

**Publishing Anglophone Wales: Politics, Culture and the
'Classic' Novel**

Peter Vokes

**A Thesis Submitted in Candidature for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

University of South Wales

2014

Summary

Questions about literary canon-making have haunted the development of twentieth-century literary critical scholarship. The processes of political devolution initiated in the closing years of the last century have only sharpened these questions for critics working in the newly empowered nations of the United Kingdom. In the tension-filled bilingual historical context of Wales in particular, discussions about the nature of the ‘Welsh’ classic literary text, and about the form and content of any identifiably Welsh literary canon, have always circled and fuelled debates about the nature of the country’s sense of cultural, political and above all linguistic identity. The same questions have accompanied the emergence of, and not insignificant ideological tensions encompassed by, the literary-critical field which has come to be known as ‘Welsh Writing in English’.

This research project takes as its particular focus the relatively recent publication, by both the Assembly-backed Library of Wales and the independent collaborative Honno Press, of competing and very different lists of so-called or potentially ‘Classic’ Welsh Anglophone texts. In light of this, it also considers the implications of the relatively recent Seren Press initiative ‘New Stories from the Mabinogion’. Embedding its detailed examination of these commercial initiatives in the context of historical and literary-critical debates about the nature and value of Wales’ English-speaking aesthetic and cultural life, the thesis questions the extent to which Honno, the Library of Wales and Seren can be implicated in the self-conscious construction and solidification of a new Anglophone literary canon in a new era of cultural independence, let alone any more (or less) formal nationwide cultural response to the political drama of devolution.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are first due to my supervisor, Dr Alice Entwistle, for her patience, guidance and support. This thesis would not have been possible without her, and I am extremely grateful that she was my supervisor. There have been a number of ups and downs throughout my thesis and she was always a willing and capable advisor and friend. Thanks should also be paid to my second supervisor, Professor Jane Aaron. Her knowledge and understanding of Welsh writing in English was invaluable, and it was always a pleasure to meet and discuss my work. Undoubtedly, this research would not have been possible without the financial support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and the more general support of the English Department at the University of South Wales. I am also grateful to Professor Dai Smith and Richard Davies for their willingness to be interviewed.

A different sort of thanks is due to my family, who were willing to put up with me, and did so without ever threatening to emigrate. Especial thanks are due to Christine and Robert Vokes for their proof reading, and the fact that they did not charge any money for their help. I would also like to thank Sara Changkee, Lleucu Cravos, Phil Davies, Sian Evans, James Henton, Kate Jones, Karl Thomas and Gareth Williams for lunches and/or nights out where I was able to forget about my thesis completely. An acknowledgement should also go to Dale Cooper, not only for the above, but also his Gestapo-like interrogation of my work. I am also grateful to my Welsh teachers in the Welsh for Adults Centre for giving me the chance to learn the Welsh language and provide an outlet away from the thesis.

Finally, a big thanks to Catherine Phelps, for her friendship, drinking companionship, and her constant support and generous help throughout the writing of my thesis.

Table of Contents

Summary	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Introduction: The (Re)Creation of a Nation.....	1
1. The Critical Construction of Pre-modern Welsh writing in English	28
2. The Anglophone Welsh in Modern Wales: Degrees of Dominance.....	57
3. Case Study of the Honno ‘Classics’: A Separate Existence	93
4. Case Study of the Library of Wales Series: A Perspective on the Past	139
5. ‘Classics’, the Canon and Tradition.....	186
6. Seren’s New Stories from the Mabinogion: The ‘Old’ as ‘New’	225
Conclusion: The Anglophone Welsh ‘Habitus’	250
Appendix: Wales’ Anglophone ‘Classics’ industry.....	259
Works Cited	269

Introduction: The (Re)Creation of a Nation

Welsh writing in English is often considered to be a modern phenomenon that found its feet in the twentieth century and is finding its stride in the twenty-first. However, for all its growth, there has historically been a lack of Anglophone- Welsh texts regularly in print. This shortage has meant that the English-language population of Wales have been denied easy access to literary sources that speak of their culturally specific heritage and with their voice. Recently, Welsh publishers have launched initiatives aimed at remedying this problem by republishing out of print works which recognise the breadth and depth of the Anglophone-Welsh experience.

Since Welsh Devolution in 1999, there have been numerous Welsh Assembly Government funding enterprises aimed at increasing Anglophone Wales' exposure to the nation's cultural heritage. Increased revenue for art, literature and music has been made available to promote new enterprises and secure the availability of a Welsh national heritage. In literature, the historic English-language materials from Wales were felt to have suffered a lack of popular attention for being in the shadow of other, larger and more opulent, English-language nations which had limited its international and national availability. In 2003, the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee of the Welsh Assembly assessed this issue and undertook a policy review of Welsh writing in English. This body consulted the major publishing houses in Wales and debated the best way to "give this important, but neglected, area of cultural life in Wales some positive exposure and lead to a revival of interest throughout Wales" (7). When it reported its findings in March 2004, it commented on the lack of easily accessible Anglophone Welsh texts and noted that it "is important that

readers understand the whole canon of Welsh writing in English. The lack of availability of classic texts is a significant problem for teaching, scholarship and readership” (19). The Committee recommended “a Library of Wales for classic works”, and cited the Library of America as a model, because it was “a great popular monument to the literary achievements of the USA” (25-26).

Thus, the Library of Wales series was born, a collection which focused solely on ensuring, according to its Mission Statement, “that all the rich and extensive literature of Wales which has been written in English will now be made available to readers in and beyond Wales”. However, a difference between the Committee’s recommendation and the published editions is that neither the volumes nor the descriptions of the Library of Wales series define the collection as ‘Classic’. This discrepancy might stem from series editor Dai Smith’s discomfort with the word ‘Classic’ in connection with such a literary collection: “I think from the beginning I really did try and avoid the word ‘Classic’ because I certainly had in my mind that there are volumes in the series that you might not think in a traditional sense were ‘Classic’, but might be terribly useful in terms of Welsh writing in English” (Interview with Dai Smith). Regardless of Professor Smith’s reluctance to use the term, the Library of Wales series bears many similarities to other so-called ‘Classic’ series. The collection that was quoted as an example for the Library of Wales series, the Library of America, states that, regarding its series, its goals are: to keep the price of its books affordable, to aid small public libraries and high schools with their purchase of the volumes, to keep the growing list of titles in print and to publish worthy yet lesser known works” (“The Library of America: Nonprofit Publishing”). This statement bears many similarities to the Mission Statement included in each Library of Wales edition. Unlike the Library of Wales, the Library of America proudly displays the banner: “Classic Writers.

Classic Books” on its website (“The Library of America: Home Page”). The Library of Wales series has many of the prerequisites to be called a ‘Classics collection, and in its Mission Statement it is prepared to state that it “will ... seek to include the best of Welsh writing in English, as well as to showcase what has been unjustly neglected”. Indeed, if we compare its stated goals with those of other ‘Classics’ publishers we see comparable fundamentals and aims. For example, the Penguin Modern Classics assert that their series continues to “inspire, entertain and enlighten”, the Oxford World Classics notes that its series “makes available lesser-known as well as celebrated writing”, and the Virago Modern Classics, in a comment that seems to echo Professor Smith’s reservation over the word ‘Classic’, states that an aim of their series is “to broaden the sometimes narrow definition of a ‘classic’ which has often led to the neglect of interesting novels and short stories”.¹ As a result of these various similarities this thesis assumes that the Library of Wales series is implicated in the same kind of cultural consecrating as an avowed ‘Classics’ series, and is a ‘Classics’ series in all but name. To acknowledge this fact, throughout this thesis it is referred to and considered as a ‘Classics’ series.

The decision of the Welsh Assembly Government to centrally fund a ‘Classics’ series built upon the work of independent Welsh publishers, who since the 1990s had become active in producing ‘Classic’ series of Anglophone Welsh works.² The most notable of these were the Honno and Seren imprints who supplemented their new publications with ‘Classics’ series. A by-product of these ‘Classics’ series was the reissued works’ contribution towards a solidified and coherent culture that was implicated in

¹ Each of these quotations are included, respectively, in the latest format of these publishers’ ‘Classic’ editions. As such, it is not possible to give a single source for each reference. However, the respective quotations can be found in, for example, the final page of the Penguin Modern Classics’ 2000 edition of Kingsley Amis’ *Lucky Jim*; the second page of the Oxford World Classics’ 2007 edition of *The Mabinogion*; and the antepenultimate page of the Virago Modern Classics’ 2011 edition of Mary Webb’s *Precious Bane*.

² For more on the ‘Classics’ industry in Wales see Appendix.

the modern Anglophone Welsh national character.³ The series provide a pool of works which yield material to suggest Anglophone Wales' contemporary nature which, in turn, promotes a wider sense of individual cultural association with the country.

The interest of this thesis is the 'Classics' series' presentation of the nation through narrative, and this narrative's presentation of a particular understanding of Anglophone Wales. Or more particularly, how 'Classics' series includes multiple voices which, through the publisher's selection, comprise a narrativizing, organizing discourse on culture; in the series there is no singular authorial voice, rather there are a multiplicity of perspectives that together make up an episodic version of events.⁴ As each work is layered into their respective series the collection's portrayal becomes transtextual: a network of signs and themes within a defined location that have a temporal beginning and end, and follow a specific arc or evolution through the works. The network of signs that are embedded within the texts articulate with each other and create a quasi-Wales which is controlled by the editorial choices, which provide the series' direction.

The literary critical discourse provides background to the 'Classic' publications and indicates what has traditionally been represented as the important moments and cultural movements in Welsh writing in English. It also suggests the role academics play in the national cultural process. Their choices over which texts deserve attention and investigation has drawn temporal, thematic and gendered boundaries. As the academic research and debates evolve and re-assess the literature, the 'Classics' organise or re-organise the relevant and significant cultural artefacts. This is certainly true of the nineteenth century, which prior to recent research and investigation

³ When referring to culture, although I am aware of the slipperiness of this word, I am following Raymond Williams' definition of it in relation to Wales, namely, "It's how and where most people in Wales are living, and in relation to which most meanings and values are in practice found" ('Welsh Culture' 5).

⁴ For practical purposes this thesis will focus on fictional prose work that has been issued as a 'Classic'.

was often considered unrelated to modern Welsh writing in English. As an example, the academic deliberation over nineteenth-century Welsh writing in English indicates how a nation's literature is a moveable feast which re-integrates works as the culture is contemporaneously reinterpreted and the nation's cultural identity is recalibrated.

The very ability of Welsh writing in English to speak for Wales incurred some dissension in the twentieth century. However, the English language's embedding of its dominance in Wales changed the critical debate which became more concerned with the literature's potential integration with, or incorporation of, Welsh-language literature as the nation's public voice. As the conversations changed regarding Welsh writing in English's relative importance to Wales, the capability of the literature to speak for Wales was strengthened and its importance as a site of national cultural identity was confirmed. Ultimately, the 'Classics' series emanating from Wales can be considered as a consequence of the national entrenching of Welsh writing in English. As such, the revived works are indicative of how the nation is being retrospectively explored according to a contemporary understanding.

While the critical commentaries provide perspective and background to the 'Classics', the series' selections indicate the various publishers' specific literary-cultural presentation of the country. In order to investigate this, the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' will be used as case studies, not least because these two series are currently the most active in Wales, but also because of the way that the series have constructed a vision of Wales.⁵ Honno and the Library of Wales identify texts that they subjectively assess to be important Welsh cultural signifiers in English, while having regard to the need for continued sales, and, in the case of Honno, the fact that the

⁵ While formerly known as 'The Honno Classics', Honno re-launched their series for the press' 25th Anniversary and rebranded it 'Welsh Women's Classics'. However, for ease of reference it will be referred to in this thesis as the Honno 'Classics'.

press only publishes women writers. The respective series offer a politicised depiction of how people lived in Wales through each of the periods covered by the collections. The Honno and the Library of Wales 'Classics' can be understood as providing a cultural narrative that emphasises a nuanced English-language Welsh identity. Though both series cover similar timeframes, their differing selections generate divergent perspectives on the Welsh experience through its Anglophone literary offerings. Regardless of the 'Classics' narratives' differences, they both provide scope for critical investigation on their varying uses of place and perspective to define Anglophone Wales and its literary specific culture, heritage and identity.

One of the questions that the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' raise is the series' potential to be called canonical. While the editors reserve their judgement, the critical debate regarding the literary canon unveils the contemporaneous concerns about allegations of elitism or cultural conservatism in the literary canon. A particular problem occurs over the ability of a small portion of society to influence a text's message and its positioning within or without of a literary canon. Implicit in decisions regarding the canon is their accommodating within a literary tradition. While a rise in the number of accessible literary works foregrounds a literary tradition, it is the retrospective activity of academics and publishers that characterise and massage that tradition. Honno's labelling of its works as 'Classics' and the Library of Wales' public refusal of even that word for its volumes potentially absolves either publisher from debates regarding the canon. However, some of the basic similarities between the two series and the canon allows comparisons to be drawn. Regardless of their canonical status, the Honno and Library of Wales series can be argued to propose a politicised construction of Anglophone Wales' literary heritage.

The recent launch of Seren's 'New Stories from the Mabinogion' suggests a new form of cultural revivification as it commissions Welsh

writers in English to reimagine and retell the *Mabinogion* for a modern audience.⁶ Nonetheless, the authors' interactions with similar themes and tropes from the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' suggests a cultural continuity, but one which implicates Anglophone Wales' authors in the nation's cultural production. The Seren stories can be considered as a development of the 'Classics' cultural narrative as the works encourage a more integrated attitude to Welsh heritage, and suggest the creative potential that is generated in the complicated space between Wales' linguistic cultures. However, the Seren retellings can be considered as building on, or from, the cultural framework produced by the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics', which present the more substantive recuperation of Anglophone Wales' literary and cultural heritage.

The 'Classics' Construction of the Nation

As a collection of national cultural artefacts 'Classic' texts can help to confirm and sustain an individual's understanding of their nation. 'Classics' suggest a temporal fraternity where the works broaden an individual's understanding of the horizons of his or her world. Each text in a 'Classics' series helps to populate this world, adding new and different elements to the internal dimensions, while exacerbating the contrast with the external worlds. There is an entwining of history and geography which involves an escape to and from the nation, the texts reacting and responding to each other and helping to continue an overarching story. One of the obvious elements of a 'Classics' series is that, rather than a single, cohesive narrative written by a solitary author, it blends a number of separate narratives by various authors. Cohesion is provided by reissuing the texts under a

⁶ The launching of the series in 2009, soon after my research programme got under way, reflects some of the dynamism of the cultural milieu under investigation in this study, and the commercial opportunities which publishers discern therein.

‘Classics’ banner which encourages a reader to think of them as having an association with each other. This results in an ability to understand each text as part of a single, fractured narrative, although there is no obvious connection between the narratives that are constructed into a community of texts.

The ‘Classic’ narrations on Anglophone-Welsh communities record how the English-language Welsh communities adapted to their changing circumstances. Unable to fully accommodate themselves within a Welsh-language heritage, the Anglophone-Welsh writers formulated and articulated an alternative Welsh national identity. The work done in constructing a collection of ‘Classic’ works defines and solidifies ideas of Anglophone-Welsh identity and suggests how this developed against a specific history. As Benedict Anderson notes, in *Imagined Communities* (1991), the “nation’s biography snatches the growing mortality rate, exemplary suicides, poignant martyrdoms, assassinations, executions, wars, and holocausts. But to serve the narrative purpose, these violent deaths must be remembered/forgotten as ‘our own’” (206). The Anglophone Welsh ‘Classics’ recognise the English-language population’s heritage as they present narratives that remember, locate and endorse ‘our’ communities’ specific place, history and culture.

In terms of world literatures, Welsh writing in English is relatively young. Although the first Anglophone Welsh novel was published towards the end of the eighteenth century, it would be some time before the trickle of works became a stream. This point has often been cited by critics who have noted that “Welsh literature in English is largely a twentieth-century phenomenon originating in the dramatic decline of Welsh speakers and the concomitant rise of English speakers in Wales in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries” (Lloyd 7). The ‘Classic’ publishing initiatives of Honno and the Library of Wales, working out of critical commentaries, have selected a cadre of texts which, they argue, give a good insight into the

interests and understanding of Welsh authors writing in English and their reading of English-language Welsh identity.⁷ The rise and development of English language Welsh writing has been promoted as a testament to the unique voice and consciousness of culture and sensibility that was unavailable in any other national literature, and spoke from and to ‘us’, the Anglophone Welsh.

In ‘Popular Images’, John Harris comments that Wales has seemed “obsessed by self-image”, which has resulted in a sensitivity to external and, the even more painful, internal criticism. This means that it tends to demand of its literature that

it serve as the handmaid of nationality and be in spirit celebratory; non-transgressive, non-adversarial. Writers are praised as cultural bridge builders, not as demolitionists. Internal divisions must be dampened down, for a literature which parades Welsh differences over supposed national defects gives ammunition to those with low opinions of Wales. (Harris 203)

However, this is complicated by questions over which notion of Welsh nationality the literature celebrates, as the history of Welsh writing in English is beset by internal wrangling and divisions over the potential of the literature to speak for the nation. The Honno and Library of Wales ‘Classics’ obviously concentrate on an Anglophone Welsh identity rather than Welsh-language identity, but they do not make the two mutually exclusive. From their ‘Classics’, Anglophone Welsh identity is born out of, but is not a synonym or antonym for, Welsh-language identity. The publishers’ selection of ‘Classics’ counters the critical arguments against the literature and presents the rise of Anglophone-Welsh identity as a part of a historic and

⁷ Albeit, in the case of Honno, this could be amended to Welsh women authors writing in English.

seemingly natural evolution. Welsh national identity is not singular, but rather than this being a negative it is celebrated as a positive. The critical dissension becomes lost in the academic stratosphere as at a popular level the internal differences are muted. The modern affirming of Anglophone-Wales' literature and culture is significant as it encourages Wales' English-language offerings to be thought of as one of the dual 'handmaids' of Welsh nationality.

Re-understanding the Past

Through various initiatives the Anglophone Welsh have more access to a heritage than ever before, a heritage which conflates history and culture to contextualise and endorse the status quo in Wales. As such, a body of literary works deemed to be 'Classics' provides significant reflective material, and each edition can be considered as a separate cultural artefact. The importance of distinguishing the works as cultural artefacts is that the label indicates their unearthing or recuperation from the past, a process which elevates and consecrates them as primary indicators of the evolution of an Anglophone Welsh national identity. While Wales as a nation is not new, its English literature is helping to assert its integral and historic English-language nature. The Anglophone Welsh experience is a complicated one, and the complexity arises over its relationship with the Welsh language and English nationality and its struggles to be free of incorporation or subordination by either.

The role of cultural artefacts such as national 'Classics' is to provide the individual with a base for his or her national identity, and in the words of Craig Calhoun, such a base gives a "temporal depth – a notion of the nation as such existing through time, including past and future generations, and having a history" (qtd. in *Postcolonial Wales* 41). Notions of national identity are positively integrated with and affirmed by the history

incorporated in the 'Classics' to create a narrative of the nation from past to present. The problem with this is that history is a complicated concept, as it is composed of multiple subjective accounts, which are often contradictory and composed of subtly different perspectives. According to Susan Bassnett,

Coming to terms with the past means facing the ambiguities of a plural history ... There can be no clearly-defined point of origin, no exact source, and as a result no polarization between binary oppositions. What remains is the need to recognise the historical processes that have resulted in such pluralism. (qtd. in *Corresponding Cultures* 74)

'Classics' series indicate a partial solution to this problem with their assertions that the selections incorporate important facets of culture or history by culturally important writers. They also help to limit the number of binary oppositions by restricting the number of voices, and although not providing a definitive point of origin at least gesture at where the roots of a nation lie.

Benedict Anderson regards nationality, or as he terms it "nation-ness", and nationalism as a particular kind of cultural artefact in its own right: "To understand [nations] properly we need to consider carefully how they have come into historical being, in what ways their meanings have changed over time, and why, today, they command such profound emotional legitimacy" (4). One source for the answers to these questions is a nation's 'Classics' works which record its evolution and development and suggest an emotional legacy. It is at this point that fiction demonstrates its tenuous ability to accurately record or chronicle a nation, as it is always conditioned by subjective elements, be it the original author's perspective of

history or culture, or, in the case of ‘Classics’, the editor’s choice of one text over another. Regardless of this problem, Anderson sees the rise of print culture as implicit in the rise of national consciousness and the construction of national identity. His analysis concentrates on the historic conceptions of nations, and how, once a nation could be imagined and the principles that formulated it passed, the

search was on, so to speak, for a new way of linking fraternity, power and time meaningfully together. Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways. (36)

In Anderson’s opinion, the importance of the printed word was its ability to grant a reader access to a narrative about *their* particular cultural heritage and the triumphs and struggles upon which *their* culture had been forged. The key to this relationship was a text’s highlighting of communal and national association with similarly situated individuals and communities by plunging a reader “immediately into calendrical time and a familiar landscape” (32).

If we update Anderson’s analysis to consider the role of the printed word in modern nations and how they continue to evoke national spirit there is still a recurrent requirement to link “fraternity, power, and time” (36). Although a nation is often thought of as a static element, consideration of it as such is motivated by a nation’s continuous affirmation of internal similarity and external difference. The ‘Classics’ are not comprised of modern imaginings of the nation, but they do justify the idea that an Anglophone Welsh national identity should be considered as historic and enduring. In fact, the connecting of “fraternity, power, and time” is arguably

further advanced in 'Classics' than more contemporary novels, as their elevated status and the fact that they are deemed to speak from the past to the present gives an authoritative account of an integrated and communal culture.

The embedding of this culture through a 'Classics' series, provides, to borrow Prasenjit Duara's term, a "master narrative of descent", or, perhaps in the case of Honno, a mistress "narrative of descent". In Duara's reasoning such narratives define and mobilize a nation as a community that gives preferential treatment to certain symbols and highlights the community's self-consciousness of their position within certain boundaries (168-9). If we consider each 'Classic' to be a cultural artefact then we can suggest that as a whole they are an index of national cultural identity. The narratives mobilize the cultural symbols that highlight the community's self-consciousness by conferring on them a depth and integrity. The recuperatory activities of publishers like Honno and the Library of Wales allows them to construct this index and suggest how members of the nation can read, contextualise and understand a past Wales within their modern experience and link the past national identity with their ideas on the current.

A Nation's Biography

Anglophone Wales' literary prose offerings have been derided, by critics such as Saunders Lewis and Bobi Jones, for not being in Welsh, being too English, or simply not being good enough. The publication of collections of Welsh works in English as 'Classics' represents a literary movement which emphasises these selections' distance from the debates by avowing their involvement in the articulation of an independent Anglophone Welsh national identity. At the same time, this recuperation addresses the works' previous neglect by recognising their literary achievements and wider credentials as 'Classic' literature.

As a collection, each ‘Classics’ series evokes a particular and peculiar national identity that, in the past, has been questioned on linguistic and cultural grounds. The works suggest the cultural and historical foundations of the Anglophone Welsh identity. This is significant, as without a secure national identity the Anglophone Welsh would occupy an incongruous status, as they would be neither fully accepted as Welsh nor English. Such a situation would be untenable in Michael Billig’s opinion, as the “dispossessed and insecure cannot bear this nomadic condition of homelessness: for them there is no rapture in ambiguity. They are driven to seek secure identities” (136). The provision of cultural foundations secures an identity by dismissing the ambiguity of ‘homelessness’ and affirming the natural and unalienable right of a people to a nationality. Of course, literature is not the only location of such cultural foundations, but its great advantage to the cementing of cultural heritage lies in its ability to merge narrative and history: “National histories tell of a people passing through time – ‘our’ people, with ‘our’ ways of life, and ‘our’ culture. Stereotypes of culture and temperament can be mobilized to tell the tale of ‘our’ uniqueness and ‘our’ common fate” (Wetherall and Potter, qtd. in Billig 71). In English-language Wales the ‘Classics’ record how ‘our’ people, with ‘our’ culture responded to ‘our’ history. The series commemorate and memorialise ‘our’ internal diversities and similarities under a singular external banner that affirms that ‘our’ means Welsh.

The history or culture expressed by the ‘Classics’ should not be assessed without reference to the critical commentators who have previously helped to define and assert the positive attributes and characteristics of the literature. Prior to the emergence of the ‘Classics’ the critics had long been choosing works of literature which supported Welsh writing in English’s claims to independence and authority. At a popular level, the Honno and Library of Wales series seem to be presenting something new as the texts are

recuperated from Wales' 'lost' or 'unavailable' literature. However, at an academic level they are endorsing or challenging roots and cultural material that had already been critically debated and affirmed or dismissed. The complication is that there is not a consistent consensus and the differences between, for example, Gwyn Jones, Roland Mathias and Stephen Knight's classifications of the breadth and composition of the literature are marked. These divisions are indicative of the nuanced national identities that are presented by the Honno and Library of Wales series. Each series editor, while favouring his or her interpretation of the best selections, is also working in and against other critical voices.

Discussing the original process that influenced the Library of Wales' choice of texts, Dai Smith revealed that a group of academics came together to identify the works that would form the spine of the series. Including Professor Smith, there were

Jane [Aaron] at the University of Glamorgan, Daniel Williams of Swansea University and Sandra Anstey who was with the WJEC, we did a couple of sessions ... looking at those big, in principle decisions, and I asked each of them to draw up a working list of titles to see if we could convince ourselves [of the viability of the project], and I think between us we came up with fifty books ... and of those fifty there were some twenty that were screaming at us and the key issues were: were they either out of print and/or relatively unavailable. (Interview with Dai Smith)

The current list of Library of Wales 'Classics' can be considered as favouring Professor Smith's ideas on the worthiest texts to be included, but the input of other voices has tempered and altered its overall composition.

Commenting on the decision-making process at the Library of Wales,

Professor Smith acknowledges his resistance to a committee-led system. He sees his role as a cultural interventionist, and promoter of linkages between past and present works. While this can occasion accusations of partiality and favouritism, he does admit the influence of others, as he has “listened and learnt. For me one of the joys of the Library of Wales is actually discovering things which neither I nor, in some instances, anybody else knew”

(Interview with Dai Smith). One prime example is the publication of the previously unfamiliar *Make Room for the Jester* (1964). Having been sent a copy of the book, Professor Smith felt it deserved inclusion because “it’s a minor classic. It’s certainly a book that talks to and about Wales. There were parameters [in the decision-making process] from the beginning, we did say we would look for geographical coverage, gender balance, chronology even” (Interview with Dai Smith). Although not favouring a formal selection process, and heavily influenced by his own opinion, Professor Smith’s agenda for the Library of Wales is, sometimes, influenced by outside agency.

We can see a more participatory and integrated process in the Honno ‘Classics’. Jane Aaron has commented that the series had

an interest in scholarly introductions from the beginning. We wanted the introductions written by scholars and researchers who had a particular enthusiasm for that author. That was always the important thing, right from the beginning. And that has really led the choice. It has been a matter of either people approaching us or being aware that someone was working on a woman writer, maybe had completed their doctorate and asking them what about doing something for the Honno Classics. (Interview with Jane Aaron)

From both Professors Smith and Aaron we can see that the chosen texts are the result of an occasionally complicated set of circumstances, and, to

differing degrees, the contribution of external sources. The academic involvement in each series accredits the 'Classics' and provides a foundation for them to be regarded as a library of material that popularly exposes the cultural integrity and independence of English-language Wales. As a narrative account or history of the life of a nation the earlier definition of the 'Classics' as a national cultural index can be updated, and the collections can, instead, be considered as national 'biographies'. Although open to anyone who cares to read the works as an example of Welsh writing in English, for the English-language Welsh the literary material speaks from and to 'our' communities. The significance of 'Classics' series are their refreshing of the literary material at a popular level; as they make these 'biographies' available, the particulars and borders of 'our' become further defined and entrenched in the public consciousness.

Having been chosen for inclusion in a 'Classics' series, a text is defined and interpreted according to marketing activities and critical reception, both of which further diminish the editor's ability to condition a work's message. The series suggest that at a socio-political level Wales is not dependent on 'outside' approval. However, the series' financial success is influenced by the column inches each reissue receives at home and abroad. As such, while primarily aimed at Wales the collections are also implicated in the construction of a sense of Welsh identity inside and outside of the borders of the principality. By receiving positive and wide-spread attention a work is valued as an important chronicler of national identity; conversely those texts which receive limited or negative attention have their worth 'reduced'. Richard Davies, the Publishing Director of Parthian, comments of the Library of Wales' publication of Brenda Chamberlain's *The Water Castle* (2013) in their 'Classics' that the work was being issued to mark the hundredth anniversary of Chamberlain's birth, which would also involve a specific marketing campaign. However,

The Water Castle is a literary novel/memoir and unless it gets good reviews in the *Times Literary Supplement*, which we haven't yet to any great extent, it isn't a book that will get to a massive audience.

Realistically, the competition is too high. Over a longer period maybe we'll sell two or three thousand copies of a literary novel of that type.

(Interview with Richard Davies)

The post-publishing process is significant because it has a direct effect on sales, and therefore on how many people interact with a text's message. A 'Classics' meaning is mediated by external factors and the publisher's awareness of the need for beneficial attention complicates the selection process. It also indicates how Welsh writing in English is still dependent on external approbation. The Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' encourage the Anglophone Welsh to have a wider consciousness of their literary heritage, but the commercial need for international recognition means that their choices are influenced by financial considerations alongside, or even over, what might simply be the best literature. The continued dominance of England's critical approval means that the series are trying to appeal to an internal market while appeasing an external one. However, if the 'Classics' were only available for an internal market it is unlikely that they would financially survive and the Anglophone Welsh access to their literary heritage would once again be very limited.

The Creation of a Community

The cultural heritage of Anglophone Wales has been distorted through a number of internal and external lenses, but, regardless of this, the 'Classics' suggest a cohesive heritage that can be said to constitute a 'biography'. At a superficial level the 'Classics' are only linked by their inclusion in their

respective series, and the decision to label the texts as significant moments in Welsh writing in English. However, their part in a literary series constructs them as a community of texts which forms connections and combines the works, culturally and historically. It is these connections which mobilize a reader's engagement with a singular meaning to a multiple and wider consideration of national identity.

Analysing how readers infer communities in novels, Benedict Anderson discusses the importance of a connected time and place in the story form. For Anderson, a reader constructs links between characters who do not meet and consequently imagines a connected scenario which justifies seemingly unconnected activities between the story's protagonists. He suggests a story, with a timeline where A, a husband and B, his wife, quarrel, and C, A's mistress and D, C's lover, have sex. Later A phones C, while B shops and D plays pool. Finally, A and B dine, D gets drunk in a bar and C has an ominous dream. A and D never actually interact, or even know of each other's existence but they are part of an imagined whole for the reader, and each character is dependent on the other for both the narrative and the story's message (25-6). Anderson's understanding can be extended, with regard to the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics', so that the texts become experienced as a connected series of works which affect and are affected by each other. They are a 'community' of literary works and their lack of overt interaction with other 'members' of the series is elided, as a timeline and a consistent interest in Wales binds the texts together. The chronologically first and last texts in each series are overtly linked by little other than their supposed interest in Wales, but this factor justifies, contextualises and embeds the series as a whole. Once such a conceit is in place; the characters throughout the works become protagonists in a unified narrative on Wales, in which their lack of interaction does not prevent them from seemingly affecting each other's fate. The difference between this

model and Anderson's is that here the characters are being imagined as part of a national community which exposes a wider more diverse message.

Developing this idea further, we can suggest how this 'community' of texts encourages national affiliation. Adapting Anderson's story, additional elements can be added so that A, B and C are Anglophone Welsh characters, A and B having read a Honno or Library of Wales 'Classic', while D is from England. In a slightly different timeline, A and B argue over their interpretation of the book they have read, later A and C discuss this quarrel, but when C and D meet and C asks D for his opinion on the work, D is evasive. In this model, A, B and C are culturally linked and the bridge that connects them is their interest in the interpretation of national identity through a recuperated cultural artefact. D's different national identity isolates and denies him the necessary cultural competence to involve himself in the debate.

'Classics' ask readers to reflect on the ties between themselves, their understanding of nationality, and what the criteria are for admission into a national community. In *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Pierre Bourdieu argues that certain cultural artefacts have a particular meaning for certain communities: "A work of art has meaning and interest only for someone who possesses the cultural competence, that is, the code, into which it is encoded" (2). The code that Bourdieu identifies separates these people from "the 'naïve' spectator [who] cannot attain a specific grasp of works of art which only have meaning – or value – in relation to the specific history of an artistic tradition" (4). The difference that Bourdieu notes means that for the native a 'Classics' series is a multiplicity of works that commemorates their cultural heritage. For the outsider, meanwhile, they are simply examples of writing from a different culture. It is this distinction that encourages their promotion of community, as they provide a body of work that has a localised importance and association that cannot be

provided elsewhere. The members of the included community can understand such works in ways unavailable to those not part of this community.

Although a ‘Classics’ series is comprised of a variety of geographically located texts, they commemorate the diversities and similarities of a communal culture under a national umbrella. The national ‘biography’ suggested earlier constructs particular ties between people who are otherwise solely linked when they physically interact, and conversely creates divisions with anyone not directly involved in this national ‘biography’. Each ‘Classics’ series’ affirmation and interrogation of national association or identity embroiders these ties, resulting in nuanced versions of Wales, that are nevertheless sheltered by the word ‘Wales’ or ‘Welsh’.

The movement from ‘Classics’ creating a community to fomenting national association is a subtle one and depends on an individual having a cultural competence which can mediate the movement. In Bourdieu’s opinion, “mastery” of these cultural symbols was,

for the most part, acquired simply by contact with works of art – that is, through an implicit learning analogous to that which makes it possible to recognise familiar faces without explicit rules or criteria ... it is what makes it possible to identify styles, i.e. modes of expression characteristic of a period, a civilization or a school, without having to distinguish clearly, or state explicitly, the features which constitute their originality. (4)

The ability to understand this “originality” as both unique to Welsh writing in English, and derived from the same original source as the imaginary Anglophone Welsh reader, creates an association between reader and text on a cultural or national level. However, these cultural artefacts are

constructed through selective recuperation according to certain criteria and “taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier” (Bourdieu 6). In the case of the Honno and Library of Wales series, the texts are being classified as evoking the peculiarity of an English-language Welsh identity distinct from a Welsh-language or purely English identity. The cultural artefacts being ‘mastered’ chronicle the background against which this identity forged those artefacts and established their independence and voice.

An important part of the process of cohering nationality is the defining of boundaries, both as a measuring device for those who do and do not have the necessary competence and to provide a set place to locate the individual’s originality. Benedict Anderson has noted that a nation is imagined as limited, “because even the largest, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations” (7).⁸ The identifying of other nations provides the concept of ‘them’ against which to judge ‘us’. In Wales, however, this position is not so clear. If geographic boundaries divide Wales and England, internally the limits are complicated by the presence of the two languages. The traditional disassociation between Welsh and English-language identity means that historically the boundaries were primarily cultural, although there were certain districts where one language reigned. The ‘Classics’ help to classify and codify these cultural borders by prompting internal identification of a national cultural heritage.

According to H. Tajfel, nations exist if a body of people feel themselves to be a nation; his theory accentuates the importance for individuals to have a positive social identity, or social conception (229, 256). This position is supported by Miroslav Hroch’s work on the nation building process, which argues that

⁸ Anderson identifies three factors as integral to the imagination of a nation: that it is limited; that it is sovereign; and that it is necessarily a community (7).

Identification with the national group in turn includes ... the construction of a personalized image of the nation. The glorious past of this personality comes to be lived as part of the individual memory of each citizen, and its defeats resented as failures that still touch them. (90-91)

The construction that Hroch discusses is only partially internal as cultural artefacts operate to expand the limit or range of national association. The 'Classics' engage with both Tajfel's idea of a positive social identity and Hroch's personalized image of the nation, as the 'glorious' past is set within boundaries that allow internal association and external disassociation. However, while these cultural artefacts expand the limits of Anglophone Wales' culture by recuperating and embedding a diverse heritage they are conversely limiting the criteria of inclusion within this national community by entrenching cultural and geographic boundaries. The formulating of national identity through 'Classics' is conceived at two levels; firstly a defining of the parameters and location of the nation and its culture; and secondly through the culture's invitation to an individual to see themselves as part of the ongoing national process.

Devolution and the Construction of Identity

Having discussed some of the factors that affect the composition of 'Classics', or 'biographies', it is worth analysing the timing of these republications. Welsh writing in English may be a relatively young literature, but the choice to memorialise its literary heritage is indicative of a deeper cultural shift in Wales. In his work on national narratives and their 'remembering' of a country, Benedict Anderson sees such emergence as a

result of “profound changes in consciousness” which bring “characteristic amnesias”.

Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives. After experiencing the physiological and emotional changes produced by puberty, it is impossible to ‘remember’ the consciousness of childhood ... Out of this estrangement comes a conception of personhood, *identity* ... which, because it can not be ‘remembered’, must be narrated. (204)⁹

The ‘impossibility’ to ‘remember’ means that the narratives present a distorted, slanted and pseudo history and as such are not set in a real time, but a “homogenous, empty time” (Anderson 204). Anderson notes the difference between personal and national narrative, which means that because a nation has

no Originator, the nation’s biography can not be written evangelically, ‘down time’, through a long procreative chain of begettings. The only alternative is to fashion it ‘up time’ ... This fashioning, however, is marked by deaths, which in a curious inversion of conventional genealogy, start from an originary present. World War II begets World War I; out of Sedan comes Austerlitz. (205)

The ‘Classics’ account of Anglophone Wales’ perseverance and suffering is similarly being fashioned, as the texts provide a genealogy for the history and the literature. Just as, historically, the industrial crisis beget the agricultural crisis, so, to give examples from the Honno and Library of Wales ‘Classics’, *The Small Mine* (1962) beget *Dew on the Grass* (1934), or

⁹ Emphasis in the original.

Cwmardy (1937) begat *The Heyday in the Blood* (1936). The need for this narration is the need for a “narrative of identity” (Anderson 205) which occurs retrospectively, and recuperates according to necessity.

The timing of the emergence of the Welsh writing in English ‘Classics’ suggests that the “profound change in consciousness” occurred in the 1990s, an argument supported by that decade’s witnessing of the launch of the Seren and Honno ‘Classics’, the increased number of academic investigations into the literature and their widening application of critical approaches and the approximate date the literature was rebranded and its Welsh identity emphasised. However, it is also possible to argue that the cause of the change was the Referendum vote in 1997, which resulted in increased independence for Wales and fomented this “new form of consciousness”. The alternative sees Devolution, rather than being a definitive national moment, as framed by the same retrospective re-configuring as discussed by Anderson. In 1999, Ron Davies produced a pamphlet entitled ‘Devolution: A Process Not an Event’, which affirms his conviction that Devolution symbolised progress not wholesale change. Both the distant and more contemporary past are distorted so that the ‘Classics’, which are representative of a dominant cultural movement, are tied into a Devolution narrative and seen as representative of a ‘new’ cultural movement by manoeuvring the texts to suit the story.

The modern reinterpretation of the past through cultural artefacts has become an important part of contextualising contemporary Wales’ understanding of its national identity. The importance of Devolution to this understanding is debatable, but it has been seen by some as a chance to reconfigure the parameters of a Welsh identity. According to the dramatist Ed Thomas, for example, “Old Wales is dead. The Wales of stereotype ... So where does it leave us? Free to make-up, re-invent, redefine our own versions of Wales ... So old Wales is dead, and new Wales is already a

possibility” (qtd. in *Postcolonial Wales* 177). However, the problem with Thomas’ idea is that it is not possible to “make-up, re-invent, define” Wales without reference to the past structures. There is a continuum between the past and the present that means that any attempts to achieve Thomas’ goals are dependent on reconfiguring the old, and as such only semantically creating the new. A ‘new’ Wales can be disinterred from a reading of ‘old’ Wales, but not created, and activities such as ‘Classics’ series ensures that ‘old’ Wales is forever ‘restructured’, or at least a guise of it is used to provide a rational, or at least understandable, national and cultural identity.

The way in which ‘Classics’ interplay with national identity suggests their part in a wider cultural scheme. They have a role which, because of their elastic meaning, allows them to evince a cultural and national heritage for the Anglophone Welsh. The ‘change in consciousness’ is not driven by national events such as Devolution, which are precipitated by the change rather than causing it. Instead, these events, including the modern interpretation of ‘Classics’, are representative and reflective of the Welsh zeitgeist where the daily affirming of the nation has its course changed to reflect a differing conceiving of national identity. The result of this is that rather than “Old Wales” being dead, it never really existed as we contemporaneously imagine it, as it is always being interpolated and configured, or re-configured, within the present.

Honno and the Library of Wales’ selection of ‘Classics’ are presaged and complicated by their historical literary contexts. I begin by surveying the previous literary critical activities which have helped to shape and define the parameters of Welsh writing in English. Chapters 1 and 2 interrogate the modes by which certain texts come to be foregrounded within a nation’s socio-historical narrative to present a nuanced cultural understanding of English-language Wales. Chapters 3 and 4 investigate the narratives outlined by the Honno and Library of Wales ‘Classics’. Both presses suggest different

perspectives on considering Wales' past, Honno through its publishing of female-authored works only, and the Library of Wales by concentrating on English-language Wales' industrial heritage. Both publishers also prove reluctant to concede the canonising effect of their collection. The cultural implications of canon-making are discussed in Chapter 5, which is also interested in a literature that might, in the wake of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, be called 'minor'. 'Classics' are not the only series implicated in the construction, or re-construction, of English-language Wales' literary cultural heritage. Chapter 6 comes to rest on Seren's 'New Stories from the Mabinogion', an alternative way of exploring Wales' literary past and its increasingly independent political and cultural present.

1. The Critical Construction of Pre-modern Welsh writing in English

Contemporary debates regarding Welsh writing in English and its depiction of a national cultural heritage are founded upon preceding critical material that constructs and defines the criteria and parameters of the literature. As new academic movements burgeon, and new critics investigate these borders, boundaries shift so that what was once considered to be the limits of the literature proper are now expanded. Literary categories are not fixed and eternal, rather they are fashioned from and shaped by a number of factors, a prominent one being the agreement or disagreement of literary critics. Any conclusions on the substance of a national literature, and how that literature might interpret the nation, is a result of a confluence of these academic commentaries. Each of these commentaries posits a subjective perspective and assessment regarding which authors and texts are justifiably included in the scope of the literature, and which of these writers and works merit especial attention. Those texts judged beyond the pale are dependent on new critical initiatives for their re-inclusion in a national narrative.

In Welsh writing in English, a common area for critical debate has been the location of the beginning of what we currently regard as Welsh writing in English. This debate, while taking into account the date of the first Welsh text written in English, has often focussed on the status and stature of nineteenth and early twentieth-century works. Until relatively recently, the literature was often argued to begin in earnest with the publication of Caradoc Evans' *My People* in 1915. This reasoning followed the academic convention begun by earlier literary critics of Welsh writing in English, such as Gwyn and Glyn Jones, who in 'The First Forty Years' (1957) and *The Dragon Has Two Tongues* (1968) respectively, argued that the

literary material occurring from this date had a relevance for contemporary Wales which the preceding offerings lacked. In such analysis, rather than entirely neglecting or dismissing the earlier literary works, they were instead, considered as a prologue or introduction to the more important story of Wales in the twentieth century.

Following Gwyn and Glyn Jones, Raymond Garlick, in *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature* (1970), conducted one of the first sustained literary critical analyses of the pre-twentieth-century authors and materials that he argues ‘introduced’ contemporary Welsh writing in English.¹⁰ Garlick’s widening of the horizons of the literature was, however, limited by the fact that his investigation largely ignores prose works and instead focusses on a poetic tradition that, he contends, better suggests the evolution and development of the literature. Roland Mathias’ *Anglo-Welsh Literature: An Illustrated History* (1987) deals more thoroughly with prose works from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and so builds upon Garlick’s foundations.¹¹ However, his treatise also agrees with the conclusions drawn by Gwyn and Glyn Jones and he dismisses from his evaluation of the literature proper prose works from the nineteenth century.

In more recent years, there has been a revival in interest in this pre-twentieth-century period and, aside from articles and various chapters in anthologies, some critics have chosen to conduct fuller investigations of the earlier English-language Welsh literature. In 1995, Meic Stephens supplied a bibliography of twentieth-century English writing from Wales, *A Select Bibliography: Literature in Twentieth-Century Wales* which was a precursor to his editing of the more in depth *The New Companion to the Literature of Wales* (1998).¹² This hefty tome provides encyclopaedia-type entries for a large

¹⁰ Hereafter *Introduction*.

¹¹ Hereafter *Illustrated*.

¹² Hereafter *Bibliography* and *Companion*. The *Companion* is an updated version of *The Oxford Companion to the Literature of Wales* (1986), also edited by Meic Stephens; however, as, aside from the new entries, the new edition bears a marked similarity to the old one this chapter will only have regard to the most recent version.

number of English and Welsh language authors, poets and personages and also deals with major events and themes reaching back to some of Wales' earliest known history. Jane Aaron has taken a different approach to English-language writing in Wales by concentrating her attention on women's writing in the nineteenth century: firstly, in an article for the *New Welsh Review*, 'A National Seduction: Wales in nineteenth-century women's writing', and more intensively in *Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing* (2007).¹³ These, together with Garlick and Mathias' works, are some of the most thorough investigations, but there have been other in-depth interrogations. Moira Dearnley's *Distant Fields: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales* (2001) concentrates on the presentation of Wales in the eighteenth century. Belinda Humfrey's chapter 'Prelude to the Twentieth Century' (7-46), in M. Wynn Thomas' *Welsh Writing in English: A Guide to Welsh Literature: Volume VII* (2003) discusses the poetic and prose presentations of Wales before the twentieth century. Rehearsing the history prior to the twentieth century, Stephen Knight's *A Hundred Years of Fiction* (2004), spends a large portion of the first quarter of the book assessing the nineteenth-century literary material.¹⁴ Finally, Sarah Prescott's *Eighteenth-Century Writing from Wales: Bards and Britons* (2008) concentrates almost entirely on early poetry from Wales.

Regardless of the revived critical attention in Wales' pre-twentieth-century literature, it remains the 'wild Wales' of Welsh writing in English literary criticism, where the terrain is more problematic than in the twentieth century. The relatively limited number of critical investigations is not reflected in the number of identified primary materials. For example, there are the Tours of Wales; the English imaginings of Wales; the more realistic internal portrayals of Wales; the picaresque fiction; and the populist romantic fiction. The problematizing of authors and texts from this period

¹³ Hereafter *Women's Writing* and 'A National Seduction'.

¹⁴ Hereafter 'Prelude', and *Hundred*.

is suggestive of how literary critics have created a world within a world, where certain texts are labelled as indicative of Wales' English-language literature, and consequently Wales, while others are not. This debate anticipates the modern publishers' choice of texts to be secured and consecrated in the national heritage. By drawing from the works critiqued in the academic convention, publishers select those works which have been argued to have a significant status or value in the national culture and identity.

Where to Begin?

Identifying the source of what we currently regard as Welsh writing in English is almost as troublesome as identifying the date that the English language arrived in Wales. As Roland Mathias has commented, from place-name evidence he would suggest the English language was in use in Wales earlier than the end of the eighth century A.D (*Illustrated* 10). With Wales' annexation by England, as a result of the Statute of Rhuddlan in 1284, much of the country was brought under the control of the English monarchy and a number of English-speaking areas across Wales were created. However, it was not until the 1536 and 1543 Acts of Union that the English language started to be more fully imposed upon the Welsh population. The Acts of Union required all those who held judicial office in Wales to use the English language only and extended Wales' incorporation into England. The significance of the Acts of Union was that, according to John Davies in *A History of Wales* (2007), they precipitated an "awareness of the privileges enjoyed by English-speakers [which] would give rise to the attitudes to Welsh which would threaten the existence of the language" (229). Yet, as Davies also comments, it would nevertheless still take several centuries before the Welsh language was completely ousted from the homes of the Welsh gentry (229).

The first recognisably Welsh attempt to write creatively in English preceded the Acts of Union, and has been credited by Gwyn Williams to Ieuan ap Hywel Swrdwal (c.1430-c.1480) in his 'Hymn to the Virgin', from 1480 (cited in *Dragon* 7). Further, Raymond Garlick, in *Introduction*, identifies William Owen of Henllys' 'Abridgement of the Common Law' in 1521 as the first book by a Welshman to be printed in English, thus signalling that "Anglo-Welsh prose was under way" (13). The term 'Anglo-Welsh', which was to label the material produced by English-speaking Welshmen for more than four centuries, and indicate its separation from English literature, has been credited to Evan Evans (1733-88), who used the term in a preface to his long poem entitled 'The Love of Our Country' (1772) (*Introduction* 1). Although Anglo-Welsh prose might have been "under way" in 1521, aside from poetry it was not until the late eighteenth century that the first Anglophone Welsh fictional prose works began to appear.¹⁵

From the end of the eighteenth century, a common and successful, at least in England, imagining and portrayal of the country were the Tours of Wales. Starting around the 1770s these Tours were 'factual' accounts of tourists' experiences with the landscape and people. As the *Companion* records, over a hundred of these Tours were published though only a few show any "originality of material or viewpoint" (729). Although the first 'Tour of Wales' could be cited as Gerald of Wales' twelfth century *Journey Through Wales*, it was not until the eighteenth century that the popularity of this type of writing, and its reading, began.¹⁶ From the account in the *Companion* it can be seen that north Wales was the more usual choice of destination, so, for example, Joseph Hucks wrote of his *A Pedestrian Tour Through North Wales in a Series of Letters* (1795), and Thomas De Quincey recorded his 1802 tour of north Wales in *Confessions* (1822), which as

¹⁵ See, for example, 'Prelude', pp.7-46.

¹⁶ In *Companion*, it is noted that this text was "available in Sir Richard Colt Hoare's translation from 1806" (729).

Damian Walford Davies notes, presents Wales “not so much in terms of its alterity as in terms of its alternativeness” (*Wales and the Romantic Imagination* 200). However, south Wales was not wholly ignored and Benjamin Heath Malkin provided “probably the most valuable tour of south Wales” in 1804, and the “particularly valuable” *Walk through Wales* (1798) by Richard Warner detailed his “Romantic quest” throughout Wales (*Companion* 728-30).

Romantic imaginings prevailed in both north and south Wales’ descriptions and the Tours seem fired and inspired by a Romantic trend that resulted in a picturesque, quaint, historic and ‘wild’ Wales.¹⁷

The Tours were not the only prose to feature Wales around the late eighteenth century, as it also appeared as a romantic backdrop in novels by English authors, such as William Godwin’s (1756-1836) *Imogen* (1794), a novel purportedly translated from a true Welsh account into English (Godwin, 169-72).¹⁸ Depictions of a gothic or mysterious ‘Celtic’ backdrop were not uncommon and Jane Aaron suggests that incorporation of this scenery “provided such novelists with a fashionably ‘sublime’ backdrop against which the ‘uncorrupted native inhabitants of the wild ‘fringes’ could feature in travellers’ tales as embodiments of that still very influential Rousseauesque ideal of the ‘Noble Savage’” (*Women’s Writing* 9). We can see here, and in the Tours, that Wales is being constructed for an English audience, rather than a Welsh one, as it panders “to the English readers’ desire to see themselves as sophisticated by comparison” (*Women’s Writing* 29). Although the writers, one would hope, had visited Wales before describing it, these English writers are nonetheless colouring and portraying Wales according to their own motivation or criteria.

In critical commentaries on Welsh writing in English, it is common to dismiss these early prose writings because they were catering for an English

¹⁷ For a more detailed investigation of ‘Romantic Wales’ see the essays that make up *Wales and the Romantic Imagination* (2007).

¹⁸ For more on this, see Moira Dearnley’s *Distant Fields: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Fiction in Wales*; or, for a more concise overview, see, *Illustrated*, pp. 63-65.

audience by portraying a Wales that was being imagined from the outside for outsiders. These works are characterised as a body of material that is best considered as a precursor to modern Welsh writing in English and the divisions that are devised critically justify their exclusion. The reasonableness of such a relegation is open to debate and although this early period can be dismissed as a footnote of mere interest to literature in Wales the texts can also be considered as an important catalyst to the development of a national identity, and by implication English-language Welsh literature. Decisions on how to regard the works seem to be dependent on which particular commentator is being read. As the era and its texts receive greater attention, the works become more acceptable explorations of a past Anglophone culture. Consequently, their potential inclusion in the national heritage becomes of secondary consideration to which texts best represent Wales during this time.

Anglophone-Welsh Fiction

For critics of Welsh writing in English, the early indigenous English-language literary offerings are arguably a more reasonable and secure starting point when considering the seeds of what would later become Welsh writing in English. *The Adventures of Twm Shon Cati* (1828) by Thomas Llewellyn Prichard although once cited as the first English-language Welsh novel was shown to have its predecessors. In 'Prelude', Belinda Humfrey notes that *Elisha Powell, or the Trials of Sensibility* (1795) by Edward 'Celtic' Davies (1756-1831) should be claimed as the first Welsh novel "rather than the picaresque 'Twm Shon Cati' ..., which is of local west-Wales interest but of no literary merit"(35). Roland Mathias comments, meanwhile, that there had been novels of a sort in Wales

even before 1800 – like Mrs Agnes Maria Bennett’s *Anna, or Memoirs of a Welsh Heiress* (1785), Mrs Gunning’s *Delves: a Welsh Tale* (1796) and Herbert Lawrence’s *Contemplative Man: or, The History of Christopher Crab Esq., of North Wales* (1771). But these were by authors of slender Welsh connection who used Wales as a land of Romance or found it easy to transfer their philosophical and aesthetic ideas to a setting impenetrable by most of their readers. (*Illustrated* 63)

The issue of quality is a recurring problem for literary critics trying to identify English-language Welsh fiction from this early-nineteenth century period. For example, although *Twm Shon* was cited as the first text, due to the relatively secure national and cultural identity of its author and subject matter, it has often been disparaged by critical readers:

[I]t is, particularly in its first version, a ragbag of a book, in which Prichard ... present[s] as much Welsh traditional material as possible – from flummery to costume to courting in bed and back again. Really a miscellany, relatively underdeveloped from the monthly – journal concept, it is both full of anti-English feeling and yet, directed towards the English taste for *grotesquerie*. (*Illustrated*, 65)¹⁹

Twm Shon is not the only text from this era to receive critical derision. For example, Andrew Davies deprecates Edward Trevor Anwyl’s *Reginald Trevor: or, The Welsh Loyalists* (1829) as a pale imitation of a Walter Scott type romance where even the

characters whom Anwyl lists as entirely ‘his own’ are nothing more than recognizable Scottian character types: Anwyl’s Shonad Cae Glâs

¹⁹ Emphasis in the original.

... is merely another prophetic old hag in the mould of Meg Merriles of *Guy Mannering*, her function to lend a touch of gothic suspense and mystic prophecy to the novel. (*Wales and the Romantic Imagination* 117)

The problem of quality is exacerbated by the fact that until the 1850s Wales produced little more than a trickle of English language literature. Due to the relative scarcity of researchable works and the issue of those works' literary quality, these early texts have been an easy target for derision and literary critical investigations of such texts seem to require justification. Those critics who choose to analyse this literature often defend their decision by judging the quality of the works as of lesser importance to the message that they unveil. In an article discussing women's nineteenth-century fiction, Jane Aaron, after identifying a number of female authors writing about Wales in English in the first half of the nineteenth century, argues that a

common feature of many of these texts is the sympathetic portrayal of injured Welsh innocence hard beset by unscrupulous English seducers ... This repeated plot device ... can, of course, be read as a trope metaphorically representative of the relation between Wales and England generally during these years, although it is unlikely it was intended as such by many of these authors. ('A National Seduction' 34)

Aaron's analysis demonstrates how emphasising the substance of the text can reflect deeper social or cultural movements that might, otherwise, be lost if they were assessed purely on the competence or fluency of the text's use of language.

Later in the nineteenth century, the difficulty becomes the problematic cultural or national affiliations of some of the authors who

might have been claimed as writing such fiction. Gwyn Jones, dismissing Wales' nineteenth-century English-language literature, decided that he would define those writing from an Anglophone Welsh tradition as "those authors of Welsh blood or connexion who for a variety of reasons write their creative work in English" (78). However, the actual substance of Jones' definition of a Welsh "connexion" is unclear. For example, the successful novelist Anne Beale (1815-1900), who spent her entire career writing in and often about Wales, was born to an English family in Somerset, only coming to Wales in 1841 (*A View across the Valley* 267). Jones' definition would probably exclude Beale from any discussions on early English-language Welsh fiction because her hereditary cultural links to Wales are slight. However, her concentration on and understanding of Wales offers an intriguing record of Anglophone Welsh culture and society from this time. The *Companion* sufficiently admires her *Traits and Stories of the Welsh Peasantry* (1849), which is part travelogue, part short story collection, to declare it "a significant stage in the development of the [Welsh] novel in English" (*Companion* 41). Offhand dismissals of Beale, because she did not have "Welsh blood or connexion", seem too simplistic when her works are judged on their own merit and not the author's nationality. Such exclusion is also complicated by the author's emotional affinities; as someone who chose to write a number of prose works about Wales we can assume that Beale had at least some fond regard and attachment to the country. Indeed, Mathias compliments her as one of the "few writers of English origin [who] have dealt so appreciatively with the rural society of Wales" (49). Decisions regarding writers such as Beale and their place in a literary tradition are divisive. At a literary critical level, such divisions expose the difficulties of judging what is, and is not, part of a national heritage when a text's quality and its author's nationality are compared and contrasted with the text's message and its interpretation of Wales.

Anne Beale has often, critically, been set in contrast to Rhoda Broughton (1840-1920), a native of Denbighshire who produced a large number of novels between 1867 and 1920, the majority of them set in England. For Mathias, Broughton was the “only novelist worthy of the name who begun to publish in mid-century” (*Illustrated*, 66). Her novels are heavily influenced by the romantic form, and Mathias notes that “her natural milieu was the Staffordshire of her childhood ... [so] what she has to say about Wales is unfortunately little, in contrast with the incomer Anne Beale” (*Illustrated* 66). From these two authors we can see an interesting division between the visitor who wrote from and about Wales versus the native who wrote from Wales about England. While there is a contrast in their literary offerings, critics have similar problems categorising them within a literary heritage. Both are repeatedly mentioned in the literary histories and are often agonised over due to their English associations. However, Beale’s choice to write about Wales has led to an increased acceptance for her works over Broughton’s, suggesting that, to an extent, the location of the material has become more important than the nationality of the author.

In his study, Mathias argues that even though nineteenth-century Anglophone Welsh novels provided some Welsh interest, they were not the real source of more modern English-language Welsh literature. The “harbingers of the Anglo-Welsh writing that was to begin with the First World War ... was the sketch – the short description from life, and occasionally a good way from it” (*Illustrated* 69). Noting the first and best author as Nimrod (Charles James Apperley, 1779-1843) Mathias calls the sketches “a faint answer to the chorus of travelling diarists ... or, as the century wore on, traditional and sentimental evocations of particular places and people, often presented as occupational stereotypes or portraits of

Welsh society” (*Illustrated* 69).²⁰ Mathias’ decision to emphasise the importance of the sketch has not been widely accepted, possibly because some of these works rely on stereotypes which only superficially and insipidly investigate Wales. Nevertheless, the academic identifying of various and varied roots proposes the potential and multiple sources for what we currently regard as Welsh writing in English, and the difficulty, critically, of identifying particular groups or types of literature as its progenitor. For example, Mathias’ favouring of the sketch writers comes at the expense of the Welsh women writers of the later nineteenth century who are largely ignored in his study. Such manoeuvring limits these writers’ contemporary exposure and silently nuances the story of Welsh writing in English. Adding further scope and complication to the literature’s heritage, Meic Stephens’ *Companion* not only mentions the above writers (although omitting the sketch writers noted by Mathias) but additionally makes a case for R.D. Blackmore (1825-1900) and Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1866) as writers of interest to Wales though neither was of Welsh birth (52, 573).

One of the reasons for the relatively limited number of writers, and the decision of those who appear not to write about Wales, in the middle part of the nineteenth century, could be that the English publishing climate had changed: “Not only were very few texts which made use of Welsh settings published in England, but, when they were, there was no longer anything alluring or desirable about Welshness to the English or anglicized eye” (‘A National Seduction’ 35). Such reasoning may also explain the sudden disappearance of the Welsh Tours from the literary landscape around the 1850s. Stephen Knight, in *Hundred*, comments on the

²⁰ Some of the works Mathias cites as exemplifying this tradition are Nimrod’s *Memoirs of the Life of John Mytton* (London: R Ackermann, 1837), *The Life of a Sportsman* (London: R. Ackerman, 1842); Richard Richard’s *Miscellaneous Poems and Pen-and-Ink Sketches* (Bangor: John Kenmuir Douglas, 1868); and (signalling the growing passion for biography) the posthumous collected series of articles *Welshmen from the Earliest Times to Llewellyn* (London and Cardiff: J.F. Spriggs and The Western Mail, 1902) by Thomas Stephens (69-70).

importance of England and English approbation for what he terms ‘first-contact narratives’.

James Motley’s *Tales of the Cymry* (1848) provided sketches of the quaint locals and the title of Revd George Tugwell’s *On the Mountain, Being the Welsh Experience of Abraham Black and James White etc., Esquires, Moralists, Photographers, Fishermen, Botanists* (1862) sufficiently expresses the approaches and interests of rural colonial visitors. The social context was still seen as a land of squires and peasants, as depicted in Benjamin Williams’ *Arthur Vaughan* (1856), a three volume novel focused on field sports. (9)

Both Aaron and Knight confirm the fiction’s dependence on English approval for its existence and blossoming, a position that suggests that the significance of a text’s subject matter in this early period is compromised by its desire to satisfy an external market rather than an internal one.

The lack of easily identifiable authors or texts has meant that much of the English-language Welsh literature from the nineteenth century has either been written off as unimportant, as in Mathias’ account; or seen as best articulated by English writers’ endeavours, as in the *Companion*; or as indicative of the way Wales was subject to English publishing whims, while producing valuable sources of literary material about Wales, as in Aaron’s ‘A National Seduction’; or as expressive of a nascent literature still unsure of itself, as in Knight’s history. What does seem clear is that this is an under-researched time for writers and critics alike. In this period, the literature is often categorised as overly dependent on England, both for its authors and its commercial and popular approval, so critical untangling of what is and is not relevant becomes problematic. For example, the choice whether or not to include or exclude Anne Beale and Rhoda Broughton from an

investigation into the seeds of Welsh writing in English, is driven by an individual's literary critical interpretation of the parameters of Welsh writing in English, and what criteria are necessary for an author to be included in this category. This issue is compounded by the fact that there have been persuasive arguments for and against such authors and their works' inclusion in an Anglophone Welsh literary heritage, arguments which colour the ability to make an impartial decision. There seems no clear cut resolving of such debates because we are dependent on both the academic research and its critical interpretation for our understanding of the constituents of the literature.

The End of an Era

We can see that if the literature tells us what Wales was, then the critics tell us what the literature is, a construction that they predicate on national and quality criteria. However, from roughly the 1880s onwards, with the publication of “an unprecedented number of prose works” (*Illustrated* 66), assessments of the literature focus predominantly on the literary quality of the texts rather than the nationality of the author. This suggests that between the 1850s and the 1880s there was a change in national consciousness where the English-language Welsh authors sought to articulate their experience in their own language. A situation that suggests the blossoming of a national literature; however, the works that might comprise it have been subject to negative criticism on the basis of their thematic and/or literary quality.

Roland Mathias, for example, notes that those English language Welsh texts whose “shy but swelling desire to present Welsh life and society for approval outside” (*Illustrated* 66) can never make up for their wider deficiencies. As a specimen of the more general problems with the works, he identifies Y Dau Wynne (Alice Williams (1867-1950 and her sister Cate

Williams fl. 1889), who in their two novels (*One of the Royal Celts* (1889) and *A Maid of Cymru* (1901)) combine romanticism with a fervent national pride and stereotypical Welsh landscape.²¹ Exasperated with their novels Mathias finds the faults levelled at Y Dau Wynne applicable to the majority of writers from this period. “[A]mongst them the Revd David Davies’ *Echoes from the Welsh Hills* (1883) and *John Vaughan and His Friends* (1897), Eleazor Roberts’ *Owen Rees* (1893), John Thomas’ *To The Angel’s Chair* (1897) and John Bufton’s *Gwen Penri: A Welsh Idyll* (1899). *Owen Tanat* (1897) by Robert Rees ... is probably more successful than any of them” (*Illustrated* 66). The *Companion* adds the works of Naunton Wingfield Davies (Naunton Covertside, 1852-1925) to this undistinguished group (165). From both *Illustrated* and the *Companion* we can see that as the amount of available literary material increases, quality becomes the most significant factor in the selection of texts worthy of sustained analysis or investigation. This may explain why the authors above receive an honourable mention but no further discussion. The works’ ability to comment on Wales is not so much ignored as overshadowed by the failings of the prose.

Two exceptions to this, in terms of quality, are Amy Dillwyn and Allen Raine. Interest in Dillwyn largely stems from recent efforts, by critics such as Kirsti Bohata, to raise her previously largely neglected profile.²² One of the reasons for her neglect may be the different tenor and message that she has been said to give in her works, which differs markedly from the writers mentioned by Mathias. As Stephen Knight comments of Dillwyn’s *The Rebecca Rioter* (1880), to

²¹ Although both works are recorded as being written by Y Dau Wynne, it is probable that *A Maid of Cymru* was authored by Alice Williams alone.

²² Kirsti Bohata has recently received a research grant to investigate ‘Difference and Desire: homoeroticism, gender and nation in the life and fiction of Amy Dillwyn’ and given a number of papers on her works and life; Katie Gramich and Alison Favre have also provided introductions to Honno’s reissues of *The Rebecca Rioter* (1880; 2004) and *A Burglary* (1883; 2009) respectively, discussing and assessing Dillwyn’s life and the novels’ themes and techniques.

match the radical nature of the topic, there is a conscious departure from romance – the genre is more like the police-detective stories that were becoming popular in the period ... Vigorous in its realism and strongly liberal in its sympathies, the novel [presents] ... the characters ... as nothing like the quaint superstitious natives of the first-contact texts. (16)

However, Dillwyn's rejection of the 'romantic' might also explain her absence from some critical commentaries. She does not sit happily within a critical categorisation that dismisses the period as too 'romantic', and she does not even receive a mention in Mathias' investigation. Earlier commentators seem more content to argue that there was a linear narrative of evolution, with one literary phase naturally begetting another. In consequence, an author such as Dillwyn was obscured in the academic commentaries because of the difficulty in reconciling her style of writing with the prevailing romantic trend identified in this period.

Possibly the most successful and well known writer of the nineteenth century emerged towards its close. Born in Newcastle Emlyn, Cardiganshire, Allen Raine (1836-1908) published eleven novels between 1889 and 1908. Though she moved to England at her marriage and published a number of novels from there, she eventually returned permanently to Tresaith, Cardiganshire with her husband in 1900. Raine's books are romances, but played out against a Welsh village setting, and her success made her one of the top four best-selling novelists of her day (*Companion* 612). According to Mathias,

Allen Raine's work exhibits fluency itself: the Cardiganshire background, entirely new to English readers ... is treated with warmth: history, where it appears is not entirely incredible: the

plotting is good and the conversations, though not invariably well managed, are an advance on the efforts of previous writers brought up within the boundaries of Wales. (*Illustrated* 67-68)

Raine was, however, to be discounted for her success and deemed part of a tradition that was alien to more contemporary Welsh writing in English. Gwyn Jones' 1957 lecture argues how, with *My People* (1915), Caradoc Evans "destroyed the sandcastle dynasty of Allen Raine and the Maid of Cefn Ydfa, and sank it into the sea" (78). Gwyn Jones identifies Raine's writing as best betokening the 'provincialism' of nineteenth-century Anglophone Welsh literature, a type of writing that, he argued, Caradoc Evans showed had little to do with the reality of the Anglophone Welsh experience (78). As Jane Aaron has noted, modern-day critics focus their attention upon twentieth-century male Welsh writers in English "to such an extent that the many female predecessors of Allen Raine ... represent a lost terrain" ('A National Seduction' 31). Much like Dillwyn, Raine has seen a recent revival of interest in her work, in which critics have exposed the intricacies of her narratives and their divulging of the Welsh experience. Commenting on *Cymru Fydd* and the political awakening from the 1880s, Jane Aaron sees these writers as part of a group of female authors who, with a "new-born confidence", gave voice to "a new type of Welsh woman, more sophisticated and more aware of her contribution to her country than hitherto" (*Women's Writing* 162).

The recent re-evaluation of these female authors and their texts' contribution to the Anglophone Welsh national heritage demonstrates how authors and their texts are 'discovered' and integrated as critical schools evolve or emerge. Both Dillwyn and Raine are beneficiaries of a relatively recent feminist movement which has sought to research and identify women authors in the Anglophone Welsh literary tradition. The result is a widening

of the range of the literature and a more complex and diverse representation of Wales. However, a subjective assessment of the quality of the works typically remains a deciding factor when determining which authors or texts merit more detailed examination, as authors such as Dillwyn and Raine are critically argued to more ably present Wales than those such as Y Dau Wynne, who still occupy a peripheral position in the literary heritage.

Publishing across the Border

The ability of critics to massage the Anglophone Welsh literary tradition is assisted by Wales' historically weak internal publishing industry. As a result, firstly, its English-language authors were required to cross the border to get their material published and, secondly, texts were not secured as enduring cultural artefacts because of the lack of indigenous publishers to keep them in print. This issue is particularly pertinent in the nineteenth century: all of the authors whose works have been discussed were published through London publishing houses. The lack of an established literature allows critics to retrospectively review and propagate a literary tradition free of popularly enshrined texts, if not other critical commentaries. We can see in the nineteenth century the part that publishers play in constructing a nation's literary heritage, because they are the arbiters of who and what is published. As such, editors in London were able to influence the content of the material emerging from Wales and decide what was and was not acceptable to their audiences. As Jane Aaron notes, "the last two decades of the eighteenth century", when the Tours of Wales were in full swing, "saw the publication of so much English-language popular fiction located in the Celtic countries of Britain that it would be easy to believe that publishers like [William] Lane [of the Minerva Press in London] were issuing instructions ... to their would-be-authors, advising them to produce, picaresque, sentimental and mildly Gothic novels, located in the so-called

‘Celtic fringe’” (*Women’s Writing*, 9). The potential market for literary material with a Welsh interest heavily influenced major publishing-house decisions, and lessening interest in ‘wild’ Wales correlated with a decline in the publication of English-language Welsh authors.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, the number of English-language speakers in Wales was beginning to reflect the amount of material published in English about Wales. Roland Mathias claims that

Those for whom English was the natural language to write (and they cannot, until after 1850, have comprised even 10% of the population of Wales) were ... either gentlefolk born, or those whose natural intelligence had been fortunately matched with educational opportunity, or inhabitants of South Pembrokeshire, Gower, a few royal boroughs and certain areas in the middle of the March, or such people as chapmen, drovers, merchants and students at universities whose occupation carried them to England and farther afield.

(*Illustrated* 16)²³

As the English language started to become more widespread in Wales so the number of Anglophone authors increased, suggesting that as the potential English-language market in Wales grew so did the English publishing houses’ interest in Wales. In his *History of Wales*, John Davies argues that by 1891 “54 per cent of the inhabitants of Wales could speak Welsh and 69 per cent could speak English. It seems not unreasonable to assume that it was in the decade 1870-80 that the ability to speak English (even if that ability was often elementary) became more common in Wales than the ability to speak Welsh” (425).²⁴ The publishing history of Welsh material in English reflects

²³ We can assume that the number of people who could write in English closely reflected the number who could read in English.

²⁴ Although as Davies noted this ability in English is regarding speaking English, it can be assumed that there was also a much greater rise in the ability to read English from the 1850s.

a wider national trend; as the English language becomes increasingly prevalent and established in Wales, so the number of texts from this portion of the populace increases. However, the dependence on English publishers indicates a recurring issue for the literature in this period, where nationality, of either author or text, undermines or problematizes the material's Welsh claims.

The other obvious outlet for authors in the nineteenth century was to publish short stories or instalments of a novel in a periodical. Achieving this in England was subject to the same factors as seen previously, but the chances of Welsh authors publishing their material in English-language Welsh magazines was hampered by the history of these periodicals. The first Anglophone Welsh magazine appears to have been *The Cambrian Register*, a periodical which produced three editions, in 1794, 1795 and 1818, under the editorship of William Owen Pughe. It concentrated on translations from medieval Welsh texts and

articles of biographical, topographical and historical interest ...

Nevertheless, the nature of its contents, its high price and the fact that it was written in English, put this periodical beyond the reach of most Welshmen and, on the editor's own admission, the chief reason for its demise was 'want of support'. (*Companion* 84)

In his thorough investigation of the history of Anglophone Welsh magazines, Roland Mathias identifies the next significant magazine as *The Cambro-Britain*, appearing between 1819 and 1822, with John Humffreys Parry as its editor (*Ride* 292). Parry, a member of the London Welsh, focussed his magazine on translations, observations on the Welsh language, genealogies and Welsh news but included very little original material and the magazine eventually failed due to a lack of interest (*Ride* 293). The next

Anglophone Welsh magazine Mathias records is *The Cambrian Journal*, published from 1853 to c. 1863 (the last edition Mathias was able to find); it was “distinctly historical in emphasis” (Ride 294). Indicating the growing prevalence of the English language in south Wales, the next magazine of any marked note, *The Red Dragon*, was published in Cardiff between 1882 and 1887; it “claimed itself ‘The National Magazine of Wales’ and claimed to be the only one of its time in English” (Ride 295). Under the editorship of Charles Wilkins, *The Red Dragon* was

overwhelmingly a *South Wales* monthly and, since the English-speakers of Wales had multiplied by four or five times since the days of ‘The Cambro-Britain’, its editor intended greatly to diminish the latter’s concentration on literature in Welsh and offer instead a framework whose regular stanchions were a romantic novel in serial (only occasionally with Welsh content), a short biography of a memorable Welshman of the hundred years previously, a sketch of an old ‘Welsh’ character, a short story or two, ‘Gossip from the Welsh colleges’, an account of Welsh affairs at Westminster, attenuated book notices and ‘Literature and Art Notes for the month’. (Ride 295)²⁵

It was the first Welsh literary magazine in English to provide a platform and vehicle for Welsh writers in English to reach a wider audience. Although not a fully-fledged breeding ground for a whole batch of new authors, it did include “numerous pieces timidly evoking the antiquarian, quaint and pastoral aspects of Welsh society” (*Companion* 676). When Charles Wilkins was replaced as editor by James Harries in 1887 the magazine returned to

²⁵ Emphasis in the original.

the type of material seen in the previous magazines and shortly afterwards ceased publication.

The last Anglophone Welsh magazine of any real significance in the nineteenth century was *Young Wales*, founded by Welshmen in London and issued between 1895 and 1905 (*Ride* 296). Nationalism and the Home Rule movement for Wales were central to its programme, but it also included original short stories in English. As can be seen from the limited number of magazines publishing original Anglophone Welsh material in the nineteenth century, Welsh writing in English was hindered in its ability to receive indigenous support. A number of Anglophone Welsh authors took advantage of the wider possibilities of publishing in English journals, for example, Amy Dillwyn appeared in *Tinsley's Magazine* (*A Burglary* ix) and Bertha Thomas was featured in *Fraser's*, *The National Review* and *Cornhill* (*A View across the Valley* 272), however, this also meant that conciliating the English publishers and magazines became a necessity.

Although the publishing of novels and periodicals is suggestive of the fact that English publishers through the century started to notice a growing English-language Welsh market, the power over such decisions was still located in London. If a major publisher decided something was too 'ethnic' or 'anti-English', then the chances of it being published would be small. This is also indicative of a problem for critics when assessing the 'Welshness' of the material; the texts may have been originally intended to reflect Wales, but the editorial censor promoted and prioritised that which was suitable for an English audience. The result is that novels from this period must, to an extent, be critically assessed through an English filter, both in terms of who their audience was and in which language they were written; where England dictated the limits of how Wales was defined.

The Scholarly Discourse

In his influential 1957 ‘The First Forty Years’ lecture, Gwyn Jones declares that the instigator of what would later come to be termed Welsh writing in English was Caradoc Evans. Not only did he destroy Allen Raine’s “sandcastle dynasty”, but “before most of the rest of us set pen to paper ... [Evans] had fought savagely against philistinism, Welsh provincialism, and the hopelessly inhibited standards of what little Anglophone Welsh literature there was” (78). Gwyn Jones’ championing of Evans as ushering in the ‘real’ English-language literature in Wales, cites 1915 and his *My People* as the reveille for the literature, and also begins a literary convention of diminishing or dismissing the importance of earlier works. Raymond Garlick’s *Introduction* finishes around this date, suggesting that everything prior to it was prologue to the ‘proper’ substance of the literature; and Roland Mathias confirms “1915 as a reasonable date for the beginning of a new era” (*Illustrated* 74). Although somewhat diluted by the recent critical work on the nineteenth-century material, 1915 is still seen as one of the most significant dates for the literature. In 2003, M Wynn Thomas asked the question “when could Welsh writing in English be said to have begun?” and wondered if Swrdwal’s ‘Hymn to the Virgin’ or Evans’ *My People* was the more reasonable choice (1). Further, in ‘Prelude’, Belinda Humfrey argues that only two poets, Henry Vaughan (1621-95) and John Dyer (1699-1757) could be described as great Anglo-Welsh writers between Shakespeare and World War I (7). The inference that can be taken from the drawing of these boundaries is that between Allen Raine’s writing and Caradoc Evans’ there was some event which precipitated a sea change for the Welsh writers in English.

The Education Act of 1889 has often been identified as the catalyst for this change. Glyn Jones, in *The Dragon has Two Tongues*, wonders “if it would be true to say that the Education Act of 1889, which established state

secondary education in Wales, brought the Anglo-Welsh writers of this century into being?” (25).²⁶ And Meic Stephens’ *Bibliography* declares that it “was the Education Act of 1890, and the spread of the English language in the industrial valleys of south Wales, which paved the way for the emergence of a recognisably Welsh literature in English” (8). The Act created a number of grammar schools that allowed the children of lower, middle and working class families’ access to education which was otherwise inaccessible, the caveat being that the children would be educated entirely in English. A consequence of this was a new generation of Welsh adolescents who were educated in the English language and taught English literature. As the language filtered into more and more parts of Welsh society, the association of the English language with the upper echelons of Welsh society was eroded.

Although the Act is commonly cited as a critical moment in the development of Welsh writing in English, some have disputed this claim. The widespread teaching of the English language may have been important, but, as John Davies has noted, “the tradition of teaching through the medium of English had taken a firm hold in Wales before 1870” (425). The idea of an earlier flowering of English-language Welsh literature, that was unique in tone and spirit, was also suggested by Owen M. Edwards, a leading figure in education in Wales, in 1894.

There is, undoubtedly, something like a literary awakening among English-speaking Welshmen, there is a strong desire for a literature that will be English in language but Welsh in spirit ... Why should not the English literature of Wales have characteristics of its own –

²⁶ Further in his discussion on the Anglo-Welsh short story and the authors included Glyn Jones also notes that of the thirty-seven writers he mentions, “more than half, I am certain, were products of the Welsh grammar schools; the exact figure will probably be found to be nearer three-quarters” (48).

like Scotch literature and American literature? (Cited in *Introduction*, 6-7)

In fact, in 'A National Seduction', Jane Aaron suggests that Wales' late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century literature "represents a reality which is as much a part of our ideological inheritance as the Welsh labour movement or the old Welsh ways of life, and one which needs critical examination" (38). This does not wholly diminish the significance of the Education Act 1889, but suggests that it is too simplistic an explanation of a more complicated process.

One thing that seems to be clear is that between Allen Raine and Caradoc Evans there was a dramatic change in style and theme which suggested a maturing, or at least a shift, in the focus of the literature. The distinction between the two has allowed critics to draw a line under Caradoc Evans and suggest that everything preceding him is archaic and untypical of the later more 'famous' works. This does mean a slightly anomalous and uncomfortable position for Ernest Rhys (1859-1962), Arthur Machen (1863-1947), W.H. Davies (1871-1940), and Joseph Keating (1871-1934), all popular writers to differing degrees and all deploying differing themes and styles. Critics like Mathias have bypassed this problem by offhandedly suggesting that "it is impossible, for example, to see Ernest Rhys, Arthur Machen or W.H. Davies, despite their long writing careers, as having much in common with the new dispensation" (*Illustrated* 74).²⁷ Joseph Keating, meanwhile, who wrote mostly pit-based novels, has been noted as an early author of a type of writing that would later become more prevalent, but his literary offerings were also "stagey and, as Tegai Hughes puts it, 'cold

²⁷ For more on the recent critical investigation of these authors, see Tomos Owen's 'The London Kelt, 1895-1914: Performing Welshness, Imagining Wales' (2009).

fictions, novelistic graftings onto reality” (*Illustrated* 79).²⁸ In his defence of 1915 as the starting date for the literature, Gwyn Jones comments that

there could be no extensive Anglo-Welsh literature till there existed what I have called a reservoir of Anglo-Welshness from which it could flow. This means, in cold and brutal fact, until English was the first language of a fair, or even a considerable, proportion of the population of Wales. (82)

What seems to be more realistic is that Jones and a number of other critics selected Evans as synonymous with the birth of Welsh writing in English, and excluded other writers because to include them would upset the linear narrative or formula that they wish to relate.

In his evocatively titled *A Hundred Years of Fiction*, Stephen Knight argues that the role of the Education Act 1889 was not to train authors in English, but rather to “direct people, like Caradoc Evans and Glyn Jones ... away from their mother tongue” (7). Suggesting three divisions to Welsh writing in English: ‘First Contact and Romance’, ‘The Industrial Settlement’, and ‘Integration and Independence’, Knight shifts his terms of reference away from the 1910s and instead identifies the 1930s as the period most clearly exposing a split in theme which was fomented by English publishing trends:

If the combination of language, tradition and history made the self-description of the Welsh industrial settlement relatively slow to emerge, there is also the question of where it would be published ... it was only when in the 1930s a sympathetic left-leaning audience,

²⁸ A dismissal supported by the *Companion* which comments that “Joseph Keating may be seen as an obscure pioneer, a precursor of those more gifted writers from the valleys of south Wales who began to emerge at the time of his death” (418).

served by publishers like Martin Lawrence and Victor Gollancz, was willing to buy novels to discover the situation in Wales that writers could work to find a form and a voice to describe the strange new world in which the south Welsh found themselves. Once publication was possible, the flood of material was remarkable, and remarkably varied. (63)

In Knight's assessment, he develops and maintains clear distinctions between different types of writing, which are identified as being indicative of separate phases in the literature. His justification of different time periods helps to further complicate the causes of the evolution of Welsh writing in English. In conclusion, when discussing the historical parameters of the literature, one can choose to dismiss or include the nineteenth century, or just certain parts of it, and justify such decisions by emphasising or relegating the value of certain authors or events. However, the most influential factor, which conditions such decisions, is the story that the literary historians wish to tell.

The Critical Debate

The chronicling of the evolution of Welsh writing in English suggests that decisions on both the beginning and depth of this literature are dependent on perspective. It would have been possible to just research the primary materials in pursuit of an investigation into the parameters of Welsh writing in English, but this would omit the important critical context within which these works are now viewed. Indeed, the contemporary interpretations and critical insights provide, in themselves, a rich seam of material for scholarly investigation. The discourse continues to provide a useful framework within which to couch certain conclusions regarding the debate and analyse how critical and cultural movements synthesise to affect our understanding of the

literature. All students of Welsh writing in English are of course influenced by, and, to an extent, dependent on previous scholarly investigations. However, any investigation of the material is coloured by these critical works, pointing and directing the student towards certain conclusions and asking them to credit certain assertions.

Critical decisions on which authors merit discussion and analysis are founded on a subjective belief of what Welsh writing in English might represent. As has been seen, there is much debate regarding the parameters of the literature, often based on a nationality and quality criterion. For example, criticising Mathias and Garlick's investigation, Belinda Humfrey comments that

they have struggled to make the majority of the works sound worthy of attention, have had to include much non-fiction and, in the wish to be inclusive, have perhaps had too levelling an effect, so that, of the many writers discussed, even the better appear mediocre or worse in achievement. ('Prelude' 33)

Humfrey's assertions reflect her own understanding, and are perfectly plausible, but also reflect the difficulty of unveiling a universal understanding, especially when admitting texts into a literature on the basis of quality or worth.

Authors from the nineteenth century can be differentiated from their twentieth-century counterparts by the supposed difficulty of including them in discussions of modern Welsh writing in English. However, a significant factor is the dependence of the authors in the nineteenth century on the English publishing industry. It is little wonder that these texts were more 'Anglo-Welsh' than Welsh in sensibility when any overt signs of nationalism or nationalist sympathy would often have resulted in an unpublished

manuscript. Theoretically this would mean that, according to the majority of the critics discussed, from Caradoc Evans onwards attitudes changed and it was easier for English-language Welsh authors to get their material published. This claim is complicated by Stephen Knight's assertion that it was not until the 1930s that London publishers started to take an interest in Welsh orientated material (63). What could be argued from all the academic wrangling is that the growth of a prosperous national literature is dependent on a healthy internal publishing industry that is not reliant on an external audience.

The locating and problematizing of available cultural artefacts for the Anglophone Welsh continues with the twentieth-century literary material. However, the debate becomes more polemic and politicised as instead of discussing authors and texts, whose quality or nationality can be called into question, there is a greater concern over their ability to represent Wales. Academically, we see a trend that assesses how Welsh writing in English opposes or supports Wales. The arguments are polarised by the critics' subjective appraisal of a 'national' literature, and how Wales can and should be represented by its literary material.

2. The Anglophone Welsh in Modern Wales: Degrees of Dominance

The current trend of publishing Anglophone Welsh ‘Classics’ recognises a relative lack of available texts at a popular level, and a cultural movement, at a national level, keen to prioritise and promote the English-language culture in Wales. The ‘Classics’ have typically featured texts from the twentieth century and such revivifying of literary material acknowledges their agreement with the critical commentaries as they tacitly follow their promotion of certain authors and works. At an academic level, various critical agencies have manoeuvred and accepted or dismissed the literary offerings to relate a specific, slanted history in which Wales’ English-language culture’s contemporary nature seems natural and obvious. Effectively, there has been, in the critical discourse, a general dismissal of Welsh Anglophone literature in the nineteenth century, a disregard of it in the early twentieth century, and an acceptance of its subsequent efforts because they are argued to have more modern relevance. Unlike the nineteenth century, there is an extensive and broad body of researched and analysed primary and secondary material from the twentieth century, meaning that a review, such as that carried out in the preceding chapter, is impractical. Instead, this chapter will focus on certain critical moments in twentieth-century Welsh writing in English that reflect the critical positioning and characterisation of the literature that the ‘Classics’ will subsequently reflect.

The path of Welsh writing in English never seems to run smoothly and, in the twentieth century, the very possibility of its existence was questioned. Perhaps the most famous dismissal of the literature was given by Saunders Lewis in his 1939 lecture *Is there an Anglo-Welsh Literature?* which

argued that the Welsh language was the proper and true language for the indigenous literature:

For if the Anglo-Welsh by writing in English have wider fame, more worldly honours, more social success, and more money, the writers in Welsh have the prestige of a national literature, and still some sense of assurance that comes from belonging to a great tradition. (Lewis 13)

Part of the reason for the urgency of this debate was what has been called, by Roland Mathias, in *Anglo-Welsh Literature: An Illustrated History* (1987), the 'First Flowering' (78-92) of English-language Welsh prose works. During a period beginning with Caradoc Evans' *My People* (1915) and lasting to, roughly, the 1940s, there was a significant increase in the number of English-authored Welsh texts. The 'First Flowering' is most commonly associated with the Anglophone authors' recording of the rise and fall of the coal industry in the industrial heartlands of south Wales. By the 1940s there was not yet much critical appreciation and interrogation of the works, but the growth of the literature indicated a swelling popularity that some, such as Lewis, saw as a threat to the status of Welsh-language literature.

The end of the Second World War heralded a move away from Wales' heavy dependence on industry; consequently its post-War English literature portrays a country less obsessed with industry and more open to a multiplicity of authorial voices, although this is not to say that industry was not still an important literary subject matter. The broadening of scope was not enough to wholly quash questions over the status of Welsh writing in English and in the 1950s there is another split in opinion. A division emerges with regard to the contentious topic of language and the question of whether the writing in English can culturally represent Wales. On the one

side were critics who continued to find fault with the representative possibilities of the literature, and on the other were critics who either felt that the literature had already achieved this distinction or ventured the possibility of a linguistic and cultural coalition between Wales' Welsh and English literatures. Underlying this debate, and that of the 1930s, was the general substance of Wales' English-language literary outpourings. While earlier critics largely focused on the materials' presentation of a male industrial voice, and characterised the literature as such, this shifted the female and/or rural texts to the periphery. A relatively recent critical movement to investigate these marginalised voices has exposed how limited perspectives on the literature occluded the multiple cultural considerations and perspectives the country's English-language heritage could offer.

Debates about the literary material's status have recurred throughout the decades of the twentieth century, but, in the 1980s, a significant shift occurred as the labelling of 'Anglo-Welsh' literature changed to 'Welsh writing in English', or 'English-language Welsh literature'. This shift, supposedly lessened suggestions of Anglicisation, although it did not entirely remove them, as was made clear in Bobi Jones' 'Demise of the Anglo-Welsh?' (1993). Jones was concerned with the writing's affinities with English literature and the modern literary offerings engagement, or lack thereof, with the cultural heritage and endeavour of Welsh-language or 'Anglo-Welsh' literature. His argument reflects the fact that modern discussions over the literature's existence have shifted to debates regarding its, and the culture it represents, dominant status in Wales. The more rigorous critical attention applied to Welsh writing in English from the 1980s has resulted in new, and occasionally controversial, ways of thinking about the literature. While this suggests the positive developments in the literature it also exposes some of its complexities as competing critical

voices attempt to use the literary materials to affirm their own understanding or construction of Wales.

Raymond Williams analyses culture and the interactions of residual, dominant and emergent culture in *Marxism and Literature* (1977). He argues that the ‘dominant’ or ‘effective’ culture reins in and reigns over the ‘residual’ and ‘emergent’ cultures. However, such supremacy does not mean that the residual and emergent are any less important, as they “are significant both in themselves and in what they reveal of the characteristics of the ‘dominant’” (122). Reflective analysis of the dominant culture’s relationship to the residual and the emergent indicates what it is not and consequently allows for some insight into what it might comprise. However, because we are in the midst, or perhaps the mist, of the dominant it is sometimes difficult to see clearly how it has and will incorporate the residual and the emergent. The problematic distinction between the various categories is well demonstrated through current cultural movements in Wales which have seen, in literature, large numbers of texts re-launched and recalibrated within the culture. The relationship between the dominant culture and literature also indicates the relationship between literature and politics, as texts which are part of the dominant culture are frequently used as a prop or ballast to national identity.

A National Literature

The 1930s was a particularly vibrant decade in the history of Welsh writing in English with a significant surge in the number of writers, and in texts which generally took the activities of industrial Wales as its focus. It also saw one of the first and most famous censures of the literature, which occurred at a time when the presence of these works was beginning to threaten Welsh-language literature’s long-held status as the voice of the nation. A division became increasingly apparent concerning which literature spoke for

Wales and should more properly be called its 'national' literature. In his lecture, *Is there an Anglo-Welsh Literature?* Saunders Lewis answers the question very simply by claiming that barring "some native of South Pembrokeshire" there was not an "Anglo-Welsh nation which has its own literature in its own language" (3). The problematic factors for Lewis, with regard to this writing, were both its choice of language, and the community it supposedly represented. Concerned with the ties between nation, community and literature, Lewis saw a necessary intertwining between community and literature which meant that unless the literature adequately presented and represented the community then it could not be considered a national literature:

A writer of literature belongs to a community. Normally, he writes for that community. His instrument of expression, - the speech he uses, - has been shaped for him and given to him by that society ... Every separate literature implies the existence of a separate moral person, an organic community. Such a community, possessing its own common traditions and its own literature, we generally call a nation. (3)

By dismissing both the language and culture of Anglophone Wales' literary offerings as unrepresentative of Wales, he argues that this type of writing was, rather, "a term of literary classification" (4).

Lewis justifies his assertions by citing 'Anglo-Irish' literature as both a good example of a 'national' literature and way of finding fault with 'Anglo-Welsh' literature. For Lewis, the literary tagging was important as he argues that while Anglo-Irish denoted the Irishness of that label, Anglo-Welsh favoured the Anglo. He suggests that there are four reasons why Anglo-Irish literature was able to speak for Ireland and embed its difference from England or English literature, in a way that the Anglo-Welsh could not.

Firstly, “that the life of Ireland, Catholic, peasant, uncommercialised and untouched by industrialism, was a separate world from the industrial civilization of England.” Secondly, that there was in Ireland a “general language ... rich in traditional idiom and folklore and folksong ... [and] something rhythmically and emotionally and idiomatically separate from all the dialects of progressive and industrialised England.” Thirdly, the “true Anglo-Irish writers were not concerned with interpreting Ireland for English readers. They were concerned with interpreting Ireland to herself.” And finally, that “this Anglo-Irish school was consciously and deliberately nationalist” (7-8). In Lewis’ argumentation the language of Anglo-Irish literature is important not because it is English, but because it is an English that is not dependent on England; it is idiomatically Irish, developed in and derived from its communities. In fact, due to its nationalist elements Lewis suggests that it was actively encouraging severance from England through the distortion and dislocating of the language and its subsequent depiction of a unique Irish identity.

‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature, on the other hand, fell short, in Lewis’ opinion, of satisfying any of these criteria. Lewis particularly dislikes its industrial element; he sees industrial culture as “the destroyer of all nationhood” (9), and stresses the inability of industry to form the basis of community. He closely associates ‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature with industry and concludes that as such it was incapable of expressing the true culture of Wales:

The extension of English has everywhere accompanied the decay of that culture [the social life of the countryside], the loss of social traditions and of social unity and the debasement of spiritual values. It has produced no richness of idiom, no folk-song, but has battered on the spread of journalese and the mechanised slang of the talkies.

There is a Welsh accent on our English, - it is the mark of our foreignness, - but there is no pure dialect. (10)

Extending his argument, Lewis suggests that not only was Anglo-Welsh writing not a literature, but it was harmful to the indigenous literature and culture. Striking a final blow, Lewis contends that it was improbable that Wales' English-language literature would ever constitute a separate literature or could ever truly represent Wales (13).

The key elements of Lewis' aspersions were language and culture and his argument suggests how literature can become politicized. The new or emergent aspects of Anglophone Welsh literature, far from reflecting a positive or divergent aspect of Welsh sensibility, are argued to be outside the parameters of what Lewis feels constitute a national literature, and are consequently unable to speak for Wales as a nation. Rather than trying to locate links and similarities, the threat is isolated and argued to be separate and potentially injurious to the integrity and continuance of the established culture and, by extension, literature. Lewis' condemnation of Anglo-Welsh writers as derivative of the English vein sounds the division bell and steers the debate regarding the literature towards its competence to articulate the social roots and consciousness of the nation. In Lewis' opinion there is an evident and obvious division between Welsh and English literature from Wales, where the former spoke from and to Wales, while the latter spoke from Wales for England.

Communal Concerns

The timing of Lewis' attack was pertinent as it was just two years after what Glyn Jones described as one of the most fecund years in English-language Welsh literary history. Jones justifies his claims by citing the publications of his collection of short stories, *The Blue Bed*; Goronwy Rees' *A Bridge to Divide*

Them; Wyn Griffith's *The Wooden Spoon*; Rhys Davies' *A Time to Laugh*; Lewis Jones' *Cwmardy*; and Geraint Goodwin's short story collection, *The White Farm* (33-34).²⁹ The texts that Jones singles out often depict an industrial setting where the action reflects those communities' concerns. One of the most surprising elements was not the growth of Welsh literary interest in this area, but "how little, comparatively, was written in English or Welsh about the mining valleys before the 1930s" (Tegai Hughes 44). Mining in Wales had been present, and not just in the south Wales valleys, for over a century and the 1930s was really the first time they received a consistent, vigorous and multiple treatment in the literature. A possible explanation is the turbulence of the 1920s which resulted in so much hardship, deprivation, and unemployment but also provided fertile source material for Welsh writers in England and the free time in which to compose such material: "What the depression really did was not to create the Anglo-Welsh, but rather to provide some of them with a theme, or even a passion" (*Dragon* 100).

It is worth briefly looking at the history of industry in Wales to investigate who this industrial literature might have been speaking for and trying to represent. The 1930s may be a critical time for this type of literature, but in his *History of Wales*, John Davies declares that the "1840s was a key period in the history of the coalfield, with the coming of docks and railways and the beginnings of the trade in steam coal" (372). By the First World War, the worth of the Welsh coal industry was ample enough for the First Admiral of the Fleet to claim that "Welsh coal, the main fuel of the fleet, was among the most important of Britain's resources" (Davies 494). The significance of industry to Wales can be seen from the number of

²⁹ Outside of the novels or short story collections Glyn Jones also identifies Jack Jones' autobiography *Unfinished Journey* and his play *Land of My Fathers*; David Jones' epic poem, *In Parenthesis*; Rhys Davies' topographical essays, *My Wales*, and Ernest Rhys' volume of verse, *Song of the Sun*. There is also reference to the publication by Faber of an anthology of 'Anglo-Welsh' short stories, and Keidrych Rhys' founding of the Anglophone Welsh literary journal 'Wales' (33-34).

people it employed; “the Welsh miners reached their numerical peak in 1920, when there were 271,000 of them in the southern coalfield and 19,000 in that of the north” (Davies 514), a number that would be considerably increased if it were to include all those connected with the industrial economy. Records indicate that the rise of industry in Wales had been rapid as in 1880 there had only been 69,000 Welsh colliers (*Capitalism* 21). Yet, this boom would be hit by the bust of the 1920s when the 1926 General Strike and 1929 Great Depression severely affected the coal industry and its dependants:

As a result of the depression in the coal trade, the labour force of the port of Cardiff decreased by 25 per cent between 1923 and 1930, and the demand for railway workers shrank as the amount of coal carried to the docks declined ... But these were small losses in employment compared with the contraction in the iron and steel industry ... by 1930, the iron industry had almost completely disappeared from northern Glamorgan and Monmouthshire. In the north-eastern part of the south Wales coalfield – the birthplace of the industrial revolution – the combination of pit and foundry closures led to appalling levels of unemployment. (Davies 542)

The harsh conditions effected by the coal industry’s economic flow and ebb were also experienced by the numerous immigrants who had been drawn to Wales by the promise of work and subsequently caused a rise in the use of the English language. This was not an annihilation of the Welsh language; rather it was a slow usurpation of Welsh by English: “At the time of the first language census of 1891, little over half of the population knew Welsh ... This held at 36 per cent to 1931 but after the worst trough of the inter-war depression and the Second World War, there was a sharp fall to 28 per cent

in 1951” (*When Was Wales?* 245). It would be foolish to suggest that Welsh would be the best language to express the cares and concerns of the largely English-language areas. The question arises over whether such expressions were part of a distinctly Welsh culture or something else. The answer may be found in the retrospective academic investigations and analyses which critique the literature’s divulging and reflecting of Welsh culture and society.

The prominence and value of the industrial settlement in 1930s Welsh writing in English has been noted by a number of literary critics. Glyn Tegai Hughes comments that after “the First World War there is little literature about the valleys until the Depression gathered momentum in the 1930s” (48) and Glyn Jones argues that the “Anglo-Welsh novel ... [arose] very largely in an industrial area which knew widespread perhaps unparalleled, unemployment, and during a period of violent unrest and bitter suffering” (52). More recently, Meic Stephens has noted that “not until the inter-war years, marked in Wales by economic depression, social deprivation, and left-wing politics, did Anglo-Welsh writers come to prominence” (*Bibliography* 8), and Dai Smith has argued that Welsh authors in English in this period were “almost overwhelmed by the sheer force of their raw material: single industrial communities, a male bonded world, political and industrial strife, life underground, raucous popular culture, evangelical religion, tragedy, disasters, explosions, illness, unemployment” (*Novel* 135). For the literary critics, the importance of the industrial literature was that it addressed head on the strife and troubles that had beset the Welsh coal-mining communities since the turn of the century. The literary material is argued to recognise and reflect a significant period in Wales’ history and the critical investigations are concerned with the cultural and societal significance of this writing to Wales, not, is it Welsh? Critics such as Glyn Jones and Meic Stephens take it as read that the culture evoked by the literature is Welsh.

A literary critical habit of using male industrial history as a shorthand for Wales' English-language culture in the 1930s and 40s is apparent in Roland Mathias' *Illustrated History*. Devoting fifteen pages to what he terms 'The First Flowering', Mathias' literary commentary is dominated by male authors and industrial themes (78-92). There is, of course, another side to the story, and Mathias does not wholly neglect these other contributions. However, the five pages given to 'The First Flowering: Other Voices', a title which already denotes the subordinate status of the 'other', deals with this area in a more offhand, less vigorous manner (93-97). It may seem a little unfair to focus on Mathias in this way, but his approach is characteristic of a certain type of critical assessment of the literature from the first half of the twentieth century. More recent investigations of the 'other' voices have improved the critical range of the literature, but such texts and authors still exist in the shadow of the male industrial material. The value of the non-industrial texts is that they suggest a more culturally diverse and complicated national model with multiple offshoots and interests. Nor is the expansion of the literature's range confined to just male writing; Katie Gramich has investigated "a number of Welsh women writers of this generation ... and their writings represent a Wales of political activism, labour unrest, unemployment, rural depopulation and poverty. Some writers ... nostalgically evoke a Welsh rural idyll, while acknowledging the encroaching proximity of the industrialized South" (*Twentieth Century* 6). The "encroaching proximity of the industrial South" is certainly evident in a large proportion of Wales' English-language literary offerings from the 1930s and 40s, but it is also apparent that the literature of this period as a whole should not be categorised simply as industrial, or merely expressive of an industrial culture and landscape.

Saunders Lewis, in his dismissal of Welsh writing in English credentials as a 'national literature' focussed on its industrial dimension and,

more specifically, the inability of this subject matter to provide a community which can speak for a culture. This position is not supported by the critics above who discuss writers intent on chronicling the cultural, societal and historical concerns of their communities, whether they be industrial or not. The importance of the thirties as ‘the coming of age of Welsh writing in English’, can be seen via socio-cultural historians like Dai Smith who argue that it was “the lynch-pin decade in the last century of Welsh history. Enough had already happened to require a literature for that history. The novel seemed the form best suited to pull that history into a significant shape” (‘Novel’ 134). From the critical commentaries we can conclude that the significance of the 1930s Anglophone-Welsh literature was that it conferred upon a fair portion of the populace, for whom English was both the natural and idiomatic language, a new confidence in their right to speak to and from Wales. As such, Wales’ English-language works can be seen as a valuable record of the Anglophone-Welsh experience and sense of national identity. If we were, instead, to follow Lewis’ suggestion, then these writings would be dismissed from a cultural understanding of Wales. To lose them on the basis of the language they were written in or a dislike of industry can be considered as an elitist approach which rejects the insight they offer because they do not agree with a subjective formulation of Welsh nationality. Lewis’ argument can be interpreted as part of a conservative doctrine, in which having labelled and deprecated Welsh writing in English as ‘English’ or ‘industrial’ he is trying to resist the shift in cultural dominance and the growth of a Welsh industrial culture with English as its form of expression. This position is supported by the fact that by the time of Lewis’ lecture, English was not just the language of the industrial heartlands, but had also begun increasing its prominence in the agricultural areas, which he argued were the spiritual heart of Wales. However, even by 1939, questions

over how representative the English language of Wales was were becoming increasingly secondary to what proportion of the population it represented.

The Tension between Anglo and Welsh

The significance of the 1930s for Anglophone Welsh literature is that it has been critically acknowledged, at least by the English-language academics, as evincing and securing its position as a voice for English-language Wales.

However, while statistically the literature represented a large proportion of the population, it also still occasioned doubts over its national and nationalist credentials. These doubts arose at a time when the continued degeneration of heavy industry in Wales contributed to a noticeable change in the subject matter of the literature. If the literature from the 1930s was dominated by the word 'industry', the subsequent literature might be characterised by the word 'integration'. According to Stephen Knight,

Changed post-war conditions right across Wales would in time make both rural romance and industrial realism of much reduced interest for both writers and readers, and the separate domains which account for almost all of the first half century of Welsh writing in English would come together, as writers increasingly seek integration between Cymraeg and English traditions in Wales and have a stronger sense of the partially existing and increasingly desirable nature of varied kinds of Welsh independence. (117)

This change in theme, partly through necessity, suggested the literature's representation of a varied nation and subsequently encroached on the arguments and moral high ground claimed by some Welsh-language critics. Aware of the threat posed by the Anglophone literature, the post-war critics who took Welsh writing in English to task attempted to rationalise a

compromise position for both literatures. However, the notion of integration between the two linguistic literary communities was complicated by the fact that it appeared to be conditional upon the English-language literature agreeing and achieving certain criteria.

A good illustration of some of the criticism the works now occasioned and possible suggestions for integration can be found in three articles published in the Anglophone periodical *Dock Leaves* in the early 1950s. The first of these, 'Anglo-Welsh and Welsh', by the Welsh language poet, Waldo Williams, declares its interest in "the condition of our culture in Wales ...: the relation of language to life, and to literature, and the relation of literature to life" (31). Williams' general position is similar to Knight's ideas on literary integration and he attempts to find common ground for the English and Welsh languages in Wales, whilst also conceding that the Welsh language had suffered a reversible decline and loss of prestige (32). Noting that, at that time, only about a quarter of the population spoke the language, Williams covertly suggests that the Welsh-language retained a higher regard in Wales when he claims that "there is a great desire to learn Welsh among the threequarters which we of our quarter do not perhaps succour as we should" (32). The significance of Williams' argument, was that it recognised the ever-increasing prevalence of English and, rather than dismissing it, sought to provide a model for the two languages' co-habitation where Welsh literature invested its English counterpart with the cultural kudos it would otherwise lack:

[W]hat is the effect of Anglo-Welsh literature? To the Welsh speaking minority its Englishness sometimes appears dominant, but to the majority of the nation it appears otherwise and with the help of other influences it can become ... a stepping stone to a deeper interest in Wales and to the acquiring of the Welsh language. Nevertheless we

should realise that the hyphen in Anglo-Welsh stands for a real, and basic tension ... and it would indeed be strange for such a tension to produce a static equilibrium. Without those influences Anglo-Welsh must become increasingly Anglo and less Welsh. (33)

The caveat to Williams's suggestion was that although this would be a partnership, it would not be an equal partnership. Instead the English-language literature would provide a path to the cultural enlightenment offered by its Welsh-language counterpart. The danger that Williams seems to be anticipating was English-language literature's interpreting of "Wales to England", and its burden to fulfil the English reader's desire for "something different" (34). This situation threatened any independence or voice the Anglophone writers may have accrued. The solution, for Williams, was that rather than becoming an offshoot of English literature it should somehow be subsumed in Welsh-language literature, as if left alone these writers "have no future as a school" and "will become more and more assimilated to English literature" (35). Williams' argument places language front and centre in considerations of culture: "this attitude of mine arises from the belief ... that a language in all its manifestations is more important than a literature. For a language will produce a literature but a literature cannot maintain a language" (35). Ignoring any cultural or representative claims that the English-language literature may have, he emphasizes its inadequacies rather than its advantages. Williams' suggested terms of integration were less of a reconciliation and more an attempt to see the English-language literature as an unfortunately necessary conduit to the culturally and spiritually 'proper' Welsh literature.

The relative merits of Wales' English-language literature was also discussed by the Anglo-Welsh literary critic, Raymond Garlick, in his editorial in the Michaelmas 1951 edition of *Dock Leaves*. Finding fault with a

south Walian Member of Parliament's claim that the "soul of Wales ... is finding expression in the writings of the Anglo-Welsh school", Garlick instead argues that there is no "such thing as a *school* of Anglo-Welsh writing" (1).³⁰ The literature could not be considered a school because it was too young, too nascent, with too few masters or pupils; rather what was being witnessed was "the birth of a new literature" (1). The problematic factor of its newness was also the reason Garlick concludes that

far from expressing the soul of Wales, it [Welsh writing in English] does not even express the soul of the English-speaking population of the country. First, because as yet it expresses only the minds of the individual writers who are creating it, and secondly, because as yet the English-speaking population has no distinct culture, no special soul to express. (2)

In contrast, the Welsh-language literature was the "literary main spring of Welsh life" (3). For Garlick, to cite the few pockets of English-language literature as indicative of a developing Welsh consciousness was actually nothing more than noting the rise of an unbroken, at best emerging, cultural voice with only the potential for "forging a new tradition", a tradition that would have "its roots in that which is more ancient" (4). Garlick would subsequently soften his criticism of Wales' Anglophone literature and consider it a potential 'bridge' between the two languages of Wales. However, at this time we can see a concern that so 'young' and 'untested' a literature could assume the obligations and responsibilities of speaking for the country. The solution, similarly to Williams' assertions, was integration, which would allow the English-language literature to learn and understand

³⁰ Emphasis in the original.

the cultural nationalist and political characteristics and burden that a national literature is required to exhibit.

A more vociferous critic was the Welsh language writer Bobi Jones. In 'The Anglo-Welsh', from the Winter 1953 edition of *Dock Leaves*, Jones opens with a lament at the possibility and plausibility of a truly 'Anglo-Welsh' literature or culture and the harm it would cause to the Welsh-language culture which had been 'perfected' over thousands of years:

There have been several attempts to define 'Anglo-Welsh literature'. I think that it must be regarded as a justified retreat from the cosmopolitan disintegration and proletarian mass-production of London and its fashion, towards a re-generation inside a society which has not yet completely lost its character. (25)

The derivative nature of Wales' English-language literature and what nationalism it was able to stir was dependent "to a great extent on the Welsh[-language] writers for their 'regionalist' political thinking" (25). A lack of direction was one of the literature's greatest weaknesses and resulted in only a superficial relationship to the "community which had reared them [the 'Anglo-Welsh' writers] and its traditions" (26). Jones seems to be likening English-language Wales to an ungrateful, immature *enfant terrible* which fails to recognise its more worthy sire. As he notes, there "has been little trace in their work of the national scholastic revival in architecture, sociology, historical geography, material culture and some other trends in the life of the community. It is as if they were not a co-ordinate part of the whole community, and no doubt, the fact that most of them know no Welsh must account for that" (26). The lack of participation in what Jones envisages as the integral and important culture of Wales is the stick with which he repeatedly beats English-language Wales, a stick barbed with the

accusation that the “Anglo-Welsh had to import and adapt their culture from an uninteresting and impoverished English during a period of unhealthy flux, which is not yet over” (28). If the literature wanted more properly to represent the nation, then, according to Jones, it should instead adopt the Welsh-language traditions and precepts. Feeling that the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ movement had recently lost some of its vitality he comments that if

an Anglo-Welsh movement is to return ... it must be prepared to participate actively and consciously in the whole of the social life of the nation, as well as in the English and European framework; and instead of only filching material and giving nothing in its place ... they must be part of a community upon which they depend, and which in turn depends upon them. And they must be willing to bide their time. (28)

In Jones’ assessment, language was paramount, and the failure of those Welsh writers in English to take proper heed of Welsh literature’s achievements had resulted in the English-language literature losing some momentum. Integration was his solution, but rather than a partnership, it should be considered a mentorship, with the English language school in thrall to the Welsh-language one. Jones does not wholly dismiss the potential of Wales’ English-language authors, though he does seem uneasy at the proposition of it being part of a national literature. To fulfil such potential it needed to address and embrace the Welsh-language culture and literature so that it could understand the cause of its more general failures.

Much like Saunders Lewis ten years earlier, the three critics above politicise the two literatures of Wales, and in doing so question and undermine the English-language literature’s participation in a Welsh culture. This seems surprising given the later critics asserting of the newly-found and

steadily growing confidence of this body of writers in the 1930s. It can be suggested that, as the Welsh-language literature faced a seemingly terminal threat to its status as the dominant literature in Wales, its advocates attempted to mitigate the danger by proposing that for the English-language works to have a Welsh relevance they needed to integrate with Welsh-language culture. However, it is also possible to argue that at the time the cultural authority of Welsh writing in English was less assured than later critics assumed, and its supposed confidence is something that has been retrospectively affirmed. Regardless of the truth of the matter, the debate exposes how the literature has been manoeuvred according to political and nationalist ends, its characteristics and potential accentuated or diminished according to the cultural understanding and perspective of the critical arguments.

Post War

The injunction that Welsh authors in English should acknowledge their debt to the Welsh-language tradition was disliked and dismissed by literary critical proponents of the Anglophone literature, such as Gwyn Jones, who said that “Anglo-Welsh ... in everything save language means Welsh” (cited in Hooker 8). However, this has not resulted in two diametrically opposed stances regarding the literature’s national worth, where opinion is divided solely by linguistic loyalties. Referring to Williams’ and Garlick’s articles, Roland Mathias, in 1968, comments on the supposed lesser position that Welsh writers in English were argued to enjoy, and that “[r]emarkably many Anglo-Welsh writers assented to this subordinate role” (*Ride* 74). Quoting from Raymond Garlick’s *Dock Leaves* editorial, for Mathias, the construction

of Anglo-Welsh literature since the last war has ... been much more than merely a formation of abstract attitudes and definitions. It has

provided the material with which a new cultural intelligentsia has attempted to mould itself in Wales: not sufficiently confident or entrenched to challenge the established Welsh-speaking intelligentsia (thus the deference), but aware of a vast English-speaking readership for whom they must 'become a voice, drawing them back to the tradition from which they have become separated, and in doing so forging a new tradition, establishing a new literature ...' (*Ride* 75)

The Post-War period sees the literature at a crossroad; with the relative decline of the Welsh coal, iron and steel industries, the industrial novel had lost its prevalence and there was little sign of it either returning or being replaced by an equivalently abundant and singular source. Instead, the literature was diversifying and seeping into more various dimensions in Wales topically and culturally. The antagonism to integration with Welsh literature which, for example, Jones exhibits, was contrasted with the deference identified by Mathias in a process which indicated Welsh writing in English's increasingly multiple composition, where different critics and writers tried to guide the literature down different paths.

Such literary wrangling might also explain the Welsh-language critics' call for integration, as, at this period of diversification and restructuring, the Welsh language and its literature sought to establish a relevance which would ensure its continued survival as part of a dominant rather than a residual culture. Such a movement had its advocates. Answering Bobi Jones, Glyn Jones, in 1968, stated that he would welcome in

Anglo-Welsh writers ... a wider knowledge of the past and present of our country, particularly of our native literature, and a deeper sense of identity with her destiny. This would surely result ultimately in closer unity between the Welsh and Anglo-Welsh, so that the two groups

could recognise each other as Welshmen and nor merely as antagonists. (196)

The problem with integration was the opposing, hostile attitude from the other side of the fence, and the fact that the Anglophone Welsh had little opportunity either to learn Welsh or gain access to Welsh-language writing in translation. The result of this was a scenario where some critics were in favour of some sort of conciliation whilst others repudiated the idea and affirmed Welsh writing in English's status as a body of literature which already has its own identity and traditions, separate from either Welsh or English literature.

Gwyn Jones' lecture, 'The First Forty Years' (1957), attempts to cement the independence of what he calls the 'Anglo-Welsh', a group he saw as sufficiently established for him to provide a general set of characteristics for its authors: "most of our writers are of working-class origin, or the sons of the lowliest strata of the middle-class: the poor middle class teachers, parsons, small tradespeople" (79). He acknowledges that this literature was "a danger to the Welsh language, [but] must never be its enemy", although he also dismisses the imposition of the "Welsh Welsh" as they "cannot speak for, even to, half their fellow countrymen; while to the great world outside they may not speak at all" (82). The gift of Wales' English-language literature was its ability to present Wales' nationalistic and patriotic concerns more widely. "'Anglo-Welsh', after all, is just a tag, a literary device for avoiding circumlocution. In every other sense the Anglo-Welsh are Welsh men and women, filled (or at least fortified) with blood from the 'old, big vein' ... In fact, I believe the Anglo-Welsh to be the strongest bulwark Wales has in the linguistically eroded parts of the country" (83). Concluding that the variety and depth of the writing stood "comparison with other regional literatures", he argues that such diversity

meant that the ‘Anglo-Welsh “have now a literature” (91-92). Jones’ argument, with its avowal of the nationalist tendencies and wider potential of the English-language literature, could almost be seen as a direct counter to some of Saunders Lewis’ doubts. The Welsh-language struggles to reach such a wide audience, something Jones avers with a seeming righteous satisfaction, meant that as Anglophone literature continued to deal with more diverse topics across more of Wales, so its political potential would only be enhanced.

The outcome of these debates can be seen in the later critical commentaries on the post-war period. In his discussion of *A Hundred Years of Fiction* (2004), Stephen Knight titles the third section of his exploration of Welsh writing in English, “which is still thriving”, ‘Integration and Independence’ (119). Knight locates the catalyst for the change from ‘The Industrial Settlement’ to ‘Integration and Independence’ in “the period of post-war prosperity” when “the impact of Welsh industrial fiction was significantly reduced among the reading public, and critics seem to have largely forgotten it” (‘Industrial Music’ 51). Knight’s chronological ordering and reasoning was similar to that of Roland Mathias, some fifteen years earlier, who made reference, after ‘The First Flowering’, to a ‘Second Movement’ (98-106), although it should be noted that Mathias, unlike Knight, conceived of this new movement with relation to poetry rather than prose. Mathias discusses this ‘Second Movement’ as part of a new impetus and direction for the literature which now looked towards Wales rather than out of it. In “the specific context of Wales there was an emphasis on the ancientness of the country’s traditions, on the need to hold on to what was left of it in the anglicised areas ... and on using scholarship or belief or both to underline the unique quality of this surviving version of Celtic community” (98). In ‘A Novel History’ (1986), Dai Smith also notes the post-war drop off in industrial writers who had got “off to such a good and

fecund start in the 1930s” (150). He saw this lessening as a consequence of the problems in industry which had long been threatening: “There were complaints, even before the traditional industries and communities of the coalfield were slowly dismantled in the wake of the Second World War, that the existence of middle-class society had been ignored too readily” (153). Smith argues that the industrial thread had been picked up by later authors such as Ron Berry (1920-1997) and Alun Richards (1929-2004) (150), a proposition which suggests that this tradition continued almost as a separate concern from the integrationist model suggested by Knight and Mathias. Regardless of this, the post-war era is critically agreed to have been one of substantive transition, where the sudden vacuum caused by the decline of the coal fields resulted in a necessary change of direction for its writers.

A criticism which can be attached to both the English-language literature’s self-assessment and its deprecation by the Welsh-language opposition is the continued construction of Welsh writing in English as male. For example, in his discussion of Wales’ English-language writing Glyn Jones chooses to focus on Caradoc Evans, Jack Jones and Gwyn Thomas, because to him they “embody a good many of the characteristics, good and bad, of Anglo-Welsh prose writing” (54). Of the other critics above, only Knight pays any sustained attention to women’s literary offerings. As Deidre Beddoe has stated the male and macho vision of Wales has been “constructed on an extremely narrow base. It has been constructed with reference to only one sex, to only one class and to only one sector of the Welsh economic base: the industrial sector” (227). In *Twentieth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales* (2007), Katie Gramich titles her third chapter ‘Awakening Place: 1946-1977’, and describes that period as one which “saw a transformation of women’s lives in Wales” (7). In this chapter, Gramich identifies a thread whereby some of the women writers, and Menna Gallie is her prime example, conflated the industrial, the English language and the

Welsh tradition. For instance, in Gallie's *The Small Mine* (1962), a novel set in a small mining community, there were "many indications in the text of the characters' closeness to and familiarity with Welsh-language culture. Frequently, indeed, there is a suggestion that the direct speech of the characters is translated from Welsh" (127). Making a claim for reciprocal integration between the two, Gramich argues that the "'seepage' between English and Welsh literature (in both directions) has been profound and became more, not less, evident towards the end of the century" (181). This 'seepage' can also be identified in the literary critics, where since the end of the Second World War, a greater exploration of the subject has emerged. There is a time lag between the authorial and critical approaches, but, this can be interpreted as indicative of the process of cultural embedding; first a cultural movement, then an authorial, narrative telling and finally, and continuously, a critical appraisal of this narration. As the confidence in the cultural and literature, and its dominance, increases, so other voices widen their scope and potential. The argument over possible integration marks the point where the emerging literature is starting to seriously challenge the incumbent literature as the cultural and national mouthpiece. The success of this challenge indicated by the critical appraisal stage, where the new literature and the culture it presents are no longer interpreted as new or one dimensional, but established as multi-faceted and nationally representative.

New Directions

In the 1980s there were radical shifts and expansion in the field of Welsh writing in English. The instigators of these changes were the academics who applied new critical approaches and a range of theories to demonstrate the literature's interrogation of different versions of Wales as a cultural entity and the kinds of ramifications which they proved capable of generating. The

increased and increasingly diverse literary critical interest resulted in adjustments to the labelling of the literature: in particular the tag of ‘Anglo-Welsh’ began to be discouraged because of its covert suggestions of Englishness or Anglicisation. This had long been a contentious issue, and Welsh authors in English had sometimes displayed uneasiness at such classification. In *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature*, Raymond Garlick relates the anecdote of the publishing of the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ poetry anthology, *The Liltling House* (1969), when the editors were obliged to omit “one poet ... who takes such objection to the term Anglo-Welsh that he will not allow any of his work to be published under this heading” (1). However, the change in nomenclature, while emphasising the Welshness of the literature, made little difference to the divisions, disputes and accusations of Englishness. There was, from some quarters, a continuing concern over the literature’s ability to really express any sense of Welsh experience or awareness of cultural issues or identity. While the literature was being invigorated by the application of literary critical theory there was anxiety over the substance of the new fictional material.

Bobi Jones, in ‘Demise of the Anglo-Welsh?’ (1993), discusses a drift to a literature that is less and less Welsh. He argues that the change of name now identifies a split in Wales’ English-language literature, a separation between the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ and the ‘English-language Welsh writers’. It should be noted that there is some complexity to Jones’ use of labels. ‘Wales’ English-language literature’, or ‘Welsh writing/writers in English’ appears to be his generic term for the literature. The important split, for Jones at least, is between ‘Anglo-Welsh’, a label which includes the authors that he views as “the literary representatives of an important section of our population, a section with a colour and a particular experience of its own” (14), and ‘English-language Welsh writing’ or the ‘English-language writer in Wales’, which is used more pejoratively and indicative of the kind of works

which see Welshness as “increasingly passé” (15). When reading the article, although not a definitive rule, especially regarding ‘Anglo-Welsh’, generally Jones’ allegiances can be assessed by the order in which he places ‘English’ and ‘Welsh’ when referring to the literature. Such intricacies indicate one of the lasting issues when trying to satisfactorily label Wales’ Anglophone literature.

Jones begins by noting the achievements of the ‘Anglo-Welsh’, and acknowledges the literature’s “famous warm charm, the radical and vital ordinariness, the individual humour, the picturesque language, the truly local engagement and concern, even the unique colour of the cavalier and instinctive rebellion against pietism”; however, he worries that the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ are now “under threat” (14). This danger occurs because some of the Welsh had failed to “realize the striking and powerfully distinctive work that was produced by some of the Anglo-Welsh” (14). Jones argues that ‘Anglo-Welsh’ denotes

that particular literature in English which is a strenuous expression of the rich and distinctive identity of a colourful and lively society that was defined by a special psychological complexity, by an earthy locale, by customs and ‘a foreign accent’ (not a dialect), and by a relationship (to the past itself and to Welsh-language culture) which has been shaped positively and negatively by centuries of a particular responsibility. ‘English-language literature in Wales’ denotes normal English literature ... located within the territory of Wales, and having ‘neutral’ values, a ‘neutral’ style and ‘neutral’ subjects. (14)

Much like ‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature forty years earlier, ‘English-language Welsh writing’ was now supposedly threatening the indigenous literature, because what we now have “is literature written in English by incomers or

literature written by Welsh people making the same noise as the incomers” (15). Jones is vague about exactly when this fault began to appear, barring a suggestion that the ‘third flowering’, or ‘post-second flowering’ of ‘Welsh writers in English’ had failed to take proper heed of their English or Welsh-language forebears (15). By distinguishing ‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature from ‘English-language literature in Wales’, Jones is able to differentiate those writers who had drawn from the “Anglo-Welsh tradition, which also in its turn is linked to the Welsh tradition”, as compared to “those who simply write English literature in Wales” (16). This commingling of ‘Anglo-Welsh’ and ‘Welsh’ suggested a cultural coalition between those two literatures, where ‘Anglo-Welsh’ was the public face and Welsh language the private. The Welsh-language literature, according to Jones, was “indebted” to Welsh writers in English from the ‘Anglo-Welsh’ tradition, and vice versa, and he cites specific examples of how the Anglophone literature had brought Wales to the wider world (18).³¹ This happy union was clouded by those who ignored Wales’ cultural tradition and were still adjudged to be part of Wales’ literary tradition.

With Jones’ argument, we see a change with regard to Wales’ English-language literature as it becomes, in part at least, more widely accepted as part of a national literature. Those who “simply write English literature in Wales” are excluded and identified as a threat, but now to both Welsh-language and ‘Anglo-Welsh’ literature. Jones’ article recognises a more general concern, namely is a text Welsh simply by virtue of the author’s place of birth or because he or she lives in Wales, or is it to do with the author’s engagement with Wales and that elusive term Welshness?³² The

³¹ Jones applauds “R.S. Thomas for his grotesquely correct poetic interpretation of some contemporary convulsions ... Emyr Humphreys, Gwyn Thomas and Glyn Jones for their rich if different images of our society and imaginative inheritance ... Anthony Conran for his translations and his critical pioneering work ... David Jones for his expression of the significance more complex than is commonly supposed, and ... well, to every one of them” (18).

³² ‘Welshness’ is perhaps so contentious that Microsoft Word currently refuses to recognise its existence, unlike the much simpler ‘Englishness’, which occasions no such warnings over word choice.

radical departure in his article is that the English language is no longer seen as a necessary barrier to Welshness and the content and/or provenance of the material and/or author is now the yardstick used to judge the literary offerings' place in the national narrative.

Jones' citing of links and mutual sympathies between Wales' two literatures marks a radical departure from his comments in the 1950s, even if he does still find much to criticise in Welsh writing in English. He was not alone in drawing comparisons and connections between the two literatures and the rise in the number of literary critical interrogations into Welsh writing in English helped to legitimise its right to speak for Wales and consequently right to be considered alongside Welsh writing in Welsh. One of the more significant dates for the surge in academic attention was December 1984 and the founding of the Association for Welsh Writing in English (AWWE), the seeds of which were sown "when individuals from five of the colleges of the University of Wales (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Lampeter and Swansea) met at Swansea to discuss the establishing of an organisation to promote the study of Welsh writing in English" ("The Association for Welsh Writing in English'). The significance of AWWE is that it has helped to provide a platform and forum for critics to investigate and share their research that has consequently led to new and diverse ways of thinking about Wales' English-language literature. For example, discussing the potential reconciling of the two literature's of Wales, Professor M. Wynn Thomas' *Internal Difference: Literature in 20th-century Wales* (1992), which includes in the fly-leaf a recommendation from the University of Wales Association for the Study of Welsh Writing in English, notes that its primary interest is "in beginning to explore ways in which these two cultures have to some extent developed in tandem, and share certain unnoticed common features that show them to have been the products (and

producers) of the same history” (xiv).³³ The growing range of literary critical investigations unveiled new perspectives on Welsh writing in English and helped to cement its wider status as a legitimate and valuable voice for Wales.

The “first academic journal to be devoted solely to the study of the English-language writing of Wales” (3), *Welsh Writing in English: A Yearbook of Critical Essays*, issued its first volume in 1995. Declaring its ends and interests, the first volume’s editorial records that:

While the *Yearbook*’s primary concern is to be the study of Welsh writing in English, it will also provide an opportunity for the publication of critical work in English on Welsh-language authors or texts, in so far as connections are made between those authors or texts and writing in English.

Indeed, the *Yearbook* will be particularly interested in studies which relate the two literatures of Wales. In many ways ... the time is ripe for serious reconsideration of the exact nature of the relationship between Welsh-language and English-language writing in Wales” (4).

In the 1990s, then, we can see increased interest in finding a way to lessen the tension between the indigenous literatures, while advancing the study of Welsh writing in English and the message that this literature has to tell on its own or in conjunction with Welsh writing in Welsh. The significance of this is that such activities emphasise the literature’s political and cultural worth at a literary critical level and assert its value as a national literature, or as part of a national literature.

³³ Indicating a similar attempt at reconciliation, but in the Welsh language, Professor M. Wynn Thomas also edited the collection *Diffinio Dwy Lenyddiaeth Cymru* (1995), which included work by both bilingual and Welsh language critics.

The widening critical investigations have led to Welsh writing in English being considered in a number of different ways. One of the more pertinent readings for this chapter has been the materials' postcolonial contextualising. Such readings underline the critics of Welsh writing in English's engagement with Wales' politicisation and its national identity. The supposed need to prove the literature's authentic Welshness has declined and instead there is an interrogation of the literature's positioning of Wales within the British model. This has not been without its controversy. One of the more public debates was conducted in the pages of the *New Welsh Review*, and originated in Professor Dai Smith's review of Stephen Knight's *A Hundred Years of Fiction*. Titling his review 'Psycho-colonialism' (2005), Professor Smith took aim at Knight's claim that Wales had been colonised by England: "This farrago is an account of human experience in Wales which flattens and homogenises. Its reductionist drive in turn reduces the overall force and subtlety of the literature. The history is presented as a 'given' in preludes to the literary analysis as if it can, in this form anyway, validate the better insights of the better work and signify the necessarily weaker aspects of the lesser" (26).

While Professor Smith applauds some of Knight's critiques and delineation of story-lines, it is the literature's potential postcoloniality that earns the majority of his review's comment and counter-argument. Refuting Professor Smith's assertions were Professor Jane Aaron and Dr Kirsti Bohata, in 'Postcolonial Change' (2005) and "Psycho-colonialism Revisited" (2006) respectively. Professor Aaron, having taken Smith to task over his commentary on Wales' history, remarks on Knight's argumentation regarding the literature's postcoloniality, that

Such a move towards a state of postcoloniality is as much a political as a cultural process; it would be difficult, for example, to accord with

it without desiring for Wales a greater degree of control over its own affairs than it has at present. Hence the desire in certain quarters to stamp out the concept of a postcolonial Wales before it is given further opportunity to challenge Old Labour fortifications (36).

Kirsti Bohata, meanwhile, while favouring the postcolonial model for Wales, avers that proving such a status for the literature “doesn’t require grand narratives or all-encompassing models to compartmentalise our writing, but a freer and more confident discussion and delineation of how Welsh writing in both languages may (and sometimes may not be) more richly explored in the light of postcolonial theory” (39). The arguments above seem a long way from the dissension of Saunders Lewis or Bobi Jones and demonstrate an increased confidence and sophistication in the appraisal of Wales English-language literature.

The development of Welsh writing in English is, of course, continuing and as the literature’s status becomes more assured the internal focus is less about justifying the authenticity of the literature’s representation of the nation and more about the potential creative and critical insight the literature can provide. Further, the greater regard generated by the academics means that the literature has assumed more responsibility as an interrogatory and political voice for Wales. As Wales’ English-language literature has become more dominant so attempts to argue, at an academic level, that it presents or portrays the nation in a certain way become heightened.

The Creation of a Dominant culture

The history of Wales’ English-language literature in the twentieth century is fraught with complications, deprecations and successes; as the literature evolved and embedded itself as a significant national voice, so it accrued

increased literary criticism and attention. By the time its name changed, it was arguably the dominant linguistic culture in Wales, if not at least the most exposed. In *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams proposes a framework against which to understand dominant, residual and emergent cultures and the interactions between these various terms. When analysing the dominant culture, Williams argues that it is necessary to use the residual and emergent cultures as mirrors, which expose the dominant culture's true nature. The complicated entwining of Williams' labels is evident in the development of Wales' English-language literature, which highlights the fact that his three cultural categories are not mutually exclusive and as such influence, and are influenced by, one another.

Before looking at the dominant, it is best to look at the reflective devices, the residual and the emergent, to see how they inform our understanding of the dominant. The composition of the residual is more than simply 'past' culture, or as Williams terms this, the 'archaic', because, unlike the archaic, it is composed of elements that still have some cultural currency: "The residual ... has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present" (122). Residual culture lies outside the domain of the dominant, often with an "alternative or even oppositional relation", which separates it from that "active manifestation of the residual ... which has been wholly or largely incorporated into the dominant culture" (122). Classified as a complicated mixture of materials and attitudes, the residual is at a distance, and in opposition to the dominant. It is composed of elements that the dominant will potentially incorporate so that, if necessary, it can recuperate certain, still vibrant or re-emergent, areas of the past. When incorporating the residual, "by reinterpretation, dilution, projection, discriminating inclusion and exclusion" (123), the dominant is able to select a tradition and embed its

own superiority whilst also preventing the growth of too much oppositional residual culture.

The past nature of the residual is contrasted with the ‘emergent’, which comprises the “new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationship [which] are continually being created” (123). What is especially difficult when considering the emergent is the difference between the elements which will be subsumed by and are indicative of a new phase of the dominant culture and those which are contrasted with and contrary to the dominant direction. The reason for this obstacle is the delicacy in anticipating how the emergent will blend with or mutate the dominant, especially as much of the emergent is in the process of formation and subject to change depending on social moods and trends.

Having examined the residual and the emergent it is now necessary to investigate the dominant. As Williams notes, ‘modes of domination’ select

from and consequently exclude the full range of human practice.

What they exclude may often be seen as the personal or the private, or as the natural or even the metaphysical. Indeed it is usually in one or other of these terms that the excluded area is expressed since what the dominant has effectively seized is indeed the ruling definition of the social. (125)

At a simplistic level, these modes help to define, culturally, modern society; they are the pivot around which culture is understood, since “we are always considering relations within a cultural process, definitions of the emergent, as of the residual, can be made only in relation to a full sense of the dominant” (123). As stated previously, the dominant is hard to comprehensively define, not least because of its elusive constitution. However, because we can use the residual and emergent as sounding devices

we feel we have a grasp of the current, prevailing culture. Additionally, because the dominant is never wholly overthrown, only subsuming or subsumed, a definitive revolutionary moment often resists simple identification; commonly there is a perpetual stream of small-scale changes making it appear that little has changed. Culture is contextualised and contemporised because new connections are continuously being forged, broken and re-forged between the dominant and the residual and emergent. The old is linked to the current, which is manoeuvring itself to incorporate the new, a model which promises a relevance and coherence to the dominant that means it is never entirely old or wholly new and always seemingly justifiable and reasonable.

This chapter has outlined the large-scale cultural movements in Wales during the twentieth century, but concentrated on how these have been reflected in the literature and its critical interpretation. Such analysis exposes the way literary critics are implicated in the process of contextualising and contemporising culture. An obvious split is apparent in the different approaches adopted by those critics assessing the then-contemporary status of Welsh writing in English as compared to those reviewing it retrospectively. Clearly, one explanation for this disparity is the fact that this chapter contrasts the literature's antagonists with its advocates. However, it also underlines the way that a dominant culture is massaged retrospectively. The majority of the antagonists argue that while the dominance of the English-language in Wales, in terms of the sheer number of speakers, cannot be disputed, to what extent does the English-language culture stand apart from 'Englishness' and represent Wales? The advocates, instead, assume the 'Welshness' of Anglophone culture, and debate how it represents Wales. The former argument is anticipating the emergent culture, while attempting to preserve the current dominant culture, as far as possible, and ensure its future relevance. The latter critics take notice of such disquiet and use it to

inform an understanding of the difficulties the ‘new’ dominant culture overcame. This is possible because they are able to retrospectively select and interpret according to a narrative that justifies and naturalises the ‘new’ dominant culture’s ascendancy and authority.

In the opening to this section it was stated that Wales’ English-language literature “was arguably the dominant linguistic culture in Wales”, and the doubt expressed by that sentence is indicative of the problems on reaching a consensus, culturally, on what is or was old or new, dominant or residual or emergent, linked or not linked. This is one of the issues concerning dominant culture, as, to an extent, it is a matter of perspective. The custodians of the culture are the ones involved in the forging and re-forging process and these activities are conducted along ideological and politicised grounds. In 1991, Angela V. John, commenting on contemporary imaginings of Wales, states that the

icons of the making of modern Wales are powerful and familiar: coal-mining and slate-quarrying dominate the images of work in south and north respectively whilst rugby and male-voice choirs have frequently been made synonymous with recreation. The emphasis has been placed on celebrating the land of our fathers rather than viewing Welsh history from the equally valid perspectives of women. (1)

John’s highlighting of the tendency to think of Wales as predominantly male and industrial is reflected in how we have often been encouraged to think of Wales’ English-language literary material. Recent research and investigation has underlined the inadequacies of such thinking and disclosed how the critical emphasis historically chose to present Wales as the ‘land of our fathers’. Such a re-interrogation of the literature exposes the

untrustworthiness of what is *represented as* dominant culture and consequently culturally important.

The publishers are also involved in this process of cultural sanctification as they maintain the fiction and preserve works which support or undermine the critical commentaries. In Wales, there has been a recent recuperation of 'Classic' texts, whose selections are, to an extent, driven by the critical debates discussed above and in the preceding chapter. These 'Classic' texts retrospectively endorse an Anglophone literary tradition and heritage that, while evincing disagreement between the various series over the minutiae, confirm Wales' English-language literature's authority to speak for Wales.

3. Case Study of the Honno 'Classics': A Separate Existence

The Honno Press has been re-issuing 'Classic' Anglophone Welsh fiction since 1996, when it republished Menna Gallie's *Travels with a Duchess* (1968).³⁴ In the subsequent years it has steadily built up its 'Classics' catalogue, and has done so under Honno's wider mandate of only publishing women authors. The mission statement that features at the end of each 'Classic' iterates the series intent to bring "back into print neglected and virtually forgotten literary works by Welsh women from the past". This declaration underlines the series' endorsing of a literary critical movement which questions traditional understandings of Welsh writing in English and seeks to undermine this school's once typical academic construction. The mission statement expands on its opening sentence by affirming that the

editor's aim is to select works which are not only of literary merit but which remain readable and appealing to a contemporary audience. An additional aim for the series is to provide materials for students of Welsh writing in English, who have until recently remained largely ignorant of the contribution of women writers to the Welsh literary tradition simply because their works have been unavailable.

The many and various portrayals of Welsh female identity found in these authors' books bear witness to the complex processes that have gone into the shaping of the Welsh women of today.

This summarises the Honno 'Classics' dual role: firstly, their involvement in the wider process of contributing to the re-publication of out of print

³⁴ The first Honno 'Classic' was in fact Jane Williams' *Betsy Cadwaladyr* (1857) in 1987, however, Menna Gallie's *Travels with a Duchess* (1968) was the first fictional prose work published as a Honno 'Classic'.

Anglophone Welsh texts and secondly, their promotion of the woman's voice and their role in this group. A reason the Honno 'Classics' were necessary was the critical marginalisation of the women's voice in Welsh writing in English. In the previous chapters we have seen how the literature had been constructed as essentially male and industrial. The Honno 'Classics' are representative of the literary-critical reappraisal which sought to recognise the role and significance of other voices and settings. The mission statement's confirmation that these texts expose a Welsh experience relegates any critical questioning of the works' 'Welshness' and, instead, promotes a critical debate regarding the perspective these 'forgotten' works provide on 'Welshness' and modern Wales' cultural heritage.

In order to unveil the Honno 'Classics' interrogation of Wales the series will be read as a single narrative which explores Wales from the series' earliest originally published text, from the end of the 1840s, to its latest, from the 1970s. Reading the texts in such a way allows for analysis of the wider message of the collection, and the way that a series of national 'Classics' can be considered as a consistent but complex cultural narrative on the country. An implicit element in the Honno 'Classics' narration is the works' portrayal of a Welsh place. This thesis' choice to focus on place, and more specifically the rural place, is driven by the Honno selections' concentration on this environment. While there are exceptions to this rule, it is striking that the Honno 'Classics' repeatedly explore place and gender relations within rural environments. By conflating the wider Honno narrative with a critical interpretation of place it is possible to suggest how the topology of Wales can be used to expose the texts' cultural and social concerns. Such a use of place can also be considered as a memorialisation of Wales that transforms the landscape into conditioned sites of public and private remembrance which formulate our interpretation of a past Wales.

The Honno 'Classics' interest is broader than a simple mandate to reissue texts which the editors regard as important markers of Welsh history and culture. The works' presentation of Wales is nuanced by the series' reliance on female authored texts, and the perspectives of Wales are viewed through a gender biased lens. The two factors, Wales and women, are vital to an interpretation of the wider story as they are the skeleton upon which the series is constructed:

The Wales side was right there from the beginning, Honno was very much a Welsh group, but ... the primary aim was making an intervention into the understanding of Welsh identity and into the study of Welsh history and culture, by reinserting the woman's voice, making sure the woman's voice was heard, following the [feminist] philosophy of the 1980s. (Interview with Jane Aaron)

The collection allows Honno to popularise authorial voices which may not have received much previous attention, either because they were women, or, even worse, women who wrote in a period that has traditionally been largely critically ignored. As such, these republications are promoted as invigorating the often ignored female dimension to Welsh society and its understanding of history and culture. The series' cohesion is generated by the works being gathered under a 'Classics' banner which presumes a connection between each individual text, an assumption which means that each new inclusion updates and colours the preceding selections while being informed and contextualised by them.

Although this investigation covers the entire Honno 'Classics' series, because the series is still being grown I have decided to concentrate on its first twenty English-language publications. While Honno's Welsh-language Classics are an interesting subject for discussion and analysis in their own

right, given this thesis' interest in Welsh writing in English there is not scope to explore them here.³⁵ From the twenty texts it is necessary to make some cuts due to my focus on prose fiction; as such I have excluded the poetry collection, *Welsh Women's Poetry 1460-2001* (2003), and the non-fiction that appears in the Honno 'Classics'.³⁶ As a result, there are sixteen texts, comprising a mixture of novels and short story collections, which will be investigated. While such decisions limit the wider context of this study, it does provide a vigorous investigation on English-language Welsh sensibility as presented through Honno's 'Classic' prose fiction.

As has been seen in the preceding chapters there are various distinct and different phases in the history of Welsh writing in English. In order to show the evolution and development of the literature the Honno 'Classics' will be organised into three time periods which roughly follow the critical constructions: firstly, pre-1915, as this was the era in which Wales was finding its literary English-language voice; secondly, 1915-1939, from the 'First Flowering' of the literature until the date it received its most famous Welsh censure; and finally, 1939 onwards, when the literature spread into wider and more diverse areas.³⁷ Such categorising of the texts exposes the Honno 'Classics' interaction with the critical constructing of Welsh writing in English, while systematically following the Anglophone Welsh authors' perspectives, opinions and visualisations of their homeland. Rather than closely analysing every text, five linked, but distinct themes will be investigated; together these can be understood to chronicle Wales' changes through the three time periods identified. These themes are the works' description and use of a Welsh place or landscape; their meditations on and

³⁵ The Welsh language texts being: Elen Egryn's *Telyn Egryn* (1850;1998); Eluned Morgan's *Dringo'r Andes* (1904; 2001); Winnie Parry's *Sioned* (1906;2003); Jane Ann Jones' '*Pererinion' a 'Storiâu Hen Ferch*' (1937;2008); and Jane Ellis' collection of poems, *Cerddi Jane Ellis* (2010).

³⁶ The non-fiction texts being: *Betsy Cadwaladr: A Balaclava Nurse* by Elizabeth Davis (1857; 1987); *A Woman's Work is Never Done* by Elizabeth Andrews (1957; 2006); and the collection of political writings, *The Very Salt of Life: Welsh Women's Political Writings from Chartism to Suffrage* (2007).

³⁷ As noted in the previous chapter, 'The First Flowering' is Roland Mathias' term (78-92).

understanding of the national culture; their use of character to show communal conformity and discord; their depiction of authoritative or authoritarian figures in these locales; and finally, their representation of foreign environments or non-indigenous people. The texts' use of these themes will also be discussed for their exposing of gender concerns and divisions in the various periods.

Having investigated the collective narrative that these 'Classics' tell, their specific use of place will be interrogated. Focussing on a text's use of place, or, as Edward Relph terms place, "significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world" (141), allows one to analyse how larger, national developments are symbolised through specific portrayals of place. Place is more significant than simply where the action occurs, as it is in its description that the protagonists' world is created. In the introduction to *The Iconology of Landscape* (1988), Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels comment that "[e]very culture weaves its world out of image and symbol" (8); such an interlacing of world and culture suggests how place is constructed from and in turn constructs culture. A text's use of place is a reconciling of individual authorial experience with important cultural imagery to imply national authenticity and understanding. In the author's use of location they incorporate and contextualise cultural symbols which themselves suggest a particular representation of the nation. In the Honno series, the different texts' deployment of signs and symbols, which are layered into the landscape, unveils the intrinsic relationship between place and its characterisation in literature. Through an examination of the Honno 'Classics', which sees multiple texts divergently using place, we can see, through comparison and contrast, deeper, more endemic national, social or cultural trends developing and degenerating in Wales over a prolonged period.

Studies investigating literature's use of Welsh place are not uncommon; for example, Matthew Jarvis' *Welsh Environment in Contemporary Poetry* (2008) tries to answer the question: "what are the landscapes that these [English-language Welsh] poets have made for Wales? Or alternatively: what Wales do the hills, valleys, towns, farms, industry, pollution or weather of these poets create?" (6).³⁸ Jarvis' investigation was concerned with how "acts of *environmental* imagination are ... acts of *cultural* imagination with great potential power" (11), and led him to agree with M. Wynn Thomas that the "Welsh landscape has become a way of exploring ... the 'shared experience of Welsh lives'" (142).³⁹ However, Jarvis' study was more interested in the links between place, culture and politics. An exploration which finds better accommodation in this investigation is Doreen Massey's, with her contention that place, a mixture of "space-time", is

a configuration of social relations within which the specifically spatial may be conceived of as an inherently dynamic simultaneity.

Moreover, since social relations are inevitably and everywhere imbued with power and meaning and symbolism, this view of the spatial is an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification. (3)

Massey argues that place is a charged space with inherent cultural, social, and political implications. By looking at the Honno texts together we can see how place is used to delineate relative power structures in Wales, for example, the rural place's gradual locating, socially, culturally and politically, to the periphery of the country. The differing textual portrayals of landscapes become significant as the interactions, or lack of interactions, between the spaces affects the evolution of social and cultural identity. Over

³⁸ Critical investigations of the use of place in Wales' English language literature are becoming an increasingly vibrant area of academic study as witnessed, for example, by Alice Entwistle's *Poetry, Geography Gender: Women Rewriting Contemporary Wales* (2013).

³⁹ Emphasis in the original

the course of the wider narration we see how place becomes indicative of the increasing decrepitude of the rural culture at a local and national level, and the rise and encroachment of an industrial place, before its decline in turn.

The Honno republications review a previous Welsh existence, and their portrayal of the decay and death of the rural is arguably implicated in an act of memorialisation similar to that described by W. Scott Howard. In 'Landscapes of Memorialisation' (2003), he examines the "relationships between works of art, mourning and memory." Or, more specifically, how landscapes in artistic creations, can "transform loss (either personal or public in magnitude) into gain, sorrow into consolation and the tragic past into redemptive visions of the present and/or future" (47). Discussing both poetic works and visual interpretations, Scott Howard saw certain works as transforming land into a "landscape of memorialisation". Such use of landscape re-enacted a vision or version of Arcadia that provided a location for us to place our sorrow and then return with renewed strength to our imperfect world:

at the crossroads between nature and culture where loss may be transformed into gain; the tragic past into the desired future ...
Landscapes of memorialisation therefore reveal continuing negotiations between personal and public narratives that both affirm and resist consolation and remembrance. Imaginative transformations of land into landscape that engage with those dynamic tensions thus may perform the writing of cultural history. (47, 50-51)

The retrospective look of a reader was important because he or she compared the 'idealised' vision of the past with the imperfect present. The Honno series can be argued to be involved in a similar act of

memorialisation as modern readers reflect on, glorify and lament a past landscape. These acts of memorialisation provide a collective memory that can be shared by the community, and a lost culture revisited.

A World of Their Own

Having defined the chronological and thematic parameters of this interrogation of the Honno 'Classics', it is now necessary to look at some of the specifics. The Honno 'Classics' series includes a mixture of fourteen novels and two short story collections. There are twenty short stories featured in *A View across the Valley* (1999) and eleven stories and an article in Bertha Thomas' collection *Stranger within The Gates* (2008), which includes the only duplicated entry in the series, Bertha Thomas' short story 'The Madness of Winifred Owen' (1912) (also included in *A View across the Valley*). The earliest short story is Anne Beale's 'Mad Moll's Story', first published in 1849, and the latest is Dilys Rowe's 'A View Across the Valley', originally published in 1955. Chronologically, the earliest original published novel is Amy Dillwyn's *The Rebecca Rioter*, first published in 1880; and the latest is Menna Gallie's *You're Welcome to Ulster*, originally published in 1970. Excluding *A View across the Valley*, the 'Honno Classic' series has reissued nine different female authors.⁴⁰ Of the authors who have had two or more novels published by Honno, Amy Dillwyn, Hilda Vaughan and Eiluned Lewis have both had two novels included in the series and Menna Gallie has had four of her novels republished. The short story collection, *A View across the Valley* has twenty stories by nineteen different writers, thirteen of whom only feature in this short story collection. In total there are twenty-two different female writers who have either a novel, short story or both reissued as a 'Classic'.

⁴⁰ These being, Menna Gallie, Allen Raine, Amy Dillwyn, Hilda Vaughan, Lily Tobias, Margiad Evans, Bertha Thomas, Eiluned Lewis and Dorothy Edwards.

The Honno ‘Classics’ includes writers from both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, although the ratio is heavily in favour of works from the twentieth century. The series’ timeline indicates the texts’ negotiating of the far-reaching cultural and social changes that Wales experienced in crucial periods of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Anne Beale (1816-1900), Allen Raine (1836-1908) and Amy Dillwyn (1847-1937) are the earliest featured Anglophone Welsh writers, and they feature depictions of mid to late nineteenth century Wales, while later writers, such as Menna Gallie (1920-1990) and Dilys Rowe (1927-), portray a Wales markedly different from earlier imaginings. When the texts are placed into the categories discussed above there are three novels and seventeen short stories in the first period; five novels and eight short stories between 1915 to 1939; and six novels and five short stories after 1939.

- i) 1849 – 1915: “The little Welsh world of my fathers” (‘The Way He Went’ in *A View across the Valley* 9)

The pre-1915 Honno ‘Classics’ represent the time when modern Welsh writing in English, and more precisely female Welsh writing in English, began to find its voice. For example, Katie Gramich has contrasted the work of Allen Raine with that of writers such as Anna Maria Bennett and Ann of Swansea, because Raine’s texts “are different in kind from these often amusing and entertaining Cymric romps. Raine is an Anglo-Welsh novelist in the modern sense in that she does balance on that bridging hyphen between a Welsh Wales which she knew at first hand and an Anglicised or English reading public” (*Queen* 7). These Honno ‘Classics’ are articulations of the Welsh experience from an insider’s perspective, countering the previous, largely foreign, depictions of Wales, and mapping the development and evolution of various factors, such as gender relations, culture and religion in this formative period.

In these texts, rural Wales is a common backdrop to the plot. In the three novels and seventeen short stories Honno has published from this period, the Welsh rural lifestyle features prominently, and only in Bertha Thomas' 'My Friend Kitty' (1897) does the entire action take place outside Wales. Wales is portrayed as neither gothic nor romantic, however; rather it is largely a mixed vista of agricultural villages surrounded by an unspoilt natural landscape. Peripheral to this is industry and its effects, the characters apparently hardly aware of its presence or growing prominence in their world. From the mid-nineteenth century's 'Mad Moll's Story' (1849), to the Bertha Thomas stories of 1912 the plot and scenery is a natural, sometimes safe, but more often harsh and uncompromising backdrop. As Jane Aaron comments, the early stories in *A View across the Valley* do not portray "tourist brochure Wales: nature is harsh here, life is a struggle not a holiday, and there are few hospitable faces to welcome the wanderer in from the cold and rain" (xii).

The safety and security of the rural locations often come at a price. In Anne Beale's 'Mad Moll's Story', after suffering at the hands of her foster mother, Moll eventually escapes her abusive home to a nearby forest. However, the sanctuary the forest offers is contrasted by its inability to nourish her, resulting in Moll's being forced to beg for food and clothes (*A View across the Valley* 13). Outside the protection of the rural community nature is repeatedly depicted as dangerous. The hazardous landscape becomes a prominent feature of Evan Williams' flight from Killay in Amy Dillwyn's *The Rebecca Rioter*, as the

hillside was covered with great pieces of rock, which often made it difficult to know with any certainty whether we were going up hill or down. Streams and small bogs abounded also, and we remembered having been told that on Cefn Bryn were one or two deep bogs which

anyone who got into would have a difficulty in getting out of again.
(125)

More dramatic portrayals of the uncultivated landscape are seen with Nancy Vaughan's death in the snow in Allen Raine's 'Home Sweet Home' (1908), "they found Nancy Vaughan sleeping calmly the sleep of Death, with the pure white snow for her winding sheet, and the big grey boulder for a headstone" (*A View across the Valley* 58); or Jacques Robinson's struggles on the mountain in Bertha Thomas' 'Zebedee' (1912), "In less than a minute [Jacques] found himself sunk waist high in a peaty bog, that gave absolutely no outward and visible hint of its underlying presence" (*Stranger within the Gates* 176). Here, the natural environment imperils the characters who venture outside their rural settlements. The texts' use of these natural locales seems to be part of an authorial process of realising Wales and presenting a more realistic and accurate depiction of the country, distancing it from its previous more fantastic literary incarnations. It is a process whereby Wales is being slowly cultivated, and its populace remain acutely conscious of the contrast between their 'safe' habitations and their 'dangerous' natural surroundings.

Religion and language are an intrinsic part of Wales' rural nature in these works, and these two elements help to further define the portrait of the country. While the "strong, almost sacred, claims of the harvest" (*Queen* 233) are the cultural heart of these communities, the religious routines and rituals are a part of everyday life, often as a moral and shaming force for the characters. In Sara Maria Saunders' 'Nancy on the Warpath' (1897), Nancy is able to coerce her father-in-law into altering his attitude by threatening to expose his cruelty to the local chapel. She warns him that

I'll call the attention of the church to your conduct, and I'll ask them if they consider that a man who has rejected every advance on the part of his only son to be on the brink of death without stretching out a finger to help him, who leaves his sick wife to the tender mercies of a lot of stupid, ignorant servants. I'll ask them if they think such a man is fit to be a deacon? (*A View across the Valley* 35)

The importance of the religious credo is its encouraging of conformity and promoting of the established order, which exhorts the characters to be good workers and husbands or wives.

However, the entwinement of the rural and religious aspects of Welsh life is unsettled by the religious Revivals. In both Mallt Williams' 'David' (1896) and Allen Raine's *Queen of the Rushes* the fire of the different Revivals threatens to unsettle the cultural centrality of agriculture and replace it with religion, a shift which prioritises spiritual obedience over domestic and rural duties. In *Queen of the Rushes*, Gildas, the largest farm owner in Tregildas, faces the prospect of reaping the harvest himself because he "had wilfully opposed and rejected the more sacred claims of the revival", although the calls of the harvest eventually prove a stronger call to the villagers (233). The Revival demonstrates the delicate balance between a rural culture and religion, where any significant reconfiguration of the alliance introduces disruption and disharmony into the community.

Together with the rural and religious factors, language also plays an integral role in evoking Welsh culture, and Welsh identity, through the medium of English. The stories use language to signal a peculiarly Welsh setting, and a defamiliarization of the English language. Although the original target audience may have mostly been the English, the repeated insertion of colloquial Welsh phrases or Welsh exclamations, such as 'bachgen' 'merch i' and 'anwyl', into the direct conversation asserts the

narratives' setting. This unsettling of the non-native reader is further complicated when the authors directly translate the protagonists' originally Welsh conversation into English. As Katie Gramich notes in the introduction to *The Rebecca Rioter*, "Dillwyn renders the typical imperfect tense of Welsh, literally ('I was want it ...' (p.33) suggesting the normal Welsh phrase 'Roeddwn i eisiau ef)" (xvii).⁴¹ These inflected uses of English separate the indigenous reader from the foreign, because although the foreign reader is presented with something linguistically understandable, it is alienating through its subtle differences, which indicate a distance between 'us' and 'them'. Such distinctions also provide the English-language Welsh reader with a fiction which speaks using the voice they commonly hear.

The Welsh communal culture is balanced on three main pillars: agriculture, religion and language, which combine to describe and prescribe societal life, the characters in these societies being judged according to their compliance. The result is a constricted set of mores which condemn and ostracise the rebellious and praise the conformist. There is also a gender division where the women are particularly constrained by the dictates of the community. These heroines' rebellious actions are often an attempt to effect some change in the rigid social mores and customs. So, for example, in *The Rebecca Rioter*, the upper class Gwenllian teaches the lower class Evan to read and write, against the advice of her father and aunt, an action which her aunt Elizabeth finds shocking because Evan has not been baptised, "Never baptized at all!" she exclaimed. 'Oh dear! How can Gwenllian be so foolish as to have to do with a heathen like that ... Who would have thought it possible that a niece of mine should take any interest in such a boy as that, and have him for her pupil?" (29). In a comparable act of mutiny, Winifred in Bertha Thomas' 'The Madness of Winifred Owen', rejects her father's exhortations to marry a Welsh farmer, instead of her English sweetheart, by

⁴¹ Emphasis in the original.

taking an injection to bring on temporary madness (*A View across the Valley* 81-88). Such characters question the status quo and a simple acceptance of the social order.

Some of the stories engineer successful conclusions for these recalcitrant characters: Winifred enjoys many happy years with her English spouse, and in 'Nancy on the Warpath', Nancy's transgressions bring about a quasi-reconciliation between her father-in-law and husband. For other heroines, however, the result is less felicitous. In 'Mad Moll's Story', Moll ends up as a deranged beggar (*A View across the Valley* 11-13) and Nancy in *Queen of the Rushes*, firstly goes into a lonely exile and then dies as a result of her attempts to escape married life (316-18). These women authors are not overtly involved in a debate on the feminist movement; rather, they outline a new generation of Welsh women, often headstrong, intelligent and dynamic, who question the restrictions of the world around them. By contrast, the male characters fall into two general categories. Those who maintain the social order and resist change are represented by figures such as Squire Tudor in *The Rebecca Rioter* and Gildas in *Queen of the Rushes*. Gildas comments of his dislike of the 1904-5 Revival that he is

not against it; may be 'tis wanted; but I am against these wild ways – people showing their hearts to the world and crying out that they are sinners! There's no need to shout that ... and d'ye think, Hezek, 'tis pleasing to God that a woman should leave her house empty, and her husband lonely, for any prayer meeting in the world? 'Tis a small job getting her husband's supper, I know; but if it's the job she ought to be doing, that is how she will be serving God best at that moment. (141-142)

On the other side are male characters who suffer for their transgressions, because they are perceived as further endangering the established culture. The community reacts by isolating and/or exiling these unfortunates rather than integrating their new or different ideas. For example, in 'David', the title character becomes an outcast and exile for choosing to be a pastor instead of settling down to marriage and the management of a farm (*A View across the Valley* 21-22), and in Bertha Thomas' 'The Way He Went' (1912), Elwyn's inability to reconcile his and his society's expectations eventually results in his death (*Stranger within the Gates* 60-61).

These emerging dissenters are checked by the curators of the communities' principles, namely the local patriarchs, and while there are more female than male transgressors there is a distinct lack of mother or matriarchal figures. Those pseudo-mother figures that do appear, such as Aunt Elizabeth in *The Rebecca Rioter*, are commonly mere adjuncts to the patriarchal convictions, advocating conformity. The few mothers who are central characters are generally weak or infirm, and as such prevented from forcefully exerting their presence. Nancy's mother-in-law, in 'Nancy on the Warpath', is too fearful of her husband to effect any change in his disapproval of his son (*A View across the Valley* 27); Mrs Roderick, in Bertha Thomas' 'Hand in Hand' (1897), is denied access to the facts as her daughters fear for her health (*Stranger within the Gates* 221-222); while Mrs Rosser, in 'The Way He Went' (1912), can do little to prevent her son leaving Wales and ends up begging his wife to bury his body in her village, so that although she has lost his soul she will have his body (*Stranger within the Gates* 108). Perhaps the cruellest treatment is reserved for Nancy Vaughan in 'Home Sweet Home', who, unable to mete any authority on her son, is placed by him in the workhouse, and escapes only to die trying to return home. The ineffectuality of such maternal characters is indicative of

the dominance of the male figure in Welsh society, who has sacrificed progress for conformity.

One exception to this female stereotype is found in Gwyneth Vaughan's 'The Old Song and the New' (early 1900s), when Sunder, a quasi-mother of the Celtic nation, prophesies the Celtic peoples' fate but promises that she will return and unite the people one day (*A View across the Valley* 42).⁴² The idea of a returning female redeemer can be seen as an allusion to the growing cohort of dynamic female Welsh characters, a generation that will unsettle and challenge the ruling patriarchal hegemony. It also gestures at a coming shift, which will erode the old and replace it with the new.

The herald of this shift is English. Not only is the language indicative of an alteration in the linguistic representation of Wales, but its novelists' inclusion of non-Welsh characters or non-Welsh settings, typically England and the English, suggests how these incomers are a catalyst, for good or ill, for cultural and communal change. Generally, these alien elements are typified as a corrupting presence; because the English have little understanding of Welsh culture or sensibilities, they try and overlay their own attitudes and ideals on the natives. As Alison Favre comments on Amy Dillwyn's *A Burglary* (1883), "while Wales, here ... affords a natural context of liberty and joyous anarchy in which the Rhys youngsters evolve ... in the upper-class London society in which the later chapters are located, the context changes to one of restraint and *civilized* humbug" (xi).⁴³ The London society that Imogen Rhys enters tries to 'tame' and coerce her out of her Welsh ways (130-131).

In her short stories, Bertha Thomas repeatedly incorporates 'outsiders': travellers within the principality, portrayed as having little

⁴² The exact publishing date of this story is unclear, although it is estimated that it was written around the early 1900s (*A View across the Valley* 270).

⁴³ Emphasis in the original.

knowledge of Welsh culture or society. The English schoolboy sent to Wales in 'Comic Objects of the Country' (1912) comments "Wales, where I was took, is very much country indeed. Sorter place we London people knows no more of than life on a Chinese junk" (*Stranger within the Gates* 122). Whether they be thieves, like Tom Brady in 'An Undesirable Alien' (1912), cads, like Joscelin Carew in 'Hand in Hand', or merely observers, like Jacques Robinson in 'Zebedee', the English involvement with Wales precipitates a change in condition for the Welsh inhabitants. Bertha Thomas depicts isolated communities and homesteads suffering for their involvement with the outside world. This suffering is, in part, caused by the innocence of the inhabitants, such as Rhydderch and Martha Morris in 'An Undesirable Alien', the Miss Rodericks in 'Hand in Hand', or the titular character in 'Zebedee', their virtue corrupted by contact with the seemingly more advanced and astute non-natives. Even in 'The Madness of Winifred Owen' where the English lover, and subsequent husband, of Winifred is not such a disruptive influence, his very presence can be argued to be the cause of her rebellion.

In 'The Way He Went', those who travel across the border for play and fun, as Mrs Rosser comments, rarely come to a good end (*Stranger within the Gates* 48-50), the Welsh abroad typified as innocent and naïve, while the Welsh at home are alien to the non-indigenous travellers. This indicates how the country has been, and is being, cultivated by its neighbour, the people growing more astute and worldly through their contact with the outside world, but subsequently losing some of their native essence.

We can see in these pre-1915 stories the seeds of change in Wales, particularly in their depictions of landscape, gender relations and the inclusion of foreign characters. The works are also a testament to the growing ease of the authors in describing Wales in English. Although the locations are limited in their diversity, the stories sketch a world that has its

own nuances and credo, its rural culture playing a significant role in the community and its members' actions. They signal a literature that is gradually broadening its scope, rejecting suggestions that nineteenth-century Welsh writing in English should be investigated more for its quaint or one-dimensional portrayals than its literary worth. These 'Classics' imaginings of Wales are textured by their divulging of the social tensions and gender and generational conflicts that threaten the ruling order, and seek to question the efficacy of the patriarchal dominance.

- ii) 1915 – 1939: “Our home among the quiet fields became a cage of savagery” (*The Wooden Doctor* 12)

The next sequence of Honno 'Classics' follows, albeit in broader terms, a similar trajectory in terms of form and content to its predecessor. In the era of the male industrial novel, the publishers' continued focus on rural Wales is notable. An obvious reason for this is Honno's exclusion of male writers, but their omission of the industrial might also be explained by the fact that there simply were not many women writing from the Welsh industrial valleys in the twenties and thirties.⁴⁴ Instead, the works maintain a rural interest that had been begun by the earlier generations of female writers, expanding and developing the portrayal of these locations. This is complemented by the use of non-Welsh locales which allow these texts to reflect on internal and external perceptions of Welshness. The stories have a continuity with those from the previous period and suggest an evolution of a specific Welsh attitude and experience expressed in English.

In this 1915-1939 period, there is an evident lessening of the focus on Wales, and consequent exploring of new locations. For example, large portions of the action in Lily Tobias' *Eunice Fleet* (1933) take place in London. Part One (1-57) and Part Three (185-285) are concerned with

⁴⁴ An assertion confirmed by Jane Aaron in an interview with the author.

Eunice's life in London in the present, while Part Two (61-182) discusses her past life in Wales. Margiad Evans' *The Wooden Doctor* (1933) includes a long sequence in France (15-65); and Dorothy Edwards' *Winter Sonata* (1928) is set entirely in an English rural village with no sign of any Welsh representation. Yet, despite this more widespread use of foreign locales, only *Winter Sonata* entirely neglects Wales, although it should be noted that the setting of Mary Webb's 'Over the Hills and Far Away' (1928) is only identifiable as taking place in Wales because of the characters' surnames (*A View across the Valley* 276-77). Other than *Eunice Fleet*, which deals with an urban Cardiff, the texts continue to concentrate on Wales' rural landscape. There are no novels or stories set firmly in an industrial terrain, which is still portrayed as a distant locale from the rural communities. While Kathleen Freeman's 'The Coward' occasionally mentions quarries and industrial work in the local area, the landscape seems relatively untouched; and Hilda Vaughan's *Here Are Lovers* (1926) sees Goronwy visit the mines, but this event occurs off page, and the separation between the two locations is well expressed when, upon his return, he says, "I do believe as it do kill the soul to lead a collier's life" (110).

The previous inclusion of a characteristically harsh and uncompromising natural scenery has been softened. The settlements now receive the full attention of the authorial eye and the surrounding landscapes are rarely explored. In rural tales such as Nansi Powell Price's 'The Heads of Coed Uchaf' (1925), Hilda Vaughan's 'A Thing of Nought' (1934) and Siân Evans' 'Davis' (1937) the characters are firmly ensconced in their rural habitations and the story does not wander far from the village or rural community. Even when that natural environment is in evidence it does not have the same imperilling character. For example, in Ellen Lloyd-Williams' 'The Call of the River' (1924), the Arfon river is a key component of the story and eventually John Evans drowns/unites himself with the river rather

than marry (*A View across the Valley* 93). However, rather than the river being dangerous the narrator comments on how difficult it would be to get swept away and lost. John's drowning is described as almost supernatural as the river quickly transforms into a torrent and then reverts to its previous calmness: "We never found [John], though even that swollen tide had hardly enough strength to sweep a man downstream and out to sea" (*A View across the Valley* 94). The lurking danger and uncultivated/uncultivable landscape has been discarded for a more domesticated and civilized vision of Wales. The writers are more consistently rejecting suggestions of a bleak, forbidding or 'Wild Wales', the scenery reflecting the development and growth of an evolving and maturing nation.

A tamer Wales has occurred with an erosion of the dominating rural culture. Agrarian traditions are waning, and are no longer seen as an intrinsic part of the inhabitants' everyday life. The supposed proprietors and custodians of these traditions are now more concerned with other enjoyments and interests. While Squire Wingfield tries to resist change and social progress in the retrospective *Here Are Lovers*, his son, Charles, is characterised by his lassitude and general disinterest (156, 28), which is perhaps symbolic of the coming generations of landowners. In *The Wooden Doctor*, John furiously denounces "the young manhood of Wales ... there they were propping themselves up against the walls in Bryn Carrog, drawing the dole, ogling the girls, and speaking English. Speaking English, among themselves! All of them, and none to help us with the harvest" (159). In the last tale in this period, Siân Evans' 'Davis', the requirements of the farm have become too much for the indolent farmer, who prefers sleeping, drinking and procrastinating, letting his property go to waste (189).

The declining agricultural culture is often represented as concomitant with a decline in religious attendance and use of the Welsh language. The retrospective depiction of Wales in Eiluned Lewis' *Dew on the Grass* (1934),

with committed religious attendance and Welsh commonly being spoken among the labouring classes, shows signs of the coming displacement of these activities in the final chapters as references to them in the narrative become increasingly scarce. In ‘The Heads of Coed Uchaf’, although the church is the one thing Lisa has any respect for, she still uses it as a place where she can play pranks on her two potential suitors (*A View across the Valley* 121); and in ‘A Thing of Nought’ the local preacher uses manipulation to compel Megan into marrying him (*A View across the Valley* 148). More generally across the stories, there are more limited references to religion and its influence over the rural communities. The previously prolific use of Welsh phrases and exclamations in the texts has also declined. The signalling of direct conversation taking place in Welsh has also been largely abandoned. Instead a dialectical and idiomatic form of English is more evident, for example, in ‘A Thing of Nought’ Megan says “Maybe I have done wrong ... without knowin’ as I did it” (*A View across the Valley* 165), the Welsh construction of the sentence rendered in English and adapted by and for the Anglophone Welsh.

In the urban districts rural culture is seen as having little influence on the inhabitants. In *Eunice Fleet* not only is there little mention of the rural way of life, but there is also no mention of the Welsh language and when religion makes an appearance it is manipulated by the authorities to try and incite conscientious objectors to enlist (89-90). While the rural culture has been severely eroded in the agricultural heartlands, it is an irrelevance in the urban districts. The three props of nineteenth-century Welsh culture are becoming less vital, and less able to secure the integrity of the community. As these props depart the Welsh stage we see increasingly nostalgic and elegiac reflections on Wales as it was, such reflections sharpened by the inadequacy or absence of modern communal activities.

This notion of a degenerating culture is reflected in the central characters and their relationship to their increasingly less agricultural communities. The texts' personae are often characterised by a sense of weariness and resignation, a contrast to the previous period's portrayal of characters forcefully advocating alteration in the social conditions of Wales. This is particularly evident when comparing the two periods' depiction of young female characters, as the new generation of women are less forthrightly championing change in Wales. For instance, in 'Davis', Fred Davis' wife, Mary, seems resigned to being unable to stir her husband to any form of worthwhile activity, though this does not stop her admonishing him for his idleness (*A View across the Valley* 185). Further, in Kathleen Freeman's 'The Coward' (1926), Nancy impotently tries to get her lover to forget his dead mother and his way of life with her; frustrated at his inability to let go of the past and unable to affect any appreciable change the only option for her is to leave him (*A View across the Valley* 105-106).

While many of the new generation of women are still endeavouring to expose the flaws in Welsh society, their male counterparts are typified as largely resigned and/or feckless. The women, however, are now less assured, and more cognisant of the difficulties of instigating any significant alteration in Wales or Welsh culture. The character of the female outsider has become more prominent and a means of signalling how these communal dissenters continue to be ostracised. The women's nonconformity generally falls into two categories. Some, like Arabella in *The Wooden Doctor*, are outsiders because they cannot conform and refuse to reconcile themselves to their culture and society; and some, like Eunice in *Eunice Fleet*, become reluctant outsiders because society condemns their actions. For both types the common result is rejection and exile. Characters such as Arabella and Eunice are repulsed because they are perceived to be detrimental to the communal good. This suggests how at this cultural crisis the guardians of

the community more firmly try to impose conformity, wholly rejecting transgressors in a seemingly hollow attempt to stem the tide and maintain the previous order. A possible result of this intransigence is that there is now no happy ending for any of the female characters, and frustration and defeat is the norm.

The community is able to renounce its female dissenters because the patriarchal preservers have managed to retain their authority and jurisdiction. In contrast, the supposedly strong, forthcoming generation of matriarchs, heralded in the last period of these 'Classics', are conspicuous by their absence, as the mother figures remain either missing or inadequate. In *Here Are Lovers*, Eunice Fleet and Eiluned Lewis' 'The Poacher' (1937) it is significant that a mother has died young and left one of the characters without maternal protection. More commonly, mothers are characterised as antagonistic or conformist. In *The Wooden Doctor*, Arabella becomes increasingly frustrated and bewildered by her mother's resignation to her husband's waywardness and drunkenness (10-12). When Arabella is most in need of support and protection during the teacher-pupil episode in France, her mother supports the Directrice's condemnation of her morals, further estranging their relationship (54). In a statement which seems to echo from its 1866 setting, Squire Wingfield, in *Here Are Lovers*, says to his daughter, Laetitia, "If ever you have an estate, you will have a husband to manage it for you, my dear" (34), a declaration which underlines the male categorising of women as their and society's supporters, not challengers. This type of conformity is apparent in Megan's mother in 'A Thing of Nought', as she encourages Megan to marry and become a helpmate to the local preacher. Megan's mother demonstrates her allegiance when she participates in a religious intervention in which Megan is pressured, against her will, into accepting the preacher's marriage proposal as part of her religious duty. A different kind of ineffectuality is seen in Eiluned Lewis' *Dew on the Grass*:

Lucy's mother is caring and loving, if slightly distant, but also unable to adequately prepare Lucy for the changing times and the erosion and dismantling of the family unit.

The two stories with a strong motherly presence both end in tragedy. Despite acceding to his grandmother's invocations to marry a local farmer's daughter, John Evans ends up drowning himself in 'The Call of the River'; and in 'The Coward' the unnamed hero is unable to escape his mother's shadow, resulting in despair and loneliness. The suggested rise of a strong, confident generation of female characters, implied in the earlier texts, has not been established. The old has not been replaced by the new, instead it has stagnated and such strong mothers as occur seldom do more good than harm.

If previously the increasing incursion of the English language could be seen as a symbol of coming social change, now the increasing number of Welsh characters travelling to England can be seen to reflect the absence of internal harmony. England is no longer a foreign and taming or dissolute influence, but rather a refuge for female writers to escape from tightening Welsh constrictions. Some of this reimagining might reflect the authors' desires to escape having to portray contemporary Wales, and more particularly its increasingly dominant and oppressive industrial nature. Dorothy Edwards' *Winter Sonata* is the clearest example of this as it evades any mention of Wales or the Welsh; her reader is left to compare the rural England she constructs with the versions of Wales drawn from elsewhere. Her rural England is sedate and aloof, its characters defined by their inability to connect emotionally with one another; while rural Wales often suffers from similar problems there is much less comfort and security in the Welsh communities. England is no longer a location for Welsh scandal and corruption; instead it is almost a safe place for authors to explore a rural society safe from the looming shadow of the industrial valleys.

A changed attitude is also apparent from the Welsh characters' astuteness as compared to their non-native counterparts. In fact, in 'The Heads of Coed Uchaf', Dorothy Edwards' 'The Conquered' (1927) and 'The Poacher', it is the Welsh characters who are portrayed as being wiser and more streetwise than their foreign counterparts; for example, in 'The Heads of Coed Uchaf', it is not Will, the Englishman who recognises Lisa's trick, but Dai, the Welshman who sees through her ruse and delivers some retribution (*A View across the Valley* 125-126). Eunice, in *Eunice Fleet*, runs a successful women's outfitters in London and it is her skill in salesmanship and marketing that has partially led to the fame of the shop. The cultivation of Wales, and its inhabitants, has largely been curtailed and the Anglophone Welsh authors portray established and complex characters and communities. This suggests an increased self-assurance from Wales' English-language authors, together with an acceptance of their responsibility to detail Wales' internal contradictions and prescriptions that restricts progress and marginalises dissenters.

The Honno 'Classics' from the 1915-1939 period can be understood, at a general level, to evince a rejection, thematically, of the industrial and affirmation of the rural, albeit if they reflect a rural culture that is showing an increasing fragility. Upon further investigation, however, we can see an intensive and often bleak portrayal of Welsh communities unsure of their future direction. The Welsh cultural crossroads encountered at the end of this period is explored from a non-industrial perspective to expose its wider Welsh implications. As previously mentioned, the cause of this may simply be the lack of Welsh female-authored industrial texts, but, nevertheless, these stories and novels reject the idea that Welsh writing in English in the twenties and thirties had only one dimension. Instead, these works progress and reinforce the more complicated literary characterisation of the country begun in the nineteenth century. It seems quite pertinent that the works

themselves are characterised by increasingly marginalised women, where the female voice is rejected by the patriarchy because it expresses attitudes thought harmful to the status quo. This situation reflects a similar marginalisation of female authors in many of the critical commentaries on Welsh writing in English. Honno's republishing of these works amplifies these voices, admitting them into a modern discussion and debate on Welsh writing in English's heritage, which consequently broadens our understanding of a historic Welsh culture and questions its traditional representation.

- iii) Post 1939: "Slowly the pattern of the valleys was asserted" (*Strike for a Kingdom* 84)

The Honno 'Classics' drawn from 1940 onwards incorporate three distinct locations: rural settlements in Wales; stories depicting Welsh pit communities; and finally, novels interested in the Welsh abroad. By including texts concerned with mining culture and foreign travel the series indicates its continuing and increasingly diversified portrayal of Wales. The rural selections extend the nostalgic remembrance of a past existence seen in the previous period and unveil communities still struggling to accommodate themselves to a changing society and culture. Such depictions are also evoked in the industrial texts, where the main difference is the change of location. These two categories are very different from the texts set outside Wales which continue to investigate the authors and their characters pleasure in escaping Wales.

The preoccupation with industrial and rural Wales sees two differing portraits of the landscape. Out of the six novels and five short stories, two novels are predominately set abroad, two novels and two short stories located in an industrial setting, and two novels and three short stories in a

natural or rural environment.⁴⁵ The rural locations may have physically changed since their earlier description, but this does not stop the physical elements from sometimes recalling some of their old, wild nature and influence. In Margiad Evans' 'The Old Woman and the Wind' (1948), the power and destructiveness of nature over the inhabitants is evinced by the wind's flattening of the local village (*A View across the Valley* 230-232); and, in Brenda Chamberlain's 'The Return' (1947), Bridgit uses the dangerous, changeable sea to reflect on her relationship with a married man (*A View across the Valley* 215). In such stories there is no mention of industrialism and the characters show little interest in affairs outside of their communities, unlike those stories where the industrial location is key to the plot.

In these stories, the rural landscape and way of life is depicted as being accessible to, but not part of, the mining towns. In Menna Gallie's *Strike for a Kingdom* (1959), Inspector Evans and P.C. Thomas take "the long walk up the mountainside to Brynhir Farm" to try and solicit information from Peci, the female farmer (87). Rhian Roberts' 'The Pattern' (1947) opens with Gwil watching a farmer taking his cows back up to his farm; "Two cars were tangled up among the cows ambling back from the village farm to their field on Penmynach hill, tails swishing lazily in the warm afternoon. The cars honked horns impatiently but old Bob did not hurry himself or his cattle" (*A View across the Valley* 193). The two environments co-exist, but do not intermingle. The farms are lonely isolated, backward places while the industrial towns are populous and, comparatively, more cosmopolitan.

A contrast to this is provided by Eiluned Lewis' *The Captain's Wife* (1943), a novel that remembers a coastal/rural community in the latter half

⁴⁵ The novels mostly set abroad are: Menna Gallie's *Travels With a Duchess* (1968), and *You're Welcome to Ulster* (1970); the works in an industrial setting are: Menna Gallie's *Strike for a Kingdom* (1959), and *The Small Mine* (1962), Rhian Roberts' 'The Pattern' (1947), and Dilys Rowe's 'A View Across the Valley' (1955); and the texts with a rural background are: Eiluned Lewis' *The Captain's Wife* (1943), Hilda Vaughan's *Iron and Gold* (1948), Brenda Chamberlain's 'The Return' (1947), and Margiad Evans' 'The Old Woman and the Wind', and 'A Modest Adornment' (both 1948).

of the nineteenth century. However, this historical novel makes the comparisons with the contemporaneous setting of the other works all the more distinct. In this text the necessities of technology and industry are only just beginning to appear in the community's peripheral vision; the narrator comments of the town that it "took three hours to drive to the nearest railway station and the passing of a steam threshing machine through the street of St. Idris was a nine days' wonder" (105).

Generally, industry is visualised as destroying and desecrating the natural landscape. In Dilys Rowe's 'A View Across the Valley' (1955), the young girl runs into the almost idyllic valley landscape above her industrial village, and sees, below her, "the tower of feathers where a train crawled on its stomach amongst the black hulks of the steel works and the bright red boxes of the factories" (*A View across the Valley* 261). As the girl looks upon the landscape around the village she notes the loss of the woods, the yellow water caused by industrial pollution and the general destruction of the natural habitat (*A View across the Valley* 264-265). The novelists' general focus on rural landscapes and habitats has been forced to change because of the erosion of this environment. The landscape that seemed so unchangeable in the earlier stories has been unable to resist the cultivation and pollution caused by industry. The idea of 'Wild Wales' has become anachronistic as it has been displaced or transformed by modern industrial Wales. Whereas earlier depictions of industry were confined to the periphery of the country, now it is rural Wales which is positioned in the more remote locations.

The change of scenery is reflected in a change of culture. Only Hilda Vaughan's *Iron and Gold* (1948) and Eiluned Lewis' *The Captain's Wife* portray environments in which agriculture is an integral component of the community's life. However, both are historical novels, commenting on a vanished age, which they varnish with nostalgia. The contemporary prologue

to *Iron and Gold* makes this clear with its references to the local colliers and workers, who “came up out of the earth in grimed clothes of a new cut, with bleached faces, blackened over, and blue scars upon them that could not be washed off” (1), the local bard subsequently drawing the reader into a rural setting with a retelling of the ‘Lady of Llyn y Fan Fach’ fable. In the other texts, the agricultural routines that previously influenced or defined the plot have been abandoned. In the rural tales set entirely in a contemporary setting, such as ‘The Old Woman and the Wind’, there is no mention of any agricultural activity. In general, the employed characters in these rurally located texts are either public servants, such as the Postmaster in ‘The Return’ and Innes Gibson in Menna Gallie’s *Travels with a Duchess*, or employed in a job connected to the mines and there are few references to anyone working the land agriculturally.

The slow decline of agriculture’s role in the culture of Wales seen in the earlier texts has now reached a terminus. However, elements, or perhaps vestiges, of the rural culture can be identified in the pit culture. For example, the industrial characters’ relationship with religion and the Welsh language bears similarities to the situation in the rural communities seen previously. In Rhian Roberts’ ‘The Pattern’, Gwil’s mother justifies her actions and ideas on the basis of her religious beliefs: “I doan care, I doan hold with it and I doan think Gwil better go [to Bracchi, the Italian’s, shop] soa often. Why! The next thing we’ll noa, he’ll be going on Sundays, buying sweets and ice-cream on the Sabbath like common children” (*A View across the Valley* 196-97). In *Strike for a Kingdom*, where religion is also a part of the everyday routine, the Welsh language is significant as a class signifier. So the middle-class Mrs Nixon speaks a very proper English (37-38), and, while the lower-middle-class Inspector Evans can speak Welsh, he prefers “not to let it be known that he suffered from this disability” (87). Meanwhile, the colliers

and their families are less comfortable in the English language and its different and difficult pronunciation (7, 68).

The transposition or integration of some of the elements of the rural culture into the mining one links the two communities. Like the earlier rural texts, the mining communities are close-knit and isolated, the inhabitants reliant on a single occupation that defines their identities. The community is suspicious and intolerant towards outsiders, and operates within a well-defined and prescriptive set of social mores and codes. This is well-exemplified in Menna Gallie's *The Small Mine* (1962) when the hero and young collier, Joe, is killed, and the local town, Cilhendre, demonstrates its strict expectations of how the women in his life should grieve and be treated (96-97). A comparable situation can be seen in *The Captain's Wife*, where the rural community tries to proscribe Lettice's conduct after the death of her son (193-194). The similarities between these texts' communities, especially given that one is modern and industrial and the other historic and rural, suggests that there is a cultural nexus between Wales' varied and various communities. The superficial differences mask an inherent commonality which works to unite the Welsh communities collectively and confirm their expressions of a codified Welsh culture. While this is particularly clear from this example, the theory has a consistency when extended to the other texts.

Aside from the terrain, the most striking difference between the rural and industrial communities is that while there is a sense of stagnation and desperation in the mining communities, in the once agriculturally dependent rural communities there is atrophy. In 'A View Across the Valley', although both habitations that the girl regards are deserted, there is very little sign of any human activity in the natural environment: "only men with their heads in the clouds and gentle happy madmen would use this right of way" (*A View across the Valley* 262). In the town the people are in their houses on this "Welsh Sunday" (*A View across the Valley* 262), but the girl sees it as a

degraded settlement, much like the “rotting and sodden ... coal barge that had not been used for thirty years” (*A View across the Valley* 265). The culture of Wales is still more widely predicated on remnants or revenants of the old culture but these are becoming increasingly obsolete, and more of the towns’ inhabitants frustrated at the irrelevance of these ‘Welsh’ codes for them and the lack of any substantive alternatives.

This disillusion seems to be more strongly felt by the female characters, the women, in both the rural and industrial sections of Wales now less concerned with effecting some sort of change to the lassitude that is portrayed as endemic in Wales. The central female protagonists in the rural environment are generally on the edge of the community, excluded because of their difference. In Margiad Evans’ ‘A Modest Adornment’ (1948), Miss Allensmoore and Miss Plant are on the periphery because they do not want the village to discover they are lovers. The two characters therefore incur the gossip of the village and are never really integrated into the community. In much the same way, Bridgit in ‘The Return’, is vilified and ostracised because of her affair with a married man (*A View across the Valley* 208-209). These ‘outsider’ characters have become increasingly segregated from the other inhabitants of the community. In the earlier stories such difference allowed these characters to act outside the normal codes, to try and effect some social change. Now, however, they seem isolated and present more of a passive than active challenge, their existence calling for change rather than their voices.

In the industrial or urban environment a similar, if more claustrophobic, situation is evident. When Sarah Thomas, in Menna Gallie’s *You’re Welcome to Ulster*, is diagnosed with cancer she goes to her friends in Ireland rather than her Welsh family: “The family ... rooted in their Welsh valleys, would lap her into their shawl of uncritical cosseting, their blind and cannibal affection ... Wales was a patterned place, a place of set responses,

ready-made, ordained” (10). Sall, in *The Small Mine*, sleeps with the colliers as a “gesture of friendship” (26), a situation condoned by the community as long as it is never formally recognised. When Joe is killed she is unable to show any public grief because it would be a public avowal of her actions and she has to bury her feelings and mourn in private: “She sat in her seat, pretending innocence of Joe Jenkins, innocence of his hands, indifference to the crush of his mouth and his white thighs” (91). Meanwhile, Cynthia, who had just started dating Joe, finds the pressure to publicly mourn, to “conform to the orthodox reactions, the natural, expected responses” (157), and be officially recognised as Joe’s girl stifling and finds a job in England to escape the pressure to comply.

The female Welsh characters in these Honno selections are marginalised or accepted based on their relative willingness to acquiesce in the communal codes and mores. However, neither obedience nor rebellion provides them with satisfaction, as they are either weighed down by the pressure of repressing their natural instincts and desires or gossiped about and excommunicated for their difference. This theme of rejection has been consistent throughout the various periods, and no matter how far the culture is eroded, little real change seems to be experienced, barring a possible worsening of the situation. The fact that this problem is not linked to location suggests that it is representative of a wider, more ingrained cultural attitude in Welsh society.

Further evidence of this issue is provided by the appearance in these later tales of active, influential mothers, on the face of it a promising progression, but these female characters are still secondary handmaids to the desires and whims of their male counterparts. In *Iron and Gold* the mother, whose life has been spent “baking and brewing for men” (5), ignores her deep reservations about her son’s courting of the fairy bride and agrees to help him with his wooing because she wants grandchildren. The very title of

The Captain's Wife suggests the female dependence on the male for identity, and the titular character, Lettice, submits to a secondary status on the appearance of her husband, John. When John returns from sea at short notice, Lettice willingly abandons the plans she had made with her children to travel to Dundee and meet him off his ship (11-12). The domestic routines that Lettice set up while her husband was at sea are questioned when he returns and since he doesn't submit to her established routines, she alters them to accommodate his wishes. For Joe's mother, in *The Small Mine*, after his death she is depicted as having lost the pivot to her life and reason for her existence, only now able to monotonously repeat the cliché "He was the apple of my eye" over and over again (97).

The presence of the mother character, rather than spearheading social change, promotes a subtle redefinition of their partnership with the community patriarchs. In *Strike for a Kingdom*, D.J., the local magistrate and collier, sees himself as a preserver of the community, a maintainer of the status quo who acts to keep the unity of the town and protect its inhabitants. In this role he is abetted by his mother who provides him with information which establishes the background to the crime at the centre of the narrative (112-113). The father and mother characters work together to preserve the cultural and social ethos. While the father provides guidance and activity, the mother provides information otherwise inaccessible to him. The prospect of a female generation that would consistently challenge the Welsh patriarchy has largely been abandoned, although the episode between Cynthia and Joe and the Germans in *The Small Mine* (63-6) when Cynthia insists on maintaining friendly contact with the outsiders, and Innes' behaviour generally in *Travels with a Duchess* provide some contrast. Innes asserts her independence and authority by still going on holiday after her husband has failed to get leave from work, even if feeling slightly intimidated at the prospect (17).

Innes' exploration of foreign locations is one of the ways that these Honno selections use either non-Welsh characters or locations as reflective devices. For the foreign visitor to Wales there is intolerance and suspicion, while for the Welsh traveller abroad there is permissiveness and liberty. The attitude meted out to those non-indigenous visitors to Wales is relatively universal. In *Iron and Gold*, the mother derides her eldest son's marriage to "a Saxon." Scorn flickered over the Welshwoman's face" (8). Bracchi, the Italian sweetshop owner, in "The Pattern", has his shop attacked when the Second World War starts because he is Italian (205), while in *The Small Mine* Joe is unable to stop the refrain "Bloody Nazis, bloody Nazis" (62), going round in his head when he meets some Germans in the local bar. The drawing of Wales into the wider world developed in the earlier texts has apparently led not to greater acceptance of different cultures but rather to dislike of these non-Welsh persons for their difference from the Welsh norm. However, the use of the word 'Welsh' is perhaps inappropriate here, and the idea of a British norm more fitting, as these last two cases can be argued as indicative of a pervasive World War II antagonism towards Italians and Germans. Nonetheless, this still constitutes a significant contrast to the earlier texts as it suggests a more integrated British attitude from these Welsh authors. It may be best to suggest that while Welsh is the primary national identity for Wales' inhabitants at this time British is an important secondary identity.

A Welsh primacy is supported by those texts which portray the freedom enjoyed away from a prescriptive, specifically Welsh society. In the two contemporary novels with foreign settings, both Innes Gibson, in *Travels with a Duchess*, and Sarah Thomas, in *You're Welcome to Ulster*, find liberty from Welsh expectations in travel. Innes escapes her life as a bored, Cardiff teacher to experience a sexual and social freedom in Yugoslavia which is impossible in Wales. After her cancer diagnosis Sarah rejects the

opportunity to return to Wales and her family for the adventure of visiting her friends in Northern Ireland. These liberating, external experiences are critiques, which suggest how Wales can learn from other national models and cultures. The foreign intolerance that is part of a Welsh, or even British, culture is symptomatic of the restrictive practices that curb the development of a progressive or liberal society and culture.

There is much in these post 1940 texts, then, that agrees with the literary critical thinking, seen previously, that typified this period as one of integration. However, rather than internal integration, these texts suggest Wales' inclusion of external, rather than internal, attitudes and ideals will facilitate a more liberal society. The urgency of this need is evinced by the portrayal of disillusioned rural and industrial communities, where the men are dissatisfied and the women marginalised. The texts broach areas unexplored in the other periods and expose widespread, ingrained dissatisfaction with no simple cure, as integration is rejected by those in authority. If we regard these works as the conclusion to a story more generally told by all the Honno 'Classics' a consistent narrative appears, begun in the nineteenth century, that shows few signs of reconciling the many, and obvious divisions entrenched in Welsh society. So, although this may be the conclusion of the story to date, it is one that seems to hope for, rather than promise, a more auspicious sequel.

A Sense of Place

This interrogation of the Honno 'Classics' narrative has been constructed by examining changes, and the way in which the culture of Wales was characterised by thematic progressions between texts or periods. A key indicator of this change is the evolving and developing depictions of place which exposed deeper cultural movements. An understanding of place, according to Edward Relph, not only helps to maintain existing places, it

also facilitates the creating of new ones; we refer to the identity of place through its “persistent sameness and unity which allows that [place] to be differentiated from others” (45). The significance of identifying with place is that it defines ‘insideness’, namely how far an individual attaches and involves themselves with place.⁴⁶ There is a process whereby the land provides the source material for its inhabitants’ immediate experience, which is then layered by internal imaginings placed on the terrestrial to suggest how that land defines them. The land is conditioned by and conditions the people who reside on it. According to Iain Robertson and Penny Richards, in the introduction to *Studying Cultural Landscapes* (2003), the “land in which we live both shapes us and we shape it, physically by means of cultivation and building, and imaginatively by projecting on to it our aspirations and fantasies of wealth, refuge, well-being, awe danger and consolation” (1). In the Honno ‘Classics’, when the land becomes cultivated by human activity so the descriptions change and a wild topography becomes transformed into a civilized locale, reflecting an associated change in the culture.

This study has attempted to use various threads to extrapolate the Honno series’ particular relating of Welsh culture, a telling partially reliant on historical context, which can be conceived of as a backdrop framing each text and the ideas emanating from their various uses of image. Although it is the action on the stage that primarily catches the attention, the backdrop is a shifting vista that subtly suggests the interplay between geography and history and social and political shifts. This approach bears comparison with Erwin Panofsky’s work on iconology, which, though primarily concerned with art, identifies “conventional, conspicuously inscribed symbols” in art as representative of the State and its power (Cosgrove and Daniels 2). The value of investigating these symbols is that the ‘intrinsic meaning’ of a work of art is revealed “by ascertaining those underlying principles which reveal

⁴⁶ ‘Insideness’ is Relph’s term.

the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion – unconsciously qualified by one personality and condensed into one work.” (Panofsky cited in Cosgrove and Daniels 2). Transposing this idea to literature, and extending it to the interrogation above, we can see that the symbolisation of the landscape politicises the Welsh place. The evolving descriptions of place are not just symbolic of cultural change but conditioned sites of resistance, whether it be the nineteenth-century attempts to realise Wales in opposition to English literature’s gothic descriptions, or the prolonged featuring of an agricultural scenery which defies simplistic internal identities. These places and their portrayal become associated with marginal and marginalised groups resisting the trend of the powerful defining the weaker.

Resistance, in the series, is organised and indicated through place relations, as the various texts connect the portrayals of place to wider political concerns and challenge established notions of culture and society. In *Space, Place and Gender* (1994), Doreen Massey argues that a place’s identity is constructed through “the specificity of their interaction with other places rather than by counterposition to them, and as such dominant images of a place will be a matter of contestation and will change over time” (121). In this study, the interaction between places is examined through multiple texts and over a significant period, but if we look at how the land is *treated* generally we see the continual feeding of a sense of place, a massaging by which one place begets and updates the previous. So, for example, the centrality of the rural in ‘Mad Moll’s Story’ is further explored in *Queen of the Rushes*, diminished but apparent in the “few stone cottages with decaying wooden fences and porches” in *The Wooden Doctor* (138), and has become peripheral in *Strike for a Kingdom*. Rather than these texts suggesting that the rural place becomes anachronistic, they outline a continuity through the texts where the various interactions locate, stage and embed a cultural

identity through place. This situation is neatly characterised in *Strike for a Kingdom*, where Peci's farm is isolated and remote from the industrial Cilhendre, but still reachable by a "dusty, dry, rutted cart track" (87).⁴⁷

In her commentary on the political, cultural and social implications of place, Doreen Massey says,

Such a way of conceptualizing the spatial ... inherently implies the existence in the lived world of a simultaneous multiplicity of spaces: cross-cutting, intersecting, aligning with one another, or existing in relations of paradox and antagonism. Most evidently this is so because the social relations of space are variously reinterpreted, by those holding different positions as part of it. (3)

When studying a selected series of works, such as the Honno 'Classics', the numerous examples provide a seemingly easy facility in which to investigate such multiplicities. The editorial biases involved in the selection of texts, however, results in a distortion where the presentation is slewed to give certain results. The series is not an impartial representation of Wales, and nor does it purport to be; rather the texts are combined to give a particular, political meaning. The emphases of this message can be understood by trying to perceive the omissions, the places which receive scant attention or are restricted in their interactions with the dominating portrayals. Perhaps the most obvious example of this is the lack of industrial places in the first and second periods in this study, a situation which, when combined with the gender bias, identifies those places, in those times, as masculine and the rural as feminine. If, as James Clifford has noted, "[c]ultural action, the making and remaking of identities, takes place in the contact zones, along

⁴⁷ Even those texts, such as *Winter Sonata*, which have little overt Welsh context can be brought into this reasoning because, when included in a national 'Classics', they are suggestive of the cultural interactions and inferences that can occur across place even when there is no contiguity.

the policed and transgressive intercultural frontiers of nations, peoples, locales” (11), it is the off-stage meeting of these locations that provides the different cultural and local portrayals in the third period. Examples of such meetings across this “contact zone” are reserved until the later texts, meaning the earlier depictions of place embed a Welsh rural identity, which resists the subsequent rise of the industrial place. The result, as seen through the Honno ‘Classics’, is a model of Welsh culture which has a rural primacy and heritage and suggests that modern reflections on Welsh identity should consider and emphasise the rural trajectory when reaching any conclusions.

The use of place to signify social relations is also relevant when considering how the texts locate women to mirror their status. This is a consistent feature of the narratives, and agrees with Katie Gramich’s identification of “dispossession and eviction” as one of the continuing tropes in Welsh writing in English (105). The repeated dislocation of those female characters who, in the Honno ‘Classics’, in some way reject the existing power structures indicates how space is used as a method for demonstrating the relative subordinate status of women in Wales. In *Queen of the Rushes*, location, for Nancy, becomes symbolic of her standing within the community. When she is willing to submit to her husband, Gildas, she inhabits a safe and relatively prosperous space, yet once she rejects her husband she ends up in a harsh wasteland. This disparity can be seen when the description of Nance in her first days of marriage, when she “had taken up her duties as mistress with a zest and interest ... Forever on the alert, she dusted, and swept, and cleaned, until not a speck or a spot was there” (100) is compared to her wanderings on the Wildrom mountains, with its cold nights and fierce dogs, after her flight from Gildas (317-318). These interactions of character and space help to underline the social and gender relations and signal that the space an individual occupies is a pointer to the regard they are held in by their community. What is significant is the

repeated incorporation of an isolated or desolate space for those female characters who transgress the social mores and codes. For these characters the place they occupy is symbolic of their separation.

A Rural Arcadia

The Honno 'Classics' use of landscape also interrogates how past landscapes, in W. Scott Howard's view, "may serve as vehicles for the expression of grief, the construction of memory and the writing of historical narratives either subjective or cultural in scope" (47). In his analysis of Walt Whitman's *When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd* (1881) and Elizabeth Bishop's *North Haven* (1978), Scott Howard looks at how the two landscapes evoked by the poets respond differently to "paradigms of loss" (49). He argues that Whitman's adornment of Abraham Lincoln's coffin with pictures of an Arcadian world creates a landscape of memorialisation. This landscape "enfolds the departed President within nature's cycles of diurnal and seasonal change, thereby investing his spirit with principles of regeneration and transformation." The final vision which poses redemptive time within the "cusp of the future ... signals the poem's engagement with both personal and public historical discourses" (51). Bishop's poem, on the other hand, revisits a place she went with her now posthumous friend, Lowell, which implies "a sympathetic bond between language and nature that is irrevocably broken by mortality" (52). For Scott Howard, Whitman and Bishop's juxtaposing of idealised, 'Arcadian' past and imperfect present "enacts" in the reader "a mourning process", where the journey "back from that devised utopian space involves a corresponding reflection upon how the landscape has received and responded to our expression of grief" (47). Such journeys combine and contrast different contexts of public and private meaning comprised of "psychological drives, artistic themes and cultural codes" (53).

If we relate these ideas to the Honno narrative, the texts can be seen as part of a cycle that evokes “a sympathetic bond between past and present” (Scott Howard 52), but also subtly questions that link. The rural nature of Wales in the final sequence of texts is often evident more through its absence than presence, the reader’s journey back to their world evoking the disparity between commemorated past and changed present. However, the landscapes evoked are not uniformly rural or utopian, and the industrial landscapes are commonly dystopic. Comparisons between the two highlight the sentimentalising of the rural landscape, though not always in the eulogistic terms Scott Howard discusses. However, the rural’s various and more picturesque comparisons result in a fonder glance, the blending of multiple landscapes, with varying hues of colour, suggesting a more complicated, but nonetheless memorialising, scenario. The reflections invoked in the reader occur across a multitude of planes: geographic, temporal and textual, effectively creating a more substantial background against which those landscapes affectionately treated come into relief as part of a degenerating or declining range rather than simply as a sharp contrast between then and now.

One text which offers a particularly good example of this process, is Dilys Rowe’s ‘A View Across the Valley’. The story opens with a coroner in an industrialised town returning a verdict of death by misadventure on a young, unnamed girl found dead on a hill above the town. The action then reverts to the unnamed girl’s earlier sights and images of the town below and its surrounding valley. As it is a “muted Welsh Sunday” (*A View across the Valley* 262) the area is practically deserted, so her gaze mostly settles upon the landscape. The girl subsequently sees a hare running and playing in the sun, and decides to follow it when it flees. When she eventually reaches the hare it is in the middle of an almost complete circle of fire. Wondering what the valley would look like from inside the circle, the girl enters it and

looks out, at which point the circle completes itself and she is caught in the middle.

The story provides an obvious contrast between the natural, hilly landscape and the developed, industrial town. The natural is characterised by the narrator as a quiet haven with an idyllic element:

Somewhere behind [the girl] foxes and badgers played, and beyond that further she could walk where there was a lake. But only men with their heads in the clouds and gentle happy madmen would use this right of way with the wind strumming in their ears when there were other ways in and out of the valley. And so it was no part of the landscape where the girl was now. Where she was four white clovers might spring up in all her footsteps, or she might be a girl conjured for convenience out of flowers. (*A View across the Valley* 262)

This mythic scene behind the girl could be classed as a ‘paradigm of loss’, separate and “no part of the landscape where the girl was now”. Further, the reference to the girl “conjured” from flowers links her to the Welsh myth of Blodeuwedd. Much like the mythic backdrop this association evokes Wales’ pre-industrial/mythic past. As the girl journeys after the hare such descriptions are now tainted by modern involvement with the landscape: “[t]his valley was not green, but sometimes a piece of slag would have the print of a fern stamped deep into it” (*A View across the Valley* 264). The dystopian vision of the town is well represented by the description of the polluted river with its decaying barge, not used for thirty years, which had trapped and drowned a boy in the yellow water (*A View across the Valley* 265). The two counterpoised landscapes memorialise the natural landscape through the absence of its idyllic elements in the description of the industrialized urban, invoking a grief at the pollution of the natural. In the

story, there is a covert suggestion, heightened by the incorporation of the circle of fire out in the wilderness, that the natural cycle may effect some regeneration or transformation of the area; however, such a suggestion is tempered by the death of the girl in the fire. While the girl's presence facilitates the narrator's description and memorialisation of the natural landscape, her death indicates a break in the connection between past and present and consequent inability of the idealised landscape to be renewed.

The opening of the story, reviewing the girl's death, performs a similar manoeuvre to that in Bishop's poem where Scott Howard comments that "Lowell's death removes him from Bishop's idea of the regenerative potential in both poetry and landscape." For Bishop, the landscape apparently "bristles" with evidence of Lowell's departure and he is now remembered best in their "shared, idealised natural setting" (52). The death of Rowe's anonymous young girl in this natural setting, both removes the 'regenerative potential' in the landscape, and also introduces an elegiac and eulogistic tenor to her reflections on and descriptions of the scenery.

The notion of Arcadia is fundamental to Scott Howard's understanding of how landscape works to signify memorialisation, loss and gain. He argues that Arcadia is more "than merely a pleasant or lovely place ... Arcadia is a landscape of and for the mind" (53). Two principles are necessary for this understanding of Arcadia. Firstly, 'dialectic temporality', which arises when the artist incorporates trace elements of the contemporary, imperfect world, "the 'this place'", into their conception of the idealised world. Such limitations condition the possibilities of Arcadia and guarantee the return to a civilized world. So "Arcadia is an idea; but more than a notion, Arcadia embodies a dialectical experience of our own temporality and necessary erasure from an imagined community where we may wish to remain, but cannot" (54). The second principle, of 'sympathetic nature', occurs because we cannot stay in Arcadia, causing what Scott

Howard terms “tragic joy” (54), the elation of being in the Arcadian ideal mixed with sorrow at the necessary return to the imperfect world. Both principles are deemed fundamentally elegiac, “each suffused with the individual’s struggle to find consolation for the loss of a sustainable vision of perfection; each equally involved with the work of either positive or resistant mourning and memorialisation” (55).

These two principles can be argued to operate in ‘A View Across the Valley’. Repetition of the differences between the rural valley and the industrial town injects elements of ‘this place’ into the natural landscape; the girl sees from her hilly prospect “the tower of feathers where a train crawled on its stomach amongst the black hulks of the steel works and the bright red boxes of the new factories” (*A View across the Valley* 261). The natural world is adjacent to and affected by the human habitations while also separate and exclusive. The necessary ‘return’ to the town and, suggestively in this case, the coroner’s court, is made an established fact by the story’s move to the retrospective, the girl only able to escape such return through her death. These various elements evoke ‘tragic joy’, comfort and peace in the natural coloured by the necessity of leaving and confronting death. Thus, the landscape becomes a memorial of and for a natural world, now only attainable for a brief period of time. The landscape may welcome us, as it does the girl in the story, but our, and the girl’s, presence there is marked by eventual absence and grief.

A significant point, though not discussed by Scott Howard, is how other uses of landscape might fit into his model. The Honno series compositely presents a contrasting, interacting mix of utopian and dystopian landscapes, variously transformed by human activity. If we follow Scott Howard rigidly, each text, to varying degrees, can be understood as a eulogy to the degeneration and diminishment of the rural culture. However, later Honno ‘Classics’ also commemorate an industrial landscape, typically

described as degenerating, diminishing and dystopian. Given that Scott Howard uses the Greek location of Arcadia for his idealised landscape, then perhaps we could label this place ‘Avernus’, the Roman name for the entrance to the underworld, described in Virgil’s *Aeneid* as “a rocky citadel ... one side of it ... hollowed out to form a vast cavern into which led a hundred broad shafts” (VI, 43-45). The ‘Arcadian’ principles delineated by Scott Howard can be applied to this ‘Avernian’ landscape, though with certain intrinsic changes. Rather than mixing the imperfect “this place” with an idealised landscape, it combines the imperfect “this place” with the imperfect “that place”, an interaction which causes sadness at the necessary reflection on the connection between the two, which becomes underlined upon one’s return. This is not a strict memorialisation in the terms argued by Scott Howard, but it, nevertheless, demonstrates how various landscapes are honoured and commemorated in the Honno series.

Across the Honno series, the presentation of these landscapes memorialises them in different ways and cross cuts divergent landscapes, which unite as features of Welsh national identity. The combined aspect of these landscapes is clear in ‘A View Across the Valley’, but can be seen more widely by comparing and contrasting different texts across different periods. Such use of landscape enables an individual reader to encounter his or her cultural heritage and reflect on the specific message these landscapes have for their contemporary cultural understanding.

The notion of the Honno ‘Classics’ cross-cutting divergent landscapes can be applied to the series’ interaction with the critical commentaries on Welshness seen previously. The narrative divulged by the series as a whole accepts and disputes the academic convention, reinforcing where it agrees and unsettling where it disagrees. As such, the Honno ‘Classics’ produce a new way of understanding the roots of modern Anglophone Welsh culture, which is derived from its identifying and

publishing of 'significant' cultural artefacts. While this affects and colours any conclusions on Welshness, it also suggests the complications and layers involved in discerning national identity. The Honno 'Classics' have been selected because they provide a female perspective to Anglophone Wales' literature, but, rather than merely presenting a gendered viewpoint, the works have wider implications for the story of Wales and how it is understood through its literature.

4. Case Study of the Library of Wales Series: A Perspective on the Past

The Library of Wales series follows a more traditional selection than its Honno counterpart by emphasizing the role of male, industrial authors in Wales. However, although this is a prominent feature of the series there are also female and non-industrial texts which add variety and diversity to the series as a whole. The Library of Wales was established following the report of the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee in 2004. This report recommended a series that would “collect and showcase the literary achievements of the English-language writers of Wales from the nineteenth century up to c. 1965” (26). Such a series, which would receive public funding, was felt to be necessary because of the historic tendency for Welsh texts in English to become unavailable or out-of-print. The Library of Wales series was officially unveiled to the public in January 2006, with the launch of the collection’s first five texts.⁴⁸ Aimed at ensuring that, according to its mission statement, “all of the rich extensive literature of Wales which has been written in English will now be available to readers in and beyond Wales”, since 2006 the Library of Wales has been a relatively prolific re-publisher, issuing, on average, four editions a year. Each re-print includes the same mission statement, written by the series editor, Dai Smith, affirming that,

Through these texts, until now unavailable, out-of-print or merely forgotten the Library of Wales will bring back into play the human

⁴⁸ These being, according to the Library of Wales numbering system: *So Long*, Hector Bebb (1970) by Ron Berry, *Border Country* (1960) by Raymond Williams, *The Dark Philosophers* (1947) by Gwyn Thomas, *Cwmardy & We Live* (1937 & 1939) by Lewis Jones, and *Country Dance* (1932) by Margiad Evans.

experience that has made us, in all our complexity, a Welsh people ... The Library of Wales ... will complement the names and texts that are already in the public domain and seek to include the best of Welsh writing in English, as well as to showcase what has been unjustly neglected.

Professor Smith's statement iterates the Library of Wales' desire to reprint texts by authors whose names may possibly be familiar to the general populace, but have not been accessible due to their absence from the bookshops or libraries.

Similarly to the investigation of the Honno 'Classics', the Library of Wales series will be read as a single narrative which explores Wales; in this case the series' earliest originally published text is from the 1890s and its latest from the 1970s. For practical purposes, this chapter will focus on the Library of Wales' first thirty publications, a body of work which provides ample scope for investigation and analysis. However, this interrogation is further refined, in line with the interest of this study, to prose fiction; as a result the poetry collection, *Poetry 1900-2000* (2007), the sport anthology, *Sport* (2007), Alun Richards' autobiographical memoir, 'Days of Absence' from *Dai Country* (2009) and Dannie Abse's autobiographical *Goodbye, Twentieth Century* (2011) are not covered.

The Library of Wales 'Classics' will be separated into three distinct periods which unveil the thematic changes in these Welsh 'Classics' in English. The first period, 1890-1936, is characterised by a rural focus and industrial locations feature sparingly. However, because the featured rural communities are in decline this body of texts can be considered as an extended prologue to the rise of their industrial counterparts. Geraint Goodwin's *The Heyday in the Blood* (1936) is the last work, in the Library of Wales series, which consistently describes a rural environment before,

chronologically, the emergence of a number of predominantly industrial texts. Although this first period includes two pit-based novels, Rhys Davies' *The Withered Root* (1927) and Jack Jones' *Black Parade* (1935), these novels signal the coming ascendancy of the industrial material in the Library of Wales 'Classics'. Following 1936, there are a number of novels that portray the impact and importance of Wales' industrial economy for the nation. Rather than celebrating Wales' industrial character, the 1937-1959 works, the second period to be considered, depict communities tarnished by such heritage and experiencing increased unemployment, poverty and dissatisfaction bordering on despair. We can see a change in focus from the Anglophone Welsh novelists in the post-1959 'Classics', the final period to be discussed, as the authors' interests become more divergent and a more multi-dimensional portrait of Wales appears. These final texts suggest that Wales is coming to terms with its post-industrial character as they explore more varied ways of thinking about Welshness.

The tale related by the Library of Wales 'Classics' bears some comparison with the Honno 'Classics' narrative, although as the majority of the Library of Wales texts are set post-World War I it obviously covers a different time frame than the Honno one. Comparison between the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classic' narratives is found in the way certain seemingly natural thematic shifts are apparent, changes where the authorial eyes collectively move their focus and interrogation to particular aspects of Wales. Such shifts can be said to reflect not only the changing tenor of the stories but also the maturing and evolving nature of Welsh writers in English, but with more emphasis in the Library of Wales series on industrial communities. This may stem from the Library of Wales' wider gender remit, but the result is a distinct perspective which agrees more readily with the significance of industry to Wales as seen in chapter two. Rather than overtly comparing and contrasting the Library of Wales 'Classics' with the Honno

‘Classics’ this chapter proposes to look at the same themes discussed in the previous chapter, but through an industrial glass.⁴⁹ To this end, instead of using place to interrogate the series this chapter shall investigate its incorporation of Welsh history. The mixing of fact in fiction will be assessed against critical considerations that question the authority and seeming naturalness of the history presented. As a whole, these ‘Classics’ can be said to offer a perspective on Welsh society that is underlined by the repeated use of certain metaphors. Such an understanding calls to mind J. Hillis Miller’s investigation of *Middlemarch* and his analysis will be drawn on to conduct a similar scrutiny of the Library of Wales’ potential to present a total version of Welsh society.

The Library of Wales ‘Classics’ prioritise industry in Wales, but often portray ailing communities whose inhabitants have suffered hardship through the decline of the Welsh mines. This results in a concentrated and nuanced understanding of the industrial history in Wales, and also indicates how history, across a series of works, should be approached in a different way than from a single text. If a single literary work can be said to discretely indicate the historical crises, against which the authors were writing, then a layered narrative which connects Wales’ history across various texts brings this subject into a more distinct and expansive focus. In *The Content of the Form* (1987), Hayden White considers the role of history in narrative, and comments that the

sequence of ‘facts’ as they are emplotted in order to make a ‘story’ out of what would otherwise only be a ‘chronicle’ must correspond to the general configuration of the ‘events’ of which the ‘facts’ are

⁴⁹ As stated in Chapter Three these themes are; the works’ description and use of a Welsh place or landscape; their meditations on and understanding of the national culture; their use of character to show communal conformity and discord; their depiction of authoritative or authoritarian figures in these locales; and finally, their representation of foreign environments or non-indigenous people. And again, the texts’ use of these themes will also be discussed for their exposing of gender concerns and divisions in the various periods.

propositional indicators ... Considered as a code, the narrative is a vehicle rather in the way that the Morse code serves as the vehicle for the transmission of messages by a telegraphical apparatus. (40-41)

Applying White's theory to the Library of Wales series is complicated by the difficulty in discerning a 'meta-narrative' from a collection of narratives. However, the fact that the works are selected on the basis of their valuable portrayals of Wales gives them a common foundation and narrative spine. The texts' use of Wales can be considered as the 'vehicle' and the Library of Wales' desire for the series to be a "key component in creating and disseminating an ongoing sense of modern Welsh culture and history for the future" (Mission Statement), the destination. Such a journey also allows us to appreciate the way the series can be considered to connect contemporary Wales to its previous character and culture.

As a whole, the Library of Wales series can be understood as a composite story, which incorporates, divulges and evidences how the history of Wales has been reflected in its English-language literature. The reprints can be imagined as an attempt to detail not only how various historical events and plot interact, but also how this history can be read as an indicator of nationality. The combining of place and history presents an extended understanding of Edward Relph's 'insideness' as the texts colour and layer an individual's cognizance of their place. The texts' interaction with ideas of Welshness also invests the series with power, as it implies a knowledge of Wales that is generated from the selections' divulging of Wales' history. However, the problematic nature of fact in fiction unsettles the historical accuracy of the series and unveils the political aspect of national 'Classics' collections.

If we regard the Library of Wales series as a single, multifarious narrative which, theoretically, evokes a common history, then a broader but

more fractured and complicated commentary on Welsh society can be apprehended. Such an investigation draws comparison with J. Hillis Miller's analysis, in 'Optic and Semiotic in *Middlemarch*' (1975), of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* and her presentation of contemporary society. Due to the complexity of society Eliot, Hillis Millis argues, had to use a strategy of compression/economy to present a

large group of the sort of people one would have been likely to find in a provincial town in the Midlands. Their representative or symbolic quality is not insisted upon ... The relation of Middlemarch to English society is rather that of part to whole ... synecdochic ... [but] in *Middlemarch* a fragment is examined as a "sample" of the larger whole of which it is part, though the whole impinges on the "medium" within which it lives, as national politics effect Middlemarch when there is a general election, or the coming of the railroad upsets rural traditions. (126)

For Hillis Miller, the narrator of *Middlemarch* assumes that the behaviour of these "unique people manifests certain general and universal laws", where "totalization" is achieved through a combination of specificity and generalising interpretation on the basis of specificity (127, 128).

Miller proposes looking at how the 'generalizing interpretation' can be used to interrogate "certain all-encompassing metaphors which are proposed as models for Middlemarch society" (128). He argues that Eliot uses these metaphors as an "interpretive net which the reader is invited to cast over the whole society, to use as a paradigm by means of which to think of the whole" (128). Although comprising a more complicated system of 'totalization', the Library of Wales 'Classics' can be interpreted as a paradigm

for Wales more generally which invites the reader to reach certain conclusions as to its past, which has lasting implications for its present.

An Emerging World

Within the selected cohort of texts, there are twenty-seven Library of Wales 'Classics' to be considered: composed of twenty-three novels and five collections of short stories by twenty-three different authors. Five of these authors are represented by two separate publications: Gwyn Thomas, Arthur Machen, Alun Richards and Margiad Evans, also the Lewis Jones reissue incorporates both *Cwmardy* (1937) and *We Live* (1939) into a single edition and Hilda Vaughan's *The Battle to the Weak* (1925) includes her short story, 'A Thing of Nought' (1934). Of the short story collections, Arthur Machen's *The Great God Pan* (1894; 1895; and 1904), and Gwyn Thomas' *The Dark Philosophers* (1947) contain three long stories each; Alun Richards' *Dai Country* (1973 & 1976) includes seven stories; Dorothy Edwards' *Rhapsody* (1927) thirteen stories; and Alun Lewis' *In the Green Tree* (1948) some of his poetry and letters and six short stories.⁵⁰

The Library of Wales 'Classics' concentrate on the twentieth century and while Arthur Machen's 'The Great God Pan' and 'The Shining Pyramid' are originally from 1894 and 1895 respectively, they are the only included reissues first published in the nineteenth century. This bias is compounded by the fact that after the Machen texts there is a break, in original publication date, of some twenty years to Hilda Vaughan's *The Battle to the Weak* (1925). The latest reissue is Stuart Evans' *The Caves of Alienation*, first published in 1977. If the works are placed into the periods above there are nine reissues in each period. This time frame includes seven novels and seventeen short stories between 1890-1936; eight novels and nine short

⁵⁰ Lewis' poems and letters are not included in this study as they are either non-fiction or not prose.

stories between 1937-1959; and eight novels and seven short stories in the post 1959 era.

- i) 1890 – 1936: The “imprisoned community” (*The Withered Root* 298)

By emphasising the role of industry in the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ the texts from this first period can be understood as narrating and staging an occupational and cultural shift in Wales. The once dominant rural communities are, in the later texts, characterised as being consumed by the needs of an increasingly industrial Wales. This scenario is portrayed as less of an industrial revolution and more of a gradual evolution that gathers pace as the century develops. In these ‘Classics’, the rural and industrial communities are not mutually exclusive, as the early industrial novels suggest that the industrial imports and integrates many features of Welsh rural culture and society. However, while characters from the rural areas travel to the industrial ones for work, there is no reciprocal movement. The blending of the rural and industrial signals the significance of the rural for Wales, both as an important precursor to Wales’ industrial existence and as a source for the industrial communities and their culture.

The first text to consistently dwell on a mining environment is Rhys Davies’ *The Withered Root*, from 1927, and the works prior to this rely largely on the rural for their locations. When describing Wales, Arthur Machen’s stories chronicle the earliest depiction of the country in the series, and describe a nation seemingly untouched by the Industrial Revolution. The Wales that Machen describes is a rural, tranquil location; for example in ‘The Great God Pan’ (1894), “a sweet breath came from the great wood on the hillside above, and with it, at intervals, the soft murmuring call of the wild

doves” (*The Great God Pan* 1).⁵¹ Such a concentration on the rural is continued in the subsequent stories, as Hilda Vaughan’s *The Battle to the Weak* (1925) and ‘A Thing of Nought’ (1934), Dorothy Edwards’ ‘The Conquered’ (1927) and Margiad Evans’ *Country Dance* (1932) and *Turf or Stone* (1934) all feature prominently rural environments.

The novels that herald a change to this scenario are Geraint Goodwin’s *The Heyday in the Blood* (1936) and the two mining community novels, *The Withered Root* and Jack Jones’ *Black Parade* (1935). The significance of *The Heyday in the Blood* is that it signals the end of an established rural environment as a prominent feature of the Welsh way of life. It is a terminus which can be appreciated by the conversion of the landscape and the widespread onset of mechanisation and industry: the narrator says of the border community in which the text is located, “Farming had gone to pieces there, as everywhere else” (79). By the end of this novel, of the main characters, only Twmi, the local innkeeper, remains. Now merely a relic of the past, Twmi stays to lament over the pervasive emigration from the area and the destruction that will be wrought by a new road through the town and his pub. The picturesque scenery invoked by the rural novels is being overrun and transformed by the needs of industry, and is no longer able to resist industry’s advance or regenerate a rural primacy.

In the predominately industrial *The Withered Root*, the retrospective first Book describes a valley community “imprisoned” in its “squat rock-crowned hills”, where “the pits gave forth coal rhythmically and generously” (3). By the end of this section the industrial valley has developed to such an extent that only the night can hide “all the raw cuts and ... harsh eruptions

⁵¹ It is worth noting that Machen’s stories, while “firmly within the canon of classical Welsh writers”, (as commented by Catherine Fisher in the Foreword to the Library of Wales edition of *The Hill of Dreams* (xiii)), are complicated by the ambiguous position of Monmouthshire to Wales prior to 1970, a phenomenon which can lead to some confusion over his labelling of places. For example, in *The Hill of Dreams*, although Lucian Taylor’s native town clearly seems to be Caerleon, it is repeatedly referred to as England (7, 8-9). In ‘The Great God Pan’, the same complications occur, although, again, the roots of the story are in Wales, as the “great wood” above is Wentwood in Gwent.

from the mines”; “the hills that shut in the still village curved up like the gigantic petals of a sombre and sleeping flower” (59). The mines have fully possessed the daylight activity and urgency, while the natural, now the part of the landscape that is “shut in”, may be apparent, but only in the darkness after the working day. In *Black Parade*, the retrospective opening sees the farmers flocking to Merthyr Tydfil, now the “second largest town in Wales”, in search of work, leaving behind them decaying and barren farms (8-9). This episode supports the idea that the growth of the industrial is at the expense of the rural. The natural environment is still noticeable, but increasingly less vital as industry develops, broadens and broaches its surroundings.

The culture depicted in the industrial texts portrays a subtly different ideology and morality from the rural ones; the characters are immersed in two linked but different cultures and communities. In the early rural texts the needs of the farm dictate the protagonists’ actions and expectations. For example, in the retrospective *Country Dance*, the heroine, Ann, in a plot which is driven by her conflicted feelings over an English shepherd and Welsh farmer, visits her ailing mother at the beginning of the story. This trip requires Ann to care for her mother and she complains that she misses her dairy, because with “everything out of the way so soon there is a lot of time to spare” (10). *Country Dance* often meditates on the set of social codes that define the workings of the community, and, as the other rural texts indicate, these codes are slowly being eroded. In Hilda Vaughan’s *The Battle to the Weak* a local feud has become more important to the two central families than the maintenance of their farmsteads and both families become sly and conceited in their drive for revenge. The hazardous and injurious consequences of this grudge are well symbolised by John Bevan’s competition with “Evan Lloyd for the possession of a butcher’s shop in Llangantyn. Eventually the prize had fallen to the Lloyds, but not before

John had driven up its price above its value, and himself expended both time and money which would have been better employed upon his farm” (279). In the other Margiad Evans text, *Turf or Stone*, the ineptitude, waywardness and drunkenness of Matt Kilminster, a member of the local gentry and landowning class, has resulted in him being indifferent to the activities on his land: “Matt Kilminster, led an increasingly blank existence. He was sometimes tortured by the vacancy of everything. Lately he had taken to drinking” (23). By the time of *The Heyday in the Blood* an agricultural way of life that provided a foundation for the local community has become impracticable: “The old way of things was ending; ... Wales would be the last to go – but it was going. Even the old twill mill no longer relied on the farmers around, but on foreign royalties and the English aristocracy” (80). Here, the younger generation are leaving Wales for greater opportunities elsewhere, the mines being the most common magnet, and only the stubborn, older generation are trying to cling to the old ways.

Parallel to a seemingly irreversible decline in the rural culture is a rising industrial one which has been influenced by a number of internal and external sources. In *The Withered Root*, the pit ethos illustrates an everyday life which involves working, drinking, fighting, attempting to sleep either with one’s own wife or someone else’s, and occasional church or chapel attendance and repentance. As a child, Reuben and his father had walked up “over the grey hills and along the railroad track to the colliery” (17) and the railway tracks are suggestive of the roots of the Welsh industrial culture as they not only bring the coal in and out of the valley, but also non-natives looking for work. In *Black Parade*, which covers many decades of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Merthyr is a melting-pot of Welsh and non-indigenous people. Mass internal migration, in pursuit of opportunities no longer present in the fields and more general immigration have rewritten the previous culture. During an early scene, having witnessed

a fight outside the bus, one of the passengers tells “the bus driver, who was an Englishman, how ‘tidy’ everything in the district had been until ‘the old Irish’ had swarmed into it” (38). In both these texts change is caused by the importing of the invaders’ attitudes and sensibilities, whether they be corrupting or edifying; the “newcomers to the district, with the exception of the happy-go-lucky Irish, were far more sober and thrifty than the natives. Seldom did a North Walian waste his substance on riotous living; and ‘the Cardies’ ... were even more thrifty and saving than their countrymen from the north” (*Black Parade* 12-13).

The development of Wales’ industrial culture is founded upon an admixture of the precepts of the original mining communities and the attitudes and character of the economic migrants. This blending is continuously updated and adjusted at this time as the mines enjoy an economic prosperity which is absent in the rural heartlands of Wales. The great societal fluxes which underpin this period of rapid Welsh industrial expansion make a clear and singular delineation of Welsh industrial culture difficult; however, the impact of external stimuli is palpable and provides a distinct and sharp contrast to the situation in the rural communities. As the pits become increasingly profitable and populated so they draw more from the surrounding areas and the old culture’s feeding of the new causes the rural to become decreasingly vital.

To judge the relative rise or decline of the culture we can use the prevalence of ‘outsider’ characters in the community as a yardstick. Such characters expose both the boundaries of socially-acceptable behaviour, and the authority of the community to dictate its members’ actions. In the rural communities a number of characters transgress their community’s social expectations, and in consequence are shunned or exiled. So, for example, Lucian Taylor in *The Hill of Dreams* (1907), Matt Kilminster and Easter Probert in *Turf or Stone* and Evan in *The Heyday in the Blood*, are all compelled

to live on the periphery of society because of their behaviour, which is unaccepted by, and unacceptable to, the community. Some, like Rhys Lloyd in *The Battle to the Weak*, return from their exile as wealthy men, now endorsed for their opulence and re-embraced by the local populace. However, this is very much the exception to the rule.

The rural communities' ability to exile their transgressive characters suggests that, despite their increasing enervation, they have retained enough authority to constrain their members or enforce their removal. Megan, in 'A Thing of Nought' and Mary Bicknor in *Turf or Stone*, eventually cede to the social conventions. However, the consequences of either submission or exile are rarely good; Megan ends up losing her lover (*The Heyday in the Blood* 408-9) and Mary is emotionally and physically abused by her husband (65). The consistent factor in these characters' transgressions is that their resistance is directed at the community; for these characters the community is an antagonistic presence, arbitrarily dictatorial and limiting.

The industrial novels, however, describe a different scenario, and perhaps the best example of this variance is witnessed in *Black Parade*. In this text, when the pits are prosperous there is widespread conformity to the newly-established conventions, but when the pay is less secure, there is greater communal dissatisfaction and more characters willing to rebel. Near the end of the novel, Saran comments to her brother, Harry, on the wayward boys playing outside that

If them poor boys down there ... had anything better to do, they wouldn't be doing what they're doing, and what seems to worry you all the time ... Having no work to go to, they drink what little they can get, play cards ... for they feel they've got to have something to make 'em forget how useless they are to themselves and everybody else. (402)

Her protest suggests that if the rebellion is linked to potential economic revival then the community is more ready to absorb a new ideology, as can be seen, for example, from the town's embracing of the Labour Party (336). Here, the community rebels against capitalism or the state, and 'outsider' characters are the enemy for promoting internal disharmony.

The stark contrast between the role of the 'outsider' in the rural communities as compared to the industrial reflects the decline and decay of the rural culture and corresponding growth of the industrial. Such 'outsider' characters express their authors' concerns for the communities in Wales, which are depicted as dependent on economic prosperity for communal cohesion. The stories anticipate the next generation of texts as they evoke internal disharmony in the rural societies and a more united sentiment in the industrial communities, which are, however, reliant on the opportunities provided in the mines for their conformity.

A similar contrast can be seen between the authoritative or authoritarian figures in the two communities; in the rural they are increasingly ineffective and/or wayward and in the industrial strong and/or prescriptive. In 'A Thing of Nought', Penry Price, "son of Rhosferig", emigrates because he is the fifth son and his family unable to apportion to him any farming land (*The Heyday in the Blood* 372, 378-9). In *Turf or Stone*, Matt Kilminster's alcoholism and debauchery and his wife Dorothy's frivolousness and materialism mean that neither are able to adequately connect with their daughter Phoebe, who is perfectly willing to depart the family home for her grandmother's house in Clystowe (158). This work portrays fractured links between the elder and younger generation, where the older is only able to exert a limited authority and hardly able to elicit even a modicum of respect. This definition could not be said to apply to the almost proto-stereotype 'Welsh Mam', Saran in *Black Parade*, who, whilst

ruling her husband, her family and her house also extremely ably manages the home finances and chores. Even in her later life she is able to dictate such routines to her daughter and daughters-in-law, in between tending and caring for her vast brood.

Alongside these parental figures is the land itself, exerting its own authority. In these 'Classics', the farm and the pit provide an almost parental role, as the populace place their children under their protection and guidance. In *Country Dance*, when Ann's mother dies she is "content to have [her] dairy and take [her] mind off other things" (48) and in *The Withered Root*, Reuben's father delivers his son to work in the pit, which will now take on the role of helping to feed, clothe and pay for him (28). This influence is dependent on the prosperity of work and, when the sources of employment fail, both the industrial and rural communities become increasingly fractured and dislocated, now, not necessarily an act of transgression, rather a necessity caused by the failure of the land in its parental role. In *Black Parade*, the start of the Strike marks the moment when characters begin leaving Wales for jobs in England. During a walk, just before Christmas, Saran, Jane and Sam's wife "talked of the families, which like themselves, were preparing for the reception of the exiles who had been forced to seek their living in places far from their native home" (386). In the rural, by the end of *The Heyday in the Blood* the increasing economic failure of agriculture sees the younger generation abandoning their homes for prospects elsewhere, as seen by Llew, Evan and Beti's departure from the village.

There is a symbiosis between the land and its representatives, where a slackening of the land's vitality undermines the authority of those who govern in its name. Although the industrial presents a more community-based ideology it is still subject to the same dependence as the rural. The difference is that in the industrial, and especially *Black Parade*, fractures result in communal cohesion and an outcry against a common enemy, here the

bosses, rather than wholesale dissatisfaction and emigration, though this still arises to degrees.

When characters venture across the border, in search of work or escape, it is not a haven from the problems at home. The non-Welsh places are often portrayed as zones of increased loneliness and alienation for the protagonists. England is the most common destination for the characters to travel to in search of opportunity or escape. It is visualised as a more advanced, prosperous nation, but its foreign culture unsettles the Anglophone Welsh characters who travel over the border. In *The Hill of Dreams*, Lucian proves unable to form any real attachments to his more 'refined' London counterparts, associating mostly with the places that remind him of home (196-198). Dorothy Edwards' *Rhapsody* (1927) rarely deals with any explicitly Welsh characters, but she emphasises the marginalisation and isolation of her protagonists. As Christopher Meredith comments in his foreword to the Library of Wales edition, all of her stories "are extremely controlled studies of constrained desire, loneliness and incomplete relationships" (ix). In Edwards' stories the main characters are searching for some sort of connection with other people, an unsuccessful enterprise that leaves them disappointed and further alienated. A good case in point is 'Treachery in a Forest', which concerns Mr Wendover, a single man spending his summer holidays in a small cottage in Shelgrove forest. During one of his walks in the forest he meets a couple whom he befriends, and forms a connection with the woman, Elizabeth Ellcot. After spending an evening at their house he receives a letter saying that they had to leave early. Mr Wendover composes a letter saying how he hopes to meet them again, but before posting it, changes his mind and rips up the letter (*Rhapsody* 61-77), resuming his previous lonely existence.

In *Rhapsody*, this repeated theme suggests Edwards' sense of the problems of the exile abroad, an issue shared by other novelists dealing with

the Welsh outside Wales. In *Black Parade*, those of Saran's children who leave Merthyr initially return for family holidays but later these returns become fewer: "You talk as though we had a dozen apiece coming home for Christmas from away," said Jane [to Saran]. "We've only one each coming home." (385). The notion of exile and exodus is generally seen as a permanent transition, the prospects in Wales being too negligible to merit any real return. One of the few characters who does, Rhys Lloyd in *The Battle to the Weak*, comments to Esther on his return of his hatred for the Welsh way of life (324-325) and his desire to regenerate the area in new cultural and social ways, terms that he has imported from foreign thinkers and philosophers.

In this 1890-1936 period, characterisations of the industrial are fuelled by the transposing of foreign attitudes and ideals onto the mining communities. Immigration and migration have shaped Wales' industrial nature by buffeting the south Wales valleys' population. In consequence, these locales are a blend of diverse cultures coalescing into a consistent whole. The inclusion of these foreign elements falls into two categories. The cross-border incomers are accepted, if not necessarily welcomed, as their habits are often depicted as corrupting and detrimental. In contrast, the internal migrants and their culture have been blended and subsumed more readily into the industrial communities. The similarities between the rural and the industrial suggest the palimpsestic nature of Wales at this time, as much of the industrial culture seems derived from the rural one. However, the fate of the rural also provides a warning for the industrial as both communities are dependent on economic prosperity for their sustenance. By the end of *Black Parade*, the clouds are starting to appear for the industrial and the vitality of the mines is more fragile. The commonality between the two communities suggests that the industrial Anglophone Welsh novelists are representing a wider culture and society than the mere setting of their

works. While not speaking from all of Wales, they are speaking from communities formed from numerous and diverse parts of Wales.

- ii) 1937 – 1959: “There was much poverty in the Terraces, nearly as much as air, weather or life” (*The Alone to the Alone 2*)

In this second period of Library of Wales ‘Classics’ there is a prevalence of industrial novels which divulge communities witnessing the economic bust evoked previously. These texts mix nostalgia for the way things were with a lamentation for the way things are: the ‘glorified’ past versus the ‘damned’ present. The texts meditate on the need for some type of regeneration and a new source of energy and impetus for the industrial society. However, the rural has not entirely disappeared from this scenario, and these texts also touch on Wales more widely, often by contextualising the significance and reverberations of the mining problems for the surrounding communities.

In six of the eight novels and three of the nine short stories industry and the mines are integral to the tales’ scenery and setting.⁵² In the heartlands of south Wales, the pits and its workings dominate descriptions of the local topography; agriculture is now mostly a relic of the past. As one of the farmers, in George Ewart Evans’ *The Voices of the Children* (1947), laments, “Before the pits started you could get a living out of the land ... They couldn’t do it now. But you’ve only got to look for yourself ... how many farms have fallen into ruin? The land won’t yield if it’s worked under” (89). The depiction of rural Wales has been pushed further to the peripheries. In Glyn Jones’ *The Valley, the City, the Village* (1956), Trystan travels to the seaside village of Llansant to find a bucolic lifestyle very different from that in either the valley or the city. As Trystan comments,

⁵² These texts are: Lewis Jones’ *Cwmardy* (1937) and *We Live* (1939); Gwyn Thomas’ *The Alone to the Alone* (1947) and his stories, ‘Oscar’, ‘The Dark Philosophers’, and ‘Simeon’, in *The Dark Philosophers* (1947); George Ewart Evans’ *The Voices of the Children*; Dannie Abse’s *Ash On a Young Man’s Sleeve* (1954); and Glyn Jones’ *The Valley, The City, the Village* (1957).

shortly after his arrival in Llansant, “the old hope and happiness and vitality, which I had expected never to experience again, began to return in the endless sunlight; and the natural loveliness and the people of this countryside brought delight if not oblivion” (257). Emyr Humphreys’ *A Man’s Estate* (1955) features the first use of north Wales in the Library of Wales ‘Classics’, typified as a struggling rural location, but this is one of the few texts to signal a concerted and widespread departure from the mines, the other being Alun Lewis’ *In the Green Tree*, which is mostly set overseas.

In the industrial heartlands, if a farm does appear it is characterised as a lonely place, isolated from the community. In Gwyn Thomas’ ‘Simeon’ (1947), Gwyn Thomas describes the titular character’s house as “nearer the mountain top than any other in the valley. It was surrounded by some two acres of cultivated land ... We all thought it must be nice to have trees as near to the house ... and a stream that had white water and not black water like the river we had to spend most of our time staring at down in the valley” (*The Dark Philosophers* 243). Whereas the natural environment is portrayed as having a charm and beauty, the ugly shadow of heavy industry looms large over the pit locations. There “On top of this mountain a colliery company had built its tip, its dump, the stuff that had to be got from underground” (‘Oscar’ in *The Dark Philosophers* 5). In Lewis Jones’ *Cwmardy* (1937) and *We Live* (1939), nature is described as having been enraged by the activities of the industrial workings, “the tempest spied the fissures in the mountain and battered its way in, to return with increasing fury on the village beneath” (*We Live* 405).

We can see, in contrast to the last period of ‘Classics’, a more developed depiction of industry’s dominance in these works as the mines have aggressively asserted their authority in Wales, often at the expense of the local scenery. As Gwyn Thomas writes of his fictional ‘Terraces’, in *The Alone to the Alone* (1947), “never had so little beauty been compressed into so

large a space as we saw in the terraces” (2). Nature has been polluted by the needs of the pit and descriptions of the Welsh environment show the mutation of a once rural locale. In *The Valley, the City, the Village* Trystan’s valley street, Rosser’s Row, “was a colliers’ terrace, standing on the bank of the black river oiling down the cwm” (5). The landscape has become a mirror, reflecting the history of Wales, and the interaction between agriculture and industry, the slag heaps and tarnished scenery indicating industry’s costly ascendancy.

The culture seen in earlier Library of Wales ‘Classics’ continues to evolve and develop in these texts, but such change is now generated internally rather than externally. Rural culture is largely absent in these texts; the only clear examples of it that remain are in the non-English-language heartlands and, as in *The Valley, the City, the Village*, the edge of English-language south Wales. When Bert returns to his native Welsh village, in Howell Davies’ *Congratulate the Devil* (1939), the community is not only recorded as speaking Welsh but as continuing a rural culture and way of life. As the narrator relates, he and Bert see the Squire “talking to a gardener near a clump of rhododendrons, a tall, bony man holding himself very upright, shaggy in heather green shooting jacket, a peaked cap far forward”; later they walk down the town street, where “everywhere it was ‘Hello, Bert, you back? Forgotten your Welsh, speaking only the squeaky language, I suppose’”. (232). In the north Walian district of Pennant, the central location of Emyr Humphreys’ *A Man’s Estate*, the proprietorship of a prosperous farmstead is one of the key concerns of the plot. Here, the rural culture is intact and relatively untarnished: “This was the land of stabilized melancholy, this was the barn where the owl brooded, where the afternoons were long and sweet and gloomy; this was the crowded parlour where the twilight lingered, ... while through the tiny back window the last red bar of sunset, behind the black lighthouse, gave way to the violet night” (74). Such

examples suggest a continuance of the rural culture, but one which through lack of stimuli is showing few signs of adaption or regeneration.

In the texts located in the centre of south Wales or the Valleys, with the image of paid employment in the mines withering, the industrial culture is increasingly reliant on the blooming of the seeds of the left-wing ideology seen previously. Lewis Jones' *Cwmardy* opens with the pits at their most prosperous and the local culture has similarities with that of the earlier texts: "Main Street was the shopping and social centre of the village that had grown with the pits. It contained the few shops, the numerous chapels, and the three drinking dens that the village boasted of" (12). As the mines start to lose their prosperity, socialism and communism become increasingly integral means of promoting unity and showing the owners the power of the people as a collective. In *Cwmardy*'s sequel, *We Live*, the "Party" regularly informs the inhabitants "what was happening to the people elsewhere, and why the government was already preparing to take sides with the owners against the working men and women ... Everything helped the people of Cwmardy to prepare for the strike with vigour and determination, confident that this time they would be victorious" (559-560). As the strikes and hard conditions start to unsettle the town, left-wing ideals become a sustaining force for Cwmardy; Communism is seen as a way of preserving, as far as possible, the social codes.

Gwyn Thomas' 1940s stories depict life in a Valleys' town without the mines as a going concern; as Shadrach comments of the Valley, in *The Alone to the Alone*, "All the joy seems to have died out of it. It's like a graveyard. And all because a few damned pits closed down" (83). In the two texts set in the Terraces, 'The Dark Philosophers' (1947) and *The Alone to the Alone*, the culture has been forcibly altered by the lack of work, the community having "come as near to a general stoppage of living as any community can come without staging a mass execution" (*The Alone to the*

Alone 2-3). By Glyn Jones' *The Valley, the City, the Village* a left-wing ideology has been conflated, or perhaps bulwarked, with a drive for independence. Trystan rebukes himself for taking the ideas of socialism and a free Wales for granted, feeling that these are important parts of his cultural make-up. In a moment of introspection, he questions his failure to connect with his culture, "Was I so very self-centred, so blind, so callous even? Why did I not feel more deeply about these things? I took them for granted – religion, socialism, freedom for Wales, and they all seemed so obviously desirable that I could not feel they demanded more of me than agreement" (318).

The importance of socialism to Welsh culture is also evident in urban districts such as Cardiff. In Dannie Abse's *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve* (1954), Dafydd rallies the local voters to the Labour Party cause, and his brother Leo involves himself even further with socialism in Wales (6, 72). This developing ideology and culture is derived from the remembrance of the 'great' events of the past, and a dissatisfaction with the 'defeat' of the mines, blamed on those in authority. The identifying of a 'common enemy' has become an important feature of the industrial culture, a way of providing a communal totem which signifies that the culture is geared towards protecting and securing the community's solidarity, an entrenching that resists the severe fragmentation seen in the rural communities.

The success of this is evident in the absence of communal transgressors, the main, and generally young male, characters in these texts are compassionate and politically aware, content to rebel against authority for the general good. Len, in *Cwmardy*, while advocating unity and comradeship is also willing to blow up the colliery's power-house to alleviate the pressure on the strikers (248). The four male heroes in 'The Dark Philosophers' and *The Alone to the Alone*, try to help the members of the Terraces in their travails, fulminating against the owners and members of the establishment who allowed conditions to become so onerous: "The

coalowner', said Arthur, ... 'was a man with a great number of nasty ideas regarding the common people ... But the voters lapped them up when spoken by the soft voice of the Rev. Emmanuel" (*The Dark Philosophers* 141-2). These industrial texts starkly contrast the 'good', but mistreated members of the lower social classes, with the 'bad', hypocritical and avaricious members of the establishment and upper classes. Lord Cwmardy's Big House, with its French windows may look down on "the pits he controlled and the valley he dominated", but it is a world away from the tight and cramped miners' accommodation where Siân's "naked feet squashed the black beetles that plastered the kitchen floor at night." (*Cwmardy* 187, 13, 23). Meanwhile, Oscar, the owner of the mountain in Gwyn Thomas' 'Oscar', is depraved and debauched, imagining that he can use his wealth and influence to protect himself in his nefarious actions: "You know those people that pick for me on that tip. They're mine. If it wasn't for me saying they come and pick my coal they wouldn't be there picking. ... If I told them to get off this mountain, off they'd have to get. They'd be rotting about on their beds having more bastards like themselves. I ought to be able to do as I like to people like that" (*The Dark Philosophers* 47). And the mining village in *The Voices of the Children* is indignant at the arrest and imprisonment of a man for "speaking the truth to the miners in Aberdare" (133).

Noticeable in the above examples is the lack of a female voice, and Emyr Humphreys' *A Man's Estate*, set in a rural environment, features one of the few women who play a significant role in the works from this period. The reason for this might be that heavy industry, unlike farming, had a male-only workforce, dominating the community politically, socially and economically. The result is that the industrial female counterparts appear, if they feature at all, as spurs, encouraging and consoling, but orbiting the heroes rather than exerting any real force. Mary and Siân in *Cwmardy* and Mabli in *The Valley, the City, the Village* have their parts to play and Mary

becomes important in her own right in *We Live*, but nonetheless these roles require the women to be satisfied with a secondary importance in the community to the men.

While the women are encouraged to be content as helpmates the elder male generation is characterised as mentally and physically scarred by the failure of the mines. In *The Alone to the Alone*, the narrator describes the Terraces as having produced a “crop” of people who looked much older than their years, grey and forlorn (4-6). Dafydd, in *Ash on a young Man’s Sleeve*, sees an ex-miner playing “an accordion, a tombstone in one of his lungs” (32). And Uncle Tom in *The Voices of the Children* still clings to the hope that the miners will eventually prevail: ““The miners’, [Uncle Tom] went on, ‘will have their day. Never doubt that. ... Every day the struggle is making them more able to win what is their right. And they’ve been in darkness for too long to be frightened by the colour of the pitch of hell or what will happen if they try to take what is their due. They’ll have their day”” (114). The division between the two generations is their experience of and attitude towards the mines; the older are defined by their working down the pits and the younger by being stuck above them. Although there may be a cultural continuity, generationally there is a deficiency in understanding and connection. While left-wing politics may be seemingly successful, it has created a false cohesion, papering over the ominous fissures which are becoming apparent in the gender and generational splits.

The dominating younger male generation has to a limited degree appropriated the role of communal authoritarian, such characters striving to aid and conserve their communities while addressing the iniquities and depravity they witness. In Gwyn Thomas’ stories the heroes try to purge the local area of a malignant presence: in ‘Oscar’, the fat, corrupt and debauched owner is killed (*The Dark Philosophers* 99); in ‘Simeon’, the hero wants to rescue the titular character’s daughter from Simeon’s incestuous activities;

and in ‘The Dark Philosophers’ and *The Alone to the Alone*, a multitude of little scandals and problems are addressed by the Dark Philosophers. The presence of an active male moral scourge is evident, albeit to a lesser degree in the other texts. For example, Bert, in *Congratulate the Devil*, forces the inhabitants of his native village, through mind control drugs, to be kinder to each other, and creates, as the narrator calls it, the “great reign of love and kindness in the world” (240).

However, for all such endeavours there is little substantial change. The Dark Philosophers are impotent in their ability to seriously improve the conditions in the terraces; the death of Oscar is merely a small victory against the community’s endemic problems; and as Bert’s mind control drugs wear off the town resorts to its previous ways. Only in ‘Simeon’, with Simeon’s death is there promised dramatic change, but even here this is uncertain, open-ended and non-communal.

The final novel in this period, *The Valley, the City, the Village*, concludes with a prolonged dream sequence in which Trystan, an artist, forgoes any capitalist pretensions and instead seeks to understand and immerse himself in the history of Wales, Welsh socialism and the fight for independence. This suggests that the next stage of evolution for Wales’ English-language artists is the embracing and conflating of socialist principles with a concerted nationalist drive, which has the history of Welsh grievances as the motivation and foundation stone for such an impetus. Across the texts from this period we can see such a shift in the interests of the protagonists, where their involvement in the local is being transformed into a need to think nationally.

The need to think nationally is, in part, driven by the frequency of characters abandoning Wales for better opportunities away from the industrial heartlands. As Dafydd, in *Ash on a Young Man’s Sleeve*, comments “the boys were going up North or to London, losing their own tongue, their

own language, their own customs. Going to an alien country and feeling clumsy and different and disliked” (27). When Welsh characters are depicted abroad they are characterised as either having been in some way cultivated, civilised and subsumed by the foreign locale, or they play up to an imagined stereotype of the Welsh. Philip Elis, in *A Man’s Estate*, is very uncomfortable with his Welshness and the Welsh people, having been brought up in England. When he returns to the family estate of Pennant in north Wales, he notes that “I was miserably at my most academic, my most English” (235): Philip sees himself as conflicted; cultured by his English upbringing, but in essence Welsh, a situation which leaves him ill at ease in either location. After his rejection by Margaret and her father, who desires a more traditional English mate for his daughter, Philip inherits Pennant. However, feeling unable to stay in Wales, Philip gives the property to his sister, commenting that “All this Welsh stuff, chapel traditions, language, family, it’s too much for me to swallow at one go”, and he decides, instead, to leave for Switzerland (352, 404).

For the Welsh outside Wales, there is a performance of imagined Welsh idiosyncrasies. In *Congratulate the Devil*, Bert, a Welsh born and bred vagrant, wanders the streets of London, half-drunk, singing old Welsh tunes: “Now he would tear their blooming heartstrings for them, shambling back a poor, broken man dreaming of his own country and the hills, singing (but to himself, mind) the old songs, the fireside chants and the chapel hymns” (62-3). Stereotypical Welsh attitudes are also evident in the descriptions of the characters in Alun Lewis’ stories. For example, in ‘A Night Journey’, the Welsh soldiers are characterised by their singing of ‘Cwm Rhondda’ and ‘Aberystwyth’ “and the more maudlin hymns of the Evan Roberts Revival” (*In the Green Tree* 85). The stereotypical performance of the Welsh abroad suggests an assumed role that is cast off upon re-entry to Wales. As such, the authentic depictions of Welshness are provided by the indigenous

characters, the portrayal of the Welsh abroad more suggestive of how the Anglophone Welsh imagine that foreigners misapprehend the Welsh character.

These texts find Wales in the autumn of its industrial heyday, and there is a widespread gloom and affectionate glance back toward a bygone prosperity. This malaise is characterised by stagnation with only unemployment and poverty on the rise. However, there are signs of hope to be found in the communal spirit based on left-wing principles. The core of the community is resisting its complete fragmentation, and fomenting what little vibrancy and vitality is available. From *The Valley, the City, the Village* there is a suggestion that the next step is to infuse this activity with a national fervour, to take the industrial core and spread its cohesive spirit to evoke a national and potentially redemptive spirit. For Welsh writers in English this signals a shift from speaking for a limited portion of Welsh society, to speaking to and for all Wales. Evidence of a subtle broadening of geographic scope, subsidiary to the above, is already apparent in the ease with which this selection of Welsh authors in English include traditional Welsh-language heartlands in their plots: north Wales in *A Man's Estate* and west Wales in *The Valley, the City, the Village*. Although these are generally only sojourns away from the main business of south Wales and the valleys. Nevertheless, it does indicate that even while industrial Welsh writers in English are trying to reconcile contemporary hurt with past triumph they are also accepting a wider responsibility to try and speak for Wales more generally.

- iii) Post 1959: "The past was all he wanted to talk about" (*I Sent a Letter to My Love* 24)

If we regard the post-1959 period as an epilogue to the Library of Wales 'Classics' narration these texts sequence the emergence of a more varied

picture of Wales, where the frame of the industrial is tintured by more assorted and multi-dimensional portraits of the country. However, this is not to say that the spectre of Wales' industrial past does not haunt the nation. The industrial culture analysed in the preceding period is echoed in the other locations and suggests the rise of a cultural and political solidarity in Anglophone Wales. This period features the most extensive geographic and thematic portrayals of Wales in the Library of Wales 'Classics' which reveals a change in the literature. Notions of Welshness are explored through a post-industrial lens, and the Welsh writers in English investigate the possibility of a unified national identity between the various English-language portions of Wales.

The broader palette of these texts can be identified through the differing Welsh backdrops. Two of the eight novels and five of the seven short stories are mostly set in industrial Wales; two novels and one short story in urban Wales; two novels in coastal Wales; and one novel, although featuring an industrial Welsh opening, then moves the action to England, returning towards the end of the novel to rural Wales.⁵³ The comparing and contrasting of the differing locations provides a reflection on the geographic and more ingrained connections between the industrial and Wales more widely. So, for example, the Valleys locations in Ron Berry's *So Long, Hector Bebb* (1970) and some of Alun Richards' short stories contrast to the coastal scenery of Porthcawl in Bernice Rubens' *I Sent a Letter to My Love* (1975), which compares with the urban conurbation of Llandudno in Jeremy Brooks' *Jampot Smith* (1960), which, in its turn, connects to the rural topes of Glanmor in Stuart Evans' *The Caves of Alienation* (1977). In this model, the

⁵³ The industrial tales are: Raymond Williams' *Border Country* (1960); Ron Berry's *So Long, Hector Bebb* (1970); and Alun Richards' 'Going to the Flames', 'Frilly Lips and the Son of the Manse', 'Dai Canvas', 'The Scandalous Thoughts of Elmyra Mouth' (all 1973), and 'Hon Sec RFC' (1976). The urban stories are: Jeremy Brooks' *Jampot Smith* (1960); and Alun Richards *Home to an Empty House* (1973), and 'Dream Girl' (1976). The coastal novels are: Stead Jones' *Make Room for the Jester* (1964) and Bernice Rubens' *I Sent a Letter to My Love* (1975). Stuart Evans' *The Caves of Alienation* (1977) mixes the Welsh action between industrial and rural landscapes.

industrial locations rather than being the heartlands, are more the engine of Wales, central and key to understanding, but sometimes remote and seemingly separate.

When the link with one of the other locations is made distinct it allows the text to meditate on how the pulse of the industrial has affected the landscape of Wales more generally. In Raymond Williams' *Border Country* (1960) the intertwining of past and present narratives exposes the symbiotic relationship between the industrial and rural in Glynmawr. In the past narrative the rural ceded its precedence to the industrial, which, while not dominating the life of the village, was visible from the hilltops, and affected the economic prosperity of the town, a situation demonstrated by the farmers selling of wood rather than wheat: "There was a big trade just then in pit-props, and many of the farmers had turned to it" (72). In the contemporary narrative, however, industry has lost its vitality and even though the once barren land is being reforested the industrial will lie beneath and alongside it as a memorandum from the past.

Such layering of the landscape is also present when Hector flees the authorities in *So Long, Hector Bebb*, and hides in an abandoned colliery. Here there are "lumps of coal scattered among the weeds, broken trams ... slag tip turned green with moss, big black slag stones glistening in the stream" (190-1). Hector is eventually turned out of his hiding place as the area has come under the control of the Forestry Commission who are demolishing the old mine and reforesting the area (220-22). What we can see in these two texts is that the industrial is being, literally and figuratively, embedded, forever under the surface and affecting what happens above; it may have lost some of its economic power, but its relevance for Wales will endure.

A more multi-topographical Wales is indicated by the inclusion of communities with subtly different cultural attitudes and codes. Valleys-born and bred Elmyra, in Alun Richards' "The Scandalous Thoughts of Elmyra

Mouth' (1973), pictures Cardiff as "like the red-light district in some lurid American film", alien and separate from the close knit, gossipy nature of the Valleys she feels comfortable in (*Dai Country* 306, 308-9). Elmyra is contrasted by the urban Connie, in Alun Richards' *Home to an Empty House* (1973), who notes of herself and her husband, "We never went away much, seldom to the country, never to the sea ... we were town people. We'd never lived with trees, were ignorant of the soil" (279). There are, however, common threads still uniting and linking society as a whole: as Pugh says of the Welsh in *Border Country*, the "real life, for these people, is each other. Even their religion is for each other" (277). The relating of religion to communal bonds develops the model of the valleys' close-knit communities seen previously, but at a more diverse national level, where large-scale movements, such as religion, operate to provide a common Welsh foundation.

With the widespread unemployment, the former relevance of socialism has lost its secure base and instead its mantra has been extended into new areas; for the men, sport is the main bonding activity. Boxing allows Hector Bebb to find a supportive, pseudo-family in *So Long, Hector Bebb*, and in Alun Richards' 'Hon Sec RFC' (1976) Elgar can only connect with his community through his involvement with the local rugby club. Here, he feels he has "at last found a position and status in life which the menfolk in his family would have thoroughly approved" (*Dai Country* 231). This tale also examines the importance of the local code (*Dai Country* 240-41) and a society that now sees a significant difference between the middle and lower classes, with the middle classes identified as similar to the bosses, if less wholly contemptible. As part of the lower middle/middle class, Elgar is ostracised for his supposed greater wealth and privilege, a separation that is also evident in *Home to an Empty House*, when Walter says "All my prejudices were against the powerful, the rich, the urbane and the

privileged” (52). A switch in loyalty, away from the working-class community, seems particularly prevalent amongst the female characters of these texts: Walter’s wife, Connie, comments “Somehow I always associated Welshness with quarrelling committees, with things going wrong, little political men with vested interests and families of unemployable nephews screwing money and jobs out of the State for their own special, personal causes” (243). Connie’s statement suggests the diminished value of a male-centric community because it prioritises the “little political men” and “unemployable nephews” while excluding women from an integrated and significant role.

Despite this division the importance of remembering and associating with a Welsh history is made clear, but problematised by the onerous nature of living in the past. In a moment of exasperation Walter comments that “The Welsh can’t forget. Sometimes I think they prefer remembering to living” (*Empty House* 177). In these post 1959 texts the past is treated in many ways, be it the comic Welshifying of stories by Gladstone in Stead Jones’ *Make Room for the Jester* (1964) (43-44), Caradock’s use of historic Welsh characters in *The Caves of Alienation* (50-52), or the exemplifying of the fortitude and commitment of the workers during the 1926 General Strike in *Border Country* (149-167). In Wales, as presented by these stories, history has become a shared mythology, aggrandizing the past and spurring nationalist sentiment while foreshadowing the culture.

As seen from Walter’s outburst above, expressions of frustration over the Welsh experience are not wholly muted, and the texts feature many examples of transgressions against the communal codes or conventions. Rather than the earlier rebellions working for the community, now they work against it and upset its moral integrity: Hector kills his wife’s lover, Amy has an incestuous pseudo intrigue with her brother, and Connie conducts an affair behind her husband’s back. The motivation behind such

disobedience is a sense of dissatisfaction and isolation in a community which the perpetrators feel struggles to understand them.

This lack of empathy is clearest in the division between the sexes, where the women feel alienated and separate from the male-orientated community. Neither sex manages to communicate with the other, resulting in two separate worlds. The problem with this, as Connie comments, in *Home to an Empty House*, is that “Separate worlds are self-perpetuating. They pass each other, seldom communicate” (173). However, the estrangement is often exacerbated when attempts at communication are instigated. In *Jampot Smith*, the eponymous hero is almost driven to despair by his innate sense of reserve and failure to fundamentally connect with the woman he loves. “I saw how lovely the whole sweep of her body was, how rich her hair; and had I dared I would then have knelt and buried my face in that hair. But how could I? Kathy was a stranger, someone I had never known” (339). Amy and her brother, Stan, in *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, live together but Amy is only able to find any real understanding with him through a clandestine, disguised series of letters. In their face-to-face communication they are unable to deal with each other on anything except a facile, superficial level. Amy internally wonders, of one of Stan’s daily repeated comments, “whether every morning Stan repeated his chorus just to annoy her, or whether perhaps he simply wanted to remind her that he was still there” (35).

Difficulties between the sexes cannot be said to be a uniquely Welsh problem; its significance in this period of texts is that it allows the Welsh writer in English to question the principles and foundations of their community and the plausibility of it ever being able to cohere all members to its dogma. In ‘Hon Sec RFC’, even though Elgar finds some form of brotherhood as the Club Secretary he is never really accepted by the other members of the rugby club, merely countenanced because of his importance

and value as ‘fixer’ not friend (*Dai Country* 235). The public and the private never meet because they cannot be reconciled, the private a long way from the expectations that are faced in the public. Sue in *So Long, Hector Bebb* has her part of the narrative split between a ‘word for word’ superficial account of her public presence, and her inner monologues where she reflects on her fears and dreams, unable to verbally articulate her private presence to anyone. This text also reflects a wider change in fictional style from the realist text to a more stream-of-consciousness technique. Such changes, as well as the historical ones, help to drive the textual differences between this and the previous period of Library of Wales ‘Classics’.

The main link between the characters in these post 1959 ‘Classics’ is their community; Wales and that elusive word ‘Welshness’ create connections that would not otherwise exist. The industrial had provided cohesion for the communities as it offered employment and security, but its sustaining presence has departed, and in consequence exposed some of the fundamental frailties of community. The fear in these texts seems to be over how far Welsh history and national pride are really able to generate a commonality beyond the superficial.

The problem of transgressors in the Welsh communities is compounded by an absence of accepted authoritarian figures. The only two strong father figures are the dying Harry Price in *Border Country* and Sam, a pseudo-father to Hector, in *So Long, Hector Bebb*. These ‘Classics’ are now often typified by absent or dead fathers, as in *Jampot Smith, Home to an Empty House*, ‘Going to the Flames’ (1973) and *The Caves of Alienation*.

Correspondingly, the number of forceful mother figures is on the increase. In Alun Richards’ ‘Frilly Lips and the Son of the Manse’ (1973) and ‘Dream Girl’ (1973) the mothers’ expectations for their children play pivotal roles in the plot. In ‘Frilly Lips’, Selwyn’s mother has severely influenced his opinion on the natives of the village and left him unprepared for any real interaction

with them (*Dai Country* 181-82); and in 'Dream Girl', Dorothea's mother rejects Will as a possible suitor because she's trying to groom her daughter for stardom (*Dai Country* 209-10). In *Home to an Empty House*, Aunt Rachel advises the younger characters, without a great deal of success, and is described as "one of those matriarchs without children" (111), noting her displaced position in the social order.

However, the protective characters that do feature are often rejected by the younger generation. Rather, the younger characters look for someone from their own ranks to provide authority and direction. This responsibility is often a burdensome one and the characters appointed to this role struggle with its expectations. In *Make Room for the Jester*, Gladstone has become a pseudo-parent for his younger siblings due to his mother's drunkenness. Although he is inventive and loving to the children, it ultimately becomes too much for him, and it comes as a relief when he is compelled to join the navy (253-4). In *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, Amy is forced to take on parental responsibility for her invalid brother, Stan. Like many of the characters in these 'Classics', Amy seems to be searching for a redeemer, someone who will appear to justify the past and explain the present - a search which is ultimately fruitless.

The reluctance of the next generation to take responsibility is a consequence of the wider Welsh problems identified in this period. The 'separate worlds' have 'perpetuated' beyond gender divisions and into generational divisions. The split between the age groups, like the gender split, is characterised not so much as antagonistic or aggressive but more as a struggle to comprehend the different worlds each lives in and understands. This does not cause the characters to inquire, investigate and attempt to remedy the various fissures in their communities but, rather, to retreat and consolidate the differences that separate.

An element of retreat can also be seen in the increased instances of characters returning to Wales, a homecoming characterised in several ways. In *Border Country* Matthew returns because of his father's illness and as he crosses the border back into Wales he feels a new rhythm of life, different and alternate from the English traditions. In England "you don't speak to people anywhere" (3). Michael Caradock tries to escape Wales and being Welsh, in *The Caves of Alienation*, but eventually comes to realise that it is only in Wales that he can adequately reflect on his personality and find a sense of self-understanding. Finding internal dissatisfaction while living his dream of "English middle-class gentleness", he returns "to Wales to find out what was wrong. Why he was bored with himself. Why he didn't give a damn for anyone. There were other contributory factors, but I think he had a conscience about his really deep indifference to suffering" (72, 86).

In foreign locations this generation of characters do not play up to stereotypes; instead there is a feeling of belittlement by the foreigners, especially the English. While in England, Connie, from *Home to an Empty House*, "suddenly felt very Welsh, meaning inferior" (169). In *Jampot Smith*, the anglicised Jampot boasts that he could "compress the whole of the Industrial Revolution on to one page, the whole of Welsh history on to two" (204), a statement, from the refugee schoolboy, which demeans the importance of history, and especially Welsh history, as a valuable source of understanding.

In these texts, Wales' history, or mythology, and its importance is something that can only be understood by being Welsh; the history, culture and scenery is misunderstood and devalued by those without the necessary competence. The significance of a Welsh heritage colours understanding and separation; Brenda, in Brenda Chamberlain's *A Rope of Vines* (1965), for example, comments of her 'hiraeth' on a Greek island: "I find myself surprised by homesickness for my own island when small fishing boats

come into sight, with men standing up in them, as they do in the Enlli craft” (3). Wales is defined as more than simply home, and its various elements are able to evoke an internal connection and association with the country if not necessarily its people.

This final period of the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ witnesses a development from the predominantly industrial novel, with its added inclusion of urban and coastal areas and retained interest in the rural. Such a situation suggests that Wales has loosed itself from being solely signified or defined by a pit environment and culture. However, this is not without its problems, as evinced by the various tensions that arise when the authors consider the founding components of a collective, single national identity. Commonly, Wales’ industrial history is cited as a potential antidote to isolation with its provision of a heritage that extends across Wales and provides a common cultural touchstone. Its successes and failures have reflected and impacted on the other locations to signify the industrial’s enduring national relevance which can consequently be used to interrogate Wales more generally. Wales, as portrayed here, is a country bound by its various internal divisions, but there is also a commonality that can be discerned, which is clearest in the differences between the Welsh and non-Welsh, or more often, English. The English-language Welsh writers, in their portrayal of home, are delineating a literature of Wales’ own, which progresses its responsibility from south Wales and the valleys to simply ‘Wales’ and this term’s wider considerations and concerns.

History and ‘Classics’

The Library of Wales ‘Classics’ are aimed at “disseminating an ongoing sense of modern Welsh culture and history for the future Wales” (Mission Statement), a proposition which suggests that the reason for reissuing these works is their articulation of a history and culture that is important for

modern Wales. The previous chapter discussed Edward Relph's term of 'insiderness', or how far an individual attaches and involves his or herself with place, and Relph's theorising can be extended to consider how far an individual attaches and involves his or herself with the history of a place. One can argue that literary portrayals of a place's history help to embed and reinforce an individual's understanding of their place by contextualising and staging its development from the past to the present. Implicit in this process is an identifying of 'our' history which distinguishes it as unique and pertinent to 'our' place. Of course, history is not as solid an entity as place, but the linking of the two provides a substantive framework against which nation emerges. In the Library of Wales 'Classics' we have seen diverging depictions of place that are driven by Wales' history. For example, the rise of the industrial novel in the south Wales valleys reflects Wales' industrial expansion and the subsequent broadening of the texts' geographic locations echoes the decline and degeneration of the pit in Wales. History shapes our understanding of place and for those 'inside' substantiates the idea of their place having an established and extensive heritage.

The reissuing of 'Classics' magnifies these texts' importance to Wales and the knowledge of Wales they contain. In Michel Foucault's chapter 'Questions on Geography' he states that, once "knowledge can be analysed in terms of region, domain, implantation, displacement, transposition, one is able to capture the process by which knowledge functions as a form of power and disseminates the effects of power" (69). The power of the Library of Wales is their ability to select cultural artefacts that relate a particular knowledge of Wales. Internally, this organises a knowledge of Wales' history so that the dominant cultural movements seem natural by-products of this history. Foucault continues his analysis by commenting that there "is an administration of knowledge, a politics of knowledge, relations of power which pass via knowledge and which, if one tries to transcribe

them, lead one to consider forms of domination designated by such notions as field, region and territory” (69). In the Library of Wales mission statement we were told that these works were “until now unavailable, out-of-print or merely forgotten” and we can also identify the ‘Classics’ as symbolic of a power struggle where Wales was denied access to its important cultural artefacts by England, represented here by the English publishing industry. The ‘Classics’ can be considered to be “an administration of knowledge” that, through the modern re-establishing of these artefacts, provides substance to modern Wales’ claims to independence.

In his work on narrative and history Hayden White analyses how, “narrative is a meta-code, a human universal on the basis of which transcultural messages about the nature of a shared reality can be transmitted” (*The Content of the Form* 1). The meta-code invested in the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ uncovers a partisan knowledge of Anglophone Wales’ ‘shared reality’, and the history that is implied by such knowledge. If we compare the Library of Wales and Honno narratives, striking contrasts can be seen. Whereas the Honno ‘Classics’ can be defined as female and rural, the Library of Wales series is, instead, largely male-orientated and industrial. The construction of the Library of Wales series as such presents a differing version of Wales’ past determined by Professor Smith’s choice of which texts to ‘uncover’. However, the difficulty is that the history is being related through fictional devices and the reality presented is a composite of the imaginary and the real. The idea of texts being able to present a ‘shared reality’ is challenging because it involves differentiating the fiction from the fact. White sees this as an implicit problem in narrative: “If we view narration and narrativity as the instruments with which the conflicting claims of the imaginary and the real are mediated, arbitrated, or resolved in a discourse, we begin to comprehend both the appeal of narrative and the grounds for refusing it” (*Content of the Form* 4). The Library of Wales does

not go so far as to suggest that the tales give a faithful portrayal of the events and occasions that helped to shape Wales. However, they do see their works as important chronicles of Wales that contextualise the history as a necessary consequence of the cultural record they provide.

Of course, no history can be truly objective, but the selection of texts that will 'showcase' Welsh writing in English is demonstrably partial. The result is that the defining and characterising of Wales with the sharing of a common history is not really sharing history, but is a combination of subjective interpretation and ideology. As Irving Howe comments, in 'History and the Novel' (1990), when

history seeps into the novel, it becomes transformed into something else, into what might be called history-in-the-novel. Nor does history make itself felt simply as a reproduction of the familiar world ... What gets 'swept' into the novel are not just depictions of how we live now; it also draws upon the line of critical thought, the fund of literary allusions, the play of street sentiment, and sometimes the ideology of revolt. (1539)

This 'history-in-the-novel' is a powerful force for although, theoretically, some of the fictional events are dependent on the factual, without the imaginary story the real events would lose some of their vibrancy. For example, it is easier to remember and associate with Lewis Jones' relating of Len and Big Jim's struggles against the bosses in *Cwmardy* than it is with a listing of the facts and figures of the General Strike. Narrative is extremely useful as it can be manipulated to construct history in a specific/peculiar mode, but this is always a false conception of the reality. What provides consistency is the use of Wales as an anchor point and a code for interpretation.

‘Classics’ are a complicated entwining of fact and fiction that purports to offer a substantial chronicling of the nation’s culture and history. In *Tropics of Discourse*, Hayden White comments that like

literature, history progresses by the production of classics, the nature of which is such that they cannot be disconfirmed or negated in the way that the principal conceptual schemata of the sciences are ... There is something in a historical masterpiece that cannot be negated, and this non-negatable element is its form, the form which is its fiction. (89)

It is in their inability to be disconfirmed that ‘Classics’ confirm their power and the relevance of their chronicling of history. However, this is tempered by the fact that there is not an inexhaustible fund of literary materials to be reissued. Series such as the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ progress Welsh writing in English by selecting texts which characterise it as having certain qualities, but they are unable to manufacture fiction. The Library of Wales ‘Classics’ are chosen for their Anglophone Welsh pertinence and as such they present a partial, nuanced, but not fantastic, understanding of place and history that politicises our understanding of Wales.

A Perspective of Wales

Analysis of the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ understanding of history can be extended to interrogate their use of signs and symbols to portray Welsh society. The texts’ employment of different metaphors to characterise Wales provides insight into how paradigms can be taken as symbolic of the whole. In J. Hillis Miller’s ‘Optic and Semiotic’ (1975) he investigates certain metaphors which he uses as a medium to study George Eliot’s *Middlemarch* and its representation of a “total picture of provincial society in England at

the period just before the Reform Bill of 1832” (125). Hillis Miller isolates Eliot’s incorporation of three recurring metaphors, and argues that these are particularly pertinent to her understanding of her society. These are the images of a labyrinth, flowing water and a woven cloth. The repetition of such metaphors leads Hillis Miller to two assumptions. Firstly, that a society can be likened to a material field and as such is subject to similar “objective scientific investigation as may be applied to that field” (129). And secondly that

the structure or texture of small-scale pieces of the whole is the same as the structure or texture of the whole and so may be validly described with the same figures. This is the assumption of the validity of one kind of synecdoche. The part is “really like” the whole, and an investigation of a sample will lead to valid conclusions about the whole. (129)

By analysing the relationship between the metaphors and the protagonists’ interactions with those metaphors, inferences can be drawn on Middlemarch society, which can then be extended to unveil provincial English society as a whole. Eliot commonly uses shifts in perspective, “from close-up to far away and back to close up”, to suggest “the systole and diastole in all inquiry” and assume that in the social world such changes in perspective “reveal a strict homogeneity between the large-scale and small-scale grain or texture of things” (129). Hillis Miller argues that Eliot’s metaphors “make up a single comprehensive model or picture of Middlemarch society as being a complex moving medium, tightly interwoven into a single fabric, always in process, endlessly subdividable” (135). It is at this point that the narrator comes to prominence as an ideally located observer of all the perspectives. Such omniscience allows the narrator to do “full representative

justice to the complexity of the condition of man in his social medium” (135).

Having previously followed the more general story as told by the Library of Wales, this chapter will now follow Hillis Miller and concentrate on a single text and its use of a particular motif. This will then allow for consideration of the perspective the Library of Wales series provides on Wales. Raymond Williams’ *Border Country* (1960) is set in the border village of Glynmawr and is concerned with Matthew Price’s return to Glynmawr after his father, Harry, a railway signaller, suffers a stroke. The text uses a mix of contemporary narrative, which largely focuses on Matthew’s return, and past narrative, which mostly deals with Harry’s arrival in Glynmawr and his activities before, during and after the 1926 General Strike. The central characters in the work are ciphers that unveil Williams’ understanding of Welsh society and the characters’ reaction to and interaction with the national historic events suggests the ‘close-up’ perspective that Hillis Miller describes. The ‘far away’ perspective is provided by the narrator’s depictions of landscape which characterise Wales in a less intense way and allow Williams to make generalisations about the country. The medium through which these perspectives connect is metaphor as various images become synecdochal and the ‘far away’ is representative of the ‘close-up’, and vice versa.

An image that sits at the heart of *Border Country* is the mountain, which, while part of the ‘far away’ description of the landscape, is close enough to Glynmawr that it is a common focus for the character’s eyes. The mountains are also characteristically Welsh; Matthew, on his train journey home, notes the stereotypical images of Wales in his rail map, but it is not until he feels the light rain on his face and the “wind was blowing from the

dark wall of the mountains” (9) that he knows he is home.⁵⁴ Although mountains feature commonly in *Border Country*, it is the text’s repeated references to the Holy Mountain that provide Williams’ most obvious lens to investigate Welsh society from varying perspectives.⁵⁵

The Holy Mountain is another name for Ysgryd Fawr, or the Skirrid, and is a part of the Black Mountains which surround Glynmawr. In *Border Country* it is only mentioned in the narrative dealing with the past and, barring one occasion, only referred to by the narrator.⁵⁶ The first allusion to it is as part of the background scenery in Harry’s coming to Glynmawr, “The four train ran north through the brakes and the green meadows under the Holy Mountain, and passed the up distant signal of Glynmawr” (25). Throughout the novel, the Holy Mountain is used as a contextual filter for the narrative, signalling to the reader the location of the action and conditioning their understanding of Glynmawr. The narrator uses the Holy Mountain as a reflective device as the intricacies of its relation to Glynmawr are used to provide perspective on the village which can be extended to interpret how the Welsh imagine the relationship between the land and themselves. The village of Glynmawr is a satellite that gravitates around the Holy Mountain, a link that allows the reader to see the specificities of Welsh life, and the implications Welsh history has for Welsh culture and internal notions of Welshness.

As the narrator directs the reader’s attention to this image the context in which he sets it becomes a defining feature, a way of symbolising what is happening in Wales, where the local comes to symbolise the general. At the start of the General Strike “the sun came up out of the cloudbank by the

⁵⁴ The images in the rail-map that Matthew mentions are “the ruined abbey at Trawsfynydd ... [and] the front at Tenby. A railing horizon, in the wide paleness of sky and sea; then, making the picture, two girls smiling under cloche hats” (8).

⁵⁵ It is specifically mentioned on pages 25, 30, 34, 58, 76, 108, 117, 216, 223, 276, 280, 303, 363 and 364.

⁵⁶ The exception is when a young Matthew goes to see the local vicar, Pugh, who says to Matthew “They call that mountain holy ... because once in a time of persecution men went there, secretly, to worship and build an altar of stones” (280).

Holy Mountain, and the day was suddenly there” (117). After the Strike, Morgan uses it as part of the logo for his burgeoning business, and when he tries to entice Harry to leave the station and work for him, “a cloud-shadow was moving over the rockfall of the Holy Mountain” (223). These instances reflect both the history of Wales and its societal changes: there is the hope that the General Strike will restore some form of equality; the growth of capitalism which is connected to a manipulation of what it means to be Welsh; and the foreboding seduction of the people away from working for the communal good to working for individual gain. The narrator uses context to filter the changes in perspective that will alter the reader’s understanding and formulation of the mountain. The Holy Mountain itself is unchanging and inviolate in the text, but by modulating its depiction Williams is able to demonstrate how the change of context also alters our conception. Or, if we take the Holy Mountain as a metaphor for Wales, he shows how the land is essentially the same, but through the events of history, Wales, and Welsh society, is repeatedly being reconfigured and reinterpreted.

Hillis Miller’s article finishes by discussing how interpretation is biased by subjective vision. He isolates Dorothea’s looking into a scratched pier glass, in *Middlemarch*, as a way of showing how vision manipulates understanding. As if

for Eliot all seeing is falsified by the limitations of point of view, it is an even more inevitable law, for her, that we make things what they are by naming them in one way or another, that is, by the incorporation of empirical data into a conventional system of signs. A corollary of this law is the fact that all interpretation of signs is false interpretation. The reading of things into signs is necessarily a further falsification, an interpretation of an interpretation. (143)

The process of attempting to subjectively interpret signs and symbols results in merely one more interpretation of what was originally a false interpretation, the metaphors providing extra webs that further obscure the reality.

In *Border Country*, the importance of perspective to our understanding is suggested in one of the conversations, taking place near the Holy Mountain, between Harry, Matthew and Morgan.

‘Morgan’s right,’ Harry said suddenly. ‘The mountains don’t much matter, except to look at ...’

‘You’ve lived under these mountains all your life and you can say they don’t matter,’ Will protested.

‘It’s a feeling about things, that’s all. The mountains are just there, that’s all about them.’

‘You wouldn’t talk like that if you went up there more often ... If you went up there and looked, really looked, you’d see it.’

‘See what, Will?’ Morgan asked.

‘Well, a different view of things, that’s all. Something more than keeping your nose to the ground.’

‘Grindstone’s the word,’ Morgan said. ‘And of course, certainly, it’s a good view, and the air’s nice. Only you can’t live on that ... at your age you get set on things like that. Mountains, stars, seas distances. A sort of longsightedness. The things close-up are all too difficult ... Only you don’t solve them by going and looking from a mountain.’

(303 - 304)

This conversation underlines Williams’ idea that understanding and interpretation are distorted by distance and perspective. In the text the

narrator consistently places the Holy Mountain in the background, and as such the reader is given a total image. If the lens was moved on to the specific terrain of the mountain then there would be a different interpretation. It is necessary to keep this distance as proximity would distort the Holy Mountain as a composite metaphor for Wales. This also suggests a reason for the narrator's mentioning of the Holy Mountain only in the past narrative, as it is only with distance, in this case time and a capable understanding of the history, that the events can be fully computed. Such retrospection allows the narrator the objective understanding that is provided by hindsight and permits his manipulation of the context in which the mountain is set and colour the lens through which Wales is viewed, a luxury that is denied in the contemporary narrative.

This investigation has concentrated on a single text and a single metaphor because a comprehensive examination of the common metaphors across the Library of Wales series is beyond the scope and practicalities of this thesis. Nevertheless, the conclusions drawn from *Border Country* can be extended to consider the perspective that the Library of Wales 'Classics' provide on Wales. The selected texts have been chosen for their representation of Wales, a process which has the benefit of hindsight. The subjective interpretation of the 'important' Anglophone Welsh texts provides the 'close-up' perspective while the temporal distance, between the original and modern publishing dates, gives the 'far away' perspective. As such, the series represents Anglophone Wales and suggests a composite picture of Anglophone Welsh society from the 1890s to the 1970s. However, this vision is distorted, as the selected texts, or lenses, are not chosen by an omniscient narrator but a politically conditioned editor. Hillis Miller notes in his analysis that *Middlemarch* provides George Eliot's understanding of English provincial society, and the Library of Wales 'Classics' suggest the series editor, Dai Smith's, understanding of Wales.

True comprehension is elusive because a wholly objective perspective is impossible, what the Library of Wales 'Classics' do provide is a template that formulates a vision, but not a reality, of Welsh society.

5. 'Classics', the Canon and Tradition

The narration of Wales described in the previous chapters is constructed from the publishers' reissuing of texts that their editors have identified as representing Anglophone Wales' cultural heritage and, in the case of Honno, portrayals of Welsh female identity. The publishing of 'Classics', issued on the basis of the publishers' interpretation of nation and/or national identity, raises the question of these 'Classics' potential to be called canonical and considered part of a canon of Welsh writing in English. However, the term the 'canon' has become associated with an elitism that "regulate[s] cultural value and taste" (*Modern Literary Theory* 397) and as such is evaded by many publishers in their reflections on their 'Classics' series. The differentiation between the terms 'Classic' and the 'canon' is subtle and the academic argument regarding canonicity underlines how texts are critically positioned within a literary cultural framework, whether they be 'Classics' or canonical.

The process whereby a text is canonized has been investigated by Richard Ohmann in *The Politics of Letters* (1987), which critiques America's literary canon. His investigation demonstrates the way that various forces in society manoeuvre and condition a text's interpretation, making the work seem relevant to the general populace. We have seen elements of this process at work in Wales' English-language literature as both critics and publishers have operated upon the literature to promote and prioritise certain texts or themes as particularly pertinent to Wales.

A sharp difference between the situation in Wales and that described by Ohmann is his discussed texts' relationship to an American literary tradition; in Welsh writing in English such a clearly identifiable literary tradition is less appreciable. As a consequence, the 'Classics' in Wales can be argued to be part of a retrospective cultural movement which identifies the

foundations of modern Welsh writing in English and suggest a literary tradition and nascent literary canon. The fact that this tradition is being fashioned contemporaneously allows the critics and publishers to selectively outline an understanding of Welsh writing in English free of already established literary texts. This demonstrates Welsh writing in English' relatively unique status as most publishers of national 'Classics' are issuing works in support of or in opposition to an established literary tradition. Regardless of the reasons for their emergence, the Welsh writing in English 'Classics' series neatly exemplify the relationship between contemporary culture, literature and the development in our understanding of the meaning of a literary canon.

Originally, the term 'canon' was a way for the Catholic Church to signal the books of the Bible that they regarded as authentic, a way for the Church to refute and reject those works that they felt disagreed with "the fundamental truths of Christianity. Etymologically, then, the canon, an instrument of measurement, becomes an orthodoxy for keeping out heretics, for establishing universal truth and absolute truth" (*Modern Literary Theory* 398). As Harold Bloom has noted, the more modern definition of canon was not adopted in literary circles to define "a catalog of approved authors" until the middle of the eighteenth century (20). At an academic level, contemporary debates over the possibility that a literary canon could exist are treated with a mixture of apprehension and scepticism with any choices over potential canonical works or authors subject to much criticism. This has led to a modern distinction between 'Classics' and the 'canon', at a critical level, where "Classics are texts from the past with enough life in them to make them worthwhile to read in the present; while canon indicates what you should read" (Interview with Jane Aaron). Such a definition is useful as it acknowledges the subtle but important difference between the two terms. It also indicates the current reluctance often felt at an academic

level to make definitive assertions regarding the canon, because essentially they are based on a context-bound, subjective assessment of literary worth and not deeper, more eternal qualities.

At a popular level, this circumspection has not been followed, and the ever increasing number of newly reissued 'Classics', or lists of the 'Greatest' novels, testifies to the growing appetite for canonized texts in popular society, and the subsequent eliding of the different interpretations of 'Classic' and canonical. In the twentieth century, with the launch of such series as the Oxford World's Classics and the Penguin Classics, a shift started that saw publishers increasingly active in promoting literary material they regarded as canonical.⁵⁷ The 'Classics' industry has steadily grown. Nowadays, it is difficult to walk into a bookshop without seeing a separate section for these 'Classic' works, and publishers such as Penguin, Oxford World's Classics and, more recently, Vintage Classics, have issued an extensive catalogue of 'Classic' works. Even outside the realm of the bookshop, it is easy to find debates on the 'best' books of all time and there have been numerous enterprises keen to declare shortlists of the greatest works ever published. For example, the *Modern Library* has published a list of the Board and Readers' choices for the '100 Best Novels', and there are numerous newspaper articles which meditate on this subject, such as *The Guardian's* 'The 100 Greatest Novels of All Time: The List' and *The Telegraph's* "500 Must-Read Books" (X1-8 & Y1-8). At a populist level, then, the concepts of 'Classic' and the 'canon' seem almost synonymous with one another, as is evident if one compares the choices made in the various "Greatest" and "Must-Read" selections.

A noticeable contemporary trend has been academic involvement with the commercially produced canonical works. Whether it be the writing

⁵⁷ The Oxford World's Classics was established in 1901 by Grant Richards and purchased by the Oxford University Press in 1906, while E.V. Rieu's translation of *The Odyssey* in 1946 launched the Penguin Classics.

of introductions for new reissues or the selection of 'Classic' works for a series, there is now a wider engagement by academia in the popular production of 'Classics' series. Such developments raise the problem of reconciling supposed literary worth with commercial viability. Traditionally, academics who considered the feasibility and potential make-up of a canon were relatively free of such factors and concentrated on the justification of a literary canon in terms of quality of content. The involvement of academics in the subtleties of commercial production inevitably limits such freedom. Although this is an easy charge to level at the current involvement of some academics in efforts to market 'Classics', it leads to questions over partiality and influence that consequently haunt such selections. Any investigation that analyses canon formation faces the difficulty of establishing any unbiased, objective choice of a canonical text.

A further difficulty arises over the process whereby a 'Classic' text is awarded such status. The 'Classics' industry represents itself as a reflective movement that seeks to categorise and label significant moments in literature. However, the importance of profit-generation and use of marketing initiatives helps to blur and complicate objectivity. Are these texts really as important as claimed, or are they more simply an identification of the texts or authors publishing houses have selected as being the most likely to generate large sales? The overwhelming majority of 'Classics' are publicised as having a special status in literature. The blurb on the reverse of most 'Classics' assures readers that what they are about to read is somehow important, either through the texts' use of language or the message they proffer, which uncovers or exposes a universal truth about the human character. 'Classic' series that focus on a nation's literary offerings add a further layer through their inclusion of a national or cultural dimension, which supposedly means that a particular work is more pertinent, more personal to a member of that nation.

This national or cultural element is an integral part of the number of reissued Welsh writing in English texts appearing in the last fifteen years or so. In this context, the growth of a ‘Classics’ industry can be understood in a variety of ways. It could be seen as a declaration of literary or cultural maturity, an assertion of the publishers’ confidence to define Welsh writing in English as a unique category that has moments and movements which highlight the separation and talent that has emerged from the country. It could be seen as a post-devolution attempt to assert Wales’ independence, a confirmation that, politically, Wales is pushing a programme that seeks to sever its ties to Britain or England in favour of fomenting a separate nationalist spirit. Finally, it could be more simply seen as an attempt to redress the marginalisation of the ‘great’ works of this school through their lack of popular availability; their promotion through a ‘Classics’ initiative ensuring their continued survival.

Honno and the Library of Wales are quite openly involved in a project to bring Welsh writing in English to a wider readership. However, whether they are actively engaged in a canon-building project is a moot point. The branding of their selections as ‘Classics’ suggests that they consider the reissued texts to differ from a general body of work classified as Welsh writing in English. Both presses claim different reasons for their series, and, interestingly, both agree that there is no overt intention for the works reissued to be regarded as canonical. On behalf of the Library of Wales, Professor Smith rejects any suggestion that the series he edits might constitute, or be read as part of any canon-making enterprise.

In terms of [the Library of Wales series] being a canon, what I would say is that that has never been my intention, and nor do I think it should be the ambition of the Library of Wales to set up a canon or tradition of classics or significant works. (Dai Smith interview)

The editor of the Honno series takes a similar line: “I don’t think I’m preparing a canon ... that is not the editor’s decision. It is the decision of the educators, and that is how I would see it” (Interview with Jane Aaron).

The general increase in the number of ‘Classics’ series undermines the idea that they are part of a literary canon representing a single catalogue of “approved authors”. Academics cannot decide which authors or texts are deemed of sufficient value to be canonized on their own. However, plainly academic opinion plays a significant role in influencing which texts ‘deserve’ inclusion; clearly their theories on the development of canons help to expose the workings and processes which result in chosen texts receiving ‘Classics’ or canonical status. Both Professors Smith and Aaron have spent most of their working lives in higher education. Their comments seem to register the anxieties haunting cultural decision-making in Wales in general, and are played out in the contemporary developments in the cultural environments this study is examining.

The Critical Canon

Theories regarding which authors and texts should be part of any putative literary canon have been proffered by many academics over the last century. Commonly, these academics have structured their choices according to a language or nation criteria. What has been consistently claimed, especially among the earlier advocates, is that the authors or texts they were advancing in some way represented exceptional writing or experimentation of form with a message that unveiled a universal truth or moral on mankind. In the early part of the twentieth century T.S Eliot discussed a tradition in poetry where the artist’s significance is appreciated in “his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead” (1093). Eliot considers there to

be “existing monuments [which] form an ideal order among themselves; which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them” (1093), an idea which presupposes that both the “existing monuments” and the “really new” are in some way self-evident.

In prose, one of the more famous proponents of the idea of a literary canon or tradition was F.R. Leavis. His 1948 work, *The Great Tradition*, argues that there were only four great English novelists.⁵⁸ The distinction between these four and all other prose writers in the English language was that they did “not only change the possibilities of the art for practitioners and readers, but ... they are significant in terms of the human awareness they promote; awareness of the possibilities of life” (2). Eliot and Leavis’ ideas propose that there is such a thing as ‘great’ writing which is separate in itself from other literary offerings. They also suggest that one of the roles of the literary academic is to expose this ‘greatness’ to the wider world, and this is the burden of those few who could distinguish and articulate the difference between the exceptional and the rest.

It can be argued that both Eliot and Leavis were following the lead of Matthew Arnold, who in the late nineteenth century argued that the definition of criticism was “*a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world*” (‘Function of Criticism’ 824).⁵⁹ Arnold thought that the best literature would provide spiritual renewal and moral integrity, and the best critics were foes of “fanaticism, zealotry, and political enthusiasm”, who functioned to equip “men and women to perceive authentic value in the workings of the society and culture around them” (‘Matthew Arnold’ 804, 805). What is evident, from these early commentators, is an elitist approach that argues that there is something self-evident about ‘great’ literature; their idealist aesthetics contend that certain

⁵⁸ Leavis names these as Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James and Joseph Conrad.

⁵⁹ Emphasis in the original.

authors or texts have a universality that ensures their appreciation through the ages. Such a proposition suggests that any personal bias or predilection regarding the identification of 'great' literature was immaterial, and critics, such as Leavis, were simply acknowledging an obvious truth.

The elitist idea of a 'great tradition' was to be devalued in the 1970s by the advent of the 'theory revolution':

The development of feminist, Marxist, postcolonialist, new historicist, postmodernist and cultural materialist theory, together with the shift towards cultural relativism, the development of alternative artistic forms around new technologies, and the erosion of boundaries between 'high' and 'popular' art forms, have all contributed to an explosion of the identities of high art. (*Modern Literary Theory* 397)

These latter theories questioned and challenged the 'tradition' of the canon and its definition of 'great' literature or literariness. As a consequence, the canon was increasingly seen as anachronistic because of its identifying of a predominantly white, male hegemony in the evaluation of what texts should be classified as 'significant'. The more recent rise in literary canons, led by commercial activity but commented on and criticised by academia, saw two diametrically opposed positions emerge over how the canon should be contemporaneously classified. These contrasting stances are best outlined in Terry Eagleton's *Literary Theory: an Introduction* (1983) and Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon* (1995).

Terry Eagleton continues the undermining of the canon seen in the 'Theory Revolution' when he states that

the so-called 'literary canon', the unquestioned 'great tradition' of the 'national literature' has to be recognized as a *construct*, fashioned by

particular people for particular reasons at a certain time. There is no such thing as a literary work or tradition which is valuable *in itself*, regardless of what anyone might have said or come to say about it. ‘Value’ is a transitive term: it means whatever is valued by certain people in specific situations, according to a particular criteria and in the light of given purposes. (10)⁶⁰

Giving Shakespeare as an example, Eagleton argues that there is no reason why in the future his works might not seem outdated and irrelevant. The reason that they are contemporarily given ‘value’ is that modern society finds an applicable and relevant message in the words (10-11). Texts, therefore, fall in and out of favour depending on their usefulness to a society; if a text can be constructed to give a valuable reading then it has the potential for inclusion in a literary canon. The conclusion that Eagleton draws is that literature is unstable and that it is society, and not something ineluctable within the text, that grants a literary work a prioritised status.

Academics play an important role in Eagleton’s scheme, not as the arbiters of what is or is not ‘great’, but rather as the ‘preservers’. “Literary theorists, critics and teachers ... are not so much purveyors of doctrine as custodians of a discourse” (175). Their part is to conserve what has gone before and ensure that any possible new additions are only granted a superior status if they agree with the previously set mandate. Literary institutions, of which academics are a part, operate a dual role of preserving the previous by signifying how and why it is still relevant and introducing only that which continues the ‘tradition’ they have inherited. ‘Great’ literature is ‘great’ because the institution constitutes it as such. Thus, for Eagleton, literary canons were dependent on “culturally specific frame[s] of value” (208), where the style,

⁶⁰ Emphasis in the original.

mode or expression of a text was less significant than the part it has been apportioned in an institution's literary framework.

However, for all Eagleton's anti-canonical zeal, he was still susceptible to its temptation. In *The English Novel: An Introduction* (2005) he discusses the works of those he regarded as the 'major' English novelists. There are no particular surprises in his choices and he elects to include all the novelists that Leavis made part of his 'Great Tradition'. What this suggests is that regardless of the "chancy nature of literary canons" (*Literary Theory* 208) they, and some of the authors and works included, have indeed become embedded within society, and instead of being an unstable element have a more concrete nature that is re-embedded with each succeeding literary academic generation.

Harold Bloom's goal in *The Western Canon* seems to be an attempt to reject the revisionary thinking of the canon as one person's biased opinion on what constitutes great literature. He tries to reinvigorate the debate by analysing tradition and 'great' literature according to criteria which would isolate those works or writers that deserved to be remembered. To this end, Bloom follows the path of critics such as Eliot and Leavis and identifies a lineage of writers who expressed something different or unique in their work from the mass of other literature. "Tradition is not only a handing-down or process of benign transmission; it is also a conflict between past genius and present aspiration in which the prize is literary survival or canonical inclusion" (8-9). The conflict that Bloom finds separates those literary works deserving of canonical inclusion from the undeserving: "[Great authors or works have a] strangeness, a mode of originality that either cannot be assimilated, or that so assimilates us that we cease to see it as strange" (3). In Bloom's assessment such works combine a veneration of past literature with a new or innovative form of expression that justifies the labelling of a text as 'great'.

Dismissing the deprecation of canons in the ‘theory revolution’, Bloom claims such critics are pandering to social concerns; theirs was “the judgement of [a] ... particular generation of impatient idealists, or ... Marxists proclaiming, “Let the dead bury the dead,” or ... sophists who attempt to substitute the library for the Canon and the archive for the discerning spirit” (9). For Bloom, a canon should have limits because that is exactly what it is supposed to do, to measure a standard of literature that is unconcerned with the political or the moral (35). In his attack on those who he views as opening up the canon on the basis of political correctness or through a focus on social concerns, Bloom is vitriolic. “Very few working-class readers ever matter in determining the survival of texts, and left-wing critics cannot do the working class’s reading for it” (38). Bloom is also unrepentant in his defence of ‘literary greatness’ and imagines himself as countering a movement that would dilute the canon to the point of meaninglessness.⁶¹ The nicety that he incorporates to try and escape arguments of elitism is that his choices are “elitist only to the extent that they are founded upon severely artistic criteria” (22). However, what this artistic criteria comprises is not clearly elucidated, save a suggestion that without it the canon would be too open and easily entered by undeserving texts.

In *The Western Canon*, Bloom selects twenty-six authors he argues “represent national canons” (2), and his choices have a very traditional feel to them.⁶² Shakespeare is given the first chapter proper and Bloom identifies him as the centre of the canon. The authors who ‘radiate’ from Shakespeare

⁶¹ Attacking feminist or colonial claims in ‘The Democratic Age’, Bloom comments, that “Nearly everything that has been revived or discovered by Feminist and African-American literary scholars falls all too precisely into the category of ‘period pieces’, as imaginatively dated now as they were enfeebled when they first came into existence” (*Western Canon* 540).

⁶² These authors, in the order Bloom discusses them, are: William Shakespeare; Dante; Geoffrey Chaucer; Cervantes; Michel de Montaigne; Molière; John Milton; Samuel Johnson; Goethe; William Wordsworth; Jane Austen; Walt Whitman; Emily Dickinson; Charles Dickens; George Eliot; Leo Tolstoy; Henrik Ibsen; Sigmund Freud; Marcel Proust; James Joyce; Virginia Woolf; Franz Kafka; Jorges Borges; Pablo Neruda; Fernando Pessoa; and Samuel Beckett.

are neither that surprising nor would they be out of place on any undergraduate reading list. Defending his traditional imagining of the canon Bloom states that we “cannot rid ourselves of Shakespeare, or of the canon that he centers [sic]. Shakespeare, as we like to forget, largely invented us; if you add the rest of the Canon, then Shakespeare and the Canon wholly invented us” (40). Bloom’s statement unapologetically makes clear the subjective nature of literary canons as it argues that if a text was key to Bloom’s literary academic evolution then it is a priori important in any construction of a literary canon. Earlier in his argument Bloom posits that the “correct test for the new canonicity is simple, clear, and wonderfully conducive to social change: it must not and cannot be reread, because its contribution to societal progress is its generosity in offering itself up for rapid ingestion and discarding” (30). However, this odd definition can be argued to be of secondary importance to considerations over whether the text was part of Bloom’s literary learning process.

From Bloom and Eagleton’s arguments it is evident that the justification for literary canons is polemical and polarised. While the canon has often been attacked in modern critical discourse it nonetheless remains a common and consistent part of both academic institutions’ selection of works for the curricula and wider debates on the nature of what is and is not ‘great’ literature. What is less clear are the selection criteria which result in a literary work gaining this supposed canonical status; Eagleton puts it down to cultural and social relevance, whereas Bloom argues that there are essential artistic criteria. However, neither provides much insight into how these factors operate in practice. What seems to be clearer is that in spite of the attempts by the ‘theory revolution’ to debunk the literary canon, debates over the canon still have a prominence and relevance.

The Anglophone prerequisite for the Honno and Library of Wales selections presents a difficulty for their ‘Classics’ beside the more traditional

formulation of literary canons suggested by critics such as Leavis and Bloom. The texts reissued by these two presses invent or present a Wales that is separate and distinct from the more famous external imaginings of the country. However, both are interested in the value that literature, especially so-called 'great' literature, has to the society from which it is produced. Bloom obviously values it extremely highly with his suggestion that, "Shakespeare and the Canon wholly invented us" (40). It would be foolhardy to claim that either Honno or the Library of Wales would make such an audacious claim about the works they have reissued in relation to Wales, but their series suggest how both literary canons and 'Classics' enjoy contemporary 'value' because of the way they are believed to reflect a society's cultural evolution and development.

Part of the reason the Honno and Library of Wales reissues evoke a particular significance in Wales lies in their transitive 'value', a 'value' similar to that denoted by Terry Eagleton (*Literary Theory* 10-11). These 'Classics' have more relevance and significance if you are Welsh; although they are declared valuable regardless, there is a special added layer of meaning for those with the necessary cultural competency. The two publishing initiatives recognise a cultural momentum in Wales that seeks to provide substance to a recently reinvigorated national identity, together, in the Honno Press, with a recognition of the feminist movement in Wales. This reasoning suggests that if the Honno and the Library of Wales series were to be considered canonical they would agree more consistently with Eagleton's version of literary canons. However, this could not be considered as wholehearted endorsement of Eagleton's more cynical version of canons: both editors of Honno and the Library of Wales would argue that their texts also have an intrinsic value, and that there is often something 'great' about them. For example, Dai Smith comments of *Border Country* (1960), that "In my view it's one of the great novels of the twentieth century in English, it's about Wales,

it's about one of us" (Interview Dai Smith). One of the conclusions that can be drawn from the canonical debate is that its polemic nature makes it little wonder that editors and publishers are reluctant to concede that their series are implicated in such a process. However, a compromise position, accommodating both literary canons and 'Classics', might be that such selections are a result of a particular cultural and social moment combined with the editor's artistic appreciation, with the necessity of commercial viability a submerged factor influencing direction.

Politics and the Canon

One of the more influential critiques of the induction of texts into a literary canon was conducted by Richard Ohmann in *The Politics of Letters* (1987). Ohmann's work concentrates on the interaction of various mechanisms within a society, which operate on a text and decide its enduring status. Not wishing wholly to dismiss the Arnoldian ideal that literacy and literature have a civilizing effect, which preserves the best values from a nation's history, Ohmann evaluates the dividing line between this elevating of literature and a more sceptical analysis of the role some institutions or readers play in the valuing of texts. An integral element in the canonizing process is what Ohmann describes in broad-brush terms as the humanities, which influence society's interest in certain texts and ideas (8-9). He warns against the potential of those who have the power to influence the humanities and do so according to a political agenda or bias. The problem of decreeing what should be regarded as high culture was a key concern for Ohmann, and he seems most interested in criticising the competence of some of those who endeavour to choose 'Classics'. The problems of 'Classics' per se and their essentially subjective nature is given less attention, instead, 'Classics' seem to be viewed as the building blocks which make up a literary canon.

For Ohmann, as critics we should focus on the who and how of a canon's construction rather than the why, and he cites *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951) as the case study through which he will investigate the canonical process.⁶³

Catcher ... is precisely revealing of relationships in mid-century America, and motives that sustained them, and rationalizations that masked them. In the hands of reviewers and critics, though, its precision and its protest were blurred and muted, masked not quite white but grayed by a steady application of interpretive terms that tended to abstract and merely universalize its characters and its action, dimming the pattern of their own historical time. (49)

In this section, the role of reviewers and critics is Ohmann's main area of interest. He focuses upon the ways in which *Catcher* was defined: whether its style was interpreted as comedic or tragicomic, and, most often, the critical rationalisation and attempts to understand the main character, Holden Caulfield. Ohmann comments on the similarity between the more populist and more academic reviewers in their "elucidating [of] the novel's rendering of human experience and ... evaluating its moral attitudes" (53). Such concentration ignored both the novel's large achievements and its shortcomings (65). However, it does expose the way that contemporary criticism manipulated and manoeuvred *Catcher* in order to grant lasting association between the text and American society. One of the reasons for the text's original interpretation was that there had been a "bourgeoisification" of academics, reviewers and readers that led to a "capitalist misreading of *The Catcher in the Rye*" (66). This first reading and reviewing of the text was maintained, and Ohmann suggests that once these

⁶³ Hereafter referred to as *Catcher*.

readings and reviews are firmly established, not only will a text continue to be considered in this way, but it will also guarantee its continued prestige or lack thereof. As *Catcher* was accepted as dealing with a then current topic, the criticism massaged it into a 'Classic' by concentrating on and applauding its capitalist concerns which ensured its enduring appeal.

In Ohmann's study of *Catcher*, we see a contrast between the critical reception of works in American literature and this study's recording of the treatment of texts by Welsh writers in English. While *Catcher* was contemporaneously assessed and admitted into American culture and its literary tradition, the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' were 'lost' until their republication. The cultural meaning of the Anglophone Welsh works is read retrospectively so that their understanding is from a modern perspective of Welshness and Wales. The loss of this 'first reading' is significant as it means the contemporary cultural value of these works has to be inferred. Anglophone Wales has been required to fashion its national narrative retrospectively because of its literature's historic dependence on an external market and their literary critical apparatus for commercial and critical success.

Having looked at a single example, Ohmann moves on to discuss how the American literary canon was shaped as a whole between 1960-75. He argues that the rise of texts to canonical status was

a process saturated with class values and interests, a process inseparable from the broader struggle for position and power in our [American] society, from the institutes that mediate that struggle, as well as from legitimisation of and challenges to the social order. (69)

The reasons for a text's admittance into a canon varied across genres, times and cultures, and arguably was, especially latterly, influenced by profits and

book markets.⁶⁴ The reasons for *The Canterbury Tales*' and *Great Expectations*' inclusion in a literary canon were noticeably different from more modern admissions. Therefore, in Ohmann's study, it was important to analyse how these factors interact in order to develop a workable model of canon formation.

In the study, the first stage in a text's journey to canonical status was through a small group of "better-than-average educated people" whose opinions were respected in their community and who would recommend the work to their friends. "These people were responsive to novels where they discovered the values in which they believed or where they found needed moral guidance when shaken in their own beliefs" (70). This group of people resulted, according to Simone Besserman in a 1970 study, for 58 percent of the readers of a particular best-seller (cited in Ohmann 70). Combined with the facts that if a novel did not become a best-seller within a few weeks of publication it was usually unlikely to achieve a large readership later on, and that best-sellers were those most likely to be adopted by clubs, paperback publishers and film producers (which would increase popular and critical attention) then the influence of this small group of people was considerable.⁶⁵ As Ohmann suggests, their decisions were not free, but rather the result of careful editorial considerations and the work of literary agents who identified and heavily marketed texts they thought looked like best-sellers (71). If these works were then favourably reviewed by the literary magazines as important or compelling, then the chances of them reaching this small group of readers was markedly increased.⁶⁶ In this stage, we can

⁶⁴ In relation to this Ohmann comments that "profit and book market are relatively unimportant in deciding what will be considered modern American poetry, by contrast with their function in defining modern American fiction" (69). However, in more recent times there seems to have been a shift, in prose and poetry, in favour of profit and the book market.

⁶⁵ The exceptions Ohmann cites are Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* (1961), Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* (1964), Hannah Green's *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden* (1964), the early novels of Kurt Vonnegut, and Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962, although Ohmann noted this novel's 1970s revival as connected with the success of the film) (70).

⁶⁶ The role of the New York Review's comments were seen as particularly significant (Ohmann 71-73).

see how the growth of a kernel of support for a work pervades into the wider elements of society with the approbation for the text and a specific, conditioned reading of it already in momentum.

Having considered how works accrue mass readership, Ohmann then deals with the fact that many best-sellers do not continue to receive popular and critical acclaim. He rejects the idea that the acclaimed works were somehow naturally 'great' and instead looks at processes that confer cultural value on a text, identifying it as worthy of prolonged and exalted reading and investigation. The deciding factor for such a work's legacy was the approval of a small number of periodicals, whose judgement was respected, and which offer both

a communication network among the influentials (where they reviewed one another's books) and an avenue of access to a wider cultural leadership. The elite writing in these journals, largely determined which books would be seriously debated and which ones permanently valued, as well as what ideas were kept alive, circulated, discussed. (74)

Ohmann rejects the idea that there is something innate and eternal about canonical works and instead points to the interests and activities of a slender portion of society. Having committed a text to the public consciousness this 'slender portion' now works to embed it and ensure that it is considered both serious and worthy.

From Ohmann's analysis it can be concluded that the power of literary canons lies in their ability to enshrine texts and secure for them a lasting popular appeal which ensures their continuing publication. The literary decision makers, integral to the canonising process, condition not only the cultural message a text presents, but also the popular availability of

literary works more generally. For Ohmann, literary canons are shaped by monopoly capitalism. While this may be true from an internal perspective, from an external perspective they are also shaped by monopolistic culturalism, as texts considered unacceptable to that culture are excluded from the publishing benefits of canonical status. Adapting Ohmann's analysis, it can be argued that the English literary decision maker's focus on ensuring the survival of texts characteristic of English literary tradition, was to the detriment of Anglophone Welsh writers dependent on the English publishers for their own texts' lasting prosperity. It is not claimed that such authors would seek or accept their texts admittance into English literature's canon; however, the fact that canonical works were the most likely to remain in print means their absence from the debate hampered the continuing availability of Welsh texts in English. While this affirms the separatist qualities of the Anglophone Welsh literary voice it also indicates the harm the canonical process in English literature has caused to Anglophone Welsh literature.

In his first chapter, Ohmann reiterates his own earlier claim that "What [the humanities] do, what literature does, depends on who is doing it. The humanities are not an agent but an instrument" (5), an argument that seems similar to his allegations against canons. What they represent and prioritise is largely dependent on who is making the case for the relative worth of a text. Literary canons are not instruments that reflect social concerns and innovative writing; rather they belong to a hegemonic process which seeks to dictate acceptance according to the norms of a small portion of the society from which the canon emerges. They are a created mythology which is self-serving rather than reflective, and typically condoned without being questioned.

Ohmann's concerns regarding literary canons reflect a wider debate regarding the unease modern editors and publishers have with the elitist

suggestions the phrase ‘the canon’ implies. Such discomfort might explain their avoidance of the phrase, but it does not exonerate them from being involved in the same kind of activities that literary canon making entails. Honno and the Library of Wales are implicated in a process very similar to that described by Ohmann. A small number of decision makers select texts they believe to have cultural relevance for Wales. Their decision to include a particular text in their respective series will have resulted from careful editorial decisions balanced against commercial viability. The editors’ reluctance to use the term ‘canon’ agrees with a general dislike for the elitist and imperialist overtones that this word carries. However, the elevation of texts to a superior status outlines a Welsh writing in English tradition that legitimises modern Anglophone Welsh national identity and suggests the competing cultural attitudes that prevail in Welsh society.

The ‘Traditional’ Route

Ohmann’s conclusions were dependent on there being a certain relationship between literature and society, where literature comprises a significant part of society’s culture and reveals something about the complex mechanisms that make it function. His theory sought to recognise how literature had evolved, morphed and been adapted over the centuries to occupy its current position. A significant factor of this evolution was the rise in the number, variety and availability of novels during the nineteenth century, which together with an increasingly progressive education system helped to provide formative moments in the development of American literature (Ohmann 26-29).

In his charting of the growth of the novel from Dickens to Lawrence, Raymond Williams signals this publishing change as occurring in Britain between the 1820s and the 1860s, when “the annual number of new books rose from 580 to 2,600, and much of the increase was in novels” (*English*

Novel 10). This increase saw a change in the form of the novel accompanied by a rising assumption that the novel was somehow able to reveal or expose the social formations, concerns and construction of the community.

Williams comments on how the new English novelists in this period, such as Charlotte Bronte in *Shirley* and George Eliot in *Middlemarch* and *Felix Holt*, “learned to look, historically, at the crises of their own immediate time; at Chartism, at the industrial struggle, at debt and speculation, at the complicated inheritance of values and property” (*English Novel* 14).

However, the relationship between novels and communities is a complicated one which pretends to offer more than it really does. When the conclusions a novel encourages are applied over a wider range then its limitations are exposed: “An important split takes place between knowable relationships and an unknown, unknowable, overwhelming society” (*English Novel* 15). Literature has a place in unveiling communities, but it is always a partially obscured picture, a part that does not necessarily represent the whole:

The problem of the knowable community ... is not only a matter of physical expansion and complication. It is also and primarily a problem of viewpoint and of consciousness. And it is at this point, precisely, that it interlocks with the methods derived from the new historical consciousness; the new sense of society as not only the bearer but the active creator, the active destroyer, of the values of persons and relationships. (*The English Novel* 26)

Novelists’ investigation of the ‘new sense of society’ continued beyond the 1860s, so that as major social shifts occurred, and the ‘new’ historical consciousness became outdated, the form and content of the novel were able to adapt to and absorb the next new historical consciousness. So, to use my own examples: Arthur Conan Doyle in *The Sign of Four* (1890) uses the

detective mode to explore the British colonial legacy; Rebecca West in *The Return of the Soldier* (1918) employs modernism to look at shifting class consciousness and feminist attitudes post World War I; George Orwell in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949) portrays a dystopic vision of the future to unveil fears over totalitarianism and tyranny; and Alasdair Gray's *Lanark* (1981) is a postmodern exploration of the collapse of the industrial society and an affirmation of a separate Scottish identity. These novels have in common the way that the different writers use their viewpoint and consciousness to investigate society, together with their more recent inclusion in a 'Classics' collection.⁶⁷

In the conclusion to *The English Novel*, Williams is reluctant to say that there is a direct and eternal correlation between society and its novels, but he does suggest that it is in the novel that some of the essential experiences of a society are and were found (191-192). The uniqueness of the novel lies in its ability to portray a time and place in a way that is unrepeatable in another medium. The novel "speaks a common experience; speaks in a work in language, in a common language, that in its shaping becomes its own but is still common, still connects with others" (192). It is a reflective device that incorporates both the ordinary social experience and the "resistant, lively" area of social experience that is "neglected, ignored, certainly at times repressed" (192). This is where the importance of a knowable community is found, because by probing the substance of social experience as depicted in literature we can begin to see the shadow of that which is hidden and less obvious. The resulting analysis approaches a greater understanding of society, with the caveat that a full understanding is always unreachable.

⁶⁷ *The Sign of Four* is in the Penguin Classics; *The Return of the Soldier* in the Virago Classics; *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in the Modern Penguin Classics; and *Lanark* in the Canongate Classics.

We can start to see in Williams' thinking the idea of a 'tradition' that works through novels and theoretically gives an insight into the societies captured in those works. It is the combination of form with supposed insight or 'new historical consciousness' that proposes a text's entry into a 'tradition'. The 'tradition', which can be defined as the genealogy of literary canons and 'Classics', embeds the new works within a cultural and national narrative to expose literature's continuous relevance as a mirror to society. If we look at the aforementioned texts, it is their assumed contemporary qualities of literary form combined with societal understanding that provides the reasoning and justification for admission into their respective 'Classics' collections. In the *Sign of Four*, Peter Ackroyd's conclusion to the introduction states that the novel "is a romance in which the rationalist or scientific temper is confronted by fabulous or monstrous events, and in which the great heart of the imperial city is disturbed by savage desires. As Holmes exclaims, in one of those rare moments of pure exhilaration, 'Isn't it gorgeous'" (xvii). Similarly, at the end of the introduction in *The Return of the Soldier*, Victoria Glendinning comments that the "superficialities" and "grace-notes" in the novel were "illustrative of the ease with which the author manipulates material in a book that is prodigal of insights and observations that a lesser writer would have made more of" (x). The back cover of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* proudly displays a quote from Timothy Garton Ash, of the New York Review of Books, that this is "His [Orwell's] final masterpiece ... enthralling and indispensable for understanding modern history." Finally, the blurb on the back of *Lanark* confirms that this is a "work of extraordinary imagination and wide range, its playful narrative techniques convey a profound message, both personal and political, about humankind's inability to love, and yet our compulsion to go on trying." More widely, we can see a generational bequeathing of an academic convention, where the role of each new generation is to dismiss the old

connections and re-form new ones on the basis of form and message. The important traditions are selective, as it is here “in the precise sense that we take the meanings ... that we feel we discover and need” (*The English Novel* 186). This process ensures continued and connected relevance for a text, a relevance that is updated and re-branded as being new with each generational shift. A ‘tradition’ is something that occurs along the generational fault lines, where a novel’s meanings and societal understandings are reconfigured and readmitted into a new, and at the same time old, ‘tradition’.

A means of monitoring the development of a ‘tradition’ is through novelists’ incorporation and interpretation of themes. At a more specific level, this reflects how certain words become adopted and assimilated within society. In *Culture and Society, 1790-1950*, Williams discusses how in the last decades of the eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century the definition of a number of now key words began to change. The five words Williams identifies - industry; democracy; class; art; and culture - “acquired new and important meanings. There is in fact a general pattern of change in these words, and this can be used as a special kind of map by which it is possible to look again at those wider changes in life and thought to which the changes in language evidently refer” (*Culture and Society* 13). By analysing the way that novels reflect these changes we are able to see how society’s cares and concerns shift depending on the impact of certain historical events. In this model, the role of critics and academics is to draw a meaning or understanding from a text and make it relevant. Their literary investigations unveil the route that certain words or their understanding have taken, to chart the progress from ‘there’, the historic position as sourced from literature, to ‘here’, the contemporary position in which knowledge of the route theoretically provides greater understanding.

As the number of literary works increases this ‘map’ becomes fuller and more detailed with wider comparative and defining possibilities. As a result, literature’s presence in society allows both literary content and reading habits to be seen as a paradigm for society (*Culture and Society* 297). A problem with this approach is that the charting is a retrospective effort in which contemporary bias and understanding are used to colour and interpret historic concerns: “To take a meaning from experience, and to try to make it active, is in fact our process of growth. Some of these meanings we receive and re-create. Others we must make for ourselves, and try to communicate” (*Culture and Society* 323). The importance of a map derived from literature is not its historic import, but the meaning that it can be given in contemporary society. If we extended this thinking to literary canons and ‘Classics’, then the selected works can be considered as exposing the well analysed and researched territory which has been conditioned and cultivated by critical and publishing activity. In contrast, the non-canonical texts depict less well-defined terrain that has the potential to be cultivated, but only if critics research and demonstrate its pertinence to the canonical or ‘Classic’ understanding of society. A reader is encouraged, through educational and marketing activities, to stay on the well-trodden path and, as such, is encouraged to accept a politicised understanding of society that is supported by a ‘tradition’ of culturally and nationally established texts.

Regarding literature in this way relies on there being a lineage in novels which recognises the connections between texts and validates them as part of a whole. In the opening to his section on ‘Literature’ in *Marxism and Literature*, Williams comments that it is

relatively difficult to see ‘literature’ as a concept ... Indeed the special property of ‘literature’ as a concept is that it claims this kind of importance and priority [as actual and practical], in the concrete

achievements of many particular great works as against the ‘abstraction’ and ‘generality’ of other concepts and of the kinds of practice which they, by contrast, define. (45)

One of the means by which criticism has codified literature is through the adoption of certain categories into which to place the various texts. Thus, we have groupings such as realist, post-modern, thriller, detective, etc. which allow a specific work to be considered as part of a wider whole and a wider concept. Canonical thinking fits into this by combining concept with taste. Once a category has been created, certain works that are considered either to best exemplify that category or do something supposedly innovative within it are admitted entry into a specific ‘tradition’. This prevents the study of literature from becoming so large as to be impracticable, while equipping a body of texts with a common element that demonstrates movement and development which provides the potential for literary critical contrast and comparison.

Literary canons benefit academic study by providing a vehicle that gives widespread coverage and continuity within a specific critical field:

‘Criticism ... was at once a *discrimination* of the authentic ‘great’ or ‘major’ works, with a consequent grading of ‘minor’ works and an effective exclusion of ‘bad’ or ‘negligible’ works, and a practical realization and communication of the ‘major’ values. What had been claimed for ‘art’ and the ‘creative imagination’ in the central Romantic arguments was now claimed for ‘criticism’, as the central ‘humane’ activity and ‘discipline’. (*Marxism and Literature* 51)⁶⁸

⁶⁸ Emphasis in the original.

This idea goes some way to suggesting how the idea of ‘tradition’ gathered momentum, especially concerning a ‘national literature’, the conceiving of which “had been growing strongly since the Renaissance” (*Marxism and Literature* 51). Williams discusses how ‘national literatures’ play on different sensibilities, the texts articulating a sense of the ‘greatness’ and ‘glory’ of the literature with a combined force of cultural nationalism (*Marxism and Literature* 51). ‘National literatures’ also offer more accessible entry into literature, because popular appeal is not reliant on supposed ‘high taste’, but instead personal, cultural identity. Honno and the Library of Wales’ indicating of their texts as formative examples of Anglophone Welsh literature, affirms the ‘greatness’ of the works while evoking cultural nationalism. These imprints prioritise the texts’ national and cultural dimension over the works’ presence in or contribution/significance to literary critical theory. Whereas the literary debates which rely on knowledge of a particular genre or form can be alienating or intimidating, those regarding ‘national literatures’ are more inclusive, as they question people’s national pride and culture rather than their literary or critical competence.

The presence of a literary ‘tradition’ in society is not a naturally occurring phenomenon; rather it is part of a selective process which is conducted along political lines and for political reasons, the shapeless past moulded and sanctified as it is prepared in the present with particular motives:

From a whole possible area of past and present, in a particular culture, certain meanings and practices are selected for emphasis and certain other meanings and practices are neglected or excluded. Yet, within a particular hegemony, and as one of its decisive processes, this selection is presented and usually successfully passed off as ‘the tradition’, ‘the significant past’. (*Marxism and Literature* 115-116)

The substance of a 'tradition' is treated as obvious and eternal while the shadow of what it leaves out, dismisses or reconfigures is obscured. As 'tradition' has become almost a synonym for 'important', to say that something is part of a 'tradition' involves assessing how that something is accommodated within 'tradition' and adapts our understanding of the 'tradition'. However, the 'tradition' itself continues and its constituents continue to be a source of potential critical debate and/or national or cultural artefacts. Rather than judging the validity of a 'tradition', texts are appreciated and rated in terms of how beneficial they are to the 'tradition' and what message their presence there denotes. This force is so ingrained that actions seemingly justified or condoned by a 'tradition' meet with less scepticism or questioning. These 'traditions' veil the fact that societies are extremely fluid, constantly changing entities that often have little real resemblance, in terms of their socio-cultural make-up and sensibility, to their forebears.

Canonical Wales

Any interrogation of Honno and the Library of Wales' canonical activities is dependent on the idea that they are actually creating a literary canon or 'tradition' in the first place. This problem is not easily solved as both presses accept the idea that they are investing in something important and long-lasting, but refrain from openly claiming that they are involved in a literary canonical exercise. However, this issue may not be as important as it first seems. As Ohmann suggests in his study, the fate of a text's lasting status is something that can be detached from authorial or editorial intention. The influence of figures in State institutions, who have the power to dictate what works are placed on the curriculum study lists, and academics who critique

and message the message offered by a text, arguably has a greater impact on a series' relative successes.⁶⁹

If we look at the declared accomplishments of the respective series, the judgement of such success is at least partially based on the number of units a particular text has sold and whether they have started to appear on either secondary or higher education reading lists. Discussing the decision-making process of the Honno 'Classics', Jane Aaron notes that:

looking over the list [of Honno 'Classics'] and also paying attention to what was selling has led to other decisions. Like, for example, the Menna Gallie run. *Travels with a Duchess* wasn't such a good seller, but *The Small Mine* was; *The Small Mine* sold very well, the best-selling of the Honno novels, so that's partly why we did all the other Menna Gallie novels. (Interview with Jane Aaron)

In the Library of Wales, the series editor, Dai Smith cites one of the lasting legacies of the series to be the eventual adoption of texts "into the curriculum and particularly into the schools of Wales. It's in the universities now and I think that the literary critical stuff being written now, in volume and in quality, is top rate and was unimaginable twenty years ago" (Interview with Dai Smith). Much like Ohmann's discussion of the American Canon, the application of the word "great" or "important" to a text is not simply the result of something internal in the text, but the way it is accepted by a 'slender portion' of society. One of these portions is the literary critical community, whose appreciation can add kudos to a text or series. For

⁶⁹ In *The Politics of Letters*, Ohmann takes particular umbrage against the then U.S. Secretary of Education, William Bennett, and rails against the literary recommendations made in Bennett's article 'To Reclaim a Legacy'. Bennett's dictatorial approach was a particular annoyance for Ohmann's, who took issue with the "decoded message of Bennett's report" that someone "should tell everyone else what the cultural prerequisites are for entry into capitalist elites, that most will fail the test; and that most will blame themselves" (13-14).

example, in the suggestively titled ‘A Female Tradition’, Kirsti Bohata comments that: “[It is] difficult to imagine a Welsh literary landscape without the Honno Classics series [...] it remains an energising and vibrant feminist imprint” (29). Her article suggests the literary critical acceptance and embracing of the Honno ‘Classics’ and their embedding in a wider literary critical debate on Anglophone Wales’ significant cultural artefacts. The Library of Wales series has even had a collection of critical essays devoted to some of its texts and their exploration of Welshness, *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English*.⁷⁰ While the series editors of Honno and the Library of Wales can hope for a beneficial review and good sales, it is critical activities such as these that demonstrate how external influences are interpreting and invigorating Welsh culture and its English-language literature and judging the relative success of individual texts.

Although Honno and the Library of Wales offer up all the texts in their series as a cohesive body of work only a certain number of these will be positioned within a literary ‘tradition’. While the editors propose, others dispose. As a result, the editors’ views on their potential literary canon making is of a secondary importance. Once the ‘Classics’ have been presented for appreciation their potential as a cultural or social ‘instrument’ will be assessed and consequently their part in a ‘tradition’ or literary canon. The input of outside factors also raises the intriguing proposition of the canon within the canon. In the introduction to *A Hundred Years of Fiction*, Stephen Knight comments that:

⁷⁰ Stated on the Parthian website as having the potential “to be considered as the second stage in the crucial campaign to raise the profile of Welsh writing in English both within Wales and in the wider world. The first stage was the foundation of the Library of Wales series,” the work includes essays on: *The Withered Root*; *Rhapsody*; *Country Dance*; *Cwmardy* and *We Live*; *The Dark Philosophers*; *In the Green Tree*; *Ash on a Young Man’s Sleeve*; *A Man’s Estate*; *Border Country*; *A Rope of Vines*; *So Long*, *Hector Bebb*; and *I Sent a Letter to My Love* (Parthian).

Fiction enables people to understand the nature of an earlier society – Chaucer, Shakespeare, Austen, Dickens, epitomize major phases in the development of England – but this process is also contemporary. Writers create in their narratives and images an account of a period which generates self-understanding in the society they realize. (1)

Knight's isolating of certain writers from England's fiction, who epitomise major phases in England's development, is representative of the extended investigation of Wales he conducts. To this end, he explores a number of English-language Welsh texts' reflections on the major changes in Welsh society. It can be argued that Knight is involved in a similar activity to the Leavis-type analysis: sorting, filtering and interpreting the texts he felt best depict Wales' development. If we look at the Honno and Library of Wales texts Knight discusses then we can see that he makes reference to seven of the sixteen novels in the Honno 'Classics' and twenty of the twenty-eight novels in the Library of Wales 'Classics'.⁷¹ The two activities, the publishing and the critical, work together, but the overlaps provide a more intense focus on these works and streamline a potential 'tradition' for the canon. This also points to one of the major problems of a 'tradition', namely that there are numerous forces, not necessarily competing against each other, but

⁷¹ A point that should be noted here is that Knight's study was published in 2004, before many of the texts in Honno and the Library of Wales were reissued. However, this does not detract from the idea that both critics and editors are involved in the creation of a 'tradition'. The texts, that have featured in the Honno and the Library of Wales 'Classics', and are mentioned by Knight are: *The Rebecca Rioter*; *A Welsh Witch*; *Queen of the Rushes*; *Here Are Lovers*; *Iron and Gold*; *Strike for a Kingdom*; and *The Small Mine*; from the Honno collection, although it should be noted that he also makes reference to the Jane Aaron edited collection of short stories, *A View across the Valley*. And: *Hill of Dreams*; *The Battle to the Weak*; *The Withered Root*; *Country Dance*; *Black Parade*; *The Heyday in the Blood*; *Cwmardy and We Live*; *The Alone to the Alone*; *All Things Betray Thee*; *Ash On a Young Man's Sleeve*; *A Man's Estate*; *The Valley, the City, the Village*; *Border Country*; *Flame and Slag*; *So Long, Hector Bebb*; *Home to an Empty House*; *I Sent a Letter to My Love*; *The Caves of Alienation*; and *The Volunteers* from the Library of Wales collection, although he also mentions 'Oscar' and 'The Dark Philosophers' from *The Dark Philosophers* and the short stories in *Dai Country*. Those that do not receive a mention are: *A Burglary*; *Winter Sonata*; *The Wooden Doctor*; *Eunice Fleet*; *Dew on the Grass*; *The Captain's Wife*; *Travels with a Duchess*; *You're Welcome to Ulster*; and *Jill* from the Honno collection. And: *Turf or Stone*; *Congratulate the Devil*; *The Voices of the Children*; *Jampot Smith*; *Make Room for the Jester*; *The Water Castle*; *A Rope of Vines*; and *A Kingdom* from the Library of Wales collection.

each outlining different elements by either using different texts or interpreting a work in different ways. Debates over novels and their relative value to society is a decisive and divisive issue when discussing ‘traditions’ and the creation of literary canons. The potential for multiple interpretations and disagreements over the message often seems to be the mark of a text that has received sustained and vigorous publishing and critical attention and is on its way to canonical status.

A necessary element for critical debate is ample source material to fuel discussion and investigation, and in the last ten years in Anglophone Welsh literature there has been a rise in the number of available texts, especially previously ‘lost’ or ‘forgotten’ works. In his analysis of the English novel and its potential to depict society, Raymond Williams comments on the significance of the 1820s-1860s, a period which, he argues, saw a dramatic rise in the number of novels and a few writers use of the novel to investigate the ‘knowable community’. It is possible to make an argument similar to Williams’ with regard to Welsh writing in English, (although on a much smaller scale than the rise he cites), which proposes that a major phase in this body of literature is in progression, evidence of which is provided by the ever increasing number of available texts and the associating of them with Welsh communities. One of the important differences is that whereas in Williams’ account it was some of the new generation of novelists who were leading the charge, in this thesis’ account a new generation of novelists’ viewpoints and ideas are being supplemented by a critical re-appreciation of texts and their positioning in Wales’ cultural heritage. The other key difference is this thesis’ focus on the national dimension, and this reflects an acknowledgement that Welsh identity is something distinct which rejects an overarching British identity. Honno and the Library of Wales’ publishing initiatives have a wider significance than just Wales; they also indicate the relegation of an umbrella British identity and whatever

supposed attitudes and ideals that identity is supposed to comprise. Mirroring Welsh devolution and its recognition of a rising, separate Welsh identity, Honno and the Library of Wales' 'Classics' help to discuss and depict communities that had been previously marginalised in the shadow of the more established English or British literature.

Attempts to understand what this Welsh cultural identity might be, as interpreted through literature, are dependent on what texts an individual has read. Through reading, and the various writers' use of words and themes, a chart or map of the evolution of and changes to this identity begins to be constructed, albeit an unfinished map. The analogy of the map seems apt because it suggests the supposed understanding of a large area, an understanding that is always limited because of the actual distance, though here historically rather than geographically, between the individual and that upon which they are looking. In the previous chapters this type of plotting was conducted to show how Wales and its cultural identity could be marked and interpreted through the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' publications. National literary canons offer easier access to this map-making process through their declared interests and definitions. However, it also shows the limitations of a canon: the rarefied activity of reading an entire literary canon means that its influence is not dependent on just its presence, but on the number of people who read the texts it includes.

When considering the more general approach to reading a literary canon there are four different ways of appreciating this map. Firstly, through the reading of a single text: this offers an understanding of a limited area of society and history with a singular perspective on these issues. Secondly, and probably most commonly, the reading of two or more texts; this allows for comparison and contrast; there is a multiplicity of voices which extend a reader's self-perceived knowledge and imagining. Thirdly, the reading of an entire canon; this includes the elements of the second method but adds a

political dimension as it reflects the interests of the series editor. Finally, the reading of two or more canons, which is a large and therefore more uncommon activity. The benefit of this approach is that it allows a wide scope for contrast and comparison of the history and societies depicted and the editorial choices.

The advantage of scrutinizing these approaches is that they suggest the more usual way that readers in Wales will experience the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics'. If an imaginary reader was just to read *Queen of the Rushes*, for example, they might come away with a version and vision of Wales in which agriculture is the predominant, but fading, occupation and culture of Wales at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁷² If the same imaginary reader then looked at *The Dark Philosophers* and *I Sent a Letter to my Love* they could appreciate that during the twentieth century industrial Wales became an integral part of Wales' heritage, though balanced by other locations, each with a separation in culture and sensibility. Here the map is extended and a fuller version of Wales provided by the contrasts and comparisons in the three texts. This mixing of texts, to change and affect perspective, can work in a myriad of different variants depending on which are examined. However, if the imaginary reader instead chose to concentrate on just the Honno 'Classics' they would read a gendered inflection that suggests that Wales' history, society and culture shifts from a rural preoccupation to an increasingly industrial one, with different routes and emphases than that offered by combined reading across a number of series or texts. If the reader finally takes on the more daunting prospect of reading more than one series then the vision of Wales becomes increasingly multi-dimensional and variegated. Honno and the Library of Wales together

⁷² For the purpose of this example and to emphasise the point, three texts have been chosen that show different aspects of Wales, rather than with any bias of perceived quality, and an imaginary reader has been selected on the basis that they have little prior knowledge of Welsh history.

indicate the differing concerns of the sexes, the differing problems encountered in subtly alternative and alternating cultures.

One of the great assets of using the map analogy in relation to literary canons is that it is one way of addressing Raymond Williams' problem of seeing literature as a concept. It is a route that proffers some explanation of the present through its exploration of the past. It cements its presence as a national literature, through a separating and sorting activity that ring fences the literature and places it apart from other bodies of work.⁷³ The perceived national importance of this process can be seen from the concerns of the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee of the Welsh Assembly 2003 Policy review, which commented that it

was felt that the English language culture of Wales, whilst as distinctive as that of the Welsh language, was under threat. One comment summed up the general view –‘it is remarkable that literature so rich and varied, so widely respected for its achievements, has received relatively little attention and support within Wales itself.’

(12)

The development of Welsh writing in English as a distinct category has a dual angle: popular and critical. It provides the populace with easier access to their literary heritage and provides a community of like-minded individuals for the critics. Both these groups have an effect upon the composition of a literary canon and its ‘tradition’; the academics affect popular choice and the number of sales affect academic attention.⁷⁴ The creation/creating of a literary canon in Welsh writing in English proposes

⁷³ Although it should be noted that this is merely one of the more obvious categories, and Honno might, very justifiably, argue that the feminist angle is just as important to them as the national dimension.

⁷⁴ As attested to by the selections in *Mapping the Territory*.

and constructs the literary and cultural ‘traditions’ of Wales (and vice versa), outlining the popular and critical role played in this creation.

Welsh writing in English as a Minor Literature

The iterations of both the Welsh political apparatus and the series editors of Honno and the Library of Wales assert the value of Welsh writing in English, distinguished and categorised as separate from the wider term of English literature. They also presuppose that there is something unique and peculiar that means Wales resists being accused of pure sentimentality in its claims of independence. Such a manoeuvre raises the potential of Welsh writing in English fulfilling Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s definition of a minor literature. The significance of this is that it would suggest that within the literature there was a reactionary, revolutionary spirit that challenges the language that begat its existence. The ‘tradition’ discussed would be recognised as a political act of resistance and the literary canon an annal of such resistance.

Deleuze and Guattari cite three characteristics as forming the basis of a minor literature: “the deterritorialization of language, the connection of the individual to a political immediacy, and the collective annunciation of language” (‘Kafka’ 1600). The deterritorialization of language is concerned with impossibilities. Using Kafka as one of the clearest examples of a writer in a minor literature they comment that because he was a Jew from Prague there was an ‘impasse’ upon him: the impossibility of not writing, or writing in German, or writing otherwise. Deleuze and Guattari argue that these impossibilities result in Kafka writing in an artificial language, what they term ‘Prague German’. This results in “strange and minor uses” of language separate from the masses who wrote in German and thus deterritorialized (‘Kafka’ 1598). The second characteristic of a minor literature is that “everything in them is political”. This is contrasted with the activities of a

major literature where the “individual concern (familial, marital, and so on) joins with no less individual concerns, the social milieu serving as a mere environment or a background” (Kafka’ 1598). The restricted space of a writer of minor literature, literally and figuratively because of the limited number of authors and the smaller geographical locations, results in their stories connecting individual intrigue to politics. “The individual concern thus becomes all the more necessary, indispensable, magnified, because a whole other story is vibrating within it” (Kafka’ 1598). The final characteristic, the collectivity of minor literature, rates the scarcity of talent, caused by the restricted space, to be beneficial as there is consequently no master of the literature, the literature thus “constitutes a common action” (Kafka’ 1599). There is a revolutionary nature to a minor literature, because it “alone is determined to fill the conditions of a collective enunciation that is lacking elsewhere in this milieu” (Kafka’ 1599). If a literature can fulfil these standards then Deleuze and Guattari regard it as a marginalised literature which is expressing itself in different terms and with a different purpose from a major literature.

If we compare Deleuze and Guattari’s criteria with some of the more general characterisations of Welsh writing in English then we are able to see some similarities. A number of Anglophone Welsh writers, through their paucity of Welsh, could not write in Welsh, and, therefore, they might argue, had little choice but to write in English. The decision regarding the political nature is a more subjective one. It is possible to argue that merely being in a restricted and relatively disempowered space, according to Deleuze and Guattari, results in such politicised writing. The problem of subjectivity also applies to the final characteristic, and there is a plausibility to both perspectives, depending on an individual’s characterisation of the literature. If we were to determine that Welsh writing in English complied with Deleuze and Guattari’s criteria of a minor literature then we could regard

any literary canon in its name as almost a revolutionary doctrine that recognises not only the literature's worth but also the wider position of Wales' status as regards its larger neighbour.

In 'Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature' Deleuze and Guattari stated that a "minor literature doesn't come from a minor language; it is rather that which a minority constructs within a major language" (1598). The word 'constructs' is significant because it suggests an active process initiated by something or someone. It suggests that there is a decision which results in the creation of something that opposes the major language. What seems less clear in Deleuze and Guattari's account is who is doing the constructing: the authors, the critics, the politicians, or perhaps the culture itself? They focus on Kafka and his diary notes concerning his status as a Prague Jew writing in German, but they give no suggestion that Kafka conceived of himself as constructing a minor literature. Deleuze and Guattari did note of a minor literature that "what each author says individually already constitutes a common action, and what he or she says or does is necessarily political, even if others aren't in agreement. The political domain has contaminated every statement" (1599). This is perhaps the key point; Welsh writing in English has characteristics that suggest it has the potential to be a minor literature, but the problem is that the idea and composition of literature has itself become a political weapon. Since the rise of the novel from the 1820s onwards literature has become a cultural tool that can be appropriated as a sword or a shield by various factions within society. The national literary canon is a particularly convenient agent as through its destabilization it can be generously added to, to flavour and massage a nation's cultural background, and its supposedly elevated status marks it out as a significant indicator of a nation's heritage. This is also the reason that a discussion of Wales' status as a minor literature becomes important, as the difference between a minor literature and a major one is that a minor one is

‘constructing’ itself as in opposition to and as being undermined by the major literature and by extension the majority political machinery. Potential danger arises once a nation’s literature starts to become established and debates over it increase in number and quantity; as it becomes available for manoeuvre so it becomes available for manipulation.

The reticence by the Honno and the Library of Wales editors to consider their texts’ canonical potential is perhaps a sign that it is too early for any definite assertions in a literature that is still analysing, assessing and sorting its cultural heritage. However, the Honno and Library of Wales ‘Classics’ do suggest an emerging literary ‘tradition’ in Welsh writing in English, that is characterising Wales in a manner that bears similarities to Deleuze and Guattari’s definition of a minor literature. As new series of Welsh texts in English appear and new literary cultural movements take hold so this narrative is challenged, accepted or adapted. Nevertheless, the work by Honno and the Library of Wales will remain a framework upon which the literary character of Welsh writing in English will be defined and developed.

6. Seren's New Stories from the Mabinogion: The 'Old' as 'New'

The Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' recognise and reflect a cultural movement in Wales that is, through the revivifying of culturally 'important' texts, producing a vision of Anglophone Wales' cultural heritage. So far, we have seen the seeds of the literary critical deliberations on this heritage germinate in the publishers' selection of 'Classics'. The launch of Seren's 'New Stories from the Mabinogion' in 2009 introduces a new way of considering this heritage and introduces and implicates contemporary Welsh authors in Wales' emerging, developing literary-cultural narrative.⁷⁵ Rather than reissuing 'lost' or 'unavailable' literary works, like their competitors, the Seren Press have elected to commission a series that re-produces the *Mabinogion*.

The Seren 'Classics' were among the first collection of this type in Wales, but the imprint's recent publishing concentration on re-telling the *Mabinogion* suggests a new phase in organising Anglophone Wales' culturally-specific literary heritage. The premise of the Seren series bears similarities to its 'Classics' counterparts, in seeking to refresh Anglophone Wales' literary heritage for a modern generation of readers. However, whereas the 'Classics' recuperate texts wholesale, the Seren series merges modern, created narratives with the plot and some of the themes of the *Mabinogion*. As such, the Seren series signals that modern Anglophone Welsh culture, now from the base of a much more firmly established and secure literary foundation, is expanding the debate over its traditional characteristics and composition. The addition of modern Welsh authors to this process also makes clear, in a way that the 'Classics' series struggled to do overtly, the relevance and

⁷⁵ Hereafter the Seren series.

connections between Wales' cultural heritage and its modern literary offerings.

Seren's decision to retell the Mabinogion confirms the importance of this text to Anglophone Welsh culture. However, the *Mabinogion* is in itself a complicated cultural artefact. The original is a collection of Welsh-language stories collated from medieval Welsh manuscripts. The first translation of the *Mabinogion* into English was conducted by Lady Charlotte Guest between 1838 and 1849. There has been a number of further translations over the years, and the *Mabinogion* is one of the few works from Wales to feature in either the Penguin or Oxford World Classics. As such, the Seren series can be considered as reconditioning the *Mabinogion* within an Anglophone Welsh specific cultural narrative that through its various adaptations both asserts its modern relevance and Wales' complicated cultural identity.

Reconciling the 'old' and the 'new' is an acknowledged end in the Seren series. Its editor, Penny Thomas, includes the same introduction in each edition which contextualises the more general history of the *Mabinogion* and suggests the series' deliberate refreshing of its message:

Many of these myths are familiar in Wales, and some have filtered through into the wider British tradition, but others are little known beyond the Welsh border. In this series of New Stories from the Mabinogion the old tales are at the heart of the new, to be enjoyed wherever they are read.

Each author has chosen a story to reinvent and retell for their own reasons and in their own way: creating fresh, contemporary tales that speak to us as much of the world we know now as of times long gone. (9)

The creative possibilities of the *Mabinogion* provide a template for the modern authors to express their understanding of Wales. By using the *Mabinogion* as a framework upon which to build and embroider, the authors, under the auspices of Seren's mandate, connect the past to the present. Seren's decision to revivify a cultural artefact that has a Welsh-language and English-language Welsh heritage indicates the underlying political intentions of the series. The texts suggest an integrated vision of Wales in which its cultural materials are available sources of meaning and identity for more than just the linguistic portion of the nation they were originally written.

Unlike the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics', the Seren series cannot be discussed as a chronological, emergent and developing narrative. Instead, these Seren texts will be investigated through their use of the *Mabinogion*, and elements of the original narratives which the authors choose to retell and adapt. The authors' understanding of modern Wales is an integral part of their selection process, and the two lenses, the *Mabinogion* (or the 'old') and the modern (or the 'new') provide perspective on the series' making or remaking of a Welsh place. Through an analysis of the series' mixing of the *Mabinogion* with the modern we can see how Anglophone Welsh culture is being conditioned. The 'old' is invigorated in the 'new', which, in turn, draws its cultural authority from the 'old'. The imagining that emerges associates and connects both the 'old' and the 'new' in the authors' vision of Wales. The space between the 'old' and the 'new' is where the series accommodates an integrated Welsh identity. The notion of a collective Welsh identity unveils this border space's potential for cultural production. It also challenges or reinforces the traditional cultural borders that have developed between English-language Wales and its Welsh-language or English neighbours. Implicit in this process is an eliding or reinforcing of the historic divisions and consequent reconditioning of the past to complement a modern cultural movement and message.

The Seren series' inclusion of authors' afterwords unveils and self-consciously affirms the authorial role in this cultural imagining of Wales. In the Seren series, while the editors decide which tale from the *Mabinogion* is retold, it is the authors' job to negotiate the relevant material and express it in a culturally relevant manner. The authors' commentary on their approach to this process suggests not only the method of adaptation, but also their character as a 'bridge'. Their works span the gap between the *Mabinogion* and the modern and indicate their involvement in preparing a cultural heritage for Anglophone Wales.

Implicit in the Seren series is a critiquing of the cultural limits of modern Anglophone Wales. Homi Bhabha's interrogation of the location of culture identifies boundaries as integral to the idea of the 'home place'. Within them the nation emerges to define itself as "singular and bounded" (172). The Seren series' production of Wales continues the cultural narrative this thesis has been depicting, in mobilizing the *Mabinogion*; the initiative lends further depth to a secure and established cultural heritage while politicising internal understandings of national identity. The series can be understood as imagining accessible, permeable cultural borders with the Welsh language and ingrained, less porous ones with England. As a result, the narratives help to define Anglophone Wales' cultural locus and affinities which embed a more confident understanding of the 'home place'.

"Worlds within Worlds" (*See How They Run* 20)

The Seren series comprises eight works, with two new 'versions' published each year. The *Mabinogion* is usually, in the pure translation of the stories, organised into eleven tales: the first four are the four Branches (which are the only tales to include a narrative causality); following this is 'Peredur son of Efrog', 'The Dream of Emperor Maxen', 'Lludd and Llefelys', 'The Lady of the Well', 'Geraint Son of Erbin', 'How Culhwch Won Olwen', and

‘Rhonabwy’s Dream’.⁷⁶ The first Seren series publications, Russell Celyn Jones’ *The Ninth Wave* (2009) and Owen Sheers’ *White Ravens* (2009), based on the First and Second Branches of the *Mabinogion* respectively, suggested that Seren may systematically retell the *Mabinogion*. However, the next two editions, Gwyneth Lewis’ *The Meat Tree* (2010), which retells the Fourth Branch, and Niall Griffiths’ *The Dreams of Max and Ronnie* (2010), which collects new versions of ‘The Dream of Emperor Maxen’ and ‘Rhonabwy’s Dream’, signals that there is no particular order to the Seren retellings. The final four Seren series texts under consideration in this chapter are: Horatio Clare’s *The Prince’s Pen* (2011), derived from ‘Lludd and Llefelys’; Fflur Dafydd’s *The White Trail* (2011), which reimagines ‘How Culhwch Won Olwen’; Lloyd Jones’ *See How They Run* (2012) which completes the Branches as it is drawn from the Third Branch; and, lastly, Cynan Jones’ *Bird, Blood, Snow* (2012) interprets ‘Peredur Son of Efrog’.⁷⁷ Each Seren text follows the same format: Penny Thomas’s introduction to the series; the author’s retelling of a *Mabinogion* story; a brief synopsis of Sioned Davies’ recent Oxford World’s Classic’s English translation of the tale in question; and, finally, an author’s afterword, in which they explain their understanding and adaptation of the *Mabinogion* story. The Sioned Davies’ synopses are included to provide a very rough guide for those readers unaware of the original story. However, their presence after the story’s conclusion indicates to the reader that they are better considered as a postscript.

The Seren editors’ choice of authors reflects the Welsh and English language heritage of the *Mabinogion* as the series features writers, such as Gwyneth Lewis, Lloyd Jones and Fflur Dafydd, who have previously published texts in both Welsh and English. The importance of the

⁷⁶ As the Seren series makes direct reference to the Oxford World Classics translation of the *Mabinogion* (2007) by Sioned Davies, all references to the ‘original’ tales or version of the *Mabinogion* are to this edition.

⁷⁷ Seren published rewrites of the final two stories to be reinterpreted, ‘Lady of the Well’, and ‘Geraint son of Erbin’, in October 2013 as *Fountainville*, by Tishani Doshi, and *The Tip of My Tongue*, by Trezza Azzopardi.

Mabinogion's dual linguistic character is noted in Penny Thomas' introduction, as she comments that the *Mabinogion* are "diverse native Welsh tales ... [whose] roots go back hundreds of years, through written fragments, and the unwritten, storytelling tradition. They were first collected under this title, and translated into English, in the nineteenth century" (7-8). However, the decision to publish the series in English indicates that it is primarily aimed at the Anglophone Welsh. Penny Thomas seeks to escape claims of exclusivity by claiming that the series rehearses the *Mabinogion* to present a collection which tries to understand Wales collectively, and just happens to be in English. As she comments, every

culture has its myths; many share ingredients with each other. Stir the pot, retell the tale and you draw out something new, a new flavour, a new meaning maybe. There's no one right version. Perhaps it's because myths were a way of describing our place in the world, of putting people and their search for meaning in a bigger picture, that they linger in our imagination. (7)

It is not this chapter's intention to be drawn into a wider literary debate about the complex relationship between literature and myth, as its interest is in the cultural message that can be interpreted from the Seren series. Nonetheless, from Penny Thomas' statement it can be concluded that the Seren series regards Wales' mythology as being available and appropriate source material for adaptation in the English language. The Seren series' intent is to explore the *Mabinogion* as part of a story about Wales and what a reinterpretation of its tales says about 'us' as a nation.

i) Wales through the *Mabinogion*

The Seren series' negotiating of the *Mabinogion* involves a complicated relationship between the source material and the retellings. In order to modernise the texts the Seren authors have taken a number of liberties with the original tales. However, the series' interest in Wales allows the nation to be a cohering force that facilitates the manoeuvring of the original story within the authors' understanding of modern Wales. The significance of the *Mabinogion* is attested to by the series' title and it can be understood as at the core of the retellings. As such, its incorporation and interpretation in the works suggests the important and enduring components of Welsh national identity and the *Mabinogion's* possibilities as a lens to investigate that identity.

All of the Seren texts overtly reference their original *Mabinogion* story in one way or another. Both their use of plot and more obvious or subtle textual nods to the *Mabinogion* confirm its presence in these updated versions. For example, Russell Celyn Jones' *The Ninth Wave* (2009) recasts Pwyll, originally a young lord "over the seven cartrefs of Dyfed" (*Mabinogion* 3), as an orphaned Lord in Wales where the global oil supplies have run out and "warfare had become medieval again" (12). Celyn Jones' re-contextualising allows him to retain the basic premise of the First Branch while infusing a modern scenario with modern concerns. While these importations acknowledge the *Mabinogion*, it is the modernising of the characters which provides the insight and new understanding. In Gwyneth Lewis' *The Meat Tree* (2010) the plot is centred on a remote space ship two hundred years in the future which the two protagonists explore. On the ship is an 'archaic' Virtual Reality machine which transports the characters back into the medieval setting of the Third Branch and transforms the characters into various members of the original cast. While this might allow Lewis to present a more faithful retelling of the Blodeuwedd myth, the modern characters preserve their modern understanding and use this to inflect and

interpret the original. In all the retellings, the reader is theoretically a long way from medieval Welsh life. However, there is an authorial balancing act where neither the ‘old’ nor the ‘new’ are given complete precedence and each is significant for its impact on the other.

One of the most consistent connections between the Seren series and the *Mabinogion* is the Seren stories’ maintaining or adapting of the original characters’ names. The texts’ use of names is a good example of how the authors filter and juxtapose the original versions with modern retellings to explore Wales. This manoeuvre has a dual role: firstly, it confirms the texts’ concentration on the *Mabinogion* and by implication Wales and, secondly, it questions Anglophone Wales’ cultural heritage by interrogating the country’s association with labels as definers of nationality. Sometimes, the texts’ use of names results in comic or odd inclusions, such as a local supermarket’s employment of “Cynddylig and Tathal, the flour-aisle guards” in *The White Trail* (22). While such instances introduce a more light-hearted approach to the *Mabinogion*, they also ask the reader to query the national association these names evoke and the presence of a deeper cultural heritage in their understanding of Welsh national identity. More commonly, the authors amend the original names to lessen their acoustic strangeness or difficult pronunciation for the English-language ear. The *Mabinogion* still lies at the heart of such examples, but denotes the series’ appeal to and appeasement of an Anglophone audience. This is achieved in different ways, for example, Lludd and Llevelys become Ludo and Levello in Horatio Clare’s *The Prince’s Pen* (2011); in a rough translation of the original name, Heilyn Goch becomes Red Helen (17), in *The Dreams of Max and Ronnie* (2010); and in both *White Ravens* and *See How they Run* (2012) Bendigeidfran is shortened to the somewhat simpler Ben. The *Mabinogion* cannot be rejected from considerations of Anglophone Wales simply on the basis of language; as the names can be adapted, so can the text and so can the message. The

Mabinogion is a valid Anglophone Welsh cultural artefact because of what it has to say about Wales, and its Welsh-language roots are indicative of its history and not its ability to explore Wales' culture as a whole. This has a political dimension as the aligning of Anglophone Welsh culture with Welsh language culture assumes a commonality where the Anglophone Welsh share in the glories and defeats of the past. As such, linguistic identity is relegated to a lesser importance than national, cultural identity.

In these retellings, the *Mabinogion* is filtered so that its contemporary validity is prioritised and its unsuitable or impractical elements are amended or removed. The authors do not consider the original a flawless exploratory device, and the reinterpretations allow the authors to adjust and contemporise where they feel that the *Mabinogion* is lacking. A good example of this is Niall Griffiths' resolving of the unfinished nature of the original version of 'Rhonabwy's Dream' in *The Dreams of Max and Ronnie*. Griffiths finishes the story by noting Ronnie's impending tour of Iraq. The open-ended original allows Griffiths to insert Ronnie's subsequent death in the Iraq war and provide a condemnation on modern warfare, a proposition that was absent in the original. A more significant authorial departure occurs in *The Ninth Wave* as the rather mysterious and fantastic disappearance and reappearance of the baby, Pryderi, is now blamed on the nannies who wanted to sell him to human traffickers (133-4).⁷⁸ Again we can see the injecting of modern concerns which supplement the original to contemporise its message. The original *Mabinogion* stories motivate the authors' imaginings as they cause them to invent and adjust. It also provides the medium through which the authors present their message. As such, the

⁷⁸ In the original version, the women hired to care for Pryderi find he is missing and plant evidence to implicate Rhiannon as his murderer. Elsewhere, Terynon is conducting a vigil for a pregnant mare, and after the horse gives birth to a foal an enormous claw comes through the window and tries to abduct the foal. Terynon cuts off the arm of the figure reaching through the window, hears a noise and a scream, and rushes out to investigate. Upon his return to the stable he finds Pryderi. However, he is unaware of the boy's heritage and keeps him as his charge until he hears of the incident with Rhiannon (*Mabinogion* 16-19). In this version, there is no explanation of the shadowy figure or who took and returned Pryderi.

modern meaning cannot be considered without reference to the original tale. Griffiths' anti-war tenor is reflective of both his own convictions and his reading of 'Rhonabwy's Dreams' and Celyn Jones incorporates modern concerns over kidnapping and human trafficking as an explanation for a lacuna in the First Branch. The result is an understanding of the modern based on the authors' interpretation of the past. In their construction of Anglophone Wales a similar manoeuvre is being performed as the authors are unveiling the nation according to their creative contemporising of the historic material.

In the Seren authors mediating of the 'old' and the 'new' their production of Wales emerges. The land is transformed by their use of the *Mabinogion* and their expression of Welshness conditioned by its presence. If we consider the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' as providing an established and extensive understanding of Anglophone Wales' geography and history through its literature, then the Seren series builds upon this foundation by layering in a mythology. Of course, there was already some evidence of this with the presence of the 'straight' English-language translations in Anglophone Wales' literature, but with the Seren series the re-contextualising confirms not only its presence but also its contemporary relevance to Anglophone Welsh culture. The Seren series adds texture to an Anglophone Welsh heritage and provides diverse literary ways of approaching and analysing the culture. For example, the Welsh rural space can be interrogated for Fflur Dafydd's decision to locate Ysbaddeden Bencawr's mansion there in *The White Trail*, or for Owen Sheers' allusion to the continuing decline of agriculture in Wales as the impetus for his retelling of the Branwen myth in *White Ravens*. The Seren series' decision to reconceptualise the *Mabinogion* as a device through which to investigate Wales suggests the way that contemporary visions of Wales are being constructed against both present imaginings and past cultural artefacts.

The benefit of this approach is that it allows the reinvigoration of Anglophone Wales' culture to appear as a re-emergence of an already established cultural heritage. These artefacts have always been available sources of cultural identity and the current national cultural movement is merely recognising their importance. Rather than constructing identity anew, the 'old' is adjusted to suggest that anything 'new' is a natural development from an ingrained and established cultural heritage. In *The Meat Tree*, Campion comments on the Blodeuwedd myth, that it "disguised itself, using what was in our heads to look familiar" (*The Meat Tree* 222). A similar conjecture can be made about the Seren series as it disguises the 'old' in the 'new' to make the 'new' look familiar. The Seren series' 'new' presentations of Wales are veiled by the inclusion of the *Mabinogion* and the 'new' is subsequently seen as an adjustment to or expansion on our understanding of Anglophone Wales and its culture.

ii) Contemporary Wales in the Seren Series

If the Seren authors' retellings exchange the medieval Welsh setting of the *Mabinogion* for a realistic imagining of the nation, they frequently present a weird version of Wales. However, the Seren authors' imagining of Wales bears some similarities to the depictions of Wales discussed in relation to the Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics'. There are portrayals of declining rural habitations, lonely urban communities and ravaged industrial landscapes. The Seren series interrogates the themes and tropes seen previously through a different medium, but the continuity suggests the embedding of these concerns and the Seren series' part in an ongoing Anglophone Welsh cultural narrative and debate. The *Mabinogion* provides a different lens through which to investigate Wales, and for this study it is at

its most useful when it provides a template from which to deduce the authors' understanding of Wales.

The Seren Series' investigation of Wales works in different ways across different texts and their varying use of landscape testifies to their diverse understandings of Wales. The *Mabinogion* influences such portrayals by helping to create a forum from which the authors can unveil their national and nationalistic concerns. Examples of this can be seen in the series' depiction of both rural and industrial environments. In Owen Sheers' *White Ravens*, Rhiannon opens the story by lamenting on the hard and isolated experience of growing up on a farm in modern rural mid-Wales. While Rhiannon wants to escape the family farm to go "to college, move to Cardiff; get some job in an office with big windows looking over the bay" (35), her brothers agree to rustle cattle. Upon her discovery of their actions Rhiannon abandons her family and, unbeknownst to her, meets her grandfather, who relates a version of the Second Branch. This story also takes place against a rural backdrop and Sheers uses the Second Branch to explore an unravelling Welsh rural existence. The economic failings of agriculture in Wales provide Sheers with a framing device in which he can insert his retelling and confirm the importance of this topic and topology to Wales. The story weaves what is regarded as significant Welsh mythology and history to present a perspective of Welsh place, which consequently reveals Welsh culture.

In a similar manner, Russell Celyn Jones investigates Wales' industrial heritage in *The Ninth Wave*. He resets the original tale in an imagined near-future Wales, where industry produces "little more than memories now" (12). The scenery in the texts is largely derelict and seems to manifest Celyn Jones' own fears for Wales' post-industrial communities. Pwyll's visit to the urban and populous Cardiff, with its Top Rank and frappuccinos (82, 84), contrasts with his general experience of intimidating estates and

carriageways “lined with cars refitted for human habitation” (23-25). Celyn Jones’ reinvention of the *Mabinogion* allows him to create a more fantastic vision of Wales, through which to explore the enduring impact of Wales’ industrial heritage and his concerns regarding a lack of regeneration in these locales.

The Seren series’ investigations of the ‘new’ through the ‘old’ means that while these texts look backward they also give a perspective on current concerns regarding Wales. For example, in Horatio Clare’s *The Prince’s Pen*, another tale set in a near-future Wales, the shadowy ‘invaders’ rule most of the world. In this retelling, Ludo’s rebellion against the ‘invaders’ reflects both the first plague in the original tale and current concerns over modern warfare and state surveillance. Meanwhile, the second plague transforms two fighting dragons into a dispute between the now Islamist Britain and the ‘non-believers’, and rather than a giant eating Lludd’s feasts, Clare’s third plague has bankers bankrupt the country.⁷⁹ Clare’s text uses the original tale as a prism to transform the spectres which haunt Wales in the *Mabinogion* into modern shadows that threaten and undermine the security of modern Welsh society.

Anglophone Welsh identity is being explored against the backdrop of Anglophone Welsh heritage in a way that confirms and updates its characterisation in the Honno and Library of Wales ‘Classics’. In the Library of Wales ‘Classics’ we saw sport used in the later texts to symbolise a growing fraternal Anglophone Welsh sensibility which would help to cohere the male portion of the community. In the Seren series, certainly amongst the male authored texts, we see a continuation of this theme, as rugby

⁷⁹ The original plagues were, as summed up in the synopsis to *The Prince’s Pen*: firstly “the coming of the Corannyeid, a people so sophisticated that there was no conversation anywhere in the country that they could not hear, provided the wind could catch it ... The second plague was a scream, heard everywhere every May-eve, which drove people and animals mad. The third was the disappearance of all the provisions from the king’s courts: however much was stored, nothing would remain in the morning.” The cause of the second plague was “two dragons ... which screamed as they fought”, and the third was the result of a spell, cast by a giant magician, which sent everyone to sleep while he raided the stores (198-199).

references flavour the language, contextualise the setting, or justify the characters' prestige. In Cynan Jones' *Bird, Blood, Snow*, modern rugby players are cited to express the characters' seriousness or provide emphasis: "What happened next is something I swear to. On Halfpenny's leg" (62); or "he looked as mad as Andy Powell (90); and, "for Warburton's sake and your own pride; be patient with him" (133). In Lloyd Jones' *See How They Run* rugby occupies centre stage as it tells the story of Big M, or Manadwyan from the Third Branch, and his exploits post retirement. Big M's status as a rugby player naturalises his importance and allure and provides a reason for the other characters', and the reader's, interest in his adventures. Rugby's importance as an iconic cultural identifier is made explicit in these texts and indicates how the Seren series can be read as part of a continuing cultural narrative that was begun in the 'Classics'.

The Seren series also addresses some of the wider cultural issues that concerned the 'Classics' series. An integral part of the Honno remit is the identification of the underappreciated female voice in Anglophone Wales' heritage and society. In some of the Seren texts we see an exploration, re-examination and emergence of the often muted female voice in the *Mabinogion*. Fflur Dafydd's *The White Trail* includes Goleudydd's frustrations at the role she is expected to play as an expectant mother. In the original, Goleudydd is barely explored and is of most interest for her ultimately fruitless attempt to stop her husband re-marrying after her death. Dafydd's retelling gives Goleudydd a much more prominent role and in doing so exposes both the historic and current social restrictions of women in Wales. Dafydd further highlights the continuing negating of the female voice by having the tyrannical male, Ysbaddeden Bencawr, relate the now posthumous Goleudydd's frustrations. The inclusion and updating of the *Mabinogion*'s female characters across the Seren series modernises these retellings and often aligns the 'new' tales with a more feminist

understanding, but not at the expense of the story. The retellings are not simply re-contextualised as in being rewritten they are formulated within a modern cultural framework that influences authorial decisions and descriptions.

The significance of external considerations is also apparent in the stories' deliberations on Anglophone Welsh identity, and its shaping by non-indigenous attitudes and culture. A good example is Niall Griffiths' retelling of 'The Dream of Macsen Wledig'. In the original story, Macsen is the foreigner, an emperor of Rome, who finds the girl he has been dreaming about in Wales. In Griffiths' version, Max is the native who searches for a girl likened to "Beyoncé, Alesha Dixon, Lisa Maffia" (109), and the knights he sends in search of her are "Questers in Kappa" (127). Although Max also finds the girl in Wales, her associations with the foreign neatly reverses the message of the story to suggest that whereas Wales was once influencing now it is being influenced. The inclusion of external cultural references modernises the message of the original and introduces a more contemporary vision of Wales. The internal sources of culture remain a consistently significant part of Welsh national identity, but an imagining of Wales also requires the recognition of Wales' place in the world and the blurry lines between 'our' culture and the ones which border and invade 'our' world.

The *Mabinogion* allows the Seren authors to enter into a conversation about the production of Anglophone Wales' cultural history, as they are implicated in a process of re-presenting the past for the present. However, the Seren stories' subjective imaginings of Anglophone Wales have been influenced by the preceding debates and their reinterpretations are part of a politicised cultural movement that seeks to revivify past Anglophone Welsh culture according to a particular perspective. In Gwyneth Lewis' *The Meat Tree* the reader is presented with the shell of a space-ship which is reinvigorated through the characters' use of the on-board Virtual Reality

machine. In the story, the space-ship is described as having been “infected” by the Blodeuwedd myth and looking like a “daffodil” (232, 22), an allusion which likens the space-ship to Wales. This metaphor is an appropriate way of thinking about Seren series’ construction of modern Wales. The mixing of Wales and mythology creates an imagined space which seems to present meaning, but that meaning is conditioned and infected by myth and its cultural allusions. The presence of myth may create and impel the stories, but in doing so it distorts understanding and colours our perceptions of the country.

iii) The Space Between

The Seren series’ decision to focus on one cultural artefact and reinterpret it for a modern audience creates an unreal vision of Wales, which is nuanced by the authors’ understanding of modern Wales. While this results in the creation of alternative portrayals of the nation, it also provides a space for the Seren authors to suggest a unified Welsh identity. This is presented from an Anglophone Welsh perspective, through the series’ choice of language, but the textual nods to the Welsh language invite a more integrated understanding of Welshness. As such, the *Mabinogion* is a cultural device that sits between Wales’ Welsh and English language borders. Its reinterpretation assesses the validity of these boundaries and investigates the space between them to lessen the difference.

The series indulges the English-language Welsh reader by being in English, but signals that a knowledge of Welsh or the Welsh version of the *Mabinogion* provides a deeper, sub-textual level to the stories. For example, in *Bird, Blood, Snow*, some of the characters nickname Peredur ‘Ape Frog’. There is an in-joke here as the original tale is called ‘Peredur son of Efrog’, or in Welsh, ‘Peredur ap Efrog’. The text hints at the author’s playing with

names, but does not make the connection to the Welsh-language explicit. Similarly, Owen Sheers' treatment of the Second Branch rewards a knowledge of the Welsh language. In the original tale, Branwen moves to Ireland with her husband, but suffers indignity and isolation there. She is barred from openly communicating with her brother in Wales, so she rears a starling and teaches it to speak Welsh. The starling travels to Wales and alerts Branwen's brother to her unhappy experience. In *White Ravens* we see a similar basic plot; however, instead of rearing a starling, Branwen is by the Irish town's small harbour when she hears a sailor speaking Welsh. Having found someone from her own country she is able to coax him into delivering a message to her brother. The sailor's ship is called "Y Ddrudwen" which in English translates as 'starling'. The Welsh language inclusions across the series suggest that full understanding of the texts is only available if the reader has a certain knowledge of the Welsh language. By implication, the Anglophone Welsh are encouraged to think of their cultural identity as involving either an acceptance or an embracing of the Welsh language. Much like the texts, Welsh identity, from an Anglophone Welsh perspective, is best understood when its Welsh-language antecedents are acknowledged.

Seren's decision to retell the *Mabinogion* should not be considered an act of cultural appropriation because the text already has an established history in Anglophone Wales' literary heritage. The dual identity of the *Mabinogion* might also explain Seren's reason for reinterpreting it, as it encourages the Anglophone Welsh to understand their cultural heritage from a bilingual perspective. However, it also implicates the Seren series in the politicised construction of Anglophone Welsh culture and identity as they are subjectively selecting and massaging the lenses which best represent their understanding of these values. The Seren authors' treatment of the *Mabinogion*, together with Penny Thomas' Introduction, confirms that Wales'

English and Welsh-language members share cultural sources that are only differentiated through their choice of language. The mythology the texts draw upon is identified as a heritage unavailable to the Anglophone Welsh elsewhere. The space between the English and Welsh language versions of the *Mabinogion* is a site of compromise as it is a place to reconcile the two identities, although the series language choice means it is primarily encouraging the Anglophone Welsh to consider their dual cultural genealogy.

The Author and the *Mabinogion*: A “Bridge Not a Barrier” (*White Ravens* 177)

A new aspect of the Seren series, as compared to the ‘Classics’, is the inclusion of an afterword, or commentary, on the authors’ experiences when adapting the *Mabinogion*. The afterwords provide insight into the authors’ understanding of the *Mabinogion* and the process of filtering and assessing its relevance to a contemporary vision of Anglophone Wales. A number of the authors note the *Mabinogion*’s resistance to simple updating and the necessity of approaching them with an inventive understanding that recognises their ability to speak for modern Anglophone Wales. As Russell Celyn Jones comments of his retelling of the First Branch, the “medieval, oral, storytelling tradition has not kept pace with the modern world and no longer engages the contemporary reader”; for him the issue is not so much the relevance of the *Mabinogion*’s message but the need to tell it using “modern fictional techniques” (171-2). This issue is cited as a common concern in the reinventions and the solution is to consider the *Mabinogion* as a background upon which to construct the authors’ visions of Wales. As such, the Seren texts are a mixture of the authors’ interpretation of the *Mabinogion*, their understanding of modern Wales and the invention of plot devices to accommodate the two.

Implicit in the authorial process is a decision over how to contextualise the *Mabinogion* so that it seems contemporary. In Horatio Clare's afterword he notes that he intentionally "departs from the spirit and the letter of the original only once, in the brothers' solution to the Corannyeid. This story puns on 'bug', rather than depicting the full horror of the myth, in which biological ... warfare is used ... I don't regret it: some things are too hideous to contemplate" (205). The inclusion of new material is not intended to lessen the wider interpretive possibilities of the *Mabinogion*; however, this necessary activity obviously affects the texts' depictions of Wales. Clare's tale, which is one hundred and seventy nine pages as compared to the five of the original, expands 'Lludd and Llefelys' through a substantive creation of material that Clare regards as in the spirit of the original. However, it is difficult to imagine that his additions do not even subtly affect the meaning and message of the original. Further evidence of the significance of the authors' management of the *Mabinogion* can be seen from Cynan Jones' comments on his retelling of 'Peredur son of Efrog', as Jones records that he became increasingly involved in filling in the gaps in the original because there is "something unfinished about the [original] tale" (187). While such additions are intended to supplement the material and make it more applicable and relevant to a modern audience, it also directly involves the authors in a contemporary production of Anglophone Wales' cultural heritage. As Clare and Jones make clear, the judgements of the modern author largely decide the presentation and substance of the *Mabinogion* material.

If we consider the tale that makes the most significant narrative departure from the original, Fflur Dafydd's *The White Trail*, we can see how the *Mabinogion* tale is manipulated for a modern audience. This work brings to the fore the Cilydd element of 'How Culhwch Won Olwen', which only

features in the first few paragraphs of the original (*Mabinogion* 177).

Justifying her decision, Dafydd reasons that

my own tale needn't be Culhwch's quest, or Olwen's for that matter. My instincts drove me to look beyond the tale, behind the tale, to scrutinise those characters that had given rise to the whole sorry situation in the first place. And that's where the more potent questions surfaced, whose answers lay in the writing process itself. (205-6)

Dafydd notes the complexity of the original tale, and comments that her decisions were influenced by the difficulty of including all the original material (203-4). She argues that this does not mean that her story is something entirely different, as for her Cilydd and Goleudydd, "in many ways, were the original Culhwch and Olwen, and they were in fact more interesting ... both quests are nevertheless bound together ... illuminating and shadowing each other, each twist and turn navigating a white trail of hope around the encroaching darkness of the *Mabinogion*" (208). Regardless of Dafydd's assertions, her insertions include new material which means that while the original is evident the message it presents is a negotiation of the 'old' and the 'new'. The reader of the texts is encouraged to think of the works as new stories *from* the *Mabinogion*, but really they are new versions *of* the *Mabinogion*. This distinction suggests that the authors manipulate the *Mabinogion* in the 'new version', and it is through this activity that they are required to assess Anglophone Welsh culture and decide whether to bridge the original material or bar it and consider it not relevant to a modern understanding of Anglophone Welsh identity.

The commissioning and adapting of these tales involves a relationship between the Seren mandate, the author and the original story. As Gwyneth

Lewis comments in her afterword, “This is a conversation with other people and minds, even though those with whom we speak – other story-tellers among them – aren’t physically present. This is a tree, after all, whose branches are still bearing fruit and on which new leaves can never feel lonely” (*The Meat Tree* 254). This conversation is a three-way one, with the author at the centre, the editor to their right, and the *Mabinogion* to their left. The author chooses which aspects of the old are updated and how these are to be negotiated in the modern, but this is subject to a certain amount of approval from Seren. The publisher influences the imaginings as a director, giving the series its foundation and driving force, but uninvolved in the actual writing. As Lewis notes, the process of adapting involves interacting with those who are not physically present, and her analogy of the *Mabinogion* being like a tree can be extended to understand the Seren series and even Welsh writing in English more generally. Its authors are involved in a conversation with current and previous academics and authors over what is and is not relevant to an understanding of Anglophone Wales’ cultural heritage. The literary imaginings are never one person’s singular vision, but the result of an appreciation and involvement with all that has gone before.

These Seren authors’ adaptations means that the act of ‘translating’ is not merely linguistic. These ‘new’ versions also translate between different worlds, modes of thinking and societies. The narrative inventions theoretically contemporise the message of the original tales, but in doing so they also re-cover them, culturally and politically. By up-dating the tales for a modern audience the authors are also configuring their versions within a Welsh narrative that has previously been coloured and contextualised to present a particular version of Wales. A process that has some similarities with that seen in the chapters on the Honno and Library of Wales series. Of course, the Seren series’ retaining of significant elements of the original tales means that the ‘new’ stories are invested with a certain amount of kudos and

veneration. However, the decision to re-tell the *Mabinogion* also means that these stories are involved in manoeuvring Wales' past literature to present a politicised message on contemporary notions of Welsh identity.

The 'Location' of Anglophone Wales

Notions of national identity are never entirely secure and it is through the defining of the borders between 'us' and 'them' that association and difference are established. Escaping English assimilation or acculturation, the Seren series posits a permeable border between Wales' English and Welsh-language cultures which, by extension, refuses cross-pollination with English culture. In *The Location of Culture* (1994), Homi Bhabha states that the

borderline work of culture demands an encounter with 'newness' that is not part of the continuum of past and present. It creates a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation. Such art does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent 'in-between' space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The 'past-present' becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living. (7)

The 'new' products produced by Seren are imbued with a sense of insurgency as they encourage resistance to any claims of Welsh writing in English's Englishness, because they translate a cultural past that confirms Anglophone Wales' Welsh affinities. By conducting their representations in an 'in-between space' the series constructs this more unified vision of the past as an important experience of the present. As such, the series can be understood as a cultural weather vane that suggests the emerging Anglophone Welsh cultural attitudes and identity. The series' understanding

and presentation of Anglophone Wales' cultural borders interrogates its identity and produces new lines of internal association and analysis.

Implicit in this construction is a rationalising of the dual linguistic nature of Wales, a transforming of difference into similarity. This can create a fear which, according to Bhabha, occurs "when the boundaries dissolve (or are felt to do so), when the geography of social relation forces us to recognise our interconnectedness" (170). In the case of Anglophone Wales and the Seren series such fear is displaced by the dissolving of one boundary, between Welsh and English-language Wales, with the strengthening of another boundary, between England and Wales. Referencing bell hooks, Bhabha states that

For the new complexities of the geography of social relations to produce fear and anxiety both personal identity and 'a place called home' have had to be conceptualised in a particular way – as singular and bounded. Of course places can be home, but they do not have to be thought of in that way, nor do they have to be places of nostalgia ... And what is more, each of these home-places is itself an equally complex product of the ever-shifting geography of social relations past and present. (172)

In Anglophone Wales, the cultural roots of this 'home-place' are still under construction, but 'in-between' articulations, such as the Seren series, provide a comforting narrative as they speak of a non-competitive Welsh identity, in a unified, non-secular place. This is not a nostalgic retrospective, but an on-going organising of similarity and lessening of difference, where potential sites of dispute are transformed into culturally vibrant spaces and fertile sources of literary production. Wales' complex internal history is not a

restriction to a singular understanding of identity, rather it is an opportunity to create a more cohesive, collective national identity.

As a whole, the cultural narratives provided by both the Seren series and the 'Classics' series presents Wales as a nation affirming its claims of individuality and independence. The timing of these series suggests that the nation is going through a historical transformation, where the

'right' to signify from the periphery of authorised power and privilege does not depend on the persistence of tradition; it is resourced by the power of tradition to be reinscribed through the conditions of contingency and contradictoriness that attend upon the lives of those who are 'in the minority'. (Bhabha 2)

In the various series' expressions of connectedness with a Welsh-language culture they are affirming their cultural hybridity and associating themselves with its historical resistance. In their portrayals of an independent Anglophone Welsh cultural heritage they are confirming a tradition that is an integral part of the nation as the "recognition that tradition bestows is a partial form of identification" (Bhabha 2). The tradition that is being formed is from a selective recuperation, which involves critics, publishers, and in the Seren series' case, authors, of literary materials and a reinterpretation of literary heritage. As such, the series are able to politicise their message and accentuate similarity or difference accordingly. While to the Anglophone Welsh a literary tradition appears to emerge in the present, this is accomplished through a staging or restaging of the past.

In restaging the past [tradition] introduces other, incommensurable cultural temporalities into the invention of tradition. This process estranges any immediate access to an originary identity or a 'received'

tradition. The borderline engagements of cultural difference may as often be consensual as conflictual; they may confound our definitions of tradition and modernity; realize the customary boundaries between the private and the public; high and low; and challenge narrative expectations of development and progress. (Bhabha 2)

In this series there is as much blurring and conflating of the borders of past and present as there is of internal and external borders. There is a recognition that the nation is found in the retrospective assertions of difference and similarity that continuously re-create tradition and normalise it in the process.

As the nation and its traditions emerge through its literary recuperation, so in the production of the “nation as narration there is a split between the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual ambivalence of modern society becomes the site of *writing the nation*” (Bhabha 145-6).⁸⁰ It can be argued that the Seren series implicates its authors in a process of not just writing the nation, but also righting the nation, as modern social attitudes or trends are made acceptable through their re-presentation of the past. What is presented through the Seren series as a whole is a codified, symbolic articulation of the nation that fulfils the populace’s cultural and social needs.

⁸⁰ Emphasis in the original.

Conclusion: The Anglophone Welsh 'Habitus'

Literature provides source material for individuals' understanding of their nation's past and present. In Anglophone Wales, series such as the 'Classics' and Seren reinterpretations recuperate and recondition the nation's history, heritage and spirit of the age in a way that confirms a particular, nuanced narrative. The fact that these series retrospectively re-present literary material is significant as it indicates that the publishers are selectively re-issuing texts they consider culturally important artefacts. As a consequence, the publishers are implicated in the construction of a perspective of the past which affirms their vision of the present. Commenting on the importance of history and the Welsh "making and remaking of themselves", Gwyn Alf Williams notes that the "Welsh or their effective movers and shapers have repeatedly employed history to make a usable past, to turn a past into an instrument with which a present can build a future" (304). A similar conclusion can be drawn regarding literature and Anglophone Wales' "making and remaking" of a "usable past" through its republishing initiatives.

The 'Classics' series represent the most comprehensive example of Anglophone Wales' contemporary construction of the past. Although the editorial choices are influenced by the preceding literary critical commentaries and debates on Welsh writing in English, they operate at a popular level and publish more accessible accounts of Anglophone Wales' literary heritage and culture. Welsh writing in English is a relatively singular model as the publishers are able to issue 'Classics' free of already established or enshrined prose works. The Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' select from a pool of texts which are 'lost or unavailable' and present their series as a cultural record or 'biography' of Anglophone Wales. As such, the

recuperated texts are signalled to be significant and culturally important portrayals of the nation from an insider's perspective.

The political motivation behind the publishers' selection of 'Classics' questions their objectivity and their ability to reliably characterise Anglophone Welsh culture and identity. Pierre Bourdieu comments that, "[c]ultural consecration does indeed confer on the objects and situations it touches, a sort of ontological promotion akin to a transubstantiation" (6), and the 'Classics' are part of a "consecration" that seeks to enshrine a politicised vision of Wales. In *The Logic of Practice*, Bourdieu discusses the idea of the 'Habitus': a multi-layered system of cultural codes that guide behaviour and social thinking. The 'Habitus' rationalises and normalises a history that explains the present. Literature supports this process by providing material which helps a member of a community perceive their relative position as both an individual and as part of that wider community. Although Bourdieu's theory takes an all-encompassing tone, and ignores the complexities of an individual's cultural identity and heritage, it does indicate how cultural artefacts are integrated in society to promote a particular kind of national thinking.

The nation that the three series I have been examining portray is heavily influenced by a developing Anglophone Welsh 'Habitus' as they promote a conditioned portrayal of national identity. The various series reflect, rather than initiate, cultural movement, and their presence helps to embed imaginings of the nation as independent and singular. The Honno and Library of Wales 'Classics' and Seren series help to establish an Anglophone Welsh narrative that endorses its distinctive intrinsic qualities, and therefore resists absorption in other cultures' narratives. Overall, these series suggest their part in a national cultural movement which is reconceiving and embedding cultural identity according and in response to the current political and cultural needs of Anglophone Wales.

Habitus and the Economy of History

The creation of a unique cultural space that is inflected by a particular national consciousness is supported by the formulation and promotion of cultural artefacts drawing on many different materials. In his work on the 'Habitus', Pierre Bourdieu describes the enmeshing of various factors, such as culture and history, to present a particular perception of the world which conditions an individual's understanding of, and actions in, their society.

The *habitus* – embodied history internalised as a second nature and so forgotten as history – is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present. This autonomy is that of the past, enacted and acting, which, functioning as accumulated capital, produces history on the basis of history and so ensures the permanence in change that makes the individual agent a world within the world. (56)

Necessarily immersed in their cultural contexts, individuals are encouraged to understand their place in the world according to a prescribed history and the embedded social mores which locate them within particular communities. Such a model accounts for literature's ability to present a politicised view of a particular world.

Bourdieu's definition of 'Habitus' takes into account a diverse set of social and cultural dispositions that interrelate. The accumulation of practices and structures homogenises individuals in a community and confirms membership of a body of people with a shared history (58). According to Loïc Wacquant's interpretation of Bourdieu's ideas, the 'Habitus'

is a mediating notion that revokes the common sense duality between the individual and social by capturing ‘the internalisation of externality and the externalisation of internality’, that is, the way society becomes deposited in persons in the form of lasting dispositions, or trained capacities and structured propensities to think, feel, and act in determinate ways, which then guide them in their creative responses to the constraints and solicitations of their extant milieu. (316)

This steering mechanism is guided by the dominant forces in a society which dictate and articulate a programme based upon their ideas of what direction society should take and manipulate and appropriate culture to their own ends. However, as the ‘Habitus’ has influenced those in power it is self-perpetuating and, to a certain extent, helps to dictate its own course. There can be no drastic change in the direction that the cultural momentum takes, as the ethos that the ‘Habitus’ promotes is protected by the fact that it has influenced the succeeding members of the dominant force. The social dispositions are embedded into both the average individual and the dominant one. Thus, although the ‘Habitus’ is a tool of the forces that rule, to control and dictate culture, it is also working on those forces to ensure that the preceding culture is not ignored, jettisoned or seen as insignificant to the contemporary society.

In Wales, the Welsh writing in English ‘Classics’ help to confirm a cultural economy that reflects and steers the dominant culture. An integral part of this process is the involvement of the National Assembly. The central funding that has been so vital to publishing efforts in Welsh writing in English means that the publishers have a certain amount of control over the texts that are reissued and stay in print, a process that anticipates the political and social aims of the dominant power. In order to continue to

receive cultural funding publishers would be ill advised to publish texts that are in stark contrast to the cultural moment.⁸¹ However, an exception could be seen in case of Honno. Its decision to publish only female authored texts bucks the trend of a discourse inclined to see Welsh writing in English as a largely male concern. Honno helps to establish a female voice often missing in the previous histories of Anglophone Wales. Rather than countering the 'Habitus', and consequently checking and undermining it, this alternative voice is now arguably being subsumed by the 'Habitus' into the national heritage, and, as such, becomes a further prop to the culture presented by the 'Habitus'. What was once seen as new and different is becoming part of a 'tradition', and, in Welsh writing in English, the female voice is a common way for uncovering a route into Anglophone Welsh identity. The 'Habitus' acts on potential dissenters, such as Honno, by normalising, rationalising and then internalising the dissenting voice in the national narrative. Rather than reacting against any challengers to its version of heritage, it simply accommodates them and then uses them for its own ends.

In their 'Classics' series both Honno and the Library of Wales have published authors who were either Welsh by birth or spent a large amount of their authorial lives in Wales. There are also a significantly larger number of authors from south Wales and the border lands between Wales and England than the Welsh speaking heartlands in the north and west of the country. The 'Habitus' that Bourdieu discusses is enacted within these boundaries and indicates that these communities are isolated because they are culturally and socially different from a purely Welsh or English culture. This idea of conflicting communities in Wales is advanced in Denis Balsom's Three Wales Model. He understands there to be three differing locations with differing concepts of Welsh identity, namely: Y Fro Gymraeg,

⁸¹ This is interestingly exemplified in the Welsh Book Council's system of grant donation, for both Welsh- and English- language texts. A whole series of contemporary poetry, *Cyfres Beirdd y Answyddogol*, was commissioned by the Lolfa Press as being exciting and innovative because they had been refused a Welsh Books Council grant for the series.

in the Welsh speaking areas of Dyfed and Gwynedd; Welsh Wales, mainly located in and around the old south Wales coalfield societies; and British Wales, comprising a large portion of the border country, parts of the southern and north-eastern coastal districts and a large section of Pembrokeshire (1-17). This is a useful means of understanding the aims of Honno and the Library of Wales, and the 'Habitus' that they are incorporated within. They are largely concerned with, and primarily provide a cultural skin for those members of 'Welsh Wales', namely the English-language populace of Wales who see themselves as Welsh first and British second. Their 'Classics' series provide a literature that inscribes their history, and recognises the interplay of Welsh identity and English language. The idea of history is important as the series also provide originary stories, a process the Seren series is implicated in, for the Anglophone Welsh, an assertion and recognition of their prolonged interaction with notions of Welsh identity.

The origin story provided by these series blurs the true picture of when 'Welsh Wales' became a sufficiently large and independent entity to be able to claim an authoritative Welsh identity. According to Bourdieu, "Nothing is more misleading than the illusion created by hindsight in which all the traces of a life, such as the works of an artist or the events in a biography, appear as the realization of an essence that seems to pre-exist them" (55). As seen in Bourdieu's ideas on 'Habitus', part of the workings of a 'Habitus' is to internalise history as second nature, which involves the retrospective inclusion of cultural artefacts to support this position. The dialogue between the past and the present is one in which the present manipulates the past to provide a particular meaning in the present; a meaning which regulates and rationalises not only social customs and practices but also an individual's understanding of their cultural identity.

The Politicisation of Anglophone Wales' Literature

The 'Classics' offer a model through which individuals are invited to think of themselves as being part of an enduring national narrative that conditions their understanding of their nationalism and national association. Stuart Hall has written that "If we feel we have a unified identity ... it is only because we construct a comforting story or 'narrative of the self' about ourselves ... The fully unified, completed, secure and coherent identity is a fantasy" (qtd. in *Postcolonial Wales* 15). The 'constructing' of the nation is deemed an individual choice where one imagines oneself as part of a collective national narrative. However, the "fantasy" occurs because an individual feels that he or she is able to assess independently their part in this narrative. In fact, they are presented with a pre-selected choice of cultural artefacts whose meaning has already been slanted to present a particular narrative.

The potential for such manipulation is assisted by the flexibility of the word 'culture', and the fact that its meaning is so amenable to change. As Ross Poole comments

In one significant sense a culture consists of a gallery of meaningful or representative objects which those with appropriate cultural knowledge can interpret and evaluate ... A culture is not made once and for all. It is constantly being remade, reaffirmed and sometimes changed. (13)

Culture is no more fixed than the history which feeds it. The history and culture recuperated by Honno and the Library of Wales is a mass of reformed material where the original interpretation of the author is superseded by the text's interpretation into the series. The narrations suggested in chapters three and four condition any new texts' entry into the 'community' of texts, and the original path of the series is fixed from the

first few texts; although later works may subtly colour this route, the overarching meaning is supported.

The identity of the constructor is not singular and instead reflects the 'Classics' involvement in a deeper cultural movement where the constructor's interpretations are, in fact, manifestations of dominant culture's endeavours to ensure its immediacy. John Breuille argues that

It is, of course, true that nationalist intellectuals and politicians seize upon myths and symbols inherited from the past and weave these into arguments designed to promote national identity and justify national claims ... What is more, it is clear that modern nationalism transforms such myths and that it ignores those which cut across its own purpose. (151)

In Wales, the artefacts being 'unearthed' foster the notion of a particular heritage, where the editors select them based on their ideas of Wales' heritage as envisaged retrospectively, and the critics interpret them according to their subjective understanding and literary-critical interpretation of their place in modern society. The common factor is the valuing of 'Classics' according to modern conceptions of Wales and which material best indicate or explain its modern culture.

Previously, Welsh writing in English was discussed in terms of a minor literature. There, the 'Classics' were located as potential sources of resistance that affirmed the literature's participation in a collective political action. Here, we can see the way in which various influences act upon the literature to structure its presentation of a particular message. The lack of a singular force suggests that the constructing of a literature as minor is linked to the role of the dominant culture in society, and emblematic of its movements. As claims for Welsh independence, or at least greater political

power, have increased so there has been a mobilisation of cultural artefacts which justify and support this proposition. The layering of Welsh writing in English as a minor literature takes place at a cultural and political level, as the cultural artefacts are interpreted in ways that support the literature's deterritorialization and are politicized as acts of resistance which embed a certain regard for the literature and by extension the national identity. As the number of 'Classics' increase, that message is compounded and reinforced so that a particular conception of Wales becomes increasingly natural. The 'Classics' are symbolic of a past heritage, but because they are being read into modern society their interpretation is amended to support the dominant culture. As such, the 'Classics' are a literature of power, not protest.

Appendix: Wales' Anglophone 'Classics' industry

The history of Welsh 'Classics' in English contextualises the rise of republishing cultural artefacts from Wales' Anglophone literary heritage. In 2003 a number of publishers were contacted by the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee, and asked to comment on the best means of 'reviving interest' in Anglophone Welsh literature. The publishers invited to comment had already been issuing 'Classic' Welsh texts in English for a number of years. Their 'Classics' selections together with their responses to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee outline the relative interest of these publishers in the 'Classics' and provide a short history of the Anglophone Welsh 'Classics' industry.

The first publisher to issue, what they claimed were, 'Classic' Welsh texts in English was Gomer press. In 1982 they published the first of their English translations of Welsh prose and poetry, *Poems - Dafydd ap Gwilym*. Their 'Welsh Classics Series' includes six published texts, the last of which was issued in 1997. Mairwen Prys Jones, the Publishing Director of Gomer, responded to the Assembly's 2003 policy review by decrying the importance of 'Classics' to contemporary Welsh writing in English, stating that:

The focus of any new initiative or funding should be on new writing. Writers will plunder the 'classics' and take from them or be influenced by them as they will. There never was a golden age for Anglo-Welsh writing and we should, in any case, be looking forward.
(Gomer Response)

This statement, together with the bias towards translations in their 'Welsh Classics', indicates that they regard Welsh-language material as more relevant

to Wales and the contemporary Welsh reader. A situation they wish to rectify by making English-language versions of Welsh texts more widely available. The significance of the Gomer 'Welsh Classics' is not that it attempts to make Anglophone Welsh authors more accessible, but that it is the first to recognise the scarcity of available past literature for the Anglophone Welsh and that it conceives a 'Classics' series as a possible means of rectifying this problem.

The first publisher to concentrate on originally English-language Welsh texts in their 'Classics' series was Seren, who in 1986 republished Caradoc Evans' *My People* and Brenda Chamberlain's *Tide Race* as Seren 'Classics'. Since then the series has gradually and quite sporadically increased its list of 'Classic' Anglophone Welsh texts. The last addition to the series was a translation of John Gwilym Jones' *The Plum Tree* in 2004. The Seren 'Classics' currently consists of eleven works: a mixture of fiction, short stories, autobiography and an English translation of a Welsh collection of short stories. In their response to the Assembly's policy review they state that 'Classics' should not receive priority status over new writing as both were equally deserving of support; the 'Classics' because they show where Wales has come from and provide a context for reader and author. With regard to the 'Seren Classics' they comment that certain

key works need to be maintained to provide the context mentioned above. It was with this in mind that we established the successful Seren Classics series (Gwyn Thomas, Caradoc Evans, Rhys Davies and several others) to make such important titles, both old and new, available in a recognisable form. That the series has been developed in a piecemeal fashion, with occasional additions, is testimony to the restrictions of funding. Yet the series is vital to maintain the profile of 'serious' writing in Wales. ('Seren Response')

Seren's focus on publishing 'new' writing is borne out by their lack of recent activity in this area and their current publishing enterprise which involves modern Welsh writers retelling the *Mabinogion*. However, the Seren 'Classics' still represent the first conscious and consistent move to return to print 'neglected' works by Anglophone Welsh writers. They also mark the first suggestions from a Welsh publisher over which authors and works 'deserve' to be remembered and reissued.

With a more dedicated and consistent approach to reissuing 'Classics' by women writers, the Honno Press, which had been launched in 1986, began its Honno 'Classics' series, recently renamed the 'Welsh Women's Classics', in 1987 with the publication of Jane Williams' *Betsy Cadwaladyr: A Balaclava Nurse*. However, there was not another 'Classic' until 1996 when Honno re-published their first fictitious prose 'Classic', Menna Gallie's *Travels with a Duchess*. In her response to the Assembly policy review, the then Honno editor, Janet Thomas, notes the success of the 'Honno Classics' series, "Honno has a thriving classics list, which is one of our great achievements" ('Honno Response'). With Honno's publishing of 'Classics' we see a more consistent and concerted effort to reissue inaccessible or out-of-print works from Anglophone Wales' literary heritage. The two-pronged goal of making both Welsh writing in English and women's writing more available has led to a relatively large number of reprints, and a series that is more involved in the considerations of past and present Welsh culture than the Seren or Gomer 'Classics'.

The 'Corgi Series', launched in 2002, and published by Carreg Gwalch Cyf, has titled its collection 'the best of Welsh Writing in English', the first, and so far only, collection of this type from Wales to make such an open and courageous claim. As stated by its series editor Meic Stephens

perhaps the best way of making sure that the books of Wales are accessible to the young, the poor, the disadvantaged, is to give them away or else sell them at prices so low that a book can be bought for less than the price of a pint of beer, so that they can reach the widest possible audience ... [The Corgi series] is meant to test the waters by selling selections of verse and poetry by well-known writers in a cheap but attractive format, at £1.99 a copy, in the hope they will attract new readers to the authors' main works. ('Meic Stephens Response')

There have been twenty-four publications in the Corgi series, the overwhelming focus being on poetry selections. Six of the works are anthologies, and of the singly authored works, Sheenagh Pugh is the only woman to get a collection to herself. Few of the Corgi 'classics' contain any verse by the chosen writers. Meic Stephens has commented on the opposition of publishers such as Seren and Gomer to his series, who apparently objected "to 'their' authors being presented in this innovative way." However, as Meic Stephens also notes rather than being any sort of definitive collection the Corgi series is intended as a taster that will draw readers to the authors' more significant works. Instead of being considered a 'Classics' series, perhaps the Corgi collection should be considered as an attempt to provide an introduction to Welsh writing in English and a suggestion of some of its 'best' authors, although its composition does provide an interesting addendum to the other 'Classics' series.

As a result of the 2003 policy review, and the responses received by the Welsh Assembly Government, the Welsh Assembly decided to launch the Library of Wales series. Publishing its first five texts in 2006, in the short time it has been operating it is already the largest publisher of, according to its Mission Statement, the "unavailable, out-of-print or merely forgotten"

“rich and extensive literature of Wales that has been written in English”. Part of the original mandate for the creation of the Library of Wales collection was to put ‘Classic’ books back into schools, libraries and bookshops and through its marketing and number of re-issues the Library of Wales series is probably the most prominent of reissued Anglophone Welsh literature.

One of the oft repeated ends of the above collections is to remedy the scarcity of available past Welsh writing in English. And this problem can be appreciated by looking at the numbers of them in the more established, international ‘Classics’. Here, Anglophone Welsh texts’ visibility is clouded and sometimes problematic. For example, in the Penguin Classics and Oxford World Classics representation is through translated versions of the *Mabinogion*, while in the Penguin Modern Classics Richard Llewellyn’s *How Green Was My Valley* (2001) and Dylan Thomas’ *Under Milk Wood* (2000) are rare examples of Welsh texts in English. While the Vintage Classics includes Richard Hughes’ *In Hazard* (2002) and *A High Wind in Jamaica* (2002) there is little else, this is a similar case with the Everyman Classics where the most prominent Welsh text is Dylan Thomas’ *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* (1989) and the Virago Classics with its republication of Dorothy Edwards *Winter Sonata* (1986).

The following is a list of the ‘Classic’ Anglophone Welsh texts republished in Wales:

The Corgi Series – The Best of Welsh Writing in English:

Abse, Dannie. *Touch Wood: Poems and a Story*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2002.

Curtis, Tony. *Considering Cassandra: Poems and a Story*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.

- Davies, Idris. *A Carol for the Coalfield and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2002.
- Davies, Rhys. *Nightgown and Other Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- Garlick, Raymond. *The Delphic Voyage and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- Goodwin, Geraint. *The Shearing and Other Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2004.
- Henry, Paul. *The Breath of Sleeping Boys and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2004.
- Humphreys, Emyr. *The Rigours of Inspection: Poems and Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- Jenkins, Mike. *Laughter Tangled in Thorn and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2002.
- Jones, Glyn. *The Common Path: Poems and a Story*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- Jones, T.H. *Lucky Jonah and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2004.
- Lewis Alun. *The Sentry: Poems and Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- Norris, Leslie. *Water and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2004.
- Ormond, John. *Boundaries and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- Pugh, Sheenagh. *What If This Road and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- Richards, Alun. *Scandalous Thoughts and Other Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- Roberts, Dewi, ed. *Death: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- , ed. *Landscapes: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- , ed. *Love: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.
- , ed. *Places: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2003.

- , ed. *War: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2002.
- , ed. *Work: An Anthology*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2004.
- Thomas, Gwyn. *Land! Land!: Short Stories*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.
- Webb, Harri. *The Stone Face and Other Poems*. Llanwrst: Carreg Gwalch Cyf., 2005.

The Gomer Welsh Classics Series:

- Aneirin. *Aneirin: Y Gododdin*. Trans. A.O.H. Jarman. Llandysul: Gomer, 1997.
- Goch, Iolo. *Poems: Iolo Goch*. Ed. Dafydd Johnston. Llandysul: Gomer, 1993.
- Gwilym, Dafydd ap. *Apocrypha: Dafydd ap Gwilym*. Ed. Helen Fulton. Llandysul: Gomer, 1997.
- . *Poems: Dafydd ap Gwilym*. Ed. Rachel Bromwich. Llandysul: Gomer, 1982.
- The Law: Hywel Dda*. Ed. Dafydd Jenkins. Llandysul: Gomer, 1986.
- Owen of Henllys, George. *The Description of Pembrokeshire*. Ed. Dillwyn Miles. Llandysul: Gomer, 1994.
- Wynn, John. *History of the Gwydir Family and Memoirs*. Ed. J. Gwynfor Jones. Llandysul: Gomer, 1990.

Honno's 'Welsh Women's Classics':

- Aaron, Jane, ed. *A View across the Valley: Short Stories by Women from Wales 1850-1950*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1999.
- Aaron, Jane, and Ursula Masson, eds. *The Very Salt of Life: Welsh Women's Political Writings from Chartism to Suffrage*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2007.
- Andrews, Elizabeth. *A Woman's Work is Never Done*, 1957. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2006.

- Dillwyn, Amy. *A Burglary*, 1883. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2009.
- . *Jill*, 1884. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2013.
- . *The Rebecca Rioter*, 1880. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2004.
- Edwards, Dorothy. *Winter Sonata*, 1928. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2011.
- Evans, Margiad. *The Wooden Doctor*, 1933. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2005.
- Gallie, Menna. *The Small Mine*, 1962. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2000.
- . *Strike for a Kingdom*, 1959. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2003.
- . *Travels with a Duchess*, 1968. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1996.
- . *You're Welcome to Ulster*, 1970. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2010.
- Gramich, Katie, and Catherine Brennan, eds. *Welsh Women's Poetry 1460-2001*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2003.
- Lewis, Eiluned. *The Captain's Wife*, 1943. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2008.
- . *Dew on the Grass*, 1934. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2006.
- Raine, Allen. *Queen of the Rushes*, 1906. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1998.
- . *A Welsh Witch*, 1902. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2013.
- Thomas, Bertha. *Stranger within the Gates*, 1912. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2008.
- Tobias, Lily. *Eunice Fleet*, 1933. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2004.
- Vaughan, Hilda. *Here Are Lovers*, 1926. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2012.
- . *Iron and Gold*, 1948. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2002.
- Williams, Jane. *Betsy Cadwaladyr: A Balaclava Nurse*, 1857. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1987.

Library of Wales 'Classics':

- Abse, Dannie. *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve*, 1954. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- . *Goodbye Twentieth Century*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- Berry, Ron. *Flame and Slag*, 1968. Cardigan: Parthian, 2012.
- . *So Long, Hector Bebb*, 1970. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Brooks, Jeremy. *Jampot Smith*, 1960. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008

- Chamberlain, Brenda. *A Rope of Vines*, 1965. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- . *The Water-castle*, 1964. Cardigan: Parthian, 2012.
- Davies, Howell. *Congratulate the Devil*, 1939. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Davies, Rhys. *The Withered Root*, 1927. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Davies, W.H. *The Autobiography of a Super Tramp*, 1908. Cardigan: Parthian, 2013.
- Edwards, Dorothy. *Rhapsody*, 1927. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Evans, George Ewart. *The Voices of the Children*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Evans, Margiad. *Country Dance*, 1932. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- . *Turf or Stone*, 1934. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- Evans, Stuart. *The Caves of Alienation*, 1977. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- Goodwin, Geraint. *The Heyday in the Blood*, 1936. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Hanley, James. *A Kingdom*, 1978. Cardigan: Parthian, 2013.
- Humphreys, Emyr. *A Man's Estate*, 1955. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Jones, Glyn. *The Valley, the City, the Village*, 1956. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- Jones, Jack. *Black Parade*, 1935. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- Jones, Lewis. *Cwmardy and We Live*, 1937 & 1939. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Jones, Stead. *Make Room for the Jester*, 1964. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- Lewis, Alun. *In The Green Tree*, 1948. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Machen, Arthur. *The Great God Pan*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- . *The Hill of Dreams*, 1907. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- Richards, Alun. *Dai Country*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- . *Home to an Empty House*, 1973. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Rubens, Bernice. *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, 1975. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008
- Stephens, Meic, ed. *Poetry 1900-2000*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Thomas, Gwyn. *All Things Betray Thee*, 1949. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- . *The Alone to the Alone*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- . *The Dark Philosophers*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.

Vaughan, Hilda. *The Battle to the Weak*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
Williams, Gareth, ed. *Sport*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
Williams, Raymond. *Border Country*, 1960. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
---. *The Volunteers*, 1978. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.

The Seren 'Classics':

Abse, Dannie. *There Was a Young Man From Cardiff*, 1991. Bridgend: Seren, 2001.
Chamberlain, Brenda. *Tide Race*, 1962. Bridgend: Seren, 1986.
Davies, Rhys. *Print of a Hare's Foot*, 1969. Bridgend: Seren, 1998.
Evans, Caradoc. *Capel Sion*, 1916. Bridgend: Seren, 2002.
---. *My People*, 1915. Bridgend: Seren, 1986.
Evans, Margiad. *The Old and the Young*, 1948. Bridgend: Seren, 1998.
Humphreys, Emyr. *A Toy Epic*, 1958. Bridgend: Seren, 1989.
James, Siân. *A Small Country*, 1979. Bridgend: Seren, 1999.
Jones, John Gwilym. *The Plum Tree*, 1946. Bridgend: Seren, 2004.
Meredith, Christopher. *Shifts*, 1988. Bridgend: Seren, 1997.
Thomas, Gwyn. *Selected Short Stories*. Bridgend: Seren, 1995.

Works Cited

Primary Texts

- Aaron, Jane, ed. *A View across the Valley: Short Stories by Women from Wales 1850-1950*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1999.
- Aaron, Jane, and Ursula Masson, eds. *The Very Salt of Life: Welsh Women's Political Writings from Chartism to Suffrage*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2007.
- Abse, Dannie. *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve*, 1954. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- . *Goodbye Twentieth Century*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- Amis, Kingsley. *Lucky Jim*, 1954. London: Penguin, 2000.
- Andrews, Elizabeth. *A Woman's Work is Never Done*, 1957. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2006.
- Azzopardi, Trezza. *The Tip of My Tongue*. Bridgend: Seren, 2013.
- Berry, Ron. *Flame and Slag*, 1968. Cardigan: Parthian, 2012.
- . *So Long, Hector Bebb*, 1970. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Brooks, Jeremy. *Jampot Smith*, 1960. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008
- Chamberlain, Brenda. *A Rope of Vines*, 1965. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- . *The Water-castle*, 1964. Cardigan: Parthian, 2012.
- Clare, Horatio. *The Prince's Pen*. Bridgend: Seren, 2011.
- Dafydd, Fflur. *The White Trail*. Bridgend: Seren, 2011.
- Davies, Howell. *Congratulate the Devil*, 1939. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Davies, Rhys. *The Withered Root*, 1927. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Davies, W.H. *The Autobiography of a Super Tramp*, 1908. Cardigan: Parthian, 2013.
- Dillwyn, Amy. *A Burglary*, 1883. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2009.
- . *Jill*, 1884. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2013.
- . *The Rebecca Rioter*, 1880. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2004.
- Doshi, Toshani. *Fountainville*. Bridgend: Seren, 2013.
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Sign of Four*, 1890. London: Penguin, 2001.

- Egryn, Elen. *Telyn Egryn*, 1850. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1998.
- Edwards, Dorothy. *Rhapsody*, 1927. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- . *Winter Sonata*, 1928. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2011.
- Ellis, Jane. *Cerddi Jane Ellis*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2010.
- Evans, Caradoc. *My People*, 1915. Bridgend: Seren, 1986.
- Evans, George Ewart. *The Voices of the Children*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Evans, Margiad. *Country Dance*, 1932. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- . *Turf or Stone*, 1934. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- . *The Wooden Doctor*, 1933. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2005.
- Evans, Stuart. *The Caves of Alienation*, 1977. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- Gallie, Menna. *The Small Mine*, 1962. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2000.
- . *Strike for a Kingdom*, 1959. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2003.
- . *Travels with a Duchess*, 1968. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1996.
- . *You're Welcome to Ulster*, 1970. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2010.
- Godwin, William. *Imogen*. In *Collected Novels and Memoirs of William Godwin*. Ed. Pamela Clemmit. Vol. 2. London: William Pickering, 1992. 163-26.
- Goodwin, Geraint. *The Heyday in the Blood*, 1936. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Gramich, Katie, and Catherine Brennan, eds. *Welsh Women's Poetry 1460-2001*. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2003.
- Griffiths, Niall. *The Dreams of Max and Ronnie*. Bridgend: Seren, 2010.
- Gray, Alasdair. *Lanark: A Life in Four Books*, 1981. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2002.
- Hanley, James. *A Kingdom*, 1978. Cardigan: Parthian, 2013.
- Jones, Cynan. *Bird, Blood, Snow*. Bridgend: Seren, 2012.
- Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. E.V. Rieu. London: Penguin, 1946.
- Humphreys, Emyr. *A Man's Estate*, 1955. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Jones, Glyn. *The Valley, the City, the Village*, 1956. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.

- Jones, Jack. *Black Parade*, 1935. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- Jones, Jane Ann. *'Pererinion' a 'Storiâu Hen Ferch'*, 1937. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2008.
- Jones, Lewis. *Cwmardy and We Live*, 1937 & 1939. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Jones, Lloyd. *See How They Run*. Bridgend: Seren, 2012.
- Jones, Russell Celyn. *The Ninth Wave*. Bridgend: Seren: 2009.
- Jones, Stead. *Make Room for the Jester*, 1964. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- Lewis, Alun. *In The Green Tree*, 1948. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Lewis, Eiluned. *The Captain's Wife*, 1943. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2008.
- . *Dew on the Grass*, 1934. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2006.
- Lewis, Gwyneth. *The Meat Tree*. Bridgend: Seren, 2010.
- The Mabinogion*. Trans. Sioned Davies. Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2007.
- Machen, Arthur. *The Great God Pan*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- . *The Hill of Dreams*, 1907. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- Morgan, Eluned. *Dringo'r Andes*, 1904. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2001.
- Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 1949. London: Penguin, 1989.
- Parry, Winnie. *Sioned*, 1906. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2003.
- Prichard, Thomas Llewellyn. *The Adventures of Twm Shon Cati*. London, 1828.
- Raine, Allen. *Queen of the Rushes*, 1906. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1998.
- . *A Welsh Witch*, 1902. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2013.
- Richards, Alun. *Dai Country*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2009.
- . *Home to an Empty House*, 1973. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- Rubens, Bernice. *I Sent a Letter to My Love*, 1975. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- Sheers, Owen. *White Ravens*. Bridgend: Seren, 2009.
- Stephens, Meic, ed. *Poetry 1900-2000*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Thomas, Bertha. *Stranger within the Gates*, 1912. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2008.
- Thomas, Gwyn. *All Things Betray Thee*, 1949. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.
- . *The Alone to the Alone*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2008.
- . *The Dark Philosophers*, 1947. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.

- Tobias, Lily. *Eunice Fleet*, 1933. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2004.
- Vaughan, Hilda. *The Battle to the Weak*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- . *Here Are Lovers*, 1926. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2012.
- . *Iron and Gold*, 1948. Dinas Powys: Honno, 2002.
- Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Trans. David West. London: Penguin, 1991.
- Webb, Mary. *Precious Bane*, 1924. London: Virago, 2011.
- West, Rebecca. *The Return of the Soldier*. 1918. London: Virago, 2006.
- Williams, Gareth, ed. *Sport*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2007.
- Williams, Jane. *Betsy Cadwaladr: A Balaclava Nurse*, 1857. Dinas Powys: Honno, 1987.
- Williams, Raymond. *Border Country*, 1960. Cardigan: Parthian, 2006.
- . *The Volunteers*, 1978. Cardigan: Parthian, 2011.

Secondary Sources

- ‘100 Best Novels’. *Modern Library*. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.
- ‘500 Must-Read Books: Part One’. *The Daily Telegraph* 1 June 2013: X1-8.
- ‘500 Must-Read Books: Part Two’. *The Daily Telegraph* 2 June 2013: Y1-8.
- Aaron, Jane. ‘A National Seduction: Wales in Nineteenth-Century Women’s Writing’. *The New Welsh Review* 27 (Winter 1994-95): 31-38.
- . *Nineteenth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales: Nation, Gender and Identity*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007.
- . Personal Interview. 12 Oct. 2012.
- . ‘Postcolonial Change’. *New Welsh Review* 67 (2005): 32-36.
- Aaron, Jane, and Chris Williams, eds. *Postcolonial Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2005.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Revised ed. London: Verso, 1991.
- Arnold, Matthew. ‘The Function of Criticism at the Present Time’. *The*

- Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, Jeffrey J. Williams. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001. 806-825.
- 'The Association for Welsh Writing in English'. *Swansea University Website*. Web. 9 Jun. 2014.
- Balsom, Denis. 'The Three Wales Model'. *The National Question Again*. Ed. John Osmond. Llandysul: Gomer, 1985. 1-17.
- Beddoe, Deirdre. 'Images of Welsh Women'. *Wales: The Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity*. Ed. Tony Curtis. Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986. 227-238.
- Bhabha, Homi. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1994.
- Billig, Michael. *Banal Nationalism*. London: SAGE Publications, 1995.
- Bloom, Harold. *The Western Canon: The Books and School of the Ages*. London: Papermac, 1995.
- Bohata, Kirsty. 'A Female Tradition'. *New Welsh Review* 80 (2008): 25-33.
- . 'Psycho-colonialism' Revisited'. *New Welsh Review* 69 (2005): 31-39.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Trans. Richard Nice. London: Routledge, 1986.
- Breuilly, John. 'Approaches to Nationalism'. *Mapping the Nation*. Ed. Gopal Balakrishnan. London: Verso, 1996. 146-174.
- Brown, Tony. 'Editorial'. *Welsh Writing in English: A Yearbook of Critical Essays* 1 (1995): 3-4.
- Clifford, James. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. London: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Cosgrove, Denis, and Stephen Daniels. 'Introduction: Iconography and Landscape'. *The Iconography of Landscape: Essays on the Symbolic Representation, Design and Use of Past Environments*. Eds. Denis Cosgrove and Stephen Daniels. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. 1-10.

- The Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee of the Welsh Assembly.
Welsh Writing in English: A Review. March 2004. Web. 20 Oct. 2009.
- Davies, Damian Walford, and Lynda Pratt, eds. *Wales and the Romantic Imagination*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007.
- Davies, John. *A History of Wales*. Revised Ed. London: Penguin, 2007.
- Davies, Richard. Personal Interview. 2 Nov. 2011.
- Davies, Ron. 'Devolution: A Process Not an Event'. Iwa.org.uk. Web. 8 Sep. 2011.
- Dearnley, Moira. *Distant Fields: Essays in Eighteenth-Century Fictions of Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. 'From Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature'. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, Jeffrey J. Williams. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001. 1598-1601.
- Duara, Prasenjit. 'Historicising National Identity, or Who Imagines What and When'. jan.ucc.nau.edu. Web. 3 Jan. 2011.
- Eagleton, Terry. *The English Novel: An Introduction*. Oxford, Blackwell, 2005.
 ---. *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. 2nd Ed. London: Blackwell, 1996.
- Eliot, T.S. 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, Jeffrey J. Williams. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001. 1093-1098.
- Entwistle, Alice. *Poetry, Geography, Gender: Women Rewriting Contemporary Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013.
- Foucault, Michael. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*. Ed. Colin Gordon, trans. Colin Gordon, Leo Marshall, John Mepham, Kate Soper. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980.
- Garlick, Raymond. 'Editorial'. *Dock Leaves* 2/6 (1951): 1-7.

- . *An Introduction to Anglo-Welsh Literature: Writers of Wales Series*. Eds. Meic Stephens and R. Brinley Jones. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1970.
- ‘Gomer Response to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee Policy Review – English Medium Writing in Wales’.
assemblywales.org. Web. 19 Feb. 2009.
- Gramich, Katie, ed. *Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English*. Cardigan: Parthian, 2010.
- . *Twentieth-Century Women’s Writing in Wales: Land, Gender and Belonging*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2007.
- Harris, John. ‘Popular Images’. *Welsh Writing in English: A Guide to Welsh Literature: Vol. VII*. Ed. M. Wynn Thomas. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003. 203-221.
- Hillis Miller, J. ‘Optic and Semiotic in *Middlemarch*’. *The Worlds of Victorian Fiction*. Ed. Jerome H. Buckley. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975. 125-145.
- ‘Honno Response to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee Policy Review – English Medium Writing in Wales’.
assemblywales.org. Web. 19 Feb. 2009.
- Hooker, Jeremy, ed. *Imagining Wales: A View of Modern Welsh Writing in English*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001.
- Howe, Irving. ‘History and the Novel’. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, Jeffrey J. Williams. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001. 1535-1547.
- Hroch, Miroslav. ‘From National Movement to the Fully Formed Nation: The Nation-Building Process in Europe’. *Mapping the Nation*. Ed. Gopal Balakrishnan. London: Verso, 1996. 78-97.
- Humfrey, Belinda. ‘Prelude to the Twentieth Century’. *Welsh Writing in*

- English: A Guide to Welsh Literature: Volume VII*. Ed. M. Wynn Thomas. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003. 7-46.
- Jarvis, Matthew. *Welsh Environments in Contemporary Poetry: Welsh Writing in English*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008.
- John, Angela V. 'Introduction'. *Our Mother's Land: Chapters in Welsh Women's History 1830-1939*. Ed. Angela V. John. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1991. 1-15.
- Jones, Bobi. 'The Anglo-Welsh'. *Dock Leaves* 4/10 (1953): 23-28.
- . 'Demise of the Anglo-Welsh?'. Trans. by Richard Poole. *Poetry Wales*. 28/3 (1993): 14-18.
- Jones, Glyn. *The Dragon Has Two Tongues: Essays on Anglo-Welsh Writers and Writing*. 1968. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001.
- Jones, Gwyn. 'The First Forty Years: Some Notes on Anglo-Welsh Literature'. *Triskel One: Essays on Welsh and Anglo-Welsh Literature*. Eds. Sam Adams and Gwilym Rees Hughes. Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1971. 75-95.
- Knight, Stephen. *A Hundred Years of Fiction*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2004.
- Leavis, F.R. *The Great Tradition*. 1948. New Ed. 1960. London: Chatto and Windus, 1979.
- Lewis, Saunders. *Is There an Anglo-Welsh Literature?*. Cardiff: Swyddfa Gofrestri, 1939.
- 'The Library of America: Home Page'. The Library of America. Web. 11 Jun. 2014.
- The Library of America: Nonprofit Publishing'. The Library of America. Web. 11 Jun. 2014.
- Lloyd, David T. *Writing on the Edge: Interviews with Writers and Editors of Wales*. Amsterdam, Atlanta GA: Rodopi, 1997.
- 'Mapping the Territory: Critical Approaches to Welsh Fiction in English'.

- ParthianBooks.Com. Web. 9 July 2011.
- Massey, Doreen. *Space, Place and Gender*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994.
- Mathias, Roland. *Anglo-Welsh Literature: An Illustrated History*. Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1987.
- . *A Ride Through the Wood: Essays on Anglo-Welsh Literature*. Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1985.
- ‘Matthew Arnold’. *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Vincent B. Leitch, William E. Cain, Laurie Finke, Barbara Johnson, John McGowan, Jeffrey J. Williams. New York: W.W. Norton, 2001. 802-806.
- McCrum, Robert. ‘The 100 Greatest Novels of All Time: The List’. TheGuardian.com, 12 Oct. 2003. Web. 4 Feb. 2010.
- ‘Meic Stephens Response to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee Policy Review – English Medium Writing in Wales’. assemblywales.org. Web. 19 Feb. 2009.
- Ohmann, Richard. *The Politics of Letters*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1987.
- Owen, Tomos. ‘The London Kelt, 1895-1914: Performing Welshness, Imagining Wales’. *Almanac: Yearbook of Welsh Writing in English* 13 (2009): 109-125.
- Poole, Ross. *Nation and Identity*. London: Routledge, 1999.
- Prescott, Sarah. *Eighteenth-Century Writing from Wales: Bards and Britons*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008.
- Relph, Edward. *Place and Placelessness*. London: Pion, 1976.
- Rice, Philip, and Patricia Waugh, eds. *Modern Literary Theory: A Reader*. 4th Ed. London: Hodder Arnold, 2001.
- Robertson, Iain, and Penny Richards. ‘Introduction’. *Studying Cultural Landscapes*. Eds. Iain Robertson and Penny Richards. London: Hodder Arnold, 2003. 1-18.

- Scott Howard, W. 'Landscapes of Memorialisation'. *Studying Cultural Landscapes*. Eds. Iain Robertson and Penny Richards. London: Hodder Arnold, 2003. 47-69.
- 'Seren Response to the Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Committee Policy Review – English Medium Writing in Wales'. assemblywales.org. Web. 19 Feb. 2009.
- Smith, Dai. 'A Novel History'. *Wales: The Imagined Nation: Essays in Cultural and National Identity*. Ed. Tony Curtis. Bridgend: Poetry Wales Press, 1986. 131-158.
- . Personal Interview. 25 Oct. 2011.
- . 'Psycho-colonialism'. *New Welsh Review*. 66 (2004): 22-29.
- Stephens, Meic. *A Select Bibliography: Literature in Twentieth-Century Wales*. London: The British Council's Literature Department, 1995.
- , ed. *The New Companion to the Literature of Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998.
- Tajfel, Henri. *Human Groups and Social Categories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.
- Tegai Hughes, Glyn. 'The Mythology of the Mining Valleys'. *Triskeel Two: Essays on Welsh and Anglo-Welsh Literature*. Swansea: Christopher Davies, 1973.
- Thomas, M. Wynn, ed. *Corresponding Cultures: The Two Literatures of Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999.
- , ed. *Difffinio Dwy Lenyddiaeth Cymru: Y Meddwl Ar Dychymyg Cymreig*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995.
- . *Internal Difference: Literature in 20th Century Wales*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1992.
- . 'Introduction'. *Welsh Writing in English: A Guide to Welsh Literature: Vol. VII*. Ed. M. Wynn Thomas. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003. 1-7.

- Wacquant, Loïc. *Pierre Bourdieu and Democratic Politics*. Cambridge, Polity Press, 2005.
- White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. 1987. London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- . *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*. London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- Williams, Chris. *Capitalism, Community and Conflict: The South Wales Coalfield 1898-1947*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998.
- Williams, Gwyn Alf. *When Was Wales?*. London: Penguin, 1985.
- Williams, Raymond. *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. 1958. London: Penguin, 1979.
- . *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence*. London: Hogarth Press, 1984.
- . *Marxism and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- . 'Welsh Culture'. *Who Speaks For Wales? Nation, Culture, Identity*. Ed. Daniel Williams. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003. 5-11.
- Williams, Waldo. 'Anglo-Welsh and Welsh'. *Dock Leaves* 2/5 (1951): 31-35.