strike is 'all politically motivated. Designed to bring the government down', and asks if Eddie is a communist like Arthur Scargill, to

which Eddie, sounding equally sloganeering, retorts: 'If fighting for your job and your community and the future of your kids is communism, then I suppose I am.' Joyce too states the obvious in her riposte to Eddie's taunt that she should 'join Women's Lib' and 'live at Greenham Common': 'I might do. And I'll not ask you either if I do. I've had my eyes opened during this strike and neither you or anybody else is going to shut them again.' However, this speech, didactic rather than dramatic though it may be, condenses into a figure of speech a fully-fledged scene from an earlier draft of *After the Strike* in which women from the Greenham Common camp, wishing to lend support to the strikers, deliver a speech about the importance of coal in the fight against nuclear weapons: 'mines not missiles', as they put it. The excision of this scene at least returns the action to the dramatis personae of the play.

Because *After the Strike* is about a time 'after' which is, paradoxically, actually very close, this makes for a literalist representation of events. Despite its hints at a long perspective on industrial unrest and class antagonism – the General Strike of 1926 and miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974 are frequently mentioned – the play's view, set *in media res*, makes it appear limited. Irvine Welsh's 1998 novel *Filth* represents the strike as an event that haunts British social life in an encrypted form; its protagonist, the Scottish policeman Bruce Robertson, undergoes a moral descent in the wake of the fact that he left the pits and joined the force, an act which he never acknowledges (see [Harris 2009](#) for further discussion of this). By contrast, in *After the Strike* the events are so close in time that the after-effects appear significant but small-scale. A present-day audience knows that the return of the miners to work in 1985 was followed by the closure of a huge number of pits, the loss of further jobs and the destruction of mining communities, yet we do not see any of this. Of necessity, the play ends inconclusively in historical and political terms, although in symbolic terms with a hint at new life. At the play's opening, when Eddie receives the letter denying his reinstatement at the colliery, he smashes up the greenhouse on his allotment; at the play's end he learns that his fellow miners are on strike for his sake and returns to his allotment greenhouse, while the stage direction reads: 'Credits over Eddie repairing the damage'. This is confusing for a contemporary audience. Are we to see Eddie as deluded, given that we know the jobs of all the men on strike are about to be lost, or correct to place his faith in present and future industrial action? The play is perhaps most valuable as a time capsule, revealing through its extreme proximity to the events depicted the uncertainty of miners returning to work in the immediate wake of the strike. In this way it also testifies to an urgency to communicate the traumatising violence and divisiveness of the strike in the months immediately after it finished.

After the Strike depends for its black comedy as well as for its political meaning on a collection of infamous and apocryphal incidents from the time of the strike, several of which are repeated in slightly altered form in *The Heart of It*, *The Diggers* and *Follow the Sun*, signalling the importance of these specific moments in Hines' political and aesthetic view. In each of Hines' subsequent narratives of the strike, the gap between past and present becomes greater. Not only has more time passed and the consequences of the strike become clearer, but retrospection is a stronger and more meta-fictional element of the plot. In *The Diggers* and *The Heart of It*, the strike is the occasion for exploring the link between artistic endeavour and social class. In *The Diggers*, Matthew Spence becomes a world-famous pop star, not despite but because of his lack of personal or political commitment to music. Hines' pitch for the play, an outline written for Sixteen Films, is preserved among the papers in his archive. It offers a description of the artistic and class differences between him and the band's original line-up, the working-class Joe Gann and Scott Parker, observing that Matthew's success arises from the fact that he is 'less idealistic' than the other young men. This echoes Hines' observation in an essay

from *This Artistic Life* about class-based differences between schoolboy footballers: 'Even the best [middle-class players] lacked the urgency and determination of the grammar-school boys ... For them it really was a game' (89). The class-related implications for any kind of aesthetic production seem clear; for Hines, labour – or the threat of its removal – must be a part of literary and televisual history. As he says of an early distaste for reading: 'No one seemed to work in literature' (68). In *The Diggers*, we see clearly the double trope of a gap between past and present along with meta-fictional concerns. Matthew revisits the sites of the strike when he returns a decade later for a sell-out concert. Music itself stands in for the act of recording and self-expression; as Hines puts it in the pitch, music 'is the narrative'.

In Hines' novel *The Heart of It*, events have moved on. It is 1994, a shopping centre is to be built on the site of the local colliery and the protagonist Cal Rickards sees leaflets for a mining museum on display at the local hotel. The plot concerns Cal's efforts to piece together what really happened when his father was arrested on a picket line a decade earlier. Cal concludes his investigation by deciding to write a novel about the strike; the last lines of the book are a verbatim repetition of its opening lines, and we realise we have been reading a species of committed *Künstlerroman*. Although Hines has stated that his greatest literary fear is ending up 'writing novels about writers writing novels. If that happens it will be time to hang up the biro' (2009: v), this is indeed a novel about a writer learning to write – specifically about the strike.

The dramatic tension between police and pickets in all four of Hines' works is shown by genre-specific means: a series of sight gags in the screenplays, mini-narratives in the novel. An incident in which a police Land Rover rams a snowman built on a picket-line and sporting a toy policeman's helmet – the Land Rover comes off worst because the snowman is built around a concrete bollard, to the amusement of watching police officers as well as pickets – appears in *After the Strike*, *The Diggers* and *The Heart of It* (Burkham 2004; Hume 2009). In *After the Strike*, we see the police pull over a van driven by Eddie, its windows obscured by cardboard since it is apparently full of crisp boxes. When the van has been waved on its way, the audience is treated to a view inside of a concealed group of pickets playing cards and trying hard not to laugh. The incident reappears in *The Diggers* where Joe's father is the driver of the van and pretends to criticise the pickets to the police – 'Nowt but troublemakers. That's what they are' – in what becomes an implicit contrast with Scott's father, seen secretly getting into a police van to be escorted to work across a picket line. What is clear from these repetitions is Hines' effort to find a suitable fictional location for dramatic incidents that summed up the strike's important incidents and trends. The miners' poetic cry of rage to scabs: 'You're lower than lino!', appears in *After the Strike* and is repeated in *The Diggers* (where the band's middle-class drummer Alice responds: 'What's lino?') and *The Heart of It*; the satirical recommendation by police that, as it's illegal to call someone a scab, the pickets should use the terms 'cad' or 'bounder', also appears in all three works. As Hines puts it in the pitch for *The Diggers*, the strike 'contained events of great humour and bravery, especially on the picket lines. It is those positive, heartening qualities I wish to emphasise.' The snowman and crisp-box incidents show the homespun ways in which the pickets foil the massed ranks of the police force and their strictures: the snowman was built as a seventh picket because only six at a time were allowed, while the crisps were a way to get round police roadblocks designed to prevent Yorkshire miners picketing elsewhere. There are also repetitions of less positive, heartening events. The incident of the bouncing brick reappears in *The Heart of It*, although it involves a minor character. During the eponymous battle, the police pursuit of miners into the village at Orgreave and an officer's wanton smashing of a window in the

house through which Eddie escapes in *After the Strike* are repeated in *The Heart of It* and *The Diggers*.

Orgreave is not a set-piece in either the novel or *The Diggers*, neither of which seek to present events on their own account, as in the earlier play, but via an exploration of family relationships. In *The Diggers*, although Matthew visits the site of Orgreave ten years on, the play's climactic scene arises from a confrontation with police who have taken extreme measures so that a scab can cross a picket line. This replacement of an iconic historical event with one that is more of a collage (among its details are some from the Orgreave scene in *After the Strike*) testifies to the emphasis placed on family conflict in Hines' later plays about the strike. Suspense and dramatic irony are registered in Scott's fury at the unidentified scab's entrance into the pit yard: 'The bastard! I'll break his bleeding neck if I get hold of him!' However, it turns out to be easier to 'get hold of him' than Scott imagines, since the scab is his father. Such a refraction of the political through the personal is a way both to represent the pressures of the strike and to make it accessible to contemporary audiences, just as William Ivory's 2005 BBC television play *Faith* was, according to its tagline, 'the gripping story of two sisters on different sides of the community', married respectively to a miner and a policeman. The fact that Ivory's play was broadcast to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the strike's end emphasises the importance of a retrospective view that uses familial as well as political conflict to encapsulate the divided loyalties of the time, as is the case in *The Heart of It*. The opposite is true in *After the Strike*, where the importance of the strike is demonstrated by the toll it takes on united family members rather than by internecine conflict.

The revision of other persistent details in Hines' strike plays reveals the development of his representational concerns in different ways. In *After the Strike*, the Wraggs' son Kevin is buried under the coal he was picking on a colliery waste-heap but is resuscitated. In *The Diggers*, in a version that remains closer to the real-life incident in which teenagers died while picking coal, this is turned into a climactic event when Scott is killed in just such circumstances. Matthew, a version of the self-centred, 'unprincipled' Cal in *The Heart of It*, goes ahead with the band's gig because an executive from Delta Records is in the audience. The coal-picking accident in *After the Strike* simply increased the pathos of the striking miners' predicament and revealed tensions between Joyce and Eddie, while in *The Diggers* it conveys instead a tragic dramatic irony: Matthew's success was cemented at the tribute gig to his dead friend. We can see here the transformation of Hines' conception of the strike from a historical event in *After the Strike* to a Hegelian tragedy in *The Diggers*, in which the irreconcilable imperatives of family loyalty and political conviction are impossibly conflicted.

Hines' novel, *The Heart of It*, focuses on (and, as we later discover, is written by) Cal Rickards. Cal, a successful author of popular film and television screenplays, left his native mining village in his late teens and reflects on the fact that, at the time his father was being beaten and arrested by the police in 1984, he was 'ten thousand miles away in Hollywood writing yet another adaptation of *Jack the Ripper*' (1994b: 149). Cal's persona is a precursor of the two middle-class characters in *The Diggers* who, according to the pitch, are 'distanced by their backgrounds and experience' from the events of the strike and are disbelieving about what Joe and Scott tell them of police violence against the pickets until they see it for themselves. In the novel, Cal, as an estranged member of a miner's family, personifies a more complex and sceptical view of the strike's events. He is initially doubtful of 'wild assertions' likening the atmosphere of the time to 'a police state' (39) and of 'fanciful' ideas that the Army were involved in strike-breaking (69), and dismisses his mother's tale about police harassment of a local woman as 'too one-sided, too simplistic to be credible' (41). Cal suspects that his father 'probably deserved everything he got' (131) at the hands of the police and even that he

must have started the violence. Despite initial appearances, such scepticism does not offer the complicating corrective missing from the Manichean polarities of *After the Strike*. Cal is an untrustworthy character and narrator who comes, through a process of education, to realise that his father 'was not the aggressor' (149) and that, alongside former miners, he himself is 'like a boy who has been allowed to join the company of men' (212). In this way, the novel's plot has the opposite trajectory to that of *Brassed Off* and *Billy Elliot*, as identified by Holland: Cal turns his back on the effete personal success of Hollywood screenwriting and devotes his literary talent to the strike, 'something that matters', in his father's phrase. Such a process is a more successful development of the didacticism of *After the Strike*, transformed from polarised speeches into embodied debate. The same is true in *The Diggers*, where Matthew's statement of disbelief – 'You're exaggerating. All this stuff about the police. Where do you think it is, Russia?' – is followed by his being fined for breach of the peace at a picket line after going along to see for himself.

The Heart of It does not rely on flashbacks in its representation of the events of the strike since its concern is with Cal's reinterpretation of past events as much as with the events themselves. The versions here of incidents from the strike take place within reported speech and are not dramatised. For instance, the equivalent of the scene from *After the Strike* in which Eddie asks McIntock and Superintendent Tolson for the name of a local scab and is accused of being a communist like Arthur Scargill is related at several removes in the form of Cal's memory of a story told by his father some five years earlier. Hines has altered the relations of the characters from *After the Strike* so that in *The Heart of It* they are family members rather than friends and colleagues, and this adds politically charged familial dimensions to the plot. The equivalent of Pete, the disaffected miner in *After the Strike*, is Cal's brother Joe in Hines' novel. This alteration means that it is his brother's ex-wife Christine with whom Cal has an affair; similarly, during the strike, it is her daughter-in-law Christine whom Maisie urges to join the women's action group in the wake of her son's desertion, in contrast to Joyce in the play who was simply Christine's friend. It is as if the close relationships and conflicted loyalties between friends and colleagues in vanished mining communities can be understood only in terms of family relationships by present-day readers and audiences, as we saw in the case of *Faith*.

The same is true in *The Diggers* in which changes to the characters' relationships mean that the miner who goes back to work is the protagonist Scott's father, not just the local schoolteacher's husband. The dilemma with which Mrs Walton in *After the Strike* confronted her class is enacted here: 'And what if your father went back [to work]? Would you leave home?' The class falls silent. It is as if the dialogue in the earlier play itself gave Hines the inspiration for a plot device about families which included working miners: this could appear in a screenplay only when more time had passed. Whereas *After the Strike* made individuals into representatives of social categories in its concern with the strike, in *The Diggers* and *The Heart of It* there appear extra elements about secret relationships, illegitimate children and the conflicts between incompatible moral actions of a kind well-suited to a Hegelian tragedy. This serves more to illustrate constraints in small working-class communities like mining villages and to universalise the concerns of *The Diggers* and *The Heart of It* than directly to represent the strike. Indeed, it was the combination of the Hegelian with the historical that attracted Ken Loach to that section of *The Heart of It* dealing with Maisie Rickards' story which was commissioned as a radio play and a self-contained novel. As Loach has said of his lengthy collaboration with Hines, 'we see things in a similar way' (Fuller 1998: 42), both politically and dramatically. However, the play was not made and Hines did not write the novel.

Follow the Sun is the most recent of Hines' quartet of works about the miners' strike and contains the least detail about it. Most of the strike-related material is confined to speeches which Maisie gives on a

fund-raising trip to Italy, while none of the recurring incidents in the other texts appears. In *The Heart of It*, Maisie confesses to Cal that – in another example of tragically incompatible imperatives – after the war she had to give up her Italian prisoner-of-war lover, Bernardo, and their child in order to care for her sick parents who disapproved of her relationship with an enemy prisoner. In the novel, Maisie's story is set amid Cal's exploration of the strike, but in the play the strike serves to enable the plot and is presented as a small part of her life history. It reveals her potential to break away from a limited role as daughter and wife and, because it involves a fund-raising trip to Genoa, allows Maisie to visit Bernardo's farm. The request which Hines received to extract the Italian plot from *The Heart of It* suggests a preference, more than ten years after the strike, for a narrative with more familiar colliding imperatives. The gap between past and present and the text's flashback structure alternates between Maisie's love affair in 1940, her trip to Italy in 1984 and her funeral in 2000. *Follow the Sun* is about a love that is both lost and irrecoverable (when Maisie arrives at Bernardo's farm she discovers that the family had left years before), as well as about a historical conflict; however, this conflict is not about taking sides during the miners' strike but about wartime antipathies. 'You can keep away from them Italians', as Maisie's father Harry says. His actions during the strike are not represented.

It may seem at first sight likely that Hines' three plays about the miners' strike, particularly *After the Strike*, remained unproduced for ideological reasons and because there was 'no political will' for such works so soon after the event (Mulvey 2010). After all, Ken Loach's television anthology of miners' songs and poems, *Which Side Are You On?*, was commissioned while the strike was still current by London Weekend Television for the *South Bank Show* for transmission in November 1984 but was banned by the station's management as 'too political' and finally broadcast only on the minority station Channel 4 a whole two months later (Hayward 2004: 193–6). However, examining Hines' screenplays offers a more varied picture. As if in reaction to the single focus of *After the Strike*, *The Diggers* places in parallel two narratives, summed up by the title's double meaning: it is about the miners' strike and about a pop group (named after the radical agrarian community of the earlier, seventeenth-century, civil war), each generating divided loyalties and betrayals. *The Heart of It*, the only one of Hines' miners' strike narratives to enter the public realm, eschews direct representation of the events and focuses instead, in modernist vein, on a changing conception of the past from one individual's point of view. Finally, *Follow the Sun* has the strike as a contextual backdrop, needed in order to place its protagonist Maisie in a particular social and geographical location. The narrative is not equally divided between two plots, as in *The Diggers*, and it is the wartime romance rather than the strike that generates tragedy.

There are two ways to view this trajectory in the fate of Hines' work. On the one hand, it suggests that representing the events of the miners' strike is acceptable only when made part of a personal history or another historical calamity. On the other hand, the way that the strike is represented in *Follow the Sun* shows that it cannot be omitted from particular kinds of British working-class representation and memory. Alongside her romance with Bernardo, the strike was the formative event in Maisie's life. Even though it is not the centre of the play's plot, it is fully present. It is here that the great value of archives like the Barry Hines Papers lies. They reveal the repeated return to the subject of the miners' strike by a writer such as Hines, even where such representations were never produced, and the political and aesthetic development over time of a playwright's response to this formative and catastrophic event in British history.

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