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Chapter 5: Scheduled Chaos and Welsh Creatures of Difference

Disney's Dance with the Dragon:

In the last chapter we explored a collection of Welsh films which easily fit into several general categories, which marked these films not only mostly as period pieces, but importantly, as Coming-of-age genre films. We discussed some of the economic, industrial and cultural reasons why these films proliferated and became the largest portion of all Welsh filmic material produced in the past thirty years, excepting the larger body of non-fiction sports-related and news/documentary product. For various reasons, a number of Welsh films fit the category of Coming-of-age, but resist being coupled with the films in the last chapter, for reasons, which we shall examine. We noted how the appeal of Coming-of-age films, i.e., 'suitable for all audiences', the lower production expense of child actors, the seeming lack of controversy, frequently compelled the making of filmic product in this genre in Wales. We also factored into the picture the importance of the Welsh 'auteurs', that is, the principal director/producers, who made considerations related to both their careers and to their political or cultural message when developing these scripts. We noted how Sara Sugarman is exemplary of directors who used the Welsh film industry to launch their individual careers, and we asserted that choices made by the Welsh 'auteurs', whether conscious or intuitive, made their final product more appealing to external audiences and less appealing to domestic audiences, or in some of the cases we cited it was the other way around. In this chapter we look at filmic product, which mostly meets the criteria of fitting the Coming-of-age genre, but because of other important dimensions, requires alternative reading. Irish filmmaker Martin Duffy came to Wales to produce the film first entitled *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* (2000). This film fits the category 'stories about children in idyllic settings who learn about magic', and was produced with funds from the Arts Council of Wales, and with the production

support of Peter Edwards at HTV Wales. In our chapter on “Wales the Cinematic ‘Outsider’”, we mentioned the role that Duffy played. We compared the BBC film *Carrie’s War* (2004) with *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* and generally described them as films made with the backing of both external and internal funding and distribution or broadcast deals. Neither *Carrie’s War* nor *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* easily fit into our discussion in the last chapter, for a couple reasons. Both are clearly Coming-of-age films, but both are based on scripts that are written from an intentionally external perspective that is external to a Welsh perspective.

As we discussed, *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* originally had a title, which conjured up for Welsh audiences a nationalistic vision due to the inclusion of the name Taliesin, a pre-Medieval Welsh poet and ruler whose poetry and heroism have become emblematic of modern Welsh, nationalistic causes. And according to Sorlin’s basic criteria for a national film, *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* has all the markers of ‘Welshness’: it was filmed in Wales, Jonathan Pryce and Matthew Rhys star in it, and the rural village setting is unmistakably Welsh. The film had a mild market success in the British cinemas, but faded away quickly, and then was rediscovered when American film critic and neo-conservative commentator Michael Medved held the film up, as an example of recommended family viewing. Medved, a former speech writer for the Clinton administration, is the advocate of an anti-Hollywood cultural movement in the U.S., and hosts a popular radio talk show which is supported nationally by proponents of family values from both the left and the right of American religious and political interests. Medved wrote in his most well known book, *Hollywood vs. America*, how having the qualities of a ‘family’ film did not necessarily guarantee either the aesthetic quality or commercial success of a film (Medved 1993: 34-35). Subsequently, the title of *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* was changed to ‘*Small Miracles*’, effectively stripping it of its confusing marker of ‘Welshness’, and more appropriately packaging the film for an

American home video market. A similar transformation has happened to the Coming-of-age film, *Carrie's War*, which is sold in the U.S. through the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) portal as a 'British' film, with 'European' appeal, barely mentioning that almost the entire film takes place in Wales and was made by BBC Wales. We can mention here that the aspiration-driven 'market' and 'film festival' consciousness of European 'auteurs', as described by Elsaesser, seems to have an enormous influence in not only the films which get made, but the ways in which these directors are willing to later market them. Ruth Barton discusses the place of Martin Duffy in Irish filmmaking, and mentions that his Coming-of-age films defy category and seem to have a marketing impetus of their own

That Duffy's film fitted into no discernible category, functioning neither as children's film or otherwise, left it susceptible to a market more used to generic Hollywood fare (Barton 2004: 180).

Both *Carrie's War* and *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* are films, which are unsatisfying to many Welsh audiences because instead of looking forward to life in Wales, the main characters are all obsessed with the time when they will finally leave Wales. For example, the opening scene of *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* shows the family playing a throw-the-dice board game, where they pick a place in America where they would like to be, and in this case it is Nantucket, Rhode Island. Taliesin ponders whether his deceased mother is in the same universe as 'our Welsh hill farm' and spends the films longing to join her in some literal, Heavenly place, indescribable, except that it's clearly not in Wales. It is implicit that either a cultural-consumer Hollywood or an Evangelical Heaven will reward these children for their 'suffering' in Wales. This sub-text, as received by mostly secular Welsh audiences, probably is perceived as being specious and condescending. Barton agrees that Duffy's body of work fits this generalization

Like so many of his contemporaries, Duffy associates childhood pleasures with imported popular cinema. At the same time, his Ireland is a constricted place,

haunted by death and one its youngest inhabitants dream of leaving (Barton 2004: 180).

The Coming-of-age features *Carrie's War* and *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* are both superficially 'Welsh' films, which have undergone a sort of 'Disneyfication' process, which happened somewhere between Cardiff and London or Cardiff and Los Angeles, respectively. We mentioned earlier, that is possible that an argument could be made that the influence of Walt Disney on the trans-national audiovisual industry is evidenced in the work of most of the Welsh 'auteurs', as well as the 'Outsiders' we have discussed. Jack Zipes provides a theoretical framework for understanding how the 'Disneyfication' of storytelling is dependent upon the codification of industrial rudiments, related to the larger concept of fairytale-as-institution (Zipes 1994: 14-15, 31, 47). It seems that not only in the world of literary storytelling, but also within the world of film production, some unspoken rules guide the development of certain genres, and especially effect the nature of films made from literary adaptations or folkloric sources.

The perceived 'theft' of Taliesin:

The commodification of the name 'Taliesin' is unavoidably politicized in a post-Devolutionary Wales: Welsh composer Karl Jenkins and satirist Grahame Davies are currently collaborating on the libretto for a much anticipated grand opera entitled, '*Taliesin*', which will fulfil the Welsh audiences' expectations of referencing the life of the Welsh hero, while negotiating some modern relevance for the poet's legendary life. Indeed, Welsh novelist and cultural theorist Emyr Humphreys named his most nationalistic work after Taliesin, in the *Taliesin Tradition* (Humphreys 1983). Simply naming the film 'Taliesin Jones' seems in retrospect at least an opportunistic manoeuvre (and in the context of the later re-packaging of the film it might be argued that it could have been a slightly cynical manoeuvre) by the producers to get the support needed to

make a film, which although set in Wales, cannot be called, a specifically ‘Welsh’ story.¹ Tellingly, as we mentioned above, as soon as *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones* had fulfilled its contractual obligations to the Welsh Arts Council and HTV Wales, the title was summarily changed to the more plausible, ‘*Small Miracles*’. If the story of ‘*Small Miracles*’ resonates at all with Welsh audiences, it’s somewhat to the extent that Welsh audiences are flattered to see their world on celluloid, and more so to the fact that *Small Miracles*’ rehearses a couple old but reliable themes about optimism and alienation. These themes seem to be implicit in the mindset of the dwindling religious minorities in Wales, which as their numbers dwindle and their cultural impact wanes, might have been inclined toward a sense of collective victimization and cultural alienation. Conversely, the mostly secular, modern Welsh society has yet to fully process the extremely religious heritage of the Welsh Chapel period in terms of contemporary cultural relevance. There is a demographic disconnect between mostly secular English-speaking Wales and residually or currently religious Welsh-speaking Wales. ‘Commodity Wales’ as packaged by the three Welsh broadcasters has varying degrees of support, neglect, and general condescension toward the historically important phenomenon of religion in Wales, at least when all representations, including current religious broadcasting and documentaries are considered.

***Small Miracles* might be Disney-derivative with an Evangelical agenda:**

Religious stories, like *Small Miracles*, make ecumenical nods in throwaway dialogue about universal religious values, but the underlying theme of paranoia related to persecution and a type of religious Utopianism prevail. Consequently, the film, *Small Miracles* and others, quickly shed their ‘Welshness’ sheep’s clothing and reveal

¹ We do not mean to say, that Duffy acted cynically, but to point out the cynical appearance of things, when taken retrospectively. To clarify, it was not cynical for Duffy to take on a script about children, since he is known for his children’s film, *The Boy From Mercury* (1996), which similarly to *Small Miracles* captures significant insights into universal themes of childhood. But differently from earlier films, Duffy selects a title that attracts funding associated with Welsh nationalism, and then he later markets the films for what it really is meant to be: an Evangelical Christian view of the world.

themselves as neo-Evangelical wolves, much more appealing to certain lucrative sectors of the U.S. market with its puritanical ideals. Irish Duffy, in his navigation of the Welsh film industry, and for purposes, which probably benefit his career, exhibits both clumsiness and sophistication, traits that are admirably traceable to the eminent Walt Disney. (We have to note, quickly, that Duffy's production is a remarkable narrative, which also was happily supported in Wales for its ability to employ a Welsh cast and a large crew on a major production, as well as its ability to provide general entertainment fodder for the broadcast-hungry audiences).

The demand for 'Family Films' by BBC Wales, ITV Wales and S4C might have influenced Welsh filmmakers to emulate Disney:

It might seem like 'cynicism' to some to question the financial motives and artistic pragmatism of filmmakers in Wales, but so as not to seem as if we are unfairly targeting Duffy, Sara Sugarman, Endaf Emlyn and others, let us briefly contextualize this matter. Jonathan Gems is brutal in his assessment of how the British film industry has succumbed to American economic and cultural imperialism

British film industry? What British film industry? There isn't one. Although, given the coverage of so-called 'British films' at the Oscars this year, you could be forgiven for thinking we had one. The sad truth is that, for the most part, people who work in film in Britain are the employees of overseas film studios. What we have is not a British Film Industry, but a British Film *Service* Industry (Gems 2007: 1).

And Gems continues his denunciation, naming the specific studio culprits, including Disney

With no support or protection, British cinema became easy prey for the US studios, which wasted no time in taking control of virtually all UK film distribution. Today, the Hollywood cartel (Paramount, Warner Bros, Universal, Sony, Fox and Disney) controls approximately 95 per cent of what is seen in Britain and, as a result, the past 30 years have witnessed an Americanisation of British culture (Gems 2007: 2).

The British government's policies are to blame, according to Gems

Back in the 1960s, there was such a thing as British Cinema. There was British Lion, the Rank Organisation and Thorn-EMI, which were all major studios, as well as a number of 'mini-majors'. But these were destroyed in the early 70s when the British government removed the Eady Levy and imposed unhelpful tax regulations (Gems 2007: 1).

While there is some truth to these claims by Gems that the British government is to blame for changes in the British film industry, it must also be recognized that American studios were also complicit. American studios began to take seriously the threat of television in the 1950s, and Walt Disney was among the first to strategize a response. It can be argued that the enormous cultural, industrial and economic influence of Disney and the U.S. studios to invest in specific types of films and programs in the late 1950s, had an immediate effect upon the films made in English-speaking countries outside the American domestic market, and that the will of Disney was leveraged through the economic / film investment and distribution / marketing control that Disney welded over English-speaking international markets, especially in Britain. The Disney 1950s and 1960s strategy of investment and distribution of specific types of films, a category most suited for television's general audiences, that came to be known as 'Family Films' (for which the moniker 'Disney films' has become synonymous) contributed to the decline that Gems describes beginning in the 1960s and peaking in the 1980s, and allowed the creation and expansion of a new, global market for products marketed to children

There is a growing global awareness that the role and nature of children's television has fundamentally changed in the past ten years. By the mid-1990s, already worth a potential 100 billion dollars a year, the global market for children's television has become one of the most crowded and competitive within the audio-visual industries. In the United Kingdom alone, there are at least fourteen separate channels offered exclusively for children today. The most popular and commercially successful global television channels targeting children, such as Disney or Nickelodeon, are each currently available in over 300 million households worldwide. After developing a market in the United States, they have gradually and aggressively expanded to Western and Northern Europe, Australia, Latin America, and more recently to Central and Eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East. These channels not only provide almost a continuous flow of television programming, but also offer movies, magazines, online services, merchandise, clothing, theme parks, reaching into nearly every facet of children's lives (Lustyik 2002: 1).

Dave Berry seems to be describing the defining attributes of Disney's signature style of animated and 'Family Film' fare, when describing the first dramas and films made by Stephen Bayly for Welsh broadcaster S4C

In 1982 Bayly made for S4C, *Joni Jones* . . . The series, centred on the adventures of a schoolboy during the Second World War, engaged audiences with its humorous and sympathetic observations of social life, and sensitive use of period detail (Berry 1994: 326).

According to his biography in the current web site of Stephen Bayly and a previous article in the *New York Times*, the success of *Joni Jones* (a series that was re-edited into a feature length film and re-broadcast by English Channel Four) was the distribution contract secured with Disney

Upon graduating in the early 1980's, Stephen first directed commercials through Sid Roberson Productions, then - by a quirk of fate - started making films in the Welsh language for the newly formed Welsh channel, S4C. Co-founding Red Rooster Film and Television with producer Linda James, their first production, *Joni Jones* became the flagship drama for S4C and was sold across the world, including to Miramax and Disney (Forsberg 1987: 1)

We are asserting with this argument that filmmakers in Wales were either conforming to or rejecting the conditioning dominance of Hollywood, especially that of Disney (meaning both the works of Walt Disney the man and all entities associated with him, even after his death). This seems to be in line with one of the positions of Irish filmmakers described by Martin McLoone, and which we believe also applies to filmmakers in Wales

Both of these positions identify and analyse a real issue. Together they represent a dilemma for national politics everywhere — a seemingly impossible choice between a self-defeating essentialism and a self-abusing capitulation. Irish cinema occupies just such a post-colonial space and the cinema that has grown out of it reflects the culture and the aspirations of such a space (McLoone 2006: 90).

It seems that filmmakers in Wales are presented with a dilemma: their primary production funding source (the three broadcasters, epitomized by S4C) demanded relatively 'non-creative' films, that is, those suited for general, tradition audiences with conservative

values, i.e., 'Family Films.' On the other hand, these filmmakers would understand the historical entrance of British films into the American market as so-called 'art house' films of the early to mid-1950s (Sklar 1975: 278). To create a serious 'art house' film that expressed Welsh values and culture (and in so doing to eschew the tendency toward so-called 'universal themes' favoured by Disney) could be understood to be a desirable impulse among filmmakers in Wales. What we get in several instances are films that emulate the casting, narrative motifs, settings and style of Disney films, and then either match Disney's values and humour or defy it. Stephen Bayly's *Joni Jones* and Martin Duffy's *Small Miracles* share similar qualities: they were both adapted from indigenous children's novels set in idyllic rural Welsh historical settings and they were both commissioned for the Welsh domestic broadcast market. Berry cites the danger of accepting these commissions

Critics might argue that regular commissions from S4C can stifle creativity, encouraging directors and companies to play safe and then resist the gamble on anything more ambitious which might be developed into a cinema release (Berry 2003: 201)

It is understandable that some filmmakers in Wales might find themselves conflicted with this set of choices, especially Welsh-speaking artists, linguistically tied to S4C. Effectively, the filmmakers were being asked by the commissioning broadcasters to produce 'Family Films' (read: Disney) which appealed to traditional television audiences, but which remained true to nationalistic and cultural values. Producing a film intended to appeal to the limited diversity of S4C's older, rural demographic could seem a restriction to some directors. This conflict is further nuanced by the informed impression among scholars and artists in Britain that Disney symbolized a negative trend in culture

There was general agreement that Disney represented and embodied a certain set of values, that those values were fundamentally negative. Disney was in turn identified with commercialism, cultural imperialism, fascism, deceptive marketing, exploitive employment practices, sexism, racism, class bias, the denial of history and the brainwashing of innocent children (Buckingham 2001: 284).

And so while Bayly and Duffy and Sugarman satisfied the globally-invented motif and narrative resolution that was imposed by the force of Disney and other studios, and were then rewarded with distribution contracts accordingly, other Welsh filmmakers rebelled against the perceived ‘McDonaldization’ of their works and were mostly penalized for it by the global film distribution systems. Endaf Emlyn’s films share similarities to Disney films and to fellow Welsh filmmakers, but he turns the motif of normalcy and idyllic childhood on its head.

When Welsh bleakness defies the ‘Mouse’:

By way of contrast, we need to refer to another similar story about a Welsh boy in small village, who has a conflicted or frozen relationship to his mother. If we consider three of the S4C films made by Endaf Emlyn we see that they all share pastoral settings in rural Wales, where the story is told from a child’s perspective: *Un Nos Ola Leuad / One Moonlit Night* (1991), *Stormydd Awst / The Storms of August* (1988) and *Y Mapiwr / The Making of Maps* (1996). In all three of these films there is a point-of-view from the child’s perspective that is classic Disney. Disney also established his stories with some rather grim circumstances and daunting sets of obstacles, including the loss of one’s mother, as we see in *Bambi* (1942). Bambi loses his mother to the hunters and our young male protagonist in Endaf Emlyn’s films loses his mother to her encroaching madness. But contrary to Disney’s model, wherein even dark circumstances are eventually resolved, Endaf Emlyn gives us an unrelentingly dismal and twisted picture of Welsh village life and familial dysfunction, this time in *Un Nos Ola Leuad / One Moonlit Night* (1991).² It can be argued that Emlyn is going to conform to the aesthetic innovations (but not the narrative innovations) of Walt Disney, while it seems that with whatever cinematographic nods he makes to Disney, Emlyn is Hell-bent to tell his version of the

² Consider the dark stories around films where Disney finds some light and happy denouement, in spite of bleak settings, including *Moon Spinners* (1964), *The Black Cauldron* (1985) and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996).

Welsh story. We consider the narrative content and structure of this film elsewhere in this study, but suffice it to say, *Un Nos Ola Leuad* cannot be accused of bowing to the ‘happy ending’ of all Disney productions. Emlyn’s protagonist will grow up and be transformed, but will also be scarred by childhood trauma for the rest of his life. Emlyn’s beautiful but brooding style of directing seemed tailor-made for the adaptation of Caradog Pritchard’s semi-autobiographical novel about madness, poverty, collective and individual shame, and familial emotional incest. The trope of national transitions as an analogue to the development of the characters in this film paints a bleak perspective of modern Wales, but at least one that the Welsh, however painfully, could recognize.

An argument can be made that Endaf Emlyn’s films are in no way are similar to anything Disney-like, by any stretch of the imagination, on account of their conflicted emotional and bleak outlooks and lack of happy resolutions. While there is substance to this objection, it does not change the climate in which Emlyn’s films were funded and produced, a climate informed and influenced by Disney (however indirectly). We have shown that it is difficult to make a children’s film in the 1960s onward that is not informed by the Disney body of work. We can further explore this argument by considering the marketing and distribution opportunities for children’s films (outside the U.K.), a history that Emlyn might have known about, but (as far as participating) missed by a few years: For example, Emlyn might have been aware of the low-key whimsy of the American puppets and hostess team of *Kukla, Fran and Ollie* who presented the *CBS Children’s Film Festival* weekly international film program on U.S. national television, from 1967 until 1977. CBS Children’s Film Festival provided the only U.S. network venue for European children’s films outside the studio and television network dominated by Disney. Later on, PBS would be established and would take up the broadcasting of alternative European children’s films, but PBS was not founded until 1969, and did not gain a reputation until the mid-1990s for screening films acquired from British

broadcasters (that eventually earned PBS the nickname based on its initials of the 'Primarily British Series' channel). To state that Emlyn departed from an unspoken expectation to conform to a standard set by Disney films is reinforced by further circumstantial evidence: Just a few years prior to Emlyn's *One Moonlit Night, A Child's Christmas in Wales* (1987) offered an intensely Welsh (but according to the Disney standards we mentioned) a more 'exportable' product, as did the later Disney a 'boy-and-his-dog' film *The Return of Gelert* (2002) that was set in Wales but shot in Ireland. Even with what Berry calls Emlyn's films' 'critical and festival success' all three mentioned above failed to achieve distribution contracts and only *One Moonlit Night* had limited but significant exhibition success in France and Australia (Berry 2003: 201).

The effect that Walt Disney had on both the technique and business of storytelling, at least regarding children's stories fairytales and folkloric sources is widely written about in film studies and cultural studies (Sklar 1975: 195-214; Smoodin 1994; Moran 1996: 5, 31-32, 155). This effect was reinforced in the trans-national audiovisual marketplace in the late 1950s, as the reaction of the film industry to their perceived market losses to television, resulted in a 'colonization' of television by the major film entities and their subsidiary parts and agents, an activity which continues to resonate, especially in marginal, national cinemas. Graeme Turner tells us

The film industry responded to the threat of TV in two main ways. Of these, the attempt to 'colonize' TV by producing films for it has proved to be the more successful . . . Warner Bros. and Disney are examples of how successful the film industry's invasion of TV can be (Turner 1988: 21).

It's significant that the renewed efforts by Disney and the studios to influence the content and production schemes of television, occurred, coincidentally, at the same time that Welsh autonomy in television and filmmaking started, the late 1950s. Disney first entered the Welsh cultural sphere directly by appropriating and re-interpreting what is probably the best known Welsh mythological source, the *Mabinogion*, when he produced

an animated Coming-of-age film based upon the novels of Welsh author Alexander Lloyd, called *The Prydein Chronicles*. Disney's film is called *The Black Cauldron* (1985), and this film fits the category 'stories about children in idyllic settings who learn about magic'. To his credit, the Disney film retains some of the remarkably idiosyncratic elements which are historic markers of Welshness, and which distinguish the *Mabinogion* as a Welsh original, amongst European literary and (historic, pagan religious) sources. *The Black Cauldron* had moderate market success for Disney Films, but its impact on the psyche of Welsh nationalists is telling, because among the most vigorously promoted films which were commissioned by S4C, was a specifically Welsh remake of Disney's film, but with the particularly Celtic mythic title of *Otherworld* (2003). It would be safe to say, that by 'stealing' the most important source of Welsh myth for American consumption, Disney effectively 'threw down the gauntlet', taunting Welsh producers to remake the story, as soon as their film production resources were in place. In Welsh, the S4C production retained the title *Y Mabinogi*.

Recently, S4C made a significant concession to their Independent producers by establishing a mechanism for reverting the rights of most of films discussed in our study back to their original director/producers. *Otherworld* is among a select few films, which S4C retained in its 'marketable' library, which is now privately tendered for worldwide distribution. While *Otherworld* is exemplary of the high standard of award winning animation products being exported from Wales in the last two decades, it is not a film that upon the quality of its narrative, is being retained by S4C — S4C seems to retain it for other reasons. It seems that the S4C decision to produce and to continue distributing *Otherworld* has more to do with national pride, instead. Part of the post-colonial impulse to 'recover' disturbed or displaced histories is wrapped up in the process of re-telling national myths, based upon nationally esteemed literary sources, and S4C fancies itself as the national bulwark for this project (Llobera 1994: 85-86). John MacLeod, based upon

the theory of Homi Bhabha, refers specifically to this process in Wales, and along with other post-colonial nations, call it 're-mythologizing of the nation' (McLeod 2003: 1). *Otherworld* as produced by S4C is still a *Bildungsroman* for the heroic characters, who begin the story as modern Welsh children, who fall into a watery passage to the 'Otherworld' and then assume the mythic titles of Rhiannon, Branwen and others. But the emphasis is not upon the personal transformation of the individuals, but rather seems to focus upon the collective importance of this allegorical tale to the national destiny. In this respect, *Otherworld* leaps ahead of the other Coming-of-age films we have looked at, and goes directly, without metaphor, to the nationalistic matter-at-hand, which is the legendary sovereignty of Britain under Celtic rule. And in this emphasis upon the collective transformation, *Otherworld* is a uniquely Welsh Coming-of-age story.

Ruth Barton noted that Duffy's films, and other similar films, defied categorization, while they loosely fit into the Coming-of-age genre. We have asserted that the highly politicized climate of the field of production in the Welsh film and television industry allowed a proliferation of Coming-of-age stories to be told on screen, but in many cases imposed upon them both overt and coded nationalistic messages and symbols. We just discussed how a couple films, like *Carrie's War* and *The Testimony of Taliesin Jones / Small Miracles*, were produced by Welsh broadcasters, with Welsh casts and crews, but were generally unsatisfying as Welsh films for reasons related to the perspective and direction of the narratives. We factored in the influence of Walt Disney, on not only the content of these films, but also the possible consideration made by Welsh 'auteurs' while planning and building their cinematic careers, or while implanting messages about Welsh identity into their films. The argument about 'perspectives' is built upon a larger discourse about individual and collective identities, and how audiences in small nations like Wales desire to see themselves represented on screen, which collectively can be called a discussion of the representation of national identity. Identity in Wales seems to

influence the next collection of films we will examine, and this identity is complex and conflicted

People living in Wales consciously or unconsciously can participate in a variety of identities: they can be Welsh, British, European, or if they are incomers from across the border, they may retain their English identity. More often than not they combine these attachments in varying degrees of intensity (Morley and Robins 2001: 123)

As we examine the next collection of Welsh films, it's clear that they have the aesthetic dimensions of a narrative, which easily fits the Coming-of-age genre. For primary reasons of identity, that is national identity, they extend beyond the label of British films. But for reasons of additional identity, they resist categorization. In other words, the list above of blended or mix-and-max identities available to the Welsh is incomplete, because it does not mention several important identities including global identity, multi-cultural or minority ethnic identities, and gendered, usually meaning gay, lesbian and trans-gendered identity. We have already looked at the distinguishing traits of ethnicity and gender in the sub-text of *Very Annie Mary* and in the plot of *Y Mapiwr*. Ethnicity is confronted directly in the plots of *Solomon & Gaenor* and *Eldra*, to name a couple Welsh films where race is central to the narrative. *The Corn is Green* (1945) (1979), from the novel by Emlyn Williams, is one of many Welsh Coming-of-age films, which focus upon the anti-Welsh racism experienced by protagonist, as we also saw in *Joni Jones*. Amma Asante's *A Way of Life* (2004) is the most recent Welsh film to deal with ethnicity, and this topic has been widely written upon by Steve Blandford, Charlotte Williams, Grahame Davies and others (Davies 2002; Blandford 2007). The gendering of Welsh films, especially regarding gay and lesbian, bisexual or trans-gendered topics, is less widely examined, although a considerable amount has been written about Welsh writers; gay Rhondda-born Rhys Davies is among a few Welsh literary examples, whose works have been frequently adapted to the screen (Stephens 2001: 54).

The Queering of Welsh national cinema

In the following chapter we will consider Welshmen who went abroad in order to make their films, and their reasons for doing this. But the next two films that we will examine in this chapter fall not only into the category of Coming-of-age films, but also fall into the category of films that were made abroad. These films resist the category of simply being Coming-of-age films, because they also introduce (more assertively than we saw in *Very Annie Mary* or *Y Mapiwr*), the issue of sexuality, as key to the plot. We include these films here, rather than in the longer discussion of Welshmen who went abroad to make their films, because it seems that the rationale for going abroad, had something to do with couching the issue of sexuality in exotic surroundings, in order to reduce any offensiveness that the conservative, Welsh-speaking audience might take at the topic of sexuality, that is, as if the directors were perhaps hoping Welsh audiences would overlook the gay issue and focus on the Welsh issue. Both films were made in the same year, with similar sources of television broadcaster support, and created for Welsh-speaking domestic audiences. The differences in how the topic of being both gay and Welsh are treated in each film, is probably reflective of the personal perspectives of the different directors, and how those directors chose to read the expectations of their audiences.

A queer concession to the Hollywood studios' homophobia:

The first film is *Dafydd* (1992) directed by Ceri Sherlock for BBC Wales. Sherlock does have a professional background as a musical conductor (as does one of the film's protagonists) so the story seems to be semi-autobiographical, at least in this respect. *Dafydd* is a Welsh-speaking country boy who leaves Pontypridd, after discussing teenage angst with his grandfather, and travels to Amsterdam, where, without any marketable skills he turns to prostitution. *Dafydd* encounters passion, lust and violence, living on the streets in Amsterdam, and just after he's severely beaten, within inches of his life, he

meets the kindly Welsh-speaking music conductor/instructor, named David. Whereas most Welsh directors go abroad to make their films for reasons related to funding schemes, or to punctuate the Welshness of their character in a foreign land, the motivation seems to be in *Dafydd*, that Sherlock judged the exotic location as an element that would help his audience overcome any objections they might have to the gay theme. *Dafydd* is clearly a film about Welshness and the transplanting of the two Welsh-speakers to the Dutch-Anglo streets of Amsterdam reinforces that identity, but the narrative is about leaving Wales, and also about a theme more widely discussed in American scholarship, the concept of 'Homecoming' whether physical or imaginary. The tenderness with which Sherlock creates the intensely sexual scenes, along with the emotional clarity that he brings to the intimacy shared by the rent boy and his protector, reveals a mature understanding of the topic of sexuality and nuanced identities in a Welsh cultural milieu. That's why it's especially disappointing when the violent denouement follows a path for gay characters that was common in Hollywood in the 1960s and before, but has long since been exposed as homophobic (Russo 1981: 18-19).

The film's implicit presupposition goes something like this: *Dafydd* is gay and has transgressed some cultural mores and therefore must be punished. Further, his moments of bliss and happiness are realized when he re-connects with his Welshness, i.e., accepts the friendship of David. One has to speculate that Sherlock feared the backlash such a film might have, if it ended with a happy ending for the gay guys. On the other hand, Sherlock might reply that the majority of similar European films from that era were reacting to the Hollywood 'fixation with happy endings'. Surprisingly, the only Welsh film, which many Americans have ever heard of, other than *How Green Was My Valley*, is often Sherlock's *Dafydd*. The reason for this seems to have something to do with the demographics and history of the ageing 'gay and grey' population in America. This population is deprived of a library of overtly identified gay films, since Hollywood

oppressed this during its Golden Era. Consequently, the gay market in America is affluent and hungry to acquire any gay title, which comes along. The savvy Welsh filmmaker includes a gay character or two in his plot, as a guarantee to get screened (almost automatically) at important GLBT film festivals worldwide, as we suggested Sara Sugarman did with *Very Annie Mary*.

Sherlock still scores, since ‘Gay & Grey’ ‘Beggars’ can’t be choosers:

Sherlock seems to have compromised this opportunity by caving to an obsolete set of narrative expectations regarding the plight of gay people in films. Nevertheless, copies of the video of *Dafydd* sell for a premium on E-Bay and have a prominent place in many gay film libraries in America. The reason for this is that the issue of Welshness enhances as exotic the ‘flavour’ of the film, and the gay audiences is more keen about identifying the themes of ‘Homecoming’ (a universally American theme) and the theme of ‘Recaptured’ or ‘Eternal Youth’ (which Queer theorists read in Hollywood but identify directly in Queer cinema) (Russo 1981: 110-111). The theme of ‘Eternal Youth’ is often metaphorical in films, as a symbol of a nation’s primitive purity and original innocence. When lead male characters or perverted former heroes seek to conquer the affections of the ‘Eternally Young’ innocent, or to save the life of the innocent, it is understood to represent the desire to return to an imagined primal innocence, as we see in the Gore Vidal script of *Ben-Hur* (1959). *Ben-Hur* is full of coded references to nationalism, but these are conflated with an overtly gay storyline about the Roman general Messala’s overt homosexual love for Judah Ben-Hur, and Judah Ben-Hur’s initial acceptance and later rejection of these gay affections, as a sub-text of the metaphor of colonialism, which Vidal described in *The Celluloid Closet* (Russo 1981: 77). This inclusion of a sub-text which conflates the pursuit of a younger gay lover by an older, wiser and more protective partner is referred to as ‘Eternal Youth’, and has roots in the ‘Male Gaze’ as expounded by Laura Mulvey. The older partner is thought to be seeking their own (possibly, but not

necessarily narcissistic) younger self, as they gaze at the face of their younger partner. This pursuit of youth is often read in national cinema analysis as a metaphor for colonial protectionisms in exchange for a brokered '*Pax Romana*', which is understood to be a political compromise. In an interview, Sherlock insisted that he did not intend nationalistic Welsh statements from *Dafydd*. While we accept Sherlock's claim about overt nationalistic statement in this film, in our revisionist reading we would like to re-examine this idea on two points: first, to make a Welsh language film is inherently subversive to the majority language and therefore implicitly nationalistic, and secondly, because we also read the Queer cinema concept of a metaphorical 'Eternal Youth', albeit retrospectively into *Dafydd*. Finally, if we hold to our argument, then one might also posit that the violent ending, which Dafydd encounters, could be a coded warning for Welsh-speakers, instructing them to be somehow 'covert' about their Welshness (i.e., the 'Invisibility of the Welsh'), lest they suffer some undesirable consequences. If Sherlock is influenced (however unconsciously) by American films, which subtly privilege the concept of 'Homecoming' then this idea of receiving some punishment for leaving the Homeland (and in this case, it could mean to stop speaking Welsh), is reinforced by the violent gay ending.

Emlyn's Queer Welsh Magical Realism meets Gay Glasnost Circuit Party:

The second film in our collection is *Gadael Lenin (Leaving Lenin)* (1993), directed by Endaf Emlyn and produced for S4C. This film fits the category 'stories about children in idyllic settings who learn about magic'. The film was made shortly after *Glasnost*, and so can claim to be one of the first Western films to be shot entirely in Saint Petersburg after the opening of Russia. The art department of a small, Welsh medium school is on a field trip with their final year students, and each student experiences some different type of Coming-of-age 'growing up moment'. The two male teachers include the husband and former lover of the female art teacher. The female art teacher finds her way safely to St.

Petersburg with the students, but the two male rivals get separated and have to travel, mostly by bicycle and on foot across the Russia forestlands and countryside to reach the city of Peter the Great. The subplot of the two male rivals travelling together makes the film a bit of a Buddy film or a Road Trip genre film, which alternates with the central plot, which is essentially a Coming-of-age plot. The central plot revolves around the gay awakening of the character Spike, who is tormented for being gay by the other boys, and is liberated from his torment when he falls in love with a bohemian Russian artist named Sergei. Emlyn's *Gadael Lenin* is similar to *Solomon & Gaenor* and to Tim Lyn's *Eldra*, in that the plot revolves around a 'Romeo and Juliet' 'forbidden love' theme. But Emlyn takes our gay lovers, one Welsh, the other Russian, to a magically realistic place, which is cultic, tribal, interstitial and subversive. The film's plot culminates when Spike must decide whether to return to the 'real world', which means he will return to Wales with his art class school mates and teachers. But Emlyn has erected in the last scene a mystical moment on a medieval bridge, on the way out of central Saint Petersburg. For unknown reasons, incendiary sparklers are lit on this bridge at twilight, by costumed and masked characters, masquerading archetypes who dance in a timeless orgy of colour, rhythm, and licentious blissfulness, with Sergei's crowd of bohemian friends dressed in modern, albeit counter-cultural garb. The dusky 'golden hour' fades to shadows and silhouettes of gyrating dancers on the bridge, beckoning Spike to forget his Welsh friends, and to join their tribal ecstasy. Emlyn is making a coded statement to gay audiences here, which understand the 'Queer nation' post-national messages implicit in the signifiers of disco music and tribal dance.³ Pedro Almodóvar makes similar coded messages to his various audiences, understood by some as post-national, 'Queer nation' signifiers.

³ These tribal dance events (always accompanied by a fortnight of scheduled sexual orgies and illicit drug use) became known as 'Circuit parties' in gay circles during the early 1980s, beginning with the legendary 'The Saint' disco events in Manhattan, in the 1980s until the various annual events, which still occur around the world, including the Miami Beach 'White Party', and similar events in various gay 'ghettos' including Ibiza, Palm Springs, Montreal, and West Hollywood.

When the Welshman court's his exotic 'other':

Our Welsh protagonist Spike is trying to cope with the suicide of his Welsh gay boyfriend, at the same time that he is trying to 'Come-of-age' as a gay man. The 'realism' of his disturbed world is the need to cope with gay suicide and with continuing homophobic bullying. The life-affirming optimism, which Spike must embrace, is found in the solace of art and a bohemian ethic of 'transcendent' art, and in moving past his emotional scars, symbolized by his willingness to fall in love with Sergei. Falling in love with Sergei is simultaneously exotic and exciting, while it also breaches linguistic, cultural, political, and sexual taboos for a young but patriotic Welshman. In the code of 'hip hedonism' genre films, Spike's love for Sergei is purified by the danger and sacrifice needed to create a relationship with Sergei, since the chances of success are exceeded the countless obstacles and boundaries. If Spike is true to himself, then he risks being perceived (by Welsh audiences) as 'selfish', and even narcissistic. This parallels a theme in Queer cinema, which is often read externally as narcissism, but which is understood in gay circles to symbolize optimism and hope, in the face of overwhelmingly hopeless conditions, mostly situated in the historical and cultural events of the AIDS crisis and gay hate crimes. Emlyn is coding a secret message to a gay-friendly youth culture with his film *Gadael Lenin*, which makes the film even more 'cool' because it is nonchalantly 'cool', while being both politically correct and politically subversive, a balance introduced by the political activism of MTV in the 1990s with the internationally produced programs called, *MTV's Rock the Vote* (1993). Symbols of the gay version of 'hip hedonism' called 'circuit parties' or Queer paganism (also formerly called 'radical faeries') is an anarchistic nod to a Bahktian carnival of subversion. The most successful commercial translation of this 'Queer Nation' message of post-nationalism is heralded in the films *Torch Song Trilogy* (1988), *La Cage aux Folles* (1978), and the Broadway hit made into an HBO cable television series, *Angels in America* (2003). Emlyn is meeting the remit of his financier, the Welsh language broadcasters, while secreting in his film an

international message about post-national fraternalism, and cultural subversion. Emlyn's *Gadael Lenin* is fiercely pro-Welsh language, while it also actively advocates a trans-national ethic of tolerance. And Emlyn might even be telling us that he exceeds the 'regionalism' of Welsh participation in the European Union, as he goes not to Leipzig or Prague, but beyond the Union's bounds to Russia. Emlyn gives brilliant visual metaphors of 'bridging' cultural and linguistic differences, as well as 'bridging' gaps of ageism, since *Gadael Lenin* grants love and romance to every age group.

Naturalizing a Queer sensibility for Cymru:

Gadael Lenin is similar to many films where Welshmen go abroad to make a film about Welshness. As we just discussed, in Sherlock's *Dafydd* a Pontypridd-born, Welsh-speaking gay rent boy hooks up with a kindly Welsh-speaking music teacher in Dutch-speaking and dangerous Amsterdam. Emlyn seems less self-conscious than Sherlock about allowing his gay character to be happy, and equally less intent to avoid the reality of the Welshness of his characters, who are all Welsh-speaking folks who travel to Russian-speaking St. Petersburg, previously called Leningrad. The 'Welshman abroad' is a recurring theme, used here to punctuate the Welshness of the characters. That is, by inserting Welshmen next to the European-ness and foreign-ness of Russian place names, it places the Welsh on an equal political and cultural par with other European languages, and diminishes the marginalization (perceived by Welsh speakers) of Welsh by English. This theme is conflated with the Coming-of-age theme, which is more prominent. But *Gadael Lenin* operates at many levels, and serves the purpose of punctuating the Welshness of the Welsh teacher and students, all of whom are 'Coming-of-age in some respect. It satisfies the audiences as a travelogue for wannabe Welsh tourism in Europe, which is to say that it indigenizes the genre of locally created travelogues for the Welsh audience, and it allows Emlyn to paint a foreign palette, against which his characters are ordinary in their Welshness. There is again the element of *Bildungsroman* here, which

seems analogous to the social and cultural development of the nation in the communicative-ness and technologically predisposed 20th century. This film considers the rural demographic of the anticipated audience in the same way that *Dafydd* established the audience's 'rooting' aspect for the main character, who happens to be a young Welshman whose morals as a gay man and a rent boy challenge rural Welsh and traditional chapel ideas, (by having the film flash back to his visit in the Rhondda with his Welsh-speaking elderly, male relative). *Gadael Lenin* introduces the aspect of being gay as a naturalized condition, which is particular to Spike's teenage desire for autonomy, which forms the 'growing up' moment for the gay protagonists, and pushes boundaries with questionable behaviour, under the scrutiny of those traditional bastions of Welsh propriety, the Welsh school teachers.

The unresolved 'Redness' of the Rhondda:

But the Welsh school teachers are have 'Homecomings' of their own, and the rival males re-visit their competition for the affections of the female teacher, and as one of the male teachers re-connects with his former hero, Lenin. The topic of Welsh Communism sympathies which existed in the in the post-Industrial Welsh Valleys, is not well-processed in Welsh filmic product and the only other notable treatment which addresses the social stigma of being 'Red' on screen is Sherlock's scene in *Cameleon*, where the young girlfriend is picked on by the gossipy Welsh village women for having a father who's affiliated with 'Commies.' But the Socialists and Communists of the industrial areas of Wales played an important role in the Trade Union Movements, and also in the secularization of modern Wales, but have not been effectively addressed very often in Welsh filmic products. Emlyn shows us the innocent and pure commitment that the male schoolteacher has for the teaching of Lenin, but once he bows to Lenin's statue in the train station, he has his traumatic trek across Russia, and has time to soak in the effects of Lenin's legacy on Russia and the countryside. Finally, he is demoralized not only by this,

but by the idea that he has been cuckold by his rival. This has a cleansing effect on the affections of the schoolteacher for his wife, and this romantic awakening occurs simultaneously with Spike's decision to quit school and to cast his fate with Sergei, staying on in the poor artists' enclave in the tenements of Saint Petersburg.

Endaf Emlyn as a Welsh 'David Lynch':

Emlyn's vision of Welshness is more cosmopolitan and outward looking than most found in Welsh films, and certainly less restrictive than the vision given to us by Sherlock in *Dafydd*. The two films were made the same year, but *Dafydd* is weighed down by a foreboding, which gay critics abroad have read as an internalized self-loathing. Emlyn seemed similarly motivated to take his first overtly gay film abroad to soften the blow to Welsh audiences, by couching the gay activity in a faraway and therefore exotic and forgivable setting, for more conservative audience members. We can compare *Gadael Lenin* to Emlyn's earlier Coming-of-age film for teenagers, *Stormydd Awst (The Storms of August)* (1987) produced for S4C. *Stormydd Awst* also fits the category 'stories about children in idyllic settings who learn about magic'. But Emlyn finds no motivation to make strange the teenage antics, which mimic the film, *Grease* (1978) or the American sit-com, *Happy Days* (1974-1984). Without the added issue of gay identity (preferring other closeted aspects of Welsh sexuality and again hinting at voyeurism), Emlyn can give us a blissful romp in a '57 Chevy, which as a sub-text makes comments on post-modern consumerism and the displacement of indigenous Welsh culture. The film is overtly self-reflective, with the students parading in slightly surreal pageants celebrating television itself, as the new technology was just reaching the hinterlands of rural Wales villages in the 1950s.

Other notable Welsh Coming-of-age films, which also address the added issue of gay identity include, *On the Black Hill* (1988) directed by Andrew Grieve and produced by

John Ormond for BBC Wales. We have already discussed this film elsewhere, but mention it here because the birth, life and death of the two Welsh twins qualifies as Coming-of-age genre film. The film is notable for the gay twin, who we have said represents an autobiographical understanding of the torn and conflicted aspects of one's adult / sexual self, since the author Bruce Chatwin was openly bisexual and eventually died from AIDS. BBC Wales produced Paul Turner's sensitive rendering of the short stories of gay Welsh writer Rhys Davies, including *The Chosen One* (1982) and *Where There's a Will* (1983). *Solomon and Gaenor* (1999), also qualifies as a Coming-of-age genre film, but we have extensively discussed it elsewhere for its familial grotesque qualities and gothic Welsh chapel politics and culture. Another Coming-of-age film is *Byw yn dy Groen (Cross-Current)* (2001) produced for S4C. This film fits the category 'stories about neurotic young adults who finally grow up'. The protagonist is trying to save his marriage, and he discovers that a lot of the guilt and anxiety that he has about his late mother and other issues related to returning home, can be traced to the root causes of problems in his relationship.

The Wisdom and the Ecstasy of Teenage Anarchy

— From Elegiac Courtesans to the Jesters of Cool Cymru

In the Introduction to the book he edited, *Wales on Screen*, Steve Blandford deconstructs a quartet of Welsh Coming-of-age films, in the context of their iconoclastic affronts to traditional icons and symbols of Welshness. These films include *Human Traffic* (1999), *Twin Town* (1997), *House of America* (1997) and *Darklands* (1996). Each film, in its own way, traced the chaotic lifestyles of a group of Welsh teenagers, as they each transitioned from some set of social and familial restrictions to some sense of enhanced autonomy, to generalize about the course of the four plots. The release of these films parallels a heady period in Welsh contemporary history, when a significant collection of Welsh pop, punk, and alternative rock bands, had just overcome industrial and

commercial marketing obstacles, and had taken the international music scene by storm (Griffiths and Hill 2005) — a movement so remarkable that it was named ‘*Cool Cymru*’, as a take-off on the broader phenomenon of ‘*Cool Britannia*’, which occurred simultaneously, as a larger, new ‘British Band Invasion’ (recalling the arrival of the Beatles, decades before), of North American and European Airwaves and club tracks. To complete a concurrent trio of influential events in contemporary Welsh cultural and political history, the events surrounding the passage of the Welsh devolution referendum in 1997 and ensuing Government of Wales Act in 1998, made this period a time of both real, perceived and imagined ascendancy for many vocal parts of Welsh society (Hannan 2002: 55; Hannan and Davies 2003: 17; Finch and Davies 2005: 7-8).

A Welsh ‘new wave’?

Blandford notes that the quartet he is describing created rumours of the beginnings of a new Welsh film ‘wave’ of production and freer expression, while they managed to offend the government, the tourist boards, the local communities where the films were shot, the Welsh religious establishment, and just about everyone else inclined to be offended. Steve Blandford and Daryl Perrins chose a middle path on the examination of the significance of the iconoclastic assertions within each film, while historian Dai Smith and cultural theorist Patrick Hannan took sides, as to the meaning and remarkableness of this iconoclastic activity by the Welsh teenagers (Smith 1984: 104-105; Hannan 1999: 10; Smith 1999: 94; Blandford 2000: 20, 152). Blandford alludes to a general weariness in Welsh society, surrounding the cultural controversy, and longs for a respite from the ‘dead-end arguments’

During the next decade it will be interesting to see whether a film culture develops with the confidence to make films without even the ironic reference to traditional Welsh iconography that this latest wave has made (Blandford 2000: 20)

Blandford seems to perceive that this ‘wave’ is related to a larger cultural malaise within a post-modern British and trans-national milieu, as he compares the quartet of Welsh films to similar films set in Scotland, *Trainspotting* (1996) and *Wickerman* (1973). Martin McLoone identifies the same type of films becoming popular in the emerging economic and cultural ‘Celtic Tiger’ ascendancy of Ireland, and coins the name ‘hip hedonism’ to describe and explain the film waves’ meaning and impetus

This might well explain the preponderance, in recent years, of another kind of urban-based film — what might be called a cinema of ‘hip hedonism’. This is a cinema that celebrates, even glorifies, an urban lifestyle dressed in the signifiers of contemporary global youth culture and populated by the beautiful people of Celtic Tiger Ireland (McLoone 2006: 97)

Ruth Barton frames the films of post World War II Ireland in a chapter entitled ‘Negotiating Modernism’ (Barton 2004: 65), and one has to wonder if in some way, McLoone and Blandford are not describing Irish and Welsh cinemas, respectively, which are representing a new generation’s negotiation with the problems of trans-national post-modernism, including the paradox of rapidly rising incomes of younger professionals in Cardiff and Dublin paralleling the fatalism and political detachment implicit in the music and lifestyles of the nightclub, pub and ‘Rave Culture’, and its various cultural cousins. Either way, the films of Scotland, Ireland and Wales in this period seem to be tapping the same vein of ‘I can’t be bothered’ attitudes endemic to the Celtic up-and-coming

They are Irish, certainly, but they epitomize a kind of trans-global ‘cool’. Drugs and crime still form part of the background, but they are presented as lifestyle choices or get-rich schemes removed from any social consequences. Most importantly, these films are lighter in tone than the more political films, as well as being driven by a deliberately irreverent humour (McLoone 2006: 97).

In the quartet of Welsh films that Blandford describes, which we will assert form the backbone of a Welsh version of McLoone’s designated Irish cinema of ‘hip hedonism,’ we need to ask what values are being challenged, and what social and cultural tensions are being transgressed or offended, and what possible meaning this might have.

Oppositional cinema in Wales:

Certainly we have seen, that the lion's share of films made for BBC Wales, S4C, and ITV Wales in the last three decades, share some distinguishable tropes related to the transitioning of Wales from a mostly agrarian or 'decentralized Valleys Industrial or subsistence rural collection of tight-knit, Nonconformist Chapel-centric, racially homogeneous small communities, into an overwhelming secular and increasingly multicultural, mostly suburban and urban chain of service industry-driven coastal cities, to which the formerly populated rural districts correspond. The demographic upheaval, which began at the end of the nineteenth century continues in Wales, including the 'brain-drain' of educated Welshmen to Cardiff or to other U.K. cities, the steady migration of young people out of rural villages and into urban or suburban settings, and the decay of the social and cultural, uniquely Welsh infrastructure, which existed for over three hundred years. For an example of the historic clash of values, we see in *Solomon and Gaenor*, the retrospective retelling in this Heritage genre and Coming-of-age genre film, of the draconic punishment meted out by the quaint and noble, but obsolete and embarrassing 'Welsh gothic', Nonconformist chapel morality, which is offended when Gaenor engages in 'fornication' (understood to be a mortal sin, suitable for community shame and banishment, during much of Welsh history). Compare this to the collection of sexually nonchalant and sexually libertarian teenagers, in any of Blandford's quartet of films, and it's doubtful that any of the modern Welsh teenagers could define 'fornication', let alone spell it. McLoone echoes this clash of older and modern sexual mores and values in Irish films

This is also a Dublin of promiscuous sexual abandon, the new cinema's final affront to the values of the old Ireland (McLoone 2006: 97)

In other words, the new wave of Welsh films, as described by Blandford probably reflect represented aspects of the Welsh society's processing of the continuing event of modernization, and even 'post-modernization' related to globalization. We have seen that

many of the Coming-of-age films made by the Welsh broadcasters also foster a nostalgic element, (usually represented by the careful period detail and preoccupation with landscape and place), which seems to long for the imagined and real, less chaotic and more-ordered lifestyle that was dictated by traditions, norms of the boroughs, and a durable cadre of imposing, didactic chapel authorities. This longing for a return to an imagined and embellished, primordial Utopia is recognized and celebrated in Welsh literature and recurs in Welsh films, and is known in Welsh as '*Hiraeth*', which can be loosely translated as 'homesickness for a home, which never existed,' or even 'sorrowful yearning for something which seems lost.' Indeed, many of the moments of 'growing up' or personal crisis realized by our youthful protagonists in the Welsh films we have already examined in this chapter, focus upon the time when the child must relinquish their hold on the reliability of the countryside and the family as durable foundations of the individual's construction of self. We see this in *Joni Jones*, when Joni must move to London and leave behind the predictability of rural, Welsh-speaking society, and we see this clash in *Carrie's War*, when the English children are transplanted from libertarian London to what they see a 'savagely' rural and religiously backward, Welsh village life.

The Coming-of-age films we have deconstructed so far, show an anxiety related to the clash of rural and religious cultures representing the 'old values' of Wales, a clash that parallels massive youth migrations, along with the implied detachment from childhood cultures and value systems, previously established, transmitted and reinforced by a strict chapel culture in collusion with locally-run schools, or other behavioural policing, made possible by small, inward-looking communities. The cinematic symbol of the 'anxiety' is represented by the city itself, with the countryside presented as the calm and sane alternative to urban living. Sherlock demonstrates this in *Dafydd*, as he contrasts the idyllic origins of Dafydd in the impoverished but predictable Rhondda and Vale of Glamorgan, and then implies for his Welsh audiences 'dark consequences', attributable to

the Welshman who dares to move to the sinful city, in this case, Amsterdam. This new negotiation with the post-modern and global in an urban setting seems to have influenced the parallel production of 'hip hedonism' films proliferating in Ireland and Scotland, beginning in the late 1990s, as McLoone explains

For many of the younger filmmakers who emerged in the 1990s, however, the city is a cause of celebration, not a source of anxiety (McLoone 2006: 97).

One way of reading and understanding the proliferation of 'hip hedonism' films in Wales is to realize first of all, they almost all fall into Coming-of-age categories. The point where they diverge is distinguished by degrees, that is, the degree to which they overtly offend or disregard social norms. The children or teenagers 'grow up' to some degree, or at least achieve some enhanced level of existence within their previously disturbed world, but in this collection of newer films, the children's transformation story is eclipsed by the social and individual turmoil, which seems wanton and random at times. There is also a differentiation related to the degree to which they alter the norms of narrative storytelling. Taken together, the celebration of chaos, crime, consumerism and other aspects of global youth culture in these films might be read as a new form of the '*carnavalesque*', as Mikhail Bakhtin described it (Bakhtin 1941: 1-3), and as Michel Foucault later conflated it with the social facility of 'madness' along with sexual libertarianism (Foucault 2001: 1). If we conceive of the Welsh cinema of 'hip hedonism', as a scheduled Bakhtian 'moment' of planned social and cultural chaos, which is intended to 'level the Foucaultian playing field' of identity and morality and social order, than a new explanation of the seemingly meaningless elements of these films starts to take shape. The seemingly meaningless elements we refer to are the obsessive embrace of mindless consumerism, illegal drugs, alcohol, violence, sexual promiscuity, and an optional criminal life-style, which we think has its aesthetic roots in Brecht's sense of social anarchism, as seen in the *Three Penny Opera* and again in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (2007). The *carnavalesque* as an aspect of the 'cinema of the grotesque' is frequently

written about in analyses of the cinemas of small nations, as another form of subversion and implied political or social dissent. The aesthetic dimension of the *carnavalesque* shares attributes and cinematic devices with related genres, including Gothic, Horror, satire, political or religious allegory, film noir, and sci-fi. Narrative clichés have evolved in the history of cinema, which signal the audience to either a foreshadowing or imminence of the disastrous, and most common is the use of incendiary scenes of rampant, unstoppable arson, inevitable explosions, and dramatic, destructive combustions. Analogues of the infernal are represented by flamboyant ‘bling’ and opulence, sexual orgies, excessive addictions and alcoholism, explicit and graphic violence, and an aggressive disregard or mockery of social and cultural norms. The ‘criminal’ and the ‘uncanny’ are married in these films and enshrined (Presdee 2001: 9).

A similar vein of iconoclastic filmmaking is present in other former ‘colonial’ nation’s cinemas. Gittings focuses on the juxtaposition of hockey and the hypersexual male icon of a Canadian hockey team as sexualized and violent villains in the film, *The Making of Monsters* (1991). The elements of sexuality and violence are conflated for a shock value, which inverts the sexual politics of Canadian constructions of masculinity, when contrasted with the victimization of what the film deems, the ‘homo-socialized’ (Gittings 2002: 281). The employment of the incendiary or its analogues as a *carnavalesque* device throughout specific genres, which emphasize the visually hyperbolic, is exemplified by the opening scene in the neo-Film Noir / Suspense genre film, *The Usual Suspects* (1995). The first of Blandford’s quartet that we will look at, is Marc Evans’s *House of America* (1997), as an example of a Coming-of-age Welsh film which also can be categorized as exemplary of a Welsh cinema of ‘hip hedonism’. But a closer understanding of the background of Evans and his filmmaker colleagues, and the climate or field of production, in which his films were made, will be revealing as to how the Welsh cinema of ‘hip hedonism’ is distinctively Welsh.

The most self-conscious and articulate of filmmakers from Blandford's quartet is Marc Evans, who produced *House of America*. Evans has since established himself as a successful Horror genre filmmaker with *My Little Eye* (2002) and *Trauma* (2004), and recently tried to escape the 'pigeonholing' of this Horror-director designation by directing a drama with Sigourney Weaver *Snow Cake* (2006), although Weaver herself also is best known for her part in the Space Western /Horror blockbuster, *Aliens* (1986). Evans is a Welsh-speaking, Cardiff-born director, who is married to Welsh star of *Solomon and Gaenor*, Nia Roberts. Evans as a new Welsh 'auteur', along with his celebrity wife are participants in the heady, upwardly mobile 'Cool Cymru' culture of the late 1990s and early 2000s. Evans's work is representative of a transition in Welsh film production, which built upon the successes and established infrastructure of film production driven by Four Films, S4C, ITV Wales, and BBC Cymru. His career begins at a time when British film production subsidy schemes in general are collapsing, and when the remit of producing Welsh language films is still disproportionately funded in comparison to Welsh, English language films. Consequently, the body of work produced by Evans reflects the available funding, linked closely to Welsh broadcasters, and similarly dependent upon the broadcaster's remits, as were the Welsh producers in the decades before Evans. Accordingly, we see Evans making a teenage Coming-of-age film for S4C, which honours his heritage and benefactors by drawing the script from a science-fictional, futuristic adaptation of the Welsh Arthurian tale, in *Ymadawiad Arthur / Arthur's Arrival* (1994). *Ymadawiad Arthur*, is playful and brighter than Evan's later dramas, but satisfies the remit of Welsh broadcasting by providing light entertainment, 'suitable for all audiences', while giving a nod to Welsh nationalism, since the title refers to a Welsh legend which predicts the return of King Arthur to the British throne, as the beginning of a new Welsh 'messianic' age of ascendancy. *Ymadawiad Arthur*, while experimental, doesn't transgress social norms or operate in content or narrative in a way similar to 'hip

hedonism' films, but is a notable example of how Evans is seeking to meet his financiers' remits, while also processing his own cultural heritage and nationalistic impulses, in a film which doesn't offend. If anything, *Ymadawiad Arthur* might be distinctive among Welsh films as the only Welsh filmic example of (the cinematic aesthetic category of) Retro-Futurism. Evans seems to need to ground himself in this vast history of Welsh literature of which he is aware, and so we see him again returning to Welsh literary sources in his documentary on the history of Welsh elegiac poetry and the modern Welsh National *Eisteddfod*, *Dal: Yma/Nawr / Still: Here/ Now* (2004). *Dal: Yma/Nawr* is mostly documentary, interspersed with dramatised, historic battle scenes from the Middle Ages and later. The bloody gore of medieval battles, suit Evan's penchant for the exaggerated, grotesque and explicit, and we find that the visual as well as the voice-over poetry readings reinforce an ambiance of elegiac melancholy that is rich and satisfying, albeit depressing.

After a brief sojourn in Ireland where he produced the political drama, *Resurrection Man* (1998) Evans returned to making a documentary about Cardiff, the new Welsh capital, and about the Cool Cymru. *Camgymeriad Gwych / Beautiful Mistake* (2000) was directed by Marc Evans and stars singer Cerys Matthews, John Cale of the Velvet Underground, Catatonia, Big Leaves, Manic Street Preachers, and other prominent, mostly world-renowned Welsh bands. The title plays upon the rebirth of the coal docks of Cardiff and the urban renewal project, which renamed the sleazy wharf district of Tiger Bay into the new, Yuppie-ready Cardiff Bay. The now bulldozed Tiger Bay district was enshrined by the film of the same name *Tiger Bay* (1959), starring Hayley Mills. The documentary's title also plays with the format of the film, which has apparently no script, and instead follows the band members in the course of a few days, in the style of 'Reality TV'. Consequently, the only real dramatic arc is created occasionally during the animated interviews with some of the variously interested or disinterested band members,

by the dramatic arc implicit in the narrative of the songs, which are performed, and mostly surrounding the antics and mood swings of the film's most famous character, John Cale. John Cale is an iconic figure in the music and art world, and he returns to Wales as a larger-than-life giant. At the time of this film, he has sobered up and stopped his active drug addictions, but not before he created a reputation for artistic innovation coupled with personal excess, consorting with the likes of the most famous 'Hollywood rehab dropout', Iggy Pop. In *Beautiful Mistake* the title plays on the idea of an impromptu or improvisational coming together of genius, which supposedly creates something serendipitous and unintended, but is later revealed to be beautiful in its own right. The somewhat bombastic implication is that Cardiff is a city, cobbled together over history, which is a metaphor for the artistic event with Cale and the Welsh bands. The rest of the Welsh bands are supposed to be 'wowed' by Cale, and they are supposed to be 'sitting at the master's feet.' Cale has stopped drinking, but he has retained a muted form of the arrogance, lack of consideration, and grandiosity, which stereotypes notorious alcoholics and the daily tabloids' favourite drug addicts. This same narcissistic grandiosity was epitomized in the film, *The Days of Wine and Roses* (1962). Cale comes across as narcissistic, and he expects complete control, throwing tantrums when he doesn't get his way. In this way, along with his history of bizarre 'rock-and-roll' lifestyle and excessive drug use, he is a strange 'hero' to impose upon the youthful Welsh bands. Cale is a Welsh grotesque, typical of the 'Outsider' celebrity who goes away, makes it big, and then comes back to Wales to flex his power and influence. The result is a matter-of-fact revelation of how dislikeable Cale really can be at times (at least, in this film). The juxtaposition of location in the film doesn't have the effect of bringing together something that teaches or informs anyone about the location. We know it's an old Welsh chapel, located in Cardiff Bay, which has been converted into a nightclub called 'The Point'. The Coal Exchange is also shown and described, but there is a 'disconnect', between any cultural material, which originated in the chapel or Industrial history of

Wales, and the content or conversations of Cale and the bands. Cale is almost like a vampire who arrives, samples the blood of each new youth band (while he tests their grace under the fire of his antagonism), and then flies away, to another important place, where he is needed. Very little sympathy is created for Cale, so if you aren't already a fan of his music and career or his celebrity, then he simply comes across as an aging male rock 'diva' or an egocentric monster. The audience hears so much about his musical talent, but the film never gives us a real musical moment of him beginning and completing an entire song worth listening to. Neither would the film compel a non-fan to go out and buy his records, based upon his poor attitudes and behaviour toward the other bands. Nevertheless, the scheduled moment of high-decibel noise is analogous with the circus coming to town, a carnival of strange, larger-than-life artists who gather in their protected 'Mount Olympus' for a meeting of the gods (or in this case, Cardiff's Mount Stuart Square), and we the audience, are supposed to be impressed.

Is it an accidental or intended carnival?

We discussed the concept of Bahktin's 'carnavalesque', to be, a planned period of 'scheduled chaos', when the existing literary, social, religious or political order are inverted or subverted. As we read Welsh films which fit McLoone's category of 'hip-hip hedonism', we must ask about this planned chaos, if it is a challenging of the social order or just the locally indigenized output of Welsh, 'Hollywood copycats', or both? The pagan / Christian / secular holidays of Halloween and Mardi Gras are cultural icons, which are emblematic in literature, pop culture and film, of the carnivalesque. During these holidays, folks shed masks and wear new masks, they masquerade and indulge in licentious behaviour, all of which is forgivable, because it's during the 'carnival'. Similarly, films, which utilize the narrative device of the 'carnival', are seeking to create a background of scheduled and managed chaos, against which to tell their stories. We associate the 'hip hedonism' films discussed by McLoone, with a type of carnivalesque

structure in Welsh films, where the characters are suspended in a world, poised to enter the carnival, or perpetually spinning in a looped reality of some carnivalesque 'Paradise', or nightmare, depending upon one's perspective. In later chapters, we will expand upon this concept and theorize at length, in order to discover and situate a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque'.

Disturbance of the order for disturbance's sake:

We would assert that the 'hip hedonism' films exist and create their characters, in order to subvert and to disturb the hegemonic order, as well as to disturb and challenge the local order, be it parents, police, and other symbols of authority. Defiance of authority, (demonstrated through outrageous, irresponsible or disreputable activities), provide the signs and markers which identify these films to their intended 'worldwide youth culture' audiences. Various criminal markers, street-culture markers, breaches of sexual mores, edgy pop music performances and 'tribal' party scenes, all serve to flag the film's generic assembly to its 'cognoscenti' audiences. Consequently, the films, which create an incendiary moment of actual pyrotechnics, wanton violence, drug and sexual orgies and debauchery, are doing so to introduce a scheduled moment of anarchy (which is naturalized to the intended audience) into the film's contained world. This is done to disturb the dominant order, or to show that the world is terribly flawed (as the characters have received it from the forces larger than themselves), and this in turn explains or justifies their personal and group excesses. *Rancid Aluminium* (2000) qualifies as a 'hip hedonism' film, and might even be more distinctively Welsh, for particular reasons. But the Welshness is not immediately apparent, aside from the Welsh crew and actors, and also apart from having Cardiff-based Fiction Factory and its Llanelli-based parent company Tinopolis, as producers.

The lead character Pete Thompson, played by Rhys Ifans, lives in an implausible world as the heir of a publisher, in some large city, which seems to be London. Ed Thomas had a good idea here, and it works in the American sitcom *Ugly Betty*, but Thomas doesn't know how to make the world of the high-power publishing world, derived from the James Hawes novel from which the film is adapted, work. Thomas directed this film, and seems to be hoping to build on his success as the writer on Marc Evan's *House of America*. *Rancid Aluminium* seems to be about a group of selfish, mildly neurotic, thirty-something urbanites. A miniscule if not token, marker of Welshness comes early, when Pete points out to his Irish partner (played by Joseph Fiennes), that a local Italian street vendor is 'not Italian', but actually 'Welsh'. It's unclear what this means, except to vaguely identify Pete as Welsh, an attribute which doesn't seem related to any other part of the film. In *House of America*, Thomas created a world in the impoverished South Wales Valleys, which was a believably bleak and depressing place to be trapped with one's dysfunctional siblings and insane mother. Consequently, the landscape and story background support the plot. Thomas is clearly familiar with his cultural and emotional 'heritage' and brings to life monstrous, but truthful characters in *House of America*. In *Rancid Aluminium* the cosmopolitan cosmology resembles the face-paced and fashionable, illicit drug-driven, nouvelle film noir-gritty tableau that creator Russell T. Davies produced in the successful franchise *Queer as Folk* (1999-2009), with drug dealer's dens that resemble Turkish tea rooms, chic upscale pubs and bars, and dazzling, smoky discos. But the clever office sets and nightclub sets are like scenes flashed in the montage style of a music video, which do have not an apparent ability to assist or reveal the plot. The plot revolves around Pete's low sperm count, his business which is about to go bust, and an indiscernible link to some Russian Mafia financiers, who apparently intend to bail Pete out, so he can save his business, pay his kooky fertility doctor, impregnate his wife, and continue snorting ridiculously long lines of cocaine, at will. None of this is compelling, and the

complicated plot doesn't have enough character development to sustain us all the way through to the last fifteen-minute denouement, when all is explained and resolved.

What is going on in *Rancid Aluminium*? It seems that Ed Thomas succeeded in *House of America*, at creating a world of believable anarchy, when he stayed in his 'home' narrative 'territory' of dysfunctional, Welsh familial and post-industrial scenarios. In *Rancid Aluminium*, it's evident that Thomas is making a conscious effort to not make a film with markers of Welshness. Thomas seems convinced here, that his filmmaking needs to be divorced from its Welsh roots, in order to tell relevant and truthful stories. So Thomas takes his story to another world, the transplanted world of London and Germany or Russia (it was actually partially filmed in Poland), and the plausibility of his characters falls flat. One reason for this could be that Thomas's characters, (who are actually Welsh-men), need to be in some sort of Welsh world to provide a credible foundation for their angst. Without the Welsh markers, Thomas's characters never develop fully, and the plot becomes impossible to grasp. In the other Welsh 'hip hedonism' films, Welsh markers provide a useful cinematic shorthand for the audiences, which Thomas is convinced, perhaps for some philosophical reason, that he needs to jettison, in order to represent, 'a new Wales.' What we get is a substandard British crime caper that never takes off. Ironically, the element of resisting any markers of Welshness, is the thing which might make *Rancid Aluminium* not only an example of 'hip hedonism' genre, but also very Welsh. This is because, the conscious act of resisting Welsh-markers, deprives the audience of the 'truthfulness' of the film and locates it in a generic British television drama morass, with no hook or anchor. Welsh filmmakers probably are the only people in the world who are, after all, making an issue out of the filmic representation of traditional Welshness and out of their intended rebuttal of Welsh signifiers and markers. *Rancid Aluminium* does provide some interesting indicators, which would readily qualify this film for a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque'. Ifans plays

his perky Welsh 'boyo' version of a stereotypically dull Hugh Grant-type in almost every film, and this is no exception. The kooky doctor is an Einstein-like mad scientist cliché, a cartoon character, and the mysterious Russians are two-dimensional villains who almost appear diabolical, with their replica Dracula's castle scene, and the motley Russian peasant mobs. The drug dealer is 'Oscar Wilde-Light', an effeminate witchdoctor and oracle. The sex scenes are explicit and occur too often, but they always have a comic strip feel to them, distant and cold, and slightly tongue-in-cheek. Pete is a male grotesque, because any vestige of masculine heroics is emasculated by his low-sperm count, and his obsession with his sperm count makes him even more of a psychologically self-mutilated freak. He's also cuckold by his adulterous wife, betrayed by his business partner, and seduced by his office assistant. He lives detached from any perceivable roots, although he goes home to a Welsh mountain cemetery in one scene. He participates in orgies of sex, laughable orgies of drug taking, and he consorts with two-dimensional Russian mafia henchmen. The head of the Russia cartel, 'Kant', is a pathetic imitation of the monstrous kingpin in the *Usual Suspects* (1995), named Keyser Söze. By imitating or by being derivative of Hollywood, Thomas fails to bring the 'critical regionalism' that McLoone cites as a prerequisite to the fulfillment of a national cinema. Thomas's conflicted filmic identities also seem redolent of an argument that McLoone makes regarding the tension in national cinemas and indigenous art between 'universalism' and 'particularism' (Hill, McLoone et al. 1994: 153-156).

Situating hedonism, 'no-where' but Cardiff, U.S.A.:

Rancid Aluminium attempts to resist its 'particularism' of Welshness and this obsession with being from 'no-where' corrupts the truthfulness of all character development in the film, and hands the audience a plot with none of the cinematic conventions which usually assist and engage audiences. Justin Kerrigan's *Human Traffic* (1999) is a story about a group of hedonistic teenagers in Cardiff, and the locations and markers of Welshness are

ignored, while they also are displayed rather blithely. Kerrigan is not obsessed with some agenda to subvert the icons of traditional Wales, so the film works, and doesn't draw attention to its privileging of a universal youth culture at the expense of local signifiers. Meaninglessness is key to the plot and actions of *Human Traffic*, and the disturbed world, which the actors inherit, is monstrously pitted against their pleasure seeking and partying. *Human Traffic* acquired a worldwide cult following for communicating the angst of a generation, without decapitating the players from their real life location in a British city called Cardiff, which the film leads us to believe, is a virtual consumer 'suburb' of New York City or Los Angeles. Filmed two years earlier than *Human Traffic*, *Twin Town* (1997) is often compared to *Trainspotting*, but has a distinctively Welsh flavour, and also relies upon the lead brothers, being discovered by the audience, as already living in the disturbed world of a dysfunctional family and a dysfunctional community. As a result, their actions are not as shocking, as they might be in real life, which is one of the film's implicit messages, that is, 'our world is Welsh and post-Industrial, but also post-modern and "twisted"'.

Just prior to *Twin Town*, Julian Richards produced a dark neo-pagan Horror flick, which was derivative of the Scottish cult hit, *Wickerman* (1973). Richards called his film *Darklands* (1996). *Darklands* is very much a lower quality version of *Wickerman* set in Wales, but it is very much a Welsh film, in that it subverts cleverly, the social and political order. Welsh nationalism is conflated with the satanic or neo-Druidic rites of the villain, so the audience is asked to root for the subversion of authority in general, at least of parental and social authorities, as perceived by a Welsh teenager. The effect is not off-putting for the cause of Welsh nationalism, but disturbs it in a way, which reveals the superficiality of national causes, which over generations morph into (perceived) political fetishes. Richards uses a Horror genre formula to create a mild bloodbath, and the orgy of weird pagan rites and violence disturb many real and imagined orders, while signalling

to a youthful audience, clear markers of internationally, enjoyed youth culture cynicism. This chapter introduced and explored Welsh films which fit the coming-of-age category, but which went to extremes and as such required a closer reading. We looked at the ‘commodification’ of Welsh legend and folktale and children’s stories, i.e., the ‘Disneyfication’ of Welsh cinema, the bold assertions of a uniquely Welsh ‘Queer cinema’, and we finally explored the Welsh version of pop culture documentary and of ‘hip hedonism’ films, which we titled, ‘From Elegiac Courtesans to the Jesters of Cool Cymru’. As our readings continue, we look at Welshmen who went abroad to make their films for both aesthetic and industrial reasons. After that, we will explore the proclivity, alluded to in this chapter, toward psychological, cultural and social extremes, even as it manifests a politicized and culturally contested, Welsh ‘cinema of the grotesque,’ as we deconstruct more Welsh filmic products, to see if such a ‘monster’, albeit banal, really does exist.

Chapter 6: Welshmen Who Went Abroad to Make their Films

Wales in Exile and Welsh Utopianism;

Cymru's Filmic Pilgrimages 'Up North' — Northern Ireland as an Obligatory 'Avalon' for Welsh Filmmakers

Wales in Exile and Welsh Utopianism

In the last chapter we considered films, which fit the category of Welsh Coming-of-Age films, but because of other important dimensions, resisted fitting into this category, without additional analysis. One of the important dimensions, which augmented our reading of those films, was the occurrence of Welsh film producers who located their narratives in foreign countries. We asserted that this cinematic device, of choosing a location foreign to the territory of Wales, was an effective cinematic device, intended to isolate and to punctuate markers of Welshness. We also suggested that, because of varying degrees of culturally conservative attitudes among Welsh audiences, Welsh film producers might have made narrative and production choices, in order to introduce otherwise offensive or controversial topics in their Welsh films, which, once set in exotic locations, might be perceived to be less-threatening to the conventions of a prevailing *status quo* in Welsh civil society and communities. Two of the films were Welsh Coming-of-Age films, which were distinguished in the category, because of the added dimension of being located in countries foreign to the territory of Wales, including *Gadael Lenin*, which was shot in Russia, and *Dafydd*, which was shot in Amsterdam, Netherlands. In this chapter, we will expand upon the readings of Welsh films from various categories, which have the added dimension of being set in foreign locations. In both *Gadael Lenin* and *Dafydd*, we asserted that the sensitivity of the topic of sexuality was more easily introduced to Welsh audiences, if couched in the perceived distance and 'other-ness' of exotic, non-Welsh locations. There are three films made by Welshmen who went abroad, which conflate issues of gender, sexuality and ethnicity, *Gadael Lenin* (1993), *Dafydd* (1993), and *Grand Slam* (1978). Carla Freccero, a professor of literature

at the University of California Santa Cruz and the author of *Popular Culture: An Introduction*, discusses the media representation of gay characters and the evolution of the ways in which these characters were and are now, treated

There have always been gay characters in the media. It's just that up until now they were represented in insinuating ways as in the closet or in swishy or covert ways (Shiels 2002: 1).

If we consider the ways in which gender and sexuality are treated in these films, and compare them, for example to *Y Mapiwr* (1995), *Very Annie Mary* (2001), *On the Black Hill* (1987) or with other Welsh films dealing with gender, masculinity, and sexuality, we may detect a trajectory which indicates or anticipates parallel cultural attitudes in Welsh society or in the larger British society. The most significant contextual differentiation between British films, among those which focus upon gender and sexuality, is frequently made in relation to whether or not they were made *before* or *after* the release of Stephen Frears's *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985), a film which conflated the issues of ethnicity and class with sexuality and gender (Russo 1981: 86-87). While *My Beautiful Laundrette* was initially read as 'pivotal' in British filmmaking, for its conflation of discourses about sexuality, race, minority language and culture, and class differences and conflicts, these debates have been generally marginalized within British film studies

It is possible that the meagreness of debates about ethnicity in British Cinema Studies is in part caused by a corresponding marginalisation of black and Asian film-makers and films that take as their central theme issues of race and ethnicity (Ashby and Higson 2000: 15)

That Wales should be referred to and considered a multicultural society with a historically marginalized ethnic and linguistic minority, whose filmic characters could be compared to the British-Pakistani characters in *My Beautiful Laundrette* (Morley and Robins 2001: 309), and that the Welsh cinema continues to be marginalized not only as a cinema, but also within British film studies debates, has already been established and discussed by other film scholars

Cinemas such as the Welsh have not achieved such prominence nor, within settler societies, have Aboriginal, Maori or Native American cinemas, nor indeed, within an immigrant society, has Chicano cinema, though Afro-American cinema reaches back to Oscar Micheaux and has broken into the mainstream with Spike Lee and others (Vitali and Willemsen 2006: 52).

What is important to our discussion within this chapter is the frequency with which Welsh producers went abroad to make their films, consideration of their motivations to go abroad, and what effectiveness or differences this 'device' of going abroad brought to their films.

Representing Welsh hyper-masculine constructions of identity:

In this chapter we begin by looking at films which were made abroad by Welsh producers, and in the second half of this chapter, we look at the special and historically/culturally important cases, of Welshmen who went to Ireland to make their films. We have already looked at two films in the first general category, which also considered the dimensions of sexuality and of Welsh constructions of masculinity, *Gadael Lenin*, and *Dafydd*. Elsewhere in this study we have summarized various ideas about Welsh constructions of masculinity, but we have generalized with our assertion that, if Wales is considered a society which reflects the attributes of a post-colonial or formerly colonial society, or if Wales is considered a society that was once colonial, but which was also transformed into a society that benefited from subordinate participation within a colonial project, then certain assumptions can be made about Welsh constructions of masculinity, which seem common to similar societies or social formations. In general, we referred to these constructions, as impacted upon by the effects of economic, cultural and political 'othering' of the subordinate male populations, by the so-called 'patriarch' or its agents, and noted how hyper-masculine constructions of masculinity (industrial, military, sports), occur frequently in these societies. John Beynon, Christopher Gittings and others have contextualized the development and representation of these contested masculinities (Gittings 1996; Beynon 2001; Gittings

2002), while Gittings's work has also located it in representations of historic social formations, comparable to Wales, namely in the Canadian National cinema

The *Boy's Own Annual* serials disciplined an exclusive gender identity for white-settler Canadian boys, inculcating English values that equated masculinity and honour with military service and sacrifice for the empire (Gittings 1996: 3).

Berry and Blandford have made numerous references to aspects of the Welsh construction of masculinity on screen (Berry 1994; Blandford 2000: 152-167; Blandford 2007). Recently, a couple important articles have focused upon how filmic representations of distinctively Welsh constructions of masculinity contribute to the individual acquisition and collective reinforcement of primary Welsh constructions. We referred to the ways in which Wales could be compared to other societies with similar histories or cultural trajectories, i.e., Canada, Australia, Ireland, Scotland or other small nations. The need to examine the particulars, which distinguish a distinctively Welsh construction of masculinity, and which differentiate the unique ways in which Welsh national cinema privileges and represents and uses these constructions is essential, as Gittings has warned

One of the principles of postcolonial assimilation, the ascription of the term to a culture, must be continually recontextualized and reconceptualized so as to avoid the potential for homogenizing the colonial experiences of diverse groups (Gittings 1996: 3)

This specifically Welsh, filmic and gendered discourse has only just started, with the *Cyfrwng* Welsh Media Journal's examination of Welsh masculinity in Stanley Baker's 'Welsh Western', *Zulu* (1964) (Shail 2002: 11-25), and in Peter Jachimiak's examination the Welsh film *Grand Slam* (1978) (Jachimiak 2006: 91-106). John Hefin produced for the BBC, *Grand Slam* (1978). *Grand Slam* is among the best-known Welsh films with domestic audiences, and holds an iconic place in Welsh history and culture

Grand Slam (directed by John Hefin, 1978) is not only a film of Welsh origin primarily aimed at a Welsh audience, but – in relation to the reproduction of Welshness and Welsh masculinity in particular – is often seen as a celebratory cultural event (Jachimiak 2006: 91)

Jachimiak's analysis and conclusions about *Grand Slam* are built upon some the same generalizations about constructions of masculinity described by Beynon, upon some specifically British imperial / post-imperial constructions described by Gittings, and upon some specifically Welsh constructions, as described by Charlotte Aull Davies and Stephanie Jones

I believe that in Blaengwyn, masculine identity formerly associated with mining in the community has been transmuted into a masculinity expressed through playing and supporting rugby, the identification of the rugby sport of Wales (Jones and Davies 2003: 27).

We mentioned the possibility of seeing in these Welsh films, evidence of a trajectory, revealing an evolution in the ways in which sexuality and gender are treated. This trajectory might parallel or inform another longer trajectory of Welsh masculinity, as it relates to and constructs a sense of Welsh nationalism. For example, Davies and Jones noted above, their theory that the fiercely independent and proudly autonomous coal miner, (which was a long held construction of Welsh masculinity, which has come to symbolize Welsh nationalism and historic degrees Welsh political and economic independence), and has since morphed into the activities and male-centric *mythos* of rugby. Our arguments in this chapter depend upon presuppositions: that these are interwoven trajectories of the treatment of gender/sexuality with the tropes of evolving Welsh male-ness; that they have significant over-lapping cultural and social significance; and that the participation of Welsh males in the hyper-masculine culture of coal mining and slate quarry mining were bound up with various social and cultural attitudes and activities. When the economic conditions ended, (which were beyond the control of all but a few pits and quarries), the economic base for the male bonding, i.e., the sense of Welsh male identity and the sense of belonging (which were derived from this work), were transferred to other group activities. The group activities, which included sports and male choirs became emblematic symbols of maleness for Welsh males. Accordingly, the scholarship of Jachimiak and of Davies and Jones mentioned above, takes into

consideration certain historic events, which are generally thought to have challenged or contested the development or sustaining of Welsh constructions of masculinity. These conditions include the subordinated and conditioned participation by Welsh males in the British imperial project, emasculation of Welsh constructs of maleness brought on by chronic economic fluctuations and historic suppression of various types of political or self determination (along with related conditions of deprivation and social upheaval / familial dysfunction, including endemic alcoholism and domestic neglect or abuse), and the resulting elevation of the strongly matriarchal figure in Welsh society, of the enduring and dominant 'Mam' or mother character in Welsh culture and key narratives. Both the activities of coal mining and of Welsh rugby mostly exclude female participation, making these two, related Welsh activities bastions of Welsh male-ness which are defended against the intrusions of the dominant *Mam*, or matriarchy, which symbolically emasculates Welsh men. Jachimiak notes in his article how the sense of male bonding in the sport of rugby, and the socio-cultural *mythos* which accompanies this activity, are related to a sense of Welsh male '*hiraeth*' or yearning for an imagined, youthful freedom

Mae ymdeimlad hiraethus o alaru am oes o ddyndod a fu yn ganolog i hyn. Felly, i John Beynon, fe'i nodweddir gan 'an enduring nostalgia for hard and stoical, traditional masculinity' (Jachimiak 2006: 104)

It's a sense of yearning for the grievous loss of having a manhood (humanity), which is central to this. According to John Beynon, it's characterized by 'an enduring nostalgia for hard and stoical, traditional masculinity' (Jachimiak 2006: 104)

So for the purposes of our chapter, *Grand Slam* operates at several different levels. To summarize the plot, the village undertaker Caradog Lloyd-Evans and his lecherous son Glyn accompany a group of mates to the Grand Slam Rugby Match held in Paris. The recently widowed Lloyd-Evans hopes to use the trip to re-new his ties with an old heartthrob, whom he met while stationed in Paris during World War II. They accompany a group of Welshmen from their fictional village of Aberflyarff, but the two characters of

Mog Jones, the village rugby team leader, and Maldwyn Pugh, an over-the-top, camp, local 'His & Hers' boutique proprietor, drive the plot along with Lloyd-Evans, his son, and their French girlfriends. It is the transfer of the location of a Welsh story to France, which first qualifies this film for our category. Jachimiak situates *Grand Slam*, as essentially an iconic phenomenon in popular Welsh culture, which is produced and marketed toward men, and which offers Welsh men a ritualized reinforcement of certain attributes of Welsh masculinity, events which replace older activities related to the coal mining communities. Jachimiak notes how these new activities of drunken stag parties and field trips to sports events, especially rugby activities, have filled a cultural and social need that was deficit with the demise of the mines. Jachimiak discusses how this has its roots, in the longing among Welsh men for a sense of male identity, and he suggests that not only the film *Grand Slam*, but also in the repeated ritualized viewings of the film, are to be found part of the modern, ceremonial reinforcements of masculinity, which Welsh men have invented

The desire to re-watch such films can also be recognized as a key aspect of a wider move towards the attempt to regain a nation-specific masculine past that is thought lost (Jachimiak 2006: 91).

Jachimiak sees the film as nostalgic, and tailored to the critical development of men's identity in a post-industrial, post-modern milieu

Thus, perhaps capitalising upon men's negative experiences derived from the 'crisis of masculinity', consumer culture has deliberately targeted 30 to 50 something males offering such nostalgic texts as *Grand Slam* as a means of 'coping' with the consequences of flux within late modernity (Jachimiak 2006: 91)

While the analysis of Jachimiak examines the film from the mostly male cultural perspective, the hyper-masculine context of *Grand Slam* invites this type of reading. But from a non-gendered Welsh audience perspective, one has to ask how *Grand Slam* achieves something by going abroad, which could not be accomplished with a domestic location. In regards to this collection of Welsh films located abroad, in general, there probably is a sense in which audiences enjoy the simple travelogue entertainment value of

the exotic setting, which is most frequently achieved by audiences in a surrogate fashion, through the medium of documentary films. But even as the documentary surrogacy is satisfying, a fictional transfer of Welsh characters is more satisfying, since the viewer can better imagine themselves, as it were, transported to the time and place where the relative Welsh fictional character is existing. So in this sense, there is an indigenizing not only of the genre and filmic themes, as described by Albert Moran, i.e., the national cinemas which 'imitate' and adapt the 'model' of Hollywood (Moran 1996: 7), but also an indigenizing of imagined place, that is, a Welsh film that is located abroad, especially in Europe, could allow Welsh audiences to imagine themselves as belonging to Europe, since their cinematic experience 'proves' they can travel there and coopt this regional territory cinematically, which is an unarticulated but popularly understood *rite de passage* into modernity (Llobera 1994: 16). This is the minimal 'pay-off' for general Welsh audiences, other than the 'light' entertainment value. *Grand Slam* is significantly one of the first Welsh fictional features ever made abroad, and it is also one of the first Welsh films to treat sexuality and gay themes in a comical, rather than a violent or tragic light. It appeals to heterosexual men because of the appearance of various sports heroes, the liberal female nudity displayed like cameos of soft porn throughout the film, and importantly, because of the ritual male adventure which forms the plot.

Grand Slam is first of all, a very Welsh film, and it gives nods to ancient Celtic signifiers, that occur in many Welsh films and pieces of modern literature. For example, the film begins and ends with the undertaker and his son driving their hearse in a funereal parade. This harkens back to an ancient practice in Welsh and proto-Welsh literature or Celtic traditions, to include an archetypal symbol of death, often a gravedigger, i.e., '*Dic the Death*', and also the inclusion of the plot of a funereal pageant, called a 'phantom funeral' (Wentz 1911: 104; Ross 1996: 19). The beginning and ending of the film, in the black hearse of the undertaker protagonist, as it courses through the typically Welsh village of

Aberflyarff, which changes from real footage of the stone, terraced houses and shops to a cartoon rendering of the scene, is reassuringly Welsh, and has a 'feminine' sense about it of the reliable and homely grey stone hearth. The undertaker Lloyd-Evans is played by Huw Griffiths, who won the Best Actor in a Supporting Role Oscar in 1959 for his role in *Ben-Hur*, but has since grown into a grisly, older version of his once handsome self, with wild eye brows and closes-ups throughout the film which exaggerate his already exaggerated face, into grotesquely bulging eyes in a wrinkled and undulating head. Lloyd-Evans is the incarnation of the Gothic Welsh Chapel minister or chapel deacon, and later on he will contort into a spasm of fire-and-brimstone over the topless French can-can girls, and nearly have a heart-attack, which might be a coded metaphor for an irrelevant modern or secularist dismissal of the more puritanical aspect of the formerly Welsh village life. The contrast between his traditional values and his son's overt hedonism is stark. This brings to question whether *Grand Slam* is a complete reinforcement of the patriarchal or a reinforcement with cracks of social subversion.

The quartet of players is all male, and Mog is the most boisterous and obnoxious of the bunch, alternating between being suave and well-dressed, and then being reduced to doing a strip-tease which leads to a bar brawl which leads to getting arrested and all but missing the match, which leads to being forced to run nearly naked through the streets of Paris, in order to see the last three minutes of the rugby match, before Wales loses to France. Mog is a pathetically macho and chauvinistic character, who the audience cannot help but like, as he is cheered on to drag his beaten body into the stadium, and just before he (almost) drops dead in the street, he spots a trio of Welsh flags to inspire him. Mog gets to express jingoistic taunts to the French female concierge, whom he pinches and fondles, in spite of her angry spew of French retorts, which he mocks. Mog is contrasted with Maldwyn, who is the gay and flamboyantly camp source of comic relief, when things go wrong for the other 'boyos'. Maldwyn is effeminate and redolent of the drag-

wearing character played by John Hurt in the *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* (1985). Gittings cites the use of similar gay characters in Canadian cinema

Such discourses contribute to an oppression that, as R.W. Connell argues, 'positions homosexual masculinities as the bottom of a gender hierarchy among men (Gittings 2002: 279)

The camp gay character in British films prior to *My Beautiful Laundrette* is generally thought to embody a composite collection of all that is feminine, and all feminine things, which men seek to control (Russo 1981: 110). In *Grand Slam*, the gay character of Maldwyn can be understood to provide two useful services to the hyper-male characters and for the male audiences, in addition to personifying a homophobic 'running gag' at his expense: Maldwyn represents the dominant female 'Mam' whose presence and influence haunts the over-grown school boys, who would like to ditch their mental 'ghosts' of their Mam, who doubles as their moral conscious, so they can have some immoral fun in Paris. Because Maldwyn has assumed an exaggerated and polarized interpretation of gayness, he poses no threat to the other men, and the threat can even become the butt of several jokes, made when it is being decided who has to share a hotel bed with Maldwyn. This is what Gittings and Connell term, 'homo-socializing' of the impulse to male violence. Because Maldwyn is camp and therefore emasculated, so his aberrant sexual identity helps to re-define the otherwise fragile and poorly invented, Welsh constructions of masculinity. Maldwyn also has the priestly function of 'cleansing' the sacred male place of the ritual camp abroad, where they can have their romp, free of the interfering intrusion of Mam and her agents of conscious. Gittings quotes Connell directly in this context

Gayness, in patriarchal ideology, is the repository of whatever is symbolically expelled from hegemonic masculinity, the items ranging from fastidious taste in home decoration to receptive anal pleasure. Hence, from the point of view of hegemonic masculinity, gayness is easily assimilated to femininity (Gittings 2002: 281)

Grand Slam was released just months before the first referendum of Welsh devolution of 1979, which failed. The inclusion of the World War II 'angle' is politically safe territory,

since this war is one of the few which Welsh nationalists are least likely to debate about, concerning whether Welsh participation constituted fighting ‘somebody else’s war, or not’. *Grand Slam* is a cinematic acknowledgement that Welsh men cannot feel complete or whole at times, within the strictures of their traditional communities, limited by morality and conditions imposed by a matriarchy and the related residue of conservative values, left-over from the chapel period. It needed to be located abroad in order to give the transgressing Welsh men the ability to commit acts, for which they would be absolved, as soon as they had a bath and came home to village and *Mam*. The world of *Grand Slam* is an immature world where consequences are dismissed and women only exist as subjects of male desire. It does this in a way which is not necessarily meant to be violent toward women, but ultimately reinforces a male violence toward women which would now be considered anachronistic and inappropriate. In order to create an efficient world for the purposes of the male characters, the film must create the feminine as subjectively two-dimensional subjects, in a world where only men are real. This adds to the caricaturing of the hyper-masculine world, (which already depicted as a cartoon of Wales, which is interpolated during the film as intra-narrative credits), rendering a very specific, gendered view of Welshness.

Other Welsh filmic constructions of masculinity:

Peter Edwards’s *Bride of War* (1998) is a feature film based upon a re-packaged series for Welsh television. The name of the series for S4C is identical to the novel upon which the film is based, *Pum Cynnig i Gymro* or ‘Five times for a Welshman’. The novel is an autobiographical account of a Welshman from Dolgellau, North Wales, who attempted five times before he escaped as a European prisoner of war, during World War II. The film is set mostly in Poland and Germany, and is a hybrid of five different languages, including the dominant Welsh, English, French, German and Polish. The film would fit easily into the American category of films about War, and is very much told from a male

point of view. The markers of Welshness are implicit in the script. For example, in one scene, the soldier who is playing the protagonist, John Elwyn Jones, tries to procure a favour from the sergeant in charge who is also Welsh. They speak Welsh and code switch back to English in the presence of the other non-Welsh speaking prisoners. When the sergeant does not acquiesce to Jones's demands, Jones excoriates the sergeant in Welsh, telling him he is not a true Welshman. Jones wrote a longer autobiography, which together with his prisoner of war tales, are esteemed in North Wales as emblematic of the story of a generation of Welsh men. The military theme often forms the reason why Welshmen go abroad to tell their tales, with numerous documentaries made, mostly by BBC Cymru, which focused on re-telling Welsh angles to various wars. The hyper-masculine image is seldom questioned, but the Welsh participation in various wars is examined. The film that we looked at earlier in this study, *Penyberth*, is set in a period which would relate to either of the World Wars, but the issue is not the morality of the war, but rather what construction of Welsh masculinity will be privileged. The Welsh nationalistic and military dissenter is usually privileged, as we saw in *On the Black Hill*, *Cameleon*, and *Hedd Wyn*.

Welsh Utopianism, neglected or usurped:

The other theme of Welsh films made abroad, deals with the Welsh version of Utopianism, which has always had a strong attachment to the vision and Evangelical mission of the Welsh Nonconformist chapels. The Welsh settlers who colonized North and South American are romanticized in a mostly unquestioningly participatory role in the British, French, and Spanish Imperial projects. The emigrants are depicted as noble and truly patriotic, since whether they moved to Quebec, Ohio or Patagonia, they were all attempting to create a new 'gwladfa' or little kingdom abroad for Welsh independence and cultural /political autonomy, neither of which could be realized in Wales. John Ormond made a documentary, which maintains this romantic vision of the Welsh settlers

in Patagonia, entitled, *The Desert and the Dream* (1963) and produced for BBC. The style is very journalistic and takes a pessimistic perspective that the Welsh language in the Argentine ‘is dying’. The now-deceased Ormond might have been pleased to know that more than thirty years later a small revival of Welsh language studies has exploded in the community of the Chubut Province, which now, more than ever, understand their ethnic and cultural ties to Wales. The body of Welsh-American literature is rich with novels and other historical accounts, which are just ‘begging’ to be produced, but so far, very few fictional films have ever been made about the settlers in the U.S. and Canada. Endaf Emlyn did create a fictional account of a ‘Welsh Western’, which is located at the National *Eisteddfod* in Cardiff, Wales and in Patagonia, called, *Gaicho* (1983). Ormond’s documentary gave a very favourable and romantic view of the Welsh gauchos still working in the Argentine in 1963, and this helped to add the gaucho to the romantic, hyper-masculine images of masculinity, available to Welsh males. Emlyn’s treatment of the story appears to be a moderate budgeted Heritage genre film, but the markers of Welshness are unavoidable. The protagonist’s relative is assassinated during the National *Eisteddfod*, which is being held on the castle grounds in Cardiff. This death forces the female lead to travel to Argentina (on board the same ship as the murderer) to discover what mystery lies hidden on the Welsh estancia on the pampas. The villains seem to be German, which gives the plot a ‘Johnny Foreigner’ cartoon-like twist, but the rest of the story unfolds in Emlyn’s characteristic style, with an unpredictable sequence to the storyline. Emlyn’s imagining of the ‘Welsh Western’ satisfies Welsh audiences and reignited the imagery of Patagonia as a metaphor for the 1990s struggle to pass the referendum for devolution. Subsequently, the image of the Welsh gaucho has become emblematic of the aggressive but pragmatic Welsh politician or businessman. Emlyn’s story privileges the perspective of the woman, but the imagery of the hyper-masculine seems to have eclipsed Emlyn’s balance view of gender in Welsh society.

Wales in exile and Cambrian usurpers:

There have few other fictionalized accounts on screen of the Welsh experience abroad, although numerous Hollywood films often featured Welsh settler families. Fox Faith Films along with Michael Landon, Jr., the son of Michael Landon, who was best known for his work on *Bonanza* (1959) and *Little House on the Prairie* (1974-1983), has just produced the film, *The Last Sin Eater* (2007). The film is based on the novel by Francine Rivers, who writes for the Evangelical Christian publisher Tyndale House. *The Last Sin Eater* is a historically Welsh ethnic settlement in Appalachia, which effectively exist for the overtly didactic themes of the film. The film's dramatic hook and title come from an actually historic but rare, Welsh religious practice, which was imported to America, and which provides the enigmatic and bizarre aspect which attracts curiosity in the story. Apparently, 'sin eaters' were professional scapegoats who frequented Welsh funerals, and for a fee or offering claimed to 'eat' and take away the lifetime of sins accumulated by the dead

Sin eating was not a Bardic idea, it seems to have been a perverted and perverse tradition, probably reaching Wales by an oriental channel, in which the Jewish scape-goat and Christian Eucharistic Sacrifice are blended in disguise and distortion. "The popular notion in Pembrokeshire, with reference to the placing of salt on the bodies of the dead, was that it kept away the evil spirit" (Appleyard 1854: 47-48).

American film critics have lambasted the film for its claim to be 'authentically' Welsh, saying that the film's 'Movie accents are more Bangalore than Bangor' (Haines 2007: 1) Landon has been panned for his didactic overstatement, although first following the path of his father, by creating period films with high value elements of verisimilitude, but later insisting upon an Evangelical focus. Francine Rivers describes her research of Welsh families in Appalachia, but is obsessed with interpreting the religious ideas of the Welsh settler through an unhistorical prism of contemporary American fundamentalist Protestant thought

For other stories, I'd have to research whatever was involved in the story. For instance, with *The Last Sin Eater* I needed to understand what a sin eater was, and

something about the customs of the Appalachian mountain people. However, *The Last Sin Eater* is set in the Great Smoky Mountains and is a complete departure from what I've written before. It has a gothic-mystery feel to it and deals with the subject of guilt and the workings of the Holy Spirit (Rivers 2007: 3).

There have been generations of Welshmen expressing dissatisfaction with the way that the Welsh village people were portrayed, by John Ford, in *How Green Was My Valley* (1941). Nevertheless, most audiences around the world are most familiar with Wales through the vision of this film. *The Last Sin Eater* is probably another case where the Welsh lack self-determination in influencing how they are portrayed in filmic product. Unfortunately, this film, with its Evangelistic sloppiness will probably end up transmitting the only representations of 'Welshness' and historic Welsh Utopian settlers, that millions of Americans will ever know.

Cymru's Filmic Pilgrimages 'Up North' — Northern Ireland as an Obligatory 'Avalon' for Welsh Filmmakers

This section of the chapter considers the filmic product of Wales, but is limited to films, which are physically and textually situated in Northern Ireland. These films are exemplary of what might be termed the 'National cinema of Wales'. These films draw upon recurring narrative themes drawn from Welsh literature spanning at least 1,600 years (Ford 1977: 14). These themes include concepts of Welsh national identity, conflicts of Welsh identity with British, English, European, and pan-Celtic identities, constructions of masculinities and femininities within and in opposition to the patriarchy of imperialism, church, chapel, and clan. When these themes are juxtaposed against the rich motif of modern Northern Irish 'Troubles' a potent political urgency emerges. This urgency provides the dramatic tension, which drives a general consideration of gendered human experiences, especially in the context of language, religion, race, and class identities. The film producers seem to imply that these conflicted human experiences naturally rage against the machinery of patriarchy. These reflections on gender and class

are a discourse of individual and group identities, which unveils preconceived notions of 'essential' nationalism, and which reveals the nationalism debate to be inherently painful, nuanced, perplexing, and complicated, and which the film producers present to us in sequences of confounding moral choices.

There is a precedent among Welsh filmmakers to examine Welsh participation in the British Imperial project in literature and film, as an outline for examining concepts of Welsh national identity. Films tend to focus on the implications of Welsh men who volunteered or were impressed into British military service, and they include Stanley Baker's starring role in *Zulu* (1964), Sherlock's *Cameleon* (1997), Paul Turner's *Hedd Wyn* (1992), Andrew Grieve's *On the Black Hill* (1987), and Gareth Wynn Jones's *Ysglyfaeth* (1984). Several important Welsh filmmakers commented on the cultural and political events since the beginning of Thatcher's government, including Karl Francis's *Milwr Bychan* (Boy Soldier 1986), and Ceri Sherlock's *Branwen*, (1994). Both of these films were produced for Welsh language television, and have won various awards at international film festivals, but aside from incidental screenings, have only been nominally distributed for exhibition or home video/DVD consumption. Each of these filmmakers created film narratives, which seemed to address the question of Welsh national identity. For various reasons, both of these directors felt it necessary to set their nationalistic-Welsh stories in Northern Ireland.

These reasons might include that Northern Ireland, the flashpoint for 1970s, anti-English emotions and for violent political dramas, as a film location both heightened and intensified the nationalist discourse of these Welsh films. This is not to say that various significant protests and even violent up-risings in Wales against imperial forces did not occur over the centuries of English subjugation, as in *Tonypanydy*, and *Merthyr Tydfil*, but there is a sense in which the Welsh, to extrapolate from Derrida's discussion of genres,

might want to have 'participation without belonging' (Derrida 1980: 10-11), that is to say with a criticism which is not entirely unfair, dipping into the foment of rebellion in the faraway arena of Northern Ireland when it suits them, but always returning home to 'Mam' in time for evening tea. This is said somewhat ironically, and in consideration of the fact that Francis and Sherlock are coming from a country where the most recent widespread rebellion against the English dates back to the rebellion of *Owain Glyndŵr* in 1409, or with the more recent attempts by 1840s Welsh peasants to subvert toll road taxes by cross-dressing as 'Rebecca's Daughters,' also the title and subject of another Karl Francis film, made in 1992.

Northern Ireland, with the mystique of masculine violence, with what some Welsh audiences might perceive as the mysterious presence of a 'high church' Catholicism, and with a more enduring and therefore more authentic 'Celticism', becomes for the Welsh a forbidden and exotic 'other.' In both films sexual borders are transgressed, which symbolizes entering a *liminal* place, which is at once dangerous and sexually exciting. For example, we see in Karl Francis's *Milwr Bychan* (Boy Soldier 1986) the penetration of Irish culture and politics, represented by the penetration of an Irish woman; she's penetrated by that symbolic concentration of both *Cymric* innocence and national virility, the Welsh soldier. In Ceri Sherlock's *Bramwen*, (1994) we see the penetration of Gaelic culture and politics symbolized by the penetration of a Welsh woman by that enigmatic and dissenting symbol of Northern Irish pragmatism and a fractured male sensibility, the Northern Irish pacifist. There are two other Welsh filmmakers of note, who travelled to Ireland to shoot their films, and they include Marc Evans, who shot *Resurrection Man* (1998) in Belfast and Gareth Wyn Jones who directed the film adaptation for S4C of the suspense novel by Harri Pritchard Jones entitled *Ysglyfaeth / Prey* (1984). Of *Ysglyfaeth*, Dave Berry commented

The director's earlier S4C work, *Ysglyfaeth / Prey* (1984), was compelling in its presentation of character and weaving of Welsh social, language and cultural issues into the fabric of a lively political suspense film (Berry 1994: 336).

Ysglyfaeth / Prey is a romantic tale between a man who's half Welsh and his fiery Gaelic girlfriend. They find themselves in the middle of the confusing and bloody events in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, this is their home, and they cannot avoid both love and violence. The ubiquity of military presence among the civilian population is disconcerting and tense, but the civilians have no choice but to try to live their lives with as much normalcy as possible. The film leaps from different locations, from Derry to Dyffryn, from Nantlle to Cork, Belfast and Dublin. The challenge for the lovers is to avoid becoming the 'prey' of the military conflict going on around them. So similarly to *Branwen*, *Ysglyfaeth* has been located in Northern Ireland not only because the story requires this, but also because the 'Troubles' seem to create a romanticized enhancement of the dramatic tension, which serves to give the narrative a more hyperbolic tableau, against which to play out its drama and melodrama. The risk of situating characters in the Irish milieu is that the news media has so intensely saturated the British audiences prior to the release of this film, that the images have vested meaning and import, related to the banality which repeated, televised news stories can assume. Television images as selected for their quick sound bite 'shock value' and intensity of impact. *Ysglyfaeth* was produced in the cultural context of the news 'blitz', which covered the 'Troubles' on British TV. Consequently, the film spends some of its energy attempting to naturalize the setting and events, while simultaneously attempting to exploit them for its narrative purposes. Berry describes the success of the narrative, and situates it historically with Karl Francis's sojourn in Ireland

The film pre-dated *Boy Soldier* and handled the love affair across sectarian divides with equal sensitivity, though the girl's final acquiescence and virtual complicity after the fact seem a little too abrupt and summary and to undermine, to some extent, the depth of honest feeling and intensity of the movie's political and ideological discussions (Berry 1994: 337).

Marc Evans travelled to Ireland to produce *Resurrection Man* (1998), which is a film based on the deeds of the Shankill Butchers in 1970s Belfast, and retold retrospectively. Evans has seized upon another narrative, which is filled with psychological extremes, which is suited to the type of fictional films, which Evans has mostly produced. The theme is madness, and this is in keeping with the dysfunctional family mood piece / Horror genre films trajectory of Evans's career, to date. The plot focuses upon the tension between the murderous gang leader Victor Kelly and the journalist pursuing him named Ryan. The film is based upon an adaptation of the novel by Eoin McNamee, and allows Evans to explore the bizarre ambiance of hatred against Catholics, projected by Kelly's character. Kelly's character is monstrous and grotesque: The criminal and uncanny meet in the personality of Kelly, and Evans shows restraint, but could easily have pushed this film in the Horror genre or the genre of extremely violent dramas, typical of the films of Quentin Tarentino. Significantly, this is not a Welsh story, but the work of a Welsh director who is perfecting his craft by working in nearby Ireland. Evans seems drawn to the Irish story, not because of the political aspects of the sectarian violence, but because of the cinematic opportunities to present gore and brutality, brought on by the extended civil conflict. Similarly, the lead actor Stuart Townsend parleyed his role as Kelly, into various film and television roles, which have more in common with Count Dracula, than with Al Capone, as shown by his appearance as the Vampire-like murderer in *Night Stalker* (2005).

In contrast to *Resurrection Man* and *Ysglyfaeth*, Ceri Sherlock's trek to Northern Ireland seems expressly intended to exploit the cultural and political implications of the Irish 'Troubles', within the context of a very Welsh story. Sherlock established the social and psychological tensions of Welsh chapel culture and contemporary politics, within the context of Welsh nationalism, and then transfers this tension to the Irish location, to

intensify the conflict, and to make the plot more compelling and plausible. In Sherlock's *Branwen*, (1994), all of the players are sexually charged and engaged in transgression: a Protestant chapel minister, Branwen's father, has his senses aroused 'by smells and bells' by entering a Catholic church for the first time in his life; the mischievous brother Peredur sprays foamy graffiti on the newlyweds' car; the brother Mathonwy nibbles incestuously on his sister Branwen's neck, in hopes of luring her back to the suitability of coupling with a Welshman, rather than with a despised Irish 'other.' In contrast, the sensuality of *Boy Soldier* is shrouded in the banality of British military regimentation. The male flower of virile, innocent youth escapes the economically decaying Welsh Valleys to become heroic and machismo. Then this flower is denuded by circumstances – the loss of innocence when he realizes his Irish girlfriend Deirdre will reject him, not because she doesn't love him, but because she loathes his uniform (Berry 1994: 321); the blush on this young Welshman's 'petals' is further disturbed when his commanders not only betray him and wrongfully imprison him, but subject him throughout the film to sadomasochistic torture. Berry has pointed out that Francis did not intend anything lurid, but aimed for a realism, which revealed aspects of life under colonization. But Francis gives us perplexing two-dimensional characters created by the soldier's commanders, and so they must be read as symbolic affronts to the virility and masculine identity of the soldier. The sadistic officer seeks to break the soldier's will in a struggle not unlike Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, with all its (in this case homoerotic) sexual overtones; in response the soldier displays his internalized self-loathing by never achieving an erection after returning to duty in Belfast. This impotence is a metaphor for a Welshman's collusion with the English military for economic motivations, and he must inevitably pay a Faustian price: either go all the way over to the oppressor's side, like his pragmatic Sergeant Crane, or surrender to his physical impotency and accompanying demoralization.

Boy Soldier contributes to the anti-colonial discourse that existed in Wales following failure of the first devolution referendum in 1979 (Jones and Balsom 2000: 5-7). Francis's films generally are situated in working-class settings, in Industrial Southeast Wales. Francis's trademark look is a gritty, post-industrial social realism, but here he goes for a non-linear, dream sequence in this dizzying montage of flashbacks and nightmares, not revealing the total story until the end of the alternating narrative threads. Francis departs slightly from his social realism style in *Boy Soldier*, while maintaining the Welsh masculine archetypes, which have served him in other narratives. In the disconnected looping style, later used by David Lynch in *Mulholland Drive* (2001), Francis creates a lyrical visual style, which alternates in staccato syncopation between scenes, which are as beautiful as they are dismaying.

The post-imperial construction of masculinities (Gittings 1996: 6-7) in Welsh narrative tradition has recently relied upon two alternating male archetypes: the respectable, rural *gwerin*, i.e., Welsh for 'folk' and the hyper-masculine, rugged coal miner (Morgan 1967: 33-37). The core values of the chapel-going *gwerin* were a strong sense of community support and loyalty, along with a compulsion toward respectability, known as '*parchus*' in Welsh. Political resistance was channelled into religious dissent. The *gwerin* is represented by Branwen and her father, the Chapel minister. Sherlock reaches even further back than the *gwerin* of the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, by linking his characters' names, personalities and destinies to the legend of the Branwen in the medieval stories, *y Mabinogi*. The later archetype created by the coal miner paralleled the lone Cowboy of the American west and Outback Ranger in Australian, or the French Canadian Trapper. This male archetype was based upon a rejection of 'mother' or traditional symbols of nation, in a mostly secular, often Labour-driven or leftist context. This construction of masculinity was built upon what has come to be an unsustainable idea of self-determination, that is, the miner as a proudly self-sufficient Union-card-

carrying member, i.e., 'junior partners in the British Empire'. The façade of the raucous, hymn-singing, hard-drinking Welsh miner was stripped away when the last mine in the Valleys struggled to stay open by going co-opt and defying government dictates, leaving behind the once proud but now bewildered and lingering men of Merthyr Tydfil, on the dole to this day (Adamson 1991: 21; Adamson 1996: 25).

The models of masculinity offered to the Welsh were limited to the mostly stern *gwerin* or macho miners (later emasculated by successive Conservative governments and by globalization), or were either drawn from nineteenth century British heroes, and comic-book stereotypes of the 1940s and 1950s, 'The cool calm English hero is set against the furious and technically trained Johnny Foreigners' (Gittings 1996: 4). Consequently a crisis occurred for non-privileged British men seeking filmic representations of their imagined selves in the late twentieth century. This crisis compounded the culturally hegemonic colonization by Hollywood's male heroes, which became an appealing cinematic alternative for European men seeking a screen character against which to reflect their dreams and identities. Stephen Bayly captured this post-modern milieu for S4C in the nostalgic-for-all-things-Hollywood, *Coming Up Roses* (1986), and Guiseppe Tornatore took this post-modern dilemma a step further in *Nuovo cinema Paradiso* (1989).

Francis first takes the Welshman abroad in *Boy Soldier*, a narrative device used to punctuate his 'Welshness', as distinguished from the 'Englishness' of the British Army, which has brought him to Northern Ireland. But the ghettoized invariably seek out new ghettos: The Welsh soldier is ghettoized in the Royal Welch Regiment. Ceri Sherlock will later use this same device in the film about a gay rent boy from Pontypridd, stranded in Amsterdam, *Dafydd* (1993). Sherlock's Welsh-speaking gay rent boy chooses Amsterdam, a gay ghetto, to begin his *Bildungsroman*. And Welsh-speaking Branwen

alienates her English-speaking Irish mother-in-law by teaching Gaelic in Belfast. Secondly, Francis deconstructs everything this young Welshman understands about himself and his masculine identity as a 'British' soldier. The soldier begins to see his complicity as a mere pawn in a neo-colonial project which requires that he point a rifle at youths from his own class-background, and that he bash the heads of old men who he perceives to be his 'Celtic cousins' and therefore more qualified as kin than his English commanders. The real problem for the innocent soldier begins when he falls in love with a 'mick' Irish girl. She will reject him, once she discovers he's a 'squaddie,' and his awakening begins when he is betrayed by his commanders, his government, his girlfriend, his family, and even by the rote prayers of his childhood cleric, a dour Salvation Army Officer who lectures him on honesty, while he faces death-row. Northern Ireland provides Francis, as the *locus* of political discourse, an energizing canvas, as well as the elements of dramatic conflict, needed to make his film succeed. In this respect, Northern Ireland itself could almost be called an 'unnamed character' in Francis's film. The extreme tension of Northern Irish political conflicts, with the expected hyper-masculine stereotypes demanded by films of military genres, afford Francis the palette he needs within the story's structure to achieve the goals of the plot and to extend his less-than-implicit commentary on Welsh class-conflict and nationalism, while subtly exploring the inverted *quasi-negritude* of long-marginalized men from the Irish, Scottish and Welsh periphery of the Empire, and of the ambivalence of Celtic male identities under the British system of government (Taylor and Thomson 1999: 41).

The poignancy of a 'Thatcher Revolution,' out-of-work, Welsh miner enlisting to participate in what the soldier comes to perceive as a British colonial project, could only succeed in the historical and cultural setting that is Northern Ireland. To be sure, the 'Coming-of-Age' or *Bildungsroman* transformation of his protagonist must for Francis be rooted in an awakening of shared class-consciousness between the Welsh soldier and

the Irishmen at the end of his rifle, as well as the soldier's subsequent betrayal by his sadomasochistic masters. But at the beginning of *Boy Soldier*, the social history, majority religion, and outlook of the Welsh and the Irish are different enough to allow a Welshman to 'buy into the lie' that the Irish Republicans are the enemies of London, and therefore the enemies of *Cymru*. For Francis, economic and therefore political and cultural determinism dictated by class-consciousness is the important unifying experience between the Welsh and the Irish, which brings about the stark awakening in his main character. *Milwr Bychan* means 'little soldier' in Welsh, an ironically oxymoronic pairing of the powerfully masculine warrior with the vulnerability of recently post-pubescent boyhood. The Welsh soldier is busy constructing his own personal masculinity, which is closely tied to his economic viability, both of which are intertwined and narrowly limited to becoming a gun-welding 'British' macho militiaman in order to escape the deprivation of post-industrial Welsh mining valleys. Nothing disturbs this male fantasy for the soldier until he is forced to fire upon his own class and ethnic equivalents. His fantasized self-concept of masculinity is further shattered when he meets and falls for a 'Mick' Irish girl. His innocence prevents his comprehension of the implications of his transgression of this forbidden border.

Francis is creating an oppositional cinema, but this cinema requires the melodramatic conflict and tension of Northern Ireland to drive its narrative. Francis could have had his soldier fall in love with a London girl of Indian-descent back in relatively peaceable South Wales, which would have had certain negative social implications. But Francis needed his hero to choose the extreme 'other' to the privileged British military male, in this case, a female from the despised Irish Catholics. So, in order to 'write the nation' for Wales, Francis prefers narrative hyperbole and so moves the story to Northern Ireland, to produce a synchronized narrative with historical and political coherency (Bhabha 1990: 99-100). This use of narrative hyperbole, in this case, a displaced Welsh soldier who

fires on his 'Celtic cousins' and then is subjected to sadomasochistic humiliation by his English superiors, is similar to Peter Mullan's *The Magdalene Sisters* (2002) wherein the three imprisoned Irish women endure absurd brutality until they succumb or survive the tortuous sojourn with the sisters. The background poignancy of both Francis's, *Boy Soldier* and Mullan's, *The Magdalene Sisters* is that both are based on real, recent occurrences: the nuns did torture Irish girls, and the British Army occupying Northern Ireland did hold both civilians and combatants *incommunicado* without charging them.

Ceri Sherlock is less subtle in his nationalist statements in *Branwen*. First of all, the names of three main characters, Branwen, Peredur, and Mathonwy are taken from widely known Welsh legends contained in the medieval stories called the *Mabinogi*. Branwen and Mathonwy are specific to Welsh mythology and elegiac poetry, while Peredur is a hero introduced in the *Mabinogi*, but who becomes famous in the later French Arthurian Romance cycles as the undaunted hero who comes 'from the north' (Ford 1977: 22). In the *Mabinogi*, Branwen marries an Irish prince to effect an alliance. Traditionally, Branwen is understood to represent a feminine quality of national pride and sovereignty, i.e., because she is a Welsh princess, she has the ability to bestow royalty upon her offspring (Matthews 2002: 45-46). As proof of her royal character she answers the call to divest herself of her individual meaning and personality, and to act for the greater good of her country, by becoming an alien in a foreign court and marrying into the rival kingdom of Ireland (Campbell 1949: 88). So in other words, Branwen betrays what for her was the medieval prescription for feminine constructs, e.g., attached to the hearth and safety (Cunliffe 2001: 231), in exchange the noble destiny of becoming a willing alien in Ireland, and an eventual martyr, dying for principles. Her royal femininity's obligations trump her need for individual construction of an individual femininity. To assert her individuality would betray Branwen's commitment to her nation, and to her children. So by offering herself to the Irish King, she becomes a metaphor for both the enduring nation

and for the 'future'. Effectively she accepts her circumstance without complaint, lamenting only to mystic totem animals (ravens), and so manipulates the Irish aggressor.

This compares with the Sherlock's interpretation of this tale on film: The modern setting of *Branwen* is Northern Ireland. *Branwen* is similar to the medieval *Branwen*, in that she marries an Irishman and leaves her country for love and other reasons, some noble, like participating in Irish nationalism. In one scene her father greets his grandson by this marriage as 'Gwyn, little King of Ireland.' The modern Branwen leaves her country and chooses a foreign husband, in contrast to the medieval Branwen who accepts her Irish husband/king as a necessary evil.¹ But this is completely appropriate for the modern Branwen, who is in Northern Ireland as a result of a destiny she has chosen. It would seem that Sherlock's discourse on national identity is less muddled than Francis's film, which is interestingly intertwined with a national discourse while insisting upon a parallel discourse on class-consciousness. But a thorough reading of Sherlock's film in the context of Welsh history reveals an underscore of class conflict: Branwen and her 'brother' Mathonwy are rebelling against her father, the respectable Welsh chapel minister, whose ecclesiastical tradition embodies the political pragmatism of choosing 'religious dissent over violent political extremism'. Branwen and Mathonwy, cousins-raised-as-siblings, share a father, but both have lost their mothers. Consequently the father is forced to offer his children a masculinity conflicted by ethnic nationalism, i.e., Branwen marries an Irish Catholic man who she later derides for not joining her in Republican subversion, who in turn beats her up to re-assert his masculinity, while Mathonwy selects a British imperial model of masculinity, aligning his 'Welshness' with

¹ The construction of femininities in Welsh society from the Early Modern Period until the early twentieth century did not permit the autonomy of women in many matters. Until the mid-1970s in Wales, women did not work outside the home. See Day, G. (2002). *Making Sense of Wales; A Sociological Perspective*. Cardiff, University of Wales Press. Neither did they travel alone to foreign countries. See Roberts, M. and S. Clarke, Eds. (2000). *Women and Gender in Early Modern Wales*. Cardiff, University of Wales Press. The only notable exceptions were Welsh female school teachers after WWI who took jobs in England.

English politics, a flawed notion of male identity which drives him to incinerate his nephew Gwyn, solely for the crime of having ‘an Irish father’ .

It's in *8-1/2* (1963) where Fellini's autobiographical protagonist sees himself as a boy trapped in a man's body, and every party reminds him of a circus arena. In a seeming homage to Fellini, Sherlock exaggerates the beauty and grotesqueness of everyday faces at Branwen's wedding, a device to comment on the absurdity of respectability (in both Roman Catholic and Protestant) society. Sherlock addresses a Welsh-speaking audience, but his films are multilayered, and there's seems to be an encoded *tongue-in-cheek* comment created by juxtaposing the tight-laced *gwerin* value system with the more esoteric and transcendent morality of the ancient characters of the *Mabinogion*. The brutality in the modern *Branwen* makes an anachronistic and therefore painless sensation. There seems to be an inevitable repetition of passions and blunders in *Branwen*, which are intended to be instructive, not only disturbing and entertaining, in a way similar to the telling of the biblical ‘Cain and Abel’ story. The original *Branwen* tale in the *Mabinogion* collection has a timeless, non-linear narrative, and Sherlock's film, while linear, has a tone, which speaks to the cyclical, resonating either timeless love or endless cycles of violence. Sherlock (and perhaps Francis) again echo Fellini in their use of innocent boys to reveal satiric ironies: Sherlock begins his film with Irish boys brutally murdering a Welsh soldier, and a young boy stares at Mathonwy from his father's chapel altar, just after he torches his nephew; in the same way Francis tosses the boy soldier into the brutal Belfast streets, and then into the *Kafkaesque* distortion of dreams, memories, and prison cells. Both Francis and Sherlock have their Welshmen-as-British-soldiers recalling flashbacks or making reference to other tours-of-duty as a way to reveal their class identity, i.e., working on an oil-rig in Turkey, defending children later massacred in Bosnia, retold in nightmares and shell-shocked daydreams. This is similar to the use of flashbacks in Ailing Walsh's *Song for a Raggy Boy* (2003), where Father Franklin's

loyalty to clerical vows and submission to hierarchy is tested, and his reflective moments of crisis are interspersed with memories of captured Spanish Leftists forced to proclaim fealty to the Virgin Mary or to die by firing squad.

Both Branwen and Mathonwy chose flawed models of identity, both hyper-masculine, both patriarchal, and both violent, and they suffer as a result: Branwen, by losing her son and husband, and Mathonwy, by losing his mind. In a contrasting fashion their father has a symbolic awakening when he is taken to a Catholic mass in Belfast by a Republican subversive, and there sees the icons of the Virgin Mary, whom he also begins to revere. The father admits he has never been to a Catholic church in his long life: that's a 'border' a respectable chapel minister would never think to cross. Sherlock's camera caresses the faces of Northern Irish masses receiving the Eucharist, we hear the 'Our Father' intoned in Gaelic, and the minister at last connects the Irish to his own Welsh flock of historic religious-Dissenters. This visit leads him to turn to the transcendent feminine, represented by his prayers to the 'Mother of God.' Ironically this happens simultaneous to the incineration of his grandson Gwyn, which Sherlock dangles as a tantalizing ambiguity, about exactly what action is appropriate, once one's national identity and human construct are intact.

The contrast between Francis's choice of a Welsh masculinity and Sherlock's nuanced treatment of a modern Welsh femininity is emphatically drop-shadowed against the background of an erstwhile colonial and not yet devolved Northern Ireland, where frustrations that would be more appropriately directed against the post-Imperial English, are instead sub-ducted by the marginalized imperial subordinates, (in this case, Wales and Northern Ireland), and later released as the magnum of misogyny, hyper-masculinity, homophobia, internecine sectarianism, etc. Gittings has established that post-colonial, 'Settler' societies both construct and reinforce with cultural images, plots, and characters,

filmic representations, which reinforce the political hierarchy of former imperious power structures (Gittings 1996: 4-5). The Welsh soldier escapes economic brutalization by the British government by adopting a role, which in turn brutalizes another still subordinate social group, in this case, Catholics in Northern Ireland. This compares to films produced by the Canadian Film Board, which celebrated the French Trapper's exploitation of incoming Chinese settlers, and to the mistreatment of Australian Aboriginal Tribes by 'heroic' Outback loners (O'Regan 1996: 150; Gittings 2002: 131). Francis and Sherlock seem to agree about two things: 1) Welshmen who become British soldiers risk madness; and 2) the Welshman who 'transgresses the border' of forbidden love by falling in love with 'enemies' women' must endure the consequence of imprisonment, whether mental, physical, or both. All of the male characters in both films are flawed: Francis and Sherlock point us to a feminine solution, whether real or transcendent, for it's Branwen who senses political dishonesty in Wales, it's Branwen's Irish mother-in-law who predicts the destruction of Gwyn and Kevin, it's the Welsh soldier's Irish 'Mick' girlfriend who understands the reality of their forbidden love, it's upon the 'Mother of God' that the minister calls to resolve the seemingly intransigent Welsh and Irish conflict.

Sherlock and Francis chose the northern Irish setting for their films in ways almost intuitive and prescient: the Irish Catholics, Irish Protestants, Welsh Nonconformists, secular post-Industrial out-of-work miners, etc. are all defending themselves against an encroachment on their hastily-constructed postcolonial masculinities, which is in fact the politics of a gendered reaction, not a sustainable nationalism, in fact, it's an attempt to render an 'essential' nationalism (Jusdanis 2001: 48-49). Branwen seems to be embracing nationalism, but in fact she is embracing a reinstatement of a patriarchy, albeit by another language, name, or creed. Francis's Welsh soldier in Belfast doesn't acknowledge any existential crisis until the foundations of his masculine identity are undermined, when his sadomasochistic military mates insist he join in with their bullying

of innocent Irish folk, or when he becomes the butt of their abuse. Gender in these Welsh films by Ceri Sherlock and Karl Francis, painted against the powerful motif and 'Wild West' setting of Northern Ireland 'Troubles', exposes the power issues in generally accepted constructions of masculinity, the kind which lead to dysfunctional notions of national identity. In the myths of the ancient Celts (Eluere 1993: 13) 'Avalon' was a place, somewhere north, where battles between star-crossed lovers were retold, and where epic struggles of Irish and Welsh royalty, from which the bard's listeners could extrapolate truths about the realm, were finally resolved. To conclude this chapter on Welshmen who went abroad, and especially those who went to Northern Ireland, to tell their tales, it's apparent that these Welsh film directors deftly exploited a public awareness of Irish 'Troubles,' informed by prime-time television news, which in turn provided a mythic 'Avalon' *loci* for their modern cinematic musings.

Chapter 7: Wales the Cinema of Estrangement (Part I)

Negotiating the filmic ‘female grotesque’ / Negotiating the filmic ‘male grotesque’

In this chapter we introduce a synthesis of several ideas, applied in filmic readings, which seek to further distinguish and describe dimensions of the national cinema of Wales. This chapter continues with a rationale, which attempts to offer defining dimensions of the national cinema of Wales. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter will be to demonstrate, that Welsh filmic product is better understood as a ‘cinema of estrangement.’ The estrangement we speak of here is manifested as systemic disconnections with cultural, social, political, linguistic, historical, and economic standards and audiovisual industrial conventions, which render the national cinema of Wales as a distinctive and definable genre. We further posit that the Welsh national cinema as a genre, might be understood as a ‘genre of disrepute’ (Petley 2004: 5).

When we employ Petley’s coinage in reference to Wales, we mean that it is an audiovisual industrial anomaly, an aberration within the institution of cinema, comparable to the national cinemas of many other small nations. The national cinemas of small nations, by their incongruities and inconsistencies, can be conceived as to engender not only a field of production that has close contextual ties to the non-hegemonic Hollywood. The films of these small nations are also understood as ‘independent cinemas’, e.g., those embodying industrial organizations and filmic representations of the both economically-marginalized and the culturally foreign, ‘estranged’ or despised, i.e., the ‘out-of-style’, ‘clunky’ and the ‘sub-standard’, the disenfranchised, the horrific, the absurd, the eccentric, and the off-beat. They also exist in various, industrial collections of production schemes, which influence and inform, (and as we shall see, even sabotage and mutilate),

and which predispose these national cinemas to be idiosyncratic and quirky, both in content, form and process.

In this chapter, we will begin to imply that, in the case of Wales the ‘small nation’, what is dismissed as culturally obsolete, banal, or embarrassingly not ‘up to American or ‘British’, i.e., London-centric English, production standards,’ might actually be a hidden source of national identification or of national filmic pride. Another compelling concept within this chapter is the way in which ‘estrangement’ is differentiated, as aspects of either a female or male ‘grotesque’. Wales is a ‘small nation’, and small nations, might be termed as a ‘female grotesque’ among stronger, ‘dominant male’ nations / dominant cultures, in that small nations are frequently cultural and political victims of other, more aggressive and more dominant cultures. At the beginning of this study, we traced the repetition of historic ‘moments’, when Wales as a nation, was forced to negotiate with other dominant cultures (Morgan 1981: 61; Davies 1990: 5-6; Morgan 2001: 108). In our literature review, we explored some of the typical ways in which ‘*othered*’ nations (similar to the case of Wales), cope with the experience of being postcolonial and/or small nations. We discussed the theories of Albert Moran, who specifically applies this thinking, to a general discussion of comparative and trans-national Film Policy studies (Moran 1996). Moran cites various phenomena, which often seem to typify the audiovisual industrial development of nations (with the possible single exception of India’s ‘Bollywood’), as they respond and react to the hegemonic influences of Hollywood. In this respect, regarding the national cinema of the United States, we find it useful to imagine Hollywood, as an exaggerated and grotesquely over-powering imperial cultural project, which forms a ‘male’ apex, of a cinematic patriarchal hierarchy, which ruthlessly ‘others’ all other national cinemas, as disreputable, colonized, cultural ‘females’, to a dominant cultural ‘male’ global monopoly, that of American cinema.

Consequently, Welsh cinema is a 'disreputable' genre because, while its national cinema, (as a genre consumed by the hegemony-driven valuating American audience) qualifies as an 'independent cinema', as a genre it also possesses the cultural and commercial enigma of 'foreign-ness.' This gendered 'othering' by America of all other national cinemas, creates a recurring crisis of national identity. Each 'othered' nation attempts to negotiate with the intrusions and pervasive influences of the American hegemony, with schemes designed to protect the debatable integrity of their cultural integrity, that is, of their national audiovisual industries and (any surviving vestige) of their distinctively indigenous, filmic content. Our usage of 'other' here, becomes a metaphoric expansion of relevant usages within post-colonial theory, extrapolated to the conceptual discourse of 'cultural colonialism' (McLeod 2000: 1), in the same way that this is frequently done, in general critical approaches to discussions of trans-national, audiovisual industrial realities, within mass communication theory (Baran and Davis 2000). This metaphoric expansion of the national cinema as an 'othered' female, complements the history and analysis of national cinemas, as they relate to Hollywood, in that they might be best described as 'messy and complicated' (Russo 1994: 21) Russo defines the female grotesque as having the 'imperfect' or non-classical statue of the male god, that is, being the fragile, female, who by definition is prepossessed with blood, infancy, vomit, lactation, and other 'messy' female activities, which would be bothersome to the patriarch and his agents. In this respect, we posit Hollywood as the male patriarch, who gets to set the rules and control 'the game', while national cinemas are the 'othered' female, who get to 'pick up the pieces' of history and childbearing, i.e., fostering young directors who immediately join the 'brain-drain to London or Hollywood, once they no longer need the figurative 'Mam'.

Comparisons to the culturally hegemonic:

To complicate this ‘othering’ even further, small nations might be particularly susceptible to a crisis of self-confidence, and to a resulting ‘culture of nay-saying’, which undermines and denies (the critical recognition, production and marketing of) many otherwise successful, filmic expressions of national identity. Consequently, the process of national cinema analysis could be confused or discouraged at certain points, by comparisons to the standards of the ever transgressing, culturally hegemonic. This chapter imagines the crisis of self-confidence for national cinemas, as an indication of an existential reality of national cinemas (as cultural and political expressions of national identity) crises that we will call cultural, historical, political, linguistic and economic forms of ‘estrangement’ for these cinemas. The previous chapter and the next two chapters, utilize non-standard and specially inflected senses of the term ‘grotesque.’ These senses of the term are explained and argued and supported with examples of each sense given, as they relate to specific filmic product. In general, these senses of the term ‘grotesque’ rely upon the lengthy aesthetic framework of the grotesque described in the book by Mikhail Bakhtin called *Rabelais and His World* (Bakhtin 1941: 1). Bakhtin specifically addressed the idea of a literature of the ‘carnavalesque’, which we will employ as an aspect of a defining dimension of Welsh nation cinema, in that it embodies a ‘cinema of the grotesque.’ Bakhtin also introduced the term and concept of the ‘grotesque body’, which becomes important in this chapter, as we purposely conflate post-colonial, Feminist and Queer Theoretical approaches, which blend the feminine with the territorial, that is, which imagine the female body as a metaphorical ‘landscape’.

A Welsh ‘cinema of the grotesque’:

These chapters also rely upon the conceptual ideas of Victor Hugo, as he positioned the grotesque, as one side of an aesthetic dichotomy, opposing beauty and the sublime. It’s appropriate that Hugo offered this essay as the ‘Introduction’ to his play ‘*Cromwell*’, wherein Hugo introduced us (within the anachronistic terms of Romanticism), to at least

two senses of the grotesque, the religious or bureaucratic grotesque and the psychological grotesque. These chapters also consider the modern (nineteenth to twentieth centuries') discussions of the grotesque, which focus upon the writing and ideas of Sherwood Anderson, Geoffrey Harpham, Mary Russo, Mike Presdee, and others. This study expands upon the documented senses of the 'grotesque', as we deconstruct, revise, and seek to 'speculatively' apply our synthesis of approaches (which privilege these various senses of the grotesque) to both the Welsh filmic field of production, and its related content and audiovisual industrial production schemes and informing characteristics. For example, we ask whether a collection of filmic products might require a scholarly reading, through the 'prism' of a 'cinema of the grotesque', even if the content of the field is not necessarily 'grotesque', but also, if other interpretative metadata that the audience receives, can be considered a grotesquery. For example, within national cinema analysis, Star Theory or *Auteur* Theory are often expanded, to demonstrate how, the exaggerated life or reputation of a star, director or producer influences the way in which his or her films are received (Elsaesser 1989: 104).

An 'Ordinary World' disturbed or distorted:

These three chapters, which explore various senses of the grotesque, also rely upon the key concepts of filmic storytelling, as originating with the scholarship of Joseph Campbell, which have come to be called in film studies, the 'mythic structure' of film. We introduced these concepts in our literature review, and within these chapters attempt to demonstrate, how the Campbell school of film studies 'mythographers' can enhance our understanding of 'estrangement.' In summary of this approach, the 'mythic structure' of film pivots on the idea, that the filmic protagonist begins in an 'Ordinary World', becomes 'estranged' from this ordinariness (for purposes of the storyline), and then after a transformative ordeal, returns as a 'hero' to the 'Ordinary World', so that the denouement is conceived, as a reversal of or reconciliation to the 'estrangement'. This

study uses this 'mythic structure' approach, synthesizing it with established aesthetic and national film analysis approaches. What's novel about our approach is the specific way in which we apply it to the aesthetic content and production characteristics of Welsh filmic product, within the informing context of post-colonial theory and cultural policy studies.

Defining 'Estrangement':

This chapter seeks to situate various conceptualizations of 'estrangement' as a dimension of the national cinema of Wales. There is a presupposition within the formation of 'estrangement', based upon our earlier discussions of key concepts of national cinema analysis, and synthesized here with post-colonial, Queer and Feminist theory, which assumes that the aspect of 'estrangement' is always a filmic 'moment', about individual and national identity crises. Martin McLoone isolates this problem, as a point of 'national' crisis, when he requires a 'critical regionalism' from national cinemas. McLoone's idea of 'critical regionalism' emerges from a discussion of what constitutes an Irish film, and which films, however set in Irish locations or motifs they might be, might not be representative of the national cinema of Ireland, if they are culturally and spiritually 'unsatisfying.' In our literature review we introduced Seton-Watson's article about '*Unsatisfied Nationalisms*', which seems to underscore McLoone's point (Seton-Watson 1971: 1). This idea of 'unsatisfied nationalisms' coupled with McLoone's 'critical regionalism', underscores the irony of our point, that the crisis of national identity, which creates the contextual settings of national filmic products (from which also, often arises the best of indigenous, dramatic tensions) frequently blinds or distracts the domestic audience from the existential reality of their national filmic output. In the case of Wales the 'small nation' this is best summarized in a symposium in the film journal, which asked the question 'Is there a national film industry for Wales?' in the magazine '*POV*²' (Court 2004: 22).

Representations of ‘small nations’:

We have been referring to Wales as a ‘small nation.’ Anglo-Catalan anthropologist Josep Llobera tells us how small nations are typically and frequently distracted from the markers of national identity in their cultural representation (in our case the filmic product), by the banality of these markers (Llobera 2004: 5-7). As a result, O’Regan and Gittings have shown us with numerous examples (from the corresponding cinemas of Australia and Canada, respectively) how small nations through their national cinemas are frequently seeking a negotiation with the hegemonic, which somehow serves to ‘level the playing field,’ that is to re-balance the imbalance perpetuated by the dominant culture (O’Regan 1996; Gittings 2002). In industrial terms, projects to reverse this imbalance are obvious and transparent, taking the form (in most European cinemas) of subsidies, lottery funds, and development, production and distribution grants and occasionally (as in the unique case of France) with government-enforced advantages and tariffs (Hayward 1993: 64). In cultural terms, the project of negotiating with the dominant culture is always complicated and confusing. The agents and players of ‘national cinemas’ frequently get caught in cyclical arguments, which are reactionary to the hegemonic, either dismissing their national distinctiveness or actively opposing it. (Ultimately, this cyclical turmoil of the non-dominant culture probably benefits the industrial objectives of the hegemonic). Blandford frequently cites this culture of opposition to traditional national icons, in Welsh filmic product of the last decade, and McLoone and Petrie cite this often, in Irish and Scottish cinema, respectively (Petrie 1992; Hill, McLoone et al. 1994; Blandford 2000; Hjort and MacKenzie 2000).

Locating the ‘grotesque’ at the point of negotiation:

We mentioned how in the last paragraph, how small nations make various negotiations with the hegemonic, in order to ‘level the playing field.’ Bakhtin builds the entire

premise of his book's aesthetic argument, upon an understanding of the metaphorical 'carnival', as a cultural and political event, which seeks to 'level the playing field', to the benefit of the suppressed, marginalized and disenfranchised (Bakhtin 1941: 12). In this chapter, we combine this creation of an oppositional Welsh cinema, with examples of a cinematic 'carnavalesque', an industrial and contextual 'carnival', which seeks to 'level the playing field', with contemporary filmic moments of intentional (and unconscious) cultural and historical anarchy and systemic excess. We will use specific examples of contextual 'females grotesques' in Welsh filmic product to demonstrate how Welsh film not only embodies a prevailing dimension of the 'female grotesque' in its filmic product, but also manifests an audiovisual industrial 'female grotesque'. Similarly, we have asserted that the national cinema of Wales as the cultural and industrial project of a small nation makes this cinema a 'genre of disrepute.'

At home in a cinematic ghetto, the national cinema:

'Genre of disrepute' in a clever combination of contrasting terms, by British film scholar Julian Petley, of culturally abject or questionable, generic film categories, with the Victorian criminalization of 'Houses of Ill-Repute', which usually referred to brothels or to outrageous homosexual cabarets, and later (during the U.S. Period of Alcohol Prohibition) to back-door, speak-easy, boot-legging, jazz-playing beer-gardens and to assorted Shanghai-style, quayside opium dens (Petley 2004: 1-2). Petley's title is more than hyperbole: In this chapter we will begin to imply, how being a 'national cinema' (excluding Hollywood and Bollywood), being a 'genre of disrepute', and being a field of production 'female grotesque' and industrial 'female grotesque' are all mutually causal and mutually informing equivalents. The primary point of these three chapters is to point the reader toward, what we mean when we call Welsh national cinema, a 'cinema of estrangement'. We will select examples of film readings, which demonstrate that the 'estrangement' occurs simultaneously as:

- 1) The estrangement from representation — Welsh audiences lack self-determination — regarding the production, availability and consumption of filmic product, which reflects their unique national experience. We have already shown, in a political and industrial sense, in the chapter ‘Wales the Outsider’, how this occurs. We will expand this idea from the industrial to the contextual, in this chapter.
- 2) The estrangement from the nation — that is, Welsh audiences are fragmented, — by race, creed, language, class, generation and geography. In this sense, Wales is arguably colonial or post-colonial, in that its identity and culture have been ‘divided and conquered’ by numerous intrusions of dominant cultures. Consequently, that which is recognizable as ‘national’ to one fragment of the Welsh domestic audience is foreign to other fragments of the Welsh domestic cultural marketplace.
- 3) The estrangement from history — Welsh audiences have complimentary and contradictory identities, which sometimes privilege and other times ignore, or which display no knowledge of, Wales’s lengthy and complicated historical and cultural history.
- 4) The estrangement from the culturally and historically banal — Welsh audiences make automatic and conditioned assumptions — which overlook the presence and significance of markers and signifiers, which external audiences, or later domestic audiences might differently interpret.
- 5) The estrangement from self — as the Welsh people have sought to negotiate with changing and conflicting political and cultural arrangements, this has informed and influenced, individual and collective constructions of self, which we loosely divide into masculinities and femininities. These constructions are often challenged, and this becomes a point of crisis, out of which rises dramatic conflict, which is represented (at times, implicitly) in Welsh filmic

product. This gendered marginalization results in filmic representations, which are usefully understood sometimes as the literally monstrous, eccentric, absurd, chaotic, criminal, magical, uncanny, bureaucratic, fanatical, insidiously desolate, bleak or blasé, but more often metaphorically as the multitudinously nuanced negotiations of the ‘female grotesque’ with the culturally monopolizing, ‘male’ dominant culture.

Dimensions of Welsh national cinema:

In the previous two chapters, we considered ‘dimensions’ of Welsh national cinema. The first dimension was industrial, that is, the extent to which the audiovisual industry in Wales negotiates with, and is informed by, and informs, the larger trans-national audiovisual industry, and how this impacts upon the production, content, and style of Welsh filmic product. That first ‘dimensional’ chapter, focused upon the culturally ‘heroic’ position of individuals who escaped Wales, went abroad, gained financial contacts and savvy, and then returned to Wales as ‘Conquering Heroes.’ These heroic figures had, metaphorically, ‘slain the dragons’ of historic, audiovisual industrial inertia, which typifies small nations, including Wales.¹ This ‘heroic’ accomplishment (which usually occurs in the faraway land called Hollywood), makes the once natural and ordinary, Welsh native born individual, ‘strange,’ even ‘magical,’ and importantly, ‘alien,’ to his or her fellow countrymen. And so in the first ‘dimensional’ chapter, which referred to displaced and estranged ‘Outsiders’, we were asserting, that the Welsh audiovisual industry, is a ‘grotesqueness’ in itself, that is, a daunting and desolate industrial landscape, as it were, where often moribund sycophants, grandiose ‘giants’, bureaucratic ‘monsters’ and exotically ‘alien’, Quixotic ‘freaks’ prevail. This is in keeping with Elsaesser’s discussion of European ‘auteurs’, who trade on their reputation

¹ This ‘inertia’ has been established by the scholarship of Steve Blandford, Philip Mitchell, David Barlow, and others. Specific examples of the types of inertia include the enormous struggles to produce a low-budget film, as detailed by Fizzy Oppé in her final chapter to Blandford’s book, *Wales on Screen*, pgs. 168-179.

for eccentricity or for mischief (Elsaesser 2005: 47-48) In that first dimensional chapter, we rooted these odd particulars about the Welsh audiovisual landscape, in the historical, socio-political milieu of 'Outsiders', a set of cultural and industrial conditions, which seem to haunt many colonial and post-colonial societies.

An existential rationale for our aesthetic groupings:

In the second 'dimensional' chapter, we established a critical foundation for the conceptualization of a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque'. We explored a variety of competing and sometimes inherently contradictory applications of the aesthetic category of the grotesque, specifically as it could relate to the national cinema of Wales. We anticipate that there will be qualified reactions (if not objections) to such a seemingly broad and vague categorization as a 'cinema of the grotesque' as it applies to the lengthy and complicated history and culture of Wales. But in this chapter we will seek to give evidence of this dimensional aspect of Welsh national cinema, and to offer several existential rationales for this categorization. In order to accomplish this we must first explore the importance of attributes, which frequently signal an 'estrangement', including the nationally 'heroic', 'alien', 'magical' and 'strange': To the external audiences it might seem ironic that the small Welsh nation, which voluntarily chooses as its national symbol a mythical red reptile, would ever question being typified as a landscape where the grotesque could flourish. This is, after all, the modern and politely benign, European small nation, where place-names of quirky stone chapels still recall Mesolithic, Roman, Biblical, Byzantine or (even Trojan/Babylonian) utopias, and children are regularly named after shape-shifting warriors, wolves, wizards, bards, mermaids, and assorted, headless princes and martyrs. The same might be true, for any impulse toward any national culture of 'denial' in other 'Celtic periphery' nations, where a cliché kale yard, kilt or thorny thistle symbolizes Scotland, or where a Shamanic shamrock or the hexed harp or St. Patrick's serpentine obsessions are iconic to Ireland. Let us quickly define one

of the questions, which this current chapter's closer analysis of Welsh films will attempt to answer, 'Does a historic familiarity with icons and markers, symbols which would appear exaggerated and grotesque to an external audience, predispose a domestic audience to 'read' or reject these makers and signifiers in ways which blind the domestic audience to the 'truth' of their own filmic representations of national identity?' In other words, can the grotesque become so every-day, ordinary and commonplace, that it thrusts the culture into some myopic distortion, denying any substantive self-reflection and self-analysis?

Decoding the habitually grotesque Dragon:

There are many film studies and cultural studies discourses which explore the occurrence of an indigenous, cultural 'myopia' toward the banal, and toward the historically or iconic banal. This manifests itself in conversations about contemporary Welsh filmic product, notably in the writing of Steve Blandford, who has chronicled the last decade of Welsh audiovisual industrial self-analysis. While some Welsh film scholars have deconstructed the historic Welsh cinema, e.g., the work of Dr. Gwenno Ffrancon, Blandford is among a few who have led the public 'self-analysis' of a contemporary Welsh audiovisual industry, which, as a colonial or post-colonial or even post-national cinema, must constantly make the existential query, 'Do we exist?' Wales is not unique in this respect. It seems the entire British film industry makes this perennial demand, as Julian Petley has for example, asked again in his recent article, '*Is there a British film industry?*' (Petley 2004: 1) Similar to this, Scandinavian film scholar Mette Hjort discusses what puts the 'national' in Danish national cinema, and cites this condition of cultural 'myopia', where domestic audiences unconsciously dismiss many obvious national markers, because they are wrapped in the shroud of official or popular banality. So as she applies theories of the national to cinema, Mette Hjort, in her essay, *Themes of the Nation*, refers to this universal 'knee-slap' reaction of nations:

Banal nationalism involves the ongoing circulation and utilization of symbols of the nation, but in a manner, which is so deeply ingrained and habitual, as to involve no focal awareness (Hjort and MacKenzie 2000: 108).

Hjort discusses the phenomenon of 'banal about-ness' in national filmic representations, which we have referred to in this study as a chronic and automatic, cultural 'myopia,' in the case of Wales. In most cases, a national 'numbness' toward the peculiarity of its icons sets in, according to Hjort. This might be especially likely in the case of Wales, when television drama representations of the every day 'ennui' of extreme, Valley's housing estates' deprivation, mixes with the over-worked historical clichés, in a newly-devolved but culturally conflicted, economically dissatisfied and politically fatigued nation. In other words, the shockingly 'real' of 'social realism' could produce in some audiences, domestic yawns. Consequently, it could be to the surprise of some domestic scholars, that we emphasize a dimension of the 'grotesque', in what many have dismissed as matter-of-fact, irrelevant or hackneyed representations of cultural product.

The banal 'about-ness' of Welshness:

By returning to some of these now-dismissed filmic products, this study hopes to unravel the intricate riddles of Welsh-ness that wrap the filmic product of this small and 'enduring nation' (White 2000: 5). So in the context of our earlier chapters and in the context of a cultural tendency to dismiss the 'banal about-ness' we are compelled to introduce the narratological and cultural importance, of the Welsh filmic phenomena of heroes, freaks, monsters and other 'alien creatures.' In the case of the native-born 'Outsiders' who went abroad and returned as heroes these figures became effective, externalized 'aliens.' It is the status and function of the important, externalized 'alien', which allowed these heroic figures to sufficiently overcome the systemic, financial, and cultural obstacles to producing filmic product in this historically and politically contested, small nation.

External perceptions of a systemic ‘grotesque’:

What we are referring to here is the industrial/cultural aspect of a systemic ‘grotesque.’ The quality of geographical and cultural estrangement became for these Welsh ‘Outsider’ heroes a badge of distinction and a part of their character’s persona and intrigue (and eventually of their potential marketability). Both the legendary importance of these cultural heroes and of their Welsh filmic product rests upon their mythologized ‘alien status’ and their perceived, national heroics. For example, it can be argued that without the ‘star-packaging’ of Burton, Taylor, and O’Toole, Dylan Thomas’s *Under Milk Wood* (1972) script might have languished or never been made. Clearly, the industrial probability of *Under Milk Wood* getting re-made for cinema (it was produced for television in 1957) is enhanced by the presence of the aging stars, but Burton is too old and Taylor is too big a star, i.e., she overwhelms the role, in a way which might easily be seen as an industrial grotesque. Burton’s character is the only one in the village whom Dylan Thomas probably did not intend as a grotesque, and by Hollywood standards, Burton is laughably overweight and neither fit nor youthful enough to drive the sexual attractiveness of his male leading role. But the film was made because Burton was such a ‘giant’ and legendary Welsh ‘Outsider’ and so we have not only grotesque content, but also, grotesque casting. Analogously, American culture makes banal the so-called ‘Tall Tales’ of its mythic giants, including the Minnesota Lumberjack, Paul Bunyan. Americans may chuckle at giant Paul’s big blue ox, Babe, standing ‘42 axe handles high,’ rendering this icon, not as a metaphor of their exaggerated symbols of national self construction, but as a mere ‘fairy tale’ suitable for children. Americans, like all other nations, are unconsciously estranged from the legendary exaggerations, which, ironically, seem to explain them to the rest of the world. There’s a contemporary myopia which obscures the vision of the Yankee national culture, so they cannot fully appreciate, for example, the fictional absurdity of a formerly bankrupt, New Jersey rental sales agent,

steeped in suburban banality, middle-class mediocrity and failure, emerging as the larger-than-life, Donald Trump. But when a modern day ‘Horatio Alger’ escapes the black inner city ghetto on a basketball scholarship, the usually smug American populace wanes teary-eyed, enraptured by the ‘rag-to-riches’ *mythos*, which still captures the imagination of the entire United States, if not the world.

Aliens among us — grotesqueness of the Welsh ‘Outsider’:

These individuals (about whom we say gained the status of ‘Outsider’) were ordinary natives who were made ‘strange’ to the culture, and by their success, acquired ‘alien’ characteristics, which were their personal *rite de passage* toward becoming national heroes. These ‘Outsider’ heroes are gigantic and strange — they travel to exotic places, consort with foreign monsters, acquire special, ‘secret’ or ‘magical’ knowledge, and return to their homeland as audiovisual industrial ‘warrior-wizards’. And so we accept that returning ‘Outsiders’ have a general ‘grotesqueness’ as they embody all the qualities simultaneously of ‘heroic’, ‘alien’, ‘magical’ and ‘strange’. Hags, witches, giants and dwarfs are obviously grotesque, and the inflated Outsider’s persona plays well, on the broadcast and cinematic ‘billboards’ of the national psyche, so to speak. Other subtle manifestations of the ‘alien’ or ‘magical’ or ‘strange’ may slip under the ‘radar’ of domestic consciousness. In the case of Wales, the national ‘myopia’ occurs when it does not recognize just how peculiar and bizarre, external audiences might perceive Welsh filmic product to be. For example, we have discussed in our literature review, the historic suppression of political violence in Welsh history, which most often preferred as a nation, an alternative tradition of non-violent, religious dissent. As an ethnicity that found political solace in the spiritual and religious, Wales might be compared historically to the American Negro slaves, who preferred a religiously mythical ‘Zion’ to a liberated and desegregated Memphis or Little Rock. It wasn’t until Martin Luther King, Jr. blended religious fervour with political pragmatism, that the Afro-American churches’ ‘Liberation

by Jesus', 'national narrative' spell over blacks, was broken. Also possibly, the construct of the Welsh nationalistic 'rebel' as a romantic 'bardic' figure is normalized, and the absence of a Welsh rebel-warrior, replaced for example, by a Welsh rebel-poet is normalized to the banal, in the Welsh audiences' collective consciousness.

Centuries of banality — the enigma of the Eisteddfod:

As our first example of how the gloriously bizarre and idiosyncratic becomes banal in Wales, let us look at the National *Eisteddfod* and regional *Eisteddfodau*. (Later on, we will metaphorically compare the mythical importance and function of the institutions of Hollywood's Academy Awards Night, the trans-national, heavenly 'Avalon' for global 'citizens' of 'Tinsel Town', the Nashville Grand Ole Opry, and the Welsh *Eisteddfodau*). Many recent Welsh films could not have dramatic tension without the background plot or significance of this recurring and uniquely Welsh cultural event, as seen in *Gaucho* (1985), *Hedd Wyn* (1992), *Porc Pei* (1998), *Dal: Yma/Nawr* (2004). The Welsh cultural institution of *Eisteddfodau* have ancient roots in Iron Age Celtic and Brythonic / Early Roman Insular British cultures and religions (Ross 1996) pg. 63-64 and (Chatwick and Cunliffe 1997) pg. 89. The modern *Eisteddfodau*, was one part historical revival, and one part cultural invention, a historic forgery, of the enigmatic Welsh literary and political hero, who went by the bardic name of 'Iolo Morganwg'. 'Unitarian-Quaker' Morganwg, an opiate-addicted forger of extant literature, epitomized the eccentric, auto-didactic Welsh folk hero of the eighteenth century, what we have referred to in our literature review as the 'tavern *gwerin*.' Morganwg invented an annually recurring, elaborate, itinerant national 'carnival', which subverted the official British standards of beauty, performance and literature, while privileging indigenous Welsh language and culture. Remarkably, the *Eisteddfodau* evolved, to be an event which brought together the opposing Welsh cultural extremities of the Gothic puritan chapel folk, or '*gwerin*' (a religious grotesque) and the psychological / social grotesque of alcoholic, drug-addicted

poets (town drunks) and musicians, and assorted, linguistic fops, with Welsh nationalistic firebrands.

***Tangnefedd y'r Eisteddfodau* — Peace of the Eisteddfods:**

The ethic of the *Eisteddfodau*, demanded a temporary truce, between the church and public house, and was led by coalitions of the motley and the respectable, of sober teetotallers and the debauched. (The ‘peace’ of the *Eisteddfod* might be compared to the odd but natural alliance between Victor Hugo’s ‘Bohemians’ and Parisian ‘Dandies’). Stranger still, the *Eisteddfodau*, which politically and culturally had more in common with the artistic, bawdy and libertarian excesses of the post-Republican British ‘Restoration of Charles II’ is even unto this day, carried on by the historical and cultural (that is, puritan, small ‘P’) descendants of Puritanical Oliver Cromwell, an original religious ‘grotesque’, according to Hugo. For example, a unifying characteristic of all puritans, whether Puritans or Separatists (i.e., Welsh Nonconformists), was their philosophical suspicion, that Roman and Anglican Christianity had been made less ‘pure’ by centuries of association with paganism. Indeed, the stark, bureaucratic and linguistic / social grotesques of the Protestant Gothic Chapel period co-exist (in the Welsh, national imaginary) with the flowery, Neo-pagan idiosyncrasies of the quasi-Druidic *Eisteddfodau*, a bizarre marriage of ascetic Protestant Christianity, which deplores Roman Catholic ‘Popery’ or even Anglican and pantheistic statuary and icons while exalting architectural and theological plain-ness, somehow blended seamlessly, with an animated, ceremonial, animistic revival of a multilayered, neo-Celtic Revival.

The bizarre banality of deacons dressed as Druids:

If the Welsh *Eisteddfodau* were linguistic and political subversions, then the truce between chapel and pub within the *Eisteddfodau*, along with the truce between the ascetic and the debauched, were both subversions within subversion. Any later filmic depictions,

of the *Eisteddfod*'s subverted-within-the-subverted as 'natural' is a curious twist, which is at least a historical and cultural perversion. For an external audience to grasp these inherent contradictions it might be useful to borrow Carl Jung's idea of the actualized ego (in this case, of the morally control-obsessed, Welsh chapel deacons) as being ever pitted in an internalized struggle against their organic and passionate, 'Shadow Self' (in this case, of the relaxed political license and mystical ritualism of the *Eisteddfodau*). Bizarrely until this day, all differences between Welsh speakers are mostly forgotten for the transcendent values of celebrating a quasi-Druidic past, of celebrating the local linguistic enigma and of celebrating a curious but enduring, indigenous culture of performance. When questioned about the inherent contradictions within and between these historic icons, Welsh domestic audiences are either disinterested, impatient or nonchalant, about the '*Gorsedd*', that is, a cult of barefooted men in togas, capes and sandals, known by 'magical' bardic names, who compete by quoting lyrically labyrinthine poems under colourful tents, which sprout in itinerant Medieval 'carnivals' each summer around the Welsh countryside (graphically documented in Evans's *Dal: Yma/Nawr*).

Outside the confines of the *Eisteddfodau* the rural grotesque continues, overlooked as banalities in modern settings, (about which these contemporary Welsh domestic audiences are equally disinterested) while ubiquitous crumbling Quaker, Baptist and Congregational stone chapels are regularly converted to discount carpet outlets or college housing. Depictions of the *Eisteddfodau*, as well as chapels-cum-storefronts, or the boarded-up-chapel-next-to-a-garish-neon-video-rental-store, which are repeatedly flashed as signifiers in the film *Coming Up Roses* (1986), barely gets a blink from Welsh audiences. This leads us to ask, does the modern Welsh sensibility make banal their indigenous cultural icons, with the *Eisteddfodau* as our first example? An *Eisteddfod* is after all, a historic and contemporary 'national carnival', which seeks to subvert. 'i.e.,

level the playing field' (by means of the linguistic and religious grotesques) of officially English extra-national and British imperial standards of beauty, using this scheduled moment of license (otherwise straight-laced, Welsh-speaking families pack into caravans like Romany families and sing and dance in the heathery countryside for ten days) to effect an indigenous, uniquely Welsh, cultural replacement. Even some non-Welsh-speaking Welshmen take pride in this iconic event, even if they mock its quirkier and clunky attributes (Hannan 1999: 19). In our film readings, we will consider if we are justified, in attaching significance to the banality of the *Eisteddfodau*, in the Welsh collective consciousness.

Mutilated filmic females symbolize transgressed territories and liminal landscapes:

In this chapter, we will begin to closely read specific Welsh filmic product, which frequently reveals the presence of a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque.' We are suggesting that an informed application of all the various senses of the 'grotesque', which we have mentioned above reveals a multi-layered 'cinema of the grotesque' within the national cinema of Wales. In the previous chapter we built upon critical approaches drawn from our literature review, wherein we discussed the key concepts of 'mythic structure' within filmic storytelling, as expostulated in the works of Joseph Campbell, Christopher Vogler, Melody Jackson and Stuart Voytilla (Vogler 1999; Voytilla and Vogler 1999; Campbell 2002; Jackson 2003). All of these scholars rely upon a rendering of the 'narrative landscape', which begins with an 'Ordinary World' which is made strange in the course of the dramatic trajectory, and is transformed into something called the 'Special World'; or in the case of traditional Welsh and Irish storytelling, the 'Otherworld' (Voytilla and Vogler 1999: 8). We also introduced in our literature review, concepts of Feminist, Queer and post-colonial theory, which imagine the 'territorial' as a feminine landscape, which is transgressed by various agents of cultural hegemony (Russo 1994: 15; Gittings 1996: 12; Gittings 2002: 39-41) During our literature review we situated the literal and

imagined 'territory' or 'landscape' of Wales within an historical and cultural milieu, which we have described as mutated, altered, compromised, marginalized or otherwise intruded upon by forces of dominant culture. These intrusions have rendered the 'Ordinary World' of the imagined and filmic Wales, variously, an anachronistic and audiovisual industrial anomaly wherein the disturbed or negotiated 'landscapes' of Wales, (as described anecdotally throughout the collections of essays, *Postcolonial Wales*) consistently makes normal and natural the extremities of Welsh historical, social, political and economic negotiations, with the current and residual political/cultural hegemonies (Aaron and Williams 2005).

Reception determines whether 'Ordinary World' is perceived as disturbed:

We have just introduced the enigmatic Welsh *Eisteddfodau* as an example of an 'Ordinary World' which is already culturally banal and unique to Welsh culture, while simultaneously peculiar or not 'ordinary' to external audiences. Gwyn Alf Williams, Raymond Williams, Dai Smith, and many others have explained how Wales, as a real and imagined 'landscape' is politically debatable and culturally enigmatic, at the very least (Williams 1985: 18; Smith 1999: 10; Williams 2003: 10) Within the writings of Gittings and Russo we see that the imagined 'landscape' of the 'Ordinary World' is never 'ordinary' or undisturbed, in the transgressed and mutated cosmologies of the colonial, post-colonial, Industrial, post-Industrial, post-modern, and so on. Consequently, the ontology of the 'Ordinary World' introduced in filmic Wales often displays a passive banality and routine ordinariness. What one audience might perceive and read as serially enigmatic and odd, another audience reads as blasé, especially domestic Welsh audiences, as they consume representations of their own, national history and modern identities.

As we have said, the interpretive concept of the 'mythic structure' of films, relies upon a narrative which begins with an 'ordinary.' In this chapter, we are asking whether the

colonial or post-colonial nation can ever begin with true 'ordinariness'. To answer this, we explore whether the 'ordinariness' of Wales and similar small nations (which are always being mutated by past and former 'transgressions' of the dominant culture) predisposes the majority of filmic depictions of Wales to falling within various categories of the grotesque, both as fields of production and as products of a 'disreputable' audiovisual industry. Our exploration of this question builds upon the conclusions of various Welsh literary scholars, who have frequently identified the 'ordinary' settings of Welsh writers, ranging from Glyn Jones, to Caradoc Evans to Dylan Thomas, as inherently 'noirish' depictions of 'ordinary' Welsh life, which implied or masked the grotesque, including the analyses of Leslie Norris, Meic Stephens, Robert Minhinnick, and Tony Brown (Stephens 1998: 12) (Welsh literary scholarship is also relevant to our analysis, since a majority of Welsh filmic product is derived or adapted from Welsh literary sources).

At the heart of the carnivalesque is estrangement:

At the end of the last chapter, which established a critical foundation for the conceptualization of the cinema of the grotesque, we stated that 'with specific readings of Welsh films we will show that in Welsh adapted literature and film, the *'carnivalesque'* is often the locus of collision and transgression between cliché and opposing binaries, i.e., rural/urban, rich/poor, Welsh/English, and others, depicted dramatically at, for example, the village pump or *'ffynnon'* (fountain or well), where the weekly market is held -- the literal and figurative marketplaces of extreme ideas, crashing together, head-on. Indeed, we understand the *'carnivalesque'* as a cultural and political metaphor, which is poignant to informed readings of Welsh filmic product. The 'carnival', is both an actual event, as well as it is a conceptual 'moment', wherein it's agreed that 'truth' cannot be found through the avenues of official narration, and so the conventions of official narration are intentionally routed, sabotaged, or incinerated, in favour of Bakhtin's 'carnivalesque' or

of Foucault's 'seasons of indulgence' (Foucault 2001: 3). These 'seasons of indulgence' often refute the accusation, that they have any claim or desire, to discovering any transcendent 'truth,' since they revel in their declared excesses of seemingly purposeless and narcissistic self-obsession (Presdee 2001: vi). But like the masked costumers of the fantasy fairs, these denials of intent are usually clever diversions.

The structure of estrangement:

The chaotic 'carnival' that we describe herein might claim to be purposeless, but instead it is usually purpose-directed, with that purpose often being the realization of political or individual identity. (We recently expanded on this topic in the last chapter, as we discussed the phenomenon of 'feigned nonchalance' within 'hip hedonism', seen in recent filmic product of the Celtic periphery, as described by McLoone and Blandford). The 'carnavalesque' like other aspects of the grotesque, turns on an 'estrangement' from the conventions of official 'reality.' To draw upon an analogy of 'estrangement' within the religious grotesque (which engenders many subsequent social grotesques, including the reactionary excesses of 'hip hedonism') we assert that without the (traditional Welsh cultural/iconic restraints or) 'anorexic suppression' of human passions, symbolized by Lent, there could be no (later Welsh filmic 'hip hedonism) Shroud Tuesday pancake party or no cinematic *Mardi Gras* excessiveness. In this respect, Geoffrey Harpham sees the grotesque as not only aesthetic category, but also as structure

Rather, the grotesque is a structure, the structure of estrangement. Suddenness and surprise, Kayser asserts, are essential elements in this estrangement; the familiar and the commonplace must be suddenly subverted or undermined by the uncanny or alien (Harpham 1976) pg. 1.

Harpham privileges suddenness and surprise, and indeed, with many manifestations of the grotesque, e.g., parody, horror, comedy, carnival, the unexpected is an essential element. But this study includes Foucault's gendered insight, that the culturally 'chaotic' is often the product of routine, codified, or scheduled moral or social 'madness' or 'anarchy'

(Foucault 2001) pg. 1. Since our study depends upon a differentiation of the female grotesque, with its appended male grotesque (and we agree with Mary Russo, that the male grotesque is mostly an aspect of the female grotesque) we see not only structure, but also process, as in the process of transgression, of the female territory or imagined 'landscapes'. The structure of the grotesque occurs in the geographical, cultural and spiritual landscape of the national cinema. A traditional film studies critical analysis might reveal occasionally, the structure of the grotesque within a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque' while it overlooks some important, integrated occurrences of the systemic or metaphorical grotesque. But as a form of meta-criticism informed by trans-national mass communication theory and cultural policy theory, national cinema analysis seeks not only textual, but inter-textual and extra-textual readings. By inter-textual, we would include the interplay between the grotesque 'bad boy' reputation of a Welsh filmmaker or actor, and the content and creation of their filmic product. By extra-textual, we imply the interplay between an additional, third 'aspect' to the reading.

This third aspect could be the 'dishonesty' of a film that is for example, the extent to which it satisfies 'truthfully' only one part of a multi-lingual, multi-cultural Welsh reality, while ignoring or making strange or un-natural another part (as we will see in the Welsh 'linguistic grotesque'). Similarly, this third aspect could include the dated or external audience reception of a Welsh film, screened as a 'foreign' film or seen as a retrospective of an author's anachronistic and provincial vision. Harri Roberts has already explored at length the various incarnations of a literary 'Welsh grotesque,' which considers not only the field of production with its commonly used literary devices, (which Robert's frequently cites as signalling the grotesque, i.e., religious fanaticism, 'appropriation', linguistic 'code-switching', etc.) and the content of Welsh writing, but also the industrial, biographical and cultural settings in which these writings were produced (Roberts 2002:

65-66; Roberts 2005: 91). We propose that a similar form of meta-criticism is merited for the national cinema of Wales.

Imagining a Welsh ‘Norman Rockwell’:

This proposed cinematic meta-criticism, which considers a triple interplay of aspects, seems to bear similarities to one of the most popular American literary interpretations of the grotesque, which is based upon the novel by Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* (Anderson 1919). Superficially, the type of grotesque we refer to in this section varies greatly from the type for which David Cronenberg for example, in the film *Dead Ringers* (1988) is known. Anderson invented this collection of character-study vignettes, as the recollections of a local newspaper editor, in a nondescript, small town in rural Ohio. This is considered autobiographical, since Anderson also worked (somewhat reclusively) for a newspaper in Clyde, Ohio, a town remarkable for its ‘white-picket-fence’ mediocrity. Instead of presenting the individual characters as odd and eccentric, which they are, Anderson presents them as ordinary and matter-of-fact. It is this matter-of-fact rendering that actually seals the characters for the reader as grotesques. Anderson sees the grotesque as the observation of the logical, absurd extension of individual, human ‘truths’ stretched out over a lifetime

It was the truths that make people grotesques. The old man had quite an elaborate theory concerning the matter. It was his notion that the moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live by it, he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became a falsehood (Anderson 1919: 3).

Since Anderson’s fictional journalist is purported to be merely reporting his observations, the novel implies an externalized reading of the character’s stories. It is this externalized and recollected observation by the neutral journalist, which renders them truly grotesques. It’s also likely that modern, twenty-first century readers add a layer of anachronistic ‘quaint-ness’ to Anderson’s work, which he never intended. The resulting modern reading of *Winesburg, Ohio* is grotesque for its peculiar character studies, it is grotesque

for the way in which the journalist recounts it, and then it is grotesque as a dated, madcap bit of Norman Rockwell's *Americana*: today we would see Anderson's characters as almost allegorical caricatures, the same way that Thornton Wilder's original 'Horace Vandergelder' and 'Dolly Levi' characters, in the play *The Matchmaker*, later made into a film *The Matchmaker* (1958) starring Anthony Perkins, and then into the musical, *Hello Dolly* (1969), are transformed from an *Art Nouveau* Yonkers, N.Y., comedy-of-manners into Barbra Streisand's timeless, costumed, *tour-de-force*, tongue-in-cheek Broadway musical farce. Similarly, our meta-criticism, which considers external and dated audience reception as a third, interplaying aspect of informed readings, might lead us to conclude that some Welsh filmic products, which might not otherwise be considered so, are in fact grotesques (that is, within the contextual understanding of national cinema analysis, as being a type of analytical and journalistic comparison of the audio-visual contents and industrial schemes, which are shared by various nations).

Officially sanctioned Welshness and how familiarity masks the grotesque:

While there are easily recognized 'grotesques' within many Welsh filmic products, we would like to begin by unmasking the banality of the Welsh systemic and historical grotesque, found simultaneously within the content, field of production, and industrial schemes of several films. Our introduction of this 'systemic' or 'historical' grotesque relies upon the extent to which historically extreme circumstances of Welsh folk-life and religious life have become naturalized, even causing their normalized 'commodification' for modern audiences. Meic Stephens credits Dr. Iorwerth Peate, founder of the National Welsh Museum at St. Fagan's, with making mainstream and official, a particular anthropological interpretation and visual depiction of the Welsh historical and religious grotesques (a politically and culturally biased perspective on the excesses of the Welsh chapel '*gwerin*' folk) 'known as the 'Llanbrynmair tradition'

Throughout his life Iorwerth C. Peate engaged in scholarly and literary activity of a high order, mainly as an exponent of the sturdily nonconformist, radical folk-culture (now known in Wales, largely at his insistence, as ‘the Llanbryn-mair tradition’), represented by Samuel Roberts (1800–1885), into which he had been born (Stephens 2004: 1).

Peate was a key figure in the commodification, of what has become a ‘politically correct’ interpretation of Welsh folk and chapel cultures to modern audiences, frequently used as the ‘historical’ basis for many dramas, produced for the audiences of ITV Wales, BBC Cymru and S4C. This *de facto* official reading of Welsh history has been widely challenged by cultural historians spanning the philosophical/political gamut, ranging from Dai Smith to Patrick Hannan (Smith 1984; Hannan 1999). Peate’s highly detailed, but biased rendering of the Welsh systemic (religious, cultural and political) grotesque, has been criticized for a historically ‘selective’ view, which privileges Peate’s personal background, as an educated and more secular product of his rural, Welsh chapel upbringing, a perspective which privileged and mythologized the images of toweringly grotesques ‘heroes’ of Welsh nationalism, i.e., the Rev. Samuel Roberts (1800-1885). However selective, Peate’s perspective dominates the visual culture of contemporary Wales, to the extent that filmic product attempts to be ‘historical and accurate.’ Peate’s influence is evident in three recent films, whose writers and directors self-consciously consulted with the cultural and political heirs of Peate, with an eye toward recreating, an almost ponderously ‘accurate’ and ‘historically normal’ verisimilitude of Welsh folk life, namely *Hedd Wyn* (1992), *Solomon & Gaenor* (1999) and *On the Black Hill* (1988).

Fractured and colonized males are ‘female grotesques’:

Welsh film and television scholars offer us examples, wherein the representations of identity in Welsh filmic product, especially that produced for BBC Wales, ITV Wales, Channel Four Films, and S4C, have been careful to ensure the quality of historical verisimilitude, as an aspect of network broadcaster ‘high production values’ (Berry 1994: 267; Davies 1994: 22; Dafydd 2005: 1). But accuracy and verisimilitude, while satisfying

to the superficial criteria of heritage and costumed film genres, do not necessarily reflect an examined and accurate significance of the historical signifiers, especially as they are perceived or read by modern or external audiences. At this point we need to turn back to another set of our critical constructs, namely the comparative film analysis of Mary Russo and Christopher Gittings. Russo and Gittings cite examples of systemic, religious, sexual and bureaucratic grotesques in their film analysis, which assist us as we bring various senses of the aesthetic category of the grotesque to the analysis of the national cinema of Wales. Their analysis is informed by post-colonial, Feminist and Queer theories, which conflate the gendered with the politically marginalized, producing two complementary constructs, the female grotesque, and the male grotesque. In *Imperialism and Gender: Constructions of Masculinity*, Gittings explains how the colonial goals of the political and cultural imperial project, permits at its apex only the dominant, white male, which he generally calls the 'Father' or the 'patriarch' (Gittings 1996: 12). All agents who extend and enforce the will of the patriarch, are called the 'patriarchy.' Every imperial project creates and enforces political and cultural hegemony. In order to create the social and economic hierarchy, which supports the imperial project, the patriarch must 'other' his white female wife. She in turn 'others' lower males and females. Sometimes literally and always metaphorically, the white female is less white and less male than her patriarchal master. Colonized males (or in our study, Welsh males) who for various reasons are deemed 'non-white', exist in a constant state of crisis created by the aggressive 'transgressions' of the patriarchy.

These fractured, colonized males are pressured by their colonized societies to create masculinities, which while masculine, are deprived of masculine power and agency. (Also, when the non-white male does acquire power, it happens at the pleasure of the patriarchy, which implies a continuing subordination). Gittings tells how the resulting trend among colonized males is to create unsustainable hyper-masculinities, which

because they are laughable for their cockiness and lack of real authority, amuse, rather than threaten the patriarch. The imagined sexual or political threat of the colonized male is often mythologized and exaggerated as a control device, used to terrorize into subservience white females. Many black males were 'lynched' in the Deep American South, merely for the imagined crime of glancing 'lustfully' at a white woman. The hegemony of the patriarch is efficient and economical in its activities, and is always improving upon its strategies to better subordinate the 'othered' females and 'othered' males. Consequently, the hegemony does not end with political and economic subordination, but establishes itself as the lone arbitrator of beauty and ugliness. The patriarch and whatever the patriarch desires, is beautiful. Everything else is marginalized and classified as 'ugly'.

Comparing a Canadian 'cinema of the grotesque':

Gittings blends Feminist theory with a post-colonial reading of numerous Canadian films, which render the white, English-speaking female as chaste and beautiful, while the 'First Nation' Inuit-speaking aboriginal women are filthy, fat, nymphomaniacs (Gittings 2002: 83). This racial 'demonizing' and 'scapegoat-ing' is historically echoed in the so-called Welsh 'Betrayal of the Blue Books', wherein compulsively chaste Welsh women were labelled as 'lascivious' by English speaking inspectors (Morgan 1981: 103). The rigidity of the patriarchal standards of beauty are internalized and appropriated by the 'othered' females and males, who internalize as self-hatred, the attribution of 'ugliness' given to them by the patriarchy. This internalized self-hatred, enhances the efficiency of the imperial project, and becomes a routine and insidious aspect of the colonial and post-colonial.

Gittings deconstructs various Canadian films, which he then extrapolates to generalizations about colonized and post-colonial societies. For example, the fragile

constructions of hyper-masculine 'male grotesques' predisposes these men to meaningless violence toward even more 'othered' social 'scapegoats', who are permitted to co-exist with colonized peoples until more convenient times, when the 'scapegoats' can be attacked. This is the only option for the frustrated male grotesque, since he is trained and conditioned and restricted from attacking the patriarch. In Western filmic culture the traditional scapegoats have been racial minorities, i.e., film characters who are both Negro or Jewish and villainous (Gabler 1989: 54-58; Bogle 2001: 35) or sexual minorities, with gays and lesbians being at the 'bottom' of the pecking order (Russo 1981: 11). It is the damage inflicted upon the 'othered' males by the patriarchy and the multitude of bizarre and lengthy contortions these subordinate males put themselves through in order to construct (what is usually a hyper-masculine) reaction to the constant attacks upon their masculinity by the patriarchy, which creates the blend of the insidious and the intricate, which Mary Russo calls, the 'male grotesque'.

Representations of inverted, hyper-masculine archetypes constitute 'female grotesques':

Both Russo and Gittings agree in principle, that the male grotesque, formed in such a contorted posture at the will of the patriarchy, is not a male at all, but in fact, a female grotesque. For example, the classification of macho Cambrian drovers, Patagonian gauchos, cowboys, Welch Regiment troops, proudly-unionized coal miners, angry and caustic chapel preachers, and housing estate drug dealers as 'female grotesques' might offend most members of these groups, but their vulnerability to offence, betrays the fragility and non-sustainability of their masculine constructions. Gittings and Russo make other generalizations about 'othered' males, which might indicate trends within the construction of filmic narratives and characterization, and which might typify the representations of males within these often small, colonial or post-colonial nations. For example, the imperial project, whether it's led by a corporation, king or a bishop creates

deliciously ‘hopeless’ religious, social, political, and bureaucratic entrapments, which force those entrapped to make numerous, intricate negotiations with the colonizing hegemonic (as seen in the grotesque parody *Catch 22* (1970)).

How the criminalization of Welshness begs a descent into the grotesque:

Foucault tells us that these activities (comprising numerous, intricate negotiations) which on their face would appear as madness become routine over time, and are emasculated by the patriarchy, which Foucault identifies as the *Bourgeoisie* (Foucault 2001: 3). Foucault describes official ‘madness’ as an enforced and controlled estrangement from middle class ‘sanity.’ Victor Hugo contrasted the ‘beauty’ of a well-ordered, Puritan mind, in conflict with the temptations of power-hungry and passionate tyranny, as displayed in the internal ‘estrangement’ in the personality and life of Oliver Cromwell, who Hugo saw as an original ‘grotesque.’ In *Cultural Criminology and the Carnival of Crime*, Mike Presdee explains how the generational disenfranchised become chronically self-identified as ‘criminal’, a synonym for the male/female grotesque (Presdee 2001: 5). This becomes an interesting point of historical and cultural examination for Welsh filmic product reflecting all periods of modern Welsh history, since historians tell us that after the English colonial ascendancy of Edward I in the thirteenth century, following the defeat and decapitation of Llewellyn the Last, most markers of ‘Welsh-ness’ became officially ‘criminal’ within the English-dominated society (Morgan 2001: 161).

Both Russo and Gittings give us film readings, which differentiate and rationalize typical stages of merging post-colonial cinemas. O’Regan echoes this in his exploration of Australia cinema: Both the Outback hero and the Aboriginal chief are what Russo would call ‘female grotesques’, socially and psychologically colonized classes, which suffer from inherently conflicted goals: recalling a shattered pre-colonial past, while negotiating a tenuous masculinity, in a constant state of crisis (O’Regan 1996: 20). In the case of

Wales we see the Welsh-speaking, Nonconformist, hyper-masculine chapel minister, who is attempting to defend his male ego and his community from the intrusions of the imperial English, and so he over-reacts and creates a religious and bureaucratic, almost Kafkaesque reality for himself and for his congregation. This is the worldview that Peates mythologized and helped to visually commodify for modern Welsh audiences. This worldview is sentimentalized, mocked, parodied, and ritualized by many Welsh filmmakers during the past thirty years, who were seeking to recover or reject a national past. But the most recent generation of Welsh filmmakers see through Peate's officially promoted and stylized 'Welsh-isms', as well as through the obsolete British Imperial constructions, being sophisticated post-modern consumers of American cultural imperialism's products and services. As a result, a significant number of younger Welsh filmmakers have joined what Martin McLoone calls the Celtic Periphery's cinema of 'hip hedonism.' Scotland's Danny Boyle and Andrew MacDonald produce the urban male gang, drugs and sex films, *Shallow Grave* (1994) and *Trainspotting* (1996), which glorify a mad 'carnival' of youthful revelry, loss and excesses. Next Scotland's Boyle and MacDonald, clone a Welsh trend of 'hip hedonism' as the producers of *Twin Town* (1997), followed by several other films we have earlier discussed.

The fragility of masculine constructions under the Imperial:

The constructions of masculinity in these films have positioned themselves in opposition to and in reaction to traditional values of old Scotland and old Wales, as McLoone tells us has occurred in Irish films, as well. But these urban heroes are fragile and unsustainable characters, who are estranged from their past, from their future and from themselves. They are the serially disenfranchised and they do not correspond with the power structures of the hegemonic, whether British or American, except as consumers and criminal anti-heroes. Consequently, they prefer the scheduled chaos of the 'carnavalesque' in their case symbolized by the suicidal flirtations with fatalism and

hedonism, which along with global consumerism compel them. Even though the newer filmmakers are positioning their films in opposition to the arguments of traditional culture and morality and identity, (which they claim to have escaped) a closer reading reveals that they are still participating in the reactionary dialectic, to which they are summoned by the hegemonic. Consequently, this entrapment guarantees their equally grotesque negotiation to the continuing crisis of (at least, cultural) colonization. In their reaction to the traditional icons and values they become as two-dimensional and allegorical as their quirky, chapel-going, Cymraeg-speaking, male choir hymn-singing ancestors. It's important to note that both in the modernist 'hip hedonism' films, and in the 'historically accurate' heritage films, neither Welsh construction of masculinity is made any less grotesque, neither by the attempts at 'feigned nonchalance' toward a self-induced drug death, or by historically and matter-of-factly rendered verisimilitude. To illustrate this, let us look more closely at the well-received *Hedd Wyn*.

A speculative application of the bureaucratic (religious) grotesques:

Oscar nominated, *Hedd Wyn* (1992) is a Welsh language film, which Steve Blandford describes as a balanced Welsh filmic treatment of the period, as a film intended for a British Devolution-alerted audience (Blandford 2007: 91). This lushly produced heritage drama is a biopic, which satisfies many Welsh expectations while delivering a delightful, European art house escape for non-domestic audiences. Neither Blandford nor Berry read anything exaggerated in this film, away from a 'naturalistic' rendering of the production. But our study, informed by readings which privilege gender and national identity, would expand upon Blandford and Berry's accurate appraisals, by emphasizing the banality of Welsh chapel life and politics, and the banality of the only possible constructions of masculinity, available to Welsh men in a rural village in post-Imperial Britain.

Both *Hedd Wyn* and *Solomon and Gaenor* are discussed here, and it's debatable whether a critic looking at these films, and applying narrow conceptualizations of the 'grotesque' would see the grotesque in either of these films. However, we should note that Hedd Wyn is a national poetry champion and also sympathetic to Conscientious Objectors to the war. If we concede that the Conscientious Objector is a stereotypical 'female grotesque' in the dissenting soldier's political relationship to the inducting army, that is, to the hyper-masculine (if not homoerotic) military construction of a 'male grotesque', then *Hedd Wyn* contains an obviously grotesque element, but the director takes pains to present this element as universal, naturalized and matter-of-fact. Both films are almost painfully dedicated to a nuanced development of their characters, so that they avoid the two-dimensionality of stereotypes; both films take equal pains to produce a historically accurate verisimilitude, which does not bring to mind the commonly understood filmic manifestations of the 'grotesque'. We would like to attempt a reading of these films which might be a conceptual leap, but which considers some obscure and less common constructions of the grotesque, as a point of argument. In other words, we are privileging in our reading of *Hedd Wyn*, the systemic grotesque, as we see it manifested in the monstrosity of the desolate landscape or in the absurdly brutal (while absurdly banal) religious fanaticism of the Welsh chapels.

The monstrosity of the austere and stern Welsh religious 'gothic' in popular memory:

We also perceive a political 'monstrosity' in the intricate and conflicted relationship between the ascetic and dogmatic Welsh Chapel ethic, as it collides with the culturally indulgent, officially ecumenical and tolerant *Eisteddfod* ethic. This argument considers the connection between politically or gendered expressions (which are marginalized, and therefore made 'monstrous' to the receiving audience) and the ways in which historically iconic, cultural 'monstrosities' can become banal and lose their signifying meaning with

the domestic national audience. In Peate's commodified Welsh folk life, the neo-Druidic drunken bard (a Welsh form of the stock character, the 'town drunk'), shares an *Eisteddfod* 'carnival' tent, with the caustically fierce chapel preacher-cum-poet, for a regularly scheduled linguistic frolic in the fields, outside the strictures of stark chapel walls: that which is inherently contradictory, here becomes natural.

Welsh military objectors as another 'female grotesque':

It's no surprise that Peate enforced a stylized and nostalgically amicable recollection of the Welsh religious and rural grotesques, since his own life embodied some of the same suppressed and gross conflicts, of the films we're about to discuss. In this context, Peate (himself a jailed, WWI Conscientious Objector), would be a post-imperial 'male grotesque', whose influence (ironically) informs and masks a systemic grotesque in modern filmic product. But like the 'old man' in Sherwood Anderson's novel, people embrace 'truths' which eventually contort them, and Peate embraced 'principles' which made him myopic to his own enigmatic reflection

His views, which were based on principle rather than caprice or personal antipathy, are vigorously and sometimes caustically set forth in essay form in *Sylfeini* (1938), *Ym mhob pen* (1948), *Syniadau* (1969), and *Personau* (1982), and in his autobiography, *Rhwng dau fyd* (1976). The last-named book gives a precise but unbiting account of his suspension from his National Museum post in 1941 and his victimization on account of his registration on pacifist grounds as a conscientious objector to military service; he was reinstated eight months later after a good deal of public controversy and a stormy meeting of the museum court (Stephens 2004: 1).

For another example of the systemic grotesque, i.e., the historically monstrous, presented as 'normal and natural', we see in *Solomon and Gaenor* (1999), the 'unnamed' characters in the film are generational poverty, and the tension between several cultural values, which held a different meaning and function in the Welsh Chapel ontology, than they do in contemporary Welsh life. These values are specifically Welsh conceptions of *parchusrwydd* or respectability, *cywilydd* or shame, and *iachawdwriaeth* or salvation. The moral and social implications of Gaenor's 'sin of fornication' do not necessarily

translate to modern (and importantly, mostly secular Welsh) domestic audiences, and certainly are romanticized and altered by external, i.e., American audiences. (There's not enough time in a ninety-minute film to effectively explain to the audience, the social implications that the chapel held over individual and collective Welsh life for over three hundred years. To summarize these implications, in many rural communities there was 'no life' apart from the approval and acceptance of the chapel and banishment meant more than social embarrassment, to say the least). The presentation of 'respectability' was more important, especially for Welsh chapel women, than respectability itself. In ways (described frequently by Roberts and Clarke), which easily compare to American Negro ex-slaves, the Welsh woman defended herself, her family and her identity against the world, with compulsively clean front rooms, big hats, and a compulsive avoidance of embarrassment or social confrontation (Roberts and Clarke 2000). Consequently, the monstrous tyranny of the grotesquely stark and draconian punishment, which Gaenor faces, is romanticized, first by the domestic Welsh audience, which has its own, conditioned response to the tensions between what it dismisses as the 'modern versus the primitive', and secondly romanticized by external audiences, (what Knight would term 'First Contact', adapted literature) (Knight 2004: 10-12, 34).²

Is the filmic female inherently monstrous?

These external audiences, as the consuming dominant culture, are constantly making unspoken assumptions about the 'quaintness' of 'primitive peoples', with their historic religious fanaticism. And according to the writings of Adamson and Williams, one can assume that within the Welsh domestic audiences, differences in the reception of *Solomon and Gaenor*, are related to the differences of language, class, levels of social

² There are other symbolic moments in *Solomon & Gaenor*, which might have other coded meaning, common to Celtic folktales and thus, to the folkloric memory of Welsh culture. For example, at one point, Gaenor's pig, which until this time has grazed peacefully behind the terraced house, is taken in and butchered. The pig disappears at the plot's nadir, and foreshadows the death of Solomon, the end of their relationship, and the loss of their child. The butchering of the pig, formerly sheltered by the women of the house, might have narrative connections with the grotesque aspects of this film, which pivot on the extreme punishment of Gaenor, an indicator of systemic misogyny in Welsh chapel culture.

inclusion/exclusion and generation (Adamson 1991: 76-77; Adamson 1996: 21-22; Williams 1997: 19). Furthermore, these differences are rapidly evolving, and constantly changing, as the sophistication and value systems, of newer generations (and of secularized older generations) are informed by external sensibilities wrought by metaphorical 'mental colonization' of the globally hegemonic (Gazetas 2000: 322). There is a precedent within film studies for this process of 'audience reception evolution', and the most common one, is the way in which readings of Gangster genre films and Film Noir genre films have been / are being transformed. For example, the Femme Fatale of Film Noir had an original reception, which emphasized the glamorous and the feminine, that is, pre-Civil Rights and pre-1960s Feminist readings. Because of later readings, by audiences which evolved in their thinking about exactly what could be 'monstrous' about a woman, some Femme Fatale characters now are likely to be read as less glamorous and more insidious, and others might be read as less monstrous and more the victims, that is, of a woman who had no choice but to manipulate the male aggressor through the wiles of female seduction, a 'victim of the times', so to speak. As a case in point, emphasizing the generational evolution of audiences, most studios now selling Christmas gift-packs of Film Noir 'Classics' include a DVD 'extra' which answers the question, 'So just what is, "Film Noir?"' A foundational discussion of genre evolution and 'genre history' can be found in Rick Altman's, *A Semantic/Syntactic Approach to Film Genre* (Braudy and Cohen 1999: 630-641).

Speculative readings within a 'meta-criticism':

There is another precedent, in the sub-discipline of national cinema analysis, to 'speculate' with a synthesis of critical approaches, which rather than passively reading a film on its face, attempts to disturb the reading and so to deconstruct the 'obvious'. In this way, national cinema analysis can be said to fashion a 'meta-criticism' of the filmic. Furthermore, this 'disturbed' reading is further displaced, by a comparative reading

between related and unrelated 'national cinemas'. As we have mentioned, traditional readings of *Hedd Wyn* and *Solomon and Gaenor*, might prefer not to see anything which could be termed 'grotesque', and rightly so, within the context of readings which choose not to emphasize the aspects, which national cinema analysis, cannot ignore. But national cinema analysis is comparative and circumspect, and seeks to look for 'what's behind the curtain', as Stephen Prince, in *The Discourse of Pictures: Iconicity and Film Studies*, tells us that, the 'myth of total cinema' is unveiled by this super-national analysis (Braudy and Cohen 1999) pgs. 99-101. Directors Paul Turner (*Hedd Wyn*) and Paul Morrison (*Solomon and Gaenor*) were careful craftsmen, who created what André Bazin explains, is the complete and closed 'ontology of the cinema' (Bazin 2004) pg. 23. Our study intentionally 'tries on' what might seem like radical readings, in our attempt to deconstruct the national and the cinematic simultaneously. In this respect, one might assert that many evolving readings of national cinema analysis are ideological and interpretive 'speculations.'

Comparing the Welsh 'savage' to the Appalachian 'brute':

This study must necessarily re-examine the 'normal' readings of Welsh national cinema; it must 'push the envelope' in certain respects, to break the illusion of the closed cinematic ontology, and to further go beyond the 'temple veil' of industrial cosmology, which tends to resist analysis. To elucidate this point, let us briefly look at the analogue of American cinema, and how the U.S. audiences have processed the culture of Appalachian/rural America over time: Early cinematic renderings of Appalachia and rural America are often romantic and condescending, as we see in the Gothic American imagery of *The End of the Perfect Day* (1914, 1915, 1917). '*The End of the Perfect Day*' takes its name from an anthem written to rally the World War I American troops, with long-forgotten connotations, similar to the British military hymn, '*Camping Tonight*.' The title implicitly conjures hyper-male and exaggerated, military heroics, for audiences

in 1914, which are lost on modern audiences. Hymns are sung, quotes and words of the King James Version of the Bible pepper normal conversation, and jazzy, metropolitan, city folks visit conservative but quaint, tight-laced church ladies, for a bit of folksy nostalgia. This Hollywood interpretation of the rural and primitive is kindly, but dismissive, a type of cinematic 'First Contact' film, if you will. (We have diverged from our central discussion here, but we are using these lengthy examples of American Appalachia, to draw analogues with the historic and cinematic experience of Wales, which will support our central theme of 'estrangement'.)

While London laughs at the 'barefoot hag of Hay-on-Wye', America's metropolitan modernity mocks the Ozark Mountain mamma:

The migration of Appalachian and rural people into American cities by the 1950s makes condescension politically untenable, but 'Middle America' must reckon what to make of their new, suburban-but-still-redneck neighbours. So we see a profusion of rural and Appalachian comedies, including *The Further Adventures of Ma and Pa Kettle* (1949) and the 'B film' series, which ran unto 1960. This parodied precursor to the *Beverly Hillbillies* (1962) interpreted the rural and savagely mountainous for urban American audiences, until televised Nashville and the Grand Ole Opry were ascendant in the 1980s, tied to the successful commercial and cultural 'coattails' of broadcast radio and recorded country music. Now national cinema analysis would look circumspectly across the full range of U.S. films, which process the American dichotomies of rural/urban, modern/primitive, and notice the ever-present cultural signifiers, however banal, which span the gamut. For example, actor Irene Ryan's 'Granny' in the *Beverly Hillbillies*, uses the archaic Jacobean 'vittles' for food, and makes constant referrals to the 'good Lord.' She prays fervently, attend tent revivals, while also casting pagan mountain hexes and spells on her enemies, which she squeezes in between daily squirrel hunts and brewing cauldrons of magical elixirs and hard liquor, 'mountain dew'. She quotes the King James

Bible, and like every other Appalachian, longs for the day that she makes her pilgrimage to Nashville, to the Grand Ole Opry (the Appalachian cultural and spiritual equivalency of a Welsh *Eisteddfod*), or when the “lord takes her home”, which ever comes first. We later consider the imprecatory incantations of the indignant Welsh undertaker (played by Huw Griffiths) in the French strip-tease scene in *Grand Slam* (1978), which parallels the predictable rants of Irene Ryan’s Granny character.

Poverty and shame are funny:

The quirky and comically grotesque rural characters of *Hee-Haw* (1969) and *Green Acres* (1965) also quote the Bible (their stab at linguistic code-switching) and ramble off in anachronistic mountain regionalisms, which privilege a culture of dulcimer players and barefoot, pregnant, West Virginia ‘mountain mommas’. Parallel to the *Ma and Pa Kettle*, *Beverly Hillbillies*, *Real McCoys* (1957) TV and film phenomena, was the cultural assimilation of the Southern American grotesque, (i.e., ‘poverty and pietism’), which alternates as the romantic *Tammy* (1965), with the shapely country girl pulled between the city and the bayou, but falls back into formulaic stereotypes with the glamorous but neurotic Holly Golightly in *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* (1961). Buddy Ebsen, who also played Jed Clampett in the *Beverly Hillbillies*, shows up in Manhattan as Doc Golightly, to embarrass Holly with his Bible quotes and backwoods faith, with its strict King James Version Biblical morality. If we considered the U.S. cultural assimilation and processing of the rural, into the collective urban consciousness of modern American audiences, we would have to note that the ‘elephants in the living room’ which everyone takes for granted, are the unrecognized dramatic roles played throughout these films by the untamed rural landscape, the poverty, markers of the primitive religious obsession, or ‘American religious Gothic,’ each owning individually-internalized shame, caused by

abandoning primitive values and ancestral morals, while blithely displaying the all-forgiving cultural institution of country music, epitomized by the Grand Ole Opry.³

Generational poverty is a cultural and systemic monstrosity, which is often the unnamed antagonist in American films (as it is in Welsh films), which are attempting to actualize their historic, agrarian roots. The 'hero' of many such dramas must overcome and 'slay the dragons' of poverty, primordial savagery and passions, before ascending to the glorified and cleansed role of a 'rag-to-riches' suburban housewife. Poverty, shame, religious fanaticism, incest, violence, crime and addiction are often banalities, in the landscape of the filmic American rural, as they are in the Welsh filmic. Initial analysis of the filmic Appalachian, sees the 'grotesque' (coded as one of several, American 'gothics') in specific characters, and in specific narratives; later analyses go deeper, finding systemic grotesqueries. Interestingly, the decoding and deconstruction of the *othered* black male in American film mostly predates analysis of the *othered* Appalachian, as described in Manthia Diawara's, *Black Spectatorship: Problems of Identification and Resistance* (Braudy and Cohen 1999: 845-853). One might speculate, that the fact that most white Americans are only a generation or two away from an embarrassingly 'quaint', older, agrarian and religiously fanatical white relative, encourages a resistance to nuanced processing of their personal histories, and prefers the processing of the *othered* black male, who is seen as not truly 'American.' Either way, the *Eisteddfod*, the Grand Ole Opry, and the Negro Gospel Choir are all mythologized in film, and the film scholar must ask why these icons, ubiquitous within the imaginaries of their respective dominant cultures, become banal and overlooked signifiers for their indigenous cultures and domestic markets. And in this chapter, we are beginning our

³ The Grand Ole Opry and the Welsh National Eisteddfod and regional Eisteddfodau are historical and cultural analogues, which serve similar narrative purposes, as far as depicting and representing or alluding to clashes with modernity and between other typically Welsh or typically Appalachian themes, mostly tied to negotiations of the rural/urban and so forth.

discussion of the 'estranged' with a discussion of the 'grotesque', which dares to include stylized, filmic marginalization, of not only the obviously comic, criminal, monstrous and eccentric, but also the systemically banal 'grotesque.' It is, after all, the bland 'ordinariness' of *The Stepford Wives* (1975, 2004), which makes them monstrous, not their robotic innards.

Three Welsh banalities:

So to make a specifically Welsh, 'speculative', national cinema analysis argument, we focus upon the monstrous, which has become banal. There are three Welsh banalities, which might seem glaringly odd and peculiar to a non-Welsh audience, but which are taken for granted or ignored by a domestic Welsh audience:

1) The starkly austere chapel settings, created by the Nonconformist commitment to plain dress and plain architecture, reads similarly to external (especially American) audiences as signifiers comparable to the Amish or colonial American, 'Quaker grey'. A typical American audience melds together the Nonconformist Welsh Dissenting chapels with the Pilgrims, the Amish, the Quakers and the Puritans, into a historical hodgepodge, that calls to mind 'Salem Witch Trials' and Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter* and the film *Witness* (1985). Modern, secular Welshmen tend to dismiss the chapel period as merely anti-modern, quaint and obsolete, while the American reading adds political layers, since Arthur Miller intentionally conflated the colonial puritanical excesses with the bureaucratic grotesque-ness of 1950s McCarthyism in the *Crucible* (1957) and the *Crucible* (1996). The post-colonial American historical sensibility, recalling the British 'Red Coats' derogatively, as villainous, robotically-uniformed, colonial 'occupiers' to be rebelled against and expelled, probably adds another layer of military, hyper-masculine 'male grotesque-ness' to the reading, as they take the side of the seemingly occupied Welsh.

2) There's a tension obvious to external audiences, regarding the various Welsh constructions of masculinities in *Hedd Wyn*. The choices are limited, and seem to permit two hyper-masculine possibilities: the nationally compromised British military recruit, with the attendant hyper-masculine fetishization of the British Imperial militaristic, male-only society and male violence, or the somewhat emasculated and passive but neutral, rural Welsh farmer or town merchant. There are also two additional constructions of Welsh masculinity, which are peculiar and unique to Welsh culture and history: a Welshman can be a rough, macho farmer, collier, slate quarryman or cattle drover, but his meaning is realized by competing for the *Eisteddfod* crown or throne. This Medieval, quasi-Druidic contest is banal to the Welsh sensibility, but exotic and bizarre to most other nationalities. There simply doesn't exist a cultural equivalent in most of Europe or America, where original and arcane poetry is recited by men dressed in robes and floral head-laurels, after anthem contests between male voice choirs, alternated with other performance contests, and set within an ancient, quasi-religious, quasi-pagan ceremony.

The other permissible construction of Welsh 'masculinity' is the ascetic chapel minister, often a plain, stern and angry 'Gothic' masculinity, who uses words and persuasion (instead of brute force), along with the force of community shame, to control other men and women. As the local 'witchdoctor', the chapel minister is 'alien', within the Welsh rural village, a heroic figure, who has shamanic powers to negotiate social welfare and eternal life for parishioners, who must conform to his standards of '*parchusrwydd*' or respectability. The chapel minister also wields the power of eternal life or eternal damnation, which were accepted quite literally by Welshmen in the chapel period. The chapel minister is often assigned to the community by an external denomination (or distant bishop, in the case of an Anglican priest), and brings specialized learning in exotic languages and special knowledge, which attribute to the cleric 'magical' powers. The

Welsh chapel minister compares to the benevolent Benedictine and Jesuit missionary monks, who doubled with the Dominican orders, “God’s Dogs,” as the ghoulish perpetrators of the Spanish Inquisition, as the chapel deacons eventually intruded into every aspect of Welsh rural life. If this stern, pale, angry Protestant, Welsh ‘Gothic’ is read by external audiences, the resulting characterizations are less benign, and almost vampire-like, to some degree.

3) So, regarding the first two banalities which might seem ‘strange’ to the external audience, one has to admit that the banality of the choice presented to the protagonist in *Hedd Wyn* is uniquely Welsh, and slightly odd: he can be a macho man, and serve the disputable cause of an English uniform in a ‘just’ European war, (while he makes the ultimate fraternal sacrifice), or he can fulfil his highest purpose as a Welshman, by presenting his poem at the *Eisteddfod*. To Welsh audiences, this is a noble and complicated choice, which is resolved by the post-mortem awarding of the highest prize of the *Eisteddfod* throne, once he has been killed in battle. While there is some difference among domestic Welsh audiences regarding the way in which they receive *Hedd Wyn*, this difference is nuanced and divides along political lines, relative to questions of class, opinions about British Devolution and language laws. But it’s difficult to recall an external cultural analogue to this set of Welsh banalities. Certainly in American culture, there are filmic representations of men who made the choice between their performance career and the destiny of distant battles. But it usually doesn’t occur in as serious a setting, at least if we compare who would be the Welsh cultural ‘equivalent’ to *Hedd Wyn*, in American culture. This brings to mind the ‘noble choice’ made in almost self-deprecating and mocking tones, by celebrities like Elvis Presley, when he ‘sacrificed his career’ to join the U.S. army. Presley parodies himself, in the musical romantic comedy, *G.I. Blues* (1960). Blandford discusses *Hedd Wyn* extensively, but does not discuss all the implications regarding the meaning of the name, Hedd Wyn. A banality, which is

overlooked here, is the code switching (with all its political implications), in the choosing of a 'bardic' name. Why not name the film, 'Ellis Humphrey Evans'? This wouldn't do, because the significance of the eccentric *Gorsedd* Circle naming ritual is integral to the intricacies of the plot. So in consideration of the hyper-masculine or romanticized 'male grotesques', coupled with the ever-present complications of the Welsh 'linguistic grotesque', in the context of a complicated Welsh cultural milieu, there might be a small but important case for placing *Hedd Wyn* in the Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque.' This designation seems possible, since through most of this chapter, we have developed a case for unclocking the elements of 'estrangement', represented in the filmic product of Welsh national cinema.

We have mounted our argument with the perplexing examples of the Welsh *Eisteddfodau*, as one of numerous markers of 'Welsh-ness', which have passed into a cultural banality, and consequently might be read as not having any filmic focus. This argument climaxes with a forceful deconstruction of the film *Hedd Wyn*. We 'speculated' with a reading, which risked credibility, by avoiding popular senses of the aesthetic category of the grotesque, while asserting that in our meta-criticism, it might not be too 'far-fetched' to find an element of cultural disconnection or even 'estrangement', i.e., a 'systemic grotesque', in the assumed 'ordinariness' of quasi-pagan-revivals-cum-neo-Celtic-linguistic-subversions, as the normal and natural heart of a Welsh filmic plot. We would like to suggest that the thorough scholarship of Blandford, Berry and others, begins our contextual dissection of these recent Welsh films, but also raises some additional questions, which need to be addressed, and that is the impetus of this study. An example of one of the questions we are raising would be this: How do we explain the co-existence of traditional themes of Welsh national identity, as represented in *Hedd Wyn*, *Solomon & Gaenor*, and *On the Black Hill*, when contrasted with the intentionally iconoclastic content of concurrent Welsh films, which intentionally mock or defy the traditional marker

of 'Welsh-ness?' In this chapter, we have suggested that these seemingly opposing schools, within contemporary Welsh cinema, might have a historical analogue, similar to the famous opposition between Hugo's Romanticists and the older French school of aesthetic Classicism. In the next chapter we continue our specific (and somewhat less speculative) readings, which explore aspects of 'estrangement' within Welsh filmic product (which we see as various confirmations of a 'cinema of the grotesque'), while we examine whether the historical analogue that we have suggested is accurate and useful, to our exploration of dimensions of the national cinema of Wales.

Chapter 8: Wales the Cinema of Estrangement (Part II)

Negotiating the filmic 'female grotesque' / Negotiating the filmic 'male grotesque'

In the previous chapter we expanded upon and described the aesthetic conditions, which lead us to designate the national cinema of Wales as a 'cinema of estrangement.' To accomplish this, we reflected upon the variety of critical approaches, which have become the analytical 'tool box' for this study, situated within a particularly Welsh historical and political milieu. Our conception of estrangement is supported by examples of various aspects of what we termed 'grotesques'. We expand upon this concept of estrangement, which in discourses of national cinema analysis is characterized by 'shifts'

On the face of it, then, national cinema can no longer be thought of in the traditional terms, but only in the context of these place-shifts and time-shifts, the cultural palimpsests that connect the ever-expanding, constantly self-differentiating field of media representations which is the contemporary everyday of movies, television, advertising. In this situation, national cinema becomes a doubly displaced category (Elsaesser 2005: 40).

In each chapter we have sought to offer new dimensions to assist our examination of what constitutes a national cinema for Wales. Our study is necessarily revisionist, informed by the context of the 'tool box', which we just mentioned. Elsaesser and others have described the final product of national cinema analysis as an industrial and aesthetic grotesquery, which is founded upon estrangement, while straddling shifting loci of production and evaluation and reception, a sort of *after-the-fact* 'psychotherapy' for the 'displaced' national culture and economy

It is at best a retrospective effect, so to speak, one that only posterity can confer, as it sifts through the nation's active and passive image bank, hoping to discover the shape of its superego or its id (Elsaesser 2005: 40).

Elsaesser insists that the revisionist analysis, which unveils the cinematic 'monstrosity', is informed, but external

But national cinema is also a displaced category, insofar as this is a shape, whether monstrous, pleasing or only mildly disfigured, that can only be recognized from without. The label national cinema has to be conferred on films

by others, either by other national or 'international' audiences, or by national audiences, but at another point in time. Defined by other critics, by other audiences, these mirror images are tokens of a national or personal identity only if this other is, as the phrase goes, a 'significant other' (Elsaesser 2005: 40-41).

Elsaesser sees a trans-national triangle within this marriage of reflective 'significant others'

Given the mutual dependencies just sketched, Europe (standing in the field of cinema metonymically for European film festivals and the critical or theoretical discourses these produce) is as much a significant other for Hollywood or Asia, as the United States is a significant other for European audiences (Elsaesser 2005: 41).

Elsaesser's points coalesce conveniently with our gendered, post-colonial readings, which employ the same metaphor of the female grotesque, as the 'othered' partner of the cultural patriarchy. Even as the character and personality and personal economy of the colonized is simultaneously shaped and altered, or 'disfigured' by the experienced of colonization, so too the dimensions of a nation cinema of a formerly or currently colonized nation have aspects of being 'othered' by the political or cultural significant other. In this chapter, we continue to reflect upon new readings of Welsh filmic product, in order to better grasp the dimensions, which generally define this emerging, national cinema.

Extrapolating from Welsh literary theory:

In the course of our initial reading of a significant Welsh film, namely, *Hedd Wyn*, we intentionally speculated in our reading, to see if within one of the contrasting aspects of the aesthetic category of the 'grotesque', a plausible application could be made. We noted how this variation from earlier established readings of *Hedd Wyn* might not immediately resonate, with scholars accustomed to more limited understanding of the 'grotesque', than we are supporting in this study. So that we might harmonize seemingly separate readings, we are reminded that there is precedent for this departure or 'speculative' dissent, within the parallel Welsh literary tradition, which seems to have an

analogue in our new readings of Welsh filmic material and related fields of production. For example, in an analysis of the writings of Welsh author, Gwyn Thomas, Stephen Knight admits that well-respected Welsh authors and literary critics, Glyn Jones, Dai Smith and Raymond Williams, would 'firmly' place Thomas's stories about the post-industrial Rhondda Valley, in the genre of socialist realism. But Knight's newer commentary is externally informed by post-colonial and feminist theory, and not restricted by a narrower, internally informed, Welsh historicism. Consequently, in the essay, *The Voices of Glamorgan: Gwyn Thomas's Colonial Fiction* (Knight 2002: 16-17), Knight uncovers linguistic, political and gendered monstrosities, where Jones, Smith or Williams would insist upon merely gritty, Glamorgan realism, from the Valleys and from the pits, as Knight remarks of Thomas

He has been praised for his realization of Rhondda culture, notably by Dai Smith; he had been lauded for his verbal power, memorably by Glyn Jones; he has been honoured as a deep voice in industrial fiction, by Raymond Williams (Knight 2002: 16).

Knight does not reject the analyses of Smith, Jones and Williams, but adds an opposing layer upon these traditional views

However, I am not convinced myself that even the early work is a form of socialist realism. Confessional irony, grotesquery, symbolism are already strong in *Sorrow for Thy Sons*, even in its apparently quite heavily-edited published form (Knight 2002: 17).

In a similar way, our 'speculative' reading of *Hedd Wyn* does not reject the perspectives of Berry, Blandford and others, but affirms their conclusions, while introducing other dimensions, collected in our specific use of the terms, 'estrangement' and 'grotesques'. As we discussed in the previous chapter, a useful 'temporary' dichotomy, is the difference between male and female grotesques. We are employing this dichotomy, very loosely, to differentiate between this chapter and the previous chapter. In the previous chapter we agreed with the overall arguments of Gittings and Mary Russo: that all 'male grotesques' manifested within the literary or filmic material of many post-colonial

societies, are effectively 'female grotesques', to the extent that they are the representative negotiations of the emasculated colonial male, within the controlled, political sphere of the 'othering' white male patriarchy (Russo 1994: 17-19; Gittings 1996: 23). The previous chapter referred to aspects of the grotesques, which might be understood as 'male' in their grotesque dimensions, mostly because of their association with male-dominated social or political structure, i.e., the military, religious or political grotesques. In this chapter, we will continue our readings of Welsh filmic material, which upon examination, often reveal an aspect of the 'grotesque', which we see as indicative of an essential estrangement (as well as being a probable cultural marker of Welsh-ness). We will continue to refer to male grotesques, but we will also introduce the Welsh cinema as highlighting a 'female grotesque,' that is, a grotesque associated with the narrative or metaphorical 'female', i.e., linguistic, physical, territorial, familial and psychological grotesques.

The exaggerated threat of the 'othered' male:

Let us begin with the Oscar nominated Welsh film *Solomon and Gaenor* (1999), which is set in the same period as *Hedd Wyn*: The pronounced presence of a female grotesque and male grotesque might be a little more easily identified, than in *Hedd Wyn*. The execution of the film does not intend a superficial perception of the grotesque. But if we apply a gendered and post-colonial reading, then there are clearly grotesque constructions. Solomon is the *othered* male grotesque, who is a Jewish fabric salesman /pawnbroker, who falls into love, with the virginal Welsh Valley girl, symbolic of the Welsh territory or nation. This film resembles Canadian and American 'Settler' stories, where the oppressed colonists take turns, further oppressing a sub-class within their midst, usually as frontier families oppressing indigenous peoples, or French trappers oppressing Chinese railroad workers (Gittings 2002: 55). But *Solomon & Gaenor* is not only about racism, but also about violations of the patriarchal order, which the patriarchy condemns as

miscegenation. Frank Capra addresses the topic of bi-racial miscegenation in *The Bitter Tea of General Yen* (1933), and the rules of cinematic bi-racial love and sex are set: fantasy is okay, but consummation, or even the thought, must result in tragic death (Sklar 1975: 206). And so Paul Morrison takes us into this bureaucratically bizarre, Welsh reality of harsh chapel rule, where chapel banishment, a religious mechanism of the bureaucratic grotesque, destroys true love. Absolute individual conformity, to the (ironically) Nonconformist social rigidity, is not negotiable. Solomon has betrayed his own people, as Gaenor has also done, by engaging in a relationship, which defies the authority of the emasculated male father of Gaenor. The timid Welsh father is too exhausted from his daily trek into the 'belly' of the coal mining 'beast', and so he will not restore the order of the patriarchy, so the exhausted and timid father is absolved for his hesitation and neglect. Consequently, Gaenor's violent brother is forced to shape-shift from a jovial, coalminer pub mate, into a murderous monster, in order to manifest the revenge of the father, which symbolizes the rule of patriarchy and social order. This is the poor Welsh-speaking, coalminer brother's tribal obligation, since his virginal sister has been breached by an even more *othered* male, a Jew. And Solomon is a disembodied monster to his own oppressed people, as he chooses to pass himself off as 'Welsh' to his own Yiddish-speaking people.

Rooting for the criminal:

The audience viewing *Solomon & Gaenor* finds themselves rooting for the star-crossed lovers, who are condemned for their clandestine embrace of the forbidden and the obscene. This juxtaposition of the audience places them on the side of subversion; and the contrasting forces of family and church, which oppose the lovers, are exaggerated allegorical villains. None of the constructions of masculinity in this film are allowed to be whole, fulfilled individuals. They are fragmented by their passions and chewed to pieces by the machinery of oppression. Any challenge to the fragility of the Welsh or

Jewish masculine constructions, must be met with violence or deceit. Anger builds when the Welsh villagers are almost starved to death by their English masters, and the anger is then directed at the hated Jewish 'others.' Gaenor, as a symbol of Welsh territorial 'purity' is violated, by the monstrous Jew, Solomon and then her brother becomes a monstrous murderer, to resolve the tension. But the brother's madness over-reaches, and he violates his sister's love, even as her newborn child is ripped away for adoption. The taking of a child recalls an ancient Celtic fairy tale, which perpetuates the paranoia and fears of kidnapping toward other tribes, traceable all the way back to the Iron Age (Wentz 1911: 135). It's probably not intentional by Morrison, an Anglo-Jewish director, to make any primordial, proto-Welsh, Celtic connection, but nevertheless, the child of mixed parentage represents something similar to the 'changeling' child of Celtic fairytales. In the ancient fairytales, punishment for violating the fairy laws is abrupt and ruthless. Likewise, in the xenophobic allegory of *Solomon and Gaenor*, every punishment is too draconian, as every delectable pleasure is too sweet to be resisted. An external audience could sympathize with the racial conflict within the plot, but the violence is sudden and horrible. On the surface, this film seems a plea for multi-cultural tolerance in a modern multi-cultural Wales. But the psychological tentacles go deeper, drawing upon primordial passions, that is, the avoidance of shame and the irresistibility of human affection and human sexuality. The final trek by Solomon to a remote, roofless farmhouse, punctuates his estrangement as a Jew, a sexual transgressor, and as an ill-fated, romantic lover, through the heavy snowfall, into the winter of 'no regrets,' which purifies his bloodied transgressions, and prepares him for death. Solomon is sexualized as a male grotesque, which threatens the territorial claims of Welsh males.

Post-national vs anti-hegemonic subversions:

This tale of the sexualized Jew in a Welsh village is not dissimilar to the Sir Henry Rider Haggard tale of the noble but savagely sexualized Zulu warrior, whose latent male

potency becomes a metaphor of external threats, in the Transvaal Regions of the novel, *King Solomon's Mines*. Gaenor acts as well, travelling to meet Solomon, but unable to prevent the consequences of their star-crossed love. So within this reading, the Welsh village becomes a historically accurate setting to tell a Jewish story of grotesque anti-Semitism, which according to Dr. Grahame Davies, did occur at least once, in Wales (Davies 2002: 174-175). The monsters of shame, poverty, xenophobia and religious fanaticism, opposing acceptance of the Welsh Jews and opposing true love, must be adequately monstrous to bring home the 'truth' of the story. If we employ Sherwood Anderson's paradigm, then the individual 'truth' of the brutalized and transgressed Gaenor, that is, her dedication to transcendent passion and love, eventually renders her a social misfit, caught in a psychological, emotional and familial maze. Reading Gaenor's plight as a metaphor for the complicated destiny, of the modern Welsh nation, becomes salient when we allow the hyperbolic representations of violence toward the defenceless Welsh female, to crescendo into analogues of the politically monstrous. In other words, when Gaenor is 'true to herself, she is betrayed by the society and local political system, that she has inherited, not one she has chosen. This analogue of political victimisation can be a metaphor for the victimisation of the nation. Essentially, this is a story of subversion, but the subversion is not a typically Welsh tale, but a European-Jewish Diaspora tale.

We cannot conclude that *Solomon and Gaenor* should resolutely be situated within a 'cinema of the grotesque' for any elements of characterization or *mise-en-scène*. But the villains in this film – shame, poverty, and the 'tyranny of the chapels' – constitute both religious and political grotesques. The lovers cannot escape the monstrous consequences of the system in which they exist. The lovers' conundrum within the claws of the Welsh chapel's religious 'gothic' social infrastructure is clearly Kafkaesque. And the scene where Gaenor is made to stand and confess her 'sins' and accept her banishment from the

chapel, recalls the exaggerated grotesque of Puritanical religious hypocrisy in Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, and the Kafkaesque foreboding of doom that builds in Miller's *Crucible*, which is meant to be read not only as religious, but political or bureaucratic grotesque, an analogy for the excesses of McCarthyism. In this way, both *Hedd Wyn* and *Solomon and Gaenor* might be said to have dimensions of the grotesque.

The divided self and the divided nation as filmic grotesques:

The late Welsh poet and film producer, John Ormond, produced for the BBC a film, directed by Cardiff native Andrew Grieve, *On the Black Hill* (1988). This film is set on the borders of England and Wales, and focuses upon the live stories of a charming but savage, angry, religiously-fanatical Nonconformist Welsh farmer and his kindly, sophisticated and educated English Anglican wife, and the lives of their twin sons. *On the Black Hill* is not a Horror genre film, but it shares many narrative and psychological similarities with Cronenberg's *Dead Ringers*. This similarity again points to the phenomenon within European cinemas, as described by Elsaesser, where a tension seems ever-present. This tension seems to pull the European filmmaker towards the cinematic poles of serious, 'Art-House' psychodramas, or towards formulaic genre films, and in the case of Wales this is frequently gothic or Horror genre. *On the Black Hill* has many layers, and was made by 'Outsider', novel author, Bruce Chatwin. The film and novel are now read as a personal *Bildungsroman* of Chatwin, who struggled throughout his life with his identity as a bisexual and as a privileged Englishman, who lived an openly 'double life' with a wife and lovers, but went to an untimely death, never admitting he was dying of AIDS. Chatwin was a 'chameleon' who engaged in 'cultural tourism' and once wrote a book on Patagonia, after staying there, and has since been vilified by the natives for telling their story too convincingly, but not from their perspective (Chatwin 1982: iv-v). Chatwin is more successful with *On the Black Hill*, and the presence of Grieve and Ormond on the film production ensured an authentically Welsh perspective.

But the perspective of the first establishing shot is from the air, high above 'England and Wales', superimposed political titles, which open the film, as the left side of the family's farm rests in Wales, and right side rests in England. The establishing shot at the opening of the film is both functional and symbolic.

The film is filled with coded religious and sexual symbols. The twins clearly represent the tension a man experiences in constructing his masculinity, and the tension that would be particular in the early 1900s, in the choices available to Welsh men. Similarly to many Welsh films, including Sherlock's *Cameleon*, the plot turns on the military induction of the gay twin, with the damage that this does to both the gay twin and to his heterosexual brother. The machinery of the British military is a Kafkaesque trap, which will not be satisfied until it takes at least one of the brothers. The monstrosity of the military, contrasts with the idyllic and pastoral existence in the rural border country. The monstrosity of the austere, religiously anorexic father, who rages without warning, is contrasted by the warmly, human mother, with her brave and enduring spirit. The British, i.e., English, are formed as ruthless landlords, who bring turmoil and heartache to the Welsh farmers. But while there are starkly gothic and hyper-masculine instances of brutally and monstrous torture in the film, the theme of estrangement, is more compelling. The personality differences between the gay and straight twins are exaggerated mutations of the aspects of their parents' personalities and lives, which cannot be reconciled. In this respect, there is a layered psychological tier to the conflict and dramatic tension.

Miscegenation and other mutations on the liminal 'borders' of Welshness:

The appropriation of the Welsh culture and language by the high church Anglican mother is symbolic of a woman who transgresses, against the advice of her landed English peers, and marries the rough, Celtic savage. She is an alien to the chapel women's impenetrable

language, and her English breeding is mocked when her husband humiliates her for 'putting on airs', after she offered her guests embroidered and folded serviettes at tea. The miscegenation of her consummated marriage to the 'othered' Welsh male, an untameable savage in her family's eyes, results in the mutation, which produces twins. And throughout the film, the twins' differences keep pounding into the mother, the ways in which her differences from her husband cannot be reconciled or ignored. The twins are not able to detach from their mother, nor are they able to ever detach from the farm or from each other, for that matter – individualized identity is not possible for them, apart from the maternal and symbolic female. The gendered readings of *On the Black Hill* are unavoidable. The film's establishing shot, with its bombastically unfurled titles for 'England' and 'Wales', introduce the dichotomy of the divided and transgressed female territory, right from the beginning.

Filmic reversal of gendered roles in Rhys Davies's adapted narratives:

Our complicated 'speculative' reading of the first two films as a Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque', followed by the gendered and post-colonial film of Welsh Borders 'estrangement,' is now followed by several angry and benignly morbid psychodramas: Caradoc Evans is a Welsh, turn-of-the-century contemporary of David Lloyd George (British Prime Minister 1916-1922), who reacted angrily to his Welsh-speaking, Nonconformist upbringing, and fashioned in his fiction a monstrously religiously 'Gothic' grotesque, wherein he created for English audiences (his literature would be considered 'First Contact'), rural Welshmen as fanatical, and primitive mutations of extra-human brutality. Rhys Davies echoed Evans's sentiments, but produced a body of literature in which, he attacked the 'tyranny of the chapels,' but with a more subtle and nuanced touch. Davies's characters are less bombastically strict and fanatical than Evans's, but this internalized insidiousness makes them more unforgettably cloying and haunting. Paul Turner produced for the BBC a series of adapted short stories called

Arswyd y Byd, or Tales from Wales, turning to Rhondda-born Rhys Davies several times, for the narrative source. It might be helpful to insert at this point, the frequent usage of established literary works in Welsh filmic production. Many post-colonial theorists have noted how this use of established authors, satisfies two important points: it's more economical to adapt, rather than commission a new, un-tested script, and it importantly belies a chronic lack of confidence, or national second-guessing, about the perceived quality of post-colonial national narrative sources.

In the drama, *The Chosen One* (1982), Turner is keenly true to Davies's vision, and creates a mildly claustrophobic conflict between a dowager English landlady who has unrequited sexual affections for a handsome and virile, however congenial and simple, Welsh country tenant farmer. The landlady takes revenge for the young Welshman daring to bring home a pretty local girl friend by informing him he is going to be evicted from the cottage where his family has lived for over one hundred years. This forms a bureaucratic grotesque, since the Welshman lacks the intelligence, talent and funds to escape the spider-like web of economic chaos instigated by the jealous landlady, and she is a monstrous hag, dining by candlelight, as she summons her prey to an audience during her dinner, when it's apparent that her dogs eat better than the Welshman does. The landlady is a sexual predator, and Turner creates for us a virile Welsh male who lacks self-determination, as a condition of his 'othered' Welsh-ness. This effectively renders the Welshman a 'male grotesque' and his humanity and dignity are transmuted by the offer to save his cottage by pleasing the monstrous landlady sexually, an offer more implicit than explicit. The bizarre sexual politics between Welshman and landlady are a subterfuge, but brilliantly dominate the narrative, and one might imagine coming away from the drama feeling slightly 'sleazy and gritty' for watching it. A post-colonial and gendered reading, punctuates the Welshman's existential dilemma: he cannot ignore his ordinal position in the hierarchy of the British post-imperial social and economic

patriarchy, which places him further down the line from the mad landlady. However tyrannical and insane, she is more 'white' being English, and holds 'all the cards'. That she would use her political and economic advantage to intrude upon the Welshman's affection and sexuality is a monstrosity, which his fragile, agrarian 'othered' construction of Welsh masculinity can barely sustain.

The transgression of the female territory is inverted and exaggerated in this drama, since instead of the cultured and landed English woman submitting to the tyrannical Welsh farmer, as we saw in *On the Black Hill*, in *The Chosen One*, the Welsh farmer is exquisitely sexualized, a male grotesque trapped in the economic absurdity of imposed sexual relations with the haggish, female monstrosity. The innocence and blissful moments enjoyed by the Welshman and his girlfriend create hyperbolic contrast with the cloying grasp of the landlady. The pastoral landscape is almost another 'unnamed' character, under Turner's loving camera, but brings no relief from the tedium of the landlady's arachnid appetites. Turner's painterly style situates his films firmly in a European cinema tradition, which romanticizes the rural countryside, as seen in *Jean de Florette* (1986) *Manon of the Spring* (1987), *My Life as a Dog* (1985), all of which presuppose the idyllic countryside as an eternal refuge for patriots and outcasts.

The beautiful bleakness of being or growing up with shame and madness:

The pastoral Welsh landscape is also frequently used in Welsh filmic product, to heighten the desolate and the grotesque, or to contrast with the insidious grip of generational poverty or religious or political intrigue. Caradoc Pritchard wrote a semi-biographical novel about growing up in rural Bethesda, a frustrated victim of his mother's insanity. A film with the same title, was produced by Emlyn Endaf, called, *Un Nos Ola Leuad*, or *One Moonlit Night* (1991). This film captures the stark landscape as alternately pastoral and protective, and then desolate and threatening, perhaps as an analogy of the 'emotional

roller coaster' a boy might experience, if growing up in the custody of a mad woman. The constructions of masculinity available to the boy are limited to the poor slate quarrymen, and the ever-present Welsh Anglican Canon or chapel minister, both equally 'gothic' in their stark presentation and demeanour. The young protagonist is caught in a lonely, horribly conflicted *Bildungsroman*, which mutates his psychological health into a way to protect himself and to cope with his mother's madness. The grotesquely Oedipal relationship between the emotionally incestuous mother and son foreshadows a horrible ending. There is a suggestion in the film that the relationship is physically incestuous, but this isn't evident in the novel. But it seems like director Emyln Endaf is attempting to create a filmic hyperbole, which gives the audience the nightmarish sense of chronic entrapment, which the young boy must be struggling with, as he tries to grow up, while finding a way to defend himself from the tentacles of his sick mother. This is a familial and psychological grotesque, because there are no good choices available to the protagonist: both staying with his mother and putting her to death or into an asylum might occur to the boy, but they all incur loss and more pain.

There is also the unspoken tension in the background of this and many other Welsh films, where maintaining social *parchus* or respectability becomes a pathetic obsession, in light of the obviously shameful implication of having a mad mother. In the case of *One Moonlit Night*, a sort of fatalism seems to remain in the back of the young protagonist's psyche. If we apply the construct of mythical structure theory to this story, the original 'Ordinary World' which our hero, the boy finds himself in, is already a bleak landscape, physically and emotionally. The bleak rural landscape becomes a metaphor of a harsh psychological and social canvas, upon which the narrative unfolds. The Welsh filmic usage, of a bleak rural motif is frequently employed by Emyln and other Welsh directors, as in Emyln's *One Moonlit Night* and also in *Gaucha* (1985), which plays against the Diaspora Welsh-Patagonian *estancias*, or desert ranch scenes, where the sandstone cliffs

could be called the 'unnamed cast member of the film'. Similar usage of a relentless bleak landscape is common in Third cinema, Brazilian post-colonial films, notably in the films of Andrucha Waddington, *House of Sand* (2005), and in *Me, You, Them* (2000).

Sherlock's endless intricacies and layers of estrangement:

The insidiously familial grotesque is echoed again in the intensely Welsh story of *Branwen* (1994), directed by Ceri Sherlock. The loving and trustworthy brother Mathonwy, is shown in delicate and playful flashbacks as a perfect sibling, who shape-shifts into the monstrously incendiary baby-killer, and Branwen cannot escape the clutches of this madness, which infects her, which infects her husband, which infects her brothers, and which destroys her child. *Branwen* pivots on the tragically-assembled Welsh construction of post-Imperial masculinity, as a British (understood to be English) soldier, and this theme, of a Welshman who goes mad or who is mutilated when he chooses the path of a hyper-masculine British military ideal, is repeated in many Welsh narratives. Implicit in all these narratives is the gendered reading that reveals how the Welshman cannot choose the 'othered' male status of a English 'British' soldier, without risking loss: we see in *Hedd Wyn*, *On the Black Hill*, *Branwen*, *Cameleon*, *Boy Soldier*, and other films, that the Welshman who chooses the imperial construction of masculinity thinks he will achieve English 'whiteness' but he is usually betrayed by his English masters.

And so the Welshman as a British soldier pursues an elusive 'equality' promised by collusion with the patriarchy, and ends up monstrously transmuted by his loyalty to the 'male' patriarchy, which ultimately betrays or is challenged by his transcending commitment to his 'female' Welsh-ness. Both John Beynon and Christopher Gittings repeatedly refer to the fragility of 'male myths', popular among adolescent boys (Gittings 1996: 15-17; Beynon 2001: 24). Gittings creates a historical context for the filmic

representations of late twentieth century men, who he sees as having been weaned upon popular literature, including the novels of Sir Henry Rider Haggard. Gittings posits that the construction of masculinity, fostered by these adventure novels, is embraced by developing males throughout every race, class, and echelon of the former British Imperial lands. The Welshman who goes to war might be simply following a trajectory of adolescent adventure, which coincidentally reinforces a colonial or post-Imperial project. It's when the Welshman discovers that he's participating in this project, or when the project takes a personal toll, that the Welshman realizes he has been betrayed by his naïve fantasies. In this respect, the recurring narrative of a Welshman who goes to war, and then returns, once betrayed, becomes a metaphor for the national crisis for Wales. Similarly to Canada, Australia, and Scotland, Wales both participated in the Imperial British project, and was victimized culturally and socially by this participation, producing conflicted and ambiguous sentiments in various Welsh populations.

Incendiary Celtic circuses and the carnivalesque from Fellini to Sherlock:

Sherlock, similarly to Paul Turner, is clearly a European filmmaker, even though he studied (albeit briefly) at U.C.L.A. film school. Sherlock uses wildly incendiary 'carnavalesque' moments in his films, to drive their denouements, and this is what Elsaesser has described as the tension between 'Art-House vs. genre cinema'. Sherlock creates intense psychodramas, filled with coded nationalistic statements and allusions, and constantly straddles the line of creating a Horror genre film, which would be read externally as a cinematic grotesque. Let us therefore refer, to the conceptualization of the grotesque by Mikhail Bakhtin (Bakhtin 1941: 1-2), which privileged various aspects of the carnivalesque, as we consider the symbolism of Sherlock's *Branwen*. The carnivalesque for Bakhtin is a conceptual moment, when incendiary chaos is permitted during a scheduled season, as an act of political or cultural subversion.

The pyrotechnic obsession of Branwen's stepbrother foreshadows his fiery infanticide of Branwen's and her husband's child, the product of Irish and Welsh miscegenation. Sherlock inserts codes everywhere: Branwen's brother is named Mathonwy, a heroic Welsh mythical character, who ironically destroys the 'house' of Wales, represented by Branwen, who is in turn, named for the mythical matron of ancient *Prydein* or Britain. Sherlock seems to be saying that the only way to resolve the imbalance caused by the moral compromise of the brother's participation in the English military project, is to see the soldier-brother lose his mind, which in turn, absolves him for the destruction which he must bring, a destruction needed to 'level the political playing field' of suppressed Welsh nationalism. To apply the mythic structural construct, our hero and heroine in *Branwen* are fractured characters entangled in an epic web of competing British identities, as they are born in an 'Ordinary World' which is previously skewed, with the residue of Imperial British exploitation of Ireland and Wales.

The use of the mythical structure in a film reading is useful but not conclusive, because the identification of various 'monads' of representation, even when situated within the denotative analytical field of mythical structure, does not yield a comprehensive understanding. In order for our reading to qualify as national cinema analysis, a meta-critical perspective must be attempted. For example, our discussion of the female grotesque within Welsh cinema has focused often upon representations of what we have termed, the 'male grotesque', that is, fractured or exaggerated (or suppressed) constructions of masculinity, which might be seen as grotesque, because of their externally induced, psychological or social artifice, exaggerated manufacture, and their related, dubious sustainability. If we merely recapitulate our recent discussion, we might see trends that emerge, which eventually could allow us to make more conclusive extrapolations about Welsh cinema.

Constellating the aesthetic and industrial categories within a national mythos:

This process might be seen as ‘Benjaminian’ in that it relies upon the enumerating of the dimensions of a national cultural product, which we situate in a historical framework, while ‘constellating’ within an industrial milieu, in hopes of finally distilling a filmic ‘Welsh idiom’ (Bullock and Jennings 1996: 7). There is a precedent for this clustering of aesthetic dimensions within a historical context, *à la* Walter Benjamin, within recent analysis within film studies, which seeks to depart from the earlier paradigms. If we conceive of a national cinema as a genre, as we have already suggested, then this departure seems useful in the identification and deconstruction of accepted genres, as Adam Lowenstein introduces his own opposition within comparative national cinemas, between dimensions of ‘Art-House’ cinema and the ‘disreputable’ genre of horror (Lowenstein 2005: 3). Lowenstein’s deconstruction of the genres within a nation-specific historical and cultural context, becomes the framework for an analysis, with not only insight into each national cinema he compares, but also into the meaning of this ‘indigenizing’ of the genres, in a trans-national context

As the meta-critical turn in this last example suggests, Lowenstein views the marginalization of each of these film-makers – and the systematic devaluation of horror films as a genre – as symptoms of larger conceptual fractures within the national imaginaries that have developed around the traumas of twentieth century history. His point is not that these filmmakers should be given pride of place in their respective national cinema histories, but that their work profoundly destabilizes those histories (Rowe 2006: 2).

For an applied example of this Lowenstein’s clustering or ‘Benjaminian’ constellating, let us consider the Welsh soldier, the critical locations where we might posit said soldier, and the variety of ‘clustered’ Welsh films where this soldier under discussion, dwells (both figuratively and physically): The frequent filmic usage of the Welsh soldier, as an inherently contradictory narrative ‘landscape’, wherein an imperial British or post-imperial construction of masculinity is offered to ‘othered’ Welsh males, seems important to our general discussion of ‘estrangement’ in Welsh cinema.

European estrangements and exile:

To further decode this 'estrangement' of the Welsh masculine constructions, as represented in Welsh filmic product, we return to the analysis of Elsaesser. Elsaesser typifies European cinemas, as we have mentioned, as cinemas caught in opposing dichotomies: In the section, "*Two European Cinemas: Art-House vs. Genre Cinema, Art-House as Genre Cinema?*" Elsaesser describes a pattern of estrangement from patriarchy, represented metaphorically by the stories wherein the fractured, post-modern European male is displaced physically or emotionally from all that represents the paternal

Thus, national cinema becomes, on the one hand, a pseudo-Oedipal drama around paternity and father-son relationships, and on the other hand, a matter of exile, self-exile and return (Elsaesser 2005: 41-42).

For Elsaesser, Hollywood's conflicted male relationships, including that of individual men toward themselves, move toward a resolution, as is the nature of American cinema, a national cinema which assumes that 'problems can be solved.' But Elsaesser contrasts representations of various constructions of masculinity within European cinemas, as part of an impulse to 'probe' rather than solve, since according to Paul Schrader (whom Elsaesser quotes) Europeans create cinemas built upon a presupposition which says, 'Life gives one dilemmas', which 'cannot be solved' but must be 'explored' (Elsaesser 2005: 44-45). The cinema, which emerges from an analysis of the filmic product of Wales, reveals a displaced but still very European cinema, in the sense that Elsaesser and Schrader describe it. If one looks only at the body of work created by five of the most prolific Welsh filmmakers, John Ormond, Endaf Emlyn, Marc Evans, Karl Francis, and Ceri Sherlock, it might be possible to identify opposing dichotomies which parallel Elsaesser's 'Art-House Cinema vs. Genre Cinema'. For example, as mentioned above, there is a tendency with all five of these directors, to create films which explore the fractured lives of disfigured male characters (usually in psycho-dramas or war films), alternating with films about similarly 'estranged' male characters, only with exaggerated narratives to the point of being Horror genre or Psychological Drama or War genres.

The Welshness of camouflage, cowardice and deceit:

So as we continue our readings, we will see that there is a significant enumeration of fractured masculine and hyper-masculine Welsh characters. Consequently, one has to ask, if what might be seen as a fetishization of hyper-masculine military characters, or as a romanticizing of generational madness, isn't indicative of emerging (albeit *de facto*) themes within a filmic 'Welsh idiom'. Accordingly, we might observe that frequent interpolation of the thwarted Welsh soldier or of the banality of madness, might be understood as significant narrative devices in Welsh filmic product. In turn, these devices might point us to cinematic and generic conventions, which work to 'destabilize' previous histories about the national cinema of Wales. For example, we see another fractured 'male grotesque', a Welsh, 'post-imperial' construction of masculinity, in Sherlock's *Cameleon* (1997). Sherlock has showcased a story of desertion, which is as much a character study as it is a community study. He focuses upon the perspective of a World War II deserter named Delme. Delme is a Welshman who realizes his mistake in participating in the British national project, as a soldier. He runs away from the Battle of Dunkirk, and hides in the attics, of a row of connected, terraced Welsh houses. The village is typical for Wales, and the lane with its grey houses could be any street in Wales. Much of the film is spent with Delme peering at the residents down below, crouched in fear of being found out. Sherlock has given us a brilliant metaphor for observing the Welsh nation, with all its banal peculiarities, through the keyhole of history, as it were. The deserter in cramped in the dusty lofts, alive, but cut off from an honest life, and the soldier crouching among the attics' antiques might also be a metaphor for looking into the future, that is, into the national future for Wales, which at the time of the film's production, has not yet passed the 1997 Welsh Devolution referendum. And the perspective is that of a Welshman who has gone away, and done what was expected of him, by joining the military. But the sentiments are mixed and extreme toward him.

and he must stay hidden, as the Nazi-like military police are never far away. Sherlock's rendering of this story is derivative of other films, including the sequestered Jewish heroine in *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1959). *Cameleon* calls to mind the Spanish film by Argentine director, Tulio Demicheli, called *Carmen la de Ronda* (1959), and Marlon Brando's role in *Morituri* (1965).

Enticing the audience as a collective voyeur:

The perspective of a character hiding in the attic, as a metaphor of cinematic vision, or as the personification of the cinematic apparatus, is first seen the 1923 Japanese Erotic/Artistic Horror film, *The Watcher in the Attic* (released on DVD in 1976), and later echoed in *Hitchcock's Rear Window* (1954). Not only is Delme watching the daily activities of everyone below, the film begins with neighbors peering out windows onto the commotion below, caused by the military police searching for Delme. Sherlock uses this to capture the Welsh cultural value of *parchus* or respectability, which is a recurring theme in Welsh storylines. The Welsh as a historic community need to maintain 'face' as the Japanese call it, and to appear respectable. This leads to a lot of peering out windows, from behind the Welsh *Mam's* meticulously clean, lacey curtains, to see what the neighbors are doing, which is a splendid cinematic metaphor, of double meanings, both the filmic sense of a cinematic apparatus, and of the Welsh sense of community shame and respect. In *Cameleon*, Sherlock echoes the tension of suspense and lust, famously seen in Hitchcock's *Rear Window* scenes, and intensified by the audience's shared voyeurism. *Cameleon's* audiences' voyeurism gazes at scenes, typically quirky but banally everyday, of Welsh village life that is trapped in staccato cameo sequences, of over-heard bits of conversations, eavesdropped by Delme the hidden soldier, and subsequently by the audience. Sherlock anticipates the success of the recent Italian film, *La finestra di fronte* or *Facing Windows* (2003), whose plot turns on views of the neighbors stolen through shutters, drapes, louvers, and windows. In *Facing Windows*, the

characters have a shared courtyard, similar to the shared garden in *Rear Window*. The courtyard and the garden become the terraced row of Welsh houses in *Cameleon*, all symbols of shared lives, shared histories, and shared destinies. The shared spaces also become metaphors for the female, which is violated by murder and lust in Hitchcock's film, by adulterous affairs and a senile, old Jewish man in the film set in Rome *La finestra di fronte*, and by the intruding British military police in *Cameleon*.

Building the filmic equivalent of a Venus Fly Trap:

Sherlock creates a claustrophobic atmosphere, which recalls the plot in Slovak director Juraj Jakubisko's *The Deserter and the Nomads* (1968), and the bureaucratic irony of a grotesque Kafka plot, best caught on film in *Catch-22* (1970). *Cameleon* contains the irony of a 'Catch-22' wherein the soldier has returned to the refuge of the female homestead of girlfriend and *Mam*, but the safety of the female 'place' has led the military police there, and so betrayed him. Delme has fled the captivity of his military post for the 'captivity' of his entrapment in the attic above the women he loves. This reversal of the role of the female as a 'safe' refuge for the Welsh male makes entering the house a dangerous, uncanny and frightening thing, rather than a safe activity. The inversion of the female symbols of the hearth and protective matriarchy are justified, because Delme has betrayed his Welsh-ness by joining the English army, and going to war. This inversion of the female-safe with the female-dangerous is typical of Horror film formulae, and Welsh films constantly straddled the line of Art-House Drama and Horror. Sherlock begins *Cameleon* with a flash of lightning illuminating the Welsh terrace, in a way, which seems like a confusing Horror foreshadowing or homage, attributable to James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931), with its haunting light on the Transylvanian blind fiddler's hovel and the iconic castle, or in this case as Sherlock flashes lightning upon the opening, establishing shot of the chalky grey row houses, as an omen of the coming danger, which will mutilate the safe, female homestead into suspense-filled trap. The theme of a *Catch-*

22, bureaucratic grotesque continues, since Delme's homestead refuge from the battlefield has become an odd prison. This narrative inversion in film is earlier seen, when Clint Eastwood plays a runaway soldier, trapped in a Southern Gothic farmhouse by competing women suitors, in *The Beguiled* (1971), and also seen (much more joyfully, considering the profligate sex scenes) in the pre-Franco Spanish film by Fernando Trueba, *Belle Époque* (1992). Other nations emerging from colonial occupations or oppression have seized upon the theme of the deserter soldier, as in Albanian Gjergj Xhuvani's *I dashur armik* or *Dear Enemy* (2004), or *Sleep Sweet, My Darling* (2005) by Croatian filmmaker Neven Hitrec.

Privileging Deserters and other criminals in the Welsh grotesque:

The Deserter Soldier serves enigmatic purposes, which draws audiences into simultaneous sympathies with a conflicted repulsion. Sherlock uses sophisticated coding and uses allusions to well-known Welsh narrative themes, which might slip by less informed audiences. For example, the Hero in many Celtic, Proto-Welsh, and Medieval Welsh stories and myths, is a warrior or god who has the ability to change form, a 'Shape-shifter', epitomized by *Gwenhwyfar*, *Taliesin*, and *Gwydion fab Dôn*. All of these nationalistic Welsh heroes are 'Shape-shifters', which means they escape by changing their appearance and fleeing, hence the 'chameleon' a reptilian camouflage expert, in the title of the film. Sherlock adds this marker of Welsh-ness, which esteems the one who hides and runs away, for nationalistic reasons.

Post-colonial film industries prefer adaptations:

Dave Berry has noted how the advent of Welsh television in the mid-1950s permitted the Welsh for the first time to have an element of cultural self-determination, that is, they could produce Welsh filmic material intended for the dual purposes of cinema screening and broadcast, material which for the first time could be 'by the Welsh, of the Welsh, and

for the Welsh' (Berry 1994: 355). Berry calls the early Welsh filmic prepossession with the adaptation of literary sources, a 'lack of imagination', but this study sees instead a nationally-enjoyed, habitual lack of self-confidence, as the cause for this reliance upon older sources, (a phenomenon which frequently plagues post-colonial nations) as a better reason for the reliance upon adaptations, as described often by John MacLeod in reference to Wales (McLeod 2003: 2). Ceri Sherlock's films are laden with coded nationalistic references of both linguistic and mythological value. This insertion of coded nationalistic symbols seems to indicate that Sherlock's work is intended to serve the needs, of recalling the national heritage and perhaps to represent an imagined national destiny. Bhabha refers to this as 'writing the nation' (Bhabha 1990: 41). And frequent Welsh filmic explorations, which privilege a fetishization of the hyper-masculine, along with the disfigurement or social 'mutilation' of these tenuous constructions of masculinity, seems to suggest the same processes, typical of post-colonial cultures, as discussed in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (Ashcroft, Griffiths et al. 2002: 4-5).

Cinema-therapy for the national conscience:

The book by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, differentiates between the literatures of societies which are 'settler' colonial societies, i.e., Canada, Australia, and which are 'invaded', i.e., Ireland and India. Our analysis of the narratives in Welsh filmic product, created since the mid-1950s advent of Welsh cultural self-determinism, which Berry described, seems to leave many Welsh products suspended between referenced trends of the literary poles of 'settler' and 'invader.' There is indeed, among the commissioning Welsh broadcasters, a persisting paranoia (which is generally expected in 'invaded' post-colonial cultures) about appearing to be substandard in U.K. broadcasting and cultural values, as Iona Jones recently stated

that we are no longer seen as marginal outposts on the edge of the UK's broadcasting and film industries (Jones 2007: 1).

The predilection towards presenting, fractured Welsh military outcasts as protagonists, on the other hand, seems more indicative of the need to process the national guilt or resentment over individual or collective Welsh participation in the British Imperial and post-Imperial project experienced by at least some percentage of the population. The ambiguity of the so-called 'just cause' war discourse in Welsh narratives highlights the national ambivalence towards any attempted revisionist representations, which all of these filmic products mentioned attain to, in some respect. Consequently, not only would the historical and political outlook of Sherlock's films not be limited to the linguistic group of Welsh-speakers, for whom they were produced, but also limited to those in Wales who share the outlook that Wales was somehow a historical victim or at least a historical party in Imperial collusions.

Cy Endfield's *Zulu* (1964) is understood as such a processing of the Welsh participation in the British South African campaigns, which are rationalized as colonial, but for the 'good of the Zulus' who are about to be enslaved by the more cruel Boers. Recent Welsh film scholarship understands *Zulu* to also satisfy an 'indigenizing of the genre' of Westerns, as noted by Robert Shail, in the *Cyfrwng Welsh Media Journal* (Shail 2002: 18-19). While *Zulu* addresses the morality and assumed nobility of Welsh participation in a specific military campaign of a specific colonial event, Sherlock and other Welsh producers prefer a more general discussion of the meaning of Welsh participation in 'foreign', i.e., British armies. The iconic Welsh nationalistic legend (which has grown around the events called '*Tân yn Llŷn* or 'Fire in the Llŷn Peninsula') refers to an arsonist burning British military bombing buildings constructed in North Wales over local objections, and the famous trials of the convicted arsonists. BBC Wales producer John Hefin creates a balanced discussion of the moral arguments about this Welsh participation

in the post-Imperial project, in the film, *Penyberth* (1985), directed by Peter Edwards. Hefin and Edwards in *Penyberth*, have no interest in drawing out the layers of generational angst and familial neuroses which drive the film dramas of Sherlock, Evans, Emlyn and other Welsh film producers. Any consideration of the events which occurred in *Penyberth* are fraught with emotional responses, since the Welsh population is divided as to whether they consider the arson which included Welsh nationalist Saunders Lewis, was an act of vandalism, or an act of patriotism. Further complicating this is the revisionist approach to Lewis, which emerges among historians in the 1960s, since Lewis's iconic status and his Welsh nationalistic activities were being somewhat eclipsed by revelations of his apparent early sympathies for ideals which in retrospect, might be more related to latent racism. Nevertheless, *Penyberth* is intended to allow Welshmen to retell their own story about an important nationalistic event.

As we discussed earlier in our study, all but a tiny percentage of Welsh films have been produced by broadcasters; that is, films commissioned by HTV, Channel Four, BBC, or S4C. Most of this filmic material, as imagined by the producers and directors, was fulfilling a 'cinematic remit', that is a remit of recalling particular national histories, or of disturbing established histories. Hefin and Edwards introduce their film with the suspenseful incendiary scene, first of the sequence of events, since this is a story told in the 'here and now' of television 'time'. Unlike Sherlock, Francis, Ormond, Turner, and other Welsh filmmakers, the style of both Hefin and Edwards tends toward an unromantic rendering. Hefin and Edwards produce a narrative, which is effective in isolating some of the truths about Saunders Lewis – namely, that he was a bit of an austere and harsh individual in some parts of his personality. This treatment would be cutting edge for the Welsh speaking audience, who tended to hold Lewis in high regard, and might tend to be less critical, in light of his contributions to Welsh language equality in Wales. The male constructions are odd, but distinctly Welsh. The heroes of *Penyberth* inhabit a 'No-

Man's-Land' of Welsh consciousness, which esteems the patriotic rebel in principle, although not necessarily in action. As a result, Hefin and Edwards' film is made-for-television, though having the feel of a cinematic event, in its introduction and opening scenes, but then lapsing into an episodic 'feel' similar to serial Westerns or Detective stories.

While Hefin and Edwards do not tread into the territory of extremes (which other Welsh directors use) with their creation of predictable, and mostly two-dimensional characters, whether they are historical or iconic policemen, soldiers or detectives, this character development gives their work either a distanced 'cartoon' feel or an inclination toward the allegorical, which was demonstrated in the same way by John Ford in many Westerns and dramas. Hefin overcomes this 'TV-feel', later in his film *Grand Slam* (1978), but Edwards exploits it to his advantage but indigenizing the genre of Detective/Police story for Welsh television, with the serial, *A Mind to Kill* (1994-1996). It's difficult to find a Welsh film, which does attempt some psychological processing of past military involvement of Welshmen to some degree, and the sub-plot of *Grand Slam* is wrapped up in the 1940s war theme, realized through a trip to Paris. Edwards will not realize again, anything like the cinematic achievements of Sherlock, Francis, Ormond, or Turner, in their commissioned films for television, until the *Bride of War* (1998). In this chapter we have attempted to expand upon the concept of estrangement, as a variety of 'shifts' or 'displacements', which might typify the emerging national cinema of Wales. We add this dimension of displacement or 'estrangement' to the dimensions of the cinema (as we understand it as a cinema) that serves to represent markers and signs of Welsh-ness.

Chapter 9: Concluding Chapter

A summary of our findings and our results

(as they compare explicitly, against objectives stated in the Introduction)

In this chapter we address some of the conclusions, which might be drawn from this study. In the first part of this chapter, we will summarize what was learned and how it can be applied. In the last part, we will consider an overview of the ‘film culture and industry in Wales’ and mention the possibilities for future research. We refer to our efforts in the first chapter to contextualize the accessing and acquisition of Welsh filmic products for study, which served to further situate this study in the blended streams of past and current, industrial, historical and political currents of Welsh culture (which influence scholarship and understanding). After viewing and analyzing our filmic products, we fitted them into traditional and speculative film readings and into several types of meta-criticism. We follow by rehearsing our strategy of research, which began with definitions of terms and concepts, followed by a review and analysis of relevant literature. This review was followed by reports on our viewing and analysis of specific samples of Welsh filmic material (with the scope and limits of this sample, as well as the scope and limits of the study) described in the first two chapters. These meta-critical conditions were situated in historical and industrial contexts (also described at length in our first and second chapters), which were constellated in comparative and contrasted groupings. These groupings or categories present a new way of organizing the ‘knowledges’ about the National cinema of Wales, and about individual and national identities in Wales, to the extent that this cinema constructs or represents various identities, understood to be ‘Welsh’. A recapitulation of the historical context of the Welsh film industry followed by our study of aesthetic and industrial categories (which might be useful when attempting to identify a ‘Welsh cinema’) raises new questions about

the possible, continuing research in this field. The direction of this research, the practical and plausible aspects of future research, and likely critical tropes are subsequently considered. Finally, the significance and relevance of this study and suggested future research are described.

From constructing a ‘canon’ of Welsh films versus ‘critical regionalisms’ or ‘new waves’; also from a ‘national cinema’ versus ‘world cinema’ — answering our explicit questions:

The explicit objective of this study has been to study a significant sample of Welsh filmic product and to determine whether our discoveries regarding this sample, merit an informed association of the terms ‘Welsh’, ‘national’ and ‘cinema’. In the course of our Introduction and review of relevant literature, we noted how the conceptualizing of a ‘national cinema’ has been an evolving and contested construct within film studies, as well as in the parlance of popular culture. This study sought to introduce a contextual and aesthetic study of Welsh filmic product and related British and regional Celtic products, from within Wales, Britain, and the larger so-called ‘Celtic periphery’. We sought to balance this contextual and aesthetic study within a larger film studies paradigm, which privileges both film content and aesthetics, as well as film history and the field of production. We sought to inform this balanced approach with considerations of the wider studies of the international audiovisual industry, conditioned by the observations of various trans-national schools, including the field of mass communication theory. Consequently, our questions have been specific, but our frame of reference has been intentionally both local and global. In other words, we sought to make this study unique and relevant by situating new discoveries about the particular within a context of the conceptually universal.

Our main thesis question pointed to the local and to the specific, ‘What constitutes a national cinema for Wales, and how does this cinema construct or reflect a Welsh national identity?’ However, the presence of the terms ‘national cinema’ in our primary question implies a broader, more internationally informed perspective. Additionally, we asked ‘How Does the Welsh National Cinema Represent or Construct a National Identity for Wales?’ which points to the specificity of a ‘Welsh’ identity, but implies situating this identity within broader historical and cultural milieus. So the scope of our first two chapters included consideration of Welsh filmic product and writings about this and related products, which addressed these queries: ‘What is a cinema?’ ‘What generally constitutes a national cinema?’ ‘What specifically constitutes a national cinema for Wales?’ ‘How do national cinemas generally represent and/or generally construct a national identity?’ ‘Does what constitutes a Welsh National Cinema benefit the national identity of Wales?’ ‘How does Welsh National Cinema and the effects of this cinema on national identity contrast with cinemas of other comparable national or ethnic groupings?’

The ‘fragile perch’ of a current, ‘Alternative Film Studies bias’:

By asking these questions, we created a conceptual trap for ourselves, since one of our first conclusions was this: within the field of film studies, constructs of ‘national cinema’ are contested and evolving. Indeed, almost every recent study that attempts to conceptualize ‘national cinema’ begins with a historical recap of the use of the term, followed by an introductory essay that intends to deconstruct the term and its usage. This study attempts to expand the body of knowledge within national cinema analysis, by bringing to Welsh filmic product analysis what we call the ‘Alternative Film Studies

bias'. The Alternative Film Studies bias (as we coin it here for the first time) is an academic approach which privileges traditional film studies, but which seeks to deconstruct those same film studies, by detecting presuppositions and the points of reference of those studies, within the context of an Hollywood/American Independent Film Producers' industrial paradigm. Our study is further nuanced by the application of postcolonial theory to Welsh cultural studies that, is in turn informed by feminist, gender and Queer theory. So every 'Alternative Film Studies bias' that is invented seeks to disturb the 'centre' of prevailing notions, or to at least augment the scholarly *status quo*. 'Traditional' film studies, refers to the first attempt to systematically consolidate the proliferation of film scholarship, which mostly began just after World War II with the publishing of the French *Cahiers du Cinéma*. Every significant and newly oppositional perspective refers to itself as somehow 'alternative', with regards to its relative divergence with or away from the 'orthodoxy' with the prevailing view. Territorial alignments within film studies have re-traced along existing geographical, scholarly, disciplinary, and political lines of demarcation, generally speaking

The consolidation of film studies as an academic discipline in Britain and America in the 1960s was made possible by several factors: the burgeoning film club and film society movements in Europe and North America in the 1940s and 1950s; the development of film culture among a growing circuit of archives, museums, and festivals; the influence of art cinemas of (primarily) Europe as a form of highbrow legitimization of film as an art; and the increasing attention given to film as cultural artefact and to directors as artists by belletrist journalism and critics publishing in a diversified array of print media (Betz 2006: 1-2).

Various developments influence the notions that drive the prevailing 'alternative view' of the day, and the arguments have often become pointed and polarizing. The first scholars to map out the field in the early 1960s claimed a historical 'orthodoxy' as is often the case among historians of any field. Teshome Gabriel tells us

Official history tends to arrest the future by means of the past. Historians privilege the written word of the text – it serves as their rule of law. It claims a ‘centre’ which continuously marginalizes others. In this way its ideology inhibits people from constructing their own history or histories (Gabriel 1989: 53).

This marginalization process (by the centre) becomes the impetus compelling new studies in the field to attack and to deconstruct the former assumptions. Hence, this study boldly claims ‘Alternative’ bias that will doubtlessly be knocked down by the next wave of scholarship. This process is unavoidable, but hopefully this study and others are written with a sense of circumspection, which is relevant and salient to the moment and to the case-at-hand. Homi Bhabha tells us that the best way to avoid becoming the hardened ‘centre’ of orthodoxy, as well as the way to avoid becoming the mirror ‘opposite’ in antagonism to the critical ‘orthodoxy’, is to bear in mind that the alternative criticism should not invent a ‘pure radicalism’, but instead must nuance the formerly asserted, as Bhabha asks rhetorically

Is our only way out of such dualism the espousal of an implacable oppositionality or the invention of an originary counter-myth of radical purity? (Bhabha 1989: 111)

As new notions become popular in scholarly circles they reverberate into the revisionist ‘tool-boxes’ of new scholars in each respective field. The field of film studies has been influenced by numerous developments in the past four decades, including the influence of linguistics, semiotics, Western post-structuralism (Lacan, Derrida, Foucault), post-colonial theory and post-modern theory. Our coinage of ‘Alternative Film Studies bias’ echoes earlier voices, including Jim Pines and Paul Willemen, when they sought to position themselves in opposition to ‘*Screen*’ and to ‘*Sight & Sound*’ magazines (by offering three decades of film articles) as an alternative with ‘*Framework*’ (here editorialized in the 1999 re-launch of the electronic journal)

The 1999 re-launch of this major film journal explores new directions in cinema, media and cultural studies. Issues will be primarily devoted to studies of single

themes which will explore crossovers and connections in cinema and media. Our focus is to broaden debates in popular and independent movies and media. We aim to promote discussion and exchanges among academics and media practitioners from different intellectual traditions and national backgrounds (Pines and Willemen 1999: 1).

In the following section we will offer an example of how film scholar Dudley Andrews intentionally positions his essay's argument as 'alternative' by the inclusion of the topic of (traditional) film festivals, in the consideration of the analysis and valuation of films. As we mentioned above, there have been historical trends in the field of film studies, as described by scholars, including Paul Willemen, who coined the phrase 'Archaeology of Film Studies', among the first, self-reflective analyses of the field, especially in the United Kingdom (Gledhill and Williams 2000; Hutchings, Jancovich et al. 2000). Along with this expansion of film studies scholarship in journals and magazines, Mark Betz mapped the phenomena of specialty film studies, 'Little Books' publishing (mostly supported by the British Film Institute and other governmental entities, and closely related to the re-printing of doctoral autographs and proceedings from academic conferences) from 1960-1990

On the other hand, I am putting forward a thesis that is polemical and driven by a certain logic of return: that little books encapsulate a film culture and study that were instrumental in the creation of academic film studies; that this culture and study were different in Britain than it was in America; that the economies of academic film studies that emerged in these two national contexts are interrelated but also in certain ways distinct; that debates concerning the parts that theoretical and historical discourses have contributed in the shaping of Anglo-American film studies are ones deriving from differing geographic specificities and relations to the academy itself; and that the current crisis in academic film publication might be strategically addressed through a renewed engagement in the small format monograph, and the constituencies it serves (Betz 2006: 1-2).

For example, the distinguished scholar Dudley Andrew does this very thing we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, of deconstructing the study of 'national cinemas' in his essay which introduces the book *National Cinemas and World Cinema*:

Studies in Irish Film 3 (Andrew 2004: 20). Andrew's essay makes many strong points about the conceptualizing of 'national cinema' and basically declares the death of this approach (based upon the concepts of individual nations) in favour of a broader 'world cinema' approach. The strongest aspects of Andrew's essay are his comparative associations between Asian and Irish cinema. Andrew's essay also stretches and contests several conceptual terms, introducing the useful metaphor of national cinemas being more like filmic 'islands' within transnational 'oceans' and consequently subject to both international 'waves' and regional 'force fields'

Between these extremes of territory (nation) and ocean (globe), I want to insert an intermediate concept, 'regional cinema,' in order to acknowledge the way that today (and I believe always) cinema operates in a transnational manner, subject of course to local force fields (Andrew 2006: 15).

Andrew is attempting to bring about a conceptual shift, which triggers a 'reassessment' 'of the idea of "new Waves" in cinema'. But if we apply our current 'Alternative Film Studies bias' it seems that his statement above is accurate and helpful to a degree, but also archaic and limited, in that it reflects a dated perspective on the international film industry, and limited, since it doesn't address the audiovisual industrial marketing trends toward prevailing modes of labelling, packaging, categorizing, and promoting of filmic products and of related merchandise and services. It is possible that Andrew's essay was aligned with new articles in the 'alternative' journal of *Framework*, which at that time (the late-1990s) seemed enthralled with the introduction of 'the influence of film festivals' upon film scholarship.

From a current 'Alternative Film Studies bias', Andrew's perspective is broadly informed and cinematically circumspect, but might expose itself (both now and then) to accusations of elitism and film festival-centrism. Andrew's perspective, while broadly informed in one area, could therefore lack the objectivity of an even broader view, which

conceptualizes the function and influence of local and international ‘film cultures’, which include, but are not limited to the film programming influences and film valuating functions of film festivals (as well as the inextricable and mutually-informing influences of television upon film). Andrew’s essay also neglects the broader perspective of other ‘alternative’ journals contemporary to his research, which were applying (what were then) new notions of post-colonial theory to film studies, including *CinémAction*, *Discourse*, *Inscriptions*, *Jump Cut*, and *Cultural Critique*. For example, the conceptualization by Elsaesser’s recent examination of European cinemas in comparison to Hollywood, is more useful in this respect, especially Elsaesser’s phraseology that collectively refers to film festivals, specialty film venues, television film exhibition and cinematic ‘new media’ as film ‘vernaculars’ (metaphorically compared to the historic, linguistic Romance language ‘vernaculars’ derived from Vulgar Latin). Elsaesser’s study situates traditional film festivals in a more accurate and industrially-informed perspective than Andrew’s essay allows (Elsaesser 2005: 84). In other words, Andrew privileges film festivals, but neither privileges the function of his own scholarly valuation of collected filmic product, nor the role of film marketing and distribution patterns and strategic initiatives, within the integrated and mutually informing ‘film culture’ (which is a cultural and economic suzerain of the international audiovisual industry). We could say that Andrew’s essay was myopic and ironic, but that wouldn’t be fair to Andrew’s research, which was consciously succeeding at presenting an ‘alternative’ view, by the introduction of film festivals (as per then current or recent (early 1990s) scholarship in *Framework*) into the mix of scholarly film influences. And to say ‘myopic’ and ‘ironic’ would border upon polarizing Andrew’s study, which Bhabha warns us against

Must we always polarize to polemicise? Are we trapped in a politics of struggle where the representation of social antagonisms and historical contradictions can take no other form than a binarism of theory vs politics? (Bhabha 1989: 111)

Nevertheless, to re-quote Betz from above, our study is also putting ‘forward a thesis that

is polemical', and so we must deconstruct the assertions of Andrews from our 'fragile perch' of a current 'Alternative Film Studies bias'. For example, Andrew's essay conceives of film festivals as the historic 'curators' in the conceptual world 'museum' of filmic product, which brilliantly describes an aspect of several roles played by film festivals in the global marketing of filmic product. But the 'Alternative Film Studies bias' would be compelled to remark that, if film festivals are the 'curators' in the museum, then Blockbuster Video, Amazon.com video sales portal, and E-Bay must be the conceptual window-dressers and cashiers at the retail, wholesale, and on-line cinematic sales counters (metaphorically manning the cinematic 'museum' souvenir shops). Andrew's perspective is partially accurate about film festivals in the 1980s, but it does not grasp the broader view of film policy studies that factors not only the trend-setting consumer influence of a global, educated urban elite, but which also realizes the power of producer / distributors (like Viacom/Miramax) and of government entities to influence the content and narrative style of filmic storytelling (or non-storytelling, as the case may be) as Andrew's essay relates

Bound together through federations of festivals and ciné-clubs, modern cinema felt itself enriched by developments on the other side of the globe. But make no mistake, the critics and cinephiles who followed such things did so in the pages of Paris' *Cahiers du Cinéma* (or London's *Sight and Sound*, or the annual catalogues from Cannes, Venice, Locarno and Berlin); that is, from the heart of Europe (Andrew 2004: 18).

This quote reveals the bias which some American scholars might call 'Euro-centric' and which others would call an 'elitist' bias (on the behalf) of Andrew's essay, especially those influenced by notions of post-colonialism and gender studies or feminist theory. Andrew does leave out any mention of American film studies, and scholars contributing to *Cinema Journal* (published in North America by the Society for Cinema and Media

Studies since 1959) and others might wonder about this oversight.¹ Accordingly, with an ‘Alternative Film Studies bias’ we have to ask, why doesn’t Andrew reference his contemporary sources beyond and within the pages of *Framework*, including *CinémAction*, *Discourse*, *Inscriptions*, *Jump Cut*, and *Cultural Critique*? And our current ‘Alternative Film Studies bias’ takes this revisionist dissection of Andrew’s essay even further, by noting that studies including Dale’s ‘*The Movie Game*’ have initiated trends in film studies scholarship which more substantively privilege the ‘transnational’ and film policy/industrial perspective, which Andrew’s essay alluded to (Dale 1997: 1-5). Hence, we might also inquire, ‘What about the pages of *Variety*, the *Hollywood Reporter*, *Screen Daily*, and the annual catalogue pages of the (AFM) American Film Market (usually held in Los Angeles a venue that is no where near the ‘heart of Europe’) and what of the (MIFED) International Film and Multimedia Market held for over seventy-three years in Milan, also in the ‘heart of Europe’?’ Dale’s study references articles in these industry papers, which in their journalistic accounting of film industry events and trends also provide anecdotal (and occasionally analytical) insight into aesthetic trends in cinema. Dale’s study might be considered among the popular ‘Little Books’ which Betz describes, and its content (or similar content) is later analyzed by scholars in the emerging area of film policy studies, a sub-field to cultural policy studies, with similar research included in the works of Albert Moran and in others cited in this study (Moran 1996).

Our study attempts to leave behind the tradition of grouping the films of an ethnic or territorial cluster (in this case Welsh) into an official ‘canon’ of national films. Andrew’s essay goes far beyond this formerly unsatisfying (and somewhat imperious tradition) with its nuanced understanding of the evolution of national cinema analysis and of world

¹ What is confusing here, is whether Andrew’s essay is modestly overlooking American scholarship, of which Andrew’s prior and recent research at the University of Iowa and at Yale University, is a significant part, or if Andrew’s essay reflects a ‘Europhilic’ bias, or if Andrew meant to assert that the mostly British and otherwise European scholarship in cinema studies did indeed eclipse all other global scholarship in the past three or four decades of film studies.

cinema. But our study seeks to apply the aesthetic discoveries of expert research, including Andrew's essay, while factoring into our approach an even more accurate and more informed, wider breadth and academic circumspection. Consequently, when Andrew tells us

The art film lost its glamour and art theatres began a decline from which they never recovered (Andrew 2006: 19)

Our 'Alternative Film Studies bias' informs us that this is not necessarily historically accurate, nor is it the entirety of the story. Art-house cinema venues in the United States thrived from the late 1960s until the early 1990s, but the availability of home video devices was a greater influence than any 'loss of glamour' (coupled with changing lifestyle patterns of an aging population, which had migrated away from U.S. city centres which housed 'Art House venues' to more dispersed and suburban demographic groupings). This statement is accurate to the degree that it refers to the programming content of traditional and mostly international film festivals, but not to the degree it might refer to the marketing practices of international consumer film markets. Or further, when Andrews tells us

Besides the demise of the European art film, one must calculate the effects of the new economics of Hollywood distribution . . . as well as the predicted impact of Betamax and VHS tapes (Andrew 2004: 20).

Our 'Alternative Film Studies bias' would firstly not accept the 'demise' of Art-house film, but rather its co-opted incorporation into the marketing plans of international distribution entities and into their marketing practices and into the 'packaging' modes of these entities, including the International News Corp/Twentieth Century Fox, Viacom/Miramax, and Blockbuster Video, to name some of the biggest 'players' in the 1980s onward. In other words, while Andrews sees the distribution and technological shifts as phenomena separate from the festival-centric aesthetic trends he describes, we

see them (for the purposes of our study about Welsh filmic product) as integrated and mutually causal (Goldman 1996: 24-32; DeGeorge 1997: vi-vii). In other words, 'posh' and 'smug' Art-house overtones and inflections persist even today, and might be desirable, as far as they can be packaged and marketed by Miramax and Blockbuster to the greying-but-affluent, urban elite, 'Baby-Boomer' home video and DVD markets of Europe and North America. As a result, we introduced in our constellated collection of 'dimensions' of Welsh national cinema, an integrated look at how the 'industrial' impacts the content and style of filmmaking in Wales (that is, the aesthetic), in our chapter about 'Outsiders.'

From our perspective, parts of Andrew's essay might tend to perpetuate a (*de facto*) 'urban elite American' or London-centric and therefore culturally imperial perspective (which colludes with many culturally hegemonic, American audiences' views), which continues to understand the Irish, Scottish and Welsh languages (both indigenous and Anglo-Celtic) and cultures as 'foreign' languages and cultures, and at best, cinematic colonial 'creoles', or variations on the purely 'British' film emanating from the hegemonic centre of London (or presumably English-speaking Hollywood)

Similarly, whatever the 'voice' of Irish cinema may be, should it not be heard as a variant of English, a 'regionalism,' as it were? (Andrew 2004: 20)

Andrew's insistence that Irish be a 'regionalism' is accurate as it applies to Irish film being influenced and informed by its regional relationship to England (and again, to Hollywood) but is less than nuanced as it neglects to consider the process of linguistic appropriation in filmic representations of post-colonial societies. For example, our study of Welsh filmic product would ask of Andrew, 'What about the Irish 'regional' relationship to Scotland and to Wales?' 'What about the 'regional' relationship of Insular

Catholic Ireland, in (the interaction and comparison of) its cinematic representations and cultural correspondence with continental Roman Catholic majority nations, that is, to the majority Protestant cultural collective within Scotland, England and Wales?’ And other questions arise, mostly of a post-colonial nature, including Andrew’s exclusion of the possibility of bilingualism in Irish film, which could be indigenous language or minority immigrant language, rather than English. Or, one might ask, does Andrew actually believe *Gaeilge* spoken in Irish language films like, *Mise Éire* (1959) to be a branch of English? This perspective which neglects the multi-lingual and multi-cultural state of cinema in the ‘Celtic periphery’ takes us directly to why we began this exercise in the deconstruction of Andrew’s essay, which is connected to our earlier discussion of controversies about nation and language in Wales, but before we address that, let’s consider one last deficit, which our revisionist ‘Alternative’ views finds in Andrew’s essay: neglect of an industrial (as in film ‘industry’) perspective.

A deconstructive exercise, which exemplifies the process leading to our conclusions:

For a final example in this deconstructive exercise of Andrew’s work, we note that Andrew’s essay does not define what a ‘film festival’ actually is, and so we have to assume that he is using the definition which is becoming increasingly contested and nuanced in film studies. Currently, ‘film festival’ is a conceptual umbrella that incorporates a wide variety of traditional film festivals, virtual and digital/electronic forums, asynchronous events, and an ever-diversifying range of specialty film exhibition and distribution venues, and Internet ‘landmarks’. (Gore 2004: 163). In other words, Andrew’s essay privileges historical trajectories, which exclusively privilege a (traditional) film festival-centric chronology, which is biased by an elite, London-centric specialty film consumer perspective. This elitist perspective is seldom informed by recent and important studies, which emphasize the dominant role of television broadcasters in European film production and marketing, including Hill and McLoone’s

'Big Picture, Small Screen, The Relations Between Film and Television' or Bignell and Lacey's collection *'Popular Television Drama: Critical Perspectives'*, which includes essays by Blandford and others, which specifically mention the 'conflicts' and interplay between broadcasters and regional film production (Hill and McLoone 1996; Lacey and Bignell 2005: 175).

Answering our study's implicit questions: "If we assume Wales to be 'post-colonial', then how does the National cinema of Wales compare to so-called 'Third cinema'?"

So to summarize what we are arguing so far (and which we are seeking to illustrate with a revision of Andrew's essay) our study is attempting to maintain a critical position that considers and deconstructs the 'orthodox' 'centre' of former film studies, without negating these views, which Bhabha has described as 'negotiation' rather than 'negation' (Bhabha 1989: 111-114). At this point in our conclusion, let us contextualize what we have learned, in the light of notions that we introduced in our preliminary chapters. For example, this discussion of Andrew's essay shows that his intended 'alternative' reflections upon the influence of film festivals upon film scholarship can later be revised in light of new theory, which show political 'fault lines' in his study. The two ideas upon which we focused were his study's apparent Euro-centricisms within film studies and its 'Western bias' within post-colonial and gender studies criticisms. This illustrates similar controversies, which this study is attempting to explore. One of the conclusions implicit in our applied readings of Welsh filmic product is a presupposition that something like a 'post-colonial' experience is relevant in the analysis of many audiovisual industrial projects in Wales. But as we noted in our lengthy review of the book, *Postcolonial Wales*, distinguished Welsh scholars including Dai Smith and Chris Williams continue to

mostly discredit any application of postcolonial theory to Welsh history and culture. We noted how the commentary by Welsh historian Smith about Knight's research into Anglo-Welsh writing (Knight 2004; Smith 2004) was vigorously negative (if not inflammatory). We can only assume that Smith, Williams and their camp would extend their historical authority to include our film studies assertions, which implicitly connected Welsh national cinema to 'Third cinema'. We believe that our analysis of Welsh filmic product in both an aesthetic and industrial context will successfully resist the possible criticisms of Smith and Williams, which would be built upon their preferred historical paradigms. For example, our readings concluded that certain notions about Welsh filmic product, or the (relevant questions our readings raised) paralleled similar studies into 'Third cinema' (which is understood to be the application of postcolonial theory to the subject of cinema). Teshome Gabriel's conditions of a 'Third cinema' seem to indicate this:

- 1) Aesthetics of a Third cinema are 'extra-cinematic' (Gabriel 1989: 53) Our study's chapter referring to 'Outsiders' and our other chapters of readings emphasized the 'critical spectatorship' of both domestic and external audiences, which effect not only the production, but also the reception and consumption of Welsh filmic products.
- 2) Third cinema narratives typically have no closure and are stories of the collective (Gabriel 1989: 55) Our study referenced the Welsh mythical accounts of the tales of *Mabinogi*, both in poetry, folklore, legend, song and culture. The *Mabinogi* is a timeless story which avoids focus upon any single hero, and that is where our application of the Mythic Hero theory was important, as we asserted that the original Welsh narrative of the *Mabinogion* was meant to be a story of the Welsh collective (and in so doing, both supported and contradicted some of Joseph Campbell's

conclusions about a ‘universal hero myth’). This collective included not only the living and future generations, but also the dead, along with individuals who symbolized ideals and hopes of the Welsh collective, which we informed with our broad reading of Celtic and early Brythonic Christian (Latin/Proto-Welsh/Old Welsh) literature and cultural studies. Later we used this knowledge again, to consider how Disney ‘stole’ the Welsh narrative, and used its plot and characters in the animated filmic hero-based tale, *The Black Cauldron*. Our postcolonial perspective led us to conclude that this act was perceived as cultural theft by Disney by later Welsh nationalists, whose ‘post-colonial’ filmic product redeemed the Welsh-ness of this story by removing its ‘hero’ focus and restoring its collective import, as seen in the S4C film, *Otherworld*.

- 3) Dichotomies are collapsed, usually via the mechanism of ritual or carnival (Gabriel 1989: 61) We frequently relied upon this notion of Third cinema to deconstruct the Welsh versions of grotesque cinema, and to decode the impetus of Welsh ‘hip hedonism’ genre films.
- 4) Third cinema narratives typically privilege ‘story’ over ‘action’ (Gabriel 1989: 60). This notion of Third cinema also relies upon our application of Mythic Hero theory to Welsh filmic product, and included the examples of the films, *A Beautiful Mistake* and *Dal: Yma/Nawr*, as films which avoided a clear plot, but seemed to create atmospheric stories which were symbolic and iconic, intended to communicate cultural values by association, rather than through the conventions of plot.

Our study also introduced Elsaesser’s and McLoone and Hill’s consideration of filmic

product, within the dichotomy of ‘film or television’, which Gabriel also references in terms of generalities of about Third cinema and which he ties to folkloric memory and representation. In comparison, our study seeks to close this gap by privileging our knowledge of both film and television histories, and by balancing our critical approaches between the aesthetic and the industrial. For example, several times in our study we question whether there is a coincidental or causal relationship between the corporate strategies of monoliths like Walt Disney / Buena Vista Films, toward television broadcasters worldwide, and the content and style of Welsh films, which emerged simultaneously, peaking at the beginning of our study of ‘contemporary’ Welsh filmic product, in the early 1960s. We must also reiterate that the dichotomy of ‘film or television’ coincides with three significant historical phenomena, a) including the history of Welsh filmic representations, which increased in content and number with the ascendancy of Welsh television broadcasters, b) including the worldwide influence of Disney and other trans-national producers to influence the production policies of U.S. domestic and ‘foreign’ markets, (which we assert had an important influence on the filmic product of Wales), and c) the emergence of a late twentieth century national revival in Wales, which influenced the recalling of historic national icons into representations of the national Welsh ‘imaginary’. Consequently, the historic range of our study begins in 1963, because this is the year that one of our ‘Welsh *auteurs*’, John Ormond (both a BBC Wales producer and a nationalistic Anglo-Welsh poet), produced the documentary about Patagonian Gauchos in the Argentine, *The Desert and the Dream*. This pessimistic vision of the declining Welsh national identity among the increasingly Spanish-speaking descendants of the 1860s Welsh South American Diaspora brings together (for the first time after Welsh broadcasters became ascendant and politically autonomous, to some degree) all the constellated aspects of representations of Welsh-ness, which we consider in this study. Furthermore, without Ormond’s 1963 film as a point-of-reference, which considers gendered, postcolonial, post-modern, post-national and iconic Welsh filmic

signifiers and cultural markers, we would not be able to draw a complete line of comparison with pre-Devolution and post-Devolutionary filmic products. For example, Ormond's Patagonian perspective was pessimistic, but it sowed the seeds of a reconstructed Welsh national identity, later referenced and echoed in the films of John Hefin and Endaf Emlyn, especially in Emlyn's *Gaicho*. And the improved vision of Ormond as we observe his personal trajectory of political viewpoints, first enunciated pessimistically in the *Desert and the Dream* and then articulated with renewed and transformed optimism in his production of *On the Black Hill* in 1981. In 1963 Ormond mourns the cultural demise and isolation of 'failed' Welsh colonial experiments and of Welsh nationalism in general; in 1981 Ormond celebrates the ambiguity of the Welsh and English 'borders' and liminal spaces of contest.

This is not to say that the aesthetic expertise of Andrew's essay described above, does not inform our study, as it considers and privileges the 'critical regionalism' introduced by Cheryl Herr and applied to Irish cinema by McLoone. For example, we see direct analogues between Andrew's descriptions of Japanese director Masamura's reaction to his mentor Mizoguchi's 'old-fashioned aestheticism', with McLoone and Blandford / Perrin's introduction of the cinema of 'hip hedonism' within Irish and Welsh cinemas, respectively. Applying Andrew's broadly informed 'world cinema' comparison, we see analogues between Irish, Scottish, and Welsh 'hip hedonism' and Masamura's 'hip anti-Niponisms' (Nipon being rendered Japanese for 'Japan'). In summary, we have also began our study, with a conceptual definition of the terms within our queries, and then to go beyond our sources, we have sought to deconstruct the subjective point-of-view of our sources, as well. Within this concluding chapter, we describe the activities, which were necessary to accomplish our objectives. Interestingly, the history and progress of the

activities (and of the historic, systemic and institutional obstacles to this research), not only reveal aspects of the Welsh national 'film culture', but also begin to answer our explicit questions, re-stated in the first section of this chapter.

Studying and analyzing scholarship related to national cinemas and film policy:

In order to complete this study, we also studied, analyzed, compared and classified all relevant samples of scholarship regarding national cinemas, within the broad context of film studies, film history, film industry studies, and film policy studies. We situated this knowledge within the comparative fields of mass communication theory, international audiovisual industrial studies, cultural studies, European cinema studies and the studies of cinemas within 'small nations'. This led to a lengthy exploration of multiple samples of scholarly and popular histories of various national cinemas, especially the cinemas of nations, which compared to Wales, for various reasons. This evaluation and comparison of these national cinema histories was guided by numerous journal articles and significant chapters and books, which have established and expanded the field of national cinema analysis. Some of these journals and books referred directly to Welsh filmic product. As a result, we studied, analyzed, compared and classified all relevant samples of scholarship regarding Welsh national cinema.

In order to situate our study in a broader historical and industrial context, we studied, analyzed, compared and classified all relevant samples of scholarship regarding the literature, culture, histories and national cinema of nations from the so-called 'Celtic Periphery'. This broad context, within the specific 'particularisms' of 'Welsh-ness' included all relevant samples of scholarship regarding symbols, icons, signs, markers, and other indicators of 'Welsh-ness' derived from Welsh literature, Welsh folklore, Welsh

legends, Welsh poetry, Welsh religious history, Welsh culture, Welsh language, Welsh political history, class history and the cultural impact of economic status, all located within the broader context of British history, the history of Celtic peoples, European and Western cultural history.

Why we pursued this particular study:

While there is extensive research in the field of Welsh national cinema by Berry, Blandford, Ffrancon and others, there is also a paucity of qualified scholarship in important areas of this field. Welsh national cinema is a national cinema that has struggled to survive, has struggled to overcome systemic and historic obstacles to scholarship, as well as funding, production, exhibition and distribution of its products, related organizations, agents and services. Consequently, the National cinema of Wales will only benefit from further scholarship, and the implied enhancement of exposure to new and different audiences, from both an industrial and cultural perspective.

The benefits of this study, could also be mutually experienced by scholars who are external to Wales, for several important reasons:

- 1) Wales as a case study is bilingual, and the languages are importantly (primarily) Welsh and English. In this way Wales compares easily to Canadian national cinema, which includes both English language and the Francophone *Cinéma Québécois*. Both film dialogue and cinema scholarship are produced in either French or English in Canada, which compares to the case of bilingual Wales. Conflicts and rivalries based upon the linguistic 'divide' in Canada compares historically to Wales. This coupling of an indigenous language with the colonial language of

English is significant: English is an internationally accessible language to scholars in the field of national cinema analysis. Compare this to studies of other comparable 'small nations', i.e., the Basque region. While there is extensive scholarship about the Basque cinema (Robert Stone and others), access to the cinema of the Basque region often requires prior knowledge of Spanish or Basque, which limits the majority of solely Anglophone scholars to secondary research about Basque cinema. Another example from Spain is the Catalan cinema, written about by Philip Mitchell, Josep R. Llobera and others. Once again, prior knowledge of Spanish, Aranese or Catalan limit primary research access to English scholars.

- 2) Welsh national cinema compares among small, English language cinemas, including Ireland, Scotland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and to a lesser degree to Hong Kong and South African, as well as comparing easily to Hollywood, the national cinema of the United States.
- 3) Welsh national cinema compares among bilingual cinemas in Europe, African, Asia and the Americas. Welsh national cinema compares in relation to British, i.e., English, London-centric cinema, shares historic, aesthetic and industrial analogues with other comparable cinemas sharing national relationships or linguistic minority status, i.e., Denmark to Scandinavia, Austria to Germany, Belgium to France, Malta, Ladia or Switzerland to Italy, Frisian cinema to that of Denmark or the Netherlands, and many others.
- 4) Welsh national cinema compares among the cinemas of post-colonial or Third cinema nations or territories. Welsh filmic product also compares internationally to cinemas of trans-national culture, post-industrial

nations, post-modern cultures, and post-national peoples and language groups, and also qualifies in studies of the cinemas of countries with distinct economic disparity between wealthy and impoverished, rural and urban, educated and uneducated constituencies.

Achieving the aims of the study / what was learned from this study:

This study has identified Welsh filmic product and supporting scholarship about this product. We have located this product, its related industrial and aesthetic field of production and distribution in the historical, cultural and political context of Wales, Britain, the Celtic countries, and Europe, as well as within the global audiovisual industry. We discovered a rich and mostly unknown collection of diverse, mostly high quality / high production standard filmic material. This product and information about the individuals, agents and related organizations frequently is difficult to access or to track down for viewing or analysis. Consequently, Welsh cinema scholarship could be said to be discouraged or stymied by systemic obstacles and challenges, and other institutional and legal or physical ‘roadblocks’, which reflect the chronically underfunded and under-resourced nature of the Welsh audiovisual industries, their production, distribution, and archiving (to the extent that Welsh filmic product is archived, at all, and later made available for study).

The Welsh filmic product produced in the period of our study (approximately 1963-2007), was overwhelmingly produced by independent producers for one or more of several prominent broadcasting entities, including BBC Wales, S4C, or HTV/ITV Wales. The historic and political conditions, which led to the funding of Welsh filmic product by these broadcasters, influenced the context and nature of these films, and these conditions are identified in the ‘dimensions’, which we identify and explore in this study. Three of the most important aspects of Welsh filmic product from this period include:

- 1) Its overwhelming dependence upon literary adaptation, primarily from important Welsh literary or cultural sources. This suggests an attempt to ‘recall and recollect’ and to re-‘write the nation’, after a period of suppressed or neglected representations of Welsh-ness. While Berry’s book and other studies have attributed this Welsh dependence upon literary adaptation as ‘laziness’ (Berry 1994: 234), we see it as being related to issues of post-colonial ‘re-telling’ of a national story, or more related to the economics of production.
- 2) The propensity to produce programming which is ‘suitable for ages’.
- 3) The overt or coded obsession with including messages of nationalism or anti-nationalism in all filmic products, including even children’s programming, making Welsh national cinema among the most politicized in Europe, if not the world.

Delivering a result, that is, integrating new and existing research and theory —

Our study’s significance in terms of both theory and practice:

This study expands the body of knowledge, in respect to Welsh filmic product, as it attempts a slight expansion or new application of country-specific theories of national film analysis, including applications to Welsh national cinema of Elsaesser’s suggested model of European cinemas, which creates contrasting oppositions between national cinemas as either genre cinema and Art-House cinemas, or both.

This study also introduces, in respect to Welsh filmic product, a clarification and a semantic expansion of the usage of ‘cinema’, to include the construct of, a national ‘film culture’, and the concept of Welsh ‘filmic product’. In review of past scholarship about Welsh filmic product and its field of productions and all related schemes and

arrangements, this study provides a current and up-to-date overview of that scholarship, relating to national cinema analysis, related to Welsh national identity, and related to the National cinema of Wales.

This study furthers the project of discovering and locating a ‘Welsh cinematic idiom’ within the national cinema of Wales, through new applications of the practice of identifying new aesthetic and industrial ‘dimensions’, which are ‘constellated’, and then used in new and revised readings of Welsh filmic product. The constellating of these dimensions is built upon practices of scholars including Benjamin and Lowenstein, and includes identifying and describing the dimension in question, and then juxtaposing or interpolating, when needed, with various other aspects and dimensions. Furthermore, this study provides new and innovative readings and classifications of individual Welsh filmic product, both previously analyzed and newly analyzed, along with new groupings and informed clustering of these products into aesthetic and industrial affiliations with similar films. Within the context of these new readings and categories of association, this study continues the relevant discussion about whether this filmic product satisfies Welsh aspirations to have a national cinema. Accordingly, this study begins a relevant discussion about whether this filmic product satisfies Welsh aspirations to create, to express, to represent, to repress or subvert or to reinforce individual Welsh identities, marginalized Welsh identities, and various constructs of a national Welsh identity.

The Essence of our Conclusions — A clear set of answers, to the questions raised in the introduction:

In the last section of this chapter we quoted our explicit questions. After this, we discussed our research methods and results, and we mentioned how the obstacles to our research, however frustrating, were also part of the overall description of the Welsh ‘film

culture', which we sought to provide, in answer to several of our explicit questions. We also quote here our two statements for the assessment of outcome for this study:

1) How to judge the outcomes:

This study addressed the unique problem of writing about Welsh national cinema as a newly invented and Wales-specific form of national cinema analysis (as it describes the real phenomenon of Welsh national cinema);

2) How to see that an improvement has been accomplished:

While this study addressed the unique problem of writing about Welsh national cinema as a newly-invented and Wales-specific form of national cinema analysis, it also offered specific observations which will enhance the interpretation of its cinematic and industrial elements, to the benefit of film-consumers, film critics, policy-makers, and producers, both domestic and external. This study also offered specific solutions, which might enhance, encourage, and facilitate the film-worker's problem of coordinating production and distribution of Welsh national cinema as a multi-faceted entity. Finally, our research reflected on the advancement of a Welsh national identity, as it is expanded, altered, or ameliorated by a Welsh national cinema.

Our first two introductory chapters defined our terms and situated our study in industrial, political contexts, considered within the framework of critical approaches and within the historical and cultural background, which we described. We learned that the study of Welsh national cinema is established as a field of popular and academic interest. We looked at what has been studied, and this led us to position our study as a solution to existing 'gaps' in the scholarship, as well as a revisionist approach to several established areas of study including Welsh national cinema studies, British film studies, and national cinema analysis. There are less than one half dozen key books which consider the

specificity of Welsh national cinema, and most of the other scholarship is spread throughout less than one dozen key journals and scholarly reviews. Another significant source of critical comment derives from academic conferences and the electronic journals of associations, which have a particular interest in the filmic product of Wales. Welsh media and filmic products are mostly studied within Wales, and this is probably due to lack of knowledge abroad, regarding its existence, and to the impediments we earlier described to acquiring and viewing Welsh films. Welsh scholars regularly compare and contrast their indigenous filmic product with 'Celtic countries' regional products, with European and American products, and with other national cinemas around the world. This interest is not much returned by any interest from scholars outside of Wales. Some new interest has recently been generated, probably due to the enhanced visibility created among scholars, when Welsh scholars go abroad to present at international conferences. Notable exceptions are percolating in Ireland, Australia, Canada, and in other minority language nations of Europe. Still, the field of study of Welsh national cinema analysis is so embryonic and so unknown worldwide, that most new scholarly expansions, including this study, can be seen as 'newly-invented' or revisionist, since many critical approaches already applied to other areas of the study of Welsh people and their culture, have yet to be applied to the area of film studies. For example, this study expands upon the 'Welsh-specific cinema' work of Berry, Blandford, Ffrancon, Woodward, Stead and others, by applying paradigms informed by new approaches, including Welsh revisionist literary theory, post-colonial theory, feminist and Queer theory, and film policy studies, which is located in the broader field of cultural policy studies. The seeds of this expansion were mentioned or implied in the works of the scholars we mentioned, and in several instances, we have introduced approaches which are novel and unique to Welsh film studies. These unique approaches build upon the established scholarship, and reinforce or re-examine the work already done. An example of one of our unique approaches is our privileging of

the scholarship within film studies and within literary studies, which focuses upon genre and upon cinemas defined by aesthetic categories, I.e., ‘a Welsh cinema of the grotesque’.

Building upon the established scholarship of a ‘Welsh-specific cinema’:

This study most builds upon the established findings of earlier scholarship in the area of Welsh national cinema. Consequently, without the pioneering work of Berry, Blandford, Ffrancon and others, this study would be greatly curtailed. For example, our chapter on Welsh ‘hip hedonism’ films depends upon the observations of Blandford and Perrins in the book edited by Blandford, *Wales on Screen* (Blandford 2000). Another example is our discussion of the film *Grand Slam*, which is deconstructed by Peter Jachimiak, using the theories of masculinities by John Beynon (Beynon 2001; Jachimiak 2006). Our study expands upon the studies of Jachimiak and Beynon, with a consideration informed by studies edited by Gittings, which brings together our privileging of post-colonial constructions of masculinity, drawn from the book, *Imperialism and Gender; Constructions of Masculinity* (Gittings 1996). Dave Berry’s encyclopaedic *Cinema & Wales: the First Hundred Years* does contain some interesting and informative anecdotes and commentary, which especially assist our study, as we attempt to conflate the industrial with the aesthetic and contextual (Berry 1994). Berry’s study is indispensable, and no other source like it exists for the study of Welsh film. The strength of Berry’s compilation is that it is very readable and well organized as a reference tool. Its material does not possess, but lends itself to interpretation through critical paradigms. In some instances, Berry actually theorizes regarding a plausible list of Welsh ‘auteurs’, including John Ormond, Karl Francis and Endaf Emlyn (Berry 1994: 375). But Berry is useful for the thoroughgoing historic timeline that he provides, while Blandford and others make critical assessments of Welsh filmic product.

Revising the established scholarship of a 'Welsh-specific cinema':

If the combined scholarship of Berry, Blandford, Stead and Ffrancon are considered, then the answer to our primary question, 'What constitutes a national cinema for Wales?' seems implied by much of this prior research. Blandford's newest book has probably the most critically realized assessment of Welsh national cinema, while Berry's work is more a reference compendium, in a journalistic style. Ffrancon's work provides a specifically Welsh-speaking perspective, and the translation of *Cyfaredd Y Cysgodion: Delweddu Cymru A'i Phobl Ar Ffilm 1935-1951* is much anticipated (Ffrancon-Jenkins 2003). Most of the films considered in Ffrancon's work would fit into our category of 'Outsiders' films about Wales, and while there is an important argument for original research in Welsh, this commitment to the Welsh language also has the disadvantage of delaying the sharing of research with Anglo-Welsh scholars. Blandford's work has focused very much on the effects of Welsh and British politics on the Welsh filmic field of production. The work of these scholars privileged particular focuses, which compelled this study toward a more critical outlook, as it, for instance, compelled our development of constellated aesthetic and industrial categories. When results of each of the studies mentioned here and outlined in the first two chapters were passed through the prism of this study's critical 'toolbox', many of the major lines of query became apparent. For example, Blandford and Perrin's studies of the Welsh youth culture films take on enhanced significance in our study, as we apply considerations of the aesthetic category of the grotesque, with the particular parallels of literary and cinematic criticism about the *carnavalesque* applied. When we conflate the comparative national cinema analysis of McLoone, we see that analogues of the 'hip hop hedonism' genre in Ireland, Scotland and Wales are likely. When we apply our theories about the international audiovisual industry derived from collected studies about film policy studies, as in Moran's, *Film Policy, International, National and Regional Perspectives* (Moran 1996), we learn that predictable trends in the

evolution of national cinemas in general, i.e., 'indigenizing of the genres', might offer an causal relationship to context and type of Welsh films produced, (based upon industrial conditions) to our synthesis of applied readings and theory, as per Hill, McLoone, Blandford and Perrins. The comprehensive film history created by Berry does not adequately answer the question, 'What constitutes a national cinema for Wales?' because it does not situate Welsh filmic product in the international audiovisual industrial milieu, and Elsaesser has told us that the designation of a national cinema is always an external and externally-informed process, by definition. This study tries to bring a decidedly Alternative Film Studies bias to its revisionist analysis of Welsh filmic product, albeit a less culturally imperial and more internationally circumspect bias, but a blended Hollywood and American Independent and U.S. Underground film bias and scholarly sensibility, (i.e., Gay & Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender cinema through the prism of Queer Theory). Or better still, this study seeks to bear in mind an educated 'guess' regarding the probable reception of Welsh film by American audiences, should it ever occur in a significant quantity, since this is part of the cinema without 'boundaries' that Elsaesser advocates, when trying to discover national cinemas

European films intended for one kind of (national) audience, or made within a particular kind of aesthetic framework or ideology, undergo a sea change as they cross the Atlantic, and on coming back, find themselves bearing the stamp of another cultural currency (Elsaesser 2005: 46).

Indeed, the generalizing about Welsh cinema by Blandford, for example, in his reference book with Grant and Hillier, *The Film Studies Dictionary* (Blandford, Grant et al. 2001), forms the first mention of Welsh cinema that many American scholars will have, so it is not only the foreign audiences' reception of a European national cinema which shapes external perception, and thus, the definition of what constitutes that particular national cinema, but also the scholarship of European film scholars, as it often forms the primary 'First Contact' as it were, with the occidental Atlantic audiences.

Comparing the established scholarship of a ‘Welsh-specific cinema’:

This study more assertively and substantively locates the field of Welsh national cinema studies within the broader field of national cinema analysis. This has both local, Welsh scholarly impact, as well as an informed international expansion. For an international example, the recent book, *Theorizing National Cinema* has several essays, which mention the National cinema of Wales, but the book in general neglects the Welsh. Consequently the Welsh merit only one mention in the bibliography, while the Irish, with twice the population of Wales, merits five citations. The theoretical framework of national cinema analysis is depended upon and alluded to, but never directly referred to in the frequently cited Welsh film scholars, including Blandford, Berry, and Ffrancon, and Woodward. By locating our study within the theoretical framework of national cinema analysis, we imply and describe the situation of Welsh filmic product within the international audiovisual industry. Another way in which we expand the comparison of Welsh filmic product is when we borrow the theoretical conclusions, examples and wording of specific national cinemas. The best example is Ireland, where we borrow the conceptual theories of Irish film scholar Martin McLoone (as we apply his theory of ‘critical regionalism’), and we borrow examples of Irish film studies when we use the commentary of Ruth Barton regarding Irish filmmaker Martin Duffy (to analyze his Welsh film), and we borrow the wording when we apply McLoone’s term ‘hip hedonism’ to deconstruct the scholarship of Blandford, Perrins, and others regarding Welsh films with a youth culture focus.

Expanding the established scholarship of a ‘Welsh-specific cinema’

We effectively expand the scholarship of Welsh national cinema in several ways: the first way is our application of critical constructs, which are not frequently (if ever) applied in the case of Welsh filmic product analysis. My new uses of critical approaches includes the use of mythic hero structural theory, and in which we inform this approach with a broad knowledge specifically Welsh history, myths, legends, folklore, fairytales,

literature, and Welsh literary analysis. For another example, postcolonial theory is applied by Bohata, Knight, Barlow and Blandford throughout their studies on Anglo Welsh Writing, Welsh literature, Welsh media, and Welsh television and film, respectively (Bohata 2004; Knight 2004; Aaron and Williams 2005; Barlow, Mitchell et al. 2005; Blandford 2007). Our study's conflation of postcolonial theory with the analysis of national film industries has been done in the case of Australia, but not Wales (O'Regan 1996), and our conflation of postcolonial theory with the aesthetic categories of national cinemas has been done in the cases of Australia, Canada, and in Hollywood, but not in Wales (Russo 1994; Sloniowski 1998; Collins 2002), and our conflation of postcolonial theory with genres has been done in the case of Canada, but not in Wales (Gittings 2002: 91), and although our conflation of postcolonial theory and gender theory or Queer theory with aesthetic categories has been applied in Welsh literary studies, as in Knight's and Roberts's studies (Knight 2002; Roberts 2005), our study applies this critical syncretism for the first time to Welsh filmic product, and to its related field of production.

Another example of how we have expanded upon the established scholarship includes our variously applied conflations of postcolonial theory, Welsh history, mythic structure, narrative theory, Welsh literary theory, and national cinema analysis, within constructs informed by feminism and Queer theory. An example of this would be our readings of Sherlock's *Branwen* and Emlyn's *Y Mapiwr*. With *Branwen* we consider the iconic value of cinematic markers of Welsh-ness, which are present in *Branwen* explicitly and implicitly, based upon our broad knowledge of Celtic history, early Roman history, Medieval Welsh literature, of Welsh 'Gothic' Nonconformist history and culture, and modern Welsh culture and politics, all considered within a paradigm which notes the internationally recognized derivative content and auteur *homages*, which Sherlock seems to use. In *Y Mapiwr* our overlapping of Welsh literary and postcolonial readings is

informed by the Queer theory and national cinema analysis understanding of the *Bildungsroman*, as metaphor for the national, which is unique in Welsh film studies.

Our central and unifying thesis argument:

Furthermore, the way in which we compare and contrast these integrated critical approaches, with our new or revisionist readings of Welsh filmic product, forms the central idea of our thesis argument. Our central argument addresses the first way in which this study can be measured, that is the extent to which it answers our thesis questions, by isolating or discovering a Welsh-specific cinema. This study has posited and demonstrated that one way to learn what constitutes a national cinema for Wales can be through our method of constellating aesthetic and industrial categories. This constellating of the dimensions or aspects of the Welsh field of filmic productions and its products is informed in or study by new readings of Welsh filmic product. These readings integrate the theoretical approaches, which show various aspects of a Welsh 'filmic idiom'. By inventing new categories for describing Welsh films, we find a useful method for organizing and analyzing this product. For example, by demonstrating that particular characteristics accompany films made by Welsh 'Outsiders,' we show not only missing or present markers of Welsh-ness which typify these films, but we also show the causal relationship between what type of films get produced by 'Outsiders' and the nature of these film's content, style, and reception.

Summaries of our results — Integrating new and existing research and theory, that is, the Conclusions, about our domains of research;

Dimensions of Welsh national cinema:

Chapter 3, Wales as the Cinematic 'Outsider'

(Specifically 'Outsiders' who came to Wales to tell their story or to tell a Welsh story)

In the previous section we have commented upon general conclusions of our study, based upon our chapters entitled, the 'Introduction' and 'The Review of Relevant Literature', and we have cited numerous, specific examples of our applied findings, which are derived from our five chapters of readings and discussion, about Welsh filmic product. Here we briefly summarize the five chapters of film readings and comment, which introduced our various 'dimensions' of Welsh film. In Wales as the Cinematic 'Outsider' we began our film readings with an intentional overlapping of the industrial conditions of production in Wales, the history of production in Wales, and the aesthetic content of Welsh filmic products. We gave numerous examples of Welsh films, non-Welsh films, and the related Welsh and non-Welsh producers, all who were affected by their relationship to Wales, or by the experience of coming to Wales to make a film, or leaving Wales and returning to Wales to make films. We considered of this within the broader scope of transnational influences, especially the effects of television, and of Walt Disney (and strategic initiatives of the Disney Films and United Artists companies, to influence and infiltrate early 1960s television with studio products).

Chapter 4, The Benign *Bildungsroman* and its Political Subversions in Wales.

Coming-of-Age in Welsh cinema

In this chapter we considered how the proclivity to produce Coming-of-age films in Wales probably had industrial and audience-driven reasons. Nonetheless, we discussed how the National cinema of Wales is among the most politicized in Europe, because of metaphoric and coded messages of nationalism within these so-called 'children's films'. We supported this argument with critical arguments from recent scholarship, including the book, *Theorizing National Cinema*. In the course of our study, we isolated particular Coming-of-age films, which supported our arguments, and we noted those, which did not fit these arguments. Furthermore, we introduced the concept of Welsh Coming-of-age

genre films, which for various reasons resisted categorization, including those that corresponded more with Hollywood fare than with any Welsh ‘critical regionalism’.

Chapter 5, Scheduled Chaos and Welsh Creatures of Difference:

This chapter was divided into three sections:

- 1) Disney’s Dance with the Dragon; The Queering of Welsh national cinema;
- 2) The Wisdom and the Ecstasy of Teenage Anarchy — From Elegiac Courtesans to the Jesters of Cool Cymru;
- 3) Introducing the ‘*carnavalesque*’ within Welsh hip hedonism films.

In this chapter we continued focusing on films which mostly fit the category of Coming-of-age, but for other reasons distinguished themselves as fitting another ‘dimension’ of Welsh filmic products. These included Welsh products that were produced by or were somehow influenced by Walt Disney, or which constituted an appeal to or reaction to the Walt Disney film companies or the aesthetic and narrative influence of Walt Disney’s film and style. We situated this in the larger critical discussion of not only the industrial influence of Disney on television, film, and film-informed-by-television, but also considered the elements of mythic storytelling, and the concept of fairytale-as-institution, along with the Welsh postcolonial reaction to Disney, positioned among other national cinema’s reaction to Disney and Hollywood, and in contrast to the reaction to Hollywood in general.

Chapter 6, Welshmen Who Went Abroad to Make their Films:

This chapter was also divided, again into three sections:

- 1) Wales in Exile;
- 2) Welsh Utopianism;
- 3) Cymru's Filmic Pilgrimages ‘Up North’ — Northern Ireland as an Obligatory ‘Avalon’ for Welsh Filmmakers

This chapter considered most of the other aspects, dimensions and categories, whether aesthetic or industrial, mentioned in the previous chapters. Additionally, this chapter considered how, by going abroad to make a Welsh film, the Welsh filmmakers were able to simultaneously indigenize various Hollywood genres, while isolating and punctuating important aspects of Welsh individual and national identities. Consequently, this chapter was similar to the first chapter of readings about ‘Outsiders’, in that we conflated both industrial categories with aesthetic categories. Further, we considered the political ramifications of going abroad, and we were able to generalize about Welsh constructions of masculinities and femininities, gender and sexual orientation in Welsh films, and the role of class, politics, sports, language and age, in the representations of Welsh identities on screen.

Chapters 7 & 8, Wales the Cinema of Estrangement (Parts I and II):

Negotiating the filmic ‘female grotesque’ / Negotiating the filmic ‘male grotesque’:

In the previous chapters we mentioned and alluded to various extreme characterizations, political (including familial), social and psychological relationships, and the altered, exaggerated, mutilated, or repressed representations of these characters and relationships in Welsh filmic product, which together we speculated could imply a uniquely ‘Welsh cinema of Estrangement’, which in turn corresponded to the ‘cinema of the grotesque’ in other national cinemas. We examined the occurrence of specific genre formulae in relationship to the use of the grotesque in Welsh filmic product, and we speculated about how retrospective, revisionist readings of Welsh filmic product might later locate elements of the grotesque, where it was not consciously intended. We employed a wide range of supporting arguments for this drawn from North American literature and film, from European and Asian literature and film, and from the cinema studies and literary studies of each. We explained the close relationship of Welsh film with literary sources.

and we tried to explain why Welsh filmmakers have preferred literary adaptation in contemporary productions. We looked at the economic, industrial and aesthetic implications of using literary adaptations, and we considered the political and narrative messages and aesthetic notions, which could be posited. To support this we referenced recent Welsh literary and historical research, which was revisionist, in that it accepted prior aesthetic designations, i.e., ‘socialist realism’, and added the moniker of ‘grotesque literature’, similar to our readings of derivative Welsh filmic products.

Discussion about how the results generalize, using the example of *Y Fargen*:

At this point in our concluding chapter, we have mentioned or alluded to the various dimensions, aspects and categories of Welsh filmic product, whether industrial or aesthetic, which as a result of our large sampling of available Welsh products led us to conclude, can be usefully applied when analyzing Welsh filmic product. Further, these general categories and dimensional aspects and characteristics fit into a Welsh historical and cultural paradigm, which when inflected, has the potential to reveal iconic, coded, and explicit or implicit meanings and messages or signifiers in Welsh filmic products. For example, if we focus upon a Welsh film which we have not yet considered in this study, we should be able to generalize about our findings, and to illustrate the relevance of almost all of our findings: *Y Fargen* (1996) is a period drama set in the nineteenth century, which concerns the plight of Welsh cattle drovers. Without introducing any new readings in this chapter of conclusive findings, we will offer an extracted analysis of this film, as an illustration of our findings, and how they could function for future film analysis. First of all, the historical setting is important, since the Drover is an archetypal construction of masculinities in the Welsh national *mythos*. The Drover compares in importance to the American Cowboy, Australian Outback **Loner**, and the Welsh Miner, and recently, the Welsh Rugby player. In *Y Fargen*, a widowed **Welsh woman** is trying

to avoid marrying the villainous Squire, who in exchange for her body and affections will be the drover of her cattle to market, saving her from disgrace and ruin. The Welsh woman makes a Faustian bargain (hence the title, *Y Fargen* or the Bargain) with the Squire's alcoholic brother. The Jungian implication of the handsome but evil, versus the drunken but good brothers, echoes other films, where brothers or twins signify a divided self. The use of the 'town drunk' situates the film in the long tradition of European drama and storytelling, but it is feminist in its purpose, since the widow intends to hire the drunk to assist her, a woman, to breach cultural norms, and together drive her animals to market. But in the context of post-colonial narratives, *Y Fargen* fails to establish a feminist statement, which escapes the control and influence of the patriarchal infrastructure of the times.

The film is deemed by the BFI files as merely a failed 'period' piece from the margins of British film production, and is slightly redeemed by the S4C description, which sees the analogues of the Drover with American Cowboys, and calls it a 'Welsh Western'. But our retrospective revisionist reading sees a powerful nationalistic statement, which recalls an important period of English oppression of the Welsh economy. During the period of Welsh cattle drovers, which has been inaccurately mythologized in the national memory as a solely male profession, the presence of thousands of women in the annual agrarian entourages is at least alluded to, although not correctly revised, according to recent scholarship and filmic representation. Our aesthetic categories, derived from our findings, would assign this film to the Welsh 'cinema of the grotesque' for its reliance upon allegorical renderings of the characters, who have little character development, and instead function as symbols of archetypal meaning and as the actors of pre-determined narrative device. Also, the **psychological** grotesque of **the emasculated male**, demonstrated by the grandiose but **failed** 'Dylan Thomas' drunk, **are typical** of Welsh filmic products. And the Welsh version of the European dramatic **archetype** of 'town

drunk' has more important significance, which is unique to Welsh literature and filmic products. This significance straddles a uniquely Welsh, narrative divide, between the chapel folk or *gwerin y gapel*, and the tavern folk or *gwerin y tafarn*, which frequently poses a symbolic Jungian division between the individual or the nation's good impulses versus evil impulses, and the rational impulses versus the passionate (Morgan 1967: 35). To summarize, we have briefly analyzed *Y Fargen* within the collected dimensions and categories derived from our entire study, which here we generalize are typical of Welsh filmic product, and which could be useful when applied to the decoding and deconstruction of other filmic products of Wales.

Discussion of limitations:

This study attempted to be comprehensive, but was limited by systemic and physical and institutional obstacles, which we earlier described. Consequently, it is likely that future study will uncover trends and dimensions within the entirety of contemporary Welsh filmic product, which will augment or overturn our present conclusions. Welsh national cinema is mostly neglected in every academic or popular consideration of its existence, let alone in its complicated history and aesthetic meaning. Consequently, there is little comparative literature to reflect against the conclusions of this study. Additionally, as a cinema, (and as a cultural artefact and as a set of industrial schemes and as a collection of products), which continues to be actively marginalized by British, European, and American academic and industrial considerations, it is likely that the conclusions we have made will not be frequently and widely contested or retested by other scholars. We consider these limitations to be minor in comparison to the significant advantage to Welsh national branding and international visibility, which a more critically analyzed national cinema could bring to Wales.

Revealing a further presupposition of this study:

There is another implicit argument, which our study alluded to and mentioned, which is best reserved for further study. This is the tension which we mentioned earlier in this chapter, when Mark Betz mentioned the tensions between ‘low and high brow art’ implicit in the binarism of art-house and genre scholarship in film studies, but let us now focus on the second half of his statement (separately from the first half)

the influence of art cinemas of (primarily) Europe as a form of highbrow legitimization of film as an art; and the increasing attention given to film as cultural artefact and to directors as artists by belletrist journalism and critics publishing in a diversified array of print media (Betz 2006: 1-2).

As we attempted a deconstruction of Andrew’s essay on the transnational nature of cinema, we pointed to the marginalizing process of established theory toward new critical approaches as described by Teshome Gabriel. We mentioned Elsaesser’s discussion of Art-house vs genre cinema, and this ties into our remarks about Andrew’s study. But left undefined is our usage of the term ‘genre’. We even introduced the National cinema of Wales as a ‘genre of disrepute’ quoting Petley and Street. Indeed, particular conceptions of genre continue to be a point of contention within film studies (even though genre has been an established precept of film theory since the late 1960s) and which forms the point at which some traditional film scholars cast academic aspersions upon the trends within current film scholarship to privilege the ‘popular’ in cinema studies. So to be clear, we are not exploring the established phenomenon of ‘genre’ within film studies, but rather the sense in which an assumption or implication about genres slips into the discourse, to the extent that ‘genre’ is understood to bear the negative connotations of generic, predictable, less-nuanced, ‘schlock’ and other detractions. Landy tells us

Genre films were associated with the much-despised popular culture and with the masses with which they were identified. Produced in standardized fashion with an emphasis upon formulaic modes of representation, the films of the genre system appeared to be remote from the notion of individual creativity so highly prized in the assessment of high culture (Landy 1991: 4).

Our study boldly re-affirms 'genre', 'industrial and aesthetic categories', as the keys to creating new 'knowledges' about Welsh filmic products. This would seem to run in a direction contrary to some discussions, including Elsaesser's discussion of 'unresolved but explored problems and discourses' implicit in 'European films vs. the individualism-based, hero-driven narratives of Hollywood fare' (Elsaesser 2005: 72). For at least three decades there might have been a presupposition within film studies, which some scholars have identified as an elitism, understanding 'elitism' as a critical centre which invents a dichotomy between estimable 'high culture', i.e., 'Art-house' or 'auteur' cinema and mass culture, i.e., genre or formulaic, or in some cases, reputable vs 'disreputable genres'. The 'elitism' of the 1960s and 1970s film scholarship seemed to give way to a nuanced discourse, which permitted a conditioned discussion of genre

A less monolithic and negative response to mass culture has evolved in recent years. The study of genre has sought to analyze the ways in which mass cultural productions are part of a meaningful system of social exchange in which the audience, rather than being the passive consumer of these texts, is an integral element in their production and reception (Landy 1991: 4).

Teshome Gabriel privileges the audience in Third cinema as a 'field of production' and so celebrates the mass culture, along with the marginalized culture as mutually-informing and rudimentary to the existence of a national or ethnic or post-national cinema (possibly Queer, Latino or Jewish cinema?) (Gabriel 1989: 61). So our study expands this thinking of Gabriel and Landy, and boldly celebrates the industrial and the consumer participation in the valuation and categorization of films. We do this because we understand that Blandford's Welsh and McLoone's Irish 'hip hedonism' genre films to have close ties to Third cinema, and to be a form of post-modern and post-national audiovisual production. And the trend of the post-national field of production is away from the informed (and possibly elitist or Euro-centric) perspective, which seeks to reject or control 'genres', and instead is a multi-platform, multi-format technological 'who-knows-what's-next' which

delights in and favours 'labels', 'tags' and other reductive markers of formulaic sectors for the grouping of meta-data. It would seem that a 'negotiation' between traditional film scholarship and the functional displacement of technology, film industry marketing practices, and of generational tastes is occurring in our study, as we seek to make sense out of the observations of Blandford, Perrins, Barton and McLoone about the emerging oppositional cinemas in the countries of the 'Celtic periphery'. We are implying here that a crisis is looming and the crisis is this: a massive transfer of filmic product is about to occur, as film and television libraries worldwide are made available to everyone via the Internet. Not only will the filmic product be available for downloading and sampling by computer users everywhere, but the databases, which identify and categorize and by implication, which value these products, will be transformed overnight. One has to anticipate that Andrew's essays' dated perspective on the 'traditional' role of film festivals in the 1990s along with our study's attempted revisionist history of this modality will quickly become even more obsolete.

Our study sought to bridge this inevitable dive toward the defunct by privileging markers of the formulaic, contrary to many traditional trends in film scholarship (which privilege the complex, subtle and the nuanced), as we noted. By doing so, our study is straddling a comfortable divide between scholar and film industry, a divide which was never sustainable, but which does continue to persist in some academic constructs and social arrangements. So we have to ask related (and specifically local) questions, including, 'Why does the Celtic Media Festival occur separately from academic venues, including the Irish Post Graduate Film Conference and from the Welsh Cyfrwng Media Conference?' We are asking this question in the context of the crisis we just described, because it seems to require that a quick treaty between scholar and the audiovisual industry might be the only solution to avoid the information 'meltdown' which we envision. Here is a possible scenario for the meltdown: In June 2007 the BBC is

launching a pilot for their 'Open Archive'. The Open Archive will permit a limited number of the public to access the vast library of the BBC, watching and downloading filmic products, previously secreted away in rusting cans and virtual magnetic abysses. This launch follows several other experiments by the BBC, wherein the metadata surrounding this vast library was launched in prototype databases. The databases were designed by archivists, and in some places seemed to neglect the priorities of both specialized scholars and of the general public. Consequently, will the expansion of access become a flawed experiment, which prejudices future market expansions to assume that some categories of filmic product are less 'marketable' than others, when in fact they might have been more inscrutable, or even invisible, due to poor online packaging and presentation?

Couldn't film scholars be employed to fashion a solution to this dilemma? But importantly, would American and European film scholars even imagine themselves as the providers of this solution? It seems that in isolated places a synthesis of the scholarly, the popular and the industrial are communicating and mutually-informing one another. This is happening in the emerging film culture of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as demonstrated by the innovative creation of an Irish Film Database at the University of Dublin, Trinity College, under the direction of Kevin Rockett. The Irish Database echoes an effort by the Canadian Film Scholars, whose ground-breaking cooperation with industry and computer programmer and government archives created not only the Canadian Encyclopaedia of Film, but also supported the creation and expansion of the Toronto International Film Festival, which has in turn, driven Canadian film production to a position of world prominence in just thirty years.²

² 'The states is brilliant': generic hybridity in *I went down* (1997) and *Divorcing Jack* (1998) by Kevin Cunnane exemplifies the film scholarship, which celebrates the generic. Rockett, K. and J. Hill, Eds. (2004). *National Cinema and Beyond (Studies in Irish Film Studies)*. Dublin. Four Courts Press.

So not only is our study implying a conceptual re-think of 'genre' within the construct of national cinema, which might lead to industrial benefits, but our study is also implying another larger, conceptual expansion: if film genres are understood to be analogous with the genres of music, poetry and other literature, then it might be possible to re-frame the formulaic predictability of generic cinema as celebrated 'artistic restraints', i.e., filmic stereotypes and plot formulae provide the same artistic 'challenge' to filmmakers, that rhyme and metre present to poets or lyricists. In our consideration of genre, the generic formula has been something, which Welsh filmmakers mastered and re-invented, as demonstration of their essential abilities and skill sets as filmmakers, and indication of their relevance to the visual and representational parlance of an international art form. We concluded that genre was in fact a usual and 'good' thing to benefit the emerging and aspiring artists in the cinemas of small nations. This could eventually be situated in future discussions, which seek to understand how the ethnic and national 'particularisms' of one nation might predispose that country's filmmakers to a specific genre. For example, did Japanese filmmakers in the late 1950s reflect a Japanese worldview when they established Japan as a producer of Monster/Horror genre and Sci-fi genre films, especially those having implausibly large dinosaurs attacking urban centres? A similar question was implied in our observation about the proliferation of Horror genre films by the 'Welsh auteurs': "Is there something about the lengthy pagan and medieval elegiac, or Welsh rural and chapel 'Gothic' which invites the modern inclination to see Wales as the likely film set for gore, mutilation and terror?" And further, "How does historical and political experience or frustration play into the Japanese or Welsh need to create visuals of mass destruction?" This speculative discussion of genre and the 'national', leads us to our consideration of future film studies in Wales.

Further work and the Future of Welsh Film Studies:

We mentioned earlier how film scholars, like Steve Blandford, wear 'two hats', when they research a national cinema, present these findings abroad, and so directly raise the visibility of the national cinema, through a *de facto* form of market promotion and publicity, albeit through academic forums. A very positive recent development in Wales points to an informed acknowledgement of this phenomenon, of film scholars who play multiple roles in the 'film culture' of a small nation, like Wales, and so bodes well for the relevance of this study and for future research. The appointment to the Board of Film Agency Wales of Professor Elan Closs Stephens signals a new willingness by the Welsh film agency to recognize the key role, played by Welsh film scholars in small nations, including Wales.

Small nations are historically deprived of full participation in the international audiovisual industry, for various reasons. Those who seek to participate, must overcome historic obstacles, and must transcend prejudices, blocking their inclusion in the global marketplace. One way for small nations to overcome their disproportionate disadvantage to larger, better-funded nations is to 'leverage' the talents and energies of their scholars. Scholars who wear 'two hats' of educator and film critic, for example, maximize limited resources for small nations. Film scholars provide a low-cost 'bridge' between the study of film and the film industry, through their knowledge and business contacts. Many small nations overlook this valuable resource, and neglect or ignore the potential of utilizing the talents of these scholars. For example, film scholars evaluate films as they study them, similar to the valuation of films that occurs by newspaper film critics and judges at international film festivals. These critical valuations contribute to the 'marketing copy'

and 'promotional verbiage', which can be used to promote and advertise films. Historically, Wales has neglected this valuable resource. Film scholars also interview and regularly are in close contact with industry 'players' and celebrities, and can facilitate the funding of new films, and the employment of film school students. Canada, Ireland, and Scotland have benefited from the contributions of film scholars, i.e., Canada's scholars have been pivotal in elevating the worldwide visibility of the Toronto International Film Festival; Ireland's film scholars have created research which may have helped to create key partnerships with Irish-American 'Diaspora' film producers, who in turn are funding new films in Ireland. According to Film Agency Wales's press reports dated 5 May 2007:

'Elan Closs Stephens CBE has joined the Board of the Film Agency for Wales and used the first meeting of the new Film Education Forum, hosted by the Film Agency, to encourage the various factions of the education sector to work together to realize the benefits that film education can bring to all aspects of society' (Jenkins 2007: 1).

In many other industries, scholars are tapped for knowledge and innovation, but in the fledgling film industries of many small nations, film scholars are mostly an after-thought. It's possible that Stephens will have a unifying effect for the nurturing of a film culture in Wales, and will facilitate the work of Welsh film scholars. This is one bright development, in a contested and politicized history of film agency management and film policy in Wales. The fact that Film Agency for Wales Board Chairman, Peter Edwards, and his team are even establishing this committee is an indicator that someone in Wales is actually considering Welsh cinema, as part of the 'bigger picture' of national cinemas. The question for the Welsh film 'culture' then would be, 'Will Stephens's committee consider the successes of other small nations, or will Wales once again try to "re-invent the wheel"?' This must be asked in the historical contest of Wales's various film agencies, because, it's one thing to establish a committee, which 'in theory' listens to scholars; it's another thing to actually entertain and implement policy based upon a

diversity of opinion, both domestically trained and external. Furthermore, previous incarnations of film agencies in Wales have failed to consider the political advantage of 'bringing on board' the expertise and goodwill of this small nation's critical minds (especially a linguistically balanced group of consultants), and this has been to their detriment, if not their eventual demise.

Another positive development for Welsh film scholars in the proposed opening of BBC archives to the general public. BBC is calling this project the 'Open Archive'

The BBC is to open up its vast archive of video and audio in an on-demand trial involving more than 20,000 people in the UK. Full-length programmes, as well as scripts and notes, will be available for download from the BBC's web site. The pilot is part of the BBC's plans to eventually offer more than a million hours of TV and radio from its archive. The BBC's Future Media boss Ashley Highfield made the announcement at an industry conference in Cannes (BBC-News 2007: 1).

Speculation about my future research:

In consideration of this study, I have demonstrated that the broad scope of my research interests includes American and European film, American Independent Film, British Film, Welsh Film, Irish Film, and Scottish Film. I am interested in the genericity of national cinemas, and I have strong interests in Queer cinema, and in the 'cinema of the grotesque', Horror and Comic Parody. I am especially interested in the transition to Digital 2009 and the planned BBC Open Archive, and how this might influence the accessibility of formerly unavailable film libraries, for scholarship and commercial exploitation.

I hope to continue my research into Welsh film and film of the European 'Celtic periphery' for at least a couple more years. I would like to analyze and compare the impact and effectiveness of the Irish Film Database on scholarship and the film culture of

Ireland. I would like to compare the examples of Ireland and Wales to other regions of Britain, as well as with other 'minority language' nations in Europe. Further, my research will compare this to the circumstances in Wales and Northern Ireland, where political Devolution might continue to permit more autonomy in cultural policy and audiovisual commercial self-determinism.

I would like to continue my studies of minority language groups and their cinematic representations, or the representations made about them. I would like to further consider the treatment and representation of marginalized cultural and ethnic sub-groups within these minority language or 'small nations'. Some of the marginalized groups I'd like to focus on are Gays, Lesbians, Transgender and Bisexual film characters. I would like to look at European ethnic and religious minorities, and gender as it influences the development of genre in these cinemas, particularly allegory, parody, gothic and various forms of the 'cinema of the grotesque'.

I am also interested in a study of the visual 'shorthand' of genre formula and narrative structure. I believe that the cinematic cult of mythic hero storytelling (Jung and Joseph Campbell, et al) should be rejected for certain reasons, especially as a proscriptive model for filmic narrative. On the other hand, I think that the mythic hero/hero's journey paradigm offers a useful analytical model, and the particular usage of archetypes as narratological 'shorthand' or, if you will, as an audience-specific code of 'filmic and mythic economy'. I see strong parallels between the cultural clashes with modernity, which is represented in the history of filmic representations of Appalachia, and in various European cinemas (versus minority language or post-colonial society cinemas). For example, I believe that the creation of an Irish folk music idiom in the popular marketplace and imagination can be compared to the commodification of Nashville in America. I wonder if a similar project of cultural colonialism is identifiable through film.

in European cultures and markets, as they cope with durable marginalization patterns of the economic or culturally hegemonic.

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Director Federico Fellini.
Cineriz. 1963.

African Queen.

Director John Huston.
United Artists. 1951.

Aliens.

Director James Cameron.
20th Century Fox. 1986.

Amélie.

Director Jean-Pierre Jeunet.
Claudie Ossard Productions,
Union Générale Cinématographique (UGC). 2001.

A Mind to Kill.

Director Peter Edwards, Edward Thomas.
Lluniau Lliw/4L Productions, Fiction Factory Ltd. 1994-1996.

And Pigs May Fly.

Director Stephen Bayly.
Red Rooster Film & Television Entertainment. 1984.

Angels in America.

Director Mike Nichols.
Avenue Pictures Productions, Home Box Office (HBO). 2003.

Anita and Me.

Director Metin Hüseyin.
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 2002.

A Way of Life.

Director Amma Asante.
AWOL Films Ltd. 2004.

Babette's Feast.

Director Gabriel Axel.
Panorama Film A/S. 1987.

Beguiled, The.

Director Don Siegel.
Jennings Lang, The Malpaso Company,
National Broadcasting Company (NBC). 1971.

Belle Epoque.
Director Fernando Trueba.
Animatógrafo. 1992.

Ben-Hur.
Director William Wyler.
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). 1959.

Beverly Hillbillies.
Director Paul Henning.
CBS Television. 1962.

Billy Eliot.
Director Stephen Daldry.
Arts Council of England, BBC Films. 2000.

Bitter Tea of General Yen, The.
Director Frank Capra.
Columbia Pictures Corporation. 1933.

Black Cauldron, The.
Directors Ted Berman, Richard Rich,
Silver Screen Partners II,
Walt Disney Pictures. 1985.

Bonanza.
Creator Fred Hamilton.
National Broadcasting Company (NBC). 1959.

Branwen.
Director Ceri Sherlock
Tellesyn Ty Helwick, S4C. 1994.

Breakfast at Tiffany's.
Director Blake Edwards.
Jurow-Shepherd, Paramount Pictures. 1961.

Byw yn dy Groen / Cross-Current.
Directors Pip Broughton, Phil Rowlands.
S4C/Boda Productions. 2001.

Caitlin.
Director Marc Evans.
Irish DreamTime, Merlin Films, Salem Films Limited. 2007.

Camgymeriad Gwych / Beautiful Mistake.
Director Marc Evans.
Merlin Films. 2000.

Carrie's War.
Director Coky Giedroyc.
BBC Wales. 2004.

Cameleon.
Director Ceri Sherlock.
Elidir, S4C. 1997.

Carmen la de Ronda.
Director Tulio Demicheli.
Producciones Benito Perojo. 1959.

Catch 22.
Director Mike Nichols.
Filmways Productions, Paramount Pictures. 1970.

Chocolat.
Director Lasse Hallström.
David Brown Productions, Fat Free Limited, Miramax Films. 2000.

Child's Christmas in Wales, A.
Director Don McBrearty.
Atlantis Films Limited, Harlech Television (HTV). 1987.

Chosen One. The.
Director Paul Turner
BBC Wales. 1982.

Christmas Story, A.
Director Bob Clark.
Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM). 1983.

Coalminer's Daughter.
Director Michael Apted.
Universal Pictures. 1980.

Coming Out.
Director Matt Lipsey.
El Camino Pictures, Milkwood Films. 2008.

Coming Up Roses.
Director Stephen Bayly.
Red Rooster Film & Television Entertainment. 1986.

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen.
Director Sara Sugarman.
Walt Disney Pictures 2004.

Corn is Green, The.
Director Irving Rapper.
Warner Bros. Pictures. 1945.

Corn is Green, The.
Director George Cukor.
Warner Bros. Television. 1979.

Crucible.
Director Raymond Rouleau.
Films Borderie, Compagnie Industrielle et Commerciale Cinématographique (CICC),
Pathé Cinéma. 1957.

Crucible.
Director Nicholas Hytner.
20th Century Fox 1996.

Cwm Hyfryd.
Director Paul Turner.
La Sept/S4C. 1993.

Dafydd.
Director Ceri Sherlock.
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 1992.

Dal: Yma/Nawr / Still: Here/ Now.
Director Marc Evans.
Fiction Factory Ltd., S4C International. 2004.

Darklands.
Director Julian Richards.
Arts Council of Wales, Lluniau Lliw/4L Productions,
Metrodome Films, Prolific Films Ltd. 1996.

Days of Wine and Roses, The.
Director Blake Edwards.
Jalem Productions,
Warner Bros. Pictures. 1962.

Dead Ringers.
Director David Cronenberg
Mantle Clinic II, Morgan Creek Productions,
Téléfilm Canada. 1988.

Deliverance.
Director John Boorman.
Elmer Productions.
Warner Bros. Pictures. 1972.

Desert and the Dream. The.
Director John Ormond.
BBC Wales. 1963.

Deserter and the Nomads, The.
Director Juraj Jakubisko.
CST Bratislava,
Ceskoslovenský Filmexport. 1968

Diary of Anne Frank, The.
Director George Stevens.
20th Century Fox. 1959.

Divine Intervention.
Director Elia Suleiman.
Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen,
Gimages, Lichtblick Film- und Fernsehproduktion,
Ness Communication & Productions Ltd.,
Ognon Pictures, Soread-2M, arte France Cinéma. 2002.

Dylan Thomas: Return Journey.
Director Anthony Hopkins.
Daniel TV, Yod Video. 1990.

Eldra.
Director Timothy Lyn.
Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C). 2001.

End of the Perfect Day, The.
Director Tom Ricketts.
American Film Manufacturing Company. 1914, 1915, 1917.

Englishman Who Went Up a Hill and Came Down a Mountain, The.
Director Christopher Monger.
Miramax Films. 1994.

Fantasia.
Director James Algar et al.
Walt Disney Pictures. 1940.

Flowers in the Attic.
Director Jeffrey Bloom.
Fries Entertainment. 1987.

Frankenstein.
Director James Whale.
Universal Pictures. 1931.

Further Adventures of Ma and Pa Kettle, The.
Director Charles Lamont.
Universal International Pictures (UI). 1949.

Gadael Lenin / Leaving Lenin.
Director Endaf Emlyn.
Gaucho, Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C). 1993.

Gaucho.
Director Endaf Emlyn.
Gaucho, Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C). 1983.

G.I. Blues.
Director Norman Taurog.
Paramount Pictures. 1960.

Grand Slam.
Director John Hefin.
BBC Wales. 1978.

Grease.
Director Randal Kleiser.
Paramount Pictures. 1978.

Great Expectations.
Director David Lean.
Cineguild. 1946.

Green Acres.
Director Richard L. Bare.
CBS Television. 1965.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner.
Director Stanley Kramer.
Stanley Kramer Productions,
Columbia Pictures Corporation. 1967.

Gwynfyd 'Paradise'.
Director Emlyn Williams.
Sianel 4 Cymru. 1992.

Happy Days.
Creator Garry Marshall.
American Broadcasting Company (ABC). 1974-1984.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone.
Director Chris Columbus.
1492 Pictures, Heyday Films,
Warner Bros. Pictures. 2001.

Hedd Wyn.
Director Paul Turner.
Pendefig Ty Cefn., Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C). 1992.

Hee-Haw.
Creator Frank Peppiatt.
Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). 1969.

Hello Dolly.
Director Gene Kelly.
20th Century Fox. 1969.

How Green Was My Valley.
Director John Ford.
Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. 1941.

House of America.
Director Marc Evans.
Egmond Film & Television. 1997.

House of Sand.
Director Andrucha Waddington.
Conspiração Filmes,
Columbia TriStar Filmes do Brasil,
Globo Filmes. 2005.

Human Traffic.
Director Justin Kerrigan.
Irish Screen,
Fruit Salad Films. 1999.

I dashur armik or Dear Enemy.
Director Gjergj Xhuvani.
Akkord Film Produktion GmbH,
Albanian General Vision,
Les Films de Cinéma. 2004.

I've Heard the Mermaids Singing.
Director Patricia Rozema.
National Film Board of Canada (NFB). 1987.

James Bond 007: Everything or Nothing.
Director Scot Bayless.
Electronic Arts (EA),
MGM Interactive,
United Artists. 2003.

Jean de Florette.

Director Claude Berri.
DD Productions, Films A2,
Rai Due Radiotelevisione Italiana,
Renn Productions, Télévision Suisse-Romande (TSR). 1986.

Joni Jones.
Director Stephen Bayley.
Red Rooster Film & Television Entertainment. 1982.
Re-released by 4 Films as Joni Jones y ffilm / Joni Jones the film, in 1988.

Kings of the Road.
Director Wim Wenders.
Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR),
Wim Wenders Productions. 1976.

Kiss of the Spiderwoman.
Director Hector Babenco.
FilmDallas Pictures, HB Filmes
Sugarloaf Films Inc. 1985.

La Cage aux Folles.
Director Edouard Molinaro.
Da Ma Produzione,
Les Productions Artistes Associés. 1978.

La finestra di fronte or Facing Windows.
Director Ferzan Ozpetek.
AFS Film, Clap Filmes,
R&C Produzioni, Redwave Films. 2003.

Last Days of Dolwyn, The / Women of Dolwyn.
Director Russell Lloyd.
Emlyn Williams, De Grunwald Productions,
London Film Productions, Arthur Rank Film Distributors. 1949.

Last Sin Eater, The.
Director Michael Landon, Jr.
Believe Pictures, The Last Sin Eater,
20th Century Fox Studios. 2007.

Les Deux Anglaises et Le Continent.
Director François Truffaut.
Les Films du Carrosse,
Cinérel. 1971.

Little House on the Prairie.
Director Michael Landon.
Ed Friendly Productions,
National Broadcasting Company (NBC). 1974-1983.

Little Princess, The.
Director Walter Lang.
Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. 1939.

Little Red Riding Hood.
Director Alfred J. Goulding.
Century Film. 1922.

Little Shop of Horrors.
Director Frank Oz.
The Geffen Company, Warner Bros. Pictures. 1986.

Lord of the Flies.
Director Peter Brook.
Two Arts Ltd., 1963.

Lord of the Flies .
Director Harry Hook.
Castle Rock Entertainment,
Jack's Camp, Nelson Entertainment,
Signal Hill Entertainment, 1990.

Mad Cows.
Director Sara Sugarman.
Capitol Films, Flashlight Films,
Newmarket Capital Group LLC. 1999.

Magdalene Sisters, The.
Director Peter Mullan.
Scottish Screen, Film Council,
Bórd Scannán na hÉireann. 2002.

Making of Monsters, The.
Director John Greyson.
Canadian Film Centre. 1991.

Manon of the Spring.
Director Claude Berri.
DD Productions, Films A2,
Rai Due Radiotelevisione Italiana,
Renn Productions. 1987.

Mary Poppins.
Director Robert Stevenson,
Walt Disney Productions. 1964.

Matchmaker, The.
Director Joseph Anthony.
Don Hartman Productions,

Paramount Pictures. 1958.

Me, You, Them.

Director Andrucha Waddington.
Columbia Pictures Corporation,
Columbia TriStar Filmes do Brasil,
Conspiração Filmes. 2000.

Milwr Bychan / Boy Soldier.

Director Karl Francis.
Cine Cymru Cyf. for S4C. 1986.

Miracle on 34th Street.

Director George Seaton.
Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. 1947.

Mitt liv som hund / My Life as a Dog.

Director Lasse Hallström.
FilmTeknik,
Svensk Filmindustri (SF). 1985.

Morituri.

Director Bernhard Wicki.
Arcola Pictures, Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. 1965.

Morphine and Dolly Mixtures.

Director Karl Francis.
British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). 1990.

MTV's Rock the Vote.

Director Victor Du Bois
20th Century Fox Television 1993.

Mulholland Drive.

Director David Lynch.
Les Films Alain Sarde,
Asymmetrical Productions.
Babbo Inc., Canal+,
The Picture Factory. 2001.

My Beautiful Laundrette.

Director Stephen Frears.
Channel Four Films. 1985.

My Big Fat Greek Wedding.

Director Joel Zwick.
Big Wedding, Gold Circle Films,
Home Box Office (HBO). 2002.

My Little Eye.
Director Marc Evans.
Studio Canal, Universal Pictures,
WT2 Productions, Working Title Films,
imX Communications Inc. 2002.

My Name is Joe.
Director Ken Loach.
Alta Films, Channel Four Films. 1998.

Never Ending Story.
Director Wolfgang Petersen.
Bavaria Studios,
Neue Constantin Film,
Producers Sales Organization,
Warner Bros. Pictures,
Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR). 1984.

Never to be Forgotten.
Director Gwenda Richards.
ITV Wales. 2007.

Night Stalker.
Director Jeffrey Grant Rice.
Touchstone Television. 2005.

Nuovo cinema Paradiso.
Director Guiseppe Tornatore.
Cristaldifilm, Les Films Ariane,
Radiotelevisione Italiana,
TF1 Films Productions. 1988.

Oed yr Addewid.
Director Emlyn Williams.
Sianel 4 Cymru. 2000.

On the Black Hill.
Director Andrew Grieve.
British Film Institute (BFI). 1987.

Otherworld / Y Mabinogi.
Director Derek W. Hayes.
S4C International. 2003.

Our Gang.
Director Robert F. McGowan.
Hal Roach Studios Inc. 1922.

Penyberth.

Director John Hefin.
BBC Wales. 1985.

Pum Cynnig i Gymro / Bride of War.
Director Peter Edwards.
Lluniau Lliw/4L Productions. 1998.

Pinocchio.
Directors Hamilton Luske, Ben Sharpsteen.
Walt Disney Pictures. 1940.

Poor Little Rich Girl.
Director Irving Cummings.
Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. 1936.

Porc Pei / Pork Pie.
Director Paul Turner.
BBC Wales, Sianel 4 Cymru. 1998.

Queer as Folk.
Creator Russell T. Davies.
Four Films, Showtime Cable Networks. 1999-2009.

Rancid Aluminium.
Director Edward Thomas,
Ballpark Productions Partnership,
Entertainment Film Distributors,
Fiction Factory Ltd. 2000.

Real McCoys.
Director David Alexander.
Hy Averback, Brennan-Westgate,
Marterto Productions, American Broadcasting Company (ABC), (1957-1962)
CBS Television, (1962-1963). 1957.

Rear Window.
Director Alfred Hitchcock.
Paramount Pictures. 1954.

Resurrection Man.
Director Marc Evans.
Revolution Films. 1998.

Scrooge.
Director Brian Desmond Hurst.
George Minter Productions. 1951.

Shallow Grave.
Director Danny Boyle.

Channel Four Films. 1994.

Six Degrees of Separation.
Director Fred Schepisi.
Maiden Movies, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM),
New Regency Pictures. 1993.

Sleep Sweet, My Darling.
Director Neven Hitrec.
Hrvatska Radiotelevizija (HRT),
Inter Film. 2005.

Snowcake.
Director Marc Evans.
Revolution Films, Rhombus Media. 2006.

Solomon and Gaenor.
Director Paul Morrison.
APT Films, APT Productions, Arts Council of England,
Arts Council of Wales, Channel Four Films, National Lottery,
September Films, Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C),
Columbia TriStar Home Video, Sony Pictures Classics. 1999.

Song for a Raggy Boy.
Director Aisling Walsh.
Fantastic Films, Lolafilms,
Moviefan Scandinavia A/S, Subotica Entertainment,
Titian Red Pictures, Zoma Films Ltd. 2003.

St. Patrick: The Irish Legend.
Director Robert Hughes.
Fox Family Channel, Sharpmist III Ltd. 2000.

Stepford Wives, The.
Director Frank Oz,
Paramount Pictures. 2004

Stormbreaker.
Director Geoffrey Sax.
Samuelson Productions,
Isle of Man Film Ltd.,
The Weinstein Company,
Isle of Man Film Commission,
VIP 4 Medienfonds, Moving Picture Company (MPC),
Rising Star Entertainment. 2006.

Stormydd Awst / The Storms of August.
Director Endaf Emlyn.
Gaucho, Sianel 4 Cymru. 1988.

Sweeney Todd.
Director Tim Burton.
DreamWorks SKG, MacDonald/Parkes Productions,
Parkes/MacDonald Productions,
Warner Bros. Pictures, The Zanuck Company. 2007.

Tammy.
Director Leslie Goodwins
Sidney Miller
American Broadcasting Company (ABC) 1965.

Testimony of Taliesin Jones, The / Small Wonders
Director Martin Duffy.
CF1 Cyf, Snake River. 2000

Tiger Bay.
Director J. Lee Thompson.
Independent Artists. 1959.

Torch Song Trilogy.
Director Paul Bogart.
New Line Cinema,
Howard Gottfried/Ronald K. Fierstein Production. 1988.

Trainspotting.
Director Danny Boyle.
Channel Four Films. 1996.

Trauma.
Director Marc Evans.
Little Bird Productions, BBC Films, Grosvenor Park Productions,
Little Bird. 2004.

Touch, The.
Director Peter Pau.
Aruze Corporation,
China Film Co-Production Corporation. 2002.

Twin Town.
Director Kevin Allen.
Agenda, Aimimage Productions,
Figment Films, Polygram Filmed Entertainment. 1997.

Ugly Betty.
Creator Silvio Horta.
Touchstone Television. 2006.

Under Milk Wood.

Director Andrew Sinclair.
Timon Productions, J. Arthur Rank Film Distributors. 1972.

Un Nos Ola Leuad / One Moonlit Night.
Director Endaf Emlyn.
Ffilm Cymru, Gaucho Films Ltd.,
Sianel 4 Cymru (S4C). 1991.

Usual Suspects, The.
Director Bryan Singer,
PolyGram Filmed Entertainment. 1995.

Valley of Song.
Director Gilbert Gunn.
Associated British Picture Corporation (ABPC). 1953.

Very Annie Mary.
Director Sara Sugarman.
Arts Council of England, Arts Council of Wales, Canal+,
Dragon Pictures, Film Four. 2001.

Waiting for the Light.
Director Christopher Monger.
Epic Productions Inc., Sarliu/Diamant. 1990.

Warrior, The.
Director Asif Kapadia,
The Bureau, British Screen Productions, Film Four. 2001.

Watcher in the Attic, The.
Director Noboru Tanaka.
Nikkatsu. 1976.

Wickerman.
Director Robin Hardy.
British Lion Film Corporation. 1973.

Witness.
Director Peter Weir.
Paramount Pictures. 1985.

Y Fargen / The Bargain.
Director Strathford Hamilton.
Sianel 4 Cymru. 1996.

Ymadawiad Arthur / Arthur's Arrival.
Director Marc Evans.
Sianel 4 Cymru. 1994.

Ysglyfaeth / Prey.
Director Gareth Wynn Jones
Sianel 4 Cymru. 1984.

Y Mynydd Grug / The Heather Mountain.
Director Angela Roberts.
Llun y Felin, S4C International. 1997.

Y Mapiwr / The Making of Maps.
Director Endaf Emlyn.
Gaucho Cyf. S4C. 1996.

Zulu.
Director Cy Endfield.
Diamond Films.
Paramount British Pictures. 1964.