

A Study of the Contributions of A. L. Lloyd and
Ewan MacColl to the Post-War Folk Revival
in 1950s and 1960s Britain

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Introduction

In Britain, the post-war folk revival of the 1950s and 1960s was mainly pioneered by four eminent figures: Albert Lancaster Lloyd (A. L. Lloyd, 1902-82), an English folk song scholar, singer, journalist and music producer, Ewan MacColl (1915-89), a Scottish actor and folk singer, John Hasted (1921-2002), a physicist and folk singer, and Alan Lomax (1915-2002), an American ethnomusicologist and folklorist who settled in London between 1950 and 1958. Stimulated by the American folk revival which burgeoned in the late 1950s and early 1960s, traditional folk songs were disseminated to a wide range of people through radio and TV programmes, LP records and by providing a venue called the folk club, where the songs were played, and by organising folk festivals. Their aim was to offer an alternative perspective to the traditional British musical heritage, as an antidote to the growing Americanisation of culture prevalent at the time.

This thesis sheds light on the activities and songs that Lloyd and MacColl used for the post-war folk revival—ballads, traditional folk songs, coal-mining songs, and work songs. It illuminates how songs are given new roles and meanings for a new generation. Previous studies, dealing with the post-war folk revival in Britain, are relatively few, compared to those on the American folk revival. From the late 1960s to the 1970s, British folk rock and electronic folk rock bands, such as Fairport Convention, Pentangle and Steeleye Span, gained an international appeal. The folk revival, which promoted the creation of folk rock and electronic folk rock, was given attention in the 1970s. *The Electronic Muse: The Story of Folk into Rock* (1975), written by Dave Laing, Karl Dallas, Robin Denselow and Robert Shelton, is the first book to discuss the development of the American and British folk revivals. *Folk Revival: The Rediscovery of a National Music*

(1979), written by Fred Woods, provides a general history of the Folk Revival, referring to various singers and musicians. As Woods, an editor of *Folk Review*, who himself was involved with the Folk Revival, admits, this book was “a collection of my own thoughts and feelings, developed from a wide experience inside the Revival as a journalist, record producer, broadcaster and editor” (7). These books give valuable information aiding understanding of the early reception of the post-war folk revival.

Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger’s *The Invention of Tradition* (1983) had a great impact on folk song studies. Tradition, Hobsbawm argues, is “actually invented, constructed, and formally instituted” (“Introduction” 1). The Marxist historical perspective brought a new criticism of the Folk Revival. Dave Harker’s *Fakesong: The Manufacture of British “Folksong,” 1700 to the Present Day* (1985) and Georgina Boyes’s *The Imagined Village: Culture, Ideology & English Folk Revival* (1993), both criticised the way folk songs were transformed into the middle-class cultural products in the hands of folk song collectors, antiquarians and folklorists. The achievement of the post-war folk revival was criticised for imposing the leftish ideologies on traditional folk songs and distorting the working-class culture which they seemed to represent. Michael Brocken’s *The British Folk Revival* (2002) was the first book that attempted to understand the folk revival in Britain, from a popular music studies perspective, giving an insightful analysis of the record company, Topic Records, folk clubs and folk song magazines. Brocken was critical of Lloyd and MacColl’s dogmatic influence on the post-war folk revival. Admittedly, Lloyd and MacColl, who were members of the Communist Party of Great Britain, had so large an impact on the movement that their political policies and leadership determined the revival’s direction. Having said that, if we consider the post-war folk revival, only within the context of the left-wing politics, we cannot perhaps grasp

the whole picture of the post-war folk revival. Brocken's research requires more wide-ranging social, cultural and political history of Britain that shaped the post-war folk revival.

Britta Sweers's *Electronic Folk: The Changing Face of English Traditional Music* (2004) illustrated the history of electric folk music in Britain, with a focus on its relationship with the American folk revival and their challenge to the dominance of American pop music. It explained the process by which young performers turned to traditional music materials, as a means of exploring their British cultural identity. Ronald D. Cohen and Rachel Clare Donaldson's *Roots of the Revival: American & British Folk Music in the 1950s* (2014) also compared the history of the American folk revival with that of Britain, discussing the two revivals' musical and cultural exchanges. Billy Bragg's *Roots, Radicals and Rockers: How Skiffle Changed the World* (2017), analysed the impact of skiffle on the burgeoning British folk revival.

Julia Mitchell's *Postwar Politics, Society and the Folk Revival in England, 1945-65*, was one of the most fascinating and stimulating works that located the post-war folk revival in the context of the New Left and the Arts and Craft Movement, inspired by a designer, poet and socialist, William Morris (1834-96). This research is particularly important in challenging the established old leftish image of the post-war folk revival.

In recent studies, well-informed and insightful biographies and autobiographies of those who were involved with the post-war folk revival, have appeared, including Dave Arthur's *Bert: The Life and Times of A. L. Lloyd* (2012), Ben Harker's *Class Act* (2014), Peggy Seeger's *First Time Ever: A Memoir* (2017) and Shirley Collins two memoirs, *All in the Downs* (2018) and *America Over the Water* (2005). J.B. Bean's *Singing from the Floor: A History of British Folk Clubs* (2014) provides a rich series of

anecdotes of those who participated in folk clubs. These books, consisting of the actual voices of those who witnessed and experienced the British folk scene, helped us to understand the grass-roots nature of the post-war folk revival.

Drawing on these valuable books, this thesis textually analyses traditional folk songs, coal-mining songs and topical songs that Lloyd and MacColl used. This approach, little mentioned in earlier folk song studies, helps illuminate the process by which these songs were inherited as the embodiment of “common culture,” through which people can feel a sense of connection and solidarity.

“Common culture,” a concept articulated by Raymond Williams, is a good starting point in discussing the post-war folk revival in Britain. “Common culture” stems from the idea that “Culture is ordinary” (“Culture” 4). Importantly, “Common culture is,” according to Williams, “not the general extension of what a minority mean and believe, but the creation of a condition in which the people as a whole participate in the articulation of meanings and values, and in the consequent decisions between this meaning and that, this value and that” (“The Idea” 36). The term, “common culture” has complicated connotations. As Williams points out, “common” has two opposing meanings: “a whole group” or “a large specific subordinate group” (*Keywords* 71). “Culture,” Williams argues, is not something exclusive to the privileged minority but rather should be seen as “a particular way of life” or “a whole way of life” (*The Long Revolution*, 57-58). Williams here underscores the importance of the duality of culture that can capture individual experiences as well as the whole experience that constitutes the society. “Common culture” is not limited to a specific class or group, but cannot be separated from the relationship with the individuals who live the ordinary life and their specific community that forms their

society. Starting from the individual or specific communal experiences, “common culture” should be considered as the process by which people can share, select and create meanings and values.

The phrase of “common culture” used by Williams, was not to be found in the post-war folk revivalists’ accounts or memoirs. However, the concept was an ideal vision for them to create an alternative culture. For example, although Lloyd defined folk song as working-class culture, he seemed to envisage a future for common culture, in which folk song would be considered a form of music, overcoming the class and racial barriers:

Ultimately I would have thought just as distinctions between classes should disappear so distinctions between music[s] should disappear. One should have one class, one human race and one music too. (Gregory, Mark, “A. L. Lloyd Interviewed”)

His idea overlapped with the concept of “common culture,” although he did not use the term. Neither deeming folk songs as a product of the past nor fixing them as subordinate culture, he placed importance on the way people can select and create newer and more universal meanings in folk songs. The purpose of “common culture” can be found in the use of mass media and folk clubs, where folk songs are shared and given freer interpretations.

Folk songs and ballads, with their simple lyrics and memorable melodies, depict their creators’ particular way of life, bringing people together and giving them a sense of community. The eighteenth-century German philosopher, Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803) coined the term *Volkslied*, which was later translated into English as “Folk Song.” As Isaiah Berlin explains, Herder, who detested “every form of centralization, coercion, and conquest” (158) was interested “not in nationality but in cultures, in worlds, in the total experience of peoples” (183). These traditional songs, through description of ordinary life, provide unique

human expression, which no social and economic system can fully contain. In other words, folk songs create another world that pursues the human bond. Folk songs cannot be separated from distinction between classes, specific groups or localities, and so the post-war folk revivalists attempted to explore shared meanings and values in songs. Meredith Veldman's *Fantasy, the Bomb and the Greening of Britain* might give a hint in understanding the ideology of the post-war folk revival. According to Veldman, the fantasies of C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, written after World War II, and the campaigns against the British H-bomb, and the warnings of the early Greens, are situated in what she calls "the romantic tradition of protest" (3). They "shared a suspicion of technology and technocracy, and a reluctance to recognize empiricism and pragmatism as paths to truth. Together they affirmed that the past should serve as a guide for the future" (Veldman 3). The spirit of protest against the hierarchy of status of power was also woven into the post-war folk revival, thus shaping an alternative world that connects people at the emotional level and bridges the past and the present.

Chapter One focuses on "socialists' song culture" and "folk song collecting," both of which took place in late nineteenth and the early twentieth-century Britain. Especially referring to *Chants for the Socialists* (1895), a collection of political poetry, written by a designer, poet and socialist, William Morris (1834-96), this chapter will explore the use of songs in politics, as a way of creating a sense of community and solidarity, which was key to the development of the post-war folk revival in Britain, associated with the New Left and pacifist movements. Furthermore, this chapter turns its focus to folk song collecting, which was enthusiastically carried out among middle-class collectors, to preserve traditional folk songs, despite rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. The two historical

backgrounds, “socialists’ song culture” and “folk song collecting” contributed to the formation of the post-war folk revival in Britain.

Chapter Two discusses the early activities of A. L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl, associated with the British Left wing’s cultural policy in the 1930s and 1940s—the period before the formation of the post-war folk revival in Britain. Making use of various platforms provided by the Communist Party of Great Britain, their profound knowledge of working-class history, culture and politics paved the way for an emerging vision of the post-war folk revival. This investigation will include the articles that Lloyd wrote for *Left Reviews*, *Daily Workers*, and *Picture Post* and his book, *The Singing Englishman* (1944), as well as theatre scripts that MacColl, who was an agitprop actor, wrote for his theatre, the Theatre Workshop.

Chapter Three conducts a wide-ranging social historical, and cultural survey of the post-war folk revival, by looking at various means of promoting folk songs, such as radio programmes, TV programmes, the distribution of LP records and venues including folk clubs and festivals. The post-war folk revival in Britain also had a complicated relationship with America. While challenging the spread of Americanization of the post-war Britain, the movement itself maintained a cultural and musical exchange with the American folk revival in the 1950s and 1960s. Furthermore, this chapter examines their relationship with the New Left and Centre 42, touring festivals held in 1962, organised by the playwright Arnold Wesker (1932-2016), aiming to reveal the ideology and the philosophy of the post-war folk revival in Britain.

Chapter Four provides a textual analysis of traditional songs, re-created by Lloyd. It examines two ballads that feature trickster characters, “Jack Orion” and “Reynardine,” both of which were included in his LP album, *First Person* (1966). By comparing different versions, this

chapter shows the process by which Lloyd recreated these ballads that could resonate deeply with new generations.

Chapter Five explores erotic folk songs, a new selection that Lloyd added into the song repertoires. Erotic folk songs, which describe sexual matters through metaphors and symbols, had been ignored or bowdlerised by Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors for their middle-class readerships. Lloyd devoted himself to revitalising erotic folk songs in the post-war folk revival, emphasising that these songs represent a peaceful world in which people harmonise with nature. This chapter uses the text of “The Bonny Black Hare” that he recorded for *The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Erotic Songs* (1966), examining how the song reflected his aesthetics and ideas on erotic folk songs.

Chapter Six begins with a focus on coal-mining songs, a subcategory of industrial folk songs, which was one of the significant post-war folk revival repertoires. Firstly, Lloyd’s coal-mining song collecting, which began in the 1950s, is examined to articulate the role of coal-mining songs in the post-war folk revival in Britain. Secondly, this chapter treats a radio documentary about coal-mining workers, *The Big Hewer* (1961), which was produced by MacColl, his wife, Peggy Seeger (1935) and a BBC producer, Charles Parker (1919-80). This research demonstrates how the coal miners’ memory and experiences of struggle and solidarity were articulated in the form of a radio documentary that includes the songs and recorded voices of miners.

Chapter Seven investigates another aspect of the post-war folk revival. It played a significant role in the pacifist movements such as the CND (the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament), through the creation of topical songs that convey the tragedy and fear of nuclear weapons. Ewan MacColl had already written a play, *Uranium 235* in 1946, as a warning of the threat of

nuclear weapons. This work, which will be discussed in this chapter, resulted in the anti-nuclear stance of the post-war folk revival in Britain. Furthermore, this chapter explores their relationship with the Singing Voice of Japan Movement (Nihon no Utagoe-*undō*), which emerged in post-war Japan, through examination of a Japanese anti-nuclear song, “Genbaku wo Yurusumaji,” which was later translated by MacColl as “Never Again the A-Bomb” and played a significant part in anti-nuclear campaigns.

This thesis makes use of primary and secondary materials including LP records, liner notes, hand-written manuscripts, folk magazines, radio documents, memoirs, traditional folk ballads, broadside ballads, audio materials, festival pamphlets, and interviews that I conducted with those who were involved with the post-war folk revival. As for the music of folk songs, this thesis places greater emphasis on the lyrical analysis and cultural history, related to songs, than on the music itself. However, some musical scores of folk songs and ballads, such as “Jack Orion” “Reyanrdine” and “The Bonny Black Hare”, are included.

In the concluding chapter, I will argue that the post-war folk revival should not be seen as the limited working-class culture but rather a wider and international political, social, cultural movement that attempted to shape a common culture where people could create a community and share a sense of belonging, through traditional folk songs.

Chapter 1

From William Morris to Cecil Sharp: Folk Revival in the late Victorian and Edwardian Age

In order to understand the roots of the post-war folk revival, it is necessary to turn to the cultural and social movements in late nineteenth century Britain. There are two strands of social history that led to the formation of the post-war folk revival. One strand is its relationship with politics. The post-war folk revival, which coincided with the emergence of the New Left and pacifist movements, placed importance on the formation of community through folk songs, as a way to get a sense of fellowship. This idea dated back to the nineteenth century socialist movements, in which William Morris (1834-96), a designer, painter, poet and writer, played a significant role.

Another strand was the first English folk revival movement between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The post-war folk revival was founded on the contribution and limitation of the late Victorian and Edwardian folk revival. Post-war folk revivalists drew on old ballads, traditional folk songs and broadside ballads, collected by prominent folksong collectors including Baring Gould (1834-1929), Frank Kidson (1855-1926), Lucy Broadwood (1858-1929), Cecil Sharp (1859-1924) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), then added new interpretations and arrangements to the songs. On the other hand, the post-war folk revivalists focused on industrial and erotic folk songs that had been ignored or overlooked in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. This chapter will analyse these two historical strands that link to the post-war folk revival.

1-1 William Morris and Socialist Songs

William Morris, known as a designer, poet, and writer in nineteenth century Britain, was also a social activist. In 1876, Morris started his political activity against the British government's involvement with the "Eastern Question," the diplomatic problem regarding the territory of the Ottoman Empire. In 1883, he joined the Social Democratic Federation, the first official socialist party in Britain. Disillusioned with the leadership of SDF, Henry Hyndman's exclusive control over the party, Morris, together with Eleanor Marx (1855-98), Edward Aveling (1849-98), and E. B. Bax (1854-1926), formed the Socialist League in 1884. It has been little known that Morris, who established himself as a prominent poet, as well as the chief executive of Morris & Co, wrote socialist songs.

Songs had long been used for political purposes in Britain. For example, the Luddite Movement, which emerged at the beginning of the nineteenth century, created machine-wrecking songs such as "the Cropper Lads":

Come cropper lads of high renown,
 Who love to drink good ale that's brown
 And strike each haughty tyrant down
 With hatchet, pike and gun,
 Oh, Cropper lads for me,
 The gallant lads for me,
 Who with the lusty stroke the shear frames broke,
 The cropper lads for me. (Qtd. in Palmer, *The Sound* 105)

It has been claimed that, when John Walker, who used to lead the singing of the song at the Shears Inn in West Yorkshire, "had come to the end of his song[,] the rollicking chorus was eagerly caught up by his delighted audience, and when the end was reached[,] the refrain was twice repeated

with extraordinary vigour, many of the men beating time on the long table with their sticks and pewter mugs” (Palmer, *The Sound* 105). This observation vividly illustrates that songs helped create a sense of solidarity for a political cause. The Chartist Movement, which took place in the 1830s, made abundant use of music-making as well as recitations of poetry, as “a ritual of solidarity” (Bowen and Pickering 49). Thus, the setting of a well-known melody to lyrics that fitted with their agendas and needs had traditionally been a feature of demotic politics in Britain. Morris’s involvement with the creation of socialist songs followed in this radical history. In late nineteenth century Britain, however, songs had tended to be used to support burgeoning social reform.

Hugh Haweis’s influential book, *Music and Morals*, which was first published in 1871 and went through twelve editions until 1903, underscored the importance of choral songs, which he believed would enhance “a spirit of sympathy” and bring about the whole “social effect” (113-15). According to Chris Waters, “the book not only contributed to the moral rhetoric of rational reaction but it also influenced the work of social reformers by suggesting that certain melodic forms could awaken socially desirable emotions” (98-99). Considering this social background, it is hardly surprising that Morris entered into a new field of song writing for socialism.

“Wake London Lads” was the first political song Morris wrote in 1878, when he involved himself in the Eastern Question. He was commissioned by a then new Trade Union leader, Henry Broadhurst, to write the song, in order to oppose Disraeli’s policy to support Turkey which committed an atrocity against Bulgaria and that was ready for war with Russia:

Wake, London Lads! the hour draws night,
The bright sun brings the day;
Cast off the shame, cast off the lie,

And cast the Turk away! (Qtd. in MacCarthy 384)

This song, with five stanzas of four line, is written in ballad meter, or common meter, in which the second and fourth lines rhyming. Morris called for anti-war unity amongst London citizens and warned them not to be disturbed by false patriotism, promoted by the government.

“Jingoism,” the term that means extreme patriotism, or “an inverted patriotism whereby the love of one’s own nation is transformed into the hatred of another nation” (Russell 146), expanded in Britain when belligerent sentiments towards Russia ran high. “Jingo” is a word, derived from the music hall song, performed by G. H. MacDermott, one of the stars of the Victorian music hall.

We don’t want to fight, but by jingo if we do,

We’ve got the ships, we’ve got the men, and we’ve got the
money too.

We’ve fought the bear before, and while we’re Britons true,

The Russians will not have Constantinople. (Qtd. in Russell 147)

According to OED, the refrain of “by Jingo” became “the Tyrtæan ode of the party ready to fight Russia in 1878” (“Jingo, n. 2.”). The song exemplifies how the music hall functioned as “a tool of the ruling classes, foisting imperialist ideology on to a pliant working and lower middle class” (Russell 145).

Morris’s song stood in opposition to the warlike songs of the music hall. His song was set to the melody of “The Hardy Norseman’s Home of Yore,” which was popular at that time. In the mid-nineteenth century, a British composer, Robert Lucas de Pearsall (1795-1856), translated the Norwegian song into English, arranging the melody for the choir. This song, which was in circulation as a form of broadside ballad by 1870, was included in *Part-song Books* (1875), a choral music book published by the music

publishing company, Novello. Philip Webb (1831-1915), an architect and Morris's friend, wrote in a letter to George Prince Boyce that "I missed Morris's verses sung to the tune of the 'Hardy Norseman' played on the organ at the latter meeting" (Aplin 136). The fact that Webb already knew the melody well indicates the song's considerable popularity.

Notably, the song was derived from a popular ancient Norwegian song (Pearsall 1). Pearsall made an interesting reference to the process by which the song was transmitted:

This melody was given to me by the late Joseph Panny of Vienna, who heard it at a family festival, in the interior of Norway and noted it on the spot. It was there described to him as a very ancient popular song, referable to the times of Kemplona or Sea Kings, and as being always sung with the greatest enthusiasm.

(1)

As this reminiscence shows, "The Hardy Norseman's Yore" was a folk song, passed down from generation to generation. This passage helps us visualize a scene in which the family was gathered at home, enjoying singing the song with affection and with a reverence for their ancestors. Morris must have been fascinated by the simple and homely melody of "The Hardy Norseman's Yore," which was different from the music hall songs with war propaganda messages that he abhorred. In a letter to his daughter, Jenny, Morris confessed that, when getting on a train for a lecture, he was irritated with "2 young mashers" humming and whistling music-hall tunes (Kelvin, Vol. II 188).

"Wake, London Lads!" was sung at the opening of Exeter Hall on January 16th of 1878. After the song sheet was distributed to all those who were present at the meeting, the song was practiced twice to familiarize the audience with the words and tune. According to Henry Broadhurst, "the

effect when the burning words were thundered forth by the vast assembly was electrifying” (qtd. in MacCarthy 384). Morris wrote to his wife, Jane, how he was impressed with the scene in which people sang “Wake, London Lads” together:

They sang it well together . . . they struck up while we were just ready to come to the platform & you can imagine I felt rather excited when I heard them begin to tune up: they stopped at the end of each verse and cheered lustily: we came on to the platform just about the middle of it. (Kelvin, Vol. I 434-36)

It can be argued that Morris was convinced of the potential for songs to bring people together, as a way of enhancing morale for the realisation of a better society. It is no doubt that the success of “Wake, London Lads” led Morris to write socialist songs. In 1884, Morris wrote “The Day is Coming,” “The Voice of Toil,” “All for the Cause,” and “No Master” for *Justice*, the organ of the SDF, and in 1885, “March of the Workers” and “The Message of the March Wind” for *The Commonwealth*, the newly established organ of the SL. To these songs, “Come, Comrades Come” was added into the socialist songbook, *Chants for Socialists* (1885).

As Elizabeth Carolyn Miller notes, “as with other radical groups, singing was an important part of Socialist League efforts to build an alternative culture” (197). “No Master,” “The March of the Workers,” “Come, Comrades Come” were given specific melodies and sung during the meetings or the open-air demonstrations. In particular, “The March of the Workers” and “Come, Comrades Come” were among the most

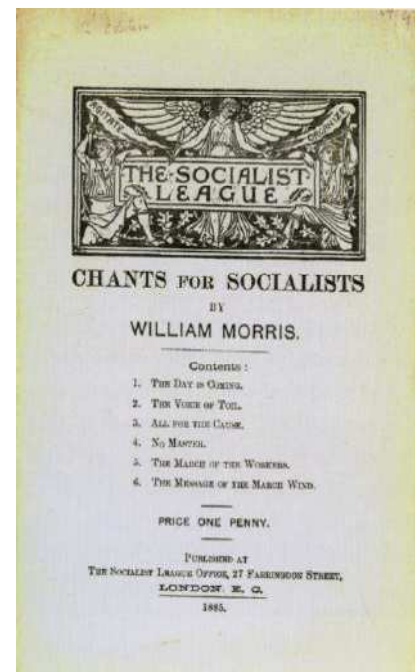


Fig.1 The Cover of *Chants for Socialists* (Morris, *Chants*)

popular socialist repertoires, frequently picked up in socialist songbooks. According to Waters' survey, of the nine significant socialist song-books, published between the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, eight song-books included "The March of the Workers" and six "Come, Comrades, Come" (Waters 110).

As can be seen from the example of "Wake London Lads," the selection of lyrics and melodies that captured the sense of unity and shared experience was important for the creation of truly socialist songs. Lyrics must be simple but have clear-cut messages. The tune must be easy to remember in order for people to sing in unison. Morris must have well understood the nature of songs, tailored for the socialist movement. "The March of the Workers" drew on the well-known melody of "John Brown's Body," a United States marching song about the abolitionist, John Brown, who was executed for launching a raid on Harpers Ferry. The rhythmical and up-tempo tune of "John Brown's Body" originally came from a folk hymn "Say Brothers," which was quite common in America, especially in the South (Stauffer and Soskis 19). The opening stanza of Morris's version is:

What is this, the sound and rumour? What is this that all
men hear,

Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near

Like the rolling on of ocean in the eventide of fear?

'Tis the people marching on.

(II 1-4; Morris, William, *Chants* 11)

Symbolical similes such as "Like the wind in hollow valleys" and "like the rolling ocean" are associated with the footsteps and roaring voices of the marching people, thus expressing the force of a united people. However, the original version of "John Brown's Body" starts as follows:

John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave

John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave

John Brown's body lies a-mold'ring in the grave

His Soul is Marching on. (Lomax and Lomax, *American Ballads* 528)

JOHN BROWN'S BODY

John Brown's bod - y lies a-mould'ring in the grave,

John Brown's bod - y lies a-mould'ring in the grave,

John Brown's bod - y lies a-mould'ring in the grave; His

REFRAIN

soul is march - ing on. Glo - ry, glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! Glo - ry, glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah!

Glo - ry, glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah! His soul is marching on!

Fig. 2 The Tune of "John Brown's Body" (Lomax and Lomax, *American Ballads* 528)

Obviously, the melody didn't fit well with the meter of "The March of the Workers," which, as Nicholas Salmon put it, "turned out to be too heavy for the familiar wording of the song" (35). According to May, Morris, "Some one unluckily furnished my father not with the original words as a guide, but with another set of verses, the long racing meter of which he followed. When he found out how much simpler the original John Brown song was, he was rather vexed about it" (xxxiiij). From this account, it can be deduced that Morris was given, not the original lyrics of "John Brow's Body," but a newer elaborate version of "John Brown's Body," written in 1861 by the abolitionist, William W. Patton (1821-89):

Old John's body lies in a-mouldering in grave,

While weeps the sons of bondage, whom he ventured all to
save

But though he lost his life while struggling for the slave
His soul is marching on. Glory, Hallelujah! (Stauffer and Soskis
295)

Morris was unaware that there were two versions of “John Brown’s body.” However, by the time he created “The March of the Workers” in 1885, “John Brown’s Body” was already well known in Britain. During the 1870s, the Fisk Jubilee Singer, an African American acappella ensemble, consisting of students from Fisk University in Nashville, visited London on tour. Their singing of “John Brown’s Body” received high acclaim, leading them to sing in front of Gladstone, the then prime minister of the United Kingdom, and the Queen Victoria (Stauffer and Soskis 125).

Thus, it is apparent that “John Brown’s Body” captured not only the hearts of American people but also of a wide range of people because of its catchy melodies and lyrics with a fighting spirit. Changing from slaves fighting for freedom to workers fighting for a better society, “The March of the Workers” was sung with affection among socialists. As Fred Jowett (1864-1944), a member of the SL, recalled:

The joint forces of Leeds and Bradford Socialists tramped together to spread the gospel by printed and spoken word in neighbouring villages. And at eventide, on the way home, as we walked in country lanes or on river bank, we sang—‘What is this, the sound and rumour? What is this that all men hear? Like the wind in hollow valleys when the storm is drawing near . . .’ And we believed they were! (Qtd. in Thompson, E. P. *William* 668)

This observation suggests that “The March of the Workers” boosted the socialist movement, strengthening the spirit of fellowship among socialists.

“Come, Comrades, Come” was another song, sung by socialists. It is set to the melody of “Down Among the Dead Men,” a well-known drinking song. This song is, according to E. David Gregory “a Cavalier drinking song written by John Dyer” at least in the seventeenth century and “it maintained its popularity into the Victorian era” (*The Late Victorian Folksong Revival* 464). Although the lyrics dated back to the seventeenth century, the powerful tune of “Down Among the Dead Men,” intended for choir singing, seems much older. It was noted as “old English airs” in the works of *Davidson’s Universal Music* (1848) and Baring Gould’s *English Minstrelsies* (1895) (Davidson 74; Baring-Gould 46-47), or as “traditional” (10) in Brown and Moffatt’s *Characteristic Songs and Dances of all Nations* (1901). “Down Among the Dead Men” starts as follows:

Here’s a health to the king and a lasting peace
 To fraction end and to wealth increase,
 Come let us drink it while we have breath
 For there’s no drinking after death
 And he that will this health deny,
 Down among the dead men, down among the dead men,
 Down among the dead men, down, down, down, down
 Down among the dead men let him lie[.] (st.1; Gregory, E. David,
The Late Victorian Folksong Revival 464-65)

On the other hand, Morris alters it thus:

Come, comrades, come your glasses clink,
 Up with your hands a health to drink,
 The health of all that workers be,
 In every land, on every sea.
 And he that will this health deny,
 Down among the dead men, down among the dead men,

Down, down, down, down,

Down among the dead men let him lie! (st.1; Morris, William, *Chants* 16)

The original version provides hedonistic content, celebrating the king and making a toast for the property of a country. Morris's version changed it into a parody, where a toast is addressed to workers, not the king. As J. Bruce Glasier argues, "It beams with good humour, and rejoices us with its large mindedness, a characteristic of Morris's Socialism that marks it so distinctly from that of many doctrinaire advocates" (*Socialism* 23). In fact, the use of patriotic songs as an element of parody partly characterised many socialist songs. Revolutionary songs such as "When Labour First in Strength Awoke" and "Up Ye People!" were set to the tune of "Rule Britannia." As Miller points out, "radical writers were intensely alert to the kind of ideological power that such popular nationalistic songs could wield, and they sought, in repurposing them, to undermine that power" (199). Thus, Morris's version, while giving a humorous impression, takes on a satirical meaning, attacking the rich who deny the workers' health and

Down Among the Dead Men

John Dyer

Voice

Here's a health to the King and a last-ing peace, To fact-ion an end, to
wealth in-crease. Come let us drink it while we have breath, For there's no drink-ing
af-ter death. And he that will this health de-ny, Down a-mong the dead men,
down a-mong the dead men. Down, down, down, down, Down a-mong the dead men
let him lie.

Fig. 15.2

Fig. 3 The Tune of "Down Among the Dead Men" (Gregory, E. David, *The Late Victorian Folksong Revival* 464)

happiness. The tune of “Down Among the Dead Men” was first put into print in *The Dancing Master* (1728). After that, the song appeared as broadside ballads, mainly in London, Liverpool, Birmingham and Durham in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. During Queen Victoria’s reign, the “king” in the first line of “Here is the health to the king” was changed into the “queen.” Morris must have understood how the song was accepted as part of street songs. As the title “Come, comrades, come” shows, Morris transformed the song into a people’s song. The haunting refrain of “Down among the dead men” is addressed to the privileged few. J.B. Glasier, a politician who belonged to the SL, provided an interesting memoir about the singing atmosphere among socialists, stating that “Our gathering, though only consisting of a few dozen members and friends of the branch, was noteworthily international in voice as in sentiment” (*William* 40). Leo Millet, a French refugee and a leading figure of the Paris Commune, sang “Carmagnole,” a popular French song sung during the French Revolution, “with such dramatic effect that we were roused to our feet and danced the chorus with him round the room” (Glasier, *William* 40). A German “sang a German workers’ song” and a Russian Jew “sang a Yiddish revolutionary song” (Glasier, *William* 49). Morris formed personal friendships with foreign socialists, showing that “music and musicking brought into direct contact with political activism” (Bowen 108). These international songs helped shape a community, regardless of language, race or religion, thereby achieving a unity through a shared purpose of establishing the socialist society. Morris’s songs were sung at the end of the meeting:

Thus the evening sped with us till midnight, when we sang “Come, Comrades, Come,” acclaimed the “Social Revolution,” and dispersed on our various ways home. One group of us insisted on conveying our guest to the hotel door, chorusing along the streets

his own “March of the Workers,” and feeling almost persuaded that we were destined to forgather some not far distant day at the barricades. (Glasier, *William* 41)

It is apparent that “Come, Comrades, Come” and “March of the Workers” both embodied a spirit of fellowship that Morris envisaged, which he believed, would be achieved through the common experience of singing together.

“The Message of the March Wind,” included both in *Chants* and *The Pilgrims of Hope* (1885), was not given a specific melody. As Glasier put it, “it was a short descriptive or reflective poem” rather than a song (*Socialism* 25). The programme for the event of SL describes how Edward Aveling recited Morris’s “Message of the March Wind” and David Nicoll recited Morris’s “March of the Workers,” suggesting that poetry recitation was a common feature of the SL activities (“The Programme”). “Message of the March Wind,” consisting of eighteen stanzas, was suitable for recitation. The song starts as follows:

Fair now is the springtide, now earth lies beholding
 With the eyes of a lover, the face of the sun;
 Long lasteth the daylight, and hope is enfolding
 The green-growing acres with increase begun.

Now sweet, sweet it is through the land to be straying
 ’Mid the birds and the blossoms and the beasts of the field;
 Love mingles with love, and no evil is weighting
 On thy heart or mine, where all sorrow is healed. (sts.1-2; Morris,
 William, *Chants* 13)

The March wind “has been an emblem of hope” since Shelly’s *Ode to the West Wind* (Boos 149). Words such as “springtide,” “sun,” “green-growing

acres” and “birds” create a pastoral imagery, contrasting with the civilization of London. As shown in Morris’s *News from Nowhere* (1890), London, with smog and factories, was transformed into a series of green villages, which supports his vision of natural beauty and tranquillity bringing happiness and peace. However, the poem’s tone changes when the sky darkens and the wind from London blows:

Hark! the March wind again of a people is telling;
 Of the life that they live there, so haggard and grim,
 That if we and our love amidst them had been dwelling
 My fondness had faltered, thy beauty grown dim.

 The singers have sung and the builders have builded,
 The painters have fashioned their tales of delight;
 For what and for whom hath the world’s book been gilded,
 When all is for these but the blackness of night. (sts. 9-11; Morris,
 William, *Chants* 14)

The March wind’s message is that civilization, like London, where the workers are exploited with low wages and long working hours, saps the strength of those who were once happy. The narrator turns his eyes to the singers, the builders and the painters, who create their own works and bring enrichment to our lives. Creativity and craftsmanship were important elements that formed Morris’s unique socialist vision. As already noted, “the Message of the March Wind” was not given a designated tune. It rather suited recitation. However, it does not necessarily mean that the song was not sung at all. One record gives convincing evidence that the members of the Bristol Socialist Society set the song to a folk tune:

It still lingers in my memory as some Enchanted Hall of Dreams.
 There was music and song and dance . . . Night after night bands

of socialists, young and old, would meet for study and debate, and terribly practical work, too, for the unemployed and unskilled workers . . . Never did our meetings break up without our singing one of Morris's songs to a crooning Irish melody—I think "The Message of the March Wind" to the tune of "Teddy O'Neill" was the favourite. (Qtd. in Waters 189-90)

"Teddy O'Neil," a song about unrequited love, originated in Ireland. Lucy Broadwood, one of the earliest English folk song collectors, collected the song in 1893. One can speculate that the melody of traditional songs, collected by folk song collectors, took on a new role for the socialist songs. People set Morris's lyrics to their favourite folk tunes, in order to associate them with these songs. They might have considered that the pastoral lyrics of "The Message of March Winds" would be fit with a simple and humane melody like folk song. It is an important example in understanding the relationship between the political activities and folk songs that folk song collectors had previously overlooked.

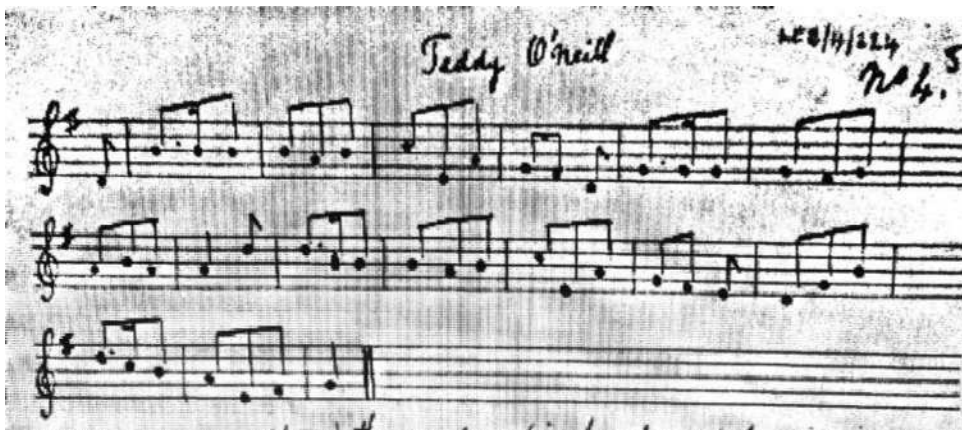


Fig. 4 The Handwritten Tune of "Teddy O'Neil" (Broadwood, "Teddy")

Generally speaking, however, Morris's song-book, *Chants for Socialists*, has not been as appreciated, in comparison to his other activities. As E. P.

Thompson argues, “the *Chants* cannot lay the foundations of a poetry of ‘revolutionary realism’” (*William* 669) in that “Morris rarely expresses any sense of vitality in the working-class, but only in the ‘Cause’ itself, the hope of the future” (*William* 669). Salmon also admits the *Chants*’ “black and white judgements, simple antitheses and banal generalisations” (37). Obviously, Morris’s optimistic songs did not directly reflect the real struggle of the working-class people. He preferred expressing the simple joy of living through a form of utopia, rather than depicting the real struggle and suffering of the working-class people, hoping that, by doing so, his songs would infuse people with the power of imagination that would be a stepping stone to take social and political action. As Kawabata notes, one important task Morris had achieved as a poet in 1880s, was to contribute to creating “[a] genuine popular culture of song” (“The Rhythm” 27).

After the publication of *Chants for Socialists*, a number of socialist songbooks were published between 1888 and 1893, including Edward Carpenter’s *Chants of Labour* (1888), Bristol Socialist Society’s *The Labour Songbook* (1888), Aberdeen’s Socialist League’s *Socialist Songs* (1889), James Leatham’s *Songs for Socialists* (1890) and John Bruce Glasier’s *Socialist Songs* (1893). At the suggestion of Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), Carpenter, who was active as a socialist mainly in Sheffield, published *Chants of Labour* in 1888 (Tsuzuki 79). Walter Crane was in charge of illustrating the book. As Carpenter stated, “this book is in no sense a merely ‘literary production’ but emanates rather from the heart of the people” (vi). The song-book consists of fifty five songs written by thirty-four poets of various social positions—not only by famous poets such as Robert Burns, Percy B. Shelly and William Morris but by poets with various occupations such as porters, barristers, drapers, cabin-makers, teachers, civil servants. Five songs by Morris—“Come Comrades, Come!,” “No Master,” “The Voice of

Toil,” “March of the Workers,” and “All for the Cause”—were included in the song-book. This was an influential anthology of socialist songs, first published in 1888 and reissued in 1897, 1905, 1912, 1916 and 1922 (Waters 107). Oscar Wilde wrote a review of *Chants of Labour* (1889) for the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1889, in which he welcomed the songbook for bringing people with various social statuses together for one cause. As Wilde points out, “It is evident from Mr. Carpenter’s book that should the Revolution ever break out in England we shall have no inarticulate roar but, rather pleasant glees and graceful part-songs” (19). Wilde’s viewpoint is that an alternative role of socialism is to encourage people to pursue creative activities in which people can sing about themselves and imagine the future. As Wilde notes, “To make Socialism is nothing, but to make Socialism human is a great thing” (18). It is apparent that the socialist songs contributed to an alternative socialist culture. The idea, connecting culture and politics, led to the post-war folk revival in the 1950s and 1960s that will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three. In addition, the socialist song culture, in which people with different social status, sang their songs together, provided prototypes of the folk club and the CND Movement. Morris’s socialist songs, written for workers, cannot be captured only within the context of the Victorian socialists, giving inspiration to the radical song culture such as the post-war folk revival.

1-2 The Late Victorian and Edwardian Folk Revival

In England, from around 1870 to 1890, there was a growing interest among the middle classes in collecting old songs from the countryside. During this period, folk songs were collected and published by pioneers such as Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), Frank Kidson (1855-1926), Lucy Broadwood (1858-1929), and Kate Lee (1858-1904). Although the folk-song

collecting began individually, it gradually developed into a wider network through the exchange of information and personal contacts, finally leading to the formation of the Folk-Song Society in 1898, whose aim was to collect, preserve, and publish songs, ballads and tunes (“Report” ii). Between 1900 and 1914, folk song collectors, including Cecil Sharp (1859-1924), Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), Percy Grainger (1882-1961), George Barnet Gardiner (1852-1910), and George Butterworth (1885-1916), collected a large number of folk songs all over England, contributing to the preservation and dissemination of folk songs. The late Victorian and Edwardian folk revival involved “amateur and professional musicians, predominantly of a metropolitan, university-educated, middle-class culture” (Sykes 446). Their mission was to save traditional folk songs from the pressure of urbanisation and industrialisation, and to promote them as English songs that could strengthen a sense of patriotism.

There were two factors that motivated their folk song collecting. One factor that led to the folk revival movement was an emergence of folklore studies. Before the folk revival began, there had already been growing interest in old songs among Victorian intellectuals. The formation of the Percy Society and the Ballad Society in 1840 and 1868, respectively, contributed to the preservation and publication of ballads and old songs. William Chappell (1809-88) published *Popular Music of the Olden Times*, a collection of old songs and poems, in 1859. Although this book was considered important in the area of British music history, Sharp argued that Chappell “had [made] no serious effort to gather together those innumerable songs and dances, which have been handed down among our peasantry from generations to generations, and are still to be heard in country places” (*A Book* vi). In fact, Chappell’s method was limited to philology and antiquarian studies. The area of Folklore, however, already

turned its eyes to the past. In 1846, William J. Thoms (1803-85) coined the word, "Folk-Lore" that did not mean "Popular Antiquities" or "Popular Literature" (Thoms, "Folk-lore" 862-63). This term, that comprehends folk customs, superstitions, songs, legends and dance, suggested a new area of study. As Thoms addressed the readers:

That there is a vast body of "traditional lore" floating among our peasantry, cannot be doubted. Our project in opening our columns to communications on the subject of Folk-Lore, was, not to establish that fact, but to collect the legendary fragments themselves. ("Devonshire Pixies" 955-56)

The term, "Folklore," proposed by Thoms, included scientific analysis and demonstrations, based on fieldwork. Not depending on written texts, folklore studies centred on practical fieldwork activities, which, helped gain knowledge of the forms by which vernacular culture was expressed and transmitted. As Richard Dorson points out, Thoms's idea was reflected in the existing folklore studies: "direct field observation, accurate reporting, communication of specific data and then the comparative commentary" (84). Folklore studies, which were related to anthropology and archaeology, replaced antiquarian studies. Folk song collectors took an active approach of the folklore studies, drawing a line between themselves and antiquarian scholars.

Another factor that promoted the folk revival was a strong sense of inferiority in British music, compared to other European countries such as Germany, France and Italy. "The land without music" was a much-used phrase that described England's "lack" of music. The phrase, "Das Land Ohne Musik" was originally described by the German critic, Oscar Adolf Herman Schmitz in 1914. However, the belief that England had no musical tradition could be traced back to the nineteenth century (Saalwächter

58-60). Hugh Haweis, the author of *Music and Morals* (1871), an influential book that gained popularity in the nineteenth century, had already pointed out that the English “are not, as a nation, an artistic people, and the English are not a Musical People” (124-25).

The German musician and musicologist, Carl Engel (1818-82), who emigrated to England around 1884-85, pointed out in *The Literature of National Music* (1878):

. . . the particular characteristics of the music of the nation are therefore more strongly exhibited in the popular songs and dance tunes traditionally preserved by the country-people and lower-classes of society, which form the great majority of a nation.

(1)

Engel used the phrase “the music of the nation” instead of “folk song” because the concept of “folk song” had not gained widespread use at that time. In this regard, Britain, mainly England, lagged behind because “many of the intelligent musicians in England are foreigners” (99). To tackle the problem, Engel insisted that “pianoforte teachers, organists, and other musical professors living in the provincial towns, must often have excellent opportunities of collecting airs from the lips of the peasantry” (99), which he believed, would “achieve good results” (99). This motto became a guiding principle for the folk song collector, most of whom were amateur or professional musicians and music teachers. As Engel was fascinated not by the words but the melodies of folk songs, folk song collectors were “enamoured mainly with the tunes and less interested in the words of the songs” (Roud and Bishop xvii). This approach, however, led to an extreme process of editing, in which folk song collectors boldly rewrote inappropriate words for the songs they gathered, in order to adapt them to the tastes of their middle-class audiences. As Georgina Boyes notes, “cultural products of

the rural working-class were taken from them and daintily and selectively re-worked for school and drawing room performance by a coterie of upper-middle-class collectors who profited financially and in status as a result” (47). Despite that, folk song collectors had a firm belief that folk songs would become a source for enriching musical culture. They had a strong sense of duty in protecting folk songs from disappearance, owing to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation.

Cecil Sharp, the English folk song collector, played the most important role in disseminating folk songs through education. Between 1903 and 1907, Sharp carried out fieldwork in Somerset (south-western England), where he collected as many as 1,500 songs, most of which were preserved in the five volumes of *Folk Songs from Somerset*. From 1916 to 1917, he visited the Southern Appalachians (USA), where he gathered about 1,600 folk songs and ballads that originated in Britain (Brocken 4). In 1911, Sharp established the English Folk Dance Society, promoting the preservation of traditional folk dances, including the Morris and sword dances. Sharp made a prominent contribution to the field of folk song and dance collection, but his role in the field of music education has not been fully discussed in the study of folk song history. Before pursuing a career as a folk song collector, he had already worked as a music master at Ludgrove (1893-1910) and later became a principal at the Hampstead Conservatoire of Music (1896-1905) (Strangways 13–24; Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp* 12-22). Thus, Sharp can be evaluated as the first English folk song collector to successfully popularise folk songs by incorporating them into education for children as a way to promote national culture.

Sharp’s activities and ideas were in keeping with the notion of cultural nationalism that, during the nineteenth century, swept across the European continent. Baycroft defines the concept of “cultural nationalism” by

arguing that “nations are conceptual, emotional, abstract entities which may be associated with a state, but can only be grasped through their representations, symbols and understanding of those who consider themselves to belong to the nation” (3). Folk song was one method of representing and symbolising the nation. Steve Roud explains how cultural nationalism flourished, related to the preservation of folklore and folk song in Britain:

[It] grew steadily during the nineteenth century, based on, extended from, the influential writings of German writers such as Herder, that a nation’s cultural soul can be found in its “folk”—variously imagined or defined but always including elements of “the people,” uneducated and therefore unspoilt, transmitting cultural traits through conservative tradition. These ideas were taken for granted by many in the wider cultural sphere and later permeated the folk-song movement. (45)

These historical, social, and cultural backgrounds gave Sharp a clear and purposeful vision: folk songs should not only be collected and preserved but also be able to represent their shared culture. In *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* (1907), Sharp perceives English folk songs as “those simple ditties which have sprung like wildflowers from the very hearts of our countrymen, and which are as redolent of the English race as its language” (136). Sharp believed that folk songs are as important as language because they reflect a unified group identity. Also in Britain, Max Nordau’s influential book *The Degeneration*, translated in English in 1895, caused a huge sensation by implying that city life and industrialization contributed to the degeneration of the human body and mind (Soloway 138). When considering these factors, it is a persuasive proposition that the use of folk songs in education was one of the most effective ways to stimulate children’s

sense of patriotism and to provide an alternative worldview in which English visions of the past could be romanticised.

The “folk song controversy” of 1906 put Sharp in the spotlight of music education in England. Following the passing of the 1870 Educational Act and the introduction of compulsory schooling, “Tonic-Solfa became the accepted method of teaching singing in the nation’s Board schools” (Rainbow 40). The Tonic Sol-fa, which was originally invented by Sarah Anna Glover (1786-1867) and further popularised by John Curwen (1816-1880), was a teaching method for encouraging sight-reading. By the end of the nineteenth century, the music teachings in schools became a more urgent agenda, with attempts to improve aural training and sight-singing. The choice of school songs, according to Bernarr Rainbow, “no longer depended principally upon the message of their words, and a wide array of national and folk songs were being brought back into currency through children’s participation” (47).

In 1905, the Board of Education for England and Wales published the pamphlet *Suggestions for the Considerations of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools*. This pamphlet outlined specific methods for the organization of schools, as well as advice on conducting classes. Along with the teaching of English, arithmetic, science, and history, the Board gave a detailed account of the teaching of singing. Arthur Somervell (1863–1957), the English composer, was appointed Inspector of Music and anonymously wrote a chapter in the pamphlet under the heading “The Teaching of Singing,” in which folk song was incorporated into the music curriculum.

Somervell suggested two important points for music education. The first was what he called “rhythmic arts” (qtd. in Board of Education 75). It is in the perfect harmony of body and the spirit that music fosters. The

second point was the deep connection between music and morality. This idea was derived from Hugh Haweis's 1871 influential work, *Music and Morals*, in which Haweis argued that "morally healthful" musicians could produce "morally healthful" music, thereby contributing to a more noble society (Haweis 42). Haweis's book gained considerable popularity in the nineteenth century; its twentieth edition was published in 1903. Obviously, Somervell's belief that good music shapes "healthy emotions" (qtd. in Board of Education 75) was strongly supported by Haweis's book and the Victorian moral virtues of the time. According to Somervell, folk songs were the ideal type of music as they "are the expression in the idiom of the people of their joys and sorrows, their unaffected patriotism, their zest for sport and the simple pleasures of a country life" (qtd. in Board of Education 75-56). Thus, Somervell believed that folk songs would help to awake national consciousness in children and prepare them to become upstanding citizens of the nation. His idea was reflected in a list of school songs, compiled by the Board of Education and divided into five categories: English, Scottish, Irish, Welsh, and Carols. However, despite Somervell's insistence on the importance of folk songs, only a few were placed on the list. For example, in the list of English songs, there are only seven folk songs out of fifty songs: "Barbara Allen," "The Oak and Ash," "The Bailiff's Daughter," "The Mermaid," "Under the Greenwood Tree," "The Golden Vanity," and "The Barley Mow" (qtd. in Board of Education 131). The list also includes works by other composers, such as Henry Purcell (1659-95) and Thomas Ford (1580-1648), and patriotic songs, like "The Roast Beef of Old England," without distinguishing folk songs from other musical genres.

In response, Sharp expressed his dissatisfaction with the list in *The Morning Post*. He stated that the Board of Education's attempt to introduce folk songs was "admirable," but its practice was "deplorable" because "there

was scarcely a single genuine peasant-made folk-song, both words and tunes, to be found!" ("English Folk-Songs" 8). Sharp indicated that the Board of Education had decided not to use any of the considerable number of English folk songs gathered by folk song collectors, which, as a result, made the list unsubstantial and lacking in content.

In another newspaper, *The Daily Chronicle*, Sharp also argued that there was no clear distinction between "national song" and "folk-song" in the song list ("Folk-Songs" 6). Sharp shared Somervell's idea that folk songs could contain moralistic and patriotic elements, rather than just artistic and historical ones, but there was a considerable difference in the degree to which each man weighed folk songs. Somervell's approach was based upon *Song Book for Schools* (1884), written by the Irish composer Charles Villiers Stanford (1852–1924), which included folk songs within a framework of national music. Somervell treated both art songs and folk songs as "national songs" (Cox, *Sir Arthur* 25–26). Sharp, however, pointed out the significant difference between folk songs and national songs. Folk song, according to Sharp, was a cultural product that had evolved and been fashioned by the community and shaped as "part of the life-blood of the nation" ("English Folk-Songs" 8). In contrast, national songs were more like art songs, created by individuals and not representing "national consciousness" ("English Folk-Songs" 8). Here, "national consciousness" means a vitality that dwells in oral tradition and communal spirit, both of which are specific to folk songs. Somervell, influenced by Stanford's advocacy of national songs, understood folk songs partly within a framework of literature, though without adequately considering the vigour and variety of the oral tradition from which folk songs grew.

Sharp was the first folk song collector to provide a specific definition of folk songs that differed from those of other music. However, Sharp's position

on folk music led to some bitter criticism. Stanford claimed in *The Daily Chronicle* that Sharp's argument was "reckless" and "unjustifiable," comparing folk song collectors, including Sharp, to "archaeologists" sticking to the past and hoping to glorify their recent discoveries (23). Somervell also participated in the dispute, arguing in *The Morning Post* that the songs he selected for the Board of Education were those he felt represented "every class" and "every period" (7). Therefore, he was critical of Sharp's use of folk song that was limited to the countryside.

These debates gradually began to attract wider interest from the public, who had not previously paid much attention to folk songs. However, the debate quieted when the Folk Song Society's Annual Report of 1906 supported *Suggestions for the Considerations of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools*. Sharp protested to the Committee and demanded an amendment to the paragraph at the general meeting of the Society but was defeated, with only five members voting in favour of the amendment (de Val 99). It was not until 1913 that the Board of Education finally amended the content and made a clear distinction between "traditional songs" and "songs from the great composers" (Karpeles, *Cecil Sharp* 63). However, the folk song controversy, led by Sharp, was not a meaningless event. Rather, it had three significant consequences. First, folk songs were acknowledged, discussed, and analysed for the first time. "Folk-song" was originally related to "Folk-lore," the term introduced in *Athenaeum* by William J. Thoms in 1846 to describe ballads, folktales, legends, and customs scientifically. Previously, there had been no general interpretation of "Folk-song." The folk song controversy provided the public with an opportunity to recognise and appreciate their hitherto ignored cultural heritage. Second, Sharp's enthusiastic commitment to folk music stimulated the formation of the Folk Song Society, which functioned as a

social place for upper middle class enthusiasts. Sharp's arguments in the folk song controversy gave a fresh perspective to the folk song revival movement, namely, that folk songs could be widely disseminated through education. Finally, the folk song controversy drove Sharp into an isolated position, but this led him to pursue a far more unique and dynamic idea: adopting folk song in education.

As a challenge to the Board of Education's decision, Sharp published *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* in 1907. After the folk song controversy, Sharp found it necessary to articulate his ideas on English folk songs. He drew upon the contemporary, influential ideas of evolutionary theory as well as German Romantic Nationalism, as a way to explain the nature and process of folk songs.

In *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions*, Sharp suggested three important definitions—continuity, variation, and selection—that shaped his ideas on folk song. Continuity is a process whereby songs are transmitted orally and as accurately as possible (16–18). A variation occurs when singers alter melodic phrases, either by a lapse of memory or out of personal taste, or possibly because songs have been adapted in different areas of the country to suit specific local needs (28). Selection, Sharp argued, is an act of community; that is, certain songs only survive because of the tastes, views, and experiences of the individual community (28). Folk song is, according to Sharp, not fixed but is flexible and spontaneous. More importantly, folk song is “a communal and racial character, the expression, in musical idiom, of aims and ideas that are primarily national in character” (*English Folk-Song* x). Sharp saw folk songs as racial, cultural products that could connect all the classes, therefore fulfilling the purpose of an education that shapes the central national idea.

Although Sharp repeatedly emphasized an obvious difference between

folk music and what he called “art music,” in other words, classical music, he was also convinced that folk music would contribute to the creation of the art music. Sharp deemed that folk song was the foundation upon which art music is created and reared. He believed that “folk-music is clearly the best and the most natural basis upon which to found a musical education” (*English Folk-Song* 135). Sharp also stated:

If the songs are carefully graded, beginning with traditional nursery rhymes, and advancing by slow degrees to the more difficult folk-songs, no other musical pabulum will be needed until the child has reached the age of ten or eleven years. By that time, folk-music will have served its purpose, and the child will be prepared to make a wider excursion into the realms of art-music. (*English Folk-Song* 135)

He suggested that, by instilling folk songs in children and pushing art music aside at an early stage of their music education, they would later be able to understand highly structured classical music without losing contact with their roots and diminishing their inherent instincts. As Sharp argued, fundamental educational reform was both necessary and urgent:

Our system of education is, at present, too cosmopolitan; it is calculated to produce citizens of the world rather than Englishmen. And it is Englishmen, English citizens, that we want . . . This discovery of the English folk-song, therefore, places in the hands of the patriot, as well as of the educationalist, an instrument of great value. The introduction of folk-songs into our schools will not only affect the musical life of England: it will tend also to arouse that love of country and pride of race, the absence of which we now deplore. (*English Folk-Song* 135-36)

Sharp felt the predominant, cosmopolitan influence of art music threatened

this process, and he feared this would result in ignoring English traditional music and neglecting the development of national music. He believed that English country folk music would provide a look into the pre-industrial world, presenting romanticized imagery of Englishness. His idea, according to Sharp, would prove that England was a land with its own musical traditions that would become an antidote against excessive cosmopolitan education and modernity.

Sharp's social and political vision was partly related to his membership of the Fabian Society, which was established in 1884 by members of the intellectual middle class of that time, including Sydney and Beatrice Webb, Edward Carpenter, and George Bernard Shaw. For the Fabian, as Watson points out, "education was the key to a better society, which meant not the elimination of class division by a social revolution but, by means of a policy of 'permeation,' to achieve a just social order without altering the basic class structure" (31). Sharp joined the Society in 1900 and sympathized with its political and social approach (Porter, James "From Idealism" 121). It can be supposed that Sharp's attempt to promote a united national culture and reconstruct society through education was inspired and then strengthened by the Fabian Society's social and political agenda.

Considering the historical context of British imperialism, the patriotic tone Sharp assumed in *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* seems problematic. Watson argues that Sharp's attempt to propagate a united national culture through education was "openly chauvinist and manipulative" (31). Additionally, Sharp's view of the folk song, as limited to the orally transmitted songs sung in the countryside, was criticized by later scholars who argued that the close relationship between the oral and written cultures, such as broadside ballads, and between the countryside and the city would prove that folk songs were far more dynamic and

encompassing than Sharp had believed (Harker, *Fakesong* 230–21; Lloyd, *Folk Song in England* 30; Shepard, *The Broadside* 77). Although Sharp's idea was dogmatic and partial, it functioned well in the context of music education in the early twentieth century. By connecting folk songs with an idea of "Englishness," he gave folk songs cultural and social value, thereby helping to establish a firm educational faith in improving children's musical tastes and achieving an agenda related to his mission of disseminating folk songs in education.'s fundamental educational principle eventually led to the cultivation of musicians such as Vaughan Williams and Gustav Holst, as well as creating a truly "English school" of music (Roud and Bishop 49). Sharp's activity inspired musicians to represent folk music in art music form and explore new creative possibilities.

Furthermore, Sharp, together with the priest, writer, and folk song collector Baring-Gould, published a textbook, *English Folk-Songs for Schools* (1906). They listed fifty-three songs, categorized as "ballads," "songs," and "infant songs." Fourteen songs came from Baring-Gould's two earlier published collections, *Songs of the West* (1905) and *Garland of Country Song* (1894). Twelve songs came from *Folk Songs from Somerset* (1904), compiled by Sharp and Rev. C. Marson (1859–1914). This textbook, containing enriched folk song materials collected by folk song collectors, was produced as a reaction to the song list suggested by the Board of Education.

Sharp's effort was innovative and practical, providing children with traditional songs to cultivate their musical taste. However, when bringing folk songs into school classrooms, some unavoidable problems arose that distorted his initial educational principles. Sharp and Baring-Gould found it necessary to rewrite some of the lyrics when they were found to be too rude or unsuitable for children. "The Shepherd's Daughter" is a prime

example of this re-editing in the name of sound educational and moral values. The song is about a shepherd's daughter being raped by a knight and begging for mercy from the king. The song had already been included and published in Francis James Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. Baring-Gould obtained the song from a local singer from Devon, James Parsons, who had contributed songs to Baring-Gould's earlier published folk song collection, *Songs of the West*. The following is taken from Baring-Gould's handwritten material, describing the scene in which the king asks the maiden why she has come to his palace. As the lyrics show, it is obvious that she was raped by a knight and lost her virginity:

“What hath he robbed thee of, fair maid,
Of purple or of pall?
Or hath he took the red gold ring
From off thy finger small?”

“He hath not robbed me, gentle sir,
Of purple or of pall,
But he hath ta'en my maidenhead
That grieves me most of all.” (sts.13-14; Baring-Gould, “The Shepherd's Daughter” ; emphasis added)

While this version is almost identical to that of Child's, the sexual reference has been entirely removed in Sharp and Baring-Gould's *English Folk-Songs for Schools*:

“He hath not robb'd me, gentle sir,
Of purple or of pall,
But he hath stol'n my heart away,
Which grieves me most of all.” (st.4; Baring-Gould and Sharp 9; emphasis added)

The song has now been transformed into something pure: a young girl grieving for her lost love, rather than for her lost virginity. In the song, by using her resourcefulness, she eventually secures marriage with a highborn knight as compensation for what she had lost. The original version, however, gives another description of the knight, who regrets his misconduct with the socially inferior woman because of inebriation:

Would I had drunk the water clear,
 When I did drink the wine,
 Rather than any shepherd's maid
 Should be a lady of mine.

Would I had drunk this puddle foul
 When I did drink the ale,
 Rather than any shepherd's maid

Should be telling me this tale. (sts.19-20; Gregory, E. David, *The Late Victorian Folksong Revival* 396)

The verse, which perhaps induces laughter to the audience, was erased when the song was published in *English Folk-Songs for Schools*, thereby losing the core message that drunkenness often leads to failure, which is one of the common themes in traditional folk songs (Gammon, *Desire* 148).

“The Seeds of Love,” collected by Sharp in Hambridge in Somerset in 1903, and described by him as one “known to the peasant folk all over England” (Sharp and Marson 57), was included in *English Folk-Songs for School*. “The Seeds of Love” uses plant metaphors to describe a woman’s seduction and abandonment. Sharp had already included the song in *Folk Songs from Somerset*. The first stanza metaphysically describes the pleasure of love:

I sowed the seeds of love,
 And I sowed them in the spring

I gather them up in the morning so soon,

While the small birds so sweetly sing. (st.1; Sharp and Marson 2)

This suggestive sexual expression becomes more explicit in the last two verses:

The willow tree will twist

And the willow tree will twine

I oftentimes have wished I were in that young man's arms

That often had the heart of mine.

Come, all you false young men,

Do not leave me here to complain

For the grass that has oftentimes been trampled underfoot

Give it time, it will rise up again. (sts.6-7; Sharp and Marson 2)

As shown in the lyrics, "The Seeds of Love" can be seen as a song of an unmarried woman's unhappy love and its rebirth. The song, with its sexual connotations, was frequently sung in rural communities both to distract people from their daily labours and to warn them against immorality. However, Sharp omitted the last two verses when the song was included in *English Folk-Songs for Schools*. Because of this, "The Seeds of Love" turned into a song about flowers with no sexual connotations whatsoever.

When using folk songs in musical education, a significant problem was that the original meanings were lost and people were no longer able to find a connection with the world of the song. As already noted, Sharp as well as Baring-Gould placed more importance on tunes rather than words, justifying his lyrical changes by the cause of cultivating future musicians. However, it cannot be denied that Sharp faced a contradiction between his ideas and his actual realization. In a letter he wrote to Litton, a publisher from Novello, he confessed that he cut out the phrase "snow-white breast" in

the *Cruel Mother* with great reluctance because he thought “the lines very great literature” (Sharp Correspondence). The correspondence here gives an insight into Sharp’s contradictory ideas and practices. Gorton Cox pointed out that there was a gulf between Sharp and his publishers: “What he regarded as the expression of natural feelings, others saw as license and bad taste. Censorship was needed to protect children from unworn sentiments” (*A History* 156). Although Sharp wanted to preserve songs as simple and direct expressions as much as possible, he still faced the necessity to meet the needs of the educational market.

Despite this dilemma, *English Folk-Songs for Schools* went through nineteen editions and was used by schoolchildren until the 1960s. However, it is doubtful that these songs, stripped of their social and historical contexts, could capture children’s imaginations. Reeves points out that “few teachers, even now, would care to teach their children the actual words of these songs as transcribed by Sharp” (*The Idiom* 13). As a reaction to Sharp’s influential ideas and theories about English folk songs, the second folk revival flourished in London during the 1950s and 1960s, led by folk enthusiasts like Ewan MacColl and A. L. Lloyd. In addition to traditional folk songs sung in the countryside, they added repertoires such as industrial folk song and erotic folk song into what we call folk song. Although they were critical of the way folk songs were treated with piano accompaniment by the folk song collectors, they borrowed a lot of song materials from their collection, releasing LP records, such as *The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Erotic Folk Songs* (1966) and *England & Her Traditional Songs: A Selection from the Penguin Book of English Folk Songs* (1959). It is obvious that the post-war folk revival would not have flourished without a vast amount of song collections gathered by folk song collectors.

It is misleading to consider that the post-war folk revival emerged

spontaneously. It cannot be separated from the Victorian cultural and social movements that emerged out of anxiety towards the industrialisation, urbanisation and imperialism. The Victorian socialists' song culture and the folk revival movement that emerged during the same period were different concepts, but they both pursued an alternative world, in which folk songs play a significant role in getting a sense of community and looking for a connection with the past. As Watts and Morrissey point out, Sharp's idea, evident in *English Folk Song: Some Conclusions*, "bears traces of an alternative late Victorian discourse of the period (e.g. in Tennyson, Browning, Rossetti, and in the works of William Morris) (154). The Victorian and Edwardian folk revival had much in common with the Arts and Crafts movement and the labour movement because they both believed that the pre-industrial rural way of life and work, and communities, would help rejuvenate the whole society. The post-war folk revival was built up on such political, cultural and social concepts, but developed in an innovative and radical way in order to disseminate songs to a wide range of people.

Chapter 2

A. L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl: Activities in the 1930s and 1940s

The folk revival movement officially started in the 1950s, but it is important to note that A. L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl's activities can be traced back to the 1930s and 40s, in the fields of art, literature, and as playwrights. Lloyd, who established himself as a professional folklorist and folk singer by the early 1950s, had an adventurous life in his youth. He "was early exposed to folk music, through the singing of his parents, although both were dead by the time he was 15" (Cohen 74). He was sent to Australia as a migrant worker and spent his youth there working at different sheep stations. He went back to London during early 1930. While studying folk songs, folklore, politics and social history at the British Library, he obtained a job as a foreign books manager at Foyles bookshop. Later, he found work on a whaling ship and experienced a seven-month trip to the Antarctic. By the late 1930s, he started to write scripts for BBC, such as "The Voice of the Seamen" (1938). He also worked as a journalist for *Picture Post*, a photojournalistic magazine published from 1938 to 57. Jimmy Miller, later known by his stage name, Ewan MacColl, was born to a working class family in Salford, near Manchester. Through the singing of his parents who were both Scottish, he learnt folk songs and ballads. His parents were both politically active and therefore political discussion was part of family life as well as singing. He left school at the age of fifteen. Owing to the Great Depression, he hopped from one job to another, such as wire factory's labourer, motor mechanic apprentice and street singer. He eventually became an actor and playwright, involving himself in left-wing theatre groups, such as the Workers Theatre Movement.

Lloyd and MacColl did not meet until 1952, when Alan Lomax, the American folk song collector and producer, brought them together. Despite this, they had a common political backbone—the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB). The CPGB was formed in 1920, as part of the labour movement in Great Britain. The CPGB consisted of “minor socialist parties and societies” and the majority of party members were from the British Socialist Party (previously the Social Democratic Federation; SDF and the successor to the Social Democratic Party) (Worley 1). The CPGB had never been in a position of major political power like the French Communist Party and Italian Communist Party (Chun 3), but from 1920 onwards, some intellectuals took roles in governing the CPGB. In 1920, the number of party members was 2,500, increasing drastically to 10,730 in 1926, owing to the General Strike in that year. The large-scale strike was against reducing wages and strict working conditions, with action taken by workers in heavy industries such as the railways, coal-mining and steel. After the failure of the General Strike, the number of members dropped to 1,376 by 1930. The Great Depression, however, had a severe impact on the British economy and society, and with the threat of emerging fascism, the Party membership again increased to 15,570 in 1938 and 55,000 during World War II. The wave of economic depression spread to middle-class intellectuals to become more involved in politics. As Woods has argued, “the spectre of unemployment and economic chaos, and the very destruction of civilization itself, sensitized the intellectuals to communism” (41). More importantly, in the 1930s, the CPGB played a significant role in forming a bridge between culture and politics, attracting writers, musicians and playwrights. The CPGB tried to “intervene in British cultural life—in painting, theatre, music, poetry, fiction, elitism, film, song, and even historical pageants—and of some of the ways in which individual artists tried to play that part in the

life of the Communist Party” (Croft 2). For example, the CPGB provided platforms such as *The Left Review*, a left-wing political journal, the Left Book Club, a publishing group, established by Victor Gollancz (1893-1967), and cultural and political organisations such as the Workers’ Educational Association, the Workers’ Music Association and the Artists’ International Association, thus encouraging working-class people to recognise their culture and trying to give them “educational and recreational opportunities” (Worley 194).

Lloyd and MacColl, both of whom were from working-class backgrounds, were confronted with the Great Depression, the threat of Fascism, and the War. Considering the turbulent times in which they lived, it was natural that they should embrace anger, pursue democratic ideals as construed by the working-classes, and discover hope in Communism. Various publications and organizations, supported by the CPGB, gave them a voice to shape their working-class ideas and experiences.

2-1 A. L. Lloyd’s Short Story “The Red Steer”

A. L. Lloyd’s short story, “The Red Steer” was published in the first edition of the *Left Review* (1934). Alarmed by the rise of Fascism and decay of Capitalism, the *Left Review*, a left-wing political journal that includes essays, poetry literary works, and illustrations, was set up by members of the British Writers’ International, an organ of the CPGB. The purpose of the publication was to encourage the working-class writers to “express in their work, more effectively than in the past, the struggle of their class” (“Writers’ International” 38).

Edgell Rickword (1898-1982), a poet and a founding member of the *Left Review*, stated in an interview that Lloyd attended a meeting for the launch of the *Left Review*:

“Well, the only thing I can remember is meeting in a room over a pub in Fitzrovia. There were about fifteen of us, Hugh MacDiarmid, I think Bert Lloyd, Ralph Fox, Amabel Williams-Ellis, Tom Wintringham, and others. Someone had the idea of founding the Society for the Defence of Culture, as I now think it was rather childishly called. And we had the notion of setting up a group of Revolutionary Writers. Yes, it was as political as that.” (Lucas 4)

As Rickword’s account shows, Lloyd was one of the most important founding members of the *Left Review*, interacting with communist intellectual writers, poets, and artists. After having worked as migrant in Australia, he returned to Britain, where he had a hard time finding a job owing to the Great Depression. Lloyd later recalled, “I passed some time shuttling between the Labour Exchange and the British Museum Reading Room. Nothing like unemployment for educating oneself: I learnt more than folklore then” (Liner Notes to *First Person*). This period of unemployment, however, provided him with extensive knowledge of folklore, history, economics, and politics that would later have direct influence on *The Singing Englishman* (1944) and *Folk Song in England* (1968). Lloyd came to learn “the class struggle, and the mental universe that helped him understand why he and millions of others were unemployed: Marxism” (Gregory, E. David, “A. L. Lloyd” 17). This unstable situation led him to join the CPGB, where he met the Marxist historian who would later become his long-standing friend, A. L. Morton (1903-87). As Morton recalled, “We met around 1932, when he was in his early and I in my late twenties, both hard up and struggling to find a foothold in the difficult London world” (“A. L. Lloyd” 688). Through Morton, who often frequented the pub in Soho, Lloyd deepened his interaction with the poet, Dylan Thomas (1914-53) and leftist

intellectuals such as Jack Lindsay (1900-90), George Rude (1910-93), and Maurice Cornforth (1909-80). It is apparent that their fervent discussions of literature, politics, and art, helped Lloyd to commit himself to writing something in the *Left Review*.

“The Red Steer” was set in Australia, which suggests that Lloyd’s experience of working at sheep stations, was directly reflected in this story. In “The Red Steer,” two protagonists, Joe Kelly and Minka, are Australian ranch workers. They are dismissed from their jobs, because of their age. They leave for the city, but fail to find jobs and wander around the city. Looking for a job, Joe visits his previous boss who does not even remember his face: on the contrary, he orders Joe to get out of his office. The story ends with a scene in which Joe and Minka contrive a plan to start a forest fire designed to burn their boss’s property. The story itself is typical of a certain brand of realism that describes the unemployment problem of the 1930s and the dire conditions of the working-class, resulting from the Great Depression. The reason why “The Red Steer” did not received any recognition was due to its lack of consistent narrative and a detailed description of its characters.

Given the context of the folk revival, what matters here is not so much the content itself as Lloyd’s use of clear-cut words and his creative imagination, expressed in “The Red Steer.” Lloyd made use of songs effectively in order to arouse a rebellions spirit, running through this story. There is a scene in which Joe and Minka watch people pass by. They seem weary of the bustle of the city. Joe, suddenly starts humming a song:

Joe was humming a song:

“We’ll trample dukes and earls, and splendid congregations,
To illuminate the Soviet Star at last upon these shores.”

He broke off suddenly, and was silent. Minka smiled, and said,

“What’s on your mind?”

“He knows it’s coming,” said Joe. (Lloyd, “The Res Steer” 28-29)

Joe’s song serves as a turning point in this novel. The story moves to Joe’s recollection about his heartless boss, eventually leading Joe and Minka to start a forest fire. Literally speaking, Joe’s phrase, “It’s coming” indicates his boss’s approaching misfortune. Another interpretation is that Joe imagines a proletarian society, like the Soviet Union, that can be achieved through a socialist revolution. The song Joe hums is obviously a socialist one. Importantly, the song originally comes from a folk song called “Napoleon’s Farewell to Paris”:

At eve, when Centaur does retire, while the Oceans gilds like fire,
And the universe admires our merchandise and store,
Commanding Flora’s fragrance the fertile fields to decorate,
To illuminate the royal Corsican again on the French shore.

My name’s Napoleon Bonaparte, the conqueror of nations,
I’ve banished German legions, and drove kings from their throne,
I’ve trampled dukes and earls, and splendid congregations,
Though they have now transported me to St. Helena’s shore. (Qtd.
in Gregory, E. David, *The Late Victorian Folksong* II.5-12;
emphasis added)

The italicised parts are almost identical with Joe’s hummed song except one difference: “the royal Corsican” is changed into “the Soviet Star.” In the nineteenth century, “Napoleon’s Farewell to Paris” was circulated widely in the form of broadside ballads in England, Ireland, Scotland and America. Napoleon was regarded as “a potential liberator” rather than “a tyrant” among the common people of Britain (Roud and Bishop 376). Napoleon’s life, full of ups and downs, captured the fancy of ordinary people, especially in

Ireland where people suffered severe oppression by the British forces. The author of the newly arranged song remains unknown, although there is the possibility that Lloyd himself made up the song. Nevertheless, importantly, Lloyd brilliantly expresses the process by which a common song is transformed into a protest song, depending on the singer's situation and the social environment. Joe's hummed song itself is one of daily behaviours. However, humming a song about the revolution and the victory of the proletariat, unconsciously or consciously, takes on a new meaning, infusing Joe with the spirit of protest, and a vision for changing society. Considering the fact that the song originally came from a folk song, Lloyd must have felt the power of folk song in its repetitive and simple tempo, rhythm and vernacular language that emotionally appealed to people.

Joe's song brings about a conscious change in Minka. Minka imagines a scene in which a forest fire engulfs a ranch while his boss is sleeping. Joe's song is deeply impressed on Minka's brain.

Within his head, he could hear the rumour of the advancing fire shuddering along the ground, and suddenly, galloping and galloping over the whole earth, the roaring regiments, with their streaming spears of flame. And above the roaring thunder, he could hear Joe's voice hammering within his head, crying, "All the dead grass will be destroyed and the new grass will grow greener in its place. The grass always comes up greener after a fire," Joe kept saying. "The grass always comes up greenest after a fire!" ("Red Steer" 30)

The last part of the story occupies Minka's imagination of burning the boss's land and building a new place for working class people. It gradually becomes more complicated, making no distinction between reality and imagination. It is not certain if Joe actually sings the song or if it is Minka's

creation. The song derives from what Joe said to his boss: “We’ll back in the summer when the grass is dry, and we’ll make it so you’ve got to let us do it” (29). Joe’s actual experience is woven into the song, which takes on a new meaning and has a power to pass on to Minka. Although the story that focuses on an adversarial relationship between an employer and employees, is too leftist and ideological, the process of transmission in which a song is made, sung, and passed on, is brilliantly expressed in the short passage.

It is clear that Lloyd already had a keen interest in traditional folk songs by the time he wrote up “the Red Steer.” Lloyd recalls that his interest in folk song began when he worked on sheep stations in New South Wales:

I found that station hands and shearers did a lot of singing. A great many of the songs caught my fancy, and I wanted to learn them. They amused me: some of them struck me by their poetry, some struck me by their tune, and I began to write them down. Not at all as a collecting thing—at that time, I’d never heard of the business of folk song collecting. That was a piece of sophisticated information that I only acquired later. So it was entirely to suit myself that I used to write the songs down in the exercise books. (Qtd. in Gregory, Mark, “A. L. Lloyd Folklore”)

Songs Lloyd listened to in Australia included old traditional folk songs, originating in Britain, and bush ballads that depicted the lives of stockmen, shearers, and drovers. As Morton points out, “his Australian experience taught him the most innovative bearers of folk song are likely to be the most active minded, best informed of the community” (“A.L. Lloyd” 689). It must have been a revelation for him to discover that folk song is never a legacy of the past, but enjoyed as living culture among active-minded working-class men. In “The Red Steer,” Lloyd made use of folk idioms and tropes:

“Joe Kelly’s face was screwed up like a paper bag in the sun.” (26)

“The horns of cars and the clatter of tram beat like bugles in the bright face of the morning” (26)

“Minka could feel the hunger turning within his stomach like an animal in its cage” (27).

“his manhood suddenly stretched within him like a tree which devours the earth from beneath its own feet” (27-28).

Lloyd prefers using impressive imagery and dynamic expressions that goes beyond readers’ expectations. Every word is sonorous and rhythmical. His writing style is partly inspired by the Spanish poet Federico Garcia Lorca. Indeed, Lloyd produced the first translation of Lorca into English. Lloyd evaluates Lorca’s poetry as follows:

In folk-material, Lorca found a whole treasury of dramatic themes and trappings. He submerged himself in the world of popular lore, not as a scientist or observer, but as if he were somehow directly implicated.” (Preface xii)

Like Lorca, Lloyd depicted the life of workers working in Australian fields and their folklore as specifically as possible. Folk song was part of their life and spoke for what they saw, felt and experienced. “The Red Steer” describes how songs can go beyond the everyday world and give people a sense of fellowship when they confront social problems such as unemployment.

Nevertheless, Lloyd never wrote a short story again, except the script for a BBC documentary drama, *Shadow of the Swastika* (1940), focusing on the emerging power of Nazism and anti-Semitism. MacColl regretted it, saying that “He could write about songs, about poems, about novels, but he lacked the special talent which is needed to write them. It was in the field of scholarship that he felt most at home” (*Journeyman* 282). Why did Lloyd

give up writing fiction? He must have felt a sense of inferiority in his creative writing skill, in comparison with contemporary writers and poets, such as Ralph Fox (1913-73), Jack Lindsay (1900-90) and Dylan Thomas (1914-53). In fact, “The Red Steer” never received attention from critics. However, Lloyd’s talent was to bloom in the fields of translation, journalism and scholarship of folk song. He strove to enable people to embrace folk song as an important constituent part of British culture.

2-2 A. L. Lloyd’s Early Works on English Folk Song

Lloyd’s work on English folk song from the late 1930s and 1940s is important. Through writing on literature, art and poetry in *The Left Review* and translating the works of Lorca and Kafka, Lloyd came to be known among left intellectuals, which resulted in his obtaining a job as scriptwriter for a BBC radio programme in 1938 and as a writer for the *Picture Post* in 1940.

In 1937, Lloyd contributed his first essay on ballads to the *Daily Worker*, in which he challenged the belief, held by middle-class intellectuals, that “the masses are by nature unable to create artistically” (“People’s Poetry” 7). What he calls “the people’s poetry” possesses an “evocative power” and “subtle humour” in their simple poetic form and language, which cannot be surpassed or imitated by poets. Lloyd’s essay, referring to the ballad collection of Thomas Percy, Francis James Child and Cecil Sharp, provides little that is new from an academic point of view, but his attempt is innovative in conveying the idea that folk poetry and ballads are a valuable part of human culture, especially to working-class people, who comprised a large part of *The Daily Workers’* readership. The headline that says “the past is ours” indicates a political message that connects traditional folk song and people. However, at this point, Lloyd gave a pessimistic

assessment of the fortunes of the British folk ballad, arguing that “capitalism has put an end to folk-art,” although British ballads are still sung in the Appalachian Mountains and Newfoundland (“The People’s Poetry” 7). It is different from his later idea that industrial folk songs sung by city workers, were added into repertoires of folk song. In those days, his view was that the ballad-singing custom came to an end in Britain, unlike that of Australia where he had lived and the Appalachian Mountains in the US.

One year later, in 1938, Lloyd came across a singing performance of English traditional folk songs at a pub called the Eel’s Foot in Eastbridge, Suffolk. His friend, A. L. Morton, moved to his hometown, Eastbridge, after finishing writing *A People’s History of England*. When Lloyd visited him there, Morton took him to a pub where traditional songs could still be heard. Lloyd was so impressed with the lively atmosphere and the songs they sang, which were what “he read at the British Library and the *Folk Song Journal*”(Arthur 104). Lloyd was then working as a scriptwriter at the BBC, so he went back to London reverberating with the genuine traditional singing at the Eel’s Foot Inn. The result was that the first ever English pub-sessions programme, *Saturday Night at the Eel’s Foot*, was broadcast on 29 July 1939. The following is excerpted from an article Lloyd wrote for *Picture Post* in 1940:

Folk song is quant, now. Folk song is arty. But once this was not so. Once, the farm labourers and the weavers, the road-menders and tinsmiths who made up these songs two hundred, three hundred years ago, were the fellows who sang them. And to this day there are still places to be found where the songs and style of the old traditional singers are still kept alive by people themselves. *The Eel’s Foot* is such a place. (“Christmas” 22)

Lloyd believed that folk song still had the power to capture the people. His experience at The Eel's Pub offered him an opportunity to learn more about folk music, which later led to the publication of *The Singing Englishman* (1944). The book was supported by the Workers' Music Association (WMA), set up in 1936 in order to convey music to working-class people. The WMA originally supported classical music with revolutionary essences, brass bands, and orchestral music. From the 1950s onwards, however, with the dawn of the folk revival, they began to show an interest in political songs that included folk songs (Porter, Gerald, "The World" 176).

The Singing Englishman not only records melodies and lyrics, but also analyses the social and historical background of folk song, thereby trying to give an idea of an alternative working-class history. *The Singing Englishman* starts with an excerpt from Bertolt Brecht's poem: "A Worker Reads History" (1935):

Who built Thebes with its seven gates?

In books, you will read the names of a lot of kings.

Was it the kings who hauled the great stones there? (Lloyd, *The Singing Englishman* 3)

Brecht suggests the importance of the idea of history from below. Lloyd applied this idea to the field of music, arguing that music books are full of great names like Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Stravinsky, but there is "a whole nameless mass of people" who make music by themselves (Lloyd, *The Singing Englishman* 3). Lloyd declares in *the Singing Englishman* that folk song embodies "the peak of cultural achievement of the English lower class" (3), thereby discovering a cultural, social, and historical connection with people.

The Singing Englishman traces folk music back to history of Anglo-Saxon minstrels, who were expelled from the French court because of

the Norman Conquest, the medieval witch hunting, the Black Death, the Peasants' Revolt, the Agricultural and Industrial Revolutions, and the Luddite movement, together with folk songs that lend colour to these historical events. Furthermore, Lloyd frequently uses the term "class" in order to describe the nature of folk song that came out of "social upheaval" (*The Singing Englishman* 4). As Lloyd argues, "while that class flourished, the folk song flourished too, through all changing circumstances that the lowborn lived in from the Middle Ages to the Industrial Revolution. When that class declined, the folk song withered away and died" (*The Singing Englishman* 4). Lloyd applies a Marxist lens to this historical narrative. He later explains why:

Marxism and many of the followers were very perceptive analysers of the movement of history and of society within history, and since folk songs are very closely bound up with the history of underdogs, then Marxist applications are particularly valuable in arriving at how and why lower class society has changed in history and why the song style has changed with these social changes. (Qtd. in Arthur, *Bert* 136)

Marxist historiography, which analyses the internal class conflict within history, was the most practical approach to understanding the relationship between folk song and working-class people. According to Gammon, "it was not the classic texts of Marx, Engels, and Lenin that were important to his development, but it was rather the ethos and writings of communist and left-leaning intellectuals coupled with the direct experience of unemployment and the workings of the capitalist system that were crucial" ("A . L. Lloyd" 148). The writings and ideas of the left intellectuals that Lloyd met during the Great Depression had an influence on *The Singing Englishman*. Lloyd particularly acknowledged his debt to A.L. Morton (30),

especially his *A People's History of England*, which was widely read at the time and formed the core historical base of *The Singing Englishman*. Morton entered the CPGB in 1929 and belonged to the Historians' Group of the Party, where he "tried to translate its Marxist discussion into historical research and publications" (Hobsbawm, "The Historian's Group" 26). *A People's History of England* is the first book to trace back the history of the working-classes from the Marxist viewpoint. Throughout this book, Morton describes how working people formed their own history and produced diverse social systems in connection with the economic realities, politics, and prevailing ideology of each period. As Morton remarks, "it is intended for the general reader, rather than specialists" (530), and he endeavoured to explain the facts and intellectual ideas of the past in the simplest way in order to make people aware of the true nature of the world, which, he believed, was not taught properly in schools or universities. *A People's History* was adopted as a national history by the Communist Party and went through eight reprints until 1972.

Lloyd drew deeply from Morton's historical knowledge. Gammon recalls "seeing Lloyd and Morton share a platform at a meeting of the Historians' Group sometime in the early 1960s" and had "a vivid memory of the obvious delight the two men took in each other's company and in sharing and exchanging ideas" ("A. L. Lloyd" 149). Lloyd's idea on folk music is, however, unique and revolutionary. Lloyd points out in the *Singing Englishman* that English folksong came out of "the imagination of the ordinary Englishman" (10). The imagination, Lloyd means here, connotes the voluntary and active action a person takes in order to create and inhabit the world in which they envisage. Lloyd argues that folk song is not merely a beautiful or tragic fantasy, but "a deep longing for a better life" (*The Singing Englishman* 22), which he believes to be a basic concept of human

beings, imbedded in folk song. Folk song, including songs of love, anger, violence, tragedy, the beauty of nature, conveys people's hopes and desires indirectly, through plain turns of speech, symbols and melody. Lloyd's argument is that people have been using their power of imagination to perceive and express the reality in which they live and to envisage a vision for the future.

The Singing Englishman attempts to give a thrilling and ambitious interpretation of songs, challenging Sharp's *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* that takes traditional folk music as the "outcome of purely natural instinct" (1). "Cutty Wren" is one of the songs that Lloyd analysed. It is a bird hunting song in a conversational form, where a wren is killed, taken to town and distributed to the poor.

O, where are you going? said Milder to Malfer,
 O, we may not tell you, said Feste to Fose.
 We'll off to the woods, said Jon the Red Nose.
 What will you do there? said Milder to Fose
 We'll shoot the Cutty Wren, said Jon the Red Nose.

 How will you cut her up? said Miler to Malder,
 With knives and with forks, said John the Red Nose.
 That will not do, said Milder to Malder,
 O what will do then? said Festle to Fose.
 O we may not tell you, said Festle to Fose.
 Big hatches and cleavers, said John the Red Nose

 Who'll get the spare ribs? said Miller to Malder,
 O we may not tell you, said Festle to Fose,
 We'll give it all to the poor, said John the Red Nose. (Lloyd, *The*

Singing Englishman 7-8)

The wren, mentioned in the song, is called “the King, the Little King, and the Kings of the Birds.” (Lloyd, *Singing Englishman* 8). According to James Frazer’s *Golden Bough* (1890), the ancient ritual of killing a wren took place annually in some parts of Britain and France:

The worshipped animal is killed with special solemnity once a year, and before or immediately after death he is promenaded from door to door, that each of his worshipers may receive portions of the virtues that are supposed to emanate from the dead or dying god. (645)

Lloyd drew on Frazer’s theory and regarded the song as “originally a magical song, a totem song, which about this time took a strong revolutionary meaning” (*The Singing Englishman* 8). He speculated that what is sung in “The Cutty Wren”: killing a wren, taking it apart, distributing to the poor, might be a symbol of distributing the medieval landlord’s property to the poor. Furthermore, He hypothesised that the song was sung during the Peasants’ Revolt in 1382. However, this theory was not supported by sufficient historical evidence. Maud Karpeles, a former assistant of Cecil Sharp and then an honorary secretary of the English Folk Dance and Song Society, claimed that Lloyd’s association of “The Cutty Wren” with the Peasants’ Revolt’s 1381 was oversimplified, arguing that “there is a danger of making false deductions in the associations of songs with a particular locality” (Review 207-08). Lloyd later amended the connection of “The Cutty Wren” with the Peasants’ Revolt in *Folk Song in England* (1968), only explaining that, “the winter-hunting song was attached to a pagan midwinter ritual of the kind that Church and authority fulminated vainly against” (96). Nevertheless, Lloyd’s interpretation of “Cutty Wren” gave the song a new meaning that inspired other art forms.

Alan Bush (1900-95), a founder of the Workers' Music Association, produced an opera, *Watt Tyler* (1947-51), set in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. In the opening act, peasants, who plan a revolt, sing "Cutty Wren." Arnold Wesker (1932-2006) also introduced "Cutty Wren" into *Chips with Everything* (1962), as a symbol of class rebellion, saying "I wanted that to come out in the process of the play. At that stage, I wanted it to be a traditional culture which was going to break up" (qtd. in Winker 165). "Cutty Wren" conveys a message of the spirit of fellowship that a new generation of people can sympathise with. The reason why *The Singing Englishman* is cherished as a valuable book is that there are a lot of innovative and thrilling ideas that lead to the folk revival. Through this book, Lloyd expected people to enjoy folk song as *their* culture and to feel familiar with it. Although Lloyd later admitted a lack of historical evidence of *the Singing Englishman*, he was delighted with the fact that people enjoyed the book. As he wrote in his preface to *Folk Song in England*, a more comprehensive scholarly work, "It wasn't a good book, but people were kind to it perhaps because it was the only one of its sort: like the okapi, not much to look at but cherished as unique" (6). Bragg comments that "Lloyd's Marxist analysis of the English folk song was not to everyone's taste, but *The Singing Englishman* marked the point at which the seeds of the second English folk revival were sown" (236). Lloyd's *The Singing Englishman* paved the way for the coming of the post-war folk revival in Britain.

2-3 MacColl's Theatre, Traditional Folk song and Song Writing

As already mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, it was politics and theatre that captured the heart of the young MacColl, who well understood society's inequality and absurdity. As for politics, it was natural for him to talk about politics because his parents were both adherents to

communistic principles. As MacColl recalled, “As early as I can remember, my mother and father were involved in politics. Specifically they were involved in the politics of the Communist Party, and for my father the politics of trade union struggle” (“Theatre” 205). As a result of his upbringing, MacColl joined the Young Communist League at the age of fourteen, where he distributed factory newspapers such as *Salford Dockers* to labourers, working at the docks. Through this activity, MacColl wrote an article, based on their experience and started composing songs with a satirical message.

Theatre, which MacColl passionately committed himself to, is deeply connected to politics. Between 1926 and 1935, the Workers’ Theatre Movement, which was associated with the Communist Party, took a leading role in working-class theatre. With the belief that “All art is propaganda” (Leach 14), they emphasised class struggle as an important theme of their plays and tackled immediate social issues. They created full-length plays, sketches, satires, montages and songs. In 1929, MacColl belonged to Salford Clarion Players, a working-class theatre group, but later set up a theatre group, the Red Megaphones, where he and his troupe members gave street performances at the “backs of lorries . . . or at big political meetings” (MacColl, *Grass* 59). He believed that theatre is the most effective mode of expression for getting political messages across to society. He reflects:

I thought that theatre should become a weapon, it should be something that spoke for all the people like me, the people who’d gone through their childhood with a red haze in front of their eyes: the people who wanted to tear it all down, and make something better. (“Theatre” 226)

MacColl saw the theatre as a way to capture the language and ideas of the working-class in the form of sketches, thereby revealing the internal

conflict between them and the society, giving some solutions to audiences. In 1932, a large-scale strike, led by weavers against the introduction of the eight-loom system, which would result in the cutting back of the work force, took place in Lancashire. The Red Megaphones visited each town of Lancashire where each division of the textile industry was located, giving street performances in order to call for unity among the weavers. As MacColl recalled:

The job was to bring some kind of unity to this tremendously complicated situation, and we felt that one of our functions was to go to a town just before the decision whether or not to strike was being taken by workers, to present the facts as clearly as we could see them, so as to make them feel that they weren't alone, that there were other workers throughout the area who were taking similar decisions. Many of us had relatives and brothers and sisters working in the industry, so it wasn't difficult to become familiar with the problems, and to arrive at a terminology. (MacColl, "Grass" 59)

Often chased by the police due to the agitational nature of their street performances, the Red Megaphones, therefore, was an instant theatre with short sketches and parodies of popular songs (Leach 20-21). In 1934, Ewan MacColl met Joan Littlewood (1914-2002), who had just graduated from RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts), and together with her, formed the Theatre of Action, which was renamed as the Theatre of Union in 1936. Goorney summarised the Theatre Union's manifesto as follows:

- (1) An awareness of the social issues that working people could understand, in that sense, a political theatre.
- (2) A theatrical language that working people could understand, but that was capable of reflecting, when necessary, ideas either

simple or involved, in a poetic form.

(3) An expressive and flexible form of movement, and a high standard of skill and technique in acting.

(4) A high level of technical expertise capable of integrating sound and light into the production. (Qtd. in Goorney 8)

Theatre of Action is a synthesis of drama, music and dance, making use of sound and lighting effectively and dealing with a variety of social issues including the emerging power of Fascism, the Spanish Civil War, and World War II. This led to the establishment of the Theatre Workshop in 1945, based in the Theatre Royal of Stratford in London. MacColl's activity in theatre was not necessarily irrelevant to the folk revival because he envisaged creating a working-class culture in both the fields of theatre and folk music, drawing on their languages, ideas and experiences. A similarity could be found between the working-class theatre companies and Singer's Club, a distinguished folk club set up by MacColl in 1961, in the way that they both present working-class languages and ideas. In addition, MacColl's theatre performances, dealing with contemporary social problems, can be linked with Radio Ballads, and audio documentary programs that connected folk music and contemporary society, produced by Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker between 1958 and 1964. The technique of sound and music that MacColl learnt through theatrical work is greatly reflected in Radio Ballads.

MacColl made extensive use of songs in his plays. In the early stages of his career, he borrowed melodies from "traditional tunes or jazz things or so on" (MacColl, *Grass* 66). *John Bullion* is a drama, co-written by MacColl and Littlewood in 1934. In the drama, in the mood of pacifism, capitalists buy up booming stocks of Vickers, a weapons company, with the aim of earning money out of weapons for the upcoming war. The drama made

effective use of sound, overlapping the sound of secretaries' typing, with the sound of machine guns, and a chorus of capitalists, crying out "Booming!" thus confronting us with the undeniable reality that some privileged people gain benefits from war. All sound stops abruptly and children can be heard singing in play.

All things bright and beautiful,

All creatures great and small,

All things wise and wonderful,

The Lord God made them all—. (Gorney and MacColl 6)

This song is a hymn, created by Cecil Francis Alexander (1818-95) and included in *Hymns for Little Children* (1848). It has several melodies including the one composed by William Henry Monk (1823-89) in 1887 and the English folk tune of "Royal Oak." In the original script of "John Bulletin" there is no mention of which melody MacColl took. However, considering his love for traditional folk songs, it can be at least assumed that he selected the folk tune. This beautiful and peaceful hymn presents the audience with an alternative world, connected by folk culture: peaceful, natural and with a sense of community, which makes a distinctive contrast with the discordance of the capitalist society, and the fear of the war. MacColl believed that even if industrialization and commercialisation proceed, the core of people's way of life remains unchanged, arguing that "Monopoly capitalism had arrived with gigantic enterprises . . . but, if you lived in a city like Manchester, Leeds or Liverpool, the chances were that your milk would be delivered to you by a local farmer or farm-hand riding a horse-drawn float and serving the milk from a churn" ("The Evolution" xi). In *John Bullion*, singing acts as a voluntary and communal activity, contributing to the creation of the alternative world, which MacColl envisaged. The fleeting incursion of hymns into the modernized, secular,

materialistic world, impacts the audience in an emotional way, highlighting the beauty of nature and everyday life.

MacColl's extensive use of traditional songs can be seen in a ballad opera *Johnny Noble* (1945). It is a thwarted love story about a fisherman, Johnny, being separated from his girlfriend, Mary, owing to the Great Depression, the Spanish Civil War and World War II. MacColl adopted traditional songs about separated lovers, such as "The Turtle Dove" and "Black is the Colour of My True Lover's Hair," as well as his own compositions. The story starts in a desolate port town, severely impacted by the Great Depression, where three girls are participating in a singing game:

Three girls (Singing)

Have you seen owt o' [anything of] my bonnie lad,

And are you sure that he's weel [well], O?

He's gone ower [over] land wiv [with] his stick in his hand,

He's gone to moor the kneel, O.

One girl (Singing)

Yes, I've seen your bonny lad,

Upon the sea I spied him,

His grave is green but not wiv [with] grass

And thou'll never lie beside him. (Goorney and MacColl 37)

This folk song, which is called "Mass Bonny Lad," is included in *North Countrie Ballads, Songs and Pipe Tunes* (1922), collected by William Giles Whittaker (1876-1944). This song, sung from the perspective of a woman whose sailor-lover crosses the sea and dies, overlaps with the story of *Johnny Noble*, although Johnny, unlike the sailor in the song, returns home after a long separation. MacColl introduced the singing game into his drama not only because of its aptness, but also because he himself

witnessed such activity in the streets of his birthplace, industrial Salford. In his memoir, there is frequent mention of children's singing games, sung in the streets of Salford (*Journeyman* 40-41), which informs us that traditional folk songs were still part of a living oral custom, not the recorded heritage of the past. Often associated with the rural past, MacColl showed that traditional folk songs actually persist in industrial communities in the form of children's singing games.

MacColl was adept at creating dynamic theatre by connecting his narrative with traditional folk songs. For example, "Black is the Colour" an Appalachian folk song of Scottish origin, is used in *Johnny Noble*, with a small re-arrangement, thereby taking on a new meaning, directly associated with the story:

Winter is past and the leaves are green,
 The time is past that we have seen.
 But still I hope the time will come
 When you and I shall be as one.

My Johnny's gone, I mourn and weep,
 But satisfied I ne'er can sleep.
 I'll write to you in a few short lines,
 I suffer death ten thousand times. (Goorney and MacColl 47-48)

The original lyrics, collected by Sharp in Appalachia in 1916, run as follows:

The winter's passed and the leaves are green
 The time is passed that we have seen.
 But still I hope the time will come
 When you and I shall be as one.

I go to the Clyde for to mourn and weep,

But satisfied I never could sleep.

I'll write to you in a few short lines,

I'll suffer death ten thousand times. (Sharp, "Black" sts. 3-4)

"Black is the Colour" is a song about separated lovers. MacColl added subtle changes to the song, in order to fit in *Johnny Noble*. Firstly, "I go to the Clyde" ("Clyde" which refers to a river in Scotland), is changed to "My Johnny's gone," which allows us to suggest that it is sung from Mary's viewpoint, waiting for her lover Johnny to return. Secondly, this song, included in *Johnny Noble*, speaks for those who lived through the economic depression and the war. In the play, the stanza, starting with "The winter's passed," is sung by a narrator, and then jobless men, wandering around the street, appear on the stage. When the narrator asks, "What are you waiting for?" these men answer the question, saying, "For time to pass" (Goorney and MacColl 47-48). A seasonal transition from cold winter to warm spring where "the leaves are green," functions as a metaphor for those who wish to change an unstable society into a peaceful one where people have hope. The song is again used in the final part of the play. Girls are singing:

Winter is past and the leaves are green,

The worst is past that we have seen;

And now at last the time has come

When these two hearts shall be as one. (Goorney and MacColl 63)

The song is sung in a scene in which Johnny, who fought in the North Sea during World War II, returns home. Compared with the original lyrics, there are tense changes from the future tense ("I hope the time will come") to the present perfect tense ("at last the time has come"), suggesting that peace has come to the world at last. Given that the play was produced in 1945, the year in which World War II ended, it can be assumed that MacColl adapted the song to reflect the joy and hope of the anticipated peace. The

use of traditional songs in the drama not only helps develop the story line but also brings about a sense of unity that a working-class audience can share.

MacColl's profound knowledge of traditional folk songs was inherited from his Scottish parents. MacColl stated in an interview that his source of song writing derived from traditional songs that he listened to as a child:

Both my parents have big repertoires of traditional songs, of Scots songs, of ballads, so that was part of my musical background; but also there were the popular songs that one learnt on the streets as a child, and so that was also part of my background . . . (Moore and Giovanni 17-18)

Traditional songs cannot be separated from MacColl's roots or community to which he belonged. Specifically, for MacColl, traditional songs have a family bond that connect him to his Scottish origins, which merge with the city landscape of Salford where he grew up—factory smoke, canal, and alley. Traditional songs that embody a whole way of life play a significant role in arousing the essence of humanity. Thus, by introducing folk songs into a drama dealing with social and political issues, MacColl carefully created an alternative world in which a sense of rebellious spirit against the authority is expressed.

His understanding of traditional folk songs is already reflected in his early song writing works. For MacColl, making up songs was “as easy an occupation as talking into a microphone” (*Journeyman* 344). He developed such a large song repertoires that he could weave them into his song writing works without difficulty. “That’s the beauty of having repertoires of songs. You can dip into it whenever you’re struck for a tune or in need of a bit inspiration” (*Journeyman* 344). “Manchester Rambler,” a protest song that MacColl wrote for the Mass Trespass, is one of his masterpieces. In the

1930s, walking on the moorlands was a popular leisure activity, enjoyed by the working-class youth. However, most of the land was occupied by gamekeepers or landowners, which meant that hiking on the moorlands was regarded as an illegal intrusion. As David Matless explains, “Political tension arose, though, regarding the freedom to roam over country owned by others” (105). To secure free access to moorlands, Kinder Scout Mass Trespass was formed in 1932, led by Benny Rothman (1911-2002) who was a member of the Young Communist League in Manchester. MacColl, who belonged to the Young Communist League, supported the Mass Trespass and wrote three songs: “Manchester Youth Song,” “Mass Trespass 1932” and “Manchester Rambler,” frequently covered in the folk revival scene:

I’m a Rambler, I’m a Rambler from Manchester way
 I get all me pleasure the hard, moorland way
 I may be a wage slave on Monday
 But I am a free man on Sunday (MacColl, “The Manchester” II.
 9-12)

The singer sings about the pleasure of walking in nature, escaping from an urban life of hard work and gaining freedom, not being bound by class and social status. According to Ben Harker, who gives a detailed analysis of “Manchester Rambler,” the song does not just repeat “political messages” but describes “different settings and scenarios” (“The Manchester” 226). By doing so, “the political resistance is diffused through poetry, parody and subversion” (“The Manchester” 226). The following stanza makes frequent use of folk idioms and expressions:

I once loved a maid, a spot welder by trade
 She was fair as the rowan in bloom
 And the bloom of her eye matched the blue moorland sky
 I wooed her from April to June

On the day that we should have been married
 I went for a ramble instead
 For sooner than part from the mountains
 I think I would rather be dead. (MacColl, "The Manchester"
 II. 29-36)

For example, phrases such as "I once loved a maid" and "She was fair as the rowan in bloom" are similar to stock phrases of typical folk songs and broadside ballads. The description of the woman's shining eyes that compare to "the blue moorland sky" is a colourful, vivid and humorous expression. From the depiction of a woman whose work is "a spot welder," a distinctive contrast between the city and the country can be observed. The description of a man, who roams aimlessly in nature on the day he was supposed to marry, implies that he broke up with his girlfriend or that he wed nature instead. Walking in nature is not only an escape from tough everyday life but also a place where people can be part of nature. The situation in which nature is controlled by a privileged class is not what it should be. Nature should be something all living creatures can enjoy equally. The lyrics "For sooner than part from mountains, I think I would rather be dead" (II. 35-36), show a strong rebellious spirit, as well as a sense of personal nostalgia. MacColl states about his own song-writing: "When we made up our own songs, we tried to make them from the inside, we sung [sang] about 'us' and 'we'" ("Theatre" 240). "Manchester Rambler" is written in the first person "I." Through specific and detailed description of moorlands and hikers, the song gradually takes on a universal political message that we can all share. The campaign of mass trespassing was a temporary social movement, but the song itself was never forgotten as a voice of the working-class.

Signs of the folk revival can be seen in Lloyd and MacColl's activities

of the 1930s and 1940s. The situation in which an interest in working-class culture deepened among left-wing intellectuals, allowed them to discover hope in traditional folk songs, and their potential as a powerful medium against economic depression and social instability. They introduced folk songs in literature, plays and other writings, in order to create an alternative grassroots world and draw a contrast with the society in which they lived.

In relation to communism, Marxist ideology was strongly implanted in their early works, suggesting their left-wing political leanings. However, Lloyd and MacColl were not core figures of the CPGB, so they did not recognise the contradictions of the Soviet Union, as epitomised by Stalin's tyranny.

Nevertheless, for Lloyd and MacColl, both of whom were from working-class origins, the CPGB provided them with a mechanism through which to express in their own language, ideas and experiences that reflected their own society, through various publications, and organizations such as the Workers' Music Association and the Workers' Theatre Movement. Their tackling of class, pacifism, and folk culture during the interwar period, continued into the 1950s folk revival, as a source for inspiration and creativity.

Chapter 3

The Social and Cultural Background of the Post-War Folk Revival in Britain

After World War II, Britain was slow to recover from severe economic conditions. The Labour Party, which won a victory in 1945, enforced nationalisation in transport and heavy industry, as well as an establishment of the National Health Service. Despite these economic attempts, the government forced people to continue rationing throughout the late 1940s. The early 1950s, however, saw a sign of economic recovery, with an achievement of full-time employment and increasing incomes. Young people started to gain purchasing power and enjoy a new form of culture. In this changing society, the post-war folk revival was formed by A. L. Lloyd, Ewan MacColl, John Hasted, and Alan Lomax, as a counterpart of American folk revival. The movement, which arose as a reaction to Americanization of British culture, resonated with a new generation of young people who lived in the affluent society, yet looked for something inspiring and exciting. The effective use of mass media and venues such as folk clubs and festivals, helped create an alternative community where they could share traditional music and identify themselves with their cultural roots. This chapter examines its ideology and philosophy that became a driving force of this cultural movement.

3-1 Americanization

The post-war folk revival cannot be separated from social, economic and political conditions in the 1950s. In Britain during the 1950s, “working class living standards were undeniably improved by full employment and comprehensive welfare provision. But this progress and prosperity may

have worn away the singularity and coherence of working class identity” (Brooke 773). The working class was, according to E. P. Thompson, “present at its own making” (*The Making* 9) during the Industrial Revolution. However, as Selina Todd puts it, “it was in the twentieth century that most Britons came to understand themselves to be working class and to be treated as such by politicians and the press” and “in this century, too—and specifically during and after the Second World War—that the working class became ‘the people’ whose interests were synonymous with those of Britain itself” (1). In this age of social mobility, British teen-agers and young people in their early twenties, “embraced particular styles of fashion and music and developed their own, distinct codes of conduct” (Nathaus 40). The emergence of youth culture, with “an increase in young people’s disposable income and the influence of American popular culture” (Nathaus 42) had a great impact on the whole British society. For example, Teddy Boys fashion, with drape jackets, velvet collars, and ties, was a typical symbol of youth culture that reflected “the particular way of life of rebellious adolescents” (Nathaus 41). In response to the changing British society, “nostalgia became embedded in the conception of being working class” (Brooke 776). One of the aims of the post-war folk revival was to counter what they perceived to be the Americanization of Britain, which was prevalent at that time. Americanization generally “referred to the rise and spread of American-style capitalism and the mass entertainment that often followed in its wake” (Abravanel 4). From the early twentieth century, with the expansion of America’s power all over the world and the popularity of jazz music and Hollywood films, concerns about the Americanization of Britain were made explicit by writers and scholars. For example, George Orwell wrote an essay “Raffles and Miss Blandish” in 1944, comparing the two crime novels: *Raffles*, published at the end of the nineteenth century and *No*

Orchids published in 1939, pointing out that the latter had descriptions of violence and murder, which he suggested represented Americanized morality. “Evidently there are great numbers of English people who are partly Americanized in language and, one ought to add, in moral outlook. For there was no popular protest against *No Orchids*” (Orwell, “Raffles” 241). Orwell felt anxiety towards Americanization, a synonym for standardisation or what F. R. Leavis called “levelling down,” (14) which might threaten Englishness, a cultural identity that determines where you came from or your social circumstances. After World War II, colonies including India and other Asian and African countries gained independence, and the end of the British Empire was apparent to everyone. Britain then began to depend on America economically and politically. Richard Hoggart’s *The Use of Literacy* depicted the change in the life-style of the working-class in the post-war Britain, in which he pointed out that working-class youth consumed American mass culture such as “milk bar,” “juke box,” “sexual novel,” and “Humphrey Bogart” (189). Young people with drape-suits, picture ties, and American slouch, listened to records, which he observes, are “almost American” (189). As he pointed out, “Many of the customers—their clothes, their hair styles, their facial expressions all indicate—are living to a large extent in a myth-world compounded of a few simple elements which they take to be those of American life” (190). Importantly, Hoggart made a clear distinction between America itself and the constructed myth of America—Americanization. As Genevieve Abravanel argues, “Hoggart makes clear that it is not the lived experience of Americans but the mass cultural processes of Americanization that pose the threat” (129). Hoggart’s argument helps to explain the folk revival in Britain. The post-war folk revival in Britain had a complicated relationship with America. While resisting the spread of Americanization throughout

Britain, they had a close relationship with the American folk revival, epitomized by outstanding folk singers, such as Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie and Pete Seeger. While making extensive use of the mass media, the American folk revivalists tried to show the audience the real aspects of America, not its superficial image, associated with capitalism, consumerism, and pop culture. Thus, the post-war folk revival in Britain was a cultural movement, offering an alternative world rooted in folk culture, as an antidote to the phenomenon of Americanization in Britain. Lloyd argued in an interview:

That was the desire not to accept too passively what the entertainment industry provided for you, the popular pap as it were, but to look for, to try to find a popularly accessible form of song, for instance, which was independent of that. (“A. L. Lloyd interviewed”)

Lloyd worried that popular music would degrade listeners, turning them into passive consumers. The problem of the listeners’ attitudes has been often discussed in popular music studies. According to Theodor W. Adorno, people who listen to popular music tend to be easily deceived by “standardization” (21) and are “manipulated not only by its promoters, but as it were, by the inherent nature of the music itself, into a system of response-mechanic wholly antagonistic to the ideal of individuality in a free, liberal society” (22). Lloyd felt a sense of unease in a situation in which American popular music became the mainstream whereas other types of music were marginalised. Lloyd points out that “the American invasion and swamping of our popular music hasn’t been halted; one didn’t expect to halt it; one only expected to provide at best even a whisper of an alternation . . . that whisper of alternative has occurred” (qtd. in Arthur, *Bert* 372). Lloyd hoped that folk songs would imbue people with a new sense of creativity and

spontaneity. The folk clubs, which will be discussed later in this chapter, functioned as a community in which people could sing traditional songs and participate in performances.

3-2 The New Left

As pointed out in Chapter Two, Lloyd and MacColl belonged to the Communist Party of Great Britain in the 1930s and 40s and they expanded their fields of activity to encompass literature, playwriting, and folk song, making use of the cultural organization supported by the CPGB. The post-war folk revival, however, distanced itself from the CPGB's policy, although they were loosely connected with offshoots of the CPGB—the Topic Records and the Workers' Music Association. Owing to the Soviet Union's military interference in the Hungary in 1956, the CPGB suffered severe damage, losing “some one-third of its members, intellectuals, as well as workers, many of whom had been active in and loyal to the party for decades” (Chun 4). In the same year, Britain, along with France and Israel, invaded the Suez Canal in order to reassert the economic control over the area, after the Egyptian President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, declared the nationalisation of the canal. These two historical events, the Hungarian Uprising and the Suez Crisis, disillusioned the member of the CPGB. Although Lloyd did not leave the party, he rarely participated in the Party's meetings after that riot. MacColl had been an earnest devotee of the Communism, but he left the CPGB in the early 1960s with great disappointment, saying that “I left the Communist Party many years ago because I disagreed with the Russians. Not because they weren't communist or socialist enough! I found myself to the left of the Communist Party!” (Moor and Giovanni 43). It can be pointed out that the ideology of the post-war folk revival was more associated with the New Left, the intellectual and political movement with which the

important critics including Raymond Williams (1921-88), E. P. Thompson (1924-93) and Stuart Hall (1932-2014) were involved. It rejected both “Stalinist communist” and “social-democratic” orthodoxies and instead focused upon the spectrum of “culture” and “current social changes” (Lee 17), tackling the counterculture, feminism and pacifist movement. As Julia Mitchell argues, “The folk revival solved many of the issues for Labour, and the New Left” because “the Left’s appropriation of certain nostalgia impulses and the natural conservatism of folk music collection echoes more than a little of this ‘radical nostalgia’” (40). “Radical nostalgia,” as Mitchell uses the term, implies that a past can be utilized as “a means of remaking the past, not as refuge” (40). The New Left’s exploration of culture, as well as of politics, allowed a much more diverse and complicated understanding of film theatre and music. Stuart Hall gave an introduction to the first edition of the *New Left Review* (1960):

The purpose of discussing the cinema or teen-age culture in NLR is not to show that, in some modish way, we are keeping up with the times. These are directly relevant to the imaginative resistances of people who have to live within capitalism—the growing points of social discontent, the projections of deeply-felt needs. Our experience of life is so extraordinary fragmented. The task of socialism is to meet people where they *are*, where they are touched, bitten, moved frustrated, nauseated—to develop discontent, and, at the same time, to give the socialist movement some *direct* sense of the times and ways in which we live. (1)

Hall’s vision stemmed from a desire to capture everyday culture, associated with the new means of mass communication and the modern mass society and to look for a genuine dialogue with people. The post-war folk revival’s role was to give people an actual shared sense of their times, their life

experiences, and their cultural roots through singing various folk songs. Folk songs were not treated as mere products of the past, but as means of creating a community where they might find a connection between the past and the present. The formation of a singing community through mass media and venues such as folk clubs and small-scaled festivals, and workshops, functioned as the alternative socialist approach that the New Left envisaged. In addition to Hall's statement, the first edition of the *New Left Review* included an essay "Song of the People" written by Bill Holdsworth, where folk song was deemed "the bed-rock of a socialist-people's culture" (49). By making reference to William Morris's statement from his lecture, "Art under Plutocracy" (1883) that "the thing which I understand by real art is the expression by man of his pleasure in labour" (48), Holdsworth applies his idea to work songs, as "the firm threads that make up the weave of a people's culture" (48). Therefore, he highly appreciated MacColl's Radio Ballads, a radio documentary that combined work songs with sound effects and recorded songs, which was broadcast between 1958 and 1964. According to Holdsworth, the Radio Ballads, a new form of ballad that were drawn from the direct experiences of the rail workers, fishers, road-workers, and coal-miners, created "a spirit of romance, a feeling of humanity about the many harsh and mechanical forms of our life" (49). The two concepts—"a spirit of romance" and "a feeling of humanity"—are key concepts that had been lost in narrative of Marxism, but they were pursued by the New Left as an alternative socialist vision, stemming from Morris's radical romanticism. Writing and singing ballads that reflect people's lives, work and the struggles of modern civilization, contributed to the development of the working-class culture.

3-3 The Use of Mass Media

The post-war folk revival in Britain made considerable use of mass media such as radio, LP records and folk magazines. This approach was strongly influenced by the American folk revival. In the 1930s, before the boom of the American folk revival, the United States government recognised folk songs as an official national culture, reflecting the ethnic diversity of the country. Under Franklin Roosevelt's presidency, the New Deal projects were announced to overcome the Great Depression. One of the government's strategies was to embark on a cultural project known as "Federal Project Number One." It supported artists, musicians, actors, writers and folklorists, in an attempt to unify America through the promotion of culture. Alan Lomax, a folklorist and a singer, wrote that they

had to get out and report America. America was being photographed, painted, and even muralized. America as a multiple civilization was being recorded, studied, and archived as never before. ("Folk Music" 93)

This programme was an epoch-making attempt to promote the diversity of America as a vital part of national culture. By accepting minorities, blacks, ethnics, Native Americans, and poor whites as bearers of American culture, the government aimed at strengthening national unity against fascism and the economic crisis.

In order to preserve American folk songs, the WPA Federal Writers' Project, the Federal Music Project and the Resettlement Administration provided research funds for the collection of folk songs, then dispatched folk-song collectors and scholars all over America (Cohen 49-56). In 1937, the Library of Congress received funds from the government for the first time and employed folklorists such as Charles Seeger (1886-1979), John Lomax (1867-1948) and his son, Alan Lomax (1915-2002) and Benjamin A.

Botkin (1901-75) to collect American folk songs (Filence 135). Alan and John Lomax travelled the Southern part of America, visiting prisons and collecting folk songs and blues from prisoners, which later led to the publications of *American Ballads and Folksongs* (1934) and *Negro Folk Songs as Sung by Lead Belly* (1936). Lomax, as a radio producer, created radio programmes featuring folk songs that he had collected through the fieldwork, thereby laying the foundation for the burgeoning folk revival of the 1950s and 60s.

Radio was originally a medium to which the president Roosevelt paid great attention. Aiming for the national unity, “Fireside chats” radio talks took place between 1933 and 1944, where the President addressed the nation and made announcements about the financial crisis, the New Deal policies and the progress of World War II. The Library of Congress also made programmes on folk song, making use of their extensive archives. (Szwed 152-53). Lomax’s first radio job was the CBS educational programme, *American School of the Air*, which was on air between 1939 and 1940. In the programme, “British ballads in America, the gold rush, love songs, lumberjacks, railroads, sailors, the American Negro, the blues” were brought into one hundred twenty thousand classrooms all over America (Szwed 153). In the same year, Lomax also produced *Back Where I Came From*, a radio programme from CBS, featuring folk music played by Woody Guthrie, Lead Belly, Josh White, Burl Ives and Pete Seeger. In 1941, with the support of the Library of Congress, John Lomax and Alan Lomax broadcasted *Ballad Hunter*, featuring folk songs recorded by them, together with their stories about singers and field trips. At a session on “Making Folklore Available” in 1953, Lomax discussed the importance of mass media for the development of folklore, explaining that “the ballad has become part of the big entertainment in America” in the last ten years and “a number of

commercial record albums have been published and these have taken the songs to the people who really wanted them, and were active consumers and learners of ballads” (117). Thus, the use of mass media can be understood as means for disseminating folk song to a wider range of people. The use of radio, according to Lomax, is related to “the other side of the folklorist’s job, which is to tell the folk, or to help the folk to tell themselves, things that they need to know and that they can’t find out through ordinary channels of communication” (“Making” 118). This approach, which took folk culture not as “fossils and artifacts” from primitive culture but as “vibrant elements of contemporary societies” (Filence 138), was originally advocated by a folklorist, Benjamin A. Botkin. Mass media, such as radio, served a role, not only in preserving folk song but also in forming a new culture or a network that connects people through folk song.

Compared with the American folk revival, the British folk revival was slower to recognise the importance of the radio in the dissemination of folk song. The folk music radio programme from the BBC, *Country Magazine*, which was on air between 1942 and 1952, introduced traditional folk songs every week, sung by professional singers, with piano accompaniment. These traditional songs were collected by a folklorist, Francis James Montgomery Collinson (1898-1994). *Country Magazine* was replaced by *As I Roved Out* (1953-58). Shirley Collins, who was a listener of these two programmes, recalled:

I listened to the BBC’s Home Service broadcasts of the programmes, *Country Magazine* and *As I Roved Out* on the radio, or wireless as we knew it, and often a folk song would be played, sometimes sung by a trained singer with pianoforte accompaniment, which didn’t sound quite right to me, or an unaccompanied song from a genuine traditional singer, which I

felt happier with. (150)

These two programmes gave her opportunities to access various folk song repertoires and singers. For Shirley Collins, who grew up listening to ballads and folk songs that were passed down from her family at Hastings, folk songs sung by professional singers must have sounded odd. This was, in fact, related to a broadcasting policy at the BBC that drew a line between classical and light, serious and popular music. The BBC producers were, according to Roud, “never fully convinced by the appeal of real folk song” (*Folk Song* 171), so there was a certain hesitation in conveying ordinary people’s voices via radio. Nevertheless, these two programmes were popular and proved that folk song still captures the hearts of people.

Along with the broadcasting of *As I Roved Out*, the BBC set out a project called “the BBC Folk Music, Custom and Dialect Recording Scheme.” Peter Kennedy from the English Folk Dance and Song Society, the Irish piper, Seamus Ennis (1919-2006) and traditional singer from Sussex, Bob Cooper (1915-2004), were employed by the BBC to travel all over Britain and collect songs, tunes, customs and dialects for creating field-recording archives. This attempt was more stimulated by the appearance of Alan Lomax, who settled in London between 1950 and 1958, for the purpose of producing a European series of *A World Library of Folk and Music* for Columbia Records. In fact, he was escaping from America where the Red Purge was carried out under the leadership of senator Joseph McCarthy (1908-57). According to Szwed, along with Pete Seeger and Josh White, Lomax was on the FBI blacklist, reported as “subversives” in the United States (250). When he set his foot in London in 1950, there was no national sound archive of authentic folksong recording in England, Wales, Scotland, or Northern Ireland. His solution was to “stay in Europe in order to make the field-recordings he needed himself” and to “find collaborators in various

countries” (Gregory, E. David, “Lomax” 138). In 1951, Lomax, together with Seamus Ennis, visited Ireland and collected Irish folk songs. In England, he worked with Peter Kennedy for the English volume of the Columbia series. As Kennedy recalled, “People are not aware that I was the main person who persuaded the BBC Record Library to commence the ‘Folk Music, Custom and Dialect Scheme’ in 1952, but in this I was certainly helped by Alan Lomax” (Gregory, E. David, “Roving” 219). Kennedy and Lomax both recognised the importance of field recording and had a common vision for disseminating their folk song collections to a wider range of people through mass media. Kennedy put Lomax in contact with MacColl and Lloyd.

MacColl wrote specifically about his first encounter with Lomax in 1951. To record Scottish ballads that MacColl used to sing as child, Lomax visited a coal-mining town at Durham, where MacColl gave performances for Theatre Workshop. According to MacColl’s memoir:

We are in the midst of the rig when Alan turns up intent on recording more songs from me. It just isn’t possible, there is too much work to be done. So he produces a guitar and starts to sing. For a couple of hours he serenades us with songs recorded in the coal towns of West Virginia and Kentucky, with chants and hollers learned in the prison camps of Texas and Florida, with blues from Mississippi and Tennessee, with lowdown ballads from Louisiana. I had heard snatches of this kind of music on record and, very occasionally, on radio programmes, but this was different. The man singing to these songs had actually heard them sung in coal camps, had actually listened to convicts singing them on prison farms. It was an education and an entertainment which I doubt any of us, rigging the stage that night, will ever forget. (*Journeyman* 262)

MacColl was so impressed with the vitality of these American folk songs that he came to envisage a folk revival in Britain, saying that “In the course of the next year or so I spent more and more time listening to Alan’s enormous collection of tapes, to songs from America, Africa, India, Italy, Spain and Britain, arguing, discussing, learning and trying to acquire Alan’s world-view of this extraordinary corpus of songs and stories” (*Journeyman* 262). Empathising with his worldview of the cultural diversity found in songs in every region, MacColl wrote a letter to Hamish Henderson, a poet and a founder of the School of Scottish Studies. The following is from an excerpt MacColl wrote to Henderson:

Just a brief note—there is a character wandering around this sceptered isle at the moment yclept Alan Lomax. He is Texan and none the worse for that. He is also just about the most important name in American folk song circles. . . . He is not interested in trained singers of refined versions of the folk songs. He wants to record traditional style singers doing ballads, work songs, political satires, etc. It occurred to me that you could help him in two ways.

1. Record some [of] your soldier songs and add any other songs you know. You sang some to me in the little café opposite the Epworth Hall.
2. Introduce him to other Scottish folk singers. You know the kind of thing he wants: bothy songs, street songs, soldier songs, mouth music, the big Gaelic stuff, weavers’ and miners’ songs, etc.

This is important, Hamish. It is vital that Scotland is well represented in this collection. It would be fatal if the ‘folksy’ boys were to cash in. If you can help, write to him—Alan Lomax c/o

BBC, London. He intends coming to Scotland in about a week's time. (Qtd. in Henderson 39-40)

In the summer of 1951, Henderson accompanied Lomax on a folksong collecting tour in Scotland, where they met traditional singers such as Flora MacNeil (1928-2015), Jennie Robertson (1908-75), and Jimmy MacBeath (1894-1975). The collecting tour in Scotland, brought was fruitful, leading to the completion of an LP of *The World Library of Folk and Primitive Music: Scotland* in 1955, and BBC radio productions, such as *I Heard Scotland Sing* (1951-52) and *The Gaelic West* (1952), which “demonstrated to a broader British audience that Gaelic folk songs were alive and well” (Cohen, *Folk Music* 95).

Inspired by Lomax's extensive folksong collection, MacColl's interest shifted from theatre to songs. He began to envisage a folksong revival in Britain and wrote a letter to Lomax at the end of 1951, saying “I think that the time is ripe here in Britain, for organizing something on the line of ‘people's music’” (Letter 2). Lomax, according to MacColl, became “deeply preoccupied with the idea of British folk-song revival” (*Journeyman* 263), and put MacColl in touch with Lloyd who was, at that time, heavily involved himself in compiling and editing for *Come All Ye Bold Miners*. Lloyd had already provided ballads that he sang as a child, such as “The Bramble Brier,” “The Trees They Grow High,” “Polly Vaughan” and “The Cruel Ship's Captain” to Lomax in 1951. As mentioned in Chapter Two, Lloyd, who had published *The Singing Englishman*, had already earned recognition as a folksong scholar. It was natural for Lomax to bring Lloyd and MacColl together because they had a lot in common: working-class, Communist, work background at the BBC and their love for singing ballads. Their collaboration was a vital for the development of a British folk revival. As a result, they produced six series of the BBC radio programme *Ballads and*

Blues. Each week had a different theme: love, war, peace, the sea, the railway, work and the city: “The Singing Sailormen,” “Bad Lad and Hard Cases,” “Song of the Iron Road,” “The Hammer and the Loom,” “Johnny has gone for the Soldier,” and “The Big City.” As the title “the Ballads and Blues” indicates, British folk song and American blues have a lot in common in the way they both represent how they lived, suffered, felt and struggled for a better life. The purpose of the series was to “demonstrate that Britain possessed a body of songs that were just as vigorous, as tough and as down-to-earth as anything that could be found in the United States” (MacColl, *Journeyman* 267). In the programme, British songs were sung by A. L. Lloyd, Isla Cameron, and Ewan MacColl, and American songs were sung by Alan Lomax, Big Bill Broonzy and Jean Ritchie. By showing the similarities and differences of the two types of music: ballads and blues, the programmes expected listeners to discover an alternative people’s music different from commercialized popular music and to expand their worldview through the music they presented. Thus, their radio programmes embraced the difference and variety of folk songs in each country and in each region, yet attempted to find commonality as people’s music. In this regard, the post-war folk revival has a local-global correlation through their careful use of mass media. It developed through various interactions with folk singers, radio producers, music producers and audiences.

3-4 Topic Records

Releasing LPs was one of the most effective ways of distributing folk music to the public. Topic Records is the oldest independent record company, specializing in folk songs, in Britain. It was founded in 1939, as an offshoot of the Worker’s Music Association, an educational organization of the Communist Party. At first, Topic Records released left-wing anthems,

showing little interest in folk songs. However, 1956 was a turning point for Topic in its search for a new direction. According to Michael Brocken, Topic suffered from not being able to receive financial support from Worker's Music Associations. After the Hungarian Uprising, about ten thousand members left the Communist Party. The Worker's Music Association, an offshoot of the Communist Party, was deprived of funds and therefore could not afford to support Topic. It was when Topic paid attention to folk song "in order to survive as a truly independent record label" (Brocken 62), although they continued to struggle financially.

Topic Records undertook technological innovation. According to a press release, dated September 1956:

Topic has now overcome the difficulties which previously limited their editions and promise that the new seven and eight inch 33 1/3 rpm disc will be available to the general public. The series which will sell at approximately 16/-(80 p) a disc, will be prepared under the guidance of experts in the field and will cover international as well as British songs. (Qtd. in *Three Scores & Ten* 10)

The change from single players to long players enabled people to play music for a longer time. Ewan MacColl's LP, *Shuttle and Cage*, released in 1957, made an immediate impact, which "introduced folk music enthusiasts to the wealth of industrial ballads in this country" ("Topic" 25). Lloyd was appointed an artistic director of Topic Records in 1957. Although the position lasted for one year, Lloyd had great authority over Topic Records throughout his life. He produced unique records featuring erotic folk songs and industrial folk songs, such as *The Bird in the Bush* (1966) and *The Iron Muse* (1962). According to Stephen D. Winick, Lloyd "picked a theme, got together several of the revival's most promising singers, and gave each one

a few songs dealing with that theme. He also invited a few of the revival's top accompaniments to ensure lively, listenable arrangements" ("Reissuing" 330). He also wrote a number of liner notes with historical and sociological comments. As Dave Arthur points out, "The prime motivation for the number of records he recorded was probably to provide the folk revival with material and a guiding (controlling?) hand rather than self-aggrandisement" (*Bert* 261). Records became a media into which Lloyd could disseminate his knowledge and ideas on folk songs.

There were other important members who were involved in Topic Records. Gerry Sharp, who took the post of director in 1960, made a great effort to survive the financial difficulties, by promoting traditional music for the emerging revival market. After his sudden death in 1970, Tony Eagle took over the position, focusing more on recording "living traditional music" from all parts of British Isles ("Topic" 25). Topic Records was also a pioneering record company in recording "regional collections of songs" and bringing "the various areas together in a superb ten-LP set 'The Folksongs of Britain' in 1968 and 1969" ("Topic" 25). These materials were "drawn largely from the field recordings of Peter Kennedy, Alan Lomax and Hamish Henderson" ("Topic" 25). Bill Leader was a recording engineer and record producer for Topic records, recording artists such as Bert Jansch, The Waterboys, Nick Jones, Christy Moore, Dick Gaughan, and Peter Bellamy. Producing records helped disseminate folk songs to a wide range of people.

3-5 Skiffle

The word "skiffle" originally derived from rent parties in 1920s Chicago, where the people from the black community struggling to pay rent imposed on their community a small fee for participation in order to "pay the landlord when things were tight" (Bragg 92). A wide variety of music such

as blues and jazz, ragtime and folk music was performed there. According to OED, the skiffle appeared as the title of jazz piece, “Chicago skiffle” in 1926 (“Skiffle, n.1.”). In America, skiffle did not gain huge popularity and the term itself has been forgotten. In 1950s Britain, do it yourself type music with the cheap and home-made instruments gained the heart of the British youth, developing into a social phenomenon. Skiffle in Britain was relevant to the post-war Jazz revival. Ken Colyer (1928-88), the trumpet player, committed himself to Traditional Jazz—or Trad Jazz, the music style based on the original New Orleans Style. After joining the navy, he got an opportunity to visit New Orleans, where he played with jazz musicians and developed his musical skills. He went back to Britain in 1953 and subsequently formed the Ken Colyer’s Jazzman, whose members included Chris Barber, Monty Sunshine, Ron Bowden, Jin Bray and Lonnie Donegan.

Skiffle was played during the interval between jazz performances, which gradually attracted attention. *Jazz Journal* reported:

The skiffle group which takes over during the intervals at the London Jazz Club is obviously going to be the success of the year. It’s getting so that more people flock into the club for the interval than for the rest of the session. The group varies but it’s always based on the guitars, banjos, and vocals of Ken Colyer, Alex Korner and Lonnie Donegan. (Qtd. in Bragg 91)

Songs, played by them, included Trixie Smith’s “Freight Train,” Woody Guthrie’s “New York Town” and American ballad “John Henry.” However, musical friction grew within the band. On the one hand, Colyer wanted to pursue trad-jazz, and a more authentic New Orleans sound. On the other hand, Barber wanted to “broaden the band’s scope, ‘jazz up’ different style of music” (Brocken 71). In 1954 Colyer left the band and they renamed themselves as “the Chris Barber Jazz Band.” Barber’s new band released

New Orleans Joy, featuring Lonnie Donegan's skiffle versions of "Rock Island Line" and "John Henry." His skiffle version gained popularity on the radio, which led him to release a solo album *Rock Island Line* under Lonnie Donegan & His Skiffle Group in 1956. It was a massive hit, paving the way for not only the skiffle booms but also the rock, blues, and folk music revolution of the 1960s.

As Hasted notes, "London skiffle was grounded solidly on two American singers, Woody Guthrie, a white and Huddie Leadbetter, a black" (*Alternative Memories* 132). The skiffle helped young people to recognise their enriched folk song materials. For example, "Rock Island Line" was originally a work song sung by prisoners and recorded by John Lomax in Arkansas in 1934. Leadbetter, a folk singer and prisoner himself, added an arrangement to the song, which became known as a train song.

Alan Lomax recorded American folk songs, which later became significant source material for skiffle. Witnessing the skiffle boom in Britain, Lomax wrote in the *Melody Maker* that he first thought the situation in which British young people sing songs he recorded from prisoners in the South, was "very strange" ("Skiffle" 137). But he came to realise that "these young people *felt* themselves to be in a prison—composed of class-and-caste lines, the shrinking British Empire, the dull job, the lack of money—things like these" ("Skiffle" 137; italics in original). This analysis is consistent with that of Todd, who argues: "For many people, the 1950s was a paradoxical decade. They were better off than their parents had been but they weren't as well off as the advertisements and government rhetoric seemed to suggest—and they weren't sure that the gains they had made were here to stay" (211). Lomax envisaged a future in which skiffle could be a means of self-expression. As he argued:

Then they will produce something a bit more home-grown. To my mind, the skiffers have already Anglicized our American versions of British songs. And I suspect that this process will go on, and that soon more regional British songs will be skiffled. (“Skiffle” 137)

In fact, there were many American folk songs that they sang, whose origin can be traced to British traditional songs. For example, Leadbelly, a hero of young people who played skiffle, sang “The Gallows Pole” in 1930, which originally came from a British ballad, “The Maid from the Gallows” or “The Prickly Bush,” a song about a maiden, pleading for someone to release her from the executioner. Lomax expected young British people not to just imitate American music but also to look for their root in the music they sing, which, he believed, would enrich British music culture. In addition, Caribbean music was brought into post-war Britain, which stimulated the music scene. Although Calypso, one type of music from Trinidad and Tobago, was commercially recorded and performed in Britain in 1930s, the music gained much attention after World War II, with the arrival of mass immigration from Caribbean. This is known as the “Windrush years” named after the first ship to bring immigrants to the United Kingdom. In American folk-song magazine, *Caravan*, John Brunner reports on the impact of the Calypso on the British skiffle scene:

The more versatile and original skiffers, those not content to follow Donegan and who have taken the trouble to learn more than three chords on their guitars, expand their activities into related fields. Calypsos are popular, especially since London has a rapidly growing West Indian population, and the West Indies cricket team is currently touring Britain. (8)

The multi-cultural atmosphere in Britain brought more diversity and vitality into the music-scene. In Soho in 1957, “there’s music on every street corner—skiffle, calypso, Spanish girls dancing to the twang of a guitar” (“Soho” 104). Although there existed racial discrimination against Caribbean immigrants, such as the notorious 1958 Notting Hill Riot that prompted an eruption of violence, a new form of music and its culture, brought by them, captured the heart of people, gradually giving a sense of equality among them.

British folk revivalists agreed with Lomax’s idea that skiffle that features diversity and vitality would be the key to the development of the folk revival. Lloyd commented in an article titled “Folk Song as Urban Music”:

It does seem to be that fact that the young city singer who until recently limited himself to transatlantic songs finds himself turning to home-grown country song, particularly as he discovers that, fitted to a guitar or five-string banjo accompaniment, his own British folk music may have as much impetus, as much “beat” as the American product. (932)

However, the revivalists were not passive, waiting for the young people who participated in skiffle, to turn to British traditional music. They rather exposed themselves to the skiffle boom and brought them traditional song materials. In fact, in London, there must have been “over four hundred Skiffle groups in Greater London alone” (“A Singer’s Notebook” vol. 4, 14). In 1956, one of the leading members of the post-war British folk revival, John Hasted, who worked as a physicist at Birkbeck College, and a founder of the London Youth Choir, opened “the Forty Four” Skiffle & Folksong Club” on Gerald Street in London, where he formed his own skiffle band, “44

Skiffle and Folk Song Group” together with a folk singer from Sussex, Shirley Collins. Hasted later recalled:

All along I had a rather ambivalent attitude to skiffle. What I really dreamt of was a folksong revival, but skiffle craze was the next best thing. I called my group a “Skiffle and Folksong Club,” in the hope that a folksong revival would grow out of skiffle. It did. (*Alternative Memories* 138).

Despite a situation in which “some skiffle groups make a dreadful noise” and “many of the folk songs are badly interpreted” (“A Singer’s Notebook,” vol. 3 81), Hasted’ skiffle band incorporated British traditional folk materials into their repertoires, providing audiences with an opportunity to listen to unfamiliar music. According to Hasted, the skiffle club’s guests were interested in their repertoires. Hasted gave the following advice in *Sing*:

Every week visitors to my skiffle club ask, “Where do you get the songs?” Well, now that’s hard to answer briefly—knocking around is the best reply. To most skifflers, a record is more use than a set of dots. There is an International Catalogue of Recorded Folk Music and at the English Folk Dance and Song Society you can listen to a large collection of British, African and American field recordings. From the American Library, Grosvenor Square, you can borrow Library of Congress recordings and Dobell’s in Charing Cross Road sell Folkways, Columbia and Stinson labels which cover the most authentic material—Good Hunting! (“A Singer’s Notebook,” vol. 3, 81)

Hasted was convinced that the British folk revival would be revived through skiffle. Alan Lomax also formed a skiffle band, “Alan Lomax and the Ramblers,” together with Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger, Shirley Collins,

Sandy Brown, John Cole, Bryan Daley and Jim Bray, releasing an LP album from the Decca, that includes MacColl's composition, "Dirty Old Town" and "O Lula" recorded by Lomax in the South. Lomax stated in a liner note that "Ewan MacColl and I were both raised with folk song like *Gypsy Davy* and *Careless Love*" (Linter Notes to *Alan Lomax and the Ramblers*), emphasising the relationship between British and American traditional music. Another important task for them was to appear on fourteen one-hour music programmes on the Granada TV Network in 1956. As Peggy Seeger recalled, "We were a haphazard assemblage of excellent musicians" (*Memoir* 102). In addition to the regular members, the West Indian guitarist and singer Fitzroy Coleman and Nat Atkinson, the clarinet and sax player Bruce Turner, and the unaccompanied Scottish singer, Isla Cameron, and A. L. Lloyd joined in each episode, where MacColl's own compositions, American folk songs ("John Henry" "Freight Train") and British folk songs ("Nancy Whiskey" "Sweet England") were performed. In the beginning of the programme, Lomax addressed the audience:

Some people call them folksongs, the lads in the London cellar clubs make them into skiffle music—we say, rambling songs because nobody knows just where these songs came from or how they got here. ("The Ramblers" 2)

Interestingly, Lomax invented a new name, "rambling songs" that cover both skiffle music and folk music. "Rambling songs" imply the flexibility and mobility of traditional songs, as well as various life stories and emotions of people. The purpose of the programme was to help young skiffle players to realise the abundant material be found in traditional British folk songs and to broaden their worldview on music. Frankie Armstrong, a folk singer, who learnt British traditional songs through skiffle, explains the impact of the skiffle boom:

. . . skiffle changed my life. I met artists, radicals and serious musicians and learnt to communicate feelings and ideas through song. I found it easy to identify with the creators of the songs we sang. Initially they were the songs of the black and the white peoples of the United States. Later, they were the songs of the peasantry: land workers of the British Isles and Eire. . . . None of us in the Skiffle Group were political in the party sense. In many ways, it was the singing of the songs that opened our small-town eyes to universal issues such as Civil Rights, the appalling conditions in mines and factories, the brutality and dangerous of life at sea over the past centuries and women's outrage and sorrow as their husbands and sons were sent to war. (Armstrong, *As Far As the Eyes Can See* 16)

Armstrong learnt skiffle through American folk songs and then encountered British traditional ballads. Importantly, these songs helped her to gain insight into society in a broad sense and to find a method of expressing what she saw and felt. In relation to the important influence that skiffle played, Nixon argues, "You know how difficult it is to get many to take part in political or trade union work, but it is a fact that large, *very large* numbers get their basic ideas and thoughts aroused by their contact with the skiffle and folk music world" ("Skiffle" 153; italics in original). Fundamental social and political problems that lie behind the songs, can be observed by listening, learning and singing British and American folk songs, sung from a viewpoint of the working-class people or the socially vulnerable people such as black labours or prisoners in the South, although it is questionable to what extent white British young people could be identified with black working class people in the 1950s. In fact, people from African, the Caribbean and Asia faced racial discrimination in housing, employment and

education, which was not illegal until 1965. The complicated relationship between the White and people of colour in the post-war Britain needs further speculation. However, for those who were fascinated by these British and American folk songs, these songs were a revelation, providing them with a deep sense of humanity. They learnt to create contemporary ballads as means of self-expression, making use of folk idioms and ideas. (For example, MacColl and Fred Dallas were songwriters, inheriting the style of ballad making.)

Although the skiffle boom fell out of fashion by the end of 1957, the impact that had on British teenagers cannot be underestimated. There were many young people who were influenced by skiffle, including legendary musicians such as John Lennon, Paul McCartney, Mick Jagger, and Jimmy Page. It is important to note that, skiffle was part of energetic and dynamic music scene in the post-war Britain, alongside with various music such as rock 'n' roll, blues, jazz and calypso. The diverse music scene in the 1950s, is too wide-ranging to cover in this chapter. However, it is obvious that skiffle helped to flourish the British folk scene. As Ross Cole points out, “crowds of young bohemians ‘folkniks’ began flocking to London’s folk clubs (commonly he din pubs) and Soho coffee houses such as Partisans, often because of related involvement in the New Left or the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (355). Davy Graham, Martin Carthy, Bert Jansch and John Renbourn, who later played a key role on the British folk scene, discovered British and American traditional folk songs through skiffle and turned to folk clubs

3-6 Folk Club

The British folk revival cannot be separated from the folk club network. Folk clubs were music gatherings held once a week in the back or upstairs

rooms of a pub. Folk clubs were characterised as follows:

Most clubs met weekly in smoky rooms above pubs, bare rooms with battered stools and beer-stained tables, where the stage was no more than a scrap of old carpet and a sound system was unknown. The organisation was amateur—there was little money around. It was all about enthusiasm. Back then, folk club audiences were young. They didn't expect comfort. They were there to see and listen a booked singer or group do two-hour spots, as well as the club's resident singers or occasional performers who might drop by. Everybody joined in the choruses, humour prevailed and much drink was taken (Bean xi).

Thus, the folk club was a kind of grass-roots community space for musical and cultural activities, which were in contrast to the pop music industry. Peggy Seeger evaluated the folk club as “part of the UK subterranean cultural life” (*Memoir* 195). The physical distance between singers and audiences was smaller. Audiences could sing as floor singers on the stage or join in as a chorus. What connected them was a passion for singing, a sense of the fellowship through the music. In 1964, the folk song magazine, *Sing* reported how the folk clubs were widely accepted among young people:

The folk club scene is bursting at the seams. Last September, there were 45 clubs. Now there are 80 . . . Several towns now boast more than one club. Many clubs are playing to large audiences. Places like the Troubadour, London and the Howff in Dunfermline are packed to capacity every week. And in many other directions—concerts, festivals, schools—the folk scene is expanding. (“New directory” 89)

The folk club stemmed from skiffle clubs. As Georgina Boyes puts it, “much of the organizational format of Skiffle clubs was simply transferred to folk

music without alternation” (232). In the mid-1950s, clubs were opened by some members of the CPGB, such as Good Earth Club, in London, Soho, a precursor of John Hasted’s 44 Club and Topic Club, in Bradford. In the beginning, skiffle was played at those clubs. In 1957, MacColl opened the Ballads and Blues Club, on the first floor of the Victorian style pub, the Princess Louise, on the Highborn Street in London. A. L. Lloyd, Peggy Seeger, Seamus Ennis, the Calypso singer, Fitzroy Coleman were resident singers of the club. As MacColl recalled, “Between us, we could handle a sizeable swatch of songs and ballads from North America, Australia, England, Ireland, Scotland, and the West Indies” (*Journeyman* 277). At that time, the Ballads and Blues club with a variety of repertoires, was the most powerful folk club, giving impact on other folk clubs. According to MacColl, “For many of the clubs in the early days, the largest single source of repertoire was Ballads and Blues, where it was the practice to distribute duplicated song-sheets to the audience at the beginning of each session. The speed with which songs sung at the Princess Louise winged their way over the country was truly amazing” (*Journeyman* 278). Pat Mackenzie, who had worked as a teenager office worker, recalled the impact that the Ballad and Blues Club had made, saying that “It was just a revelation . . . I’d never heard anything like it . . . Ewan at the time was singing a lot of industrial songs from *Shuttle and Cage* . . . To me, it was like English blues, songs about working people, their lives and work and love . . . it was mind boggling” (qtd. in Harker, *Class* 128). Thus, the Ballads and Blues Club, functioned as a place with little distance between audience and performers, where young people could connect with enriched folk songs and various singing styles. The Ballads and Blues Club started off as a loose and unrestricted atmosphere. However, around 1958, they started to impose rules on the club, and became known as a policy club since the American

folk singer, Peggy Seeger, burst out laughing when she heard young British lads sing Lead Belly and Guthrie songs with a strong cockney accent. As this episode shows, it is apparent that when performers sing songs that they cannot understand in idioms, nuances and languages, they take the risk of not being able to interpret the songs in a correct way. In order to solve the problem, MacColl decided to have a policy:

The folk club should be a place where our native music should have pride of place and where the folk music of other nations would be treated with dignity and respect. So the resident singers of Ballads and Blues decided on a policy: that from now on residents, guest singers and those who sang from the floor should limit themselves to songs which were in a language the singer spoke or understood. We became what began to be known as a policy club. (*Journeyman* 279: italics in original)

Lloyd understood MacColl's view, stating as follows:

Well, particularly Ewan and I felt that it was rather a shame that this *simple exotic American* [Ed. After reading a proof of the interview, Bert amended this to "*foreign grown material*" was hogging the scene] and that it would be nice if we could introduce onto the musical scene more and more traditional stuff from our own islands. (Taylor, Barry: italics in original)

Lloyd and MacColl hoped that people would embrace the British traditional songs as their cultural identity. Nevertheless, this policy brought furious debate. When the policy was released, as far as MacColl remembered, the number of people who visited the club decreased from 130 to 15 (qtd. in Moore and Vacca 127). However, other clubs followed MacColl's policy gradually, changing from the skiffle style that "anything goes" to the critical music space where singers were able to interpret traditional songs,

taking its meanings, idioms, languages and historical backgrounds into account. The Ballads and Blues club was re-named as the Singers' Club in 1961. It cannot be denied that MacColl forcefully imposed his views and style on performers. In 1964, MacColl formed the Critics Group together with Peggy Seeger. Frankie Armstrong, who participated in the Critics Group, was well aware of MacColl's dogmatic personality, while having been impressed with his amazing knowledge of politics, philosophy, anthropology, theatre, and traditional songs. "Ewan already had a reputation for arrogance among people who disagreed with his ideas or simply found it hard to relate to him in person" (Armstrong, *As Far As the Eyes Can See* 34). Eric Winter wrote that "The arrogance that lies behind this has isolated MacColl from the main-stream of the clubs' life—especially in London" ("Unaccompanied Singers" 34) Around 1964, MacColl and Lloyd began to drift apart. Lloyd, who showed a more generous understanding of the performers' free and imaginative interpretations, must have drawn a line from MacColl who educated them thoroughly about how to sing. It must be noted, however, that MacColl did not take a control of every club in Britain, although his club policy was so influential. The Howff, a folk club, located in Scotland, Dunfermline, had a policy of being "simple—anything goes" (Watt 90), where border ballads, bothy ballads, Scots ballads, Burns songs, Geordie material, country songs, blues, spirituals, Edwardian music-halls and Harry Lauder songs were sung. Peggy Seeger argued that "The policy was meant for our club, not for other clubs" ("Ewan MacColl"), implying that MacColl's club required each singer to become a representative of their culture. As David Atkinson points out, bringing authentic British traditional songs into the club scene "no doubt mirrored a real perception of regional identity, of 'Englishness' and conversely of 'Scottishness,' and so on, in the minds of many singers of folk songs" (*The*

English Traditional Ballad 249). Martin Carthy, who hardly went to MacColl's club, "was suddenly presented with this notion that if someone could stand up and sing English folk songs in his folk club, there must be English songs to find" (qtd. in Sweers 218). This attempt partly paved the way for the formation of Electronic Folk Rock with an emphasis on distinctive identities of Englishness, Irishness, or Scottishness.

It is not well known that, in the end of 1962, Bob Dylan arrived in London and stayed there for three weeks, working on the BBC film, *Madhouse on Castle Street* directed by Philip Saville, where he played the role of a young rebellions guitar player. Dylan, who had already performed in coffee houses in New York City, released his first album, *Bob Dylan* in March 1962, which was not commercially successful. Therefore, he was "almost unknown at that time" (Bean 81). Seizing this opportunity, he visited several folk clubs, one of which was the Singers' Club, organised by MacColl and Peggy Seeger and held at the Pindar of Wakefield at King's Cross district of London. As Dave Arthur notes, "Dylan sang two songs that evening. One was the grim 'Ballad of Hollis Brown'—a gothic tale of poverty, despair and murder and suicide, with its musical roots in the Appalachian murder ballad 'Pretty Polly.' The second song, to date, remains a mystery" (*Bert* 332). Regrettably, Dylan's singing was not well received by Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger. As Peggy Seeger later recalled, "Ewan and I were rather stand-offish at that time and perhaps we were not welcoming enough" (qtd. in Jones, Tudor 15). The Singers' Club policy, which forced singers to sing traditional folk songs in a strict and rigid manner, did not fit well with Dylan's unique and modern singing style. However, according to Tudor Jones, Dylan "met with a more favourable response, particularly from the popular English folk singers Martin Carthy, a highly influential figure on the English folk-music scene during the early 1960s, and Bob

Davenport” (15). Carthy, who had seen a picture of Dylan on the front cover of *Sing Out!*, was impressed with his singing, later saying that “he was electrifying. He was brilliant” (qtd. in Bean 84). Carthy taught Dylan the melodies of the traditional English folk songs “Scarborough Fair” and “Lady Franklin’s Lament,” which he later reworked as “Girl From the North Country” and “Bob Dylan’s Dream” (Jones 16; Arthur, *Bert* 332). Both songs appeared on his second album, *The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan*, released in 1963. As can be seen from Dylan’s “A-Hard Rain’s A-Gonna Fall,” a reworking of the traditional English and Scottish border ballad, “Lord Randall,” he had already been deeply inspired by traditional ballads. However, it is obvious that Dylan, familiar as he was to the London folk club scene, absorbed these traditional folk songs sung there and enhanced his creativity.

Finally, analysis of the audiences who visited folk clubs provides an interesting insight into the folk revival in Britain. Niall Mackinnon conducted a survey of those who visited folk clubs from Edinburgh to Southampton, between 1986 and 87. Of those involved in the folk scene, 25 percent were from those aged 30-34, and 29 percent from those aged 30-34, suggesting that they were in their teens or early twenties in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the period in which the folk scene was booming. Most of them were “non-manual” workers with academic qualifications and belonged to the middle class. Taking the upward social mobility into account over the twenty years, it is apparent that the folk revival was supported by the middle class in the long run. The folk revival was originally led by the working-class intellectual men with leftish ideas such as Lloyd and MacColl, yet it developed gradually into a youth sub culture, accepting a wider social demographic including lower-middle class and middle class. As Andrew Rouse put it:

The men and women who were the backbone of the new folk music revival were not separate form, but an integral part of that period, and for the most part they were young men and women. Politics, whether in England or in the Eastern “bloc”, was basically “left” . . . it must be noted that there was a very definite enthusiasm in the Anglo-Saxon countries for a humanitarian, proto-communist society that would banish social inequalities.

(170)

The folk revival envisaged a democratic and pacific worldview where people could connect with traditional folk songs at an emotional level, regardless of the social class difference and social status, which captured the hearts of young people looking for new possibilities, something as opposed to the establishment and authoritarianism. As Lloyd stated, “Generally speaking, I suppose what they’re listening for in a folk club is something they can relate to their life more directly, logically, than the thing they hear at a pop music concert.” (Gregory, Mark, “A. L. Lloyd Interviewed”). Fairies, ghosts, agricultural labourers, sailors, soldiers, and coal miners—those sung in traditional songs, were materially separated from young people living in the city. What connected them was enriched vitality that traditional folk songs owe. For further ongoing discussion, this thesis now explores how songs included in the folk revival—such as ballads, industrial folk songs, erotic folk songs—were given new interpretations and different meanings that coincided with the times.

3-7 Festivals

Festivals made a great contribution to the development of the British folk scene. Mitchell points out that “Folk festivals became one of the most memorable features of the post-war folk revival; the imagery of the mass

gathering has since become one of the most dominant features” (39). According to Brocken, the festival “has matured into possibly the best medium for presenting the eclectic and idiosyncratic in folk music, whilst at the same time drawing attention to the folk scene as an important feeder network” (125). British folk festivals borrowed ideas from the Newport Folk Festival in America. The Cambridge Folk Festival started in 1965, where not only British folk singers but also American folk singers participated in the festival. The British folk rock band, Pentangle, joined in the Cambridge Folk Festival, held in 1968. The festivals functioned as a bridge between folk and rock.

The other well-known festival was the Keele Festival, organised by the English Folk Dance and Song Society and held at the campus of the University of Keele in 1965. This festival was held for two days, drawing more than 500 folk music enthusiasts, where the performances, given by revival singers as well as traditional singers, A. L. Lloyd’s lecture on ballads, the music making workshop, the instrumental performances, and informal singing took place. The purpose of the Keele Festival was to provide “common ground for the folk scene to meet, for the experts to be available . . . for the theorists to expound . . . for the singers of all sorts to sing and for everyone to present to get an opportunity of meeting and hearing a handsome selection of our true traditional performers” (Winter, “Keele 1965” 1-2). This suggests that the EFDSS believed that, in the heyday of the folk boom, the interaction between traditional singers and revival singers would contribute to a development of the folk revival in Britain. Thus, the Keele Festival was supported a sense of communal spirit, shared by those who were passionate about the promotion of folk song as common culture, and as something that people could enjoy and find meaning in.

The cultural project, Centre 42, led by the playwright Arnold Wesker (1932-2016), is worth mentioning in the festival history of the post-war folk revival in Britain. Centre 42, although not as large-scale as the Cambridge Folk Festival and the Keele Festival, offered a folk song event. Centre 42 was formed out of the Trade Union Congress's decision that "recognises the importance of the arts in the life of the community especially now when many unions are securing a shorter working week and greater leisure for their members" (Trade Union Congress 435). Wesker must have felt a necessity of bringing art, rooted in a community, to the people who were not interested in culture despite their shorter working hours and expanding leisure time. Inspired by William Morris's brand of socialism, Wesker argued that "Art must not ever have to pay for itself, it must just happen; it is an experience not a commodity" ("The Secret Reins" 48). Thus, it was worth pursuing a place where people might enjoy art as part of everyday life. Wesker turned his eyes to local places, far from London, where traveling festivals were held in Wellingborough, Leicester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Bristol and Hayes, offering dramas, poetry, jazz and folk song singing. Lloyd and MacColl were in charge of the music directors of the folk song department. Wesker highly valued folk song as authentic working-class culture. For example, as already mentioned in Chapter Two, "Cutty Wren" the old folk song, was introduced into his play, *Chips with Everything*, creating a communal world, different from the commercialised entertainment. Wesker explained the reason why Centre 42 adopted folk song-related events, saying that "since many of the songs in this field deal with miners, engine drivers, labourers, and the armed forces, it was natural to seek ways of bringing these songs to our public" (qtd. in Long 196). Wesker shared the idea of creating an alternative culture where people could connect with each other through folk song—a different form of

musical culture from the dominant musical culture in which people passively listen to popular music and there is a distance between artist and audience. The EFDSS expected Centre 42's attempt, promoting the event in the *English Dance & Song*:

There are signs, however that the English attitude to culture may be changing; and this Autumn Centre 42 are doing all they can to bust up the traditional idea of culture as something which is either a status symbol to show that you are educated or a hair shirt which will get you into heaven. With the help of local trades councils and anybody else who will co-operate (including local branches of our own Society) they are putting on six festivals. Each festival will last a week and will include a concert of folk music to begin with, and folk singing in pubs and elsewhere throughout the week. . . . If Centre 42 can convince the public the culture (including folk song) is not a cold bath after all our Society may find itself with a lot of extra work to do. ("Stinkyng Ydols?" 71-72)

During the six festivals, A. L. Lloyd, Ewan MacColl, Peggy Seeger, Bob Davenport, Ray Fishier, Enoch Kent, Alf Edward, Lou Killen, Collin Ross from Northumberland, Belle and Alex Stewart from Scotland, Francis McPeake from Northern Ireland, joined in the folk concerts, held at folk clubs, pubs and halls every Friday night. Through Centre 42, Anne Briggs, one of the most well-known English folk singers, was "discovered" when auditioned by Bruce Dunnet at the Nottingham Centre 42 Festival (Arthur, *Bert* 287). Anne Briggs later recalls that "Centre 42 exposed me to singers I hadn't heard before, either because they hadn't recorded, or because I didn't have access to their material" (Gallacher). Centre 42 brought folk singers from different regions together, creating a community in which they could

share their singing repertoires and singing styles. Centre 42 festivals also stimulated the local folk club scene. Gef Lucena, a founder of an independent record company, Saydisc records in Bristol, recalls as follows:

When Centre 42 came to Bristol in '62, that was a major stimulus for the folk clubs. We'd started off singing not long before and we suddenly found ourselves singing in local pubs with Cyril Tawny and Matt McGinn and the McPeakes. They had a concert at the Colston Hall which I think was sponsored by CND. It was a terrible winter, I remember helping to get around to the Centre 42 things. (Bean 130)

Compared to drama and jazz, folk singing events had received little attention, as has been reported in newspapers such as *The Stage*, and *Birmingham post*. However, Centre 42 brought folk singers together, creating a community where they could exchange songs and knowledge, contributing to the development of the post-war folk revival in Britain.

In the 1950s and 1960s, folk songs became a “key medium through which young people, mostly identifying on the Left, experienced and interpreted the world around them” (Mitchell 1). The media, including radio companies and TV programmes and organisations such as record companies, festivals and folk clubs, had a strong influence on the creative enrichment of folk songs. Folk songs are, according to Karl Dallas, “indeed communication, not so much from one man to another as from one generation to another, part of the great corpus of stored knowledge and custom that tell man what it means to be human in the alienated world of the factory and machine” (Dallas 125). Folk songs provided an alternative community, which gave hope to those who felt insecure about the changing world.

The post-war folk revival in Britain also had a complicated

relationship with America. The movement itself occurred as a reaction to Americanization of post-war Britain and the mass media, but maintained a mutual, even reciprocal, relationship with the American folk revival. In addition, the multi-cultural aspect of post-war Britain also stimulated the folk music scene. Influenced by American folk songs and other ethnic music, the British folk revival developed its own distinctive way of approaching traditional songs.



Fig.5 Bob Dylan at the Singer's Club, December,1962, Lloyd sits behind Dylan.
(Arthur, *Bert*)



Fig.6 A photo of Ewan MacColl singing at Ballads & Blues Club 1957.(MacColl, *Journeyman*)

Chapter 4

A. L. Lloyd's Adaptation of Ballads: "Reynardine" and "Jack Orion"

4-1 What is "Revival"/ "Traditional" Singer?

Ballads, "anonymous, narrative poems, nearly always written down in short stanzas of two or four lines" (Hodgart 10) and folk songs, sound strange and alien to those who are accustomed to listening to pop songs and classic music. These British old ballads and folk songs are usually "unaccompanied without harmony or counterpoint" (Hodgart 49). In the folk scene, however, ballads and folk songs are rather performed with instrumental accompaniment such as the acoustic guitar, fiddle, pipe and concertina.

A. L. Lloyd sang a lot of traditional folk songs throughout his career as a folk singer. In order to understand his adaptation of ballads, we must keep in mind the complex relationship between traditional and revival singers. In a magazine entitled *Marxism Today*, A. L. Lloyd, who was a member of the Communist Party of Britain (CPB), wrote an essay entitled "The Folk-Song Revival," which discussed how the folk-song revival had begun to affect working class culture in towns and cities. Lloyd gave a clear explanation of the two kinds of music. According to him, the term "traditional" refers to a "performance by people living within the folk tradition, whose musical horizon is to a great extent bounded by the conventions of home-made, orally diffused, mainly anonymous song" (170). On the other hand, the "revival" refers to a performance by those "of normal modern urbanised-industrial culture, whose artistic interests extend to folk-music, either in its "authentic" traditional shape or in more-or-less adapted and modernised forms" (170). The distinction that Lloyd suggests is

helpful when we consider how each group treated ballads and folk songs differently. While traditional singers preserved the conventional mode of performance accepted by their community, revival singers could be easily influenced by various performative styles and different types of music.

The traditional singer was a bearer of old songs, passed down from generation to generation and his or her role was an essential part of the closed-village community. Singing was more closely connected with their everyday village life, compared with the revival singers. Flora Thompson (1876-1947) gives a vivid description of villagers enjoying themselves singing in her semi-autobiographical novel, *Lark Rise to Candleford* (1945):

There was a good deal of outdoor singing in those days. Workmen sang at their jobs; men with horses and carts sang on the road; the baker, the miller's man, and the fish-hawker sang as they went from door to door, even the doctor and parson on their rounds hummed a tune between their teeth. (62)

This shows that singing songs was an indispensable daily activity for labourers living in the countryside, not only as an aid to labour but also as their main pleasure.

Bob Copper, a well-known traditional singer of unaccompanied English folk songs, recalled the older generation, saying that these songs “were the one and only source of cultural nourishment. In their songs, they found their music, their poetry, their drama and their humour and singing them was their main escape from the heavy yoke of repetitious, mind-dulling toil” (184). Naturally, it is rather dangerous to depend only upon the romanticised single account to support the assumption that songs directly reflected their whole life-story and worldview. A song has different mentalities and roles, depending on each singer who sings the song. Porter James used the term, “epistemics” to refer “not just to the function that the

singer perceives a specific song to have in the context of the performance but also, just as crucially, to the complex of meanings the singer brings to the song in the context of 'undifferentiated daily life' ("Ballad" 120-21; in original). Singers, in a singing community, recognised specific meanings of the songs that grew out of their shared cultural contexts and worldviews. Importantly, traditional singers, growing up with ballads and folk songs, were able to enter into the story and relate it to their own world.

The attitude was different from "revival" singers, who were exposed to different types of musical influence, including jazz, skiffle, pop and rock music. For "revival" singers, old ballads and songs were felt to be "strange and exotic" (Sweers 215). That strangeness appealed to them as a new method of expression and style.

The relationship between the audience and the singer was also a dividing line between traditional and revival singers. Ballads and folk songs contain a series of symbolic and functional meanings and forms, which convey cultural knowledge and belief systems. Within the context of singing performance, the singer shared songs with an audience who knew their motifs, meanings and forms well. As James Reeves points out, "there existed a *lingua franca* which must have been accepted and understood between singer and audience" (*The Everlasting* 21). For example, the colour green was believed to signify bad luck. When people encountered a character dressed up in green, they assumed that the person would soon die, or in the case of a woman, soon fall pregnant (Toelken, "Language" 130). According to the ballad "Tam Lin," the heroine Janet is wearing a green kirtle and goes to a wood, which suggests that she will be deprived of her chastity and become pregnant. Barre Toelken described the audience as a "pro-active ballad audience" which means that "any traditional singers actively seek[s] out meaning . . . Traditional listeners do more than just

hear a ballad: they ‘glean’ it” (qtd. in McKean, *The Flowering Thorn* 6). Thus, not only the singers, but also the audience actively contributed to song texts, as a means of identifying their shared world and experience.

However, the revival singer was challenged by a sense of distance between song texts and the audience; more specifically, they were required to add their skills, creativity and ideas into these songs so as to draw attention from the audience, making the songs more familiar ones.

In keeping with this point of view, Frankie Armstrong, one of the best female revival singers, wrote a short essay entitled “On Singing Child Ballads.” As she recalls, when she heard the vernacular songs, she felt that “there is something there which resonates within the depth of me” (“On Singing” 251). This shows that ballads inspired her with a sense of deep sympathy and inspiration, no matter how these songs were distant from her contemporary world. She further comments that “we no longer live in a context in which ballads are commonly sung, and so I model myself on the singers who do paint the story with bolder colours” (“On Singing” 254). Her role was to embody what she felt through singing these songs. She did not merely reproduce the materials in “authentic” forms but turned them into living performances. She explained as follows:

To find a way of using the voice and its myriad possibilities to touch myself and the listener without overdramatising or losing the subtleties is a considerable challenge. Each word, each line, each verse holds a range of possible alternatives from which to choose. Where to pitch the song, which timbre to use, how much to ornament, what kind of ornaments to use, what tempo is appropriate are some of the decisions to be made. I don’t believe that traditional singers are either mindless or artless, but I doubt they need to agonise to the degree that I do over each song I learn.

("On Singing" 254-55)

While certain formats, words and stories of ballads and folk songs belong to the past, they still have the potential to inspire the imagination and the creativity of each singer.

Of course, as Armstrong points out, traditional singers did not necessarily receive the text without considering aesthetic details. Jeanie Robertson (1908-75), Scottish traditional folk singer and traveller, "would make small modifications to the text and air of a song until it seemed right to her in balance and tone" (Porter and Gower xxxii). However, compared with the revival singers, they could relate themselves to these songs, directly and promptly, within a limited but deeply connected community. Trial and error was part of the revival singers' process for understanding the meaning of ballads and folk songs. They built up their version of a song, drawing from existing materials that folk-song collectors had already collected, such as the transcribed materials, the song-recordings, or the broadsides ballads.

David Atkinson points out that the English revival singers' choice of songs "seemed to have been determined largely by ideology on the one hand and aesthetics on the other hand because unlike its Scottish counterparts, the post-war revival in England was not initially founded upon wide and close connection with traditional singers and their cosmology" ("Expropriating" 32). Atkinson's argument explains what characterized the English revival singers. Owing to their unavoidable distance from the worldview of traditional singers, revival singers had no choice but to interpret the ballad from their own perspectives and sensibility. Atkinson's idea is a convincing and powerful one, when interpreting A. L. Lloyd's folk songs and ballads. "Ideology" and "aesthetics" formed the core of his re-working of folk songs and ballads. Ideology is a set of political ideas that

gives songs a new social and cultural context. The aesthetic sense has the potential to develop the quality of songs in an innovative and creative way. With these two elements, old folk songs are brought to life again.

Lloyd, who was a scholar as well as a singer, faced difficulty in exploring authenticity. Leslie describes him as “a romantic at odds with a scholar” (“A. L. Lloyd” 132). There must be conflicting elements between the scholar and the performer in the way traditional folk songs were treated. In scholarly work, folk songs were collected, categorised, and analysed in order to examine authentic folk songs. In performance, folk songs are sung in order to entertain themselves and audiences.

In the context of folklore studies, it was believed that authenticity “resides in the anonymity of entire social groups or the ‘folk’” (Watts and Morrissey 164). However, the concept of authenticity itself is nowadays considered to be ambiguous in the field of folklore studies. As Richard J. Watts and Franz Andres Morrissey argue, “it is the ‘seeking out’ that is significant rather than the subjective authenticity itself” (164). As Regina Bendix points out, “what is authenticity?” is a wrong question but “who needs authenticity and why?” and “how has authenticity been used?” were crucial questions (21). Thus, Lloyd’s performance was located in a unique but complicated position. As a performer, he added his own concept of authenticity into traditional songs in order to create an alternative community, where people, who rebelled against “all things American” and “the British imperial dream,” might share their values (Watts and Morrissey 166). While Lloyd showed respect for texts and traditional singers, he wished to enhance the quality of the original and express what he considered to be an ideal and universally accepted folk song, which would blur the boundaries between the past and the present, authorship and authenticity, and the voice of the people and personal expression.

According to a short article Lloyd wrote for *Folk Song Music*, he was sceptical about the two opposing views. One was “the traditionalist” (“What’s Traditional?” 11) who attached importance to being authentic. The view was supported by Cecil Sharp, one of the most influential folk song collectors, who theorised “folk song” as “communal in authorship, and communal in that it reflects the mind of community” (*English Folk-Song* 15). The other was “the modernist” who believes that any innovation is possible if “it makes the song more accessible” (“What’s Traditional?” 11). In his opinion, traditional songs may be developed and adapted, depending on how they are used. In dealing with traditional materials, Lloyd notes:

Really listen to the old-style traditional singers, the Pops and the Sams. Really get to know the tradition as it was. Extract from your listening and your study all the virtues, the beauties, the expression of life experience that you can find, and build on that. (“What’s Traditional?” 13).

What Lloyd suggests here is to add a personal sense and imagination to traditional texts rather than just imitation. By doing this, revival singers could identify with the songs. Lloyd created poetically and aesthetically pleasing re-workings of ballads, without ever losing the essence of the traditional song. In this chapter, I treat his ballads, “Reynardine” and “Jack Orion” in order to examine his skill of re-creating ballads.

4-2 Reynardine

A. L. Lloyd’s recording of “Reynardine” was included in his two LP albums, *The Foggy Dew and Other Traditional English Love Songs* (1956) and *First Person* (1966). “Reynardine” is a story in which a lady meets a stranger, Reynardine, and is tempted to enter the forest and go to his castle with him. Although the British electronic folk rock band, Fairport Convention’s

version of “Reynardine” is well known, it is among the most outstanding songs that Lloyd brought into the post-war folk revival scene.

Lloyd got the song from a singer called Tom Cook, who lived in Eastbridge, Suffolk (DeNatale 43). However, according to Stephen D. Winick who surveyed the origin of the song, there is no evidence that the singer even existed (“A. L. Lloyd” 288-89). It is now commonly held that Lloyd constructed the ballad from broadside ballads and some fragmentary song texts that he came across and then added an arrangement of the lyrics and melody.

In the liner notes to “Reynardine,” Lloyd observes that “some commentators have thought [that] it concerns a love affair between an English lady and an Irish outlaw, and have set its date in the Elizabethan time. Others believe the story is older and consider Reynardine, the “little fox”, to be a supernatural, lycanthropic lover” (Liner Notes to *First Person*). Importantly, the ambiguous identity of Reynardine—whether he is an outlaw who is chased by his enemy or a mysterious and alluring fox—remains at the enigmatic core of the song, allowing us to give it an enriched imaginative interpretation.

Reynardine, who stands between fox and man, and between the supernatural world and the ordinary world, overlaps with the ambivalent trickster figure. According to William. J. Hynes, a trickster is “the fundamentally ambiguous,” appearing “on the edge or just beyond existing border, classifications, and categories” (34). His activities are often “outlandish, outrageous, out-of-bounds, and out-of-order” (34). These characteristics of the trickster can apply to Reynardine, whose identity remains unknown and who crosses between the two worlds: the ordinary world and out-of-the ordinary world. The song never gives any decisive answers regarding who Reynardine really is, or what the woman’s fate will

be. Lloyd made use of the trickster in “Reynardine,” enhancing the mystique of the ballad’s performance and lending itself the quality of a bridge that connects the past, present, and future.

4-3 Representation of the Outlaw in Broadside “Reynardine”

“Reynardine” has been preserved in the form of a broadside in England, Ireland and America. Broadside ballads, which gained popularity between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, were single pieces of paper printed on one side with rhyming lyrics.

The broadside versions of “Reynardine,” with various titles such as “Rinordine” and “The Mountain High,” were widely circulated in the early nineteenth century. Like many other ballads dealing with a dialogue between a man and a woman, “Reynardine” follows a similar storyline, starting with his encounter with an innocent maiden and their ensuing dialogue:

One evening in my ramble
 Three miles below Pomeroy
 I met a farmer’s daughter
 Upon the mountains high.
 I said, my pretty fair maid,
 Your beauty bright so clever
 And upon those lonely mountains
 I am glad to meet you there.

She said, young man, be civil,
 And my company forsake
 For to tell you my opinion
 I think you are a rake.

And if my parents come to know
 My life they would destroy
 For keeping of your company
 Upon the mountains high
 I said, I am no rake
 But brought up in the Venus's train.
 Searching for concealment
 All in the judge's names.
 Your beauty so entices me
 That I could not pass you by
 With gun I will guard you
 Upon the mountains high. (sts.1- 3)



Fig. 7 "Rinordine" (*Forget Me Not Songsters* 199)

As the song suggests, Reynardine escapes any form of punishment and lives out of sight in the mountain, isolated from society. He encounters the young woman in the wilderness and persistently woos her. Reynardine puts himself in the position of outlaw, like Robin Hood, who transgresses the legal system and the contemporary moral code.

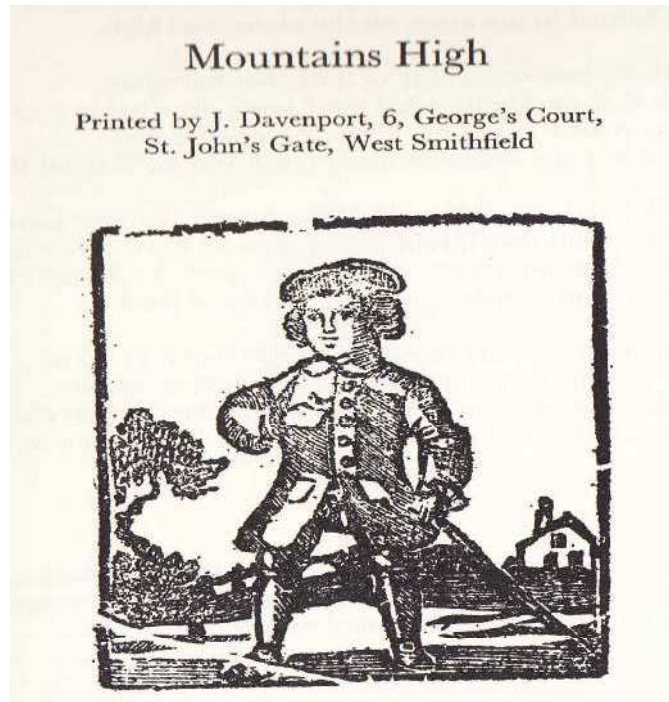


Fig. 8 "Mountains High" in *Late English Broadside Ballads* (Holloway and Black 183)

The gun, which is used to protect the woman, is the symbol of an outlaw, or, alternatively a phallic metaphor. The hidden implication—a desire to take control of her both physically and psychologically—can be interpreted in his words: "With guns I will guard you."

Compared with Lloyd's version of "Reynardine," the broadside versions rarely have any direct connections with a fox, except that the name, "Reynardine" etymologically means either "foxlike" or "little fox" (Winick, "Reynardine" 54). The broadside versions have other variant names such as "Ryner Dyne," "Rinor Dine," "Rinordine," and "Randal Rine," all of which lose the lexical connection with the fox and just describe him as a human outlaw.

Forget Me Not Songsters, an American songbook, published in 1844, included "Rinordine" with an illustration of an outlaw who embraces a young woman. It gives ample evidence that, in the nineteenth century,

“Reynardine” gained popularity as a song about an outlaw.

As already noted, Lloyd observed in his sleeve-notes that “Reynardine” concerns “a love affair between an English lady and an Irish outlaw” (Liner Notes to *First Person*), which supports the view that the song originated in Ireland. The hypothesis that the song is of Irish origin is convincing because some broadside ballads call Reynardine “Randal Rine”—“Rine” means, according to John Holloway and Joan Black, “Ryan” whose roots are Irish (184).

In addition, some broadside versions give place names such as “Pomeroy,” “Pomroy,” “Pomisa,” and “Pimroy.” Pomeroy is an extant name of a village, located in Ulster, where the Protestant English and Scottish settled and deprived the Catholic Irish of their land in the seventeenth century. Ulster, where the conflict over the land was intense, was abundant in folktales portraying the outlaw. As Ray Cashman argues, “we can imagine common Irish people vicariously enjoying the victories of their heroes during periods of constant defeat” (192). In fact, some broadside versions have lyrics such as “Wrote in ancient history / My name is Reynardine” (II.39-40; “Rinordine”) or “Wrote in some lonesome history, call you for Randal Rine” (qtd. in Holloway and Black 184), suggesting that Reynardine once held power, but was defeated in battle and was driven away from his native land. The broadside versions might represent Ireland’s troublesome history in the period of colonisation.

The broadside versions also describe Reynardine’s sensuality and his seduction of the woman. The line of Reynardine who is “brought up in the Venus’s train” (I.18) implies that he is a passionate and lustful man. The woman finally gives in to temptation:

This pretty little fair maid
She stood all in amaze

And with eyes as bright as amber
 Upon me she did gaze
 Her cherry cheeks and ruby lips
 They lost their former dye
 And then she fell into my arms
 Upon the mountains high

I kissed her once, I kissed her twice,
 She came to [herself] again.
 And then she quietly asked me
 Kind sir, pray, what's your name?
 If whom you chance to come this way
 And to see me you're inclined
 It's down in yonder valley
 My character you'll find. (sts.4-5; "Reynardine.")

It is interesting to observe how she changes her attitude toward him. His kiss arouses her passion. She is liberated from the social convention and follows him. While the song admires Reynardine who transgresses social norms and provides a new worldview, associated with freedom, it ends with a moralistic and didactic message that warns young girls from stepping outside the everyday world:

Come all you pretty fair maids,
 A warning take[n] by me.
 Avoid all lonesome walks at night
 And shun the bad company.
 For if you don't, you'll surely rue
 Until the day you die
 Beware of meeting Reynardine

Upon the mountains high. (st.7; “Reynardine”)

These types of moralistic and didactic messages are often included in traditional songs in order to warn young women who might ruin themselves for love before marriage. As Vic Gammon points out, songs, equipped with moralistic messages, helps to convey “appropriate roles in society” under a patriarchal ideology (*Desire* 49). The opposing concepts, between the ordinary and the out-of-ordinary life, between freedom and social morality, and between nature and civilisation, are represented in the broadside version of “Reynardine.” Lloyd, perhaps intentionally, deleted the last stanza with its moralistic message and ended the story with a scene in which she follows him. He preferred not to give a decisive conclusion. By so doing, the image of the trickster who is a boundary crosser is stabilised, thereby enhancing the mysterious and visionary atmosphere of the song. Lloyd also added to the song the interpretation of Reynardine being a supernatural fox, which is not found in other broadside ballads.

4-4 Representation of Fox in “Reynardine”

The idea that Reynardine is a supernatural fox is derived from the work of the Irish music composer and collector, Herbert Hughes. In 1904, Hughes came across a fragment of the song that an old woman sang in Donegal. In 1908, he sent it to *Notes and Queries*, a scholarly journal where academics and amateur scholars exchange opinions (DeNatale 44). According to Hughes, the old woman only remembered four lines:

If by chance you look for me

Perhaps you will not me find,

For I’ll be in my castle

Enquire for Reynardine. (st.1; “Rinordine” 33)

When Hughes asked what the song was about, the old woman told him that

the Reynardine was “a faery in Ireland who turns into a shape of fox” (Hughes, “Rinordine” 33). Hughes, who gained inspiration from this idea of a supernatural fox, later added “Reynardine” into his traditional folk song book, *Irish Country Songs*, published in 1909, in reaction to the emergence of the Celtic Revival, a politically inspired cultural movement which focused on a renewed interest in Gaelic culture and customs. He added another four verses:

Sun and dark I followed him

His eyes did brightly shine

He took me over the mountains

Did my sweet Reynardine. (st.2; Hughes, *Irish Country* 5)

By adding a mysterious description of Reynardine whose eyes are bright and shining, Hughes embodied the old woman's account that Reynardine was a fairy that transformed into the shape of a fox. “Sun and dark I followed him” (I.5) is another newly written line, implying that the woman was possessed by a fairy who turned into the shape of a fox.

The additional verse was, however, not in Hughes' original. It was created by his friend, the Irish poet, Joseph Campbell, who, based on the fragmentary ballad that Hughes found, expanded the story:

Sun and dark he courted me

His eyes were red as wine

He took me for his leman,

Did my sweet Reynardine

Sun and dark the gay horn blow

The beagles run like wind

They know not where he harbours

The fairy Reynardine. (sts.2-3; Campbell 11)

As is evident from this passage, Campbell emphasised the image of the supernatural fox that Hughes identified. However, both expressions are slightly different. Hughes's version, "His eyes did bright shine" (I. 6) describes the fox from a visual point of view, whereas Campbell's, "His eyes were red as wine" is vividly more colourful. Lloyd adopted both Hughes and Campbell's interpretations of a fox, thereby creating his own version of "Reynardine":

Day and night she followed him,
His teeth so bright did shine,
And he led her over the mountain
Did this sly bold Reynardine. (st.6; Lloyd, "Reynardine.")

Lloyd's version, which is based on both Hughes and Campbell's verses, skilfully and impressively changed the lyrics. Hughes and Campbell enhanced the mystique of "Reynardine" by vividly describing the fox's shining or red eyes. Lloyd replaced the word shining "eye" with "teeth" and also added the adjectives "sly" and "bold." In addition to the mysterious quality, Lloyd partly adopted the roughness of the outlaw, expressed in the broadside ballad, thereby creating a more thrilling trickster figure, identifiable as both fox and man.

In Lloyd's versions, the figurative expressions such as "sly" and "bold," supposed characteristics associated with the fox, that can also be found in folklore, proverbs and literature. According to Ad de Vries, the fox is a symbol of "sly thief, wiles and tricks" (202) and "in most fable, his outstanding characteristic is his slyness, by which he even fools himself sometimes" (202). The representation of the fox as a trickster can be dated back to *Reynard the Fox*, the anthropomorphic medieval allegorical fable, which was well-known throughout Europe including France, Netherlands, German and Britain. It is the story of a fox, Reynard, who, through his wit

and strategy, cheats the wolf, Ysengrimus, King Noble the Lion, and other animals. The fable has been said to satirize the abuses of the church, through the use of animal allegory. While attacking authority and challenging the existing social order, Reynard, with his wily and witty conversation skills, makes his own way through the world. Reynard, who stands between justice and injustice, plays the role of a trickster. The fox, which ravages both crops and livestock, is both a hunter and a hunted animal. This ambivalence gives both a poetical inspiration and a critical insight into the world.

Lloyd commented in his liner notes, "Who was Reynardine, with his irresistible charm, his glittering eye, his foxy smile? An ordinary man, or an outlaw maybe, or some supernatural lover?" (Liner Notes to *Foggy Dew*). The poetic and imaginative vocabulary, used in "Reynardine," allows people to put forward various alternative interpretations.

Furthermore, he asks, "Is he that dreadful Mr. Fox in the English folk-tale, the elegant gentleman whose bedroom was full of skeletons and buckets of blood?" (Liner Notes to *First Person*). The folktale, *Mr. Fox* that Lloyd refers to here is the story of an aristocratic bachelor named Mr. Fox, who invites beautiful ladies to his castle, kills them one after another, and hides their bones in his bedroom. When Lloyd decided to recreate his own version of "Reynardine," he must have borne the folktale of *Mr. Fox* in mind. He admitted to a similarity between "Reynardine" and *Mr. Fox*, arguing that "the dread uncertainty is whether he is man or animal. Similar unease broods within this song" (Liner Notes to *First Person*). Lloyd's attempt was to bring life to the ballad which had been forgotten through the years and to reproduce its original essence, embedded in the song.

The description of white shining teeth, which can be seen in Lloyd's "Reynardine" is not only mysterious but also gives a thrilling and a tense

feeling. Traditional ballads, dealing with the murder between families and between couples and an encounter with the ghost or a fairy, have an evocative power that appeals to us.

Lloyd's "Reynardine" enhances this thrilling feeling, thus creating a tense relationship between the singer and the audience. This effect is used in "Reynardine":

One evening as I rambled
 Among the springing thyme
 I overheard a young woman
 Conversing with Reynardine

Her hair was black, her eyes were blue
 And her mouth was red as wine
 And he smiled as he looked upon them,

Did this sly bold Reynardine. (sts.1-2; Lloyd, "Reynardine")

The opening stanza starts with the narrator who witnesses the scene in which Reynardine courts the lady. As Winick put it, "The revival version, then, is the only one told from the point of view of a third-person narrator who witnesses the meeting of the protagonists" ("A. L. Lloyd" 294). This effect works well in leading the audience to enter into the story. By doing so, the phrase "And he smiled as he looked upon them, / Did this sly bold Reynardine" takes on reality, dissolving the boundary between the song and the real world, and thus creating the illusion that we put ourselves in Reynardine's situation, as if we already knew his conspiracy.

Reynardine's smile can be understood in the context of what Mikhail Bakhtin called "carnival laughter" (xxii). Although the smile and laughter are distinctively different in expressions, Bakhtin's theory of laughter might help explain Reynardine's rebellious smile. Bakhtin took carnival

laughter as “social consciousness of all the people” (92), which means that it is “an element of victory not only over supernatural awe, over the sacred, over death: it also means the defeat of power, of earthly kings, of the earthy upper classes, of all that oppresses and restricts” (92). Reynardine’s smile has similar characteristics, overcoming the conflict between the authoritative world and the open, flexible, unrestricted world, between life and death, between the present and the past, thereby creating a connection between the performer, their audience and the song.

The melody of “One Night upon my Rambles,” collected by W. Percy Merrick from Henry Hills (1830-1901), of Lodsworth in Sussex, and published in 1904 by the Folk Song Society, was the oldest existing melody of “Reyanrdine.” The protagonist of this song is a man, tempting a woman. Its content is similar to the broadside versions.

If Lloyd had collected a melody of “Reyanrdine” from Tom Cook in Eastbridge, Suffolk, the melody would have been closer to that of Sussex for geographical reasons. However, Lloyd’s version used a melody from Herbert Hughes’s Irish traditional song. The mixolydian mode, used in this song, is one of the typical melodies of Irish songs. In Lloyd’s version, the rhythm is rather more slowly than the original, strengthening a mysterious aura of the song. Compared to the pastoral country melody of the South England, Lloyd must have considered that the melody of doleful Irish song, would be perfectly fit with the ambiguous identity of Reyanrdine that cannot be determined whether he is a man or a fox.

33.—One Night upon my Rambles.

Moderato.

One night up - on my ram - bles An I - rish girl I
 spied; Your beau-ty so en - tic - ed me, I could not pass you
 by. So it's with my gun I'll guard you All on the moun - tains
 high. So it's with my gun I'll guard you All on the mountains high.

The image shows a musical score for the song 'One Night upon my Rambles'. It consists of four staves of music in a single system. The first staff is the vocal line, starting with the tempo marking 'Moderato.' and the key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are written below the notes. The second and third staves are piano accompaniment, and the fourth staff continues the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'One night up - on my ram - bles An I - rish girl I spied; Your beau-ty so en - tic - ed me, I could not pass you by. So it's with my gun I'll guard you All on the moun - tains high. So it's with my gun I'll guard you All on the mountains high.'

Fig. 9 The Tune of “One Night upon my Rambles” (Merrick and Broadwood 271)

If by chance you look for me Per - haps you'll not me
 find, For I'll be in my cas - - tle, En -

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Reynardine'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'If by chance you look for me Per - haps you'll not me find, For I'll be in my cas - - tle, En -'. The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking 'pp' (pianissimo) in the first system.

Fig.10 The Tune of Herbert Hughes’s “Reynardine” (Hughes “Irish” 4)

4-5 Folk Revival Scene and “Reynardine”

Finally, this chapter will consider how “Reynardine” spread into the British and American folk revival. Lloyd’s version of “Reynardine,” with his selection of words and aesthetic sensibility, entered into a repertoire of the folk revival, capturing the imaginations of young folk singers. In Britain, the Fairport Convention, Anne Briggs, Martin Carthy, Dave Swarbrick, Bert Jansch, and June Tabor all sang “Reynardine.” Dave Arthur, English singer and writer, told me in an interview that “he had preferred the art of

communication with the common people. A skill he simply transferred into his song / ballad adaptations and rewrites" (Arthur, E-mail interview Part I). Lloyd discovered that people could sympathise at an emotional level, in "Reynardine"—the trickster who has an ambivalent role in crossing between the ordinary and the extra-ordinary world, and between man and animal.

Compared to Britain, "Reynardine" has been not so well known in America. One reason is perhaps that Lloyd, who was a music producer of Topic Records specialised in British folk songs and ballads, had a decisive authority on selections of songs for young British folk musicians, but not for American folk musicians. However, Buffy Saint-Marie, who is descended from Aboriginal Canadian and who was actively involved in the 1960s Greenwich Village folk scene, sang "Reynardine" but with a different title, "A Vampire Legend" which was included in her 1967 album, *Fire & Fleet & Candle-Night*. It must be stressed, however, that her background led her to sing the song "Reynardine." Buffy was adopted into a White middle-class family shortly after she was born. She grew up in Wakefield, Massachusetts, where white people made up a great majority of its population. She felt as if she were an outsider, because she noticed that her appearance with her dark hair and tan skin was different from others (Warner 15-24). Buffy sang songs dealing with social and political issues. Her pursuit of her Native American identity, and the lack of Native American perspective in American history, made her determine to perform songs that challenge stereotype and prejudices against the Native American. It is not clear how Buffy came to know "Reynardine" but there was an obvious relationship between the British and American folk scenes. For example, Bob Dylan visited London in 1962 and was strongly influenced by the ballads that Lloyd and Ewan MacColl sang at the city's folk club. Buffy perhaps came to know Lloyd's

“Reynardine” through an interaction between the American and British folk scenes, and included it in her repertoire at an early stage. Buffy said in an interview that “I loved coming across genuine British and Irish folk songs and they included a lot of protest” (*The Independent*). More specifically, she explained that “Protest songs have to be more than just emotional, ‘angry’ Indian songs or angry anti-war songs—they’re not effective. It’s okay to do that, but anger itself is not necessarily effective in making change, which is what I really wanted to do” (qtd. in Warner 45). It is uncertain whether Buffy knew the fact that “Reynardine” was a reworking by Lloyd, but the song can be interpreted as what Buffy called a protest song—through the trickster figure, challenging the social hierarchy and providing an alternative worldview. Buffy’s version made use of the native American musical instrument, the moth bow, making the song sound more primitive and purer. Rather than considering the “Reynardine” within a concept of British ballads, Buffy found a connection between Reynardine and the Native Americans, in that they are both marginal. Thus, “Reynardine” which freely goes beyond the race, the times and the place, rebels against the social order and captures the hearts of those who hope to bring about changes.

4-6 Jack Orion

“Jack Orion” is another ballad that A. L. Lloyd re-created in the post-war folk revival. This song, with a fiddle accompaniment by Dave Swarbrick (1914–2016), was also included in *First Person* (1965). It is a song about a talented fiddle player, Jack Orion, who wins a lady’s heart with the music he plays and who promises to secretly meet her. However, his servant, Tom disguises himself as a master and goes to her bower to make love to her. Jack Orion discovers the truth and hangs Tom from his

own gatepost. Regarding this tragic ending, Lloyd states:

Farm boys, tailors' apprentices, stable-grooms and other tricksters who overhear assignments and forestall the lover are standard stuff in folklore, but they don't usually come to such an unjustly sticky end as opportunistic Tom, the apprentice minstrel of our ballad. (Liner Notes to *First Person*)

As Lloyd observes, both "Jack Orion," as well as "Reynardine," use the motif of the trickster. Tom, disguising himself as his master, can be identified as a trickster who turns the world upside down. However, in contrast to Reynardine who succeeds in seducing the woman, Tom is finally punished for his betrayal.

This ballad originally came from Child ballad 67, "Glasgerion" whose protagonist is a harp player. By replacing a harper with a fiddler, the song took on a new meaning in performance. "Jack Orion" enhanced a quality of trickster, thereby creating an alternative world in which we can sympathise with the past.

4-7 Glasgerion as a Harpist

"Glasgerion" has two completed versions: one is in Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), the other, "Glenkindie" is in Robert Jamieson's *Popular Ballads and Songs* (1806). Child put the songs together in *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882-98), which is categorised as Child 67 "Glasgerion." Anna Brown (1747-1810), an informant of "Glenkindie," wrote in a letter that "Glen Kindy, or rather Glen Skeeny, I have heard, and there is a ballad in Percy's collection that is very much the same" (qtd. in Child 468; vol. 4). As she suggested in the letter, the ballad was widely known as "Glasgerion" in England, as "Glenkindie." in Scotland.

It is generally believed that Glasgerion, whose “Glas” means the Blue Bard, is a legendary Welsh harpist (Child 136-37; vol. 2). This ballad, originated in Wales, spread to England and later to Scotland, taking on a specific local flavour as it did so. In Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The House of Fame* (1380), Glasgerion appears alongside Orpheus and Orion, both of whom were highly acclaimed classical harpists in Greek mythology:

Ther herde I playen [played] on an harpe [harp]
 That sounded bothe [both] wel [well] and sharpe, [sharp]
 Orpheus ful craftely, [full craftily]
 And on his syde [side], faste [fast] by,
 Sat the harper Orion
 And Eacides Chiron,
 And the other harpers many oon,
 And the Bret Glascurion. (II. 1202-1209; Chaucer 362)

This describes the scene in which a dreamer enters the castle and encounters four harpists. Child assumed the last of the four, Bret Glascurion was Glasgerion, claiming a similarity with the tenth century Welsh harpist, Glass Keraint. However, Child’s opinion is now disputed because Glas Keraint has been proven to be a forgery, made up by Iolo Morganwg (1747-1826), the Welsh antiquarian and poet (Breeze 64). Instead, it is speculated that Glasgerion or Bret Glascurion can be identified with Gwyndion who appears in the medieval Welsh myth, the *Mabinogion* (Breeze 64). Gwyndion is a magician, as well as a gifted bard.

Gwyndion was the best teller of tales in the world. And that night he entertained the court with pleasant tales and story-telling till he was praised by every one in the court, and it was a pleasure for Pryderi to converse with him. (Jones and Jones 51)

The tale of Gwyndion who, through his storytelling, pleases the king and

the court, resembles that of “Glasgerion.” Moreover, Gwyndion has magical powers that enables horses to be made out of toadstools, shoes out of seaweed, a woman out of flowers, and a sea filled with hostile vessels out of nothing. Similarly, in the ballad of Glasgerion, his harp possesses the magical ability of controlling the natural world.

He'd harpit [harped] a fish out o saut [salt] water,
Or water out o a stane [stone],
Or milk out o a maiden's breast,

That bairn [baby] had never nane [none]. (st.2; Child 67 B; vol. 2)

Although a link between Glasgerion and Gwyndion can be found, the mystery about the origin of this character, remains unsolved. According to Richard Firth Green, Geoffrey Chaucer might have come across a romance or an old ballad about a Welsh bard—the one we know as “Glasgerion” today (257).

When Percy and Jamieson collected “Glasgerion” or “Glenkindie” between the mid-seventeenth and the early eighteenth centuries, interest in medieval bards started to grow among the antiquarians. Katie Trumpener carefully categorises the concept of the bard in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. For Celtic antiquaries, mostly nationalists, the bard was “the mouthpiece for a whole society, articulating its values, chronicling its history, and mourning the inconsolable tragedy of its collapse” (Trumpener 6). On the other hand, English poets imagined “the bard (and the minstrel after him) as an inspired, isolated and peripatetic figure” (Trumpener 6). Considering that the English version of “Glasgerion” fitted the latter definition of Trumpener, Percy imagined a lost medieval society in which both the bards and the minstrels, were admired as divine, inspirational, and isolated figures. In “An Essay on the Ancient Minstrels” (1765) that Percy appended to *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, he wrote that “the

minstrels were an order of men in the middle ages, who subsisted by the arts of poetry and music, and sang to the harp verses composed by themselves, or other” (345). The link between the bards and the minstrels was clear because Percy argued that, in the Middle Ages, the minstrels were considered to be “the genuine successor of Bards” (346). Although the broadside ballad writers had taken the place of minstrels by the sixteenth century, Percy treated the minstrels as “one of the more picturesque characters of the medieval scene” (Freedman 215), making a clear distinction from the decaying position of minstrels that Joseph Ritson termed “rouges, vagabonds and sturdy beggars” (113). Thus, it can be assumed that the ballad about a minstrel interested Percy enormously. In Percy’s version, the king’s daughter of Normandy, who promises to meet Glasgerion in secret, appears, which possibly suggests that the story is of Norman origin.

Robert Jamieson stated in *Popular Ballads and Songs from Tradition* (1806) that Glenkindie was “the celebrated Welsh bard” but “the Scottish writers, adapting the name to their own meridian, call him Glenkindiy and Glenskeenie” (91). He also explained that Glenkindie derived from “a beautiful valley, watered by the river Don, in the neighbourhood of Glenbucket, and belongs to the earl of Fife” (93). This means that Scottish geography, history and culture are reflected in the ballad of “Glenkindie.” Both Percy and Jamieson were fascinated by the acclaimed position of the bards or minstrels whose image had been adopted as a national symbol by poets and writers.

In Percy’s version, Glasgerion is the son of a king, namely a harpist of the royal blood:

Glasgerion was a kings owne [own] sonne [son],
And a harper he was good;

He harped in the kings [king's] chamber,
 Where cuppe [cup] and candle stooode [stood],
 And soe [so] did hee [he] in the queens [queen's] chamber,
 Till ladies waxed wood. (st.1, Child 67 A; vol. 2)

Glasgerion, who is of royal blood and possesses superb musical skills, can be associated with legendary figures such as King David and King Alfred, both of whom were said to play the harp very proficiently. In contrast, Jamieson's version describes Glenkindie as a minstrel who serves a king:

Glenkindie was once a harper gude [good],
 He harped to the king;
 And Glenkindie was ance [once] the best harper
 That ever harped on a string. (st.1, Child 67 B; vol. 2)

Glenkindie, a minstrel, captures the heart of a king and then is given a royal robe from the king, who orders him to play before the nobles on a winter's night:

He's taen [taken] his haro [harp] intil [into] his hand,
 He harpit [harped] and he sang,
 And ay as he harpit [harped] to the king,
 To haud [hold] him unthought lang [long].

"I'll gie [give] you a robe, Glenkindie,
 A robe o the royal pa [palace],
 Gin [if] ye will harp i [in] the winter's night
 Afore [before] my nobles a'." (st.3-4; Child 67 B; vol. 2)

As can be seen from both Percy and Jamieson's version, despite the differences in their backgrounds, Glasgerion or Glenkindie was depicted as musicians highly placed at the royal court. Glasgerion or Glenkindie "may be thought of a permanent harper, that is, one attached to the royal

household, or only as a harper of note who in the course of his wanderings has gained admission to the king's palace" (Wimberly 18). The fact that Glasgerion is a gentleman, can be observed from the way a page wears his master's costume:

But vpp [up] then rose that lither ladd [lad],
 And did on hose [stockings] and shoone [shoes];
 A coller [collar] he cast vpon [upon] his necke [neck],
 Hee [he] seemd a gentleman. (st. 9; Child 67 A; vol. 2)

Glasgerion / Glenkindie and the lady belong to high society, where the page, who is depicted as working-class boy, appears as an intruder in their relationship in order to confuse the class system. Nevertheless, the amusing point about this ballad is that he cannot conceal his origin, even by wearing classy costume:

He did not take that lady gay
 To boulster [bolster] or to bedd [bed],
 But downe [down] upon her chamber-flore [floor]
 Full soone [soon] he hath her layd [laid]

He did not kiss that lady gay
 When he came nor when he youd [vowed];
 And sore mistrusted that lady gay

He was of some churles blood. (sts.11-12; Child 67 A; vol. 2)

The page temporarily subverts the class system through his sexual relationship with a lady. When Glasgerion tells her that he is not the one who went to her bedroom, she says:

O then it was your litle [little] foote-page
 Falsly [falsely] hath beguiled me
 And then shee [she] pulld [pulled] forth a litle [little] pen-knife

That hanged by her knee,
 Says, There shall neuer [never] noe [no] churles blood,
 Spring within my body. (st.19; Child 67 A; vol. 2)

Gammon points out that “the lady’s horror is not so much that an impostor has taken advantage of her, but that she might bear a child of ‘churles blood.’ The page-boy’s adolescent sexual transgression is both personal and social” (*Desire* 224). John Wesley Hales and Frederick James Furnivall also argue that “there is no ballad that represents more keenly the great gulf between churl and noble—a profounder horror at the crossing over of it” (248). The page-boy not only satisfies his personal sexual desire by having an affair with the lady, but he also plays a political role in overcoming the social hierarchy and creating a world in which the social boundary becomes irrelevant. Whereas the lady and Glasgerion / Glenkindie live in a static class structure, the page-boy challenges it, traversing the class border even for a moment, although he suffers the consequence of this indiscretion.

It is interesting to compare the difference between Glasgerion / Glenkindie and the page-boy in their harp-performances. Here is an excerpt from Jamieson’s version:

He’s taken his harp intil [into] his hand,
 He’s harpit [harped] them a’ asleep,
 Except it was the young countess,
 That love did waukin [waken] keep,

And first he has harpit a grave tune,
 And syne [soon] he has harpit a gay,
 And mony [many] a sich [sigh] atween [between] hands,
 I wat the lady gae [go]. (sts. 5-6; Child 67 B; vol. 2)

Glasgerion / Glenkindie, with his harp, has a magical power to put people to

sleep. His repertoires, ranging from a grave melody to a cheerful one, shows his exquisite harp skill. In contrast, the page-boy's harp performance gives a different impression:

He's taen [taken] his harp intill his hand,
 He harpit and he sang,
 Until he harpit his master asleep,
 As fast as he could rin [run]. (st.14; Child 67 B; vol. 2)

Gib, the page-boy, plays the harp, singing when he travels between his house and the lady's mansion. It can be assumed that, as the page-boy moves fast, the harp string is gradually disarranged, which can be interpreted as a metaphor of the process by which the social hierarchy is gradually being broken down. John Bromyard, the fourteenth century clergyman, compared the harp strings to the social class structure. "The order of these various ranks in the community ought to be like the position of strings upon the harp . . . if the strings are disarranged, the melody jars" (qtd. in Horrox 61). It is interesting to note that the harp, with its well-arranged strings, is a representation of the static social hierarchy. Glasgerion / Glenkindie perhaps plays the harp with regulated strings, implying a stable social hierarchy. We cannot guess what songs the pageboy plays and sings but his harp performance with an accompaniment of singing is more human and down-to-earth than his master's. Through a description of the page-boy, playing the harp outside and singing freely, the ballad presents another vivid image of the harp player, but one not bound by the sense of duty that a privileged minstrel (or a bard) employed by the king would be.

"Glasgerion" or "Glenkindie" was collected in the period in which the bard or the minstrel gave inspiration to writers and poets such as James Macpherson, Thomas Percy and Walter Scott. Having said that, the ballad

had been rapidly forgotten from singing culture. According to Bronson, except for Percy's version, the song has never "been recorded outside Scotland" and "no collector has reported it in America" (59). As Richard Firth Green argues, "its unashamedly aristocratic bias was unappealing to democratic sensibilities" (352). Even in the twentieth century, no complete version of "Glasgerion" / "Glenkindie has ever been discovered. For instance, a fragmentary version, sung by a Scotswoman, M. Douglas Gorton and collected by Francis M. Collinson in 1953, was recorded. There were some other fragmentary versions, sung by Mary Thain and Ellen Lindsay, which were collected by James Madison Carpenter between 1929 and 1935. Lloyd comments:

The ballad of *Glasgerion* dropped out of tradition long ago, but the story it tells is an engaging one . . . and it seemed to me too good a song to be shut away in books, so I took it out and dusted it off a bit and set a tune to it and, I hope, started it on a new lease of life." (Liner Notes to *First Person*)

Lloyd decided to revive "Glasgerion" which had been forgotten from ballad singing custom, giving a new role to the British folk revival scene.

4-8 A. L. Lloyd's "Jack Orion"

Lloyd substituted the harp player Glasgerion for the fiddle player, Jack Orion. What do these changes mean?

Jack Orion was as good fiddler
As ever fiddled on a string,
And he could drive young women mad
With the tune his wires would sing. (st.1)

As already mentioned, Glasgerion / Glenkindie was a king's son or minstrel. The noblewomen are fascinated by his harp performance. In "Jack Orion," it

is the women of the town who are fascinated by his fiddle performances. Jack Orion is a street musician, playing for the ordinary folk. As the musical instrument changes from a harp to a fiddle, so the audience changes from an aristocratic one to one populated by working-class people. The harp has an elegant and inspiring image, relating to bards and minstrels. In contrast, as supported by the old saying, “They that dance must pay the fiddle,” the fiddle, is considered a more secular instrument associated with dancing and frivolity. For example, there is a song called “The Rural Dance about the May-Pole.”

Come lasses and lads,
 Take leave of your dads,
 And away to the may-pole hie;
 For every he has got him a she,
 And the minstrel’s standing by;
 For Willie has his Jill,
 And Johnny has his Joan,
 To jig it, jig it, jig it,
 Jig it up and down

“Strike up” says Wat, “Agreed” says Kate,
 “And I prithee, fiddler, play”
 “Content” says Hodge, and so says Madge,
 For this is a holiday,
 That even a man did put his hat off to his lass,
 And even girl did curchy, curchy, curchy, on the grass. (Dixon
 164-165)

The fiddle, which was played at a May-pole festival, offered fleeting entertainment, that liberated people from everyday labour. The fiddle,

which was a symbol of “gaiety” and “freedom,” belongs to a community (Vires 181). Lloyd obviously selected the fiddle as a light-hearted image. In contrast with Glasgerion / Glenkindie whose father is a king and who is given a royal robe by a king, there is no such a description in “Jack Orion.” He is described as an intruder, sneaking into the castle hall at the midnight and playing the fiddle:

So he sat and played in the castle hall
 And fiddled them all so sound asleep,
 Except it was for the young countess,
 And for love she stayed awake.

 So he lapped his fiddle in a cloth of green
 And he stole out on his tip toe,
 And he's off back to his young boy Tom
 As fast as he could go. (st.3, st.6)

The humorous description beginning with “So he lapped his fiddle in a cloth of green / And he stole out on his tip toe” (17-18) is Lloyd's invention. His standing on tiptoe is the typical pose of a trespasser. The use of green in the cloth is effectively used in order to draw a contrast with the darkness and make the scene more vivid and dramatic. This description of Jack Orion reminds us of a trickster, sneaking into the upper-class world and turning it upside down. While Glasgerion / Glenkindie is a member of the aristocracy, Jack Orion is of the working-class, locating himself in the same position as his page-boy, Tom. As Dave Arthur comments in my email-interview, the fiddle “is a more folky than literary instruments” and he “liked his folk music to be working-class / proletarian, even though many of the later lyrical songs were written by hack journalists for chapbook printers, and ‘literary’ writers” (E-mail interview Part I). As Arthur suggests, Lloyd's

preference for the working-class hero was reflected in “Jack Orion.” Lloyd explains in the sleeve-notes that “The fiddler Dave Swarbrick likes this one: does he see himself as Jack or Tom?” “Jack Orion” offers a broad perspective in order to sympathise with the characters, Jack or Tom, who steps into the aristocratic world. By converting from a harp player to a fiddle player, Lloyd made the ballad more relevant to performers and audience members, rather than regarding it as the distant past.

The fiddle can be easily connected with a trickster. In the medieval Europe, for example, the fiddle player, who accompanied the dance, was given a nickname, “Pan,” a god of the shepherds and a symbol of the trickster (Dixon 165). Another example can be seen from a story about the trickster figure, Br'er Rabbit. The story, originated in African folklore, was transmitted by African slaves to America, where the rabbit uses the fiddle as a magical wand. As Stuckey explains, there is a historical record in which one in ten slaves played the fiddle, implying that “the violin was a democratic rather than an aristocratic instrument” (21). While the fiddle was widely enjoyed among the people, the instrument was well known for its connection with the Devil who is said to be a master of the fiddle. Sayings such as “The Devil’s in the fiddle” and “The fiddle is the Devil’s instrument” suggest that the fiddle was feared by pious Christians and banned in some parts of the United States and Britain because they believed it would trigger immorality (Halpert 46). Lloyd combined various aspects of the fiddle player—the non-privileged, secular, anti-establishment and communal—in order to create a new protagonist, Jack Orion who, with his musical performance, brings people together and overturns the everyday life.

Obviously, Lloyd adopted this challenging approach in the reworking of “Jack Orion.” However, the question is whether it diminishes the song’s

authenticity. From the historical point of view that Lloyd had of ballads, even if the times and social structures have changed, the core of the story—the theme of class struggle in “Jack Orion”—remains unchanged. As Lloyd argues in *Folk Song in England*, “To define the character and meaning of the heroic personage is the main task of ballad study. The content is struggle, whether of champion against dragon, outlaw against forester, ploughboy against the rich girl’s parents who would have him press-ganged, miner against mine-owner” (142-43).

Jack Orion was given new life as a folky hero, but the social struggle between the master and the apprentice and between the working class and the upper class remains unchanged as an important essence of the song. In *Folk Song in England*, Lloyd finds a continuity between “Glasgerion” and the eighteenth century sailor’s song “Do me ama” or “Jack the Jolly Tar,” a story about a bourgeois lady who is “delighted with the sailor who so cheekily smuggled himself into her arms in place of the squire” (165). The harp player is replaced by a squire, the aristocratic lady by a bourgeois lady, the page-boy by the sailor. Martin Cathy, English folk singer, supports Lloyd’s idea, saying:

On the face of it, there are enough similarities between *Jacky Tar* and the big ballad *Glasgerion* as far as the basic plot line goes, for it to be thought of as a gutter version of the latter song. Bowing to A. L. Lloyd’s wider knowledge (and he was always clear that in his view it was simply not the case), I retain a feeling that these things cannot be entirely unconnected: I like the idea that people rework such themes over and over. (Liner Notes to *But Two Came By*)

The traditional folk song is repeated over time, often changing its formula and motif. Lloyd’s “Jack Orion” is a product of what suited the sensibility

and experiences of the performer and his audience in the 1960s. In this way, Lloyd made use of the flexibility and adaptability that traditional songs have always had.

4-9 The Melody of “Jack Orion”

The replacement of the harp with a fiddle, makes the song more familiar and down-to-earth. In addition, another reason for using the fiddle could be his consideration for the then revival scene in Britain, where “the instrument revival got under way” (Woods 71). Not only unaccompanied songs but also fiddle, concertina and guitar were actively used in the post-war folk revival. As Stuart Eydmann points out, at first, Lloyd was “adamant that folk song should be performed unaccompanied” (44). However, he later came to “accept instrumental backing in the dominant forms of youth music: skiffle, rock and roll and American ‘folk’” (Eydmann 44). Lloyd must have thought that “Jack Orion” would sound more real and inspiring, with the accompaniment of the fiddle, featured in the story. In the contemporary English folk scene, there were fewer outstanding harp players, compared with fiddle players. Swarbrick had already been famous as a young and talented fiddle player who was a member of the Ian Campbell Folk Group. Lloyd perhaps expected Swarbrick to help revive “Jack Orion” with his brilliant fiddle performance.

The melody score of “Glasgerion” is preserved in Bronson’s *The Tunes of the Traditional Child Ballads*. This version uses a mixture of Dorian and Aeolian modes, which creates a doleful atmosphere. There has been no record of “Glasgerion” / “Glenkindie” with a harp accompaniment. The ballad had been sung unaccompanied, but the melody is, like the harp, elegant and slow. Lloyd’s version “Jack Orion” is sung in Aeolian mode. In general, Aeolian mode, referred to “pure minor” and “natural minor,”

creates a dark atmosphere. However, the melody of “Jack Orion” creates a cheerful beat with the high note of Ti, thus making up an unsophisticated traditional song. Lloyd sang in an unrefined but impressive way as if he were a traditional singer.

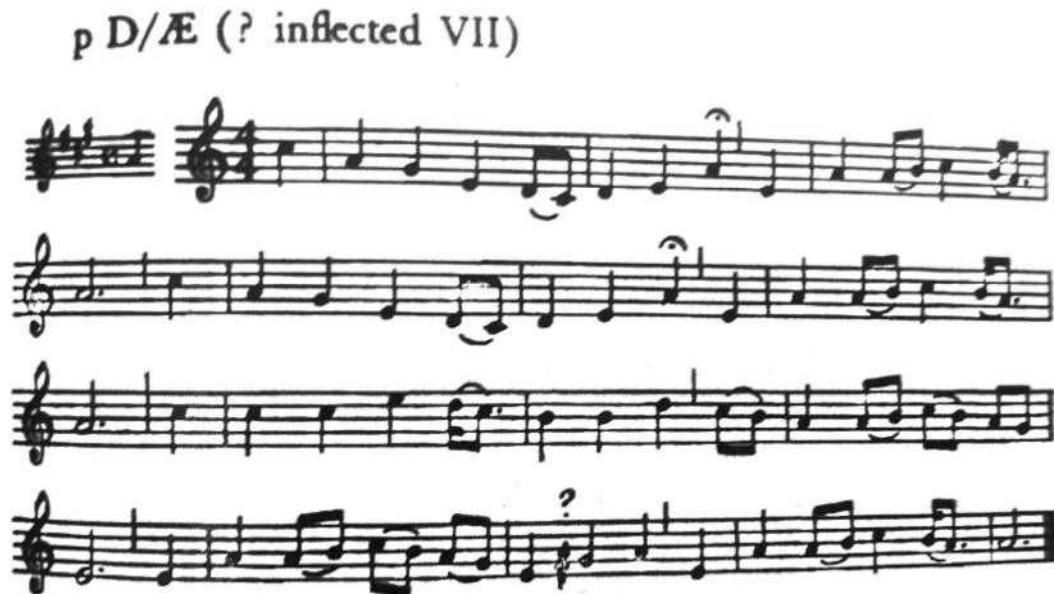


Fig. 11 The tune of “Gleskindie” sung by Miss. M. Douglas Gordon, Derbyshire in 1953. (Bronson 59)



Fig. 12 The Tune, transcribed from A. L. Lloyd's “Jack Orion” (Lloyd, *First Person*)

Surprisingly, the melody of “Jack Orion” comes from Andrew Stewart's “Donald, Where's Your Trousers?” Andrew Stewart (1933-93), a famous Scottish entertainer and singer, was well known for his variety show, *The White Heath Club*, which ran from 1956 to 1968. “Donald, Where is Your Trousers?” was performed in the programme, making it a great hit. Lloyd knew the song's popularity and found the light melody attractive. Dave

Arthur states:

Bert also recognised a good tune when he heard it. He was adept at “fitting” tunes, often well-known melodies, to texts and creating new exciting pieces . . . Who’d have thought the jokey melody that carried self-parodying Scottish, “Donald, Where’s Your Trousers?”, when grafted on to Bert’s modernisation and reworking of the ancient ballad “Glasgerion” (or “Glenkindie”), could produce the chilling “Jack Orion”? (*Bert* 27)

Compared to the high-pitch melody of “Donald, Where’s Your Trousers?”, Lloyd’s “Jack Orion” is pitched an octave lower and slower. “Donald, Where’s Your Trousers” is made up of the Aeonian mode. The melody is a pop music arrangement of the traditional folk song, collected in the island of Lewis, Scotland. Lloyd might have whistled the tune and noticed that it was a folk tune. Lloyd used the melody of “Donald, Where’s Your Trousers?” believing that the humorous and up-tempo melody would fit the image of a trickster, depicted in the ballad of “Jack Orion.”

4-10 The Role of Willow Tree

There is a subtle difference in the ending of “Glasgerion” / “Glenkindie” and “Jack Orion.” In Percy’s version, after the lady knows that it was a page-boy, not Glasgerion, that seduced her, she immediately commits suicide from despair. “And then shee[she] pulld [pulled] forth a little pen-knife, / That hanged by her knee.” (II.79-80). Glasgerion kills the page-boy with a sword and soon takes his own life.

And he puld [pulled] out his bright browne [brown]sword,
 And dryed [dried] it on his sleeue [sleeve]
 And he smote off that lither [lazy] ladds [lad’s] head,
 And asked noe man noe leaue [leave],

He sett [set] the swords point till his breast,
 The pumill till a stone
 Thorrow [through] that falsenese of that lither lad[d]
 There three liues [lives] were all gone. (sts.22-23; Child 67 A)

Percy's *Reliques*, as Groom argues, "are obsessed with the body" (59), as can be observed from the scene in which Glasgerion beheads the page before killing himself. Jamieson's version is not as bloody as Percy's, yet Glenskindie hanged the page-boy as a punishment. The lady dies of misery and Glenkindie goes mad.

And he has taen him Gib, his man,
 And he has hangd [hanged] him hie [high],
 And he's hangit him oer [over] his ain yate [own gate],
 And high as high could be. (st.28; Child 67 B; vol. 2)

Both versions have tragic, frightening and violent endings. As Douglas Shelia argues, it is not surprising that "most ballads originate from ages in which there was a lot of conflict, when the rule of law was weak and when people had recourse to violence as the only solution they could see to their problems" (104). "Glasgerion" / "Glenkindie" follows the pattern of many ballads whose themes were about revenge against those who cheated. Lloyd's version basically borrows from Jamieson's version:

And home then went Jack Orion, crying,
 "Tom, my lad, come here to me!"
 And he hanged that boy from his own gatepost
 High as the willow tree. (st.22)

Lloyd's version only focuses upon the page-boy, Tom, not mentioning what happened to Jack Orion or the lady. While the versions of Percy and Jamieson underscore the graphic and realistic description of how the

page-boy was punished, Lloyd's version created an aesthetically appealing ending that would function well in the singing performance.

Lloyd did not explain the reason why he introduced "willow tree" in the song, but we can understand his deep insight and respect for traditional folk ballads. The willow tree is known as "a symbol of grief for forsaken lovers" (Vickery 400). For example, in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Ophelia, whose father is killed by her sweetheart, Hamlet, goes mad and drowns herself, when she tries to hang a garland on a willow tree on the bank of a brook. Furthermore, in *Othello*, another of Shakespeare's works, Desdemona, who is in despair and sorrow for her husband, sings an old song about a willow tree to herself. Audiences, who already understood the symbolical meaning of the willow tree, could expect something tragic would happen. Not only in the theatre but also in an area of singing performance, the interaction between a performer and audience, at the emotional level, was vital to the ballad singing. The use of metaphors and symbols can be shared by the community. David Buchan explains that "the oral ballad poet is often concerned more with connotative effect than strict denotative meaning" (170). The "connotative effect" works imaginatively as metaphors and symbols, shared by a community and whose root lies in a now fragmentary beliefs and myths.

The willow tree often appears in folk song. "The Banks of Green Willow" is a song about a pregnant girl who sails away with a sailor but is thrown away as a sacrifice to calm the raging storm. It was included in Lloyd and Vaughan Williams's *The Penguin Book of English Folk Songs*. The last verse, with a motif of the willow tree, arouses emotion:

Oh, make my love a coffin
Of the gold that shines yellow
And she shall be buried,

In the banks of green willow. (st.6; Lloyd and Vaughan Williams 15)

Obviously, the willow tree is used as a symbol of a forsaken lover. Lloyd must have known the symbolic meaning of the tree and introduced it in order to make the song more striking. The willow tree might simply represent the end of love between Jack Orion and the lady. Importantly, this can be also interpreted as the betrayal Jack Orion felt toward Tom, the collapse of a reliable relationship between master and servant. M. J. C. Hoggart states that understanding and recognising the symbol is “our total response to the poem” and that it “added to our enjoyment” (35). Introducing the willow tree as a symbol therefore helps audiences to participate in the story it and give their own interpretations.

While the willow tree is associated with broken relationship, the image is full of vitality and intensity, leaving a reverberating feeling with the audience. The willow tree, besides being a symbol of forsake love, represents the space in between life and death. In the *Odyssey*, willows grow at the gate of the Underground in which Hades reigns. In traditional folk ballads and myth, the boundary between life and death is ambiguous. For example, in traditional folk ballads, the rose and briar grow and reunite together, from the graves of the young couple who have been separated and lost their life due to war and the conflict between their two families:

Lord Thomas was buried in the church,
Fair Eleanor in the choir,
And out of her bosom there grew a red rose,
And out of Lord Thomas a briar.

And it grew till it reached the church steeple top,
Where it could grow no higher,

And there it entwined like a true lover's knot

For all true loves to admire. (sts.17-18; Lloyd and Vaughan Williams 63)

According to Toelken, the rose usually grows on the woman's grave, and the briar typically grows on the man's grave, signifying "the physical, sexual, reunion of the couple" (130). In traditional folk ballads, nature is an important source of imagery, representing life, death and resurrection. The suffering is contrasted with the beauty of nature around. Behind the tragic ballad story, nature always seems to exist. A hope of living can be detected in nature, and also depicted in traditional ballads. The willow tree imagery in "Jack Orion" can be seen to reflect such views on life and death. The contrast between Tom and the willow tree creates a more impressive, powerful and mysterious world that appeals more closely to the emotions than in other versions. Lloyd states that the songs he selected do not only express "the endurance" of the social inferior but also their "sense of victory" (Liner Notes to *First Person*). Although Tom is eventually punished for rebelling against the social hierarchy, he remains a working-class hero of the ballad and lives on in the heart of performers and audiences.

"Reynardine" and "Jack Orion," adapted by Lloyd, became frequently sung songs in the post-war folk revival in Britain. Both ballads embody his personal taste, that is, "songs expressing an attitude, either of social responsibility or of irony towards the more illusionistic kinds of institution that our masters try to fob us off with" (Taylor, Barry). "Reynardine" depicts a fox as a trickster who rebels against the social order, thereby enhancing the mystique of the song. "Jack Orion," an adaptation of the traditional ballad, "Glasgerion" focused on a page, Tom, who rebelled against the class hierarchy, thereby emphasising the essence of the working class. The rebellious spirit, which had resided in both ballads, took on more actuality,

transforming songs into ones which resonate with people, looking for an alternative world with which they can identify. Lloyd believed that rather than remaining in oblivion, traditional folk songs should be re-created and retold as they had been for centuries, something which Lloyd was adamant about. Only this way could folk songs survive. His open-mindedness to traditional folk songs inspired young revival folk singers to search for traditional ballads and interpret them in their own ways.

Chapter 5

A. L. Lloyd's View of Erotic Folk songs: His Reworking of "The Bony Black Hare."

The post-war folk revival encouraged people to accept erotic folk songs, which had previously been ignored or bowdlerized by Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors. Erotic folk songs directly refer to a couple's sexual relationship or suggest it with the use of euphemism or metaphors. Ed Cray states that "bawdy songs are funny; they have an elemental appeal; they entertain" (xvii), which strengthen the "underground sense of group-identification" (xxv). Erotic folk songs created an alternate community where they could share personal and secret matters such as sex and make fun of them. Although these songs survived within a small community for generations, they had not been given sufficient attention in the field of ballad and folklore studies. Rather, folk song collectors in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries completely rewrote entire songs or sections of songs with sexual connotations in keeping with the expected mores of the middle-class readership. However, a critical view of such editing appeared in the 1950s. James Reeves published *The Idiom of the People* (1958) and *The Everlasting Circle* (1960), in which he listed unpublished materials collected by Cecil Sharp and Baring-Gould, and showed that sexual and suggestive lyrics, found in traditional folk songs, had been heavily re-written. In 1964, Gershon Legman published *The Horn Book: Studies in Erotic Folklore*, giving a comprehensive history of bawdy ballads in relation to censorship. These scholarly books helped Lloyd shape the idea that erotic folk songs should be re-evaluated as part of traditional folk song genres.

The relationship between traditional songs and misogyny is complicated to grasp, but it seems necessary to discuss the issue of it in folk songs. Ballads and traditional folk songs were created out of the world in which the position of women was socially lower and the system of patriarchy was dominant. The nineteenth century Appalachian murder ballads, for example, functioned as a warning against “the dangers of love, sexuality and untrustworthy men” (Hastie 108). Besides, the beautiful and young women, who are portrayed as victims, are “violently silenced in death by femicide” (110). By doing so, according to Hastie, the women who embodied “anti-ideal” womanhood, won “ideals of stillness, wholeness, silence and perfection” by being killed (109). As already mentioned in the ballad of “Glasgerion,” the woman, who commits adultery, is punished by taking her own life, thus suggesting a common pattern of doomed women straying from the social norms.

To sum up, the element of misogyny, which was formed out of the patriarchy system, existed in ballads. Erotic folksongs, which will be discussed in this chapter, are songs mostly about female bodies, sung from a male point of view. Songs that depict a sexually active woman were created out of men’s fantasy and therefore mostly sung by men. However, as Steve Roud points out, “it must be said at the outset that simplistic notion that women do not perform and enjoy bawdy material must be laid aside as untrue and unhelpful” (555). In fact, Rayana Green reports on her grandmother in Southern America, who had “a large and delightfully bawdy store of tales, songs, jokes, and sayings” (26). The reason few knew about Southern women’s bawdy lore is that, according to Green, “more scholars of pornography, obscenity and bawdry are male. . . . Women sang them child ballads and lullabies and men told them bawdy tales and songs which could not, until recently, be printed at all” (27). Bawdy songs, sung among women,

were almost entirely hidden from the public performance.

In Britain, children, living in villages, learnt sex education “by watching animals on the farm” (Lindsay 14). This circumstance allowed them to accept sex as part of natural things, which might explain why there exists a large repertory of erotic folk songs. Despite that, Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors hesitated to publish these songs in consideration of their middle class readership. However, in the 1950s and 60s, “putting the sex back into folk song became a significant part of the Revival’s countercultural rebellion” (Roud 553). Lloyd and MacColl “were more than happy to provide materials with their records and publications, to the extent of putting bawdy back into places where it did not previously exist” (Roud 553). In a sense, the post-war folk revival possessed an element of misogyny in that they found value in erotic folk songs performed from male perspectives. Although attempts to focus on the hidden voices of women were made in the Folklore Society by the 1980s, we must keep in mind that Lloyd and MacColl, did not have a concept of “feminism” at least in the 1950s and 60s.

Having said that, Lloyd’s attempt was something innovative and practical in conveying erotic folk songs to a wider audience as part of living singing culture. Collaborating with Anne Briggs, Luis Killen, Frankie Armstrong and Norman Kennedy, Lloyd released *The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Erotic Songs* (1966), focusing on traditional folk songs preserved in Britain. Although American folk singer Ed McCurdy (1919-2000) had already released *Sin Songs Pro & Con* in 1954, Lloyd’s LP release of erotic folk songs was important not only as it was the first attempt in Britain but also in giving clear and insightful interpretations of these songs. This chapter will use the text of “The Bonny Black Hare” that he recorded for *The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Erotic Songs*.

5-1 Censorship of the Late Victorian and Edwardian Folk Revival

Before mentioning Lloyd's erotic folk songs, it seems significant to trace the history of censorship in the Late Victorian and Edwardian folk revival. Erotic folk songs were new repertoires of the post-war folk revival in Britain. These songs challenged a dominant view, held by the Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors, that any obscene lyrics should be expurgated or re-written. Legman claims that "the entire history of folksong publication in the English language is one of falsification and expurgation for the last two hundred years, and that it has invariably disguised its forgeries and dishonesties behind mealy-mouthed prefatory brags of sexual purity" (*The Horn* 342). Legman's argument makes sense because Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors always confronted the problem of bowdlerizing the texts they had gathered. They attached more importance to melodies rather than to words because they were "primarily musicians" and their real purpose in collecting folk songs was "nothing less than the re-vitalization of English music" (Roud xvii). This meant that folk song collectors found it necessary to rewrite some of the songs when they found them too rude for middle-class audiences.

Baring-Gould, a priest, writer and collector of traditional folk songs sung in Devon and Cornwall, justified his editorial method by stating as follows:

As a great part of the words was obscene or indelicate, it became absolutely necessary for me to write fresh verses to such as were not fit to be sung in a drawing room. Unhappily some of the most dainty airs were wedded to the most indecorous words. (*Further Reminiscences* 189)

In fact, Baring-Gould was notorious for heavy re-writing of sexual words when publishing folk-song collections. For example, "Strawberry Fair" is

one of the songs that he entirely rewrote in 1891. The song was collected and preserved in *Songs and Ballads of the West*. In the published version, this was a song about a man who takes a fancy to a girl who is on the way to the fair:

“Kind sir, pray pick of my basket.” she said.

Singing etc.

“My cherries ripe, or my roses red,

Fol-de-dee

My strawberries sweet, I can of them spare.

As I go on to Strawberry Fair.

Ri-fol, & etc c.” (II. 1-7; *Songs and Ballads* 145)

This appears as a mere pastoral song. As Baring-Gould, commented in *Songs of the West*, “We have been forced to rewrite the words, which were very indelicate” (20). The original version, preserved in his handwritten manuscript, tells a different story. When the man asks what she sells, she answers:

O I have a lock that doth lack a key

O I have a lock sir, she did say.

If you have a key then come this way,

As we go on to Strawberry Fair.

Between us I reckon, that when we met

The key to the lock, it was well set

The key to the lock, it well did fit

As we went on to Strawberry Fair

O would that my lock had been a gun

I'd shoot the blacksmiths, for I'm undone.

And wares to carry I need have none.

That I should go to Strawberry Fair.

(II. 5-16; Baring-Gould, "Strawberry Fair")

Compared to the published version, the original contains many more overtly sexual symbols such as the "lock" and "key" phrases. E. David Gregory points out that the woman might be a prostitute, or might have experienced an unexpected pregnancy and thus desire revenge on the man (*The Late Victorian Folk Song Revival* 149-150). Baring-Gould simply rewrote lyrics when he found them unsuitable for the drawing room. But it does not necessarily mean that he underestimated or underappreciated their originality. When he rewrote songs, he informed his readers that he had done so. Furthermore, he donated all the ballads and melodies that he had collected in their original form to the Public Free Library. Although Baring-Gould might have changed the words of these songs in consideration of his middle-class audience, he was still willing to allow the public to have access to the original materials. In the Edwardian period, expurgation became a justified social mission because Cecil Sharp, the most influential folk song collector of the period, decided to incorporate folk songs into children's education as a means of promoting national culture. As already noted in chapter one, "The Seeds of Love," collected by Sharp, originally concerns a woman's seduction and abandonment through the use of plant metaphors (Palmer, *Folk Songs* 133). The first stanza, "I sow the seeds of love, / And I sowed them in the spring / I gathered them up in the morning so soon, / while the small birds so sweetly sing," metaphorically describes the sexual act. However, the song was re-written when incorporated into a music textbook for children.

These songs were sung in small communities, and therefore there were some cases in which female folk song collectors were not allowed to collect

these songs from villagers. When Lucy Broadwood, who was from the upper middle class, collected a song from an old man, he suddenly stopped singing and said that "I know a wonderful deal more, but they are not very good ones. Most of them be outway rude" ("On the Collecting" 101). In another case, Henry Burstow, a shoemaker and bellringer from Horsham, Sussex, who was best known for his vast repertoires of traditional folk songs, sent a letter with a song "Gilderoy" to Broadwood, saying that "I dare say you can alter some of the words" (Burstow). This suggests that a singer hinted that bawdy words should be expurgated. These cases imply that a large number of erotic folk songs were sung in an all-male atmosphere like pubs. It was generally considered justifiable to edit obscene words when published for the middle class readership.

However, Lloyd called these songs "erotic folk songs," thus discovering an essential value in them. As shown in "Strawberry Fair" and "The Seeds of Love," these songs never openly describe sexual matters, but rather suggest them with the use of figurative expressions and word plays in order for audiences to participate in the construction of their meaning. As Lloyd states, "these songs here are made by man and woman in close touch with nature, the run of the seasons, the growth of the crops, increase of stock, the fruitfulness of their own kind" (Liner Notes to *The Bird*). He associated erotic folk song with the imagery of natural procreation and fertility, which was distinct from coarse bawdy songs. Stripped of their social and historical context, however, these songs would give little insight into the original tradition. Sharp and other folk song collectors aided the popularisation of these folk songs. However, this meant that the songs, heavily reedited and bowdlerized from the originals, gained dominance during the first half of the twentieth century. A new generation of folk enthusiasts, such as Ewan MacColl and A. L. Lloyd, were no longer content to settle for redacted

versions of the originals. “Erotic folk songs” arose out of their challenge to the dogma of the Victorian and Edwardian folk revival, shaping alternative repertoires of folk songs.

5-2 Discussion over Erotic Folk Songs

The Bird in the Bush offered innovative pieces of music, collecting erotic British folk songs such as “The Two Magicians,” “The Wanton Seed,” “The Bonny Black Hare,” and “The Mower.” Following the LP release of *The Bird in the Bush*, a fierce argument was played out in the folk song magazine, *Spin*. Tony Davis wrote a short review of this album, in which he described *The Bird in the Bush* as “a nutshell” (19). He criticized the way Lloyd selected only erotic folk songs and concluded by saying that “I feel sure that he [Lloyd] wished to see these songs accepted into the general repertory of revival singers. This end would, I feel, be far better served by the inclusion of a few erotic songs on each of several more general records. You can have too much of even the best thing!” (30). It is doubtful if Davis knew about “the concept album,” a new format that emerged at that time. There is no clear definition of the term, but according to Jim Cullen, the concept album means “a collection of discrete but thematically unified songs whose whole is greater than some of its parts” (98). 1966 saw the release of The Beach Boys’ *Pet Sounds* (1966 May) and The Beatles’ *Revolver* (1966 August), both of which were labelled as “the first concept album” (Jones, Carys Wyn 49). Driven by the mood of the swinging sixties,” the age of free love and hippie generation, *The Bird in the Bush*, released also in 1966, was an experimental piece of work in the British folk scene, providing new interpretations of various songs about love and lust.

Nevertheless, this criticism suggested that erotic folk songs were still considered to be rude pornographic songs, rather than as a significant

cultural products of working-class people. Furthermore, a reviewer in *Spin Magazine* condemned Lloyd for a “boring over-emphasis on the sexual joke” (Review of *The Best of A. L. Lloyd* 4). Against such criticism, Lloyd explained how to sing these erotic folk songs:

It's true I do sing rather a lot of songs of erotic content. I like them. Behind the light surface there are often considerable deep, ponderable sobrieties. The roots of many such songs are found in the religious institutions of early agricultural civilizations and these intuitions—such as the identification of ploughing and poking—have often doggedly survived more or less unaltered over the last—what?—three thousand years and more, up to our own time: so it's clear they have a tenacious grip on the imagination of man, and are not to be lightly shrugged off as insignificant. (Letters 26)

This clarifies Lloyd's claim that erotic folk songs are deeply rooted in agricultural societies and therefore they reflect life and minds of the country people. This can be observed in *Folk Song in England* (1967), in which Lloyd explains that the erotic folk song “with its clean joy and acceptance of the realities of virginity and desire, passion and pregnancy, belongs to a country people living an integrated deeply-communal life, in tune with natural events, with the cycle of the seasons, seed-times and harvest” (197). Thus, according to Lloyd, “a love affair is not simply established within the couple, nor even between the couple and the community, but extends beyond that to the whole natural environment as an echo, however faint, of an ancient ritualistic way of looking at the world” (*Folk Song* 197). This means that sexual intercourse was not regarded as obscene from the viewpoint of country people. Rather, it signified harmony with the natural world. Erotic folk songs vividly describe how people

assimilated themselves with nature through the process of sexual intercourse. Love is not only shared by the individuals but also deeply connected with their world and nature. In a reply to *Spin*, Lloyd also mentioned another significant point:

It's in the favour of the folk songs that few of them adopt the idea of sex as sin. The message tends to be about increase rather than naughtiness, with laughter rather than guilt and despair. (I'm speaking now of the solidly traditional erotic songs, not the sad pornographic Eskimo Nellery.) I suppose the reason why I incline to sing rather a lot of amatory—encounter songs is to reassure young listeners that relations between the sexes don't have to be—as the pops pretend—a matter of despair, loss and frenzy. Perhaps attempts to redress a balance tend to seem like a “boring over-emphasis”? (Letters 26)

What Lloyd is stressing here is that erotic folk songs could be a challenge to the mores of a prudent and prudish middle-class society. As Paul Long points out, “For him (Lloyd), the freedom of the folk genre arose from a different cultural mindset—that of the working-class” (93). Lloyd believed that erotic folk songs are a reflection of working-class society, in which sex is joyous and celebrated for procreation. These songs, as Lloyd argued, also differ from sex portrayed in pop music, which was associated with drugs and commercialism. Erotic folk songs are more communal and optimistic, rooted in the earth and people's daily life. Thus, the role of erotic folk songs in modern society was to get rid of middle-class prejudices and provide a different worldview.

Tony Wilson later defended Lloyd against harsh criticism, arguing that these songs had a sort of humour, which was the reason why his audience accepted them and “laughed outright, long and loud” without any

prejudice (25). As Wilson insisted:

My attitude is that I am pleased Bert is singing these songs as part of his repertoire. I am glad to hear songs which Victorian and latter-day prudes have attempted to make us forget about. Certainly these songs have never been absent from the repertoires of our traditional singers, if proof be needed[,] listen to some Bob Roberts or Jeannie Robertson's songs to name but two. (25)

Wilson stood in the position of the audience, who actually enjoyed listening to what Lloyd provided as an important cultural product. The reaction of audiences can be heard in *An Evening with A. L. Lloyd*, recorded live at the Top Lock Folk Club on November 5 1972. It conveyed the cheerful atmosphere when Lloyd sang "The Widow of Westmorland's Daughter," a song about an innocent girl who believes that her maidenhead could be replaced if she lay downside up. Another important point that Wilson suggests here is that Lloyd revived the sexual lyrics that Victorian folk song-collectors had consciously erased.

Attitudes in rural society towards sexual life can be observed in a novel, *Cider with Rosie* (1959), written by English writer, Laurie Lee (1914-97). According to Lee, who lived in the village of Slad in Gloucestershire, village life was "clearly no pagan paradise" (201) with long working hours and austere life conditions. However, in terms of sex, there was a generosity and honesty among the community. He recalled his first sexual experience:

Such early sex-games were formal exercises, a hornless charging of calves, but we were certainly lucky to live in a village, the landscape abounded with natural instruction which we imitated as best we could; if anyone saw us they laughed their heads off

and there were no magistrates to define us obscene. (200)

Lee's description here can be easily related to Lloyd's ideas about erotic folk songs. This shows that those living in villages deemed sex to be a natural function and their attitude was generous and optimistic. However, Lloyd's claim that erotic folk songs only celebrate the freedom of love and associate the earth with fertility is an exaggerated opinion. Vic Gammon argues that Lloyd's viewpoint could be too romanticized and that the song's main functions were "social and conservative," enforcing appropriate role in the society (Desire 49). We can see that Gammon's point is partly true if we consider folk songs like "Rosemary Lane" and "A Brisk Young Sailor." Both songs describe a woman who is seduced and then abandoned with a baby by a sailor. "Rosemary Lane" underlines the dangers of premarital sex:

Now all you young lasses take a warning from me
 Never trust a young sailor whos'er he may be
 They give you, they court you, they swear they'll be true
 But the very next moment they'll bid you adieu.
 (II 20-24; Roud 125)

The warning phrase can often be seen in traditional songs. Even if the love affair is satisfactory, the reality could be harsh unless the couple decides to get married. As Dave Arthur points out, "sexual relationships, might not, as Bert said, be matters for despair, loss, or frenzy, but they should, perhaps, be about responsibility as well as laughter, and many amorous folk songs were potentially as admonitory as amusing" (*Bert* 116). There were two complicated elements, the "amusing" and the "admonitory" in erotic folk songs. Erotic folk songs are often treated as being comic, when they are sung in public spaces like the pub or in social gatherings, but the text itself also reveals another realistic viewpoint, which is not as light and amusing as people assume. Most coarse songs were usually "sung only by men and

were male-oriented" (Palmer, *The Sound* 219). The maid, sung in erotic folk songs, who is open to, free with, and in control of sexuality, "is the product of male representation of female reality and, specifically female sexuality" (Preston 320). Thus, Lloyd's optimistic idea about erotic folk songs is not completely convincing, and may be subject to feminist critique. Having said that, as Legman points out, "to most people they are among the most treasured, if secrets, parts" ("Erotic" 417). Throughout human history, erotic folk songs gained an underground popularity. According to Ed Cray, "bawdy songs have survived when other folk songs have died, victims of urbanization and the blight of the mass media" (xiii). "The reason for this staying power is" as Cray put it, "bawdy songs are funny" (xiii). In another case, Jig, a form of social folk dance, which developed in the sixteenth century, was sometimes associated with "a sexual dance figuring copulation" because of its "lively dance and up-and-down motion" (Clegg and Skeaping 32). It is obvious that audience were familiar with the sexual innuendo, expressed in songs and dances. Cray gives an interesting comment:

Bawdy songs are remembered and sung by adults because they, too feel a need to "rebel." The prevailing public opinion, or what the singers feel is the prevailing public opinion, that somehow bawdy songs are 'dirty' or not fit for polite society permits the bawdy songster to thumb his nose at convention even as he relieves his own fears and guilt with laughter . . . The very locale of the presentation lends a covert, "underground" sense of group identification—a (usually) masculine camaraderie or "we-feeling" so necessary for the emotionally mature male. (xxiii)

As Cray argues above, bawdy songs, although mostly sung from a male-point of view, are one way of expressing the suppressed or forbidden feeling through the use of wit and laughter. The rebellious spirit, disguised

in the form of songs and dances, shaped an alternative world where people could share, not bounded by social hierarchy. Lloyd's use of "erotic" folk songs took on philosophical, psychological and political connotations. In Freudian terms, Eros is used as a synonym for sexual or life instinct, which is in opposition to death instinct. Eros, according to Freud, "seeks to force together and hold together the portions of living substance" (54). The idea that connects Eros with the unity of life, corresponds with Lloyd's vision on erotic folk songs that place importance on the harmony between nature and human beings. Furthermore, as Herbert Marcuse points out in *Eros and Civilization*, a freedom that releases the powers of Eros can be a tool of revolt against civilization based on "toil, productivity and progress through repression" (161). Since *Eros and Civilization* "was being read in New Left and antiwar circles, and providing a new Marxist-psychoanalytic perspective" (Davis, G. Susan 218), it is highly likely that Lloyd bore in mind these concepts when articulating the idea of erotic folk songs. For him, erotic folk songs provide an alternative relationship between human beings and nature, thus giving a different insight into the world.

Lloyd's selection of these erotic folk songs, with his emphasis on the freedom of sex and its consonance with nature, consciously or unconsciously, echoed the changing mores of an emerging permissive society in Britain. Metaphors and symbols of love and nature, as well as the direct and simple expressions of folk songs that Lloyd suggested, captured the imagination of young people and shaped new values and aesthetics. In the post-war folk revival, erotic folk songs were no longer, limited to male-singers. Rather, female singers enjoyed singing these songs, interpreting them as a celebration of freedom and sexual liberation. Preston argues that these songs, sung by men, strengthened male-gendered power. On the other hand, as Preston puts it, "if voiced by a woman, the stanza might function

ironically as either a woman's validation of male power or as a challenge to that expected validation" (337). When these songs were sung in the context of performing arts, they have many purposes and produce different ambiguous meanings and reactions, in relation to singers, audiences and places. To Frankie Armstrong, a female folk singer, these erotic folk songs were a revelation.

The sexual ethic of most of our traditional song is decidedly "pre-Victorian." For some years, folk clubs were the only places where one could hear songs that took it for granted that copulation was a normal human activity . . . To those of us reared on the pop songs of the 1950s and early '60s, which scarcely acknowledged that the human body extended below the neck, it came as a tremendous liberation that such matters could be sung about. We did not worry about what would nowadays be called the sexism of some of the songs—no such concept was then available. (Armstrong and Pearson 97)

For female singers like Armstrong, erotic folk songs gave them a new perspective on the human body and life. Although some of the folk songs have a warning message about the sexual relationships, the pill (female contraception), which became widely used in the 1960s helped to eliminate the seriousness of these warnings. Such an optimistic background promoted the inclusion of the erotic folk songs into their repertoires.

5-3 Brief Introduction to the Bonnie Black Hare

A. L. Lloyd sang "The Bonny Black Hare" accompanied by a fiddler, Dave Swarbrick. It was included in his LP *The Bird in the Bush: Traditional Songs of Love and Lust*, which was released in 1966 from Topic Records. This is a song with explicit sexual meanings: A man goes out hunting a

hare; he encounters a woman and indulges in a sexual dalliance. The oldest source can be traced back to the mid nineteenth century broadside ballad, preserved at the Bodleian Library in Oxford. The following is an excerpt from the broadside version:

One morning in autumn by the dawn of the day
 With my gun in good order I straight took my way
 To look for some game to the woods[,] I did steer,
 To see if I could find my bonny black hare.

I met a young damsel, her eyes black as sloes,
 Her teeth white as ivory, her cheeks like the rose,
 Her hair hung in ringlets on her shoulder bare,
 Sweet maiden[,] I cried, did you see my black hare?

This morning a-hunting I have been all around,
 But my bonny black hare is not to be found.
 The maid she then answered, and at him did stare,
 “I never yet hear, of or saw, a black hare.

I think you are deceitful, young maid, he did say,
 My bonny black hare I am told passed this way;
 And you have decoyed me, I vow and declare,
 You shall go with me for to hunt the bonny black hare (sts.1-4
 “The Bonny Black Hare”)

Among a few rare oral versions of this song, collected in various parts of Britain, there is one collected by George Barnet Gardiner (1852-1910) in Portsmouth in 1907. However, the entire text is missing and only the first verse has survived. As Purslow points out, “this is word-for-word the

opening of a broadside text in the Bodleian” (118). Cecil Sharp also collected part of “The Bonny Black Hare” at Somerset in 1908, which was almost identical with the broadside version. Therefore, we can assume that the oral versions, preserved in Britain, took the form of the broadside version. There is a lot in common between Lloyd’s version and Vance Randolph’s two versions, collected in Ozark County (US) in 1940 and 1942 respectively. However, Lloyd claims that he learnt “The Bonny Black Hare” from a British traditional singer, observing that “It was got from an immigrant potato-lifter near Walberswick, but he learnt it in England” (Liner Notes to *The Bird*). Martin Carthy, who learnt “The Bonny Black Hare” from Lloyd, gave a specific profile of the singer, noting that “This version was collected from an Irish labourer, Mr. Morrow, at Walberswick, Suffolk, in 1938” (Liner Notes to *Byker Hill*). But as is often the case, there was no record that Mr. Morrow sang the version. As far as this present research is concerned, no discernible similarity has been found between Randolph’s versions and the oral ones found in Britain. As Malcolm Taylor, who worked as a librarian and a director of the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML), points out, “he was creative with this one” because there was no recorded materials that suggest the existence of the singer, Mr. Morrow (E-mail interview Part II). Dave Arthur, too, doubts if Mr. Morrow existed, arguing that it is highly likely that Lloyd was influenced by Randolph’s versions of “The Bonny Black Hare” (Email interview Part II). As can be seen from these two interviews, it is clear that Lloyd made up the character of Mr. Morrow in order to create what audiences were keen to hear, namely, an authentic English traditional song. As mentioned in chapter Four, Lloyd presented “Reynardine” as an authentic English folk song, one that he learnt from Tom Cook, at Eastbridge, Suffolk. Stephen D. Winick, however, reveals that this informant was a fictional figure, for there has been no

evidence that he actually existed (“A. L. Lloyd” 288-89). Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that “The Bonny Black Hare” is a sort of song that Lloyd reworked. Vance Randolph (1892-1960) was a folk song collector who influenced and helped Lloyd to promote English erotic folk songs. After studying psychology at Clark University, he moved to Pineville, Missouri in 1919, where he started collecting Ozark folk songs, ballads, folk tales, superstitions, jokes, and riddles. According to Randolph, people who live in Ozark County came “of British stock, and many families have lived in America since colonial days. Their material heirlooms are few, but like all isolated illiterates, they have clung to the old songs and obsolete sayings” (*Ozark* 3). It is clear from this passage that the materials he collected in the Ozark region were linked to the British folk songs. Unlike other folk song collectors who came from the city, Randolph, living in the Ozark area, established a personal relationship with singers, leading him to collect many songs including erotic folk songs. Since he presented bawdy phrases as they were, he was not allowed to publish most of them (Legman, Introduction 6). Lloyd admitted in his liner notes that “Vance Randolph found a version among the Ozark hillfolk, too coarse to publish” (Liner Notes to *The Bird*). In fact, the two versions of “The Bonny Black Hare” were collected and recorded by Randolph during the period when he was commissioned to do field recording for the Archive of American Folk Song between 1940 and 1944. He sent in “one hundred and eighty records of Ozark ballads and folk tunes” (Lomax, Archive 59) for the Library of Congress and “The Bonny Black Hare” was one of those collections preserved there. Although there has been no evidence supporting the fact that Lloyd corresponded with Randolph, Dave Arthur assumes that “Randolph’s bawdy/erotic material was available in an archive, perhaps Bert had access to such an archive on trip to the States” (Email Interview

Part II). Another possibility is that he might have learnt it from the American folksong collector, Alan Lomax (1915-2002), who had worked as Director of the Archive of American Folk Song between 1937 and 1943 and settled in London between 1950 and 1958.

Either way, there is little doubt that Randolph's erotic folk collections helped Lloyd to deepen understanding of this genre of songs. Randolph's unprintable material including bawdy songs and tales achieved "underground reputations" among a small group of scholarly readers (Green, Rayna xi). Lloyd, who established himself as a professional folklorist by the 1950s, must have read them. For example, one of Lloyd's Australian storytelling repertoires, "Hold on Hamilton" is similar to "Fill Bowl Fill" that Randolph collected in 1927. The story of "*Hold Hamilton*" is as follows. A mean cattle owner Tyson hires a worker named Hamilton to capture rabbits. Tyson discovers that Hamilton has a magical tin whistle that can lure rabbits towards him. Tyson, who does not want to pay Hamilton, gets his daughter and wife to steal the magical tin whistle, but they are seduced by the tune and make love with Hamilton.

Oh, the boss's daughter come[s] to me bed

All for to try me the skill,

I pulled her in and rolled her well,

And the tank is still to fill, fill fill, the tank is still to fill,

Oh the boss's wife come[s] to me door,

All for to try me skill,

I pulled her in and rolled her well,

And the tank is still to fill, fill, fill, and the tank is still to fill.

(Qtd. in Arthur, "I Remember" 5)

This is similar to that of Randolph:

The next to come over was the king's own daughter,
 To steal away my skill
 I laid her down and horned her off,
 Fill, bowl, fill!

The next come over was the king's own wife
 To steal away my skill,
 I laid her down and horned her off,
 Fill, bowl, fill! (49 *Pissing*)

Gregory Mark notes that "Hold on Hamilton" was the one that Lloyd "embellished with some of the 'imaginative detail'" ("Bert Lloyd Interview"). Arthur, who never saw it in any collection of Australian folklore, assumes "his subsequent Ozified reworking of the American story 'Fill, Bowl, Fill'" ("I Remember" 2). This example shows how Randolph's humorous erotic storytelling influenced and encouraged Lloyd to create his own versions. Similarly, "The Bonny Black Hare" is a song that Lloyd garnished with "imaginative detail" using Randolph's versions.

5-4 A Text Analysis of "The Bonnie Black Hare"

[Lloyd's Version]

On the fourteenth of May at the dawn of the day
 With me gun on me shoulders to the woods I did stray
 In search of some game if the weather proved fair
 To see could I get a shot at the bonny black hare. (st.1)

[Randolph's A Version]

On the sixteenth of May, at the dawn of the day,
 With my gun on my shoulder to the game field did stray,

In search of some game if the weather proved fair.

To see could I get a shot at the bonny black hare. (st.1; *Roll* 42)

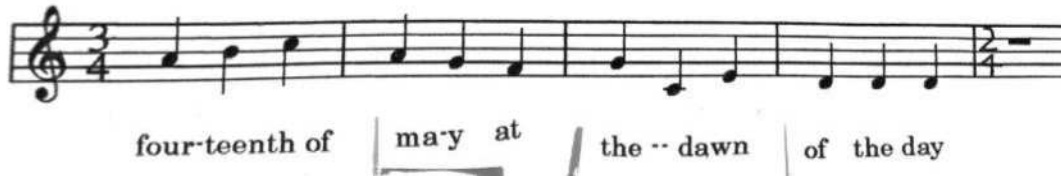


Fig. 13 The Tune, transcribed from A. L. Lloyd's "The Bonny Black Hare" (Lloyd, "The Bonny Black Hare")

This opening stanza starts with a man going out to "the woods" and "the fields" to look for the bonny black hare. The melody, Lloyd used here, is different from the one collected by Randolph. It is likely that he made up the tune or borrowed it from other traditional songs. The song mostly consists of three beats, but sometimes changes into two beats.

The tempo is fast and rhythmical, which is perfectly suitable for the hunting song, used as an allegory of love courtship.

There are many folk songs that open in May. For example, a song called "Cupid and the Ploughboy" begins with this opening stanza:

As I walked out one May morning when May was all in bloom
 I went into the meadows to taste the sweet perfume
 I went into the flowery field to turn my head a while
 Where I saw Kilpit [Cupid] the pretty ploughboy, who did my
 heart beguile. (st.1; Roud and Bishop 56)

"As I walked out in May Morning" is a conventional set phrase. Most songs follow a plot in which a hero or heroine goes to a deserted area aimlessly and encounters a member of the opposite sex. May is a meaningful word with several associated images. Firstly, agricultural chores shift from intensive winter work to the onset of strenuous outdoor activities. Secondly,

May, coming after a long, dark winter, has overtones of warmth, fertility, and a new beginning. Thirdly, May signifies wooing, dalliance and seduction (Toelken, "Figurative Language" 134; Renwick 19). May is linked with the early morning and the dawn of the day, and also signifies a "play-time" release from heavy labour in a mild climate (Renwick 19). According to Toelken, it suggests the "expectation of an amorous narrative—Or at least one with amorous possibilities" ("Figurative Language" 134). It is believed that the Maypole, used in the May-day festivals, was a phallic symbol, associated with fertility and growth. In "The Bonnie Black Hare," the man goes out to hunt a hare, yet considering such images of May, his other purpose is to encounter a woman, identified as a hare.

The hare has long been connected with womanhood, fertility and sexuality, in myths and rituals (Davis and Margo 134). The man is described as a hunter with a gun, whereas a hare is a metaphor for a woman. The song can be categorized as a love-hunting song. According to Cartmill, "ancient writers as far back as Plato had occasionally used the hunt as a metaphor for a lover's pursuit of the beloved" (70). Lloyd, in the Liner Notes to "The Bonny Black Hare," explains:

Psychiatrists tell us the cowboy's ready gun is a "potency affirmation." Well, maybe. Certainly, to identify sex-relations with ordnance display is an old joke. Cupid with his bow and arrows is but the fore-runner of those sailors in the bawdy songs who fire their canon and hole their girl amidships and fall asleep with an empty shot-locker. Here, suitably enough, the central image is a sporting gun with its punning target the black hare.

(Liner Notes to *The Bird*)

The theme of "The Bonny Black Hare" is a sexual conquest. This is clearly evident in the metaphor of hunting with a gun. The woman is seduced and

conquered by the sexually oppressive power of the man. Lewes included the broadside version of "The Bonny Black Hare" in his list of pornographic texts that present "women's bodies (or more accurately, a generalized female body) as a site of male pleasures" (167). "The Bonny Black Hare" shows how the woman, identified as a hare, becomes the prey of the man in a humorous way.

In contrast to Lloyd's version where he heads towards the woods, the man heads towards the game field in Randolph's A version. Lloyd must have borrowed from the two lines of Randolph's B version, "With my gun in good order to the woods I did stray" (I.2). The existing broadside-ballad of "The Bonny Black Hare" runs as follows: "With my gun in good order, I straight took my way to look hunt for some game to the woods I did steer" (II.2-41). This line shows that "woods" is an original phrase. While the field has an open atmosphere, the woods evoke a closed and prohibited place, separated from civilization. The woods have folkloric connotations, associated with the image of being "unconventional, free, alluring, but dangerous" (Zipes 66). In fairy tales, within the woods, the protagonist "usually finds shelter from what s/he hoped to escape from the civilized world" (Post 68). On the other hand, woods provide "challenging places, in which the courage and aptitude of the protagonist is tested" (Post 68). The woods, where social rules no longer apply, may bring about a new experience and opportunity. By selecting mystical "woods" rather than "fields" as a place in which the story is set, Lloyd successfully emphasises the function of the verb "stray," which signifies "escap[ing] from confinement or control, to wander away from a place" ("Stray, v. 2."). The broadside version uses "steer" signifying "to guide to a specified point or in a specified direction" ("Steer, v. 1."), which suggests that the man behaves as if he knew what would happen—that he would have an encounter with a woman. On the other hand, according to Lloyd's

version, mostly borrowing from Randolph's B version, the man's intention is vague and exploratory. While expecting to find a hare, in other words, a woman, he wanders into the woods, half aimlessly. The following stanza depicts a scene in which the young hunter meets a woman:

[Lloyd's version]

I met a young girl there, with her face as a rose
 Her skin was as fair as a lily that blows
 I say, "Me young maiden, why ramble you so?"
 Can you tell me where the bonny black hare do go?
 (st.2)

[Randolph's A Version]

I met a fair maiden as fair as a rose,
 Her cheeks [cheek] was as fair as the lilies that grows.
 Say I, my fair maiden, why rambles you so?
 Can you tell me where the bonny black hare does grow? (st.2;
Roll 42)

The man encounters the woman at a deserted place, separated from the everyday world. This is a typical plot in folk songs. Randolph's A version frequently uses a traditional expression, "fair," to describe the beauty of the woman. While Lloyd's version gives the woman a lively modern image, with phrases such as "young girl" or "young maiden," he preserves the traditional poetical expressions, using similes such as "her face as a rose" and "her skin was as fair as the lily that blows." Compared to the eighth line of Randolph's A version, ending with "the lily that grows," the verb, "the blow" sounds like an archaic poetical expression. The man asks the whereabouts of the bonny black hare. In the next stanza, the woman answers his question.

[Lloyd's version]

The answer she gave me, Oh her answer was no
 But under my apron, o they say it do grow.
 And if you'll not deceive me, well I vow and declare,
 We'll go off together to see the bonny black hare. (st.3)

[Randolph's A version]

The answer she gave me, the answer was no,
 But under my apron, they say it doth grow,
 An' if you'll not deceive me, I vow an' declare
 We'll go to yon green wood to hunt the black bonny hare.
 (st.3; *Roll* 42)

The woman's answer—the hare grows under the apron—creates a play on words with sexual connotations. Black hare and black hair have the same sound. We can assume that they have erotic double meanings in the performance context. Overall, this stanza has playful tones, but the solemn expressions such as “vow” and “declare” are used. This brings out the contrast between a cheerful and a serious mood. The woman is willing to have sex, yet she also worries about having pre-marriage sex and is anxious to secure a guarantee of marriage. Gammon points out that in a closed village society, “sexual activity outside marriage generally took place in a disapproving, inquisitive and regulative atmosphere” (Desire 18). However, he also admits that sexual intercourse was tacitly tolerated if the couples “had every intention to marry and eventually did” (20). Such a tacit acknowledgement is implied in “The Bonny Black Hare.” The song continues:

[Lloyd's Version]

Oh, I laid this girl down with her face to the skies

I took out me ramrod and me bullets likewise
 I say “Lock your legs around me and dig in with your heels
 For the closer, we get love, the better it feels. (II. 9-12)

[Randolph’s B Version]

I laid her down gently with her face to the sky,
 I tuck out my ramrod an’ laid my balls by
 I said, Do as I tell you, lock you around me your heels
 For the closer, we get love, the better it feels. (II. 9-12; *Roll* 43)

This stanza describes the sexual scene graphically. Compared with Lloyd’s version, Randolph’s B version used an adverb “gently” which reflects the man’s consideration for her body as well as a singer’s consideration for morality. Randolph’s A version also describes the man “walking on beside her” (st.4). Lloyd’s version ignored such affectionate details. Rather, he attached importance to a momentary impulse and instinct, aroused in the man. By doing so, he emphasises the “ramrod” and “bullet,” both of which can be associated with the image of a phallus. But this violent and intense verse is in contrast to the more restrained stanza that follows:

[Lloyd’s Version]

Now the birds they were singing in the bushes and trees
 And the songs that they sang was, O, she’s easy to please.
 And I felt her heart quiver and I knew what I’d done
 Says I, “Have you had enough of me old sporting gun?”
 (st.4)

[Randolph’s B Version]

I heard the birds singing in the bushes an’ trees

I felt her heart throbbin' an' I knowed [knew] what I'd done. (St.4;
43)

This is the most imaginative part of the song. After having sexual intercourse, the man notices that the woman's "heart quivers" and he comes to himself. The scene develops from their sexual act to the description of nature which surrounds them. Lloyd mainly borrows from Randolph's B version but he now creates a new phrase, "the songs that they sang was, O, she's easy to please" (II.18). Lloyd imagines a missing verse in Randolph's version and attempts to revive what he considered to be an ideal traditional song. We need to speculate on this introduction of a talking bird. Birds can often be seen in traditional songs, appearing as figurative expressions, related to sexual matters. "The Bird in the Bush" ("Three Maids are Milking") is a song about maids, who neglect their jobs and indulge themselves in sexual acts with him that they do not know well. Here, a bird stimulates action and provokes a response:

They met with a man with a man that they knew,
They met with a man that they knew,
They boldly asked him if he had any skill
That would catch a small bird or two

Oh yes! I've a very good skill,
Oh yes, I've a very good skill,
If you'll go with me to yonder green grove.
I will catch you a small bird or two.

They courted all day in the shade,
These maidens, as I have heard now
But no small birds they caught, for love was their thought,

And they cared not for milking their cow.

(sts.2-4; Williams, Alfred 229)

The broadside version of “Three Maids A-Milking Would Go” adds another phrase, “He set her up against a green tree/ And he beat the bush and the Bird flew in, / A little above my love’s knees” (II. 18-20). The bird is used figuratively in the evocation of sexual arousal. According to the liner-notes Lloyd wrote for “Bird in the Bush” (“Three Maids are A-Milking”), “[I]n poetry, as in dream, the bird may be a mild symbol of the penis as the rose, rosebush or bush is of the vulva.” Thus, the description of the birds singing in the bushes and trees in “The Bonny Black Hare” provides a clear sexual implication.

The talking bird that Lloyd newly invented in this verse, gives another meaning to the song. In traditional ballads, a supernatural bird, that is able to speak, has several motifs: “*the Bird of Truth, Bird reveals murder, Bird reveals woman’s infidelity, Bird tells a secret, Murder discovered through knowledge of bird languages, Prophetic bird, Speaking bird tells where the treasure is buried, Birds as messenger of the gods, and so on*” (Atkinson, *The English Traditional Ballads* 163; italics in original). For example, the talking bird can be seen in a song called “Young Hunting,” included as no. 68 in Francis Child’s ballad collection. This is a violent and tragic story about a jealous woman who kills her lover, Young Hunting, with a pen-knife, after discovering that he is attracted to another woman, and throws his corpse into a river. Here, the talking bird appears as a witness to this crime. The following is from Child’s A version:

Out an spake [spoke] the bonny bird,
That flew abon [above] her head:
“Lady, keep well thy green clothing
Fra [From] that good lord’s blood”

O better I'll keep my green clothing
 Fra that good lord's blood
 Nor thou can keep thy flattering toun [tongue],
 That flatters in thy head.

Light down, light down, my bonny bird
 Light down upon my hand

“O siller [silver], O siller shall be thy hire,
 And goud [gold] shall be thy fee
 An every month into the year,
 Thy cage shall changed be.”

“I winna [wanna] light down, I shanna [shall] light down,
 I winna light on thy hand
 For soon, soon wad [would] ye do to me
 As ye done to Young Hunting. (sts.7-11; Child 68; vol. 2)

The bird, who never forgives the concealment of the sin she committed, exposes the murder and the whereabouts of the body to the king, who is looking for his missing son.

Out an spake [spoke] the bonny bird,
 That flew abon [above] their head

“O, he's na drawned [not drown] in Clyde Water,
 He is slain and put therein;

That lady that lives in you castil [castle]
Slew him and put him in.

“Leave aff [off] your ducking on the day,
And duck upon the night
Whear ever that sakeless [innocent] knight lys [lies] slain
The candles will shine bright. (sts. 20-22.; Child 68 A version;
vol.2)

The talking bird actively contributes to the story and speaks on behalf of Young Hunting. As Atkinson points out, the caged bird signifies “social order and family harmony” while the uncaged bird signifies “scenes of disorder” (*The English Traditional Ballads* 178). Compared with the bird in “Young Hunting,” this bird, appearing in “the Bonny Black Hare,” does not play a central role, yet it offers an alternative viewpoint to the song. The bird plays the role of the audience, observing a disordered world, created by two couples and making fun of the situation, singing, “Oh she’s easy to please.” The motif of the talking bird here helps to articulate Lloyd’s idea that erotic folk songs do not simply focus on the relationship between couples, rather allowing for social engagement. Thus, the talking bird stands on a boundary between reality and fantasy and the human world and nature. This allows performer and audience to provide a space in which they can exercise their imagination and interpretative capacities on their own. According to Dave Arthur, the talking bird’s line of “she’s easy to please” accords with a description of a woman, achieving orgasm, thus guaranteeing “a knowing smile from the audience” (Email-Interview Part II). It is, as Arthur explains, “a typical jokey Bert-type phrase, that he would deliver with smiling innuendo” (E-mail Interview Part II).

The talking bird’s line enhances the whole performance, connecting the text,

the singer, and the audience. Lloyd created the talking bird motif, based on traditional materials, in order to make the song sound more thrilling and dramatic. This also helps explain the following line. When the man asks "Have you had enough of my sporting gun?" she answers:

[Lloyd's Version]

Oh, the answer she gave me, oh, her answer was, "Nay.

It's not often, young sportsman, that you come this way.

But if your powder is good and your bullets play fair,

Why don't you keeping firing at the bonny black hare?" (II. 21-24)

She seems to enjoy the sexual act, yet at the same time controls her sexual appetite discreetly. Lloyd borrowed the phrase from Randolph's A version, "The answer she gave me, the answer was nay, / How often, young sportsman, do you ramble this way? / If good be your powder, and your balls they play fair, / Why don't you keep firing at the bonny black hare?" (st.5; *Roll* 42) The broadside version pictures a bold and more highly sexualised woman:

Her eyes they did twinkle and smiling did say

How often, dearest sportsman, do you come this way,

There is few in this country can with you compare

So fire once again at my bonny black hare

His gun he reloaded and fired once more

She cried, draw your trigger and never give o'er

Your powder and balls are so sweet I declare

Keep shooting away at my bonny black hare (sts.7-8)

In this broadside version, the woman becomes greedy and lustful, forcing the man to regain his sexual appetite. The two oral versions collected by Randolph are not as explicit as this broadside version, in terms of their

portrayal of sex. Lloyd admitted that, compared with orally transmitted songs, broadside ballads contributed to the wider dissemination of songs. However, the broadside ballads have drawbacks in that “the poetry of the song sheets is generally flat, colourless, lacking in secret and surprise” (Lloyd, Foreword 16). The broadside version of “The Bonny Black Hare” provides a crude and less subtle description. The oral version is rich with euphemism in the dialogue of the woman and the man. To the question of “Have you had enough of my old sporting gun?” (II.20), she answers, “Nay” (II.21), which describes a sexually demanding woman in a humorous way. The song ends with the following stanza:

[Lloyd’s Version]

Me powder is wasted and my bullets all gone.

Me ramrod is limp, and I cannot fire on.

But I’ll be back in the morning, and if the weather is
fair

O I’ll take another shot at the bonny black hare (st.7)

[Randolph’s A version]

My powder’s all wasted, my balls are all gone,

My ramrod is limber n’ I cannot fire on,

But come back in the morning if the weather proved fair,

An’ I’ll take another shot at the bonny black hare (st.6; *Roll* 42)

As Lloyd comments, “sly humour is accentuated by the elusive bichronal rhythm of the tune” (Liner Notes to *Bird*). The “sly humour” here lies in the reversal of power relationships. While he becomes sexually inactive, the woman is still highly sexed. The man’s desire to conquer her is subsumed in an irony that she is now sexually superior to him. This power-relationship, however, returns to one in which the man is again dominant when he

promises to meet her the next morning and “shoot the bonny black hare” (II. 28; Lloyd's version). On the other hand, there is a chance that she might be seduced by another man during his absence. The subject of the story is a man, led by his instinct to tame the woman. This struggle between man and woman is transmuted into humour and irony. When Martin Carthy, an English folk singer, sang “The Bonny Black Hare” based on Lloyd's version, in his LP album *Byker Hill*, he only changed the last stanza:

[Carthy's Version]

“Oh, my power is wasted and my bullets all gone.

My ramrod is limp, and I cannot fire on.

But I'll be back in the morning, and if you are still

there,

We'll both go again to shoot the bonny black hare.” (st.7)

Here, he uses “we” in the last line of the song, thus adding another viewpoint to the song. Although Lloyd's version uses “we'll go off together to see the bonny black hare” in the twelfth line of the third stanza, Carthy uses the phrase repeatedly, which can be interpreted as his introducing a sense of equality and harmony in the couple's relationship. This also promotes the audience to participate in the story. Carthy emphasised the independence of the woman, unhampered by the male-biased framework, as well as the delight and honesty of sex, preserved in oral versions. Carthy's version became popular and widespread because the British folk rock bands, Fairport Convention and Steeleye Span, used his version. As shown in Carthy's version, the original essence of erotic folk songs that express male desire to take control of women, tend to be softened within the context of the post-war folk revival. But there is no doubt that Lloyd was the first to bring life again to “The Bonny Black Hare” and helped other performers interpret the song in their own ways.

Lloyd successfully created a coherent story, based on the two different oral versions. “The Bonny Black Hare” is a humorous and merry song with suggestive sexual metaphors such as “hare,” “gun,” “powder” and “bullet.” The broadside version has an overt pornographic description, with “gross sexual details” and it is far from what Lloyd considered as erotic folk songs, “mainly concerned with the clean truths of desire and fulfilment, love and fruitfulness” (Liner Notes to *Bird*). Lloyd was fascinated with the use of euphemism and sexual symbols in erotic folk songs and wanted people feel the energy of these songs. Ewan MacColl and Peggy Seeger compiled a song collection they recorded from travelers, a marginal group in Britain, where erotic folk songs were included. According to MacColl and Seeger, “the English and Scots traditional repertoires are rich in euphemistic songs and scores of trades and occupants have contributed their terminologies and their tools to the vocabularies of sexual symbolism” (*Travellers’ Songs* 153). Erotic folk songs allow better understanding of alternative singing culture and capture the emotional essence of traditional folk songs.

This chapter showed the way in which erotic folk songs came to be recognised as a significant part of post-war folk song repertoires. It was a challenging attempt against the expurgation of folk songs by Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors. Lloyd’s interpretation of erotic folk songs that centred on expressions and metaphors of love and nature, provided an alternative worldview for young performers and for their audience who looked for something inspiring and adventurous, not found in their parents’ generation. However, despite their support, Lloyd was to encounter bitter criticism when he released his LP, a collection of erotic British folk songs. From the social-historical perspective, not all songs celebrate the freedom of the sexual act. There were a number of folk songs warning against light-hearted pre-material sex. Sexual desire and lust are not separated

from the fear and danger that an unwanted pregnancy or abandonment could bring, although, ironically, the fear and danger can be an ingredient of sexual pleasure. These erotic songs are frequently sung from a male-point of view. Having said that, erotic folk songs provided an enriched folk culture that mirrors the neutral relationship between human beings and nature and people's desire to gain freedom and to release them from sexual repression. Within the context of the performer, these erotic folk songs produced various meanings and messages that the singer and the audience could relate to. "The Bonny Black Hare," originally existed in broadsides, was sung as part of an erotic folk song repertory, within a small community. Lloyd's version, however, was more often and widely performed both by male and female performers, imparting the delight and amazement of sex and thrilling magical essence to the audience. Lloyd brought life again to "The Bonny Black Hare" and contributed to shaping a new repertoire of traditional folk song.

Chapter 6

The Role of Coal-mining songs in the Post-War Folk Revival

This chapter examines how coal-mining songs played an important role in the development of the post-war folk revival. Coal had been a significant resource for the British economy as the backbone of the Industrial Revolution and had acquired significant social meaning too. After World War II, Labour's victory at the general election in 1945 paved the way for the Nationalization of the coal industry. Under the National Coal Board, Nationalization brought improvements in welfare and employment security among colliers. However, the coal industry itself continued to decline throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, owing to the government's turn to oil in a new national energy strategy. As Julia Mitchell explains, "Between 1954 and 1956 alone, 4,000 Durham miners were forced to leave the country because of colliery closures. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, hundreds of mines across Britain were shut down, having been termed 'uneconomical' by the NCB, leaving hundreds of thousands of miners out of work—forced to move to another mining district, or find another livelihood" (73). The folk revival's focus on coal-mining songs through publication, LP records, and radio programmes, provided colliers with a sense of belonging and identity, and a means of self-expression, in a period in which they were disillusioned with the outcome of Nationalization. As Mitchell put it, "The folk revival played an important role in articulating a fundamentally very localized, yet powerful dissent, providing a compelling and empathetic voice for thousands of displaced coal miners" (75).

This chapter considers how Lloyd and MacColl's activity in coal-mining songs can be related to "common culture," a concept described in Raymond William's "Culture is Ordinary." Coal-mining songs are a form of popular

culture that embody coal miners' "particular way of life" (58), which means that particular emotions and experiences of a certain community—in this context, that of coal miners—are strongly reflected in the songs. Although coal mining songs cannot be separated from class, social group, and place, Lloyd and MacColl discovered that a spirit of struggle and fellowship, detected in coal-mining songs, could be widely shared as "common culture" among people. According to the preface to *Come All Ye Bold Miners* (1952), coal-mining songs do not have "much cleverness or felicity in the literary sense," but they "have the power to move mountains" (11). The dynamic power of coal mining songs is full of enriched possibilities and potentials that suggest vitality for living and for being part of society. Lloyd and MacColl did not regard coal mining songs as closed working class culture, but envisaged them as common culture, revealing a circuit in which coal-mining songs are accepted as actual whole social experiences.

6-1 Coal mining songs as a Genre of "Industrial Folk Song"

In Britain, the demand for coal can be traced back as far as the Roman era (Nef, vol. 1, 2). But it was in the seventeenth century that this demand increased exponentially. With economic and industrial expansion, coal mining developed into one of the key industries in Britain. The number of miners also grew enormously, creating a community in which they could support each other physically and mentally under harsh and strict working conditions. This historical shift resulted in a number of songs through which they could share their common experiences and emotions.

Cecil Sharp, arguably the most influential folk song collector of the nineteenth century, transcribed a song called "Bonny Pit Laddie" in Clewer, Berkshire in 1909:

The bonny pit laddie, the canny pit laddie

The bonny pit laddie for me O
The canny pit laddie, the bonny pit laddie,
The canny pit laddie for me

He sits in a hole, as black as a coal
And brings the white money to me O
He sits in a cracket and walks in a jacket
And brings the white money to me O (sts.1-2)

This song originally dates back to between 1790 and 1840, when the miners had a reputation of being relatively high wage-earners, compared to other workers. William Cobbett (1763-1835), a journalist, claimed that “the pitmen have twenty-four shillings a week . . . Their work is terrible, to be sure, and perhaps, they do not have what they ought to have; but, at any rate, they live well . . . their lives seem to be as good as that of the working part of mankind can reasonably expect” (qtd. in Thompson, E. P. *The Making* 242). This song, in which the collier’s wife or lover admires his job and high wage, is a representation of historical fact. “Bonny Pit Laddie” is also a harmonious song with an internal rhyme of “cracket” (a small stool that supported a miner’s head while he was lying down, hewing coal) and “jacket,” as well as with a colour contrast of “coal” and “white money.”

As this song shows, the colliers’ songs about their work and love were retained in people’s memory. Having said that, the number of these songs, being collected from colliers, was rather limited. During the first British folk revival movement that emerged in the late nineteenth century, there had been few songs about coal mining or songs collected from miners. The collectors’ fieldwork was limited to the rural countryside, not coalfields. However, in America where collecting coal-mining songs was especially important for historical and sociological purposes, George Korson

(1899-1967) collected songs, mainly originating in Pennsylvania, subsequently publishing songbooks such as *Songs and Ballads of the Anthracite Miners* (1927), *Minstrels of the Mine Patch: Songs and Stories of the Anthracite Industry* (1938) and *Coal Dust on the Fiddle: Songs and Stories of the Bituminous Industry* (1943). In 1937, John Lomax (1869-1947) and his son Alan (1915-2002) also recorded a song called “The Coal Miner’s Child” from Molly Jackson (1880-1960) who was a daughter of an Appalachian coal miner as well as an influential leader of a coal strike. It follows that Lloyd was greatly influenced by American coal-mining songs and adopted a new method of folklore into British folksong collecting activity. He did not merely imitate the method, but rather attempted to add a new dimension to what we know as “folk-song,” eventually contributing to the formation of new genre, industrial folk song.

Lloyd’s focus on industrial folk song was an obvious challenge to Cecil Sharp’s *English Folk-Song: Some Conclusions* (1907), a monumental work on English folk songs. In this book, Sharp deemed folk songs as songs of “common people,” more specifically, “peasants” (3-4). While advocating the introduction of folk songs into school education, Sharp anticipated in “The Decline of the Folk-Song” that “in less than a decade, therefore, English-folk singing will be extinct” (*English Folk-Song* 119). He lamented both urbanisation and industrialisation, believing that folk songs, which were created out of simple and plain life, had nothing in common with the complexities of modern life. Sharp held a pessimistic view that, with the disappearance of the “peasantry” as a class, folk songs would be lost entirely (*English Folk-Song* 120). For Sharp and other folk song collectors, folk songs were the product of a past age that recalled a pre-industrial agricultural society. Thus, it was important for him to collect and preserve these songs before they disappeared entirely.

On the other hand, Lloyd challenged Sharp's view that folk songs were limited to the countryside, arguing that

the *creation* of folk music and poetry has, within the last hundred years or so, passed almost entirely into the hands and mouths of industrial workers. The performance of country song still goes on, though rather faintly now; but the composition of new stuff in the villages had practically ceased by the 1850s. Not so in industrial areas. Miners, textile workers and others went on making their own songs. (Lloyd, *Folk Song* 319: italics in original)

When people migrated from the countryside to the city, they brought with them their traditional habits of making up their own songs. Folk songs go through a transformation, corresponding to the social and economic dynamics of time and place. However, even if songs change their contents over time, according to Lloyd, there is a certain continuity in the way people create and express songs. In *Folk Song in England* (1967), Lloyd gave a definition of this type of work song as an industrial folk song:

(The industrial folk song is) the kind of vernacular songs made by workers themselves directly out of their own experiences, expressing their own interests and aspirations, and incidentally passed on among themselves mainly by oral means, though this is no *sine qua non*. (317: italics in original)

Lloyd clearly distinguished industrial folk songs from proletarian hymns like "the 'Internationale', or "Red Flag" and such" (*Folk Song* 340). The industrial folk song is a process itself through which people spontaneously create and express songs out of their own experience, life, emotions and struggles. This led to an important fact that these songs played a vital role in creating their identity as a working class. Lloyd's idea of class was deeply influenced by E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*

(1963):

Class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences, feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from theirs. (9-10)

Lloyd expanded Thompson's argument by applying it to folk songs, claiming that "the folk songs are lower-class songs, specifically in so far as they arise from the common experience of labouring people and express the identity of interests of those people, very often in opposition to the interests of the masters" (*Folk Song* 179). Lloyd also shared Thompson's view that folk songs are connected with class and should be studied in relation to their political, cultural, economic and historical context. But there was a marked difference of political direction between Lloyd and Thompson. Thompson left the Communist Party in despair over the Hungarian Uprising of 1956 and participated in a radical intellectual movement called the New Left. On the other hand, Lloyd was a devotee of the Communist Party throughout his life, although he was less active after taking a lead in the folk revival movement. Having said that, as Gammon points out, "Whatever the political differences between them, the power of Thompson's great work and its closeness to Lloyd's interests and enthusiasms made it an obvious quarry for Lloyd" ("A. L. Lloyd" 149). Thompson's work showed a great interest in the "culture" that features in the New Left and frequently made use of oral materials such as folk culture and folk beliefs in order to describe the values of the common people in the eighteenth century. Thus, Thompson's historical approach supported the notion of industrial folk song.

The industrial folk song illustrates a whole process in which workers create and express their own songs spontaneously in order to appeal to their community or to a wider society. It would be difficult to explain this

complicated process only within a framework of existing Marxist theory. Although Lloyd did not have a direct link to New Left, its historical and cultural discourse was indispensable to him for connecting folk songs to the present-day. Coal mining songs were among the most powerful songs in the industrial folk song canon. Lloyd perhaps imagined a future where people could engage in creative activity through coal-mining songs.

6-2 Come All Ye Bold Miners

The coal mining song collection that Lloyd started was deeply involved with the Festival of Britain held in 1951. After World War II, a period during which the British Empire was being dismantled, the Festival was held with the support of the Labour government. It celebrated the latest advances in industry, art and science in the country. Situated on the South Bank, London, as the Festival's main venue, it was held across the four nations of the United Kingdom: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Festival aimed to reconstruct the whole of Britain, by connecting the four regions and demonstrating "a love of British land and a strong sense of its history" (Atkinson, Harriet 18). The nationalization of heavy industries including coal, iron and steel, carried out by the Labour administration between 1947 and 1949, was of great significance to the Festival of Britain. During the Festival, live demonstrations of workers such as miners and blacksmiths took place. According to Harriet Atkinson, "Productivity was both a subject and object of the Festival: demonstrated through the Festival's exhibitions displays, as well as simply through showing people living and working in their country" (99). Coal-mining songs were therefore a necessary project for the promotion of the coal industry.

For Lloyd, the Festival of Britain was an early important subject

when he started working as a freelance writer and folksong collector. For example, in keeping up with the Festival of Britain, Lloyd organised a folk concert at St Pancreas Hall in 1951, which was very successful. He also re-issued *Singing Englishman* that he wrote in 1944 for the Festival of Britain, simultaneously publishing the songbook of *Singing Englishman*. As Lloyd stated in his preface to *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, “In the spring of 1951, as part of the mining industry’s contribution to the Festival of Britain, it was decided to try to collect coalfield songs before they disappeared” (9). Lloyd, a specialist in the field of folk songs, had to be in charge of collecting coal-mining songs.

First of all, he asked miners to submit coal-mining songs through *Mining Review*, a monthly cinema news-film of colliery affairs, supported by the National Coal Board. Under the nationalization of the coal industry, *Mining Review*, which ran from 1947 to 1982, was shown in cinemas throughout mining areas, intended for the miners and their families. It covered various aspects of mining, including not only miners’ work sites but also their family life and cultural activities such as brass bands, sports, leisure and festivals. *Mining Review* played an important role as corporate propaganda, celebrating and encouraging miners who supported the base of the British economy. Leslie Shepard (1917-2004), who was a director of *Mining Review* in the 1940s and 1950s, had already read *The Singing Englishman* with great pleasure. As Shepard recalled, “During the filming of *Mining Review* stories in the coalfields, I had come across evidence of industrial folklore, and I had the idea of doing a story in which Bert Lloyd would talk about the subject and ask miners to contribute folk songs” (“A. L. Lloyd” 129).

The shooting of *Mining Review* took place at Carton Hill Studios, Maida Vale, London. *Mining Review* comprised of short 10-minute films. It

started with a scene in which Roland Robson, a concert singer, sang one of the traditional coal-mining songs “The Collier’s Rant” in a strong Geordie dialect (it is a dialect spoken in Newcastle and the larger Tyneside region of North East England). In the following scene, Lloyd, in a suit and tie, spoke to a camera, sitting in a chair in a control room:

Most miners, Geordies particularly, will know that song that Roland Robson is singing, its name is *The Collier’s Rant*, and it’s what we call a folk song. At one time there used to be a lot of these songs in the coalfields but few of them ever got written down, and now many of them are dying out. But I believe there are many miners who still know them and are perhaps making them up for themselves. The kind of songs I have in mind are about miners’ work or his home life, his pastimes, about mine disasters or strikes or trade union struggles. We want to collect them before they disappear, so we’re having a competition with prizes. If you know any of these songs of the coalfields, please sent them to me. My name is A. L. Lloyd and you’ll find full details in the May issue of *Coal* magazine. (*Mining Review*)

Coal magazine was published in 1947 in order to provide a medium in which miners could share information and opinions with other miners, working at different pits. Lloyd published a notice entitled “Do you know any Coalfield Folk-Songs?” in the magazine, together with an article that he wrote, entitled “Folk-Songs of the Coalfields.” The competition, according to Lloyd, offered ten pounds and ten shillings as the first prize and five prizes of five pounds and five shillings (26).

As Lloyd put it in *Mining Review*, he felt a sense of danger when he witnessed the situation in which coal-mining songs were being lost rapidly owing to the dissemination of mass culture and mass media. This was the

reason, so he noted, that led him to eventually embarking upon collecting coal-mining songs. Lloyd's attempt to rescue folk songs from extinction was partly inspired by the previous folk song collectors, including Sharp, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although he challenged their partial views of folk songs being mainly confined to countryside. They had collected and preserved folk songs that seemed doomed to extinction owing to industrialisation and urbanisation.

Despite their different fieldwork methods, Lloyd and his predecessors shared a sense of nostalgia as well as a sense of duty to protect their cherished folk music. But Lloyd's goal was not limited to the preservation of songs. By recognising the importance of coal-mining songs, he believed that these songs would "stimulate British miners to return to making up their own songs" ("Folk-Songs of the Coalfields" 211). More specifically, his vision was to create "common culture" in which miners could express and identify themselves through a process of creative activity such as making-up songs.

As a result of *Miners Review* and *Coal, Come All Ye Bold Miners* was edited by Lloyd and published in 1952. In this collection, sixty-seven songs, exploring coal miners' work, love, pastimes, pit disasters and strikes, were included, of which sixteen songs were with melody. The following is a list of each chapter title:

- I. The Miners at Work (8 songs)
- II. The Miners at Play (6 songs)
- III. Love and the Miner (14 songs)
- IV. Boy Miners and Old Miners (4 songs)
- V. The Perils of Mining (9 songs)
- VI. Coalfield Conditions and the Struggle for a Better Life (16 songs)
- VII. A Miner's Miscellany (10 songs)

Lloyd recalled that more than 100 songs were originally sent to him, but these songs, for the most part, were “parodies, literary recitations, parlour ballads of the type of *Don’t Go Down in the Mine, Daddy*” (*Come* 9) and therefore could not be defined as folk songs in a strictest sense. Of the 67 songs that were included in *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, only eighteen were collected directly from miners, mostly in the mining regions of Durham and Northumberland in the North East and from Wigan. The rest were taken from printed sources—“compilations, garlands, ballad-sheets, leaflets—and from miners’ manuscripts” (Lloyd, *Come* 11). One of the remarkable characteristics of *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, is that songs written by “a pitman poet” were included in a selection of coal-mining songs. In general, orality and anonymity were the attributes of rural folk songs, but each mining area had the outstanding “pitman poets” who made up songs about their local mining disasters or strikes and whose songs had been sung within their community. Lloyd took six songs from a well-known pitman poet, Tommy Armstrong (1848-1919) of Durham, who wrote many songs about mining life. Lloyd points out that industrial folk songs differ from rural folk songs in that the names of song creators can be easily recognised but, in terms of expression, “the industrial songs are far more collective than the more anonymous rural songs” (*Folk Song* 342). This means that “not individual emotions but solidarity and social cohesion is their great motive and message” (*Folk Song* 342). Industrial folk songs place great value on collective feelings, particularly a shared desire for a better life, rather than the “orality” and “anonymity” that traditional folk songs possessed.

Among folk song specialists, Lloyd’s *Come All Ye Bold Miners* was innovative because it was the first book to focus on industrial folk songs in Britain. Wienandt stated that the “contents should be of interest to a

segment of the British population; it is surely destined for only the most avid collectors of ballad material in this country” (146). Korson, a pioneer of industrial folk songs in America, wrote a review, saying that the book “establishes the kinship between the English and American mining folklore movements” (Review of *Come* 459). Some songs, included in *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, were identical to those that Korson had recorded from British immigrants in American coal regions. Furthermore, this book also drew an enthusiastic reaction from general readers, especially young colliers, inspiring them to make up their own songs.

Lloyd later claimed in the second edition of *Come All Ye Bold Miners* (1978):

As it turned out, that modest first edition, skimpy in content, poorly edited as it was, had an influence far beyond expectation. To some pitmen, especially young ones enthusiastic for the folk song revival, *Come All Ye Bold Miners* was “the Bible.” The compilation had the effect of restoring to vigorous life many past songs, stimulating investigators to seek out lyrics dormant in cold corners of the memory of old miners or gathering dusts in library cupboards, and best of all, encouraging members of colliers’ families to chance their arm at making songs for themselves about their own lives. (11)

Come All Ye Bold Miners was by no means satisfactory in terms of the quality of coal-mining song collecting activity. Considering Lloyd’s emphasis on the collection of North-Eastern mining songs, as Arthur put it, the book gave “perhaps a somewhat distorted view of the picture, for, as we know, more and more industrial material is being unearthed from all parts of the country” although it is perhaps due to the fact that “as with everything nowadays, space and cost is bound to have restricted him more than he

would have wished” (Review of *Come* 490). Toelken argued that even in the second edition, “there is still a lack of informed commentary about the tunes” and should have dealt with the issues such as “if a song has particular metaphorical meanings, or if it was sung as a work song . . . or if it was often sung, or only at picnics, or only by (or for) men, and so on” (Review of *Come* 175). Having said that, Barre Toelken acknowledged that Lloyd’s book would “continue to give us an extremely valuable example of the power in community expression” (Review of *Come* 175). In spite of these drawbacks, this comprehensive collection, ranging from coal mining songs that had been sung in the past to the latest ones, helped to shape the narrative of coal miners historically, culturally and politically. By gathering various songs about their work, love, hardship and hope for a better life, Lloyd captured the whole life of the coal miners, which contributed to enhancing their sense of solidarity and fellowship that emerges through songs, and so advocating them as their culture that should be inherited.

6-3 Coal-mining Songs and Folk Revival

Using songs that are included in *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, this section observes how the miners’ strong sense of fellowship and solidarity were expressed in song and considers how they were related to the folk revival. Coal-mining songs are a parody of traditional folk songs. Their song structures and rhymes are the same as traditional folk songs, but their motifs and tropes are peculiar to coal mining, imbuing the songs with new life. “I’ll Have a Collier for my Sweetheart” was one song that Lloyd included and edited in *Come All Ye Bold Miners*. The song text without melody was supplied by a collier, William Oliver, who lived in Widnes, Northwest England and by an ex-collier, Plat Bridge, who lived in a suburb of Wigan. This is a song about a defiant woman who has a collier lover. She

is courted by a man working at a textile mill, but refuses his offer despite her mother's admonition:

If you'll leave your collier sweetheart,
 I'll buy thee a guinea gold ring.
 I'll buy thee a silver cradle,
 For to rock thy baby in.

I don't want your silks and satin,
 Not your guinea golden ring.
 I don't want a silver cradle [,]
 For to rock thy baby in.

My mother said that I could be a lady,
 If from my collier lad I'd quickly part;
 I'd sooner walk the bottom of the ocean
 Than I'd give up my collier sweetheart. (sts.3-5; Lloyd, *Come*
 62-63)

Lloyd noted similarities between this song and another nineteenth century sailor ballad, "Johnny Todd" (Lloyd, *Come*, 2nd ed. 346). The sailor goes to sea, leaving his lover behind. Another sailor seduces the woman who wallows in misery. The following is from an excerpt of "Jonny Todd":

I'll buy you sheets and blankets,
 I'll buy you a wedding ring.
 You shall have a gilded cradle
 For to rock your baby in. (st.4; Kidson 104)

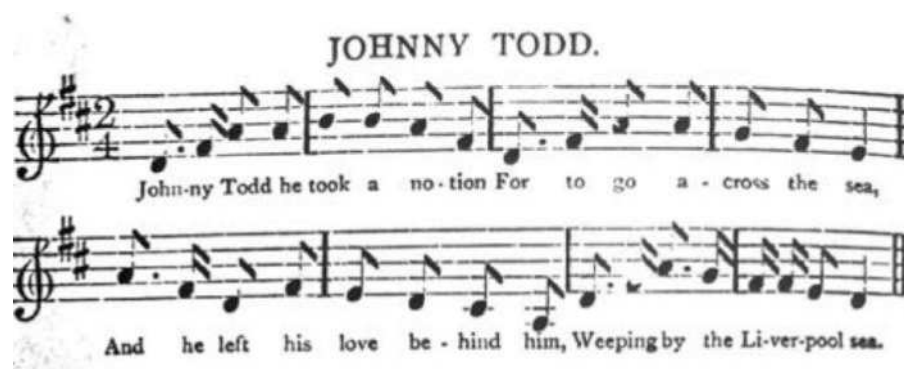


Fig. 14 The tune of “Johnny Todd” (Kidson 104)

While the woman in “I’ll Have a Collier for My Sweetheart” is loyal to her lover, the woman in “Johnny Todd” forsakes her lover and subsequently marries another sailor. Despite the differences in the narratives, their motifs such as “guinea gold ring” or “silver cradle” are common in both songs. In the late nineteenth century, Frank Kidson, the folk song collector, transcribed this song when he heard children singing “Johnny Todd” in Liverpool, not far from Widnes and Wigan. Platt Bridge, who sent Lloyd the lyrics of “I’ll Have a Collier for My Sweetheart,” said that the song was “popular some fifty years ago) among the collier boys and the girls who worked on the screens” (*Come* 134). It follows that the version was sung between the late nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. When “Jonny Todd” was sung for a children’s singing game in Liverpool, “I’ll Have a Collier for My Sweetheart” was also sung among coal miners at the same time. On the one hand, the song, which was sung among sailors, passed down to children for a singing game. On the other hand, the song’s change from sailor to miner brought it a new life in a coal-mining area, which took in a role as a work song and helped to strengthen their identity as miners.

Thus, although largely originating in the outside world, coal-mining songs were reinvented by the coal miners themselves, infusing their particular worldviews and values into songs. Of all songs included in *Come*

All Ye Bold Miners, “Jimmy Enlisted” (another title is “The Recruited Collier”) was one of the songs that were frequently sung by singers in the folk revival. According to Lloyd, this song was obtained by a miner, J. T. Huxtable, of Workington, located on the west coast of Cumbria. This song is about a woman who grieves over the absence of her lover, a collier now in the army:

Oh, what’s the matter wi’ [with] you, my lass,
An’ where’s your dashin[g] Jimmy?
The sowdger [soldier] boys have picked him up
And sent him far, far frae [from] me. (st.1; Lloyd, *Come* 42)

She recalls him working at a pit:

As I walked over the stubble field,
Below it runs the seam,
I thought o’ Jimmy hewin[g] there
But it was all a dream.

He hewed the very coals we burn,
And when the fire I’s leetin [set lighting],
To think the lumps was in his hands,
It sets my heart to beatin[g]. (sts.7-8; Lloyd, *Come* 43)

In this stanza, the words such as “seam” (A layer of coal sandwiched between layers of rock), “hewing” (an act of cutting or hacking out the coals), “coals” and “lumps” can be associated with coal miners’ daily work, thus emerging as an image of their whole way of life. In other words, “a complete image of a life, its routine shot through with emotions, has been created” in this song (Craig 295). In addition, she imagines the coal that her family burns as being directly what he hewed from below. This description informs us that contemporary domestic life has been largely sustained by

coal that is extracted by miners, although they are invisible. Relating to this, George Orwell (1903-50) pointed out in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937):

It is just “coal”—something that I have got to have; black stuff that arrives mysteriously from nowhere in particular . . . You could quite easily drive a car right across the north of England and never once remember that hundreds of feet below the road you are on the miners are hacking at coal. Yet in a sense it is the miners who are driving your car forward. Their lamp-lit world down there is as necessary to the daylight world above as the root is to the flower. (35)

“The Recruited Collier” poetically and emotionally embodies what Orwell described in *The Road to Wigan Pier*. The fact that coal is indispensable for everyday life is well woven into this beautiful yet melancholic song, producing a dynamic network that connects us with the numerous and nameless invisible miners.

According to Lloyd, this song appears in *Ballads in the Cumberland Dialect* (1808), edited by Robert Anderson (1770-1833), a poet who was known for his ballad-style poems in Cumbrian dialect. But the song is simply entitled “Jenny’s Complaint” where the man is described as a ploughman, not a collier:

If owre [over] the stibble [stubble] fields I gang [go],
I think I see him ploughin[g]
And ev’ry [every] bit o’ bread I eat,
It seems o’ Jimmy sowi[ng]:

He led the varra [very] cwoals [coals] we burn,
And when the fire I’s leetin[g]
To think the peats were in his hands,

It sets my heart a beatin[g]. (st.4; Anderson 59)

As shown in the line “He led the varra cwoals [coals] we burn,” despite Anderson’s version, referring to coal, there is no description of Jimmy, digging coal out of the ground. He simply carries the coal. The words such as “ploughing[g]” and “sowi[ng]” suggest that Jimmy is a ploughman. With regard to “Jimmy’s Enlisted,” Roy Palmer argues that “Lloyd silently (and brilliantly) remade the song” (“A. L. Lloyd” 137). Palmer’s argument is convincing because, despite the fact that Anderson noted in the *Cumberland Dialect* that this song could be sung to a melody of “Nancy to the Greenwood Gane” (Anderson 58), Lloyd set another different tune to “Jimmy’s Enlisted” (“The Recruited Collier”). In a letter that Lloyd sent to Palmer, he admitted that he changed the melody though he could not remember where the melody originally came from:

I fitted the tune, but whether I made up the melody or took it from tradition, I no longer remember. I think the latter, but if so, what was it the tune of? (Qtd. in Palmer “A. L. Lloyd” 136)

Lloyd’s approach to traditional songs was based on two factors. Firstly, he attempted to re-create traditional folk songs in a way that the modern audiences can sing them without difficulty. Secondly, Lloyd found it necessary to impart his skills, ideas and aesthetics into traditional folk songs and ballads in fragmentary and incomplete forms that had been passed down over a long period of time. Thus, we cannot deny the possibility that Lloyd changed words and the melody of Anderson’s song that Huxtable had sent. Another possibility is that, like “I’ll Have a Collier for My Sweetheart,” Anderson’s song, which had been sung in Cumbria, passed on to the coal-mining area, where it adapted itself into a form that resonated with that coal miners. Either way, it is evident that Lloyd changed the melody. Therefore, it is highly likely that he partly made changes to the

song text in order to fit the melody.

It is difficult to judge the extent to which Lloyd rewrote “The Recruited Collier.” Nevertheless, we can see that Lloyd succeeded in arousing miners’ common experience and senses embedded in the song, thereby giving it a certain power. The line “But it was all a dream,” expressing the moment where the woman wakes up from a dream of her collier lover and returns to reality, does not exist in Anderson’s version; therefore it is presumably Lloyd’s invention. In contrast with the deadly battlefield that her lover is sent to, this “dream” is a utopian world rooted in ordinary life. Here, we can see the dignity of miners’ everyday labour, solidarity and hopes for life.

“The Recruited Collier” was included in *The Iron Muse: A Panorama of Industrial Folk Song* (1963), where the folk singer Anne Briggs sang the song unaccompanied. Ten songs, included in *The Iron Muse*, were selected from *Come All Ye Bold Miners*, in both 1952 and 1978 editions. Lloyd commented in the sleeve-notes:

This record, in a brief survey, presents but a few of the songs that working men and women have made out of their own lives. If it helps to make the songs wider known, good. If it inspires the making of new industrial songs, better still. The tradition is a fine one and worth perpetuating. (Liner Notes to *Iron Muse*)

This shows that coal-mining songs, which had been gathered thus far, were used not only as important material for articulating working-class history and consciousness, but also their role as a driving force behind the folk revival movement. In other words, Lloyd constructed the alternative culture of coal-mining songs through preservation and representation of these songs. This approach contributed to creating the “pit elegy,” songs written by coal-miners, such as “Farewell to Cotia” and “Farewell to the Monty.”

These songs, “offered nuanced articulation of the hope—and disappointment—surrounding nationalization” (Mitchell 82). The coal-mining songs, therefore, helped shape a community that was in danger of disappearing.

6-4 Ewan MacColl’s Role in Coal-mining Songs

As we have seen, coal-mining song collecting, set out by Lloyd, as well as his publication of *Come All Ye Bold Miners* (1952), created a new genre called the industrial folk song, eventually contributing to the post-war folk revival. This chapter now discusses Ewan MacColl’s role in the history of coal-mining songs. As has been shown, Lloyd added a new historical, cultural, and political interpretation to coal-mining songs, thereby recognizing their potential to represent a common culture. Besides, MacColl introduced coal-mining songs into his song-writing and experimented with how these songs could be presented as “common culture.”

In fact, MacColl had been interested in coal miners and their songs even before he met Lloyd. As a child, his mother sang him a traditional folk song, *The Collier’s Rant*. He later recalled in a memoir *Journeyman* that he “had been fairly familiar with miners and their families” ever since the days of his childhood (318). Salford, where he was born, had developed into an industrial city, with the production of cotton, silk, iron and steel, but there were collieries including Agecroft Colliery in the district. His father, Will, was a political activist and belonged to the trade union. MacColl, as a child, often used to be taken by his father to demonstrations, where he heard the miner’s union leader, A. J. Cook (1883-1931) speak during the General Strike of 1926 (Harker, *Class 9*). This episode suggests that MacColl came to know both miners and ex-miners through the demonstrations and meetings that his father attended. For him, miners were not others but rather his

comrades who fought against the capitalist class and for better working conditions.

MacColl, who was a leading member of the Red Megaphone, a street theatre troupe in the early 1930s, performed various plays on the street outside the factory or the mill, directed at working-class audiences. Miners were among the most important audiences. He recalled visiting Wigan, a coal-mining town during his days at the Red Megaphone:

We went to Wigan on the Saturday morning, and that was marvellous, because there was a market there and we just stepped into the middle of the market-place, near one of those big ornamental lamp standards. Some Wigan comrades had set up a coal-cart there, we climbed onto it and went through our whole repertoire, every sketch we knew, starting off with *Billy Boy*. To our amazement, a couple of hundred people gathered round us. We did our eight-loom sketch there, and it went down a bomb. And then we did a little sketch we had on mining, I forgot what it was called. We'd learnt it specially for Wigan, because Wigan was a mining town. So we put that on, and got rapturous applause. ('Theatre' 236)

MacColl dedicated himself to writing a play that would connect directly with working class people's life and experiences. Miners had been his inspiration during his years as a playwright, even though Red Megaphone changed its name first to Theatre of Action in 1934, then to Theatre of Union in 1936, and finally to Theatre Workshop in 1945. He recalled that, during his Theatre Workshop days, he toured around the coalfields of Fife, Lanark, Durham and South Wales, where he "had become accustomed to the conventional skills of miners" (MacColl, *Journeyman* 318). Visiting pit towns for performances, he readily absorbed their

particular form of speech and actual experiences, later drawing on them for his creative activity. Together with his then wife, Joan Littlewood, he wrote the play, *Last Edition* in 1940, which was what they described as “a living newspaper, dealing with events from 1934-1940” (qtd. in Goonrney and MacColl 21). In this play, MacColl drew on materials from the 1934 pit disaster at Gresford Colliery in North Wales, killing 266 men. The play covered the trial scene in which the colliery manger, William Bonsall was interrogated, where it is revealed that miners were forced to work overtime on Saturday and Sunday nights. What was worse, the fireman’s report describing the forty-two days before the accident had happened, apparently had been intentionally lost, perhaps by Bonsall himself, although he never admitted it. *The Last Edition* was a documentary play, presenting social problems and getting to the core of the pit disaster, from the standpoint of the miners.

Considering MacColl’s career as a playwright, coal mining had been his subject of interest even before the folk revival movement. Turning his eyes to coal miners helped him to articulate the issue of the “class struggle” that he had been working on. In addition, by getting to know Lloyd’s coal-mining song collecting activity and its significance, MacColl discovered a new possibility in coal mining songs as a depiction of working-class culture.

According to MacColl, when Lomax introduced him to Lloyd for the first time, Lloyd had already set about writing *Come All Ye Bold Miners*.

We stood there for an hour talking about music. Bert told me he was working on the anthology of miners’ songs, which later was called *Come All Ye Bold Miners* and I was fascinated by the idea. First of all, I did not know there were that many miners’ songs. I thought maybe there were half a dozen extant, but Bert told me

he had got hundreds. I thought this is a kind of exaggeration that I'm prone to rather than this man. (*Singing Englishman: A Portrait*)

MacColl learnt that rich coal-mining songs still existed in Britain and were strongly influenced by an attempt to collect and publish these songs. The idea that coal-mining songs should not only be kept in miners' communities but also be shared widely as part of the general culture, synchronized well with the more general concept of the post-war folk song revival.

Through Lloyd, MacColl understood that coal-mining songs could be an important guideline to promoting a cultural movement. He had already collected some coal mining songs during his days at Theatre Workshop. "Fourpence a Day" is one of the songs that he collected. In 1949, MacColl and Littlewood collected a number of songs in Teesdale, the area located between Yorkshire and Durham, for a Children's Hour broadcast. Among them, "Fourpence a Day" and "Four Loom Weavers" were transcribed by MacColl and Littlewood and later included as "industrial folk songs" in his song book, *The Shuttle and Cage: Industrial Folk-Ballads* (1954).

"Fourpence a Day" was obtained from John Gowland, a retired lead-miner of Middleton-in-Teesdale, York. This song is about child labourers who were forced to work for twelve or fourteen hours a day in the mines:

The one is waiting in the tubs, the snow's upon the fell:
Canny folk are sleeping yet, but lead is reet to sell.
Come, me little washer lad, come let's away
We're bound down to slavery for fourpence a day.

It's early in the morning, we rise at five o'clock,
And the little slaves come to the door to knock, knock, knock,

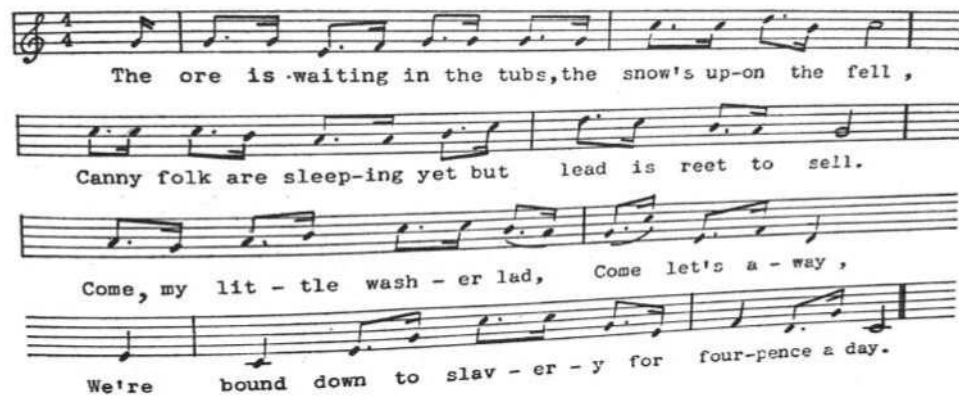


Fig. 15 The Tune of "Fourpence a Day" (Lloyd, *Come* 127)

knock.

Come, me littl[e] washer lad, come, let's away

It's very hard to work for fourpence a day. (sts.1-2; MacColl, *Shuttle* 9)

In this song, "the little slaves," namely the child labourers, working all day in dark passages, open and shut the trap-door to allow the cart full of coal and colliers to pass through. "Fourpence a Day" is repeated as a refrain, emphasizing how coal miners were unfairly treated. "Fourpence a Day" became widely known to the public when it was included in the Columbia LP set, *A World Library of Folk and Primitive Music*, directed by Alan Lomax.

Not only did MacColl collect coal-mining songs, he also wrote a song based on them. In 1937, he wrote "The Plodder Seam" for a number of young colliers in Ashton Colliery, Lancashire (Lloyd, *Come* 132).

The Plodder Seam is a wicked seam,

It's worse than the Trencherbone.

It's hot and there's the three foot of shale between

The coal and rocky stone.

You can smell the smoke from the fires of hell

Deep under Ashton town
 Oh, the Plodder Seam is a wicked seam,
 It's a mile and a quarter down.

Thirteen hundred tons a day
 Are taken from that mine.
 There's a tone of dirt[s] for a tone of coal,
 And a gallon of sweat and grime.
 We crawl behind the cutters and
 We scrabble for the coal
 Oh, I'd rather sweep the streets than have
 To burrow like a mole (Lloyd, *Come* 25)

The Plodder Seam

The Plodder Seam is a wicked seam, It's worse than the Trencher-bone,
 It's hot and there's three foot of shale between The coal and rocky stone.
 You can smell the smoke from the fires of hell Deep under Ashton town.
 Oh, the Plodder Seam is a wicked seam, It's a mile and a quarter down.

Fig. 16 The tune of “Plodder Seam” (Lloyd, *Come* 124)

David Craig points out that industrial folk songs have distinctive characteristics because “a working-class singer uses the details of his trade, the simple naming of it, the materials, the work-place, as a kind of declaration of where he stands” (299). McColl’s “The Plodder Seam” efficiently captures what Craig considers as essential in industrial folk song. First of all, as can be seen from the lyrics such as “Plodder Seam” and “Deep Under Ashton Town,” the places are specifically located, giving the

song a feel of a particular locality. In addition, the opening stanza, starting with “The Plodder Seam” is a wicked seam, / It’s worse than he Trencherbone” (II.1-2), is sung with a conversational style, comparing their colliery with other neighbouring ones. By describing how miners were treated unfairly under poor working conditions at the Plodder Seam, this song articulated what was common knowledge among the miners.

Next, this song contains a series of words that arouse the senses, smell, touch and sight, such as “you can smell the smokes from the fires of hell” (I.5) and “there’s a tone of dirt for a ton of coal / and a gallon of sweat and grime” (II. 11-12). Not simply describing the working process at the colliery, the use of metaphors (“fire of hell”) and exaggerated expressions (“a tone of dirt; “a gallon of sweat and grime”) produces a theatrical effect and vivid imagery that draws the attention of listeners. Within an internal rhyming of “crawl” and “scrawl” in the lyrics “we crawl behind the cutters’ and we scrabble for the coal” (II. 15-16), the song unifies a body of miners with the sound of a pick, creating a powerful imagery of tough miners.

Furthermore, the last line ending with “oh, I’d rather sweep the streets than have / to burrow like a mole,” shows that MacColl added a humour into this song, as well as the suffering and pain. Korson places importance on humour that can be seen in coal-mining songs, arguing that “A surprising amount of humour went into them despite hardships or perhaps because of them, for they undoubtedly serve as a release from frustration” (*Black* 352). Korson’s argument can apply to “The Plodder Seam.” By comparing the miner to a mole, he makes full use of humour for lightening their burden of routine, yet dangerous work, and converting their suffering into laughter. Here we can see MacColl’s deep and affectionate insight into coal miners. “The Plodder Seam” was performed in *Songs of the Coalfields*, the news-film series of *Mining Review*, where the

song was introduced as “a Lancashire ballad from the turn of the century” not as MacColl’s creation. This would probably derive from the idea that coal-mining songs, created by miners, should be authentic. MacColl intentionally concealed his authorship of the song. By doing so, “The Plodder Seam” achieved a “popular status” (Holland 93), to the degree that people could understand coal-mining songs and derive meaning from them. Rather than declaring his authorship, he wished the song to be accepted as a genuine coal miners’ song that reflected their experiences and sensibility.

6-5 *The Big Hewer*

The production of *The Big Hewer*, the fourth series of Radio Ballads, would be among the most important projects in MacColl’s coal-mining song activity. This was a BBC radio programme that was broadcast between 1958 and 1964. It took the form of a “narrative documentary” combining songs, people’s actual voices and real sounds with songs.

As singers for *The Big Hewer*, A. L. Lloyd, Ian Cameron, Ian Campbell, Joe Higgins and Louis Killen participated in the recording. Charles Parker, impressed with the true story of John Axton, a stream-locomotive driver, who sacrificed his life to protect his passengers in 1957, came up with the idea of creating a documentary programme based upon the tragic accident. He commissioned MacColl, who had already worked as a folk singer, to create music for the new project. MacColl was willing to accept the offer, saying that he had already “collected some old English railway songs with a somewhat vague notion of working on a ballad-opera on the subject” (qtd. in Cox, Peter 50). Parker and MacColl made a journey to Edgeley with the purpose of gathering background materials, where they conducted an interview with Axton’s widow, his children and his colleagues. After the fieldwork, MacColl wrote the music for John Axon, “conceiving each song

either as an extension of a specific piece of actuality recording, as a comment on that recording, or as a single frame for a collection of actuality pieces” (MacColl and Seeger, *I’m a Freeborn* 6). This eventually led to *The Ballad of John Axon* (1958), a new form of documentary programme with a mixture of the actual voices of those involved with Axon’s life, sound effects, and music, what we would now term a “docudrama.”

When *The Ballad of John Axon* was broadcast, it received critically acclaimed reviews. Robert Robinson commented in *The Sunday Times* that “as remarkable a piece of radio as I have ever listened to” (qtd. in Cox, Peter 58). In the *Observer*, Paul Ferris wrote: “Last week a technique and subject got married, and nothing in radio kaleidoscope, or whatever you like to call it, will ever be the same again” (qtd. in Cox, Peter 49). *The Ballad of John Axon* was also selected to be the British entry for the 1958 Prix d’Italia, an international Italian television and radio award. Parker, MacColl and Seeger continued to produce the *Radio Ballad* series programmes including *Song of the Road* (1959), a story about labourers who built the London-Yorkshire motorway, and *Singing the Fishing* (1960), a story about fishermen of the herring fishing fleets of East Anglia and Northeast Scotland. *The Big Hewer* was the fourth programme of the *Radio Ballad* series, “dealing with the miners of the Northumberland, Durham, South Wales and East Midlands coalfields” (MacColl and Seeger, *I’m a Freeborn* 12).

Through the process of making *The Big Hewer*, MacColl, Parker and Seeger conducted extensive fieldwork research. On the second or third days of fieldwork at Newcastle-on-Tyne, they encountered a young collier and, from him, recorded the legend of *The Big Hewer*—“the mythological superhuman of the British coalfields” (MacColl and Seeger 12)—that eventually became the title of the Radio Ballad. MacColl recalled that

we encountered him frequently under a variety of names —as Jack Tempest and Bob Temple in Northumberland, as Big Towers in Country Durham, as Jackie Torr in Derbyshire, and as Isaac Lewis in South Wales. (MacColl and Seeger, *I'm a Freeborn* 12)

Using legends and tales known to coal miners, MacColl created a song about The Big Hewer for the radio programme. In *The Big Hewer*, coal miners' tales are included, one of which was a giant legend, told by Jack Elliot, a coal miner of Durham Colliery and singer:

As a boy, four, five, six years old, I remember my father was talking about this legendary figure, temple. Temple is a big hewer. Whether it was a real or purely legendary, I never knew, even to this day. (MacColl, Parker and Seeger)

For coal miners, The Big Hewer—Elliot here called him as Temple—was a familiar existence that had been handed down from generation to generation. The shared memory among coal miners was embodied in *The Big Hewer*, thus shaping a world that transcended the time. Parker commented on miners' emotional aspects, which were gradually revealed through the production process of *The Big Hewer*:

Tough, forthright, politically aware—this we expected: but to find men and women so strongly imbued with a sense of history, of a long struggle shared, and above all who could talk brilliantly, and with an overwhelming sense of their real importance as human beings—this was a revelation. (Qtd. in Cox, Peter 115)

What Parker found in the coal miners was their positive perspectives on life, which they maintained by a sense of shared history of struggle among them. Thus, *The Big Hewer* provided a window into an enriched life-story of coal miners, concentrating their diverse aspects that comprehended their work, struggle, emotions and memory, into one epic. An attempt to discover

an enriched humanity in coal miners through the metaphor of *The Big Hewer* leads to an egalitarian community that the folk revival envisages. Through the metaphors and poetic words used in *The Big Hewer*, coal miners' desire to make their life better, fulfilling and meaningful, can be understood as a common culture that we can share. The song, *The Big Hewer*, starts with the following lines:

Out of the dirt and darkness I was born, go down!
 Out of the hard, black coalface I was torn, go down!
 Kicked on the world and the earth split open,
 Crawled through a crack where the rock was broken,
 Burrowed a hole, away in the coal, go down!

In a cradle of coal in the darkness I was laid, go down!
 Down in the dirt and darkness I was raised, go down!
 Cut me teeth on a five-foot timber,
 Held up the roof with me little finger,
 Started me time away in the mine, go down!

On the day that I was born, I was six foot tall, go down!
 And the very next day I learned the way to haul, go down!
 On the third day worked at board-and-pillar,
 Worked on the forth as a long wall filler,
 Getting me stream up, hewing the seam, go down (sts.1-3;
 MacColl, Parker and Seeger)

In these three stanzas, the legends of *The Big Hewer* with supernatural and physical strengths, are told one after another. *The Big Hewer* can kick and split the earth open. He is strong enough to lift up a roof with one little finger. As is often the case with a giant in folklore such as "John Henry," an

African American folk hero, known for prowess in nature, he was born in the pit and next day, started working there. In the radio programme, the song is subsequently mixed with coal miners' words.

“Oh yes, you can find umpteen stories about Isaac Lewis in the anthracite.”

“Yes, oh yes, this Towers well, he couldn't be beat this George Towers—Robert Towers—Bob Towers.”

“My he was a big man.”

“Could you imagine? He was 18 stone. No fat. Eighteen stone of man. What they call the Country Durham Big Hewer.”

“Like a machine when he was hewing, you could hear the pick, pick, pick as regular as that clock. Never used to seem ever to tire.”(MacColl, Parker and Seeger).

Interestingly, the miners spoke of The Big Hewer with affection as if he was a real figure or their companion. In relation to this phenomenon, as Fish explains, “The tall tale is the logical extension of the joke which bases its humour on exaggeration. Miners, like many physical labourers, have been great tellers of these ‘lies’” (68). Telling a lie, according to Fish, “offers another means of release from psychic tension and of triumphing over the deadly day to day routine” (66). While the Big Hewer is celebrated as a heroic figure, for his supernatural power and masculinity, the long struggle of coal miners is the core basis of it.

Dave Harker criticised MacColl and Parker's *The Big Hewer* as a romanticised description of “masculine prowess” (Harker, *One* 183), arguing that “it never seems to have occurred to Parker and MacColl that the mythical figure might have been a *deliberate* and *grotesque caricature* of the self-exploitative worker, the man who filled more tubs, dug more coal

and worked more hours than any other” (Harker, *One* 183; italics in original). Harker’s argument that the Big Hewer was a caricature of exploited labourers derives from the fact that this legend was produced around 1840 when the working conditions in the coal mining industry became stricter under the Industrial Revolution (Harker, *One* 183). However, it is doubtful if *The Big Hewer* was merely a romanticised creation, without any historical reality. Vic is rather critical of Harker’s argument, pointing out that “The song certainly is heroic, it has something epic about it, but I also find it boastful, funny and ironic. It in no way minimises the awfulness of mining as Harker suggests” (“Two” 151). Gammon’s argument is supported by actual conversations among miners, recorded in *The Big Hewer*. In *The Big Hewer*, one miner described how, “like a machine when he was hewing, you could hear the pick, pick, pick as regular as that clock. Never used to seem ever to tire” (MacColl, Parker and Seeger). It implies that the sound of the pick that the Big Hewer works with, can be read as a metaphor of the clock, suggesting in an ironical way that he cannot escape from the regular and subordinate working system. MacColl understood ambivalent elements of the Big Hewer—the working-man hero as well as the subordinate of the capitalist society—and through irony, he carefully attempted to capture this complexity. This double meaning can also be found in this lyric of *The Big Hewer*:

I’m the son of the son of the son of a collier’s son, go down!
 Coal dust flows in the veins where the blood should run, go down!
 Five steel ribs and an iron backbone,
 Teeth that can bite through rock and blackstone,
 Working me time, away in the mine, go down! (st.4; MacColl,
 Parker and Seeger)

The lyrics glorify coal miners’ work that lasted for generations. The lyric of

“I’m the son of the son of the son of a collier’s son, go down!” implies that coal mining is deeply linked to family blood ties among colliers. However, if we read the lyrics in depth, another aspect of the coal miner emerges—the careful use of metaphors articulates the pathos of coal miners who were tied down by the harsh work. The line starting with “coal dust flows in the veins where the blood should run, go down!” was obviously inspired by one of the stories, told by a collier with a sense of humour. It was recorded in *The Big Hewer*: “I think if I cut my fingers and it bled, it would just come out of black” (MacColl, Parker and Seeger). Based on an actual speech of a working-class man, MacColl created a dynamic metaphor of coal dust that became identified with the blood that ran in the body, thereby producing an imagery of the miners, whose bodies were overrun by coal. This also implies the fact that coal miners, whose bodies are ruined by coal, came down with fatal diseases. Coal miners, who were exposed to coal dust, often contracted “black lung.” It is reported that the symptoms were “emaciation of the whole body, constant shortness and quickness of breath, occasional stitches in the side, quick pulse, and hacking cough day and night ‘attended by a copious expectoration for the most part perfectly black’” (Pollard 48). In addition to the coal dust phrase, various metaphors such as “five steel ribs,” “an iron blackstone” and “teeth that can bite through rock and blackstone” are scattered in this stanza, suggesting that the Big Hewer’s body is reduced to a machine for labour. The song continues:

Three-hundred years I hewed at the coal by hand, go down!

In the pits of Durham and East Northumberland, go down!

Been gassed and burned and blown asunder,

Buried more times than I can number,

Getting the coal, away in the hole, go down. (st.5; MacColl, Parker and Seeger)

Regarding this stanza, while celebrating the Big Hewer's physical and supernatural power, this song hints at the dark aspect of the Big Hewer, who has "been gassed and burned and blown asunder / Buried more times than I can number." *The Big Hewer* includes interviews with miners who lost their workmates in pit disasters. It also includes interviews with widows who lost their husbands in mining accidents. Therefore, these lyrics acknowledge the death of those who were sacrificed for coal. The Big Hewer is not just a legend but something rooted in living memory: memory of their suffering, thereby connecting the present and the past miners at an emotional level. The song operates "within an aesthetic field of tension between close representation of working-class speech and alien language and imagery" (Watson 182).

Thus, coal miners' complex conflict was inherent in *The Big Hewer*. Their experience of working underground, which is separated from normal life, is thrilling and mystical. The Big Hewer's power, taking out coal with hammer and pick, reflects their pride and ideal dream. At the same time, there is an unavoidable reality that the Big Hewer is a subordinate worker whose body is being exploited. The struggle is, according to a coal miner, "like hitting out a hammer of hate on the anvil bitterness" (MacColl, Parker and Seeger). For each miner, their labour had a particular meaning that collectively symbolized the struggle of their brethren. Using humour as metaphors, *The Big Hewer* captured and embodied them in a song. Stephen Linstead interprets such creativity as "the aesthetics," explaining that "So the aesthetics can make us aware of paradox, as well as pleasure, and looking at the aesthetics of a particular group can reveal powerfully how identity is sustained by the symbolic revalorisation, within the group, of phenomena, tasks, objects, activities etc. that are devalued by other groups or wider society" (475). Drawing on Linstead's ideas of aesthetics, McColl

reproduced the humour that coal miners acquired for their survival, as aesthetic expressions” in a song.

The coal miners’ world was originally limited to the male world. Peggy Seeger, one of the production members on *The Big Hower*, recalled when she visited the coal-mining site together with Parker and MacColl:

Kitted out with gloves, a pit helmet and pads on my knees and elbows, I was directed to speak as little as possible. Miners like fishermen, are superstitious about women in their workplace. Or maybe they want just one place in the world without women, just as many women want places without men. (*First Time* 221)

According to Gerald Porter, the Big Hower had been a male-role type that excluded femininity (“Big John” 177). However, when *The Big Hower*, which was created out of male-dominated world, was transplanted in another wider world, it took on another meaning as common culture, where people can identify with his vitality and struggle. Importantly, the Big Hower’s focus shifted from a category of masculinity that is distinct from femininity to the whole of humanity. Peggy Seeger never felt humiliated by the coal-mining world where she was considered as inferior, but she was rather given power for living by looking at miners full of energy to go down the mine.

It is never silent in a coal mine. The earth is creaking, and groaning all around me. I’m twenty-seven, I’m a mother, and I want to live. I am in a man-made world where I am regarded as the weaker sex. I must not reinforce the stereotype of the hysterical female. I *will* live through this. By the time we emerged at the other end, I believed that a miner should be paid just for going down a mine, never mind for working there. (Seeger, Peggy, *First Time* 222: italics in original)

Parker emphasised that without “the bitterness of our past at our peril,” we cannot grasp “the defiant humanism of the Big Hower” (Liner Notes to *The Big Hower*). *The Big Hower* captured the powerful vitality that coal miners ultimately retained, inheriting it as our common culture. MacColl’s attempt should be seen as the significant culmination of coal-mining song activity.

Industrial folk song, a song genre, popularised as part of the folk revival, challenged Cecil Sharp’s and other folk song collectors’ idea that folk song is only limited to countryside. Associated with the Nationalization of the coal industry, great attention has been paid to coal-mining songs. Lloyd and MacColl recognised the value of coal-mining songs, as the expression of communal and rebellious spirits that capture the hearts of people. Through coal-mining song collection, LP records, and radio documentary epitomized by *The Big Hower*, folk revivalists conveyed the energetic voices of the coal-miners, hoping that these songs would help contribute to their actual vision in which people would be able to sing about their emotions and experiences.



Fig. 17 The LP Jacket Cover of *The Big Hower* (1971)

Chapter 7

The Post-War Folk Revival and Pacifism

As mentioned in Chapter Three, the post-war folk revival had a close relationship with the New Left movement. Jeff Nuttall (1993-2004), a poet, painter, actor and jazz musician, commented in his book *Bomb Culture* that the Partisan Coffee House, set under the library and office of the *Universities and Left Review*, provided a unique atmosphere, where “folk sessions, trad jazz sessions and political harangues” took place (43). The notice board was, according to Nuttall, “perpetually covered with petitions on an array of subjects that became monotonous, the bomb, the hungry, the death sentence” (43). It must have been natural for folk singers and musicians to be inspired by the idea of pacifism and equality. The café also attracted anti-nuclear activists, such as Bertrand Russell, Hugh Brock (1914-85), Pat Arrowsmith (1930-), and Peggy Duff, functioning as the “social nucleus” of the CND (The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) (Nuttall 43). The folk revival was closely tied to the movement. As Mitchell points out, “beginning with the CND, politics began to pull the English folk revival out of the local, and into national—and international—politics through topical songwriting” (51). Through CND activities, the impact of the post-war folk revival became worldwide, not limited to Britain. This chapter will explore their relationship with the Singing Voice of Japan Movement (Nihon no Utageo-*undō*), by discussing a Japanese anti-nuclear song, “Genbaku o Yurusumaji,” which was translated by Ewan MacColl as “Never Again the A-Bomb.” Ewan MacColl had been keenly critical of nuclear weapons before the CND was launched. He had already written a play, *Uranium 235*, in 1946, to convey the threat of nuclear weapons. The

spirit of protest had been implanted in the post-war folk revival, which functioned as a driving force for topical-song writing that flourished in the 1960s.

7-1 *Uranium 235*

The play, *Uranium 235*, written in 1946 by singer Ewan MacColl, was performed around Britain until 1952. MacColl was well known as the leading protagonist of the post-war folk revival in Britain. It is little known,

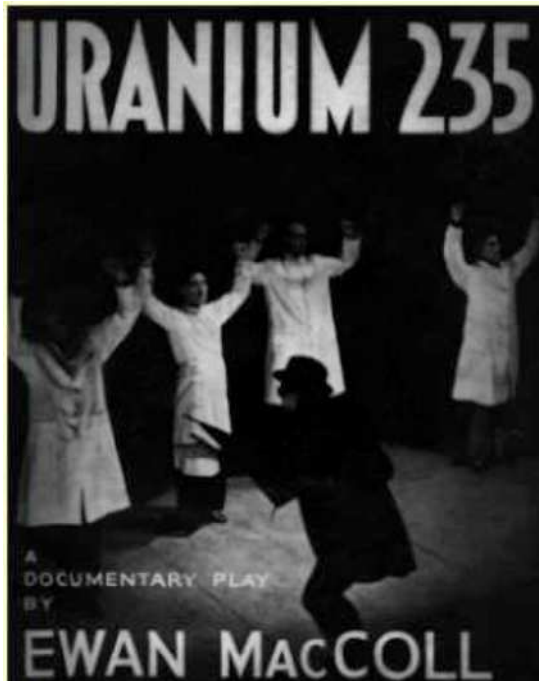


Fig. 18 The Cover of *Uranium 235* (1948)

however, that he started as an actor and playwright, involving himself in a series of political theatre groups in the 1930s and in the establishment of the Theatre Workshop, together with his wife at the time, Joan Littlewood. MacColl's plays, which included extensive use of music, dance and sound effects, attacked capitalist society and authoritarianism against the backdrop of the Great Depression, the emergence of Fascism and World

War II, They attracted attention from

critics and dramatists alike, including George Bernard Shaw who called him "the only genius working in the theatre of the day—apart from himself" (Cox, Peter 40). This chapter aims to analyse how the nuclear threat is depicted in *Uranium 235*, a documentary play that looks at the threat of atomic bombing and considers the role the drama played within the context of anti-nuclear literature. Kirk Wills argues that, in contrast to America, "British nuclear culture has been almost neglected" (60). He defines nuclear

culture as a product of “modern atomic physics,” and more specifically, as “the history of popular images of and attitudes towards nuclear power, atomic energy and nuclear weapon development” (60-61). He points out that the field of nuclear culture includes “a wide array of sources, ranging from plays, films, serials, comic books, novels and science fiction tales to scholarly monographs, learned articles, and scientific popularizations, which were freely translated, frequently subtitled, and thus widely disseminated” (60). The general attitude towards nuclear weapons changed from optimism to pessimism over a period of time leading up to the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. However, literary works such as H. G. Wells’s *The World Set Free* (1914) and J. B. Priestley’s *The Doomsday Men* (1938) had already foreseen the destructive potential of nuclear weapons. MacColl’s *Uranium 235* was, arguably, the first British drama to feature the threat of atomic bombs. As Shepherd-Barr argues, science plays that involve direct dialogue with the audience help “unify the sciences and the arts and humanities” (45), thus giving insight into the conflict between science and society. Having heard of the disaster of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, MacColl started to write *Uranium 235* with the help of the Theatre Workshop members, Alf Smyth and Bill Davidson, both of whom had extensive scientific knowledge. MacColl consulted *The Smyth Report*, officially called *Atomic Energy for Military Purposes* (1945), a detailed account of the development and production of atomic bombs. First performed at the Newcastle People’s Theatre in 1946, *Uranium 235* underwent several rounds of rewriting and revision. It was also performed at the Edinburgh’s People’s Festival in 1951. *Uranium 235* was published in 1948, and then re-published with a different ending in 1986.

MacColl decided that the best way to present his message was through

a historical framework. *Uranium 235*, consisting of eleven episodes, provides an outline of the history of atomic energy, starting with ancient Greece and moving through the Renaissance until modern times. The long and tortuous road leading to the development of nuclear power is presented through a history of science—from the ancient Greek philosopher, Democritus, who insisted that everything is made of atoms, to Giordano Bruno, the Italian philosopher, who was burnt at the stake for challenging the geocentrism, John Dalton, the British chemist, who introduced the atom into chemistry, Marie and Pierre Curie who discovered radium, and Einstein who established the formula $E=mc^2$, which eventually led to the development of nuclear power and the atomic bomb. In *Uranium 235*, sub-narrators such as the “microphone voice” and the Puppet Master, comment on the action of the play and manipulate the characters while the personified Energy blurs the relationship between reality and imagination.

In the opening scene of *Uranium 235*, a fire watcher, who is on the roof of a house or a church having been assigned the task of watching for bombs and air raids, appears on the stage and recites the following monologue:

This is the hour
 When death is rationed out,
 When iron eggs, fruit of some monstrous couplings in Hell
 Are hatched in blood.
 This is the hour when cities rise up
 Shrieking in the night
 And lamentations sound from iron throats,
 This is destruction’s hour. (Goorney and MacColl 75)

The frequent use of nuclear representation can be seen in this monologue. The phrase of “iron eggs” is a metaphor for the atomic bomb. The “fruit of some monstrous couplings in Hell” suggests that the atomic bomb is made

up of a combination of chemical elements such as uranium and plutonium. The statement that the iron eggs “are hatched in blood” symbolizes the energy of the explosion caused by the nuclear fission and the blood of those who lose their lives. These nuclear metaphors in the monologue add a solemn and imminent tone to the repeated phrase “This is the hour.” A glimmer of hope, however, can also be seen in the fire watcher’s monologue, which can be identified as the purpose of this play:

This night will pass and so will other nights,

Just as this war will pass.

Men have survived catastrophes before

And those who crouched despairing in a pit

Have often lived to tell their friends of it. (Goorney and MacColl
75)

As expressed in this passage, MacColl argues that those who survive the disaster must play a role in handing down their stories and sharing them with others. The ultimate intention of the play was to articulate what people saw, felt and experienced, sharing the past with future generations. As MacColl expresses it, “My ideal was the anonymous author, the anonymous song-writer, and you only achieve anonymity by becoming part of the whole” (“Theatre” 225). According to Owen Holland, “To create a popular participation, MacColl had to synthesize a destabilization of the supposedly hierarchical relationships existing between writer and reader, actor and audience, producer and consumer” (83). The reason for MacColl’s emphasising the importance of being anonymous stemmed from his belief that the artist must speak with the voice of the people. *Uranium 235* adopts the approach of observing the historical process from the earliest explorations of nuclear science to the dropping of atomic bombs and in this way, offering possible solutions. As a result, the tragedy of war would not be

forgotten. In *Uranium 235*, a scientist plays a significant role in exploring the issue:

MAN IN AUDIENCE. Hey, there! You in the white coat ! Is it
always to be like this? Nothing but
death and destruction ?

SCIENTIST. It depends

MAN IN AUDIENCE. On what?

SCIENTIST. On you.

MAN IN AUDIENCE. Us? Come off it! You're the ones who're
supposed to know all the answers.

SCIENTIST. Not *all* the answers but some of them . . . yes. We have, if I may say so, in the course of the last few years brought about considerable changes in what might be called the map of human knowledge. We have conquered power and explored the innermost secrets of the origin of matter. There are no closed doors to us now. We can choose our own road and send fate scurrying before us like an idiot beggar. We have opened a door on the future and on that door is written Uranium 235. (Gorney and MacColl 7; italics in original)

The planting of an actor in the audience was one of the distinctive characteristics of radical theatre like the Theatre Workshop. This created an effect in which the audience themselves participated in the drama, thus removing the barrier between a passive audience and the performers and making sense of the events. In *Uranium 235*, the “man in the audience” declares that science brings “nothing but death and destruction” (Gorney and MacColl 76), thereby showing a sceptical attitude towards the

development of science and attacking the scientists who engage in it. The scientist responds by saying, “It depends . . . on you” (Goorney and MacColl 76), which implies that the public should not blame scientists for bringing about a catastrophe but rather share the responsibility for ensuring that science is used in positive ways. The audience is, therefore, “actively encouraged to participate in what the play has represented, to make its meaning” (Holland 84). By sympathising with scientists who devote their lives to the exploration of “the innermost secrets of the origin of matter” (Goorney and MacColl 76), the play carefully attempts to identify the contradiction when the achievements of science are used to create weapons that can destroy humanity and all other living creatures. We are challenged to go back to the history of atomic science and think of its potential threats as well as advantages.

Unlike his other plays, such as *Johnny Noble* (1945), in which music and dance are used to create a cohesive storyline, in *Uranium 235*, according to MacColl, “the clash of different idioms was a vitally important feature of the over-all style” (Goorney and MacColl liv). In order to reveal clearly the struggle between scientists and public, jazz music was intentionally and effectively employed. In the play, the scientist warns against the danger of scientific weapons that threaten people’s lives. However, the young, who throw themselves into swinging jazz dance, will not listen to what the scientist is saying:

JESSIE. I love you, Frank.

FRANK. I love you, Jessie.

SCIENTIST. Excuse me, but . . .

FRANK. Look at the moon, Jessie.

JESSIE. The moon in June . . .

FRANK. And time to spoon,

My heart goes boom,
Honest it does, Jessie!
Boom diddy boom
Diddy diddy didy boom,
Boom, boom, boom! (Goorney and MacColl 76)

The banal rhymes of “moon,” “June” and “spoon,” often heard in typical Tin Pan Alley lyrics, are used in the couple’s conversation. The scientist’s serious warning is erased by the loud sound of jazz and their frantic dance. The couple, who are enjoying the wild dance, are completely indifferent to the scientist’s urgent appeal. Jazz was brought to Britain in 1919 when the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, a group of White Italian-American musicians from Chicago, gave their first performance at the Hammersmith Palais de Dance, a large dance-hall that became “a mecca for suburban West London” (Ross 28). Hobsbawm describes jazz as “a new epidemic of mass social dancing” (*Uncommon People* 268), which, accompanied by swing jazz and hot jazz, generated explosive popularity between the 1920s and 1930s. By 1920, jazz was widespread all over Britain, and in 1921, the *Times* wrote that “Jazz-tunes are our ‘folk-tunes’” (“Enraged Musician” 8). Speaking of jazz, as Cathy Ross explains “the word in the twenties was also an all-purpose adjective which could be applied to almost anything, from clashing colours to traffic noise” (27). However, many people were concerned about the potential dangers of jazz music due to its association with commercialisation and mass culture. For example, in the *Westminster Gazette*, the Irish composer, Hamilton Harty (1879-1941), criticised jazz as “sensual, noisy, and incredibly stupid” (qtd. In “Sensual Jazz” 4). The *Times* variously called it a “plague” (“Art” 12) or “madness” (“Jazz-Thoughts” 15). As Abravanel argues, jazz, with its accompaniment of frenetic dance, seemed “dangerous, sexualized, and radicalized” (55). Jazz was a symbol of

youth rebellion, challenging the conventional lifestyle and conservative society. *Uranium 235*, however, warns that the spread of jazz might encourage indifference among people and a lack of criticism, eventually leading to social distortion. The conflict between science and the public resulted in the tragedy of the nuclear explosion:

SCIENTIST. Listen, everybody. What happens during the next few months depends upon your decision. There is very little time left.

CROONER. Enjoy yourself; it's later than you think,
Enjoy yourself, while you're still in the pink.

(Goorney and MacColl 80)

After that, with frantic gaiety, the people on the stage recite their lines at high speed. When it reaches point of chaos, an explosion and a blackout happen almost simultaneously. The spotlight starts to wander aimlessly and sheds its light on “a female, headless lay-figure” (Goorney and MacColl 80). Beside the doll, there is “an old-fashioned portable gramophone,” on which a record can be heard playing the repetitive phrase “Enjoy yourself, it's later than you think” (Goorney and MacColl 80). It is obvious that the “female headless lay-figure” is associated with citizens who became victims of nuclear war. “Enjoy yourself” was a popular American song sung by Guy Lombardo (1902-77) in 1949. It can be assumed that MacColl introduced it into the play after 1949. In contrast to the scene of bloody massacre, the optimistic music, aimlessly and fruitlessly, echoes through the hall. This scene was not written in the first version published in 1948. The original version ended with the explosion and the blackout. The newly written scene, in which “Enjoy yourself” is played beside the headless doll, implies MacColl's message that popular music lacks the power to control our direction and determine our destiny. *Uranium 235* depicts popular forms of

entertainment, such as Hollywood films and sports, as something that can encourage people's indifference and distraction. The following scene is an example:

SCIENTIST. I wanted to tell you that . . .

1ST GIRL. Tyrone Power's nice.

2ND GIRL. Errol Flynn's nicer.

1ST GIRL. He's rough.

2ND GIRL. He makes me feel all funny inside.

.....

BOTH GIRLS. Nice. Nice. Nice. Nice . . . (Gorney and MacColl 77-78)

In the jazz music scene, the girls, who are completely mesmerized by the Hollywood stars, take no notice of the scientist's warning. The girls dance like "sleep-walkers" (77). The Theatre Workshop adopted dance movement theory, developed by the Austrian-Hungarian dancer and choreographer, Rudolf von Laban (1879-1958). Under the instruction of Jean Newlove (1923-2017) who had worked as an assistant to Laban, they were trained to create expressive movement, making use of "space, weight and time." The sleepwalker dance represents those who are caught up in the popular music craze and are blind to the impending danger.

MacColl's feelings towards jazz, however, were not entirely negative. As a teenager, he was exposed to jazz music through records of swing jazz bands such as Louis Armstrong, Jelly Roll Morton and King Oliver (*Journeyman* 188). MacColl understood well the post-war jazz revival in Britain, in which the popularity of traditional jazz, rooted in New Orleans, contributed to the formation of jazz clubs, and later, to skiffle and folk clubs (Moore and Vacca 28). The BBC radio series, *Ballads and Blues*, with which MacColl was heavily involved, broadcast not only folk songs but also jazz

music. It is evident that his attitude towards popular music was ambivalent. While admiring the driving energy of the popular music that had created a new cultural phenomenon, he was concerned about the passive attitude of listeners. MacColl commented as follows:

I see pop music, indeed pop art generally, as a defiant relinquishing of responsibility towards this society. The responsibility of thinking, the responsibility of being committed to any idea, to any point of view, to any course of action. And it's this negative attitude to society, to human thought, to historical processes, and all the rest of it, which, it seems to me, seems to permeate the whole of beat music, the whole of pop art. (Qtd. In Holbrook 191)

In short, MacColl considered pop music and pop art to be a part of popular culture, which he feared would deprive people of the responsibility to think critically, an essential element for observing the world and taking appropriate action. In order to challenge this, folk clubs, often located in the back or upstairs rooms of local pubs, functioned as alternative places, independent of popular entertainment, where a sense of community was maintained, with no clear barrier between performers and audiences and where traditional folk songs were exchanged. The Ballads and Blues club launched by MacColl in 1957, and re-named the Singers Club in 1961, created an alternative space in which people could give their interpretation of songs and be identified with them. His activity in the Theatre Workshop sowed the seeds of the post-war folk revival by creating a grass-roots culture. His ideas about the way music should be perceived are embedded in *Uranium 235*. More importantly, *Uranium 235* not only offered a critique of popular culture, representing it as a symbol of modernity, but went a step further by showing the way in which people are manipulated by the power

of popular culture and how this is not a single historical phenomenon but rather a continuous one that has been repeated throughout history. In *Uranium 235*, the theme of conflict between scientists and the public is re-stated in a new setting and format. The history is clearly portrayed in one scene that depicts the Italian Dominican friar, Giordano Bruno, who, despite his social status, challenged the Christian doctrine to endorse his ideas of cosmic pluralism, which eventually led to his being delivered to the Inquisition:

BRUNO. You cannot burn the truth. Rome has excommunicated me, Geneva has stoned me—but while I have breath in my body I will speak the truth for men to hear. I will sing a song of truth as will charm the shackles off their leaden souls.

INQUISITOR. You poor, stupid fool! They will not listen.

BRUNO. I will make them listen!

MUSIC. The Fool's Jig played on pipe and tabor. Fool enters dancing, leading a procession of dancing men and women. Bringing up the rear is the figure of Death.
(Gorney and MacColl 92)

Bruno attempts to convey the truth to people, but in vein. Those who dance to the tune of the Fool's Jig are completely indifferent to what he is saying, and fail to notice the figure of Death watching them. This scene allows the audience to realise the historical continuity between the medieval people who danced to the tune of the Fool's Jig and modern people who are crazy about the beat of jazz music. Music is thus used in *Uranium 235* to connect the two different worlds. The Theatre Workshop adopted the approach of the distancing effect, advocated by the German playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956), in which "the aim of music and song in Brecht's theatre is to

expose social processes; they should activate the audiences' rational, critical and analytical faculties" (Winkler 46). The audience was prevented from identifying with the characters but was required to observe the story with critical insight. In *Uranium 235*, the use of music contributed by highlighting the gap between the scientists and the people.

MacColl wrote two endings for *Uranium 235*. One ending was written between 1946 and 1951. Another ending was written in 1986 for the publication of an anthology of his playscripts, *Agit-Prop to Theatre Workshop*. His opinion on nuclear power had changed over the decades. After finishing the performance of *Uranium 235*, he deepened his friendship with the American folklorist, Alan Lomax (1915-2002), who settled in London between 1950 and 1958 for the purpose of producing a European series of *A World Library of Folk and Music* for Columbia records, who put him in touch with Lloyd. This encounter led MacColl to start a new career as a folk singer and enter the British folk scene. Although he had left the Theatre Workshop, his anti-nuclear commitment was still expressed through his engagement with the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and his participation in the Aldermaston March in 1958. The songs he released included "Never Again the A-Bomb" ("Song of Hiroshima"), an anti-atomic song composed in Japan in 1954 and translated by MacColl in 1955. It is evident that *Uranium 235* expressed the early seeds of his anti-nuclear activities. In the original ending, the scientist is accused of "conspiring against the world," of "betraying mankind to war" and "planning to destroy the very fabric of the world, having released the forces of death in everything that lives" (Goorney and MacColl 125). The scientist responds:

The road that we have built across the wastes of ignorance is not a road which leads to Death except for fools who would throw themselves over the precipice. It is a good road which can lead to

peace itself if only men will stop wearing blinkers on their eyes. It can lead to peace such as you have never known. (Goorney and MacColl 125)

The play emphasises that whether the earth is worth saving or not depends on our decision about how to use the scientific technologies invented by scientists. The personified Energy appears and gives a brief conclusion to the play:

1ST MAN. Let Energy speak. Who are your parents?

ENERGY. Albertus Magnus, Einstein, Democritus, da Vinci, Plank, Dalton, Rutherford, Paracelsus, Thomson, Mendelejev, Curie, Bohr, Chadwick, Dirac, Heisenberg. The men and women of the whole earth and of all ages. I am their child.

ENERGY. I will go where you go. If you work for war I will work with you. If you work for peace I will work too. There are two roads.

PUPPET-MASTER. My road is the familiar one. You can walk it blindfold. Come with me.

SCIENTIST. Mine is the new road, where a man walks with his eyes on the future. The road out of the night.

ENERGY. There are two roads. It is for you to choose and for me to follow. (Goorney and MacColl 125-26)

Energy tells the audience that he is the child of all scientists and mankind. Littlewood points out that this energy is enchained by “Greed, Lust and Death” (191), which implies that it is a product of mammon and authoritarianism. Although it was scientists who invented and developed nuclear technology, men of power took control of it for military purposes,

and the majority of people remained indifferent to it. Energy here embodies its results. What the Puppet-master calls the “familiar” road is the easy one that leads to the tragedy of the atomic bombing. The Puppet-master, who represents self-interest and deception, tries to manipulate blind Energy. There is, however, another “new road” that leads to a brighter future, meaning that nuclear energy can be used for peaceful purposes. The future depends on which road we choose to take. MacColl’s didactic ending was related to people’s anxieties over nuclear war and their growing desire for peace during the Cold War. In order to reduce these fears, in 1953, Dwight. D. Eisenhower, the 34th president of the United States, addressed the nation in a speech about the threat and fear of nuclear weapons and the hope for nuclear energy. Recognising that the development of nuclear weapons would instil feelings of fear and unrest in people, Eisenhower stated:

So my country’s purpose is to help us to move out of the dark chamber of horrors into the light, to find a way by which the minds of men, the hopes of men, the souls of men everywhere, can move forward toward peace and happiness and well-being.
(“Atoms for Peace” 4)

By using the metaphor of “the dark” and “the light,” Eisenhower emphasised the importance of transferring the power of nuclear weapons, which had the potential to destroy the entire human race, into nuclear energy, to be used for peaceful purposes in the fields of science, medicine and agriculture. The political conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States was implicit in the metaphor of “dark” and “light” that Eisenhower used. According to Shawn Parry-Gilles, “metaphors of light framed images of the United States as dark metaphorical images heightened the fear of a USSR-directed atomic energy program” (123). It is

evident that *Uranium 235* shared the basic idea with Eisenhower that science can be used in good or bad ways for the entire human race, although the nuclear disarmament was, in reality, difficult to achieve.

After its first performance at the Newcastle People's Theatre in 1946, *Uranium 235* went on to travel all over Britain until 1952. When performed in Liverpool in 1946, the *Liverpool Echo* reported that *Uranium 235* was a play with "boundless inspiration," making effective use of "light, darkness, off stage sound, music, and rhythm, and the players" ("Uranium 235" 3). In the same year, an anonymous columnist who saw the *Uranium 235* performance in Glasgow commented in the *Perthshire Advertiser* that MacColl had the power of direct and convincing speech, writing that "I was glad I went; for thus I added to my small store of quite unforgettable experiences. . . . For here's a man, too, who, for good or ill, knows how to raise speech to the level of action" ("Words" 9). When performed in Edinburgh in 1948, in an article entitled "Uranium 235" the *Scotsman* reported that "its language has power and is not without humour" while at the same time arguing that "its weakness is that its characters are mere abstractions" (4). *Uranium 235* received high commendation at the International Edinburgh festival in 1951. Hugh MacDiarmid wrote an introduction for the first publication of *Uranium 235*, stating that, unlike other plays featuring dictators and secret agencies, here "spiritual values are the realities" (6). As MacDiarmid expressed it, *Uranium 235*, provided "an absorbing experience to watch and listen to his ideas on the stage, expressed by speech, mime, dances, and song" (6). Thus, *Uranium 235* mirrored an alternative world in which MacColl's anti-nuclear stance is revealed through various modes of expression. MacDiarmid was convinced that such an innovative play would lead to the development of the Scottish theatre. Despite the high reputation afforded to *Uranium 235*, thirty years

later, MacColl became “highly dissatisfied with this ending and added to it an updated and far more cynical one demonstrating an extreme disillusionment with both politics and science” (Shepherd-Barr 72). He reached the conclusion that, considering what happened over the next three decades, the original ending, suggesting new possibilities for nuclear energy, had proved to be wrong. In the new ending, one of the characters becomes a spokesman for MacColl:

WOMAN. Are you confused? Perhaps I should explain. What you have seen so far, is what the author wrote way back in the late forties and early fifties. At that time, he believed, as many people did, in what Eisenhower called “Atoms for Peace.” Indeed, he ended the play on a note of hope. “We have the choice,” he said, “between two roads; the road to war and the road to peace.”

SCIENTIST. So?

WOMAN. Events have forced him to change his mind. (Goorney and MacColl 126-27).

MacColl supported “Atoms for peace” as advocated by Eisenhower, but he despaired of the results. The later ending reports on the nuclear reactor fire at Windscale in 1957, and the recurring nuclear plant accidents in the United States, the Soviet Union, West Germany, France, Switzerland, and Japan (Goorney and MacColl 127). It also points out that radioactive substances emitted from the nuclear plants exert poisonous influences on nature.

WOMAN. They only produce electricity and we’ve got more of that kind of power than we need. They produce radioactive substances which poison everything they touch—the land, the

rivers, the seas, the air . . . they breed cancers in the bones and flesh of people like us. Man's greatest achievement! A device, a series of devices with which we can kill ourselves, our children, our families, our friends. (Goorney and MacColl 129)

MacColl's love for nature can be seen in his songs such as "Manchester Rambler" (1932) and "Joy of Living" (1986), in which landscapes, such as moorlands, mountains and hills, are described as inspiring places. For him, a nuclear disaster was an unforgivable event. Nuclear power brought about dramatic changes in people's working lives. MacColl argued in an interview that "with the advent of nuclear power, as a result, a lot of contiguous industries have also disappeared or are in the process of disappearing" (Moore and Vacca 43). The development of nuclear power resulted in the closure of pits, forcing coal miners to lose their jobs. To give continuity to the play, MacColl needed to tackle the problems of the current nuclear power plants and convey the importance of considering the world. His voice is reflected in the play:

PUPPET MASTER. Do you think you might give it some thought?

It's worth thinking about. And remember what's at stake: our future and our past, all two or three million years of it. Anyway, think it over.

WOMAN. Yes, think it over. But don't take too long. Please don't take too long.

ALL. Remember—forever is an awful long time. (Goorney and MacColl 130)

The play's message that we should all take individual responsibility for the world and take action for the future is expressed in this ending. Compared to the original ending, the revised version ends on an urgent note, showing that *Uranium 235* is a story that is still relevant to us and is not limited to

the 1950s. Although MacColl did not give a specific solution, the play insists on the importance of arousing a sense of morality and the conscience of the human mind. The spirit of *Uranium 235*, in which MacColl's anti-nuclear stance was strongly reflected, was later adopted by the post-war folk revival.

7-2 The CND movement

The British post-war folk revival contributed to the development of the peace movement, taking place between the late 1950s and early 1960s. Their focus on nuclear disarmament can be associated with the emergence of the Cold War, leading to an international crisis and the increasing fear of nuclear testing in Western countries. Followed by nuclear testing in the Soviet Union and in the United States, Britain conducted nuclear tests on the Montebello Islands and the Emu Field in Western Australia between 1952 and 1953. Under the Macmillan government, Britain started a series of hydrogen bomb tests on Malden Island and Christmas Island in 1957 and 1958.

In Britain, in order to sound the alarm about the danger of nuclear war, the Nuclear Disarmament Movement (CND) was officially launched by prominent intellectuals such as J. B. Priestley (1894-84), Jacquetta Hawkes (1910-96), Bertrand Russell (1872-70), Lewis John Collins (1905-82) and A. J. P. Taylor (1906-90). Russell, a philosopher and a mathematician, was appointed the first president of the campaign (Taylor, Richard 22). According to Richard J. K. Taylor and Colin Pritchard, "the origins of the CND organizationally were precisely of this elite pressure group type" (56), gradually developing into "a huge mass movement" (56). The 1958 Aldermaston march, organised by the Direct Action Committee (DAC) and the recently formed CND, attracted thousands of people. They marched

from Trafalgar Square, London, to the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston during the Easter weekend (from April 4th to 7th). From 1959, the route was reversed, starting in Aldermaston and ending with a rally at Trafalgar Square. In 1960, roughly 100,000 people gathered at Trafalgar Square (Taylor and Collin 7). Canon Collins, the first chair of CND, recalled, "From Aldermaston 1959 till the Autumn of 1960 was the period of the Campaign's greatest success" (qtd. in Taylor, Richard 48). The success of the Aldermaston marches meant that the CND was no longer in the hands of elite leaders but in the hands of the mass. "Students were," as Carter put it, "active from the outset of the movement in 1958 and played a major role in promoting debate and information and in demonstrations. CND also attracted large numbers of teenagers" (54). E. P. Thompson supported CND, admitting the power of the "young marchers to Aldermaston" who "understood that 'politics' have become too serious to be left to the routines of politicians" (Thompson, *E. P. Thompson* 27). Thus, CND developed into a grass-roots movement, aiming for a world without nuclear weapons. "The Aldermaston march," according to Carter, "became a focus for the youth culture which had emerged in the 1950s, and for the music which transcended class differences among its fans" (Carter 54). At the Aldermaston marches, music such as jazz, skiffle, folk song and chorus, played a significant role in enhancing the morale of participants. Pete Seeger, who witnessed the Aldermaston march, wrote:

It became a musical parade: choruses, jazz bands, bagpipers, steel bands. Folkdancers adapted their fingers to the line of march. Thousands of song-sheets passed from hand to hand till everyone knew by heart "The H-Bomb's Thunder" and other songs. (Seeger, Pete 15)

It is interesting to note that, five years before "We Shall Overcome" became

an anthem song for the 1963 Washington march, the Aldermaston marches made use of music, associated with youth culture. According to *Peace News*, the organizers of the Aldermaston march, initially urged participants to “conduct themselves with dignity, courtesy and use no violence” and “march in silence” (“To March” 1). The silence was, however, broken by the African-American spiritual “Down by the Riverside” with the sounds of skiffle and trad-jazz (Ben Harker, *Class* 136). Trad-jazz bands, typified by Ken Colyer’s Omega Band and Humphrey Lyttelton, played a leading role in the first Aldermaston march. As Ian Campbell, the Scottish folk singer, says:

It is significant that 1958, the year that saw the climactic boom in jazz popularity, also produced the first Aldermaston march. The jazz revival and the rise of CND were more than coincidental; they were almost two sides of the same coin. Similar social attitudes and positive humanist values informed them both. At any jazz event a liberal sprinkling of CND badges, and perhaps even leaflets and posters, would be in evidence; conversely, at every CND demonstration live jazz music set the tempo for the march. (Qtd. in McKay 270)

For Jazz lovers, trad-jazz, inheriting New-Orleans black culture and Creole culture, became “a symbol of revolt, revolt against the values of their parents, against war, against ‘commercialism’” (qtd. in Moore and Vacca 50). The folk revival, using traditional songs to challenge what they perceived to be an authoritarian society, shared similar social and political stances. As Georgina Boyes points out, “prominent jazz and folk musicians appeared on the same platform at political events” (214-15), CND provided a platform where two different types of music—jazz and folk music—influenced each other. John Hasted, who led the London Youth Choir, was asked by Ken

Colyer, to make up a song for the march:

What songs would we sing? Songs which would give a lead, and help the marchers to march. Several songs were obvious choices, although it was still more than five years before “We shall overcome” was to be heard. We felt that there was a need for a new song produced especially for the occasion. (*Alternative Memories* 155)

Hasted recognised the importance of topical songs for the anti-nuclear campaign. As Boyes argues, “although jazz bands provided much of the music for the marches organized by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, it was folksong which became synonymous with protest” (214). CND provided a valuable opportunity for creating topical songs based on folk-song materials.

In Britain, the first pioneering folk-song magazine, *Sing*, contributed to the flourishing of topical songs. This British version of American folk-song magazine, *Sing out!* was launched by the communist Eric Winter, as a direct reaction to the hydrogen bomb tests at Bikini Island conducted by the United States. Eric Winter described the founding purpose of *Sing*:

The songs, which are produced in the course of man’s struggle for a better life, have not always been written down. This may not have done any harm to the songs but it has certainly restricted their value and importance. Today there is a need for the distribution of such songs, of immediate and topical interest, as widely as possible, particularly among young people. This is the task which this magazine sets itself. (“Something” 2)

Sing dealt with not only traditional folk songs but also with newly written songs that reflected the spirit of struggle. There were internationally enriched repertoires, not limited to Britain, including Leon Fung’s calypso

“The Atom Bomb and the Hydrogen!” and John Hasted’s “Talking Rearmament” and Korean folk song “Arian.” MacColl, who was a friend of Winter and Hasted, contributed songs such as “Against the Atomic Bomb” and “For Peace and Lasting Friendship” to *Sing*. As Hasted noted, “the circulation was seldom more than a thousand, but SING sold well by hand at folk clubs, and we knew that many of our readers actually leaned and sang the songs in each issue” (*Alternative Memories* 128). *Sing* gradually expanded their contents including articles, folk club news and record/book reviews. According to Winter’s wife, Audrey, the magazine’s main readership came from people in their “20s and 30s” and those in their “30s and 40s taught songs to young people” (Personal Interview). Thus, *Sing* implanted a pacifist consciousness in people, sowing the seed of CND and offering possibilities for a new creativity that would reflect a changing society. According to Eric Winter, *Sing* actively engaged in the CND marches:

When the first march was being planned, the magazine *Sing* undertook to organise singers who would march and sing and about forty singers took part. A week or two before the march, a small group of writers (John Hasted, Karl Dallas, Eric Winter and John Burners were among them) met to think about and write a campaign song that would catch the marchers’ imagination. (Qtd. in Joseph and Winter 18)

John Burner, the SF writer, who was a member of this group, presented them with fragments of song lyrics with no chorus, starting with “Don’t you hear the H-Bomb thunder, Echo like the crack of doom? / While they render the skies asunder / Fall-out makes the world a tomb” (II.1-4; qtd. in Joseph and Winter 18). After discussing what melody would fit the lyrics, as Hasted recalled, “Suddenly an idea came to me, that the words would suit the fine

American miner's song recorded by Pete Seeger" (*Alternative Memories* 156). This American miner's song is called "Miner's Lifeguard." In 1955, Pete Seeger and the Almanac Singers sang the song on their LP record, *Talking Union and Other Union Songs*. George Korson recorded the song from Mrs. Luigi for his song collection, *Coal Dust on the Fiddle* (1943). This chorus verse suggests that it was a coal miners' union song:

Union miners, stand together,
Do not heed the bosses [bosses'] tale,
Keep your hand upon your wages
And your eyes upon the scale. (II.9-12; Hasted, *Alternataive Memories* 156)

Inspired by this chorus verse, the following verse was newly written by Burner:

Men and women, stand together.
Do not heed the men of war,
Make your mind up, now or never;
Ban the bomb for evermore. (II.9-12; Joseph and Winter 18)

In Britain, A. L. Lloyd included "Miner's Lifeguard" but with a different title, "Miner's Life is Like a Sailor's" in *Come All Ye Bold Miners* (1952), stating that he obtained the song from George Evans of South Wales. This melody is said to have originated in a Welsh hymn, "Calon Lan." This miner's song had been little known in Wales, but frequently sung in America (138). The union song, shared purely among coal miners, was transformed into the anti-nuclear song, addressing all "men and women" and inheriting their spirit of struggle. "The H-Bomb Thunder" became known as CND's unofficial anthem song. This process illustrates how a folk song, shared among a limited community, took on a new role and meaning, which resonated with a wide range people.

7-3 “Never Again the A-Bomb”

This section discusses a protest song called “Genbaku o Yurusumaji” or “Never again the A-Bomb,” an anti-atomic song, made in Japan in 1954 before traveling around the world. The song found its way onto the British folk music scene in the 1950s and the CND movement. Ewan MacColl contributed to the dissemination of the song in Britain through an English translation.

The song, “Genbaku o Yurusumaji” (Never again the A-Bomb”) was generated in the Singing Voice of Japan Movement (Nihon no Utagee-*undō*). The movement was a cultural and political one with a definite socio-political tone, that emerged in 1947, two years after World War II, and was most influential in the 1950s. Related to communism and democratic socialism, it promoted social and pacifist activities through the medium of choral singing.



Fig.19 The Jacket Cover of *Songs Against the Bomb* (1959)

The lyrics of the song were written by Ishiji Asada (1932-), a factory worker, and the music was by Koji Kinoshita (1925-99), a high-school teacher of ethics and social studies. Both young men were in their twenties, engaging in the Utagee Movement in which the creation of anti-nuclear songs was promoted. Akiko Seki (1899-1973), a singer and the mainstay of the movement, contributed to an article, saying that “another problem is that, despite the voice of strong opposition to the atomic and hydrogen bombs, the creation of such songs lagged behind” (my trans.; Kinoshita 40).

Her appeal for the creation of peace songs that expressed anger and sorrow against the atomic bomb, drove Asada and Kinoshita to write a song with an anti-nuclear theme. Asada recalled their first meeting in the spring of 1954 when he asked Kinoshita about what kinds of songs were required in the movement, to which Kinoshita promptly answered him that they needed “nothing but songs protesting nuclear bombs” (my trans.; Kinoshita 32).

It was the time when the anti-nuclear movement in Japan had just begun, belatedly, nine years after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. The delay was mostly caused by the censorship of the press under the occupant forces (GHQ or General Headquarters), which were substantially the U.S. Army, who, as assailants, covered up the reality of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The entire Japanese people were largely not allowed to know the real truth of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings.

The general anti-nuclear weapons protest movement gained momentum in 1954, two years after Japan regained its sovereignty, on the occasion of the US’s Castle Bravo thermonuclear weapon test at Bikini Atoll in the early spring of 1954 when a Japanese tuna fishing boat, Daigo Fukuryū Maru, was heavily exposed to and contaminated by nuclear fallout, causing the crew’s acute radiation syndrome (ARS), including Aikichi Kuboyama (1914-54), the boat’s chief radioman, who died seven months later, and was believed to be the first victim of the hydrogen bomb. Consequently, the impending doom that foreshadowed the nuclear war in the early Cold War era, with the increasing knowledge of the consequences of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, led to the circumstance in which the song “Genbaku o Yurusumaji” was born. Though without first-hand knowledge of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, both Asada and Kinoshita gained a sense of the devastation through literary works including *Natsu no Hana* (*Summer Flowers*) by Tamiki Hara (1947),

Shikabane no Machi (The Town of Dead Bodies) by Yoko Ota (1948) and *Genbaku Shishu (Atomic Bomb Poems)* by Sankichi Tōge (1951), as well as a series of paintings, *The Hiroshima Panels (Genbaku no zu, 1950-82)* by Iri and Toshi Maruki (Kido 293).

Asada, living and working in Tokyo, began writing the lyrics, just after the Daigo Fukuryū Maru incident, on the recommendation of Koji Kinoshita. Asada recalled:

I received a letter, saying that white flowers are now in bloom in the town of Hiroshima, where people would have never thought that the grass would grow again and the flowers would be in bloom. Though there are still those who suffer from atomic bomb diseases, the news that Hiroshima's soil is still alive gave slight hope. Accepting it as a faint ray of light amidst suffering might have been my self-righteous. The news that the devastated soil was still alive became a vivid image, overlapping with those two hundred thousand people, who were killed in Hiroshima. I decided to make a song about it. (my trans.; Kinoshita 33)

By connecting the past and the present, Asada attempted to create the actuality of their shared experience. After making corrections, with the help of Kinoshita, the song was completed. The following is from the original excerpt of the song:

Frusato no machi yakare,
 Miyori no hone umeshi yaketsuchi ni
 Ima wa shiroi hana saku.
 Aa yurusumaji genbaku o.
 Mitabi yurusumaji genbaku o
 Warera no machi ni.

(My hometown was burned to ashes, / Where I buried the bones of

my loved ones in the burnt soil / Now, white flowers are in bloom /
 Never allow the atomic bombs! / Never allow the atomic bombs to
 drop on our town, a third time!)

Furusato no umi arete,
 Kuroki ame yorokobi no hi wa naku
 Ima wa fune ni hito mo nashi
 Aa yurusumaji genbaku o.
 Mitabi yurusumaji genbaku o
 Warera no umi ni.

(The sea is rough in our native land. With the black rain,
 there are no joyful days. / There are no people on the boat
 today. / Never allow the atomic bombs! / Never allow the
 atomic bombs to drop on the sea, a third time!)

Furusato no sora omoku
 Kuroki kumo kyō mo daichi ooi
 Ima wa sora ni hi mo sasazu
 Aa yurusumaji genbaku o
 Mitabi yurusumaji genbaku o
 Warera no sora ni.

(The sky is heavy over our hometown, / with black clouds covered
 with the earth, day after day / And the sun is shadowed, / Never
 allow the atomic bombs! / Never allow the atomic bombs on the
 sky!)

Harakara no taema naki
 Rōdō ni kizuki agu tomi to sachi
 Ima wa subete tsuie saran

Aa yurusumaji genbaku o

Mitabi yurusumaji genbaku o

Sekai no ue ni.

(The wealth and joy, built up by our fellow men's ceaseless labour,
have now all gone for nothing. / Never allow the atomic bombs! /
Never allow the atomic bombs on our world!) (sts.1-4; my trans.;
Kinoshita 141)

It is obvious from the first stanza that Asada drew inspiration from the letter that he received, saying that the white flowers are now in bloom in the deserted land of Hiroshima, after the long years, therefore creating an evocative and vivid image of the white flower and implying an awaking of life on the deadly land. Both the second and third stanzas give the description of the dreary sea and the gloomy sky, contaminated by the residual radiation of the nuclear bombings. The scene in which boats are empty on the sea, perhaps refers to the tragic incident of the Japanese tuna fishing boat, Daigo Fukuryū Maru, exposed to radiation. By connecting the past and the present, the song reveals that the natural destruction caused by the nuclear bombings and other nuclear weapons still go on, taking the lives. The last stanza calls on people all over the world not to repeat the tragedy of atomic bombings.

The song starts from what had happened in reality, describing the actual experiences, emotions and perspectives of those victims of the atomic bombings and nuclear weapons, and thereby creating a poignant yet highly empathic song. The song is reflected in Asada's belief that:

The damage, brought by the massacre of the war, is not only inflicted on those who were killed but also on those who were left behind. They suffer the misfortune and misery of their loss, both of which will never fade as long as they live. In that sense, we

cannot start a new war as long as the memory of the dead is kept alive. (my trans.: Kinoshita 35)

“Genbaku o Yurusu maji” preserves the memory of the dead and provides a powerful connection to our modern concern with nuclear weapons. By creating a connection between the dead and the living, the song is elevated to the universal, hoping for peace. Set to a doleful but powerful melody by Kinoshita, the song was first performed in late July in Tokyo by the Central Choral Group. This was followed by a memorial event held in Hiroshima on 6th August 1954, the 9th anniversary of the bombing, organized by the workers of the Japan National Railway. This event had a great impact on the thousands of attendees, who returned to their home with the new songs so that it “spread like wildfire all over the country, through the network of railways” (my trans.: Michiba178). By the first World Conference against A & H Bombs held in Hiroshima in August 1955, the song became the “theme song of the movement to ban nuclear bombs” (Hayashi 361).

How was the English version of the song created? Toshiaki Tsukiyama, a librarian at the National Diet Library and a pacifist activist, was the first English translator of the song. Deeply impressed by it, he translated the song in 1954, with the title “No More Hellish Bombs!” hoping that it would gain an international appeal. In 1955, Tokusaburo Dan (1901-77), a social critic and a member of the World Council of Peace, wrote an article about the spread of the Utageo movement in Japan, for *The Bulletin of the World Council of Peace*, where he introduced the song:

The horror of the hydrogen bomb, and the tests which brought new sufferings to the Japanese people, were also factors which brought more and more people into “The Songs of Japan.” A song of anger and grief, “We shall never allow the dropping of another atomic bomb,” rapidly spread throughout the country. In factory

and on farm this song is heard rising up at any time, an expression of the people's hatred of war and their desire for peace.

(15)

Another English translation of the song, with the title "We Shall never Allow the Dropping of Another Atomic Bomb" was put in the article. It can be assumed that MacColl created the English version based on the existing one. The song was brought to Europe on the tenth anniversary of Hiroshima bombing, 6th August 1955, when it was performed in Warsaw, Poland, at the Fifth World Festival of Youth and Students (WFYS), by a joint choir of a thousand singers from various countries including Japanese delegates of the Utageo movement. The performance was produced mainly by Malcolm Nixon, a member of the Communist Party of Britain, and a British representative of the anti-imperialist and left-wing organization, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, who had visited Japan earlier in the year. Meeting with people engaged in the Utageo movement, he knew the song, *Genbaku o Yurusumaji*, and was deeply impressed by it. He negotiated with Akiko Seki and others for the big choir project in Warsaw, which turned out to be a very successful performance. During the festival, the song was sung in chorus frequently in different languages (Miwa 117), including German, Italian and Russian. The propaganda of the festival in Warsaw was "the spirit of peace, goodwill, and friendship" ("Wholehearted Hospitality" 4), suggesting that its Communist sponsors "were at pains not to overdo the ideological propaganda, emphasizing instead the new attitude of tolerance to the west and the promotion of 'friendship among all nations'" ("Youth Festival" 5). During the festival, there was "no mention of Democracy nor Communism, nor singing of 'The Red Flag' nor 'Internationale'" ("Wholehearted Hospitality" 4). This suggests that the song, *Genbaku o Yurusumaji* met the needs of the festival that required more peace songs

rather than overly ideological songs.

For the festival, the English version was written by Ewan MacColl, with the new title of *Never Again the A-Bomb (Song of Hiroshima)*. It was Malcolm Nixon who asked MacColl to translate the song for the festival in Warsaw. Nixon was MacColl's collaborator at that time and also an organizer of a folk club in Soho, called *The Ballad and Blues*, one of the major venues of the post-war folk revival. This English version, written by MacColl, was sent to the Japanese delegates of the Utage movement. During the festival, they distributed the sheet music of the song to participants from all over the world (Kinoshita 142).

As far as we know, MacColl never mentioned the song in any written memoir nor in any interview that he gave. However, as he made the English version in a relatively short period of time, it is clear that he felt sympathy with the subject matter of the song. As already mentioned, his play, *Uranium 235*, had equipped him with the knowledge and insight, regarding the threat of atomic war. He was convinced that it was his mission to transmit the danger of atomic conflict to the general public. MacColl did not translate the song word by word, but added his own idioms to the song:

In the place where our city was destroyed,
Where we buried the ashes of the ones that we loved,
There the green grass grows and the white waving weeds
Deadly the harvest of two atomic bombs.
Then, brothers and sisters, you must watch and take care
That the third atomic bomb never comes. (st.1; "Against the Atom
Bomb" 17)

Instead of the vivid and evocative image of "a white flower" in bloom, written in the Japanese version, MacColl replaced it with "the green grass grows" and "the white waving weeds" so as to emphasise the alliterative

phrases. “The white waving weeds” might suggest white wild flowers, mingled with weeds, waving in the wind. “The green grass grows” obviously belongs to the formulae of British folk songs and folklore that he was familiar with, implying that the dead are buried under the grass. For example, a traditional folk song called “The Trees They Grow So High” depicts the death of a young man as “the green grass grew over him” (Vaughan Williams and Lloyd 99). The description of the grass expresses the liminal position between the dead and the living. But such beautiful imagery is soon betrayed by, or contrasted with, the opposing metaphor that MacColl newly created, namely, “Deadly harvest of the two atom bombs,” which gives the song a cruel, yet aesthetically pleasing impression. His use of various images and metaphors can also be seen in the second and third stanzas:

Gentle rain gathers poison from the sky
 And the fish carry death in the depths of the sea.
 Fishing boats are idle, their owners are blind.
 Deadly the harvest of the two atom bombs.
 Then, landsmen and seamen you must watch and take care
 That the third atom bomb never comes.

The Sky hangs like a shroud overhead,
 And the sun’s in the cage of the black, lowering cloud.
 No birds fly in the leaden sky
 Deadly harvest of two atom bombs.
 Then, brothers and sisters, you must watch and take care
 That the third atom bomb never comes. (sts.2-3 “Against” 17)

The second and third stanzas, where the scenes change from “the sea” to “the sky,” present each element with the words of “the fish carry death in

the depth of the sea” and the dismal simile “The sky hangs like a shroud overhead.” The metaphorical phrase, “the sun’s in the cage of the black, lowering cloud,” implies that the sun is hidden by the poisonous black clouds. This image can work effectively with his newly invented phrase, “No birds fly in the leaden sky.” The birds are a metaphor of spring, love, freedom and peace. For example, the song, “By the Green Grove” describes the joy of hearing sweet birdsong on a peaceful May morning (Copper 223). The scene in which no birds fly in the leaden sky is contrasted with such an idyllic folk song, envisaging a dystopian world in which the atomic bombings destroy the beautiful nature around us. The last stanza runs as follows:

All that men have created with their hands
 And their minds, for the glory of the world that we live in,
 Now it can be smashed, in a moment destroyed—
 Deadly harvest of two atom bombs,
 Then, the people of the world, you must watch and take care
 That the third atom bomb never comes. (st.4 “Against” 19)

By not employing a word-for-word translation, MacColl uses “hands” as a metaphor for the power of labour. Thus, “All the wealth and joy,” written in the original version, is replaced with “All that men have created with their hands” and “their minds.” His version is more dynamic and dramatic, giving insight into the labouring people. He inserts vocative expressions in each stanza, such as “The brothers and sisters,” “landsmen and seamen,” “the people of the world” and the repetitive warning, “you must watch and take care,” thereby emphasising the solidarity, frequently seen in British chants and songs with a socialist cause. With regard to creating atomic-bomb songs, MacColl noted:

There is still hope, time for us to do something about the bomb,

about the state of the world. Writing songs is, or should be, an act of optimism since it implies that there will always be people eager to listen to them. I still write songs about all kinds of things, even about the bomb. Well, not exactly about the bomb but about nuclear energy and those government agencies which are at such pains to convince us that nuclear reactors are safe, clean and economical and the only alternative to a dirty, drab, expensive future. (*Journeyman* 354)

It follows that, according to MacColl, even songs about the atomic bomb need to give people a feeling of hope whereby they might think about the real state of the world and find the way out of difficulties. “Never Again the A-Bomb” is such a song that provides the stimulus for the action necessary to create a peaceful society. This song gradually spread onto the contemporary British folk scene where politics and music were deeply intertwined. The pioneering British political folk magazine, *Sing!*, launched in 1954, as a direct reaction to the hydrogen bomb tests at Bikini Island, reported on *Never Against the A-Bomb* in the 1955 issue, thereby giving support for it among its youthful, politically active readership. The song also played an active role in the 1958 Aldermaston march, organised by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), eventually gaining wide popularity. As already noted, during the march, various genres of music—including skiffle, folk and jazz music—were performed, thus playing a key role in boosting the morale and solidarity of the marchers. Ewan MacColl, together with his wife, Peggy Seeger, joining the march, sang *Never Again the A-Bomb*, along the way and distributed its sheets among the demonstrators (Arthur, *Bert* 284). This song was later recorded on the LP record, *Songs Against the Bombs* (1959), with the new title, “Song of Hiroshima” and with the choir accompaniment of the London Youth Choir.

MacColl's version became one of the symbolic and iconic songs of the CND movement during the period. Furthermore, deeply impressed by the song, Pete Seeger sang "Never Again the A-Bomb" both in English and Japanese, in the live performance at Carnegie Hall in New York, on 8th of July 1963, during the height of the civil rights movement. Considering the fact that his wife, Toshi Seeger (1921-2003) was of Japanese ancestry, according to Akagi, "Seeger had special feelings toward Japan" (21). His lifelong hope for peace and deep affection for humanity drove him to select "Never Again the A-Bomb" in the midst of the civil rights movement.

The post-war folk revival in Britain was intertwined with the CND movement through topical-song writing. They both shared the same concept of peace and anti-nuclear politics and took action to realise an egalitarian society without war. Therefore, the post-war folk revival in Britain developed into an international cultural movement, by looking at world affairs and making protest songs. Inspired by MacColl's *Songs Against the Bombs* and "The H-Bomb Thunder," Ian Campbell created an introspective anti-war song, "The Sun is Burning" in 1963:

The sun is burning in the sky.

Strands of cloud are gently drifting by.

In the park the dreamy bees are droning in the flowers among the trees. And the sun burns in the sky.

Now the sun has come to earth,

Shrouded in a mushroom cloud of death.

Death comes in a blinding flash

Of hellish heat and leaves a smear of ash

And the sun has come to earth.

Now the sun has disappeared,
All is darkness, anger, pain and fear.
Twisted sightless wrecks of men
Go grouping on their knees and cry in pain
And the sun has disappeared. (Qtd. in Joseph and Winter 1)

There is no doubt that Campbell must have imagined the tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where a peaceful normal life—laughing children and flowers, trees and bees—was, in an instant, turned into ash. Campbell did not witness the hellish scene, but he attempted to share the memory through song-writing. This song became a hit when Simon & Garfunkel sang it on their first album, *Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.* (1964). This song was covered by Luke Kelly (1964-84) and Christy Moore (1965-). Through his song, Campbell attempted to capture the essence of this real-life horrific event and helped to perpetuate its memory. The post-war folk revival contributed to shaping the anti-nuclear culture. Thus, the post-war folk revival was not only limited to Britain, but also provided a global outlook through topical-song writing. The protest spirit was woven into the vision of the post-war folk revival.

Conclusion

By analysing various aspects of the British folk revival of the 1950s and 60s as well as song lyrics, this thesis has sought to investigate the process by which traditional songs were given new meanings and values. This in turn contributed towards shaping an alternative world view that challenged the prevailing social system. The post-war folk revival was a cultural movement, exploring the genuine human relationships that went beyond class and racial boundaries. The celebration of human life can be understood in the voices of the folk music performers who initiated the post-war folk revival. As Dave Arthur, looking back on the folk club scene in which he participated, noted: “We didn’t do it for the money. We just loved the music. We wanted to play it. We wanted to be part of it” (qtd. in Bean 371). Martin Carthy also observes, “I love the freedom. People will allow you to do what you like—and you belong to them” (qtd. in Bean 380). These comments indicate that the existence of a community that connected people was a vital component in recreating traditional songs and developing the folk scene. Traditional songs that depict people’s everyday lives and feelings cannot be grasped within the abstract system of the modern society. The post-war folk revivalists, such as A. L. Lloyd and Ewan MacColl, attempted to capture the vitality of the traditional songs but then transform them to reflect contemporary issues, thereby changing them into something that modern audiences could relate to.

Chapter One argued that the post-war folk revival was not spontaneously created but was instead situated within the strand of radical culture that can be traced back to the Victorian Era. As noted in this chapter, William Morris’s *Chants for the Socialists* (1895) set newly written words to the melody of folk songs and other old songs, thereby creating a community where a sense of solidarity and fellowship could be felt. Morris’s

quest for the past as a form of insurance against the rapid advances of the Industrial Revolution, which, in part, led to the Arts and Crafts movement, became a necessary ingredient in creating socialist songs. Similarly, the collection of folk songs that took place during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries was inspired by the fear of industrialisation and urbanisation that the collectors believed would destroy their nostalgic vision of Britain. While the post-war folk revival made use of traditional folk songs, garnered by the earlier collectors, they questioned why their Victorian and Edwardian predecessors had only collected traditional songs sung in the countryside. Instead, the post-war artists started to expand their repertoires to include industrial folk songs and erotic folk songs.

Chapter Two examined the activities of Lloyd and MacColl in the 1930s and 1940s and the cultural strategies of the Communist Party of Great Britain (CPGB), which helped in the formation of the post-war folk revival. Lloyd and MacColl did not participate directly in politics, but it is obvious, given their working-class backgrounds, that communism was the underlying ideology that gave them a voice. Marxist ideas enabled them to understand the world in which they lived. In the areas of literature, drama and folklore studies in which they engaged, they learnt how to express the authentic voice of working-class people. However, as Chapter Three repeatedly emphasised, it is misleading to regard the post-war folk revival as solely the cultural product of the CPGB. Certainly, considering the creation of Topic Records, which started as an offshoot of the CPGB and publications such as Lloyd's *The Singing Englishman* and MacColl's *Shuttle and Cage*, published by the Workers' Music Association, the post-war folk revival cannot be separated out entirely from the support of the CPGB. Having said that, after World War II, the post-war folk revival came to distance itself from the CPGB. Thus, the folk revival should rather be

considered in the context of various social changes that happened in post-war Britain. Their struggle to maintain their identity against the general Americanisation of English culture, the influence of various forms of ethnic music brought into the country by immigrants, the formation of the youth communities such as coffee houses, skiffle and folk clubs and the development of mass media, all contributed to creating the vigorous British folk scene. The post-war folk revival, therefore, was part of the international cultural scene in London. Besides, a significant connection can be found in the relationship between the New Left and the post-war folk revival in the way they shed light on ordinary people's culture. The folk revival's engagement with Arnold Wesker's Centre 42 is an important example, connecting politics and culture.

Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six provided textual analysis of songs that Lloyd and MacColl sang. They revived traditional songs that had been gathering dust in libraries. While not corrupting the original essence of the traditional song, their approach was to imbue these songs with new meanings, values and aesthetics in order to make modern audiences feel a connection with them. As G. H. Burns notes, "Songs that may be relocated into a contemporary context, while retaining their original message, provide renewal points for perceptions of authenticity that can be transferred and applied to new source versions" (38). The process by which traditional songs were recreated and performed, allowed an exploration of common culture that connected people. Chapter Four focused on Lloyd's adaptation of traditional ballads, "Jack Orion" ("Glasgerion") and "Reynardine," both of which treat trickster type characters who rebel against the class system and its social rules. By reviving the essence of that rebellious spirit, Lloyd's versions provide an alternative worldview that captured the hearts of contemporary audiences.

Chapter Five examined the way in which erotic folk songs came to be recognised as part of the post-war song repertoire. Erotic folk songs, which express sexual matters through the use of metaphors and symbols, had been ignored or expunged by Victorian and Edwardian folk song collectors in consideration of their prudish middle-class readership. These erotic folk songs, however, regained their power by the efforts of A. L. Lloyd, who believed that they embody a peaceful world in which nature is in harmony with humanity. Erotic folk songs, celebrating sexual freedom and harmonisation with nature, were to a greater degree accepted in 1960's Britain, when people started to become more permissive about the sexual behaviour of the younger generation. This change of attitude was accompanied by new methods of birth control and by the emergence of the hippie counter-culture.

Chapter Six illuminated the process by which coal mining songs that consist of Industrial Folk Song, came to be firmly implanted in the post-war British folk scene, through coal-mining song collecting initiated by Lloyd and the radio ballad, *The Big Hewer*, produced by MacColl, Peggy Seeger and Charles Parker. The trend that encouraged a singing culture among coal miners was associated both with the nationalization of the coal mining industry and with the closure of pits. The vigorous spirit of coal mining songs was conveyed in the British folk scene, thereby creating a connection between miners and people at the emotional level.

As Chapter Seven has shown, the feeling of vitality that dwelt in traditional songs was utilised in the peace movements such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. As can be seen in the play, *Uranium 235*, MacColl had already recognised the threat of nuclear weapons, suggesting that the only hope for peace was to develop a spirit of protest in the human mind. Folk song magazines such as *Sing!* provided a platform for

creating topical songs that reflected people's struggle for a better life. By doing so, these songs, which were often sung to the melody of folk songs and hymns, gave a voice to those who wanted to change society. The post-war folk revival was not limited to Britain, but rather developed into an international cultural movement. As shown in Chapter Seven, the Japanese anti-nuclear song, *Never Again the A-Bomb*, translated by MacColl, was sung in the Aldermaston marches, implying that the hope for peace was a commonly shared vision, which went beyond national borders and racial differences. The topical and political songs, created in the folk scene, helped strengthen the anti-nuclear campaigns and foment a sense of solidarity.

Throughout these chapters, it is obvious that the post-war folk revival gave traditional songs a new meaning and role in Britain's fast changing society. This in turn created a community in which these songs could resonate across class and generational boundaries. As Julia Mitchell notes, the post-war folk revival can be situated in "the political, social, cultural history of postwar England," offering "something compelling and unique to the historiography of postwar England" (130). By analysing ballads, industrial folk songs, erotic folk songs and topical songs, this thesis has attempted to highlight the literary aspects of the post-war folk revival. Folk revivalists found, in traditional songs, a new possibility of sharing a common culture that connected people, rather than simply seeing them as products of a distant past. By adding new words or changing archaic phrases or dialects, traditional songs became more personal and relevant to people. Lloyd preferred quoting what Ralph Vaughan Williams had once said: "The practice of rewriting a folk song is abominable, and I wouldn't trust anyone to do it except myself" (Liner Notes to *Bird*). According to Frankie Armstrong, "he knew very well, of course, that folk songs are constantly being re-created, that this is their essence" ("On Singing" 256).

There is no doubt that folk songs, re-created and sung by folk revivalists like Lloyd and MacColl, were part of the “invention of tradition.” However, it was the dynamic and magical power of traditional songs that drove them to be so. In liner notes to “The Two Magicians,” Lloyd wrote that “it seemed too good a song to remain unused, so I brushed it up and fitted a tune, and now it appears to have started a new life” (Liner Notes to *The Bird*). Folk songs are subject to change, thus creating different versions and interpretations. As McKean points out, “the singers have learned and developed a version that is ‘right’ and best for their sensibilities and their singing style” (“Gordon” 240). The adaptability of folk songs allows people to create a space in which they can participate and invent different approaches.

In an interview with Lloyd’s daughter, Caroline Clayton described Lloyd as “a happy man,” who was already interested in living and always looked towards the future, not the past (Personal Interview). It can be assumed that his perspective on life shaped a vision of the folk revival, stemming from restoring human bonds and maintaining a community spirit. This provided an alternative worldview that was different from the society in which he lived.

Today, in a world where the Internet has changed our lifestyle and the way we interact with other people, folk songs still give us hope. The vast amount of folk material now available on the Internet archive of the Vaughan Williams Library, which helps folk song performers, researchers and folk song-lovers to search for valuable song materials, gives hope for the future. Folk festivals, such as the Cambridge Folk Festival, the Whitby Folk Festival, and the Sidmouth Folk Festival, take place annually in Britain. The folk clubs, although not on the same scale as in the post-war period, still manage to continue operating. The BBC broadcasts a folk music

programme on Radio 2 every week. The station has an annual event called “The BBC2 Folk Awards,” which celebrates the outstanding achievement of folk singers and performers. Although folk song is still not part of the cultural mainstream, it is, nonetheless, a well-established genre in British subculture. In 2018, the folk song magazine, *fRoots* featured articles and memoirs, related to the 1965 Keel Festival. Ian Anderson, an editor of this magazine, notes as follows:

Perhaps the sort of talking workshops and discussions presented by experts that Keel specialised in more than fifty years ago deserve to be brought out. There are many out there with years of accumulated knowledge and experience that deserves to be passed on or debated, and our whole music world could benefit from it. (4)

As Anderson shows, the folk revival, which placed importance on the shared community and its experiences, had the potential to influence the music world. As Mitchell observes, “Remarkably, that infrastructure largely still remains intact: it is still possible, on any given night, to find a folk club in the back or upstairs room of a pub in most cities and towns throughout England” (134). The robust nature of the folk scene in Britain took shape through an intricate weave of folk song material, folk song collectors, singers, audiences, and venues that provided a vigorous creative environment. In *Folk Song in England*, folk songs, according to Lloyd, are given their “second existence,” where “a primitive midwinter good-luck charm becomes an amiable chorus song for nuclear physics students in a university folk song” and “shanties,” he added “are now sung for fun, not [just for] work” (408). These songs in their “second existence,” Lloyd mused, “are probably enjoying a more vigorous life than they did in their first, restricted time, even if they are bent to different purposes” (*Folk Song in England* 408). Folk songs, performed in the post-war folk revival, served a

wider communal end. Thus, the folk revival played a significant role in bridging the past, the present and the future together. Its vision of a common culture that offered hope, humanity and connectivity, built and strengthened the prospect of the post-war folk revival, which will, one is certain, be inherited by future generations.

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