POSTCOLONIAL WELSH MODERNISMS:
ETHNIC PERFORMATIVITY IN WELSH WRITING
OF THE LATE 19\textsuperscript{TH} AND 20\textsuperscript{TH} CENTURIES

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Introduction

Project Overview

The literary traditions of Wales have been linked with politics since the appearance of literary texts in the Welsh language in the 6th century (e.g. *Y Gododdin*). Thus, its literature can act as a litmus test for evaluating discourses surrounding the politics of national identity in relation to a long history of colonization. The particular era I aim to address is the late 19th and 20th centuries, an era which complicates notions of identity – not least of which are the notions of a national literary identity. While Anglophone writing in Wales had existed previously (e.g. George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, even some works by the distinctively Welsh author Iolo Morganwg), this period sees the rise of a discrete literary tradition that is outside but not necessarily in opposition to the Welsh language literature of Wales – a tradition that critics such as M. Wynn Thomas call Welsh Writing in English.

I include the 19th century since the dawn of the 20th century is an artificial (though not irrelevant) marker for evaluating identity, particularly as spatial notions of borders are at least equally as essential as temporal divisions. Additionally, the advance of colonial notions of identity is a sustained development during the period I address. The 19th century provides the foundation for much of the writings of the 20th century regarding the British Empire, especially given the rise of the Cymru Fydd movement for Welsh Home Rule and the peak of British Imperialism in the 1800s. In this era we find both imperial forces constructing “Welshness” in imperial terms and Welsh reactions against those constructions in nationalist contexts. These
reactions to imperialist definitions occur in both of the main literary languages of Wales, namely English and Welsh. I intend to explore the ways in which several Welsh writers, and English writers of Welsh descent, respond to and reconstruct these related notions of Britishness and Welshness during this period; Gerard Manley Hopkins, Saunders Lewis, David Jones and Kate Roberts each reveal nuances in perspective during this period in which the British Empire reached its peak and required popular justification for doing so.

From a Welsh perspective, the authors I address may not appear to be an automatically natural group due to their variety of genres and even languages they employ. Despite the differences in these authors and the literary and cultural traditions they reference, each struggles with imperial constructions of identity and influences the Welsh nation as it stands today. Indeed, it is this very quality of diversity that I find particularly appealing for this project, as I will regard each author as a separate case study for definitions of Britishness rather than attempting to find one unified view within modernist British texts. While I define this concept in greater detail below, at its most basic level I take Britishness to mean the attempt to reduce ethnic differences in Britain to one singular identity. In other words, through the goal of leading the various populations of Britain (and often Ireland) to understand themselves as British, the state would aim to create citizens loyal to global imperial projects while removing a strong sense of diversity at home. At the same time, what most characterizes Britishness is the ideal of Englishness, so that an Anglocentric culture could spread throughout the isles under the noble guise of unity while giving nominal lip service to regional and ethnic differences.

I address these authors in greater detail in the Chapter Outlines section below, but a brief summary should be helpful before going into more theoretical concepts. The first of the authors whose works I aim to address is Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889), who represents a hybrid
identity that is thoroughly Victorian in its subordination of Celticness to Britishness. While he embraces Welsh identity as distinct, having its own literary and cultural traditions, he also appropriates it as an element of Britishness that can be claimed by a non-nationalist, non-Welsh speaker. Saunders Lewis (1893-1985) was a dramatist and poet, who co-founded the Welsh nationalist party, Plaid Cymru. His body of work and political action reveal a strain in Welsh thought that sets present-day and historical Wales in contrast to the contemporary British Empire, as the policies of the empire led to the suppression of the Welsh language and culture in favor of ubiquitous, monolithic notions of Britishness. David Jones (1895-1974), a poet and visual artist, was friends with Saunders Lewis and a fellow Roman Catholic, but held different views regarding the notion of Britishness. Though he upheld that Welsh culture was unique and to be valued, he believed it played an essential role in the historical British Empire, and that the empire would not be the empire without the culture, language and political history of Wales. My analysis of the unpublished correspondence between David Jones and Saunders Lewis from the National Library of Wales will be central to understanding the relationship between the identity case studies of Jones and Lewis. Kate Roberts (1891-1985), another member of Plaid Cymru, is primarily known for her Welsh language short stories and is called the “Queen of Welsh Literature.” However, instead of locating Welsh particularities in the mythology and religion of the past, she depicts the contemporary, poor, Welsh-speaking and industrial North Wales as the key site for understanding Welsh identity. Additionally, her works present challenges to solely traditional roots of Welshness through a confrontation with the hegemony of patriarchy in Wales.

**Terminology**

*Celticness*
As I address in later chapters, Celticness informs exterior definitions of racial and ethnic difference among the peoples of Britain and Ireland. While Hopkins, Lewis, Jones and Roberts each tend to concern themselves more overtly with Welshness in relation to Britishness, the common discussions of Celtic identity at the time form a ubiquitous subtext to which these authors respond. The term “Celtic” may have romantic connotations in that some associate it with romantic or mystified notions of “magic” (e.g. Matthew Arnold) or with misty lands where the spirits still interact with the living (e.g. the Otherworld). However, the term seems to have a substantive denotation in that it categorizes certain groups of people according to perceived similarities, whether these perceptions are internal or external. I say “perceived” due to the fact that ancient Celtic tribes may not have viewed each other as similar (whether due to cultural differences or simply that each tribe had a different ruler and would be hence a distinct group); however, if both “outsiders” and “insiders” agree with the terminology, a case can be made that the people in question do fall into a designated group. Due to the slippery nature of language, it may be tempting to throw out the term “Celtic” as vague or imprecise; yet approaching language pragmatically, the term is useful in that it does in fact describe a sense of unity found in certain groups, however tenuous it may be, that is not found in the same fashion or to the same extent between one of these groups and outsiders. In today's terminology, “Celtic” may serve as a collective cultural definition or label for the “non-English” groups living in Britain and Ireland especially.

I look to A.D. Smith’s criteria for an ethnie in order to attempt to establish a sense of commonality between the various groups in question. The first Smith category is the “Collective Name”; since the name “Celtic” is provided from outside (having Greek and Roman roots), it does not require any more detail here – especially since, presumably, the collective name comes
from the recognition of the other unified qualities that appear below. The next condition is the “Common Myth of Descent”; yet even this is tenuous on its own, since individual tribes of Celts (here I am thinking mainly Hallstatt and La Tene, of which little is known) may have had a common myth of descent that was not shared with other tribes. However, in the present day Celtic groups do seem to share this descent myth; the mythomoteur (or the general structure which gives a group of people meaning) of such Celts can be seen as twofold: first, that they descend from continental Celts who shared a similar language, and second, that they define themselves in contrast to outside invaders (i.e. definition by negation – Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Manx and Cornish are Celts in that they live in a historically English-dominated area but are not English, and Bretons are not French/Franks). The third quality, “Shared History,” is loose for these various groups, but as previously stated is still perceived from within Celtic groups today through the common myth of descent. “Shared Culture,” the fourth category, is also a bit sketchy; as far as religion is concerned ancient Celts were pagan while more contemporary Celts tend to be Christian, and the music of Halstatt era Celts would certainly not have the modern instrumentation of contemporary Celtic music (e.g. guitars, fiddles, etc.). However, certain elements may be said to be congruent. First is language, which Smith states is not necessary for an ethnie but can prove useful as a uniting force among peoples. Linguistic experts have found relations of language between ancient Celtic groups and contemporary ones; for example, the continental word “dunum” (meaning fortress) serves as the antecedent form of similar words in both P- and Q-Celtic strains (P-Celtic words descending from “dunum” either begin with “din” or “dyn,” while Q-Celtic forms begin with “dun”).¹ Second is art, as ancient Celts and contemporary Celts use similar motifs and trends throughout their work. For example, the

¹ One of Ptolemy’s maps of Britain uses the term “dunum” to mark what was likely a Celtic hillfort; see John T. Koch’s *An Atlas for Celtic Studies* for a more substantial discussion of Celtic place names (particularly pages 4-6).
triskelion was a common trope in the classical era, yet it can still be found on the Manx flag. This may be due to the fact that there are ancient artifacts which still provide reference points for Celts of the current era (such as standing stones, or the Vix krater, etc.) and allow for a sense of continuity over time. The fifth quality is a “Shared Territory”; once again, this can be easily satisfied when considering individual groups (the Parisii lived in Parisii territory, just as contemporary Bretons live in Brittany), but it is more difficult to apply to Celtic peoples as a whole since current Celtic nations occupy territories that are distinct from one another. However, this difficulty does not mean impossibility, as contemporary Celts may define their territory collective in terms of such notions as “this land (whether it be Scottish, Breton or Welsh) is Celtic land, not English or French land” (once again definition by negation). The sixth and final category is the “Sense of Solidarity,” which means that the various groups perceive a similar identity themselves – similar enough to call themselves by the name of such a group. Authors such as Hélias (Breton) and Yeats (Irish) both employ the term to describe their own people, suggesting that they see a commonality based on the previous criteria. For the skeptic, these six criteria may seem impossible to satisfy, given the fractured nature of Celtic societies; however, the fact that Western Europeans use the term and have a basic sense of what it means (in part based on these six criteria) suggests that the term is useful and thus should be used. The fact that both outsiders see similar qualities between Celtic groups and the fact that Celtic groups themselves embrace the broad term suggests that, while not perfect, the term does have a degree of accuracy and utilitarian function.

There seem to be both necessary and sufficient conditions for being considered “Celtic” – that is, certain elements are required, while others may build up to an overall gestalt that appears

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2 Current pan-Celtic festivals, such as the annual The Festival Interceltique de Lorient in Brittany, show the interest in mutual identification among Celtic groups since the founding of such festivals in the 1960s.
to be Celtic. In addition, a certain Celtic group may have cultural qualities that might not be considered distinctly Celtic, but rather participate in a broader movement outside the confines of what is generally understood to be Celtic (e.g. continental qualities, such as the Christian religion would become, or global as certain businesses may integrate into the market of Celtic nations without being considered “Celtic” franchises). Certain characteristics may be shared by all the Celtic groups (necessary conditions), while those outside may not be part of the larger Celtic label even if they are part of a society which could be described as participating in the larger Celtic label. Other distinct qualities may be possessed by a certain Celtic group (and thus may be a quality that can be called “Celtic”) while not necessarily being shared by all the Celtic groups (i.e. sufficient conditions).

Writers of Celtic origin have indeed struggled for definitions of identity in the aftermath of English conquest and colonization. Due to the nature of colonization, this becomes a more increasingly difficult task through the process of Anglicizing Celtic peoples. Throughout the 20th century, each of the 5 non-Continental Celtic peoples (i.e. the Irish, Scottish, Manx, Welsh and Cornish) have had more English speakers than speakers of their respective Celtic languages. Each author I address in later chapters deal with this process of carving out a national identity (including evaluating whether or not this is even possible) within the context of Anglicization.

**Britishness**

Wales has a rather unique status in that it can be understood as both “Celtic” and “British,” a status shared by few other nations at different points in history. “British” is a very elastic term, and the various definitions can be used as a tool by different groups to suit their own purposes. Though I intend to articulate these shifting definitions in greater depth in each chapter,
on the most basic level British literally means inhabitants of the Island of Britain. Yet even this simple geographical boundary for the definition can prove insufficient and transient, since Britain has seen waves of settlement by many distinct peoples speaking different languages. Archaeological data suggests that there were pre-Celtic peoples (such as those who created Stonehenge and other such megalithic sites); classical history links Celtic peoples on the Island of Britain with those on the European continent, and contemporary linguists have labeled the pre-Welsh Celtic language spoken in Britain as Brythonic (Koch 3-4); however, today the term “British” often conjures up associations with the “English,” whose contemporary culture is a mix of Germanic Anglo-Saxons and Norman influences and is traditionally defined in opposition to the Celtic residents of Britain (e.g. the Welsh, the Scottish and the Cornish). Still, this account of Britishness does not even address recent immigrants from the European Union and the British Commonwealth, nor the inhabitants of Northern Ireland who may identify as British due to their participation as a constituent nation in the UK but do not reside on the island of Britain itself.

A further complication is this terminology of “constituent nation.” The UK’s formulation of constituent nations complicates the imperial project to some extent, as the Celtic peoples of separate nations (and with separate national assemblies) are politically united under the British rule of the United Kingdom centered in London’s Westminster; in other words, the term British can be used as an umbrella term to obscure ethnic and cultural separateness. Currently the traditionally Celtic areas of Scotland, N. Ireland and Wales each have separate assemblies from the seat of British power in Westminster, with varying degrees of power. Yet even before these assemblies, Wales and Scotland in particular were still understood as distinct nations from England, but simply ones without sovereignty. English acknowledgement of these areas as separate nations could be used to preserve the standard of cultural superiority used to justify
English rule over these other nations, while simultaneously preserving the umbrella term of British to assimilate non-English peoples and thus safeguard against calls for national sovereignty.

Hence, as Britishness justifies the central rule over all of Britain, the separate and superior sense Englishness provides justification for distinctly English quality of official, ruling British culture. English is the only official language of the entire UK, and only recently has Welsh gained the same status within Wales; however, the status of Welsh has not been extended to be an official language outside of the Welsh borders. Furthermore, Wales has had an English prince since the late 13th century. As a result, understanding Wales as a nation cannot correctly depend upon any principle of political sovereignty.

While it would be in the empire’s best interest to preserve this vague understanding of Wales as a non-sovereign nation within an inclusive Britishness, the term Britishness can be also used by Welsh nationalists in an exclusive sense. According to this narrative of British identity, the Welsh are the descendents of the true, original Britons/Brythons, whereas the English are Germanic invaders and/or Norman imperialists. This narrative depends on the primacy of historical chronology, and assumes to a certain extent that any pre-Saxon conflict in Wales (such as pre-Celts vs. Celts, Celtic tribe vs. Celtic tribe, Romans vs. Celts, etc.) either did not fundamentally change the nature of British identity or it is merely lost to history and impossible to reconstruct. It also depends on mythology such as the medieval Welsh collection of tales known as *The Mabinogion*, in which the main characters traverse a distinctly pre-Saxon Isle of Britain. Although the earliest surviving sources were written in the 13th century, the borders between what would have been contemporary England and Wales are absent. This is particularly clear when Bran, the giant king of Britain, requests that upon his death his head should be buried
in London as a protection against other invading forces. Regarding definitions of the term “British,” Welsh nationalists do not typically seek to find solidarity in union with the rest of contemporary Britain, but rather tend to look toward other former colonies or semi-detached dominions, such as Canada, India, Australia, Ireland, America, etc., as models for successful separation from British power centered in England.

One of the most important methods of justifying the empire was to create a new notion of Britishness as a masculine, civilized and thus naturally dominant global force. The constructed qualities of Welshness, however, are more complex in that Welsh people both participated in the broadly British colonization of other territories and were colonized themselves by the English. On the one hand, difference from the English justifies colonization of a Wales characterized as feminine, unruly and yet naturally submissive. On the other, the idea of Welshness being a subset of Britishness and the subsequent complicity of the Welsh in the British imperial project can serve as a substantial objection for Wales being considered (post)colonial. Yet it is common for indigenous peoples of colonial territories to participate in their own subjugation, or that of other peoples, or that of other groups within their own nation. As Declan Kiberd argues, it is possible to simultaneously be both colonizer and colonized, both subjugated and complicit in subjugation (18).

The relationship between Wales, Welsh and British identities and Welsh writing is unique, given that Wales had been subjugated long before the period I aim to address and, for better or worse, its history has been closely intertwined with that of its colonizer for centuries. As a result, notions of Welsh identity tend to be at least as complex as the typical colonial paradigms of oppositional identity allow. I intend to contribute to the relatively new discussion of a postcolonial Wales through a theoretical understanding of the varying models of ethnic and
cultural identity in the region. I will analyze how certain 19th and 20th century texts and authors act as case studies to represent Wales in relation to general understandings of modern Britain. While Wales is not a strictly bilingual constituent nation of the UK, since Welsh speaking communities and literary traditions can be quite distinct from their English-speaking counterparts, I intend to argue that its writers do in fact have a degree of crossover and exchange of ideas regarding identity. As a result, I will be addressing works written in English and in Welsh (though the latter group mainly in translation) in order to emphasize the distinct kinds of Welshness of both traditions, rather than either collapsing the two traditions into a monolithic Welsh culture or separating the two in a manner that would more or less allow the canon of the literature of England to subsume “Welsh writing in English” as a subcategory. My critical approaches to these texts participate in several relatively new theoretical paradigms, which, in addition to the Postcoloniality of Wales (addressed in its own chapter below), include Ethnic Performativity and the Multiconsciousness of National Identity.

**Ethnic Performativity**

Others critics such as Corey Frost, Sean Griffin, and Debby Thompson have applied the notion of performativity to race and ethnicity, but I intend to develop a more comprehensive theoretical model of ethnic performativity. Frost provides one of the only working understandings of ethnic performativity, in which ethnicity, like gender for Judith Butler, is a “constantly performed construction rather than an essential attribute” (195). Frost then links Bhabha and Butler by writing that “hybridity in an exaggerated form demonstrates the fluidity of the content of cultural identity” and emphasizing the elasticity and re-assemblage of ethnic identities (208). Debby Thompson addresses a biological notion of racial performativity, rather
than the more cultural performativity of ethnicity, and suggests that the racial emphasis is a harmful construct resulting in the real world effects of racism when she writes that race is a “trap constructed by and upholding racism” (137). Sean Griffin emphasizes the non-authenticity of a performatively approach to ethnicity when he writes, “identity is also consistently treated as a costume that the protagonists can put on and discard on a whim, encapsulating ideas of masquerade and performativity” (76). While Thompson and Griffin see danger in such ethnic performativity, either as a means of constructing and reinforcing racist essentialism or as a way to assume another identity (i.e. a “bluff”) when convenient, Frost hints at the more productive aspects of the term. The key to Judith Butler’s notion of performativity is that identity is not absolute, but rather that its aspects are socially constructed through performing in order to meet (or subvert) these social expectations. As she writes of gender, it is “in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts” (270). Gender, then, is not about being born a certain way and then permanently remaining that way, but instead develops through performed behavior that is often learned from the pressure to adopt social values. The lasting power of the symbolic law of normative identity occurs within a consistent but tacit pattern of citationality. Butler writes, “performativity cannot be understood outside the process of iterability, a regularized and constrained repetition of norms. And this repetition is not performed by a subject; this repetition is what enables a subject and constitutes the temporal condition of the subject. This iterability implies that 'performance' is not a singular 'act' or event, but a ritualized production, a ritual reiterated under and through constraint, under and through the

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3 Butler also writes that performativity can apply to other aspects of identity, including ethnicity, in part “because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced at maintained” (Gender Trouble 4-5).
force of prohibition and taboo” (60). This model diverges from two common models of identity: a) pure determinism, in which some model of identity is imposed upon a powerless individual or group by an exterior force, or b), pure individualism, in which the individual subject arbitrarily creates a fixed identity without being constrained by exterior norms. Rather, it is the reiteration of collective norms and the tacit citation of symbolic law to govern collective norms that produces and generates notions of individual identity.

However, it is this very process of reiteration that paradoxically opens a set of norms to criticism. Society assumes identity to be secure, as the reiterated norms build upon previous iterations to create the compacted and reductive stability of sedimentation, but the repetition of constrained performances will also, over time, reveal and test the flaws of normative identity. The revelation of these flaws can be unsettling, and may prompt attempts to create new notions of identity or to reference previous historical models that are allegedly more stable. To use a biological parallel, this latter method would be akin to finding a fossil and considering the species in terms of its fixity over time as a fossil rather than its place as both ancestor and descendent within the constantly shifting evolutionary process. This criticism of norms occurred on a large scale during the late 19\textsuperscript{th} and early 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries, since periods of social upheaval may drive communities to revaluate norms by referencing previous historical models (particularly when a society has greater access to historical records and shifting notions of identity over time through growing literacy rates) or by simply mocking current models; to return to the concepts of Judith Butler, social movements can attempt to either performatively \emph{reaffix} current identity within a notion of a stable past or they can \emph{unfix} identity through new performatives in order to threaten the hegemony of current norms. In other words, the plausibility of creating an entirely
new norm is suspect, but subversion of previous norms can be an effective response to hegemonic structures.

**The Multiconsciousness of National Identity**

Given the complexity of the simultaneous presence of normative Westernness, Otherness, Britishness, Welshness and Celticness in the various authors I address, performativity often plays out as a DuBoisean “double-consciousness” or even multiple-consciousness in which simultaneously holding various social statuses defines conceptions of self identity and collective identity. Much like Paul Gilroy’s “Black English” figure, who bears linguistic or other cultural similarities to the figures in the center of the dominant standard while remaining on the fringe due to differences in appearance and cultural history, the four focal authors in my dissertation present a variety of permutations and affiliations regarding the conceptual categories of identity listed above. The complexities of multiple consciousness appropriately mesh with Butlerian notions of identity, as Gilroy writes, “whatever the radical constructionists may say, [multiple consciousness] is lived as a coherent (if not always stable) experiential sense of self. Though it is often felt to be natural and spontaneous, it remains the outcome of practical activity: language, gesture, bodily significations, desires” (102). While acknowledging that this stable sense of self is, in Butler’s terms, a “ruse of phallogocentric power” (19), Gilroy illustrates how this ruse gains power through the “practical activity” of reiteration that consolidates multiple consciousness into a form which can be conveyed through literary means as a currently viable identity model.

**Chapter Outlines**
In Chapter 1 I expound upon scholarly debates regarding postcoloniality in greater detail. While looking to previous critical works to provide a practical definition of the postcolonial, I look to various global analogues to draw similarities to Wales and to highlight Welsh elements that, while unique to Wales among other colonies, show the depth of colonial variation without negating Wales’s colonial status. I will argue that Wales can be considered the first territory colonized by the English, even preceding Ireland, in that the Norman lords of the Welsh Marches led the first sustained effort to colonize Ireland. Despite this, Wales has a problematic relationship with the definitions of postcolonialism. This nation experienced the external control of land and resources by the English in the Medieval period, before the dawn of capitalism – although colonial relations continued in Wales through the development of capitalism, and the feudal system clearly worked under the assumptions of exploitation for capital gain (that is to say, feudalism and capitalism should not be set up as oppositional binaries, but have certain commonalities despite their differences). Initially Germanic tribes conquered and displaced the ancestors of the Welsh (as their land and resources were appropriated, rather than being settled as a colony; Maier 164); once displaced to Wales, this Celtic group was made subject to the English Crown in the late 13th century, and was formally annexed via the 16th century Acts of Union, in which Wales was no longer considered a Principality, but was “shired” according to the English system of land organization, and English law and language were imposed (Maier 175-176).

Chapter 2 provides an overview of Welsh literary traditions while giving particular focus to the role of proto-Modernism in the late 19th century and Modernism the first half of the 20th, drawing attention to issues of both form and content. The poetry of Wales, and particularly the tradition of <i>cynghanedd</i> (a form of sequential alliteration), has traditionally been the primary mode of performing a Welsh literary (or bardic) identity. I argue that Gerard Manley Hopkins
uses and adapts this particular poetic form. Yet even when Hopkins, Saunders Lewis, David Jones and Kate Roberts embrace new or non-traditional literary forms (e.g. drama, the novel and Modernist poetry), they do so within a context of understanding Welsh identity as contemporary and popular, rather than archaic and elitist. Regarding content, each of the four authors still reference the sociopolitical role of the Celtic bard – a role that has been adopted consistently, albeit on a less official basis, ever since the demise of the Celtic societal structure – as an example of the artist’s relationship to society, but in distinctly modern or Modernist terms as a way of adapting the concept to industrialization, the fracturing of society, and the British Empire. The topics of postcoloniality and Modernism in the first two chapters provide a contextual frame in which to evaluate the literary constructions of colonial identity by the respective authors of each subsequent chapter.

Chapter 3 is the first author-centered chapter, which will focus on the proto-Modernist Victorian poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins. Hopkins sees himself as simultaneously English and Welsh, and he advocates a form of hybridity that takes cues from Matthew Arnold’s construction of Britishness as the virtuous means between the vicious extremes of Celtic and Germanic elements. This model, as was common in the Victorian era, appropriates a romanticized notion of a Celtic British past, most clearly identified in the figure of Arthur, and combines it with an understanding of Prussian organization.

Hopkins’s singular use of the traditional Welsh form of *cynghanedd* (both in English and in Welsh language poems) also illustrates a tension between the collective and the individual, mirroring a shift from the solidarity of empire projected by the Victorian state to the lack of assurance that is common to Modernism. In addition to performing Arnoldian Britishness, Hopkins’ ideal of Welshness comes from his identity as an Englishman who sees himself as
partly Welsh but also resistant to contemporary Wales. As a Jesuit missionary in North Wales, he
decried the Welsh for being stubbornly Protestant instead of embracing a previous Catholic
heritage. As a nature poet, he lamented the British tendency to move toward industrialization, yet
does so without specifically addressing the Welsh people who he lived among.

Saunders Lewis is the focus of Chapter 4. He, too, performs a hybrid identity, but rather
than emphasizing Welshness within Britishness he constructs a Welsh identity in opposition to
Englishness which exists primarily within a broader European context. Although born in
England (within a Welsh community in Merseyside), Lewis would come to the conclusion that
Welsh political independence is necessary to preserve the distinct Welsh culture that is centered
around the Welsh language. In terms of double-consciousness, Lewis appears to advocate a
Europeanly Welsh identity and condemns the notion that Welsh is a subset or even equal partner
to broad Britishness (i.e. Welshness and Europeanness form the basis of Lewis’s double-
consciousness, rather than the more typical understanding of Welshness and
Britishness/Englishness).

Lewis co-founded Wales’s nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, and would become its
president from 1926-1939. While he spent much of his career on literary endeavors, many in
Wales remember him best for his 1962 BBC Wales radio lecture *Tynged yr Iaith* (“Fate of the
Language”). This address can provide more of a theoretical framework for the decline of the
Welsh language, as it references specific historical events that provide the background for the
fatalism in his Welsh language play *Cymru Fydd* (“Tomorrow’s Wales”). Lewis traces various
English actions which belie a systematic attempt by the English to eradicate Welsh language and
culture, such as the “Blue Books” of 1847\(^4\) which suggest that the Welsh educational system was in shambles, in large part due to the prevalent use the Welsh language. The Welsh would come to memorialize this event as *Brad y Llyfrau Gleision*, or “The Treachery of the Blue Books” – an allusion to the “Treachery of the Long Knives,” in which the Saxons of the 5\(^{th}\) century murdered Welsh nobles, emphasizing the long history of Welsh-English conflict (Brooks 121).

Lewis upholds that independence and self-governance is necessary for the survival of Welsh culture. Hence the title of Lewis’s drama is an allusion to the failed Home Rule movement in Wales in the latter part of the 19\(^{th}\) century called Cymru Fydd, which was itself modeled after the Irish Home Rule movement (Stephens 137); the failure of Cymru Fydd and the attempts at formulating pan-British solidarity in the World Wars meant that no other nationalist movements had risen to succeed Cymru Fydd until Saunders Lewis’ co-founding of the political party that would become known as Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales). This connects Lewis’s drama to watershed moments of historical oppression in the Welsh collective memory, but for Lewis this also serves as a call for foundational change as he links inextricably the future survival of Welsh language and culture with continuing pressure of anticolonial resistance.

Saunders Lewis constructs his nation as colonial in order to reevaluate the past and evaluate possible future directions for Wales, mainly through the characters of Bet and Dewi. I will analyze several key passages from the text in order to show how manipulation of language plays a key role in the attempted Anglicization of Wales; as with other British colonies, education and the promise of success in the British system provides an incentive for mimicry, and the failure of such promises contributes to the sense of personal cultural abandonment on one hand (which may lead to an attempt re-embrace of traditional culture, as seen with Bet) or

\(^4\) Kirsti Bohata links this report to Babington Macaulay’s 1835 “Minute of Education” for India, in that they both suggest that the state (morally, intellectually and spiritually speaking) of each respective nation would be drastically improved by a distinctly English education – essentially calling for the removal of indigenous culture (20).
cultural disillusionment on the other (e.g. Dewi). One role of the colonizer is to make the culture of the colonized appear to be foreign or backwards; thus, the task of many postcolonial texts is to redefine their respective nations in return, providing an indigenous alternative to the categorizations imposed by the external authority.

As with Lewis, David Jones sees Wales as aligned with broader European culture; also like Lewis, as a Catholic he is not against empire per se. However, Chapter 5 highlights his distinct perspective that comes with the fact that Wales, for Jones, becomes a necessary part of Britain as a whole within a European context, instead of Wales being pitted against England within Europe. David Jones’s long poem In Parenthesis works to construct a national identity which, mirroring the response of Britain’s fear of global strife during World War I, focuses on a broad Britishness by opening its arms to include differing factions within the population of the island. In Parenthesis takes a unique approach to the problem of establishing a common British national identity by underscoring a collective national consciousness while at the same time highlighting distinct ethnic variation; in fact, Jones asserts (at least in the case of Britain) that the former is not possible without the latter – which is to say that communal sharing in the historical and mythical Welsh narratives is essential to the project of defining a unified pan-British identity.

Jones’s poem works within this very tension between the ethnic/historical/cultural distinction of the Welsh and their separateness from English culture, yet establishes this distinction as an essential piece of the quality of “Britishness” in the present, modern era. The poem attempts this qualified union in the microcosm of soldiers at war; such comradeship between men-at-arms is shown to be a subset of national experience, as the company contains both English and Welsh soldiers with very distinct cultures and manners of speech. Jones not
only draws England and Wales together through the characters of the poem, but through style and allusions as well; the juxtaposition of ancient Welsh heroic poetry (e.g. *Y Gododdin*), Malory’s Arthurian cycle, and contemporary hymns and folk tunes highlights this model of diversity within the union to assert that Britain as a whole can claim the ancient heritage of the indigenous Celts (i.e. not only Celtic culture, but the Celtic connection to the Roman Empire, etc.).

Thus Jones assembles a pastiche of styles from past and present to portray Britain as a unified entity, as particulars of each distinct group exist individually but also under the cover of universals. However, the historical subtexts in the poem betray the union which Jones attempts to establish. For example, the poem *Y Gododdin* lauds the bravery of Welsh warriors attempting to route Anglo-Saxon (i.e. English) invaders, and the historical Arthur (if there truly is one) would have been a warlord fighting against the Germanic trespassers who would become the English. In either case, the subtexts present in these allusions testify more to the division between the ethnic groups of Britain than to a unified essence; Arthur, for example, would be appropriated by the English (particularly in Malory, where Arthur is described as English rather than British), and the present unification between England and Wales stands in direct contrast to the warriors of *Y Gododdin* who attempt to keep Britain a distinctly Celtic land.

Chapter 6 addresses Kate Roberts, who also formed part of the literary circle surrounding Saunders Lewis and was a firm nationalist and Plaid Cymru member. Her literary influence in Wales is clear, and she delves into issues of class and gender in her writings more overtly than any of the other four authors. As I address her 1936 novel *Traed Mewn Cyffion* (“Feet in Chains”), I emphasize how she addresses performing the particular, regional Welsh identity of the small slate-quarrying towns of North Wales. While adherence to community values and the
Welsh language provides a definition by negation for such an identity (i.e. “we are Welsh in that we neither speak English nor participate in broader British, imperial and colonial concerns”), this communal abstinence from the assumed forces of modernization and her challenge to traditional gender roles redefine both local and broader understanding of what it means to be Welsh in Britain in the 20th century.

By looking at these different texts I hope to have established the flexibility of the explanatory powers of ethnic performativity. My dissertation aims to contribute to the fields of Postcolonial Theory and Welsh Studies through evaluating how authors construct and perform identity markers in the late 19th and 20th centuries for political purposes. My analyses can benefit the field of postcolonial theory through continuing to expand the critical discussion to include these four authors’ construction of Wales, thus providing both a new testing ground for traditional postcolonial concepts as well as expanding and problematizing critical limits; in turn, this dissertation will not only continue the recent introduction of postcolonial issues into Welsh Studies but it will also provide a means for categorizing elements contemporary cultural and political identity. As “British” and “Welsh” are indeed elastic terms, the effort to identify how various models for relating the two must be made in order to understand how these models are used for political ends, whether they aim at separateness and Welsh independence or attempt to instill a sense of pacification within the ideal of Anglocentric uniformity of the British Empire. By drawing on collective national memory presented in areas as diverse as history, myth, fashion, musical genres, gender norms, etc., and selecting preferred attributes of Welsh identity over time, the four authors I address either personally reiterate selected performative attributes or employ fictional characters to explore the viability of models of collective Welsh identity. Each
author formulates this consolidation differently, and in so doing each offers evidence for the dire grasp for stable national identities during the upheaval modern industrial Britain.
Chapter 1: Postcolonial & Performative Wales: Theory, Origins, Borders and Race

Postcolonial Wales

This project responds to critical debates in the field of literature by analyzing juncture points between postcoloniality and performativity, and it serves as an evaluation of literary responses to the foreign control of a land, its people and its goods in terms of ethnic identity. Wales and its Celtic inhabitants have been formally governed by England since the 16th century Acts of Union, and works of literature have frequently responded to issues of personal, ethnic and national identity ever since. There currently exists a critical research gap regarding literary perceptions of the place of Wales within the context of the British Empire, as only within the last decade or so have scholars produced any major work on evaluating Welsh literature in a postcolonial theoretical paradigm. Even then, these tend to focus on literature before the 20th century (e.g. Damien Walford Davies’s Wales and the Romantic Imagination); or if they do address 20th century literature they only briefly mention the four authors I address here (e.g. the Postcolonial Wales essay collection), despite my view that these authors can form a central part in understanding competing notions of Welsh national identities in this period. Additionally, there is some disagreement concerning which national identities fall into the categories of colonial or postcolonial. The fact that Wales has had representation within Britain's system of government separates it from many other areas of the British Empire (such as India, Kenya, etc.) which did not have full participation in the United Kingdom. Postcolonial critics such as Declan Kiberd and Angela Bourke have debated Ireland's place in postcolonial discourse, but comparatively little work appears regarding the similar yet distinct place of Wales within the
discourse. As a result, I intend to refer to this body of work on Ireland as an analog to the more recent and less fully-formed corpus on postcolonialism and Wales, while acknowledging the major differences between the two nations (not least of which include the differences in religion and geography).

A series of articles in the New Welsh Review in 2004 and 2005 give an overview of the major strains of thought regarding the application of postcolonial theory to Welsh texts. The series begins with the major question, posed by Dai Smith, of whether or not Wales can in any sense even be considered postcolonial. Smith proceeds to argue that Wales has never been a true colony and suggests that Welsh identity falls neatly under the umbrella heading of regional British identities. Jane Aaron provides the first response to Smith’s article, fairly describing the gist of Smith’s argument as being that any assertion of Wales as postcolonial “is not true – and cannot become true… because it has not been endorsed by Welsh historians” (32). Aaron identifies the major fallacy in Smith’s article, namely that humans cannot change the way the past is understood, and suggests that a notion of a colonial or postcolonial Wales has in fact been endorsed by a variety of historians as alternatives to reductive histories that collapse local identities under the heading of British.

Kirsti Bohata closes the series of articles in her two-fold critique of Smith. First she provides a historical account in which Wales can be understood as a colony, particularly before the 16th century Acts of Union. Second, and more importantly, she argues that “the validity of a postcolonial discussion of Welsh writing in English is not dependent on showing that Wales was once a colony or is now post-colonial, still less that Welsh history conforms to a linear model of conquest, colonialism and post-colonialism.” Rather, its unique history involves “the incorporation of Wales into England,” “cultural imperialism” and “Wales’s own imperialist
roles,” each of which can be fodder for a compelling postcolonial analysis even without considering Wales’s status as a colony (34). Bohata calls for moving from analyzing whether or not Wales is postcolonial to a critical evaluation of “things that postcolonialism does and does not offer to a study of Wales, and Welsh writing in English in particular” (36). For Bohata, postcolonial theory offers “tools for analysing history, colonial discourse, cultural imperialism” as well as “intercultural dynamics,” “the politico-economic foundations of hegemonic, subaltern and hybrid cultures,” “dynamics of power” and “liminal cultural spaces” (37, 38).

This discussion acts as a recent center for postcolonial discourse concerning Wales, highlighting in particular the need to move beyond a narrowly focused debate of whether or not Wales is postcolonial to a fruitful application of postcolonial theory to explore the intersection of politics and identity in Welsh literatures. Bohata’s article in particular draws attention to the usefulness, and even necessity, of postcolonial theory when evaluating the literature of a nation such as Wales⁵ that has a long and complicated history that problematizes any simple binary categorization between colonizer or colonized. While Smith tries to oversimplify Welsh identity to provide historically elegant perspective, Aaron and Bohata suggest that Welsh history, literature and identity is not conveniently collapsible.

At the same time, this series of articles also hints at a major area that has yet to be developed, namely the need to comprehensively and comparatively address the distinct literary traditions of Wales. Each of the three authors mentions “Welsh writing” and “Welsh writing in English,” drawing attention to these categories as different fields with different influences and (traditionally) different critics. Yet various works in the field of postcolonial Wales, such as Stephen Knight’s One Hundred Years of Fiction, tend to exclusively address texts originally

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⁵ I use the term “nation” here as it is widely used by Welsh people to describe Wales. This usage at least in part depends on the idea of “nations without states,” to use Monserrat Guibernau’s terminology (Nations without States: Political Communities in a Global Age).
written in English. While it is of utmost importance to stress the distinction between the two literary languages and traditions of Wales, and I can certainly understand the impulse to separate these traditions for analytical purposes, it is also necessary to evaluate them side-by-side in order to grasp the difference, fragmentation and hybridity that can occur (and how they occur) in a postcolonial context. Even how authors in the two areas choose to relate to each other is a political topic itself; Welsh language literature is often regarded as authentically Welsh (with all the baggage that comes with the term “authentic”), yet Welsh writers in English also construct Welsh literary heritage as a shared heritage. It is for this reason that the authors I choose to address in my dissertation represent distinct languages, regions, genders and even national affiliation, each of which contributes to the overall understanding of the multiple, particular dimensions that comprise a postcolonial Wales.

In addition to participating in a relatively new and burgeoning discourse surrounding the postcolonial nature of Wales and adding to the small amount of scholarship in English on Saunders Lewis and Kate Roberts, such a project is particularly timely given the current political landscape in Wales. The Welsh Assembly is slightly over a decade old, and in the Spring of 2011 Wales voted to have a greater degree of devolution from Westminster. These recent political changes will undoubtedly lead to new kinds of performative Welsh identity, and such identity is never just in the present; it draws on historical memory (whether based on events or myths) to contribute to contemporary notions of ethnic identity. I provide an analysis of critical trends regarding the notion of performative ethnic identity below.

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6 The Welsh National anthem, “Hen Wlad fy Nhadau” (“Ancient Land of my Fathers”) which was composed in 1856, mentions both land and language (“yr hen iaith barhau,” the old language forever”) as key aspects of understanding Welsh national identity.
Concepts of Colonialism and Ethnic Identity

"[C]olonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is contracted around an ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference… Mimicry is, thus the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power" (Bhabha 122-123).

Homi Bhabha’s work *The Location of Culture* delineates one of the key concepts of postcolonial theory – colonial mimicry. Mimicry often begins as a tool of the colonizer to regulate the colonized; that is, by rewarding or enforcing behaviors that resemble the colonizer, the colonizer can more easily control the colonial area (in part since it more closely resembles government at home) while at the same time demarcating authenticity (since the colonized may appear more like the colonizer but never fully becomes the colonizer). Yet mimicry is a double-edge sword of sorts, as the native population may choose Anglicization in order to gain some degree of power; in turn, this power could be used for some kind of resistance. Yet this resemblance to the colonizer is, as Bhabha discusses, a threat or menace to the colonizer, since it begins to deconstruct the binary logic of colonial discourse (i.e. the colonized is not opposite of the colonizer, due the presence of cultural resemblance). As a result, the colonizer would need to either shift focus to more unchanging categories (such as notions of racial difference for most of the British Commonwealth) or be forced to incorporate the Other as mimicry begins to cover
ethnic distinctions. This latter result happens to be the case, to some extent, with the Celtic peoples, though attempts to assert racial differences certainly did occur, as I will address below. The application of the notion of Britishness to Celtic peoples, rather than just figuring them as British imperial subjects, attempts to remove notions of difference to incorporate Celticness.

This project rests primarily within two theoretical realms dealing with identity politics – namely, the performative and the postcolonial. Judith Butler’s notion of performativity, or those aspects that are socially constructed prior to individual identity and performed within societal constraints in order to meet (or subvert) social expectations, has been central to my understanding of identity in general. An understanding of a given society as “postcolonial” means, for the purposes of ethnic identity, a negotiation between the two major concepts mentioned above: mimicry and living culture. These concepts provide an avenue for understanding how ethnic groups create a sense of self, either through adopting previous categories (often either according to colonial definitions or falling back upon a static definition of the perceived pre-colonial identity) or through developing a non-prescriptive culture in a new, postcolonial context. This negotiation certainly occurs in modern Wales, although much work on how that happens is yet to be done.

As mentioned above, only recently have scholars of literature begun to view Wales as a postcolonial nation, with Kirsti Bohata’s Postcolonialism Revisited being the seminal text on the matter. Yet the term “postcolonialism” has come to have several differing nuances of meaning, which can be problematic for evaluating Wales within a postcolonial context. However, there

7 To inform this notion of how the colonizer constructs the identity of the colonized I will be looking to Edward Said’s Orientalism. Though originally a depiction of how Western countries view Eastern countries, Said’s work can provide an analogy between many non-Eastern colonized nations (include the Celtic nations) in that the colonizer tends to construct the colonized as exotic and feminine and hence requiring the leadership of a rational and masculine colonizer. Orientalism can either be latent or manifest, that is either unconsciously held or overtly acted upon. Thus, even postcolonial texts that try to productively respond to the problems of colonization may in fact reveal the unconscious influence of colonial binaries. In the process of exoticizing the Celts and linking them to other colonized peoples, imperial discourse Orientalizes groups such as the Welsh according to these terms.
must be limitations built into a definition for the term to have the stability that is necessary for its usage. Ania Loomba states that colonialism is often defined as mere “settlement” by a certain people group in a new land, but more accurately the term refers to the “conquest and control of other people’s land and goods” (8). For Loomba, colonialism can be pre- or post-capitalism (a notion that would be contested by some critics), though it may have different manifestations; this is due to the fact that feudal control could, as with capitalism, still be a system of labor exploitation and of controlling “land and goods,” though in different ways (9). Postcolonialism, however, can be an even more problematic term. On one hand, the “post” prefix can be used in the sense of chronology – that is, occurring after an era of colonialism – or in the sense of ideology, where a new system has replaced colonialism (12). A nation’s independence, or even the beginning of anticolonial resistance, can mark the transition from colonial rule; however, many would argue that certain psychological or cultural remnants of colonialism can outlast the physical presence of a colonial power. The other key complication concerning the “post” prefix is the historical differences between various colonized groups in their transitions from colonial rule; as one nation or people’s experience can differ dramatically from another (based on who colonized, who was colonized, technology, international interest in a location’s decolonization, etc.), so resistance to colonization cannot simply be “collapsed into some pure oppositional essence” (19).

In order to evaluate Wales according to the terms of colonization, necessary and sufficient conditions of colonialism and postcolonialism must be distilled. When considering the range of colonized nations and their varied experiences, the necessary condition appears in

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8 A thing may have certain extra qualities that go beyond the necessary conditions of category A and may bear similarities to a category B, but meeting the necessary conditions may be enough for its consideration in the first category; that is to say, the presence of extra qualities and the lack of other certain qualities does not necessarily disqualify a thing from fitting the definition. E.g. a platypus may have a bill as fowl do, but it is still a mammal as it is a milk-producing species (the necessary condition).
Loomba’s previously mentioned criterion: *the foreign control of a land, its people and its goods*. If the entire history of England’s relations with Wales is to be included in the postcolonial discussion, the criterion of capitalism must be a sufficient condition; that is to say, the occurrence of colonization by an expressly capitalist power can only lead a nation closer to the center of the definition of colonialism, but is not a requirement per se (and of course, as mentioned before, Wales has had colonial experiences continuing into the capitalist era as well). Kirsti Bohata’s strategic and pragmatic approach to the discourse of postcolonialism bolsters the assertion of capitalism as a sufficient rather than necessary condition, for even if Wales should be considered on the fringe of the “postcolonial” given its differences from other British colonies, Bohata suggests that one can still use postcolonial criticism due to the similarities to and analogues with the colonies that may be closer to the center of the definition.

While Wales may hold both similarities and differences to other colonized regions and cultures, both are important to understanding the relationship between Wales and postcolonial theory. The similarities may be more obvious, as they provide analogues for comparison and there could be no case for understanding Wales as postcolonial without them. Although differences provide complications for this understanding, they also serve at least two important functions: 1) They stress that not all colonial situations are exactly the same, and that to suggest that they are would be to overlook key cultural, historical, geographical and philosophical distinctions in each case, and 2) Following this, differences can expand the notion of what constitutes colonialism through providing an alternative case study. Wales offers a new perspective on how the processes of colonization and postcolonialism occur and how they affect a given society. In other words, it is important to highlight that not all postcolonial situations are exactly the same, and that no instance can serve as the Platonic form of postcoloniality. This
does not mean we should avoid the term postcolonial, but nor does it mean that we should we collapse all distinctions to serve an overly tidy definition.

In addition to the variety of broad national postcolonial definitions, Paul Gilroy highlights the internal division that can occur within the individual subject. He writes, “The themes of nationality, exile, and cultural affiliation accentuate the inescapable fragmentation and differentiation of the black subject” (35). This principle can occur, although differently, within the Welsh population as well. Issues of nationality, cultural affiliation and language each play significant roles in this particular kind of fragmentation. As I will discuss further in the Saunders Lewis chapter, language has been at the forefront of Welsh nationalism over the last two centuries. In fact, nationalist voices often call for political independence for the main purpose of language protection. The nationalist discourses in Wales have followed a distinct intellectual history, where language is given primacy over other unifying ideals of race, people and nation, to the point where one can argue that to not have the language is to not be genuinely Welsh. This near equation of language and national identity presents a problem for the monoglot English speaker in Wales who must seek an alternative definition of Welshness in order to be included, whether that alternative be cultural, genetic, geographical, historical, mythical, etc. Of course, a deconstructive analysis of nationalism can follow from such obvious fragmentation. What if an individual has Welsh as a first language, but is culturally illiterate (meaning unaware or uninitiated into socially valued aspects of culture)? Such an individual would have the potential to access more resources about the culture, literature and history of Wales, but that potential may not lead to fulfillment. In fact, it is possible that a given monoglot English speaker may be more culturally engaged than a Welsh speaker. In that case, any other elements which could be regarded as Welsh distinctives do not necessarily follow from knowledge of the Welsh language.
Yet this internal division rests on the notion of ethnic purity in relation to language, and ignores the lived experience of hybridity. Hybridity, according to Homi Bhabha, is “a difference ‘within’ a subject that inhabits the rim of an ‘in-between’ reality” (19). More specifically, it is “the revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity through the repetition of discriminatory identity effects” (i.e. effects which “secure the ‘pure’ and original identity of authority”; 159). The narrative of purity in Wales seeks to establish ethnic continuity, in which “authenticity” is linked to age (i.e. the authentically Welsh individual speaks the ancient Welsh language in common with her Welsh ancestors). Hybridity, on the other hand, erases imagined notions of strict, temporal continuity – an objection, for example, could be that ancient Celtic tribes may have spoken the same language but still fought each other over territory – and instead upholds a coherentist “web” of ethnic identity that allows for variation and multiplication. This hybridity offers an alternative to the “inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures,” as those who bear a hybrid identity “are caught in the discontinuous time of translation and negotiation.” Rather than simply taking a mathematical mean between the colonizer and the colonized as a new standard, hybridity simultaneously resists colonial impositions and “the continuities and constancies of the nationalist tradition which provided a safeguard against colonial cultural impositions” (Bhabha 55).

Multiconscious Welshness, then, is a viable hybridity that embraces what may be perceived as fragmentation as a coherent network of identity markers instead. Like Gilroy’s “Black English” figure, the English-speaking Welsh person and the English person of Welsh descent both embody characteristics that eschew notions of cultural or ethnic purity. For example, an English person may have a Welsh name, leading local communities in England may perceive her as fringe, if not essentially “other”; yet because of geographical distance or a lack of
the Welsh language, a community in Wales may perceive this person as being primarily English. Multiconscious ethnicity requires negotiating various identity traits, whether selected, inherited or externally imposed. At times when hybridity is a threat to both “internal” and “external” imperialist notions of identity, the search for purity in dominant circles continues in order to establish an ethnic hierarchy. However, in negotiating multiconsciousness, versions of hybridity can become a new and apparently stable identity through practical reiteration. Individual performances select certain fragments from the past, and it is through this process that Welsh identity (like other ethnic identities) is imagined into being. Origin myths may point to an original hybridity, such as Britain being founded by the relocated Trojan Brutus, rather than purity; purity then becomes an easily deconstructed myth. However, it is important to note that a similar process of identity development can occur in a postcolonial context, in which nationalist thought becomes the new dominant strain and picks up the search for purity. Welsh nationalism, unlike some other forms of nationalism, tends to root this sense of purity within the indigenous language. How an individual or society of individuals configures the role of consciousness in relationship to lived identity – that is, how notions about identity in the past inform notions about identity in the present – is the realm of ethnic performativity.

**Ethnic Performativity: How Identity is Developed and Implemented**

The works of Joseph Roach (*Cities of the Dead*) and Diana Taylor (*The Archive and the Repertoire*) expand notions of performativity, particularly as they address the relationship between remembered history and lived performance. Roach argues that human cultures revise and replicate themselves through the process of surrogation. When culture creators leave or pass away, their role must be filled by a substitute performance that aims to enact a memory of
authenticity. Roach asserts that this inexact process of surrogation typically does not succeed; in fact, “improvised narratives of authenticity and priority may congeal into full-blown myths of legitimacy and origin” (3). The ideal of authenticity can become informed by exterior mimicry, as A) a definition by negation can lead to the production of caricatures by an outside group, and B) this caricature can be used or referenced to fill in the cultural vacuum in lieu of a seemingly genuine performance. The irony behind the drive to develop a narrative of cultural authenticity is that the standard of pure performances is constantly adapted and reevaluated by current culture, rather than simply passed down in an unchanging state. Roach argues that the “relentless search for the purity of origins is a voyage not of discovery but of erasure” of the allegedly impure strains of cultural performance (6). Analogous to what A.D. Smith calls the Common Myth of Descent, Roach’s notion of “genealogies of performance” reveals the performative mechanism behind claimed narratives of origin and actually ensure “that discontinuities rudely interrupt the succession of surrogates” (25). In other words, even an attempted performance of “ethnic purity” will reveal the inability of the individual to embody the ideal of purity.

The three underlying aspects of genealogies of performance are kinesthetic imagination, vortices of behavior and displaced transmission. Kinesthetic imagination is the dance of embodying memory, which is limited by memory, law and custom (27). Vortices of behavior are sites of remembrance, where the “[canalization of] specific needs, desires and habits [occurs] in order to reproduce them” (28). Paul Connerton defines how vortices of behavior and kinesthetic imagination relate, as incorporating practice is “memory that is sedimented, or amassed, in the body” (How Societies Remember 72, Roach 26). The last element, displaced transmission, is “the adaptation of historic practices to changing conditions, in which popular behaviors are resituated in new locales” (28). The existence of vortices of behavior reveals the underlying desire of
surrogation, which is the production of static, unchanging monuments to serve as permanent reminders of cultural or ethnic purity. In tracing genealogies of performance, however, the genealogist finds that the dance of kinesthetic imagination in the new arenas of displaced transmission expose “the paradox of the restoration of behavior [that] resides in the phenomenon of repetition itself: no action or sequence of actions may be performed exactly the same way twice; they must be reinvented or recreated at each appearance” (29).

Diana Taylor’s concepts of the archive and the repertoire add to Roach’s three aspects of genealogies of performance. The archive consists of “supposedly enduring materials (i.e. texts, documents, buildings, bones),” while the “so-called ephemeral repertoire” is built from “embodied practice/knowledge (i.e. spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)” (18). Both elements can have the appearance of being pure bases for identity, or as Taylor puts it, they seem “unmediated” (21). Scholars may approach archival items as original, unchanging, permanent items for reference; however, a historical analogue to the “observer effect” in the field of physics does occur, where the very fact that the archival objects are preserved and studied suggests a subjective or culturally relative emphasis on archival value and selection.

While Taylor upholds the distinction between archive and repertoire (“the live performance can never be captured or transmitted through the archive,” since to be stored as media transforms the performance into an archival material that simply deals with performance as subject matter; 20), a deconstructive approach can illustrate the slippage between the two. In fact, when synthetized with Roach, Taylor illustrates the specific kinds of knowledge that the cultural performer uses to build a referential surrogation. The creator of the surrogate needs to build a performance to fill a cultural vacuum that appeals to and is accepted by society at large, and may reference archival data in a reconstructive approach, or may claim to be the inheritor of
a direct and unbroken line of repertoire-based rituals. “Authenticity,” then, becomes the ability to prove that tradition informs (and possibly even determines) a contemporary performance, while the basis of tradition becomes an infinite regress of repertoire and archive citing each other in lieu of the desired absolute origin of an Aristotelian “unmoved mover” that founds and sets culture in motion. As we will see in subsequent chapters, this does not sway individuals from searching for a single moment of origin, whether that is for a particular ritual or for an ethnic group as a whole. When an origin cannot be found (or cannot be trusted, due to shifting historical standards of authenticity), claims of priority appear; e.g. “our system is more authentic and our claim (to land, authorship, etc.) is superior since we have evidence in our archive and in our oral traditions that we did it first.”

Synthesizing these critical works shows the transience of foundational approaches to ethnic origins, while at the same time illustrating the perceived cultural need to base ethnic identity in categorical fact. Whether these bases are strictly fictional or not, they have real impact on narratives of ethnic identity and hence on the real world of political history. Regarding Welsh identity, interior cultural memory serves to validate Welshness and the Welsh language in the hopes of creating solidarity and preserving any Welsh distinctives from annihilation. Depending on the community or the individual, different notions of necessary and sufficient conditions of Welshness may be stressed. What is common, however, is the response of internal cultural memory to external threats (in the case of Wales, this generally means Welsh cultural memory responding to English cultural impositions).

Exterior cultural memory may use the categorization of the Welsh as a political tool in order to wield power. In the subsequent sections of this chapter I will address discourses of myth and history, used to classify the Welsh as culturally inferior to the English, as well as discourses
of science, used to classify the Welsh as racially inferior. Both of these discourses form an oppression narrative. Resistance to such a narrative requires presenting counter claims to hegemonic claims and renaming the titles of dominant origin. If dominant narratives of science and history say one thing, a postcolonial response could be either to cite alternative archives for science and history or to use memory and repertoire to assemble cultural fragments into a narrative that serves as a cohesive whole. In this way a postcolonial identity can be bolstered after conquest and domination by a foreign power, after language and culture have been systematically outlawed or suppressed. To reclaim place and belonging, an individual or nation may turn back to a perceived pre-colonial conception of identity for postcolonial identity. Welsh nationalism in particular cites prior claims to land and the existence of an older language and literature. In this method, one stresses qualities in the past that are valuable because of their rarity or uniqueness. If England, as a dominant colonial power, classifies Wales as inferior for being conquered, Welsh nationalism can counter that it is in fact superior because of the status of Welsh people as virtuous underdog warriors. Nationalism may also take a paternalistic response to indigenous civilization, in that it figures language and culture as feminized and in need of protection from a masculinized political movement.\(^9\) Performativity once again can be conceived as both liberating and constraining, as it means that one need not settle for external essentialist definitions of identity from the colonizer; however, alternative definitions in a given nationalist discourse may contain residual elements of colonialism, such as the feminization of culture and the masculinization of politics. Before looking at how this process occurs in discourses of race, I will first address historical and mythological underpinnings for narratives of Welsh cultural inferiority.

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\(^9\) Yeats’s invoking of the feminized embodiment of Ireland in *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, and the equivalent cartographic figure of Modryb Gwen in Wales, are examples of the nation as feminized, vulnerable and in need of masculine protection.
The Place of Wales in the British Empire

While Welsh animosity to Germanic tribes began long before the Renaissance (e.g. 6th century Welsh text Y Gododdin lamenting the fall of warriors fighting the Angles, the 8th century formation of Offa’s Dyke to separate Germanic and Welsh kingdoms which became the basis of the current Welsh-English border, the 14th century rebellion against English rule by Owain Glyndŵr, etc.), this was the era in which scope and ideals of the British Empire were first developed. Having recently incorporated Wales into the English state in the 1535-1542 Acts of Union, the English Crown set out to define a broader empire that could compete with other European empires. The primary force behind this formulation was John Dee, the court astrologer for Queen Elizabeth and a London Welshman, whose influence would extend for the remaining centuries of the British Empire.

John Dee and the Welsh Justification for an English Empire

“… a New World was not discovered in the Caribbean, but one was truly invented there. Newness enacts a kind of surrogation – in the invention of a new England or a New France out of the memories of the old – but it also conceptually erases indigenous populations…” (Roach 4)

John Dee was simultaneously a serious and fanciful man, who used fancy for real world political ends in the form of territorial expansion. He traced his own ancestry to the greatest Welsh kings (Lord Rhys, Rhodri Mawr, and Coel Hen [Old King Cole]) to assert his own nobility. Cambridge educated, he ultimately received a doctorate in medicine from University of Prague. He became involved in navigation for the Mercers Company and the Russia Company,
and served as a financial and navigational advisor for Martin Frobisher’s three expeditions to the New World between 1576 and 1577. He performed astrological calculations to determine the ideal day for Elizabeth’s coronation. He believed in the accuracy of the histories of Geoffrey of Monmouth, including the Trojan origin myth for the Welsh people and the nascent empire based on the Arthurian conquests. Until Dee, this history can be seen as primarily Welsh, as Geoffrey Monmouth based his history on earlier Welsh texts in which Arthur fought the Germanic ancestors of the English, e.g. The Battle of Mons Bandonicus in Nennius’s 9th century text Historia Brittonum. He also promoted the legend of Madog ab Owain Gwynedd being the first European to travel to North America. According to legend, Madog was a 12th century Welsh prince who preceded Columbus in the European “discovery” of North America by sailing there in the 1170s (“John Dee,” Roberts).

Both Arthur and Madog provide a basis for a British Empire, both since Wales was annexed by the English crown and since the Tudors were of Welsh derivation, and accordingly for Dee the Welsh territorial claims were transferred to English government. Scholars generally agree that this legend was appropriated, if not invented, by Dee specifically for the purpose of countering “Spanish claims to the New World and to stress Elizabeth I’s rights as heir to the Welsh princes” through the Tudor family (Stephens 476). With one myth, Dee establishes both early British land claims to the New World and chronological priority over Spanish and Portuguese claims. In fact, the very term “British Empire” seems to originate with Dee from his unfinished work, The Brytish Monarchy, which contained a finished portion dated to 1577 and titled General and Rare Memorials Pertaining to the Perfect Art of Navigation. Another work called Brytanici imperii limites, dated from 1576-1578, reassembled Arthur’s empire and gave Queen Elizabeth rights to New World since the land was conquered by Arthur and settled by
Madog (“John Dee,” Roberts). John Dee’s basis for imperial ideology not only provided evidence that became the official justification for the expansion of the British Empire, but it also began to work within popular imagination to develop an English cultural (and eventually racial) superiority that further justified the conquest of other peoples. Ironically, one of the first applications of Dee’s imperial ideology was in the suppression of the people of Wales, the very people who provided the imperial continuity between Arthur, the Welsh warlord, and the essentially English throne of Queen Elizabeth.

**Borders: Physical and National Identity in Cymbeline and The Maps of John Speede**

When attempting to formulate a conception of nationhood, one runs into the problem of what to make of various distinct ethnies that may be present in a given territory, since traditionally speaking one ethnie defines itself, in part, by the exclusion of another (that is, through definition by negation). By saying, “Our group has collective name X” (to consider the first criterion listed above), one is also saying, “Your group has collective name not-X.” As a result, if a given nation desires to unite various people groups under a common government – and especially if that nation wants loyal, and hence more easily manageable, subjects – that nation needs to provide an alternative (meta)narrative which unites the above criteria for each of the distinct ethnic groups, thus basing unity on the shared heritage of the nation rather than on the individual ethnie.

A case in point for this scenario is Britain, which during the Renaissance was comprised of distinct Celtic groups (each with their own names –Welsh, Cornish, etc., as well as the other shared elements listed above) as well as distinct Germanic groups (Saxon and Norman French, the latter being descendants of Viking “Northmen”). The problem concerning the Germanic
groups was that their “shared territory” was not united to a common myth of descent, whereas
the Celtic groups had given names associated with certain tribes (e.g. Cornwall from the
Cornovii) as well as with certain deities (according to the Medieval collection of Welsh tales
called The Mabinogion, London comes from Caer Lludd or Lludd’s fortress, Jones 92). That is
to say, the Celtic groups had a narrative that connected them to the specific territory and
provided a sufficient justification for that connection at the time. The Germanic groups, on the
other hand, did not have justification-providing myths, but only the stories of their conquest of
the land. However, for a nation trying to unite these varying factions under a single monarch, the
narrative of conquest is arguably not enough; if anything, invoking such a narrative might only
serve to provoke insurrection on the part the conquered peoples. In fact, when Henry Tudor
aimed to legitimize his claim to the throne, he did not appeal to as much to his Norman heritage
via the Lancasters as he did to The Lord Rhys (Rhys ap Gruffydd), a Welsh prince and ancestor
on Henry Tudor’s paternal side (Escobedo 86).

The Elizabethan and Jacobean eras were key moments not only for the formulation of the
British Empire, but of British national identity. For example, the Ulster plantations in Ireland, in
which English and Scottish (both understood as British peoples) loyalists were given Irish land,
were established under Mary Tudor and continued into the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I.
Exploration of the New World grew under Elizabeth and James as well, in part due to John Dee’s
previously mentioned claim on the land which resulted from the legend of the Welsh Prince
Madoc.

Shakespearean texts both reflect or actively participate in constructions of Britishness.
Cymbeline is one of the key texts for this imperial project, as it reaches back into ancient history
in order to provide a narrative that unites indigenous British Celts with the order of the Roman
Empire, which in turn provides a rationale for the contemporary English monarchy. While little seems to be inherently worthwhile in the Celts on their own in Shakespearean texts, the fact remains that the Germanic English did not arrive in great numbers until after the Romans left Britain; thus, the Celts become the means to the end of this task of providing continuity between the Roman Empire and the British Empire. Others have argued that the appearance of this play was very timely, coinciding with the beginning of both a Scottish King’s rule on the British throne and his initial discussions of a united “Great” Britain; thus, the rise of James I (James VI of Scotland) to the throne is causally connected to this search to establish a pan-British identity (in fact, as Paul Innes states, some critics would even suggest that James I makes an appearance in the text, as these critics equate him with Jupiter; Innes 5). In opposition to the Tudor approach of grounding their claim to the throne primarily via Welsh ancestry, Willy Maley argues that the Stuart approach to Britain was one of “multiplicity and plurality,” and hence James constructed a “more inclusive, more multicultural, more pluralistic, more European, more worldly state” (Escobedo 72). This plurality-based approach apparently serves to unite all of the various inhabitants of the island of Britain under a new imagined community and ethnic category – “British.” However, Paul Innes argues that both the Stuarts and Tudors actively assembled a monarchical identity around the Arthurian myth, as each group saw themselves as inheritors (whether via lineage or by right) of the Arthurian claim to the throne (8). I take for granted these previously established arguments concerning the imperial relationship between Cymbeline and the ascension of British monarchs at the time of Shakespeare, but will give specific attention to how Wales and its people are used in this construction of British identity and monarchical right to the throne.
Rome, England and Wales each play a part in the formation of Renaissance Britishness; in order to accomplish this unification, Shakespeare creates a pastiche of the various peoples throughout time and in various places to suggest that contemporary Britain has a unified past and hence a unified present. What tacitly occurs in this formulation of Britishness, however, is a hierarchical structure of the comprising elements. Due to the complex nature of the project of joining such disparate elements (i.e. Romans, Welsh and English), Shakespeare negotiates this unifying narrative through a problematic analogy: Ancient Rome is to Ancient Celtic Britain as Contemporary England is to Contemporary Wales and other imperial subjects. In doing so, however, the text is forced to separate Celtic Britons from their Welsh descendants, juxtaposing the two rather than uniting them, especially as Cymbeline’s realm and Wales are divided in the text by geography, namely the River Severn. In assembling a narrative out of historical fragments, England (or the land east of the Severn in the text) still represents ruling power and civilization, while Wales (west of the Severn) represents chaos (or at least the potential for chaos), despite the fact that each region is comprised of pre-Germanic Britons, the Brythonic Celts. The result of this artificial separation is an essentialism of land rather than the later race distinctions of Victorian pseudo-science, where the western lands are chaotic in both past and present while the center of culture in past and present exists in the eastern lands.

Shakespeare’s contemporary, cartographer John Speede, presents a clear border between England and Wales in his map of Wales that is not present on his map of the entire island of

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10 When Imogen arrives at the cave in Wales where her banished brothers reside, she describes the cave from her courtly perspective as a “savage hold,” and wonders who or what might occupy it and commands, “Who’s here? / If anything that’s civil, speak.” (147) As Brian Lockey notes, the Roman characters in the play have their first encounter of Wales in witnessing Fidele lying on the beheaded corpse of Cloten (Lockey 176); curious (and, given the phrasing, likely rather shocked), Lucius asks, “Who is this/ Thou mak’st thy bloody pillow?” (187) Both of the “civilized” groups (i.e. the courtly Imogen and the imperial Romans) who come to Wales are immediately taken aback by the barbarism of the place. This paranoia surrounding the lawlessness of Wales both produces and reinforces the accompanying stereotypes of Wales in the text.
Britain (Speede “Wales”). In fact, this latter map does not even include Offa’s Dyke, which historically performs the same roles for Wales as Hadrian’s Wall did for Scotland – that is, it serves as a human-made marker of the frontier. Interestingly, Speede’s map of Wales depicts some counties in the west of contemporary England, beyond the clearly defined Welsh border, but the map cuts off just before the River Severn. This suggests a tacit understanding of English separation from the land that is at once wild frontier and buffer territory, an understanding that Renaissance England constructs as continuing from the Roman occupation of Britain to the contemporary present. Michael Hechter notes that the border region between England and Wales known as the Welsh Marches were perceived as “sanctuaries for roving bands of cattle thieves… [who] regularly plundered the wealthier English border counties” (57). Thus the inclusion of English counties on a map of Wales can be explained by the increasing wildness as one moves from England, through the Marches and into Wales itself. The notion of a wild, unruly land links to colonial narratives that suggest the necessity of a masculine imposition of order on the disorderly (i.e. feminized) land would be evident. Cymbeline’s final resistance to the conflict with Rome that is endorsed by the Queen personifies the imperial demand of masculine control which informs the understanding of Wales as a feminized landscape.

This construction of the “lawless wilderness” is a common topic in postcolonial theory, Ecocriticism and genre studies (e.g. the Western), each of which emphasizes how literary works identify the wilderness as something that needs to be tamed or domesticated by orderly force so that civilization can thrive. As a result, this becomes the justification for establishing external

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11 Another relationship between the Speede maps and Cymbeline is the presence of a seal on the map of Britain and Ireland containing the bust of a ruler labeled “Cuno Bilin” – the Latinized version of the name being Cunobelinus and Anglicized as Cymbeline. The seal appears next to Edinburgh, rather than London or Wales. This may serve as a nod to King James, as Shakespeare’s Celtic leader links with the home territory of James I, and helps to create a sense of historical continuity among Britain’s civilized Celtic aristocracy.

12 e.g. Mbembe’s “Necropolitics”
rule over a feminized land and its indigenous people. The lack of familiarity with which Cymbeline regards Wales suggests the land as being on the fringe of Britain, beyond the civilizing power of either the throne of Britain or of Rome and playing on the common stereotypes of Wales as being a barbaric wilderness. The notion of wilderness as a feminized landscape bears particular relevance on the building of the British Empire during the time of Shakespeare. Greg Garrard notes that if “the pastoral is the distinctive Old World construction of nature, suited to long-settled and domesticated landscapes, wilderness fits the settlers’ experience in the New Worlds… with their apparently untamed landscapes and the sharp distinction between the forces of culture and nature” (59-60). In Shakespeare’s present, the imperial projects of the Irish plantations, Welsh annexation and the colonization of the Americas employ this rhetoric of domestication. The Scottish and English colonizers would serve to figuratively “plant” English culture so that it could grow and thrive, turning what the English deemed as the cultural wilderness of Ireland into a garden of British culture; union with Wales would provide the land with English systems of law and land organization, in lieu of the perceived lack of law and order; and in the latter case the rhetoric of domesticating the land is again employed, as the colonial power imposes order where it is not naturally found – namely, among the “uncivilized” land and people of North America.

Cymbeline creates a similar sense of binary opposition between the civilized court of the king and the uncivilized caves of Wales. Wales is shown to be virtually devoid of culture, not only because there are truly no Welsh people but also due to the lack of any suggestion of architectural civilization in the dialogue (as mentioned above, Imogen is astounded by the “savage hold” of the cave, as if she has seen nothing like it east of the Severn). Thus for the purposes of the play, the implication of a necessitated civilizing force for Wales is analogous to
the present project of British imperial expansion; in other words, the Wales of the past serves the same role as Wales, Ireland and the New World serve for the present, and thus justifies the British occupation. As the Celtic occupants of Britain provide the necessary link to Britain’s Roman past, the Celts residing in the area that would be part of contemporary England must be distinct from the common stereotype of Wales as wilderness. The Welsh people west of the Severn (absent in the play) are unable to order their own lands; as a result, the western lands require external assistance, and England finds justification in fulfilling that role (ironically) because of the connection to Roman Empire that Celtic Britain provides.

Shakespeare’s task of reinventing Britain should not be overly surprising, as such projects are nothing new; rather, he participates in a tradition of actively creating historical roots when the rights of a people to occupy or rule a certain territory need to be established (e.g. the Medieval formulation of Brutus as the mythological founder of Britain in order to establish a prestigious classical/Trojan heritage, as if Roman occupation of Britain was not enough). However, Shakespeare’s attempts to renegotiate a pan-British identity are indicative of the socio-political situations of the day, particularly the project of rooting the British Empire’s authority through a British connection to the Roman Empire (again revealing the prestige of classical associations). As stated above, the presence of continental stereotypes that accompany Shakespeare’s revision of Britain divulge the imperial investment in constructing the superiority of the British Empire. However, this prompts the question – if the Welsh are part of the British Empire (rather than being competition as are the Italians), why is the Empire invested in Welsh stereotypes? I have argued that this is the ultimate tension within Shakespeare’s imperial definitions, as the Welsh on one hand provide a connection to past, but on the other the stereotypes of the Welsh land justify the current state of Welsh subjugation. In his historical
pastiche, Welsh culture is only useful insofar as it establishes a link to the past; otherwise, there is nothing distinctly Welsh in the play, apart from English misconceptions about the territory of Wales. In addition, while Shakespeare mines the annals of British history for Celtic character names, and despite the setting of the story in Celtic Britain, Shakespeare ironically assumes a national division between England and Wales (marked by the River Severn) that would have been non-existent during the life of Cymbeline. In both of these areas, all would have been Brythonic Celts, the ancestors of the Welsh; yet the seat of British power occurs in what would be England, where the court of Cymbeline resides. Thus Shakespeare reads present conceptions of divisions in land onto his historical reconstruction, opening up the division between England and Wales in a manner that deconstructs his attempt to negotiate and unify an atemporal Britishness.

“Scientific” Considerations: Wielding Discourse for Power

While borders and the essentializing of land provided a common discourse of cultural inferiority during the Renaissance, nascent scientific discourses would soon aim to develop a more inherent and less malleable notion of inferiority based on race. Although the British Empire would primarily use such scientific rhetoric to justify its domination of non-white and overseas people groups, racial theories were by no means absent from discussions concerning Britain’s indigenous Celtic populations. The British Empire developed the discourse of race, appealing to current scientific, biological and evolutionary discourses, as a powerful new tool to justify conquest and colonization at home and abroad. European standards of physical beauty would, over time, adapt. As aesthetics were not "scientific" enough for later justifications of colonization, scholars would integrate previous understandings of features and pigmentation into
rubric for categorizing racial hierarchy both at home (with the Celts constructed as being inferior) and abroad. These so-called “scientific” standards for establishing a global racial hierarchy which would in turn serve the project of global conquest.

**The Hard Aesthetic Paradigm of Difference in Non-white Peoples: Proto-Racial Discourse**

This racial discourse did not suddenly appear out of nowhere; rather, it finds its origins largely in aesthetics. Texts from the 17th and 18th centuries highlight that issues of aesthetics and complexion serve as the initial justification for slavery and the ultimate basis for ideas of racial difference. While differences in religion or culture are also key components of difference between people groups, they are more flexible or “soft” than aesthetics; in other words, an individual can convert to an entirely new religion but cannot completely modify the way she looks. In other words, the key to these definitions is the possibility of change, religion and culture being more easily adaptable than physical appearance. As such, I argue that the issue of aesthetics provides a “hard” difference between people groups, versus the more flexible differences of religion and culture, and provides a basis for the later “hard” or inherent essentialist distinction which racial discourse would claim. Of course, this is not to say that this is the only proto-racial discourse; while Aphra Behn’s *Abdelazer* is an example of this theory, other works such as Ben Jonson’s *Masque of Blackness* or Behn’s own *Oroonoko* complicate any such generalization. The emergence of modern racialist discourses follows the pattern observed by Raymond Williams, particularly through the notions of dominant, residual and emergent culture. That is, this progression to racial discourse is not continuous or unbreaking but rather

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13 The titular character of *Oroonoko* has European features, despite his darker skin, suggesting that complexion is not the only aesthetic standard for nobility; however, what is consistent is that physical appearance and nobility of character are linked.
slips in and out of societal preconceptions for several centuries until it gains strong support in the 19th century’s pseudo-scientific discourse on race.

Roxann Wheeler’s book *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Literature* informs much of this section. In it she argues that in the period of these texts the concept of “race” as it is understood today did not exist as a term or as an idea. In fact, skin color as the “primary signifier of human difference was not a dominant conception until the last quarter of the eighteenth century” (7). Rather, “Christianity, civility and rank were more explicitly important” than “physical attributes such as skin color, shape of the nose, or texture of the hair” (7). This is due to the fact that monogenesis, or the view that “all peoples of the world, regardless of race, spring from [the] common origin” of Adam and Eve was the dominant view (Kidd 29). However, Wheeler tends to focus primarily on religion and character traits whereas I emphasize aesthetics in general and focus on the presence of aesthetic differences and proto-racial discourse in earlier texts before they gain dominance. This is not to say that I disagree with Wheeler, but simply that I will be taking a different emphasis.

Raymond Williams’s conception of emergent and dominant cultural notions suggests here that the perception of inherent differences between various people groups was in fact present in several of these texts, even if such perceptions are merely underlying themes. Williams defines the emergent as

…new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships [which] are continually being created. But it is exceptionally difficult to distinguish between those which are really elements of some new phase of the dominant culture (and in this sense ‘species specific’) and those
which are substantially alternative or oppositional to it: emergent in a strict sense, rather than merely novel (606).

This definition highlights the perceived incompatibility between the emergent and the dominant, though Williams complicates this in suggesting that emergent ideas sometimes have difficulty succeeding in their alternative to the dominant though the dominant’s appropriation of the emergent – particularly as “the incorporated forms [of the emergent] are merely facsimiles of genuinely emergent cultural practice” (608). This back-and-forth between the two distinct cultural modes of thinking illustrates the complexity in distinguishing between the dominant and emergent at times. However, this complex view of cultural shifts also illustrates that the emergent may come to prominence in incremental shifts, as the two points of view are in dialogue with each other.14 Regarding this latter point, several of the texts below will display aspects of both the emergent and dominant simultaneously as various texts grapple with the apparently contradictory views.

While I agree with Wheeler’s assessment of innate difference not being dominant in the Renaissance and 18th century, I will simply adopt a distinct angle that focuses on the presence of these emergent notions of race, even if the texts I will address neither directly (and anachronistically) adopt later pseudo-scientific notions of race nor even speak for culture as a whole. Even though such methods of thinking about difference may be in their nascent stages and peripheral to dominant thought, such an emphasis is important because it allows a nuanced consideration of the past as not being completely separated into distinct zeitgeists or monolithic eras. Rather, this suggests that history is more fluid and that ideas develop and change over time.

14 Colin Kidd similarly asserts that history cannot be divided into tidy categories of cultural attitudes towards what would come to be known as race since monogenesis was defended by ethnologists such as James Cowles Prichard well into the 19th century, the time in which the Biblical account of monogenesis began to be popularly exchanged for a more “scientific” view of hard racial difference (32).
before gaining prominence. Such a view may also allow one to consider that even budding notions or proto-racial difference may have had some effect on public policy long before the public recognized it as valid.

As mentioned above, the common notion of monogenesis prevented people of this era of constructing proto-racial or genetic differences, since all people were believed to descend from Adam and Eve and thus shared a common heritage. Yet earlier texts couple aesthetics and religion together in order to justify the separation and at times enslavement of other people groups, though aesthetics provides the only hard distinction due to the relative flexibility of religious conviction. Religion and culture do in fact accompany aesthetics in notions of difference, and may even be dominant over aesthetics at times and in certain texts. However, this paradigm is named after aesthetics since it is the only “hard” aspect of this paradigm, and as such aesthetics provides the key distinction from later texts.

Aphra Behn’s *Abdelazer* (1676) illustrates this incremental change, showing that strains of a proto-racial discourse occur in first in the Hard Aesthetic Paradigm of Difference. It references darker complexion as undesirable, which is a residual element from the medieval period in which fairness was more or less equivalent to beauty and often to virtuous character. However, an imbalance of different humors could exist within a single people group, whether dark or light skinned, so this does not necessarily mean that they was an absolute biological link between personality and people group or “race.” In *Abdelazer*, the titular character’s despicable actions are not linked to race, and any mention of skin color occurs solely within aesthetic contexts. Yet these contexts assert that beauty is not culturally relative, but is rather an absolute standard that is uniformly recognized by different people groups.

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15 In Act V Scene 1 Abdelazer laments that Leonora does not return his love and blames “Nature, that has dy’d my skin / With this ungrateful colour! cou’d not the Gods / Have given me equal Beauty with Alonzo!” (104)
Racial Discourse Among The Celtic Peoples: The Index of Nigressence

Aesthetic differences based on complexion would evolve as The British Empire developed racial distinctions in order to justify colonization of non-white, overseas populations. However, the fact that the post-American Revolution 19th century brought with it social unrest within the “at home” white populations prompted the application of racial theory to Celtic peoples as well. John Beddoe’s *The Races of Britain: A Contribution to the Anthropology of Western Europe* (1862) identifies the source of racial difference, both in general and in evaluating white people groups, through his “Index of Nigressence.” Beddoe suggests that this regional index can be calculated by:

subtracted the number of red and fair-haired persons from that of the dark-haired, together with twice the black-haired. I double the black, in order to give its proper value to the greater tendency to melanosity shown thereby; while brown (chestnut) hair is regarded as neutral, though in truth most of the persons placed in B [brown] are fair-skinned, and approach more nearly in aspect to the xanthous than to the melanous variety (5).

The basis of this index is the binary between the xanthous (light) and the melanous (dark), which assumes a notion of purity and corruption. However, Beddoe’s mapping of this index in Britain and Ireland (as well as the rest of Europe to a lesser extent) highlights the ubiquity of a racially “corrupt” hybridity; the attempt to calculate race scientifically and objectively leads to the complication of such a theory, and Beddoe consistently struggles with containing the implications of his work.
Given his tacit (but not subtle) agenda, Beddoe finds the highest index of nigrescence in the westernmost areas of Britain and Ireland (Wales, the Scottish highlands, Cornwall and rural Ireland). These areas have the highest population of Celtic language speakers, as well as the highest percentage of people who claim a Celtic identity. Yet in order to account for distinct cultural perceptions between the Celtic peoples, Beddoe highlights internal racial distinctions. He discusses the “Mongoloid” traits of Welsh, such as “the oblique or Chinese eye,” broad cheek-bones, oblique brows, narrow chin, receding forehead, etc. (9). He finds the Irish distinctions in Cro-Magnon origins, qualifying that although “the head is large, the intelligence is low, and there is a great deal of cunning and suspicion” (10). The Prognathous type (defined as “having prominent mouths”) is listed as an “Africanoid” type, which is most common in Ireland, then England, then Wales. Interestingly, this is figured as a “positive” exception to regional norms and akin to, for example, Oroonoko’s nobility. Beddoe writes that individuals in the Prognathous type have “longer and narrower heads… The cheek-bones are much narrower… The usual form of the forehead is flat, narrow, and square,” etc. (10). Yet he noticed this trait in “one of the ablest and most distinguished clergymen in Wales” and “in the portraits of some well-known Welsh bards; in fact, eloquence, or at least readiness of speech, seems to be a general characteristic of this type” (12). While categorized in more “positive” terms than other types, the Prognathous type is also an example of noble savagery akin to Matthew Arnold’s conception of the Celts (which I address in more detail in Chapter 3).

Looking at this from an imperial perspective, it should come as no surprise that political history plays a part in these distinctions. For Beddoe, the least intelligent and most vicious people are the Irish, who would have regular rebellions throughout the 19th century. Next comes

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16 This information appears in the “Military Schedules” section, between pages 192 and 193, which features an “Index of Nigrescence” map of the islands of Britain and Ireland.
the Welsh, who engaged in acts of non-violent resistance but who also produced pious and renowned hymns. The Scottish, on the other hand, had strong political and intellectual centers in the south, so the most stereotypically “Celtic” populations in Scotland are to be found in the rural highlands. Beddoe suggests that such Celtic areas have a higher index of nigrescence, which he bases on physical characteristics, and that these people have an essentially different intellectual standing and sense of morality. He suggests that “people of Welsh descent and name hold their own fairly in science; the Scotch do more, the Irish less” (142). Beddoe applies the medieval criticism from Gerald of Wales to the contemporary Welsh, writing that Gerald “presses very hardly on the worst points of the Welsh character; but some of the vices which he alleges are those with which their enemies still charge them.” These allegations include that the Welsh are “inconstant”; that they “have no respect for their oaths, for their promises, for the truth”; that they “attack fiercely, with much noise” but “if repulsed, they flee as in terror,” and that they indulge in “vengefulness” (261).  

Beddoe find the lowland Scots, on the other hand, to be more akin to the English. “[T]he greater part of the blond population of modern Britain… derive their ancestry from the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians,” especially in England and east of Scotland, versus the “Welsh element” on the English-Welsh border which has a higher nigrescence and is more typically Celtic (269). For example, he contrasts a village in Derbyshire, England with historic Welsh county of Carnarvonshire (now spelled Caernarfonshire); Derbyshire has an index of -3, while Carnarvonshire has an index of 304 (275). The Welsh are “generally dark-haired and often dark-eyed people, among whom the Gaelic combination is common” (260).

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17 Beddoe also quotes here that they have a “love and talent for music” and “that they could sing in three parts, whereas the English, except the Northumbrians, could only sing in one; the Northumbrians sang in two parts.” In a footnote, he asserts that the “Yorkshiremen as still the most naturally musical people in England.”
The issue of nigrescence is similar to the “simian” representations of the Irish common throughout the 19th century in particular. While nigrescence is common among all of the Celtic peoples, the simian quality does not appear to the same extent when discussing the Welsh or the Scottish people. As mentioned above, this is due to the fact that Ireland was engaging in consistent and violent rebellion, unlike Scotland and Wales. Discourse is a powerful tool for subjugation, so in this case the tool was employed most where it was needed most.

Despite the simple deconstruction of such binary thinking, a narrative of fear underlies Beddoe in the attempt to bring a more powerful rhetorical stance to his racially oriented conclusions. As he suggests, a corruption of racial purity (according to the xanthous/melanous binary) leads to a corresponding moral corruption in Celtic populations. This creates the classic sense of horror – that the monster may be among “us” and can pass as at least an approximation of “one of us.” Nigrescence, then, becomes a way to identify the threat, based on certain physical and allegedly measureable traits, in order to subjugate the threat. With an eye informed by “scientific observation,” one can also avoid the danger of further racial mixture and hybridity.

In addition to racial discourse being used from the imperial colonizer as a way to categorize separate ethnicities into groups based on participation in various hominid groups of the past, it can also be appropriated and transformed by the colonized. Sometimes this may provide a counter and anti-imperial narrative of origin, while at others it may provide a separate narrative of superiority that mirrors the colonial perspective. In subsequent chapters, we shall see how a hybridity of Englishness and Welshness can be either exalted as an ethnic boon (e.g. in Gerard Manley Hopkins and David Jones) or serve as example of ethnic corruption (e.g. Saunders Lewis and Kate Roberts). With the transition into modernity, with its cosmopolitan and industrial ideals, this negotiation of the viability of a hybrid identity would become all the more
common as people groups relocated in urban centers, encountered each other on the battlefield, and came into contact en masse more than was previously possible.
Chapter 2: Literary Traditions and Welsh Modernisms

While the bard initially served as an elite position in royal court, over the centuries the bardic figure became a popular voice, one which both reflects and influences the views of the immediate community. In other words, the cultural function of the bard evolved with the passing of the Welsh aristocracy, from an official voice of the aristocratic elite to a popular and communal voice. However, the roles played by the bard would be anything but stable, and serve as examples of what Roach calls “surrogation” – that is, a performative system of acts that serve to replace what would have been perceived as a fixed historical role in the attempt to reestablish a lineage of cultural authenticity. Anticolonial resistance in these bardic parameters reveals a relational paradox; at times, Welsh writers look back to an ideal past or Welsh Golden Age of the bard, free from Anglocentric modernization, but at other times they emphasize that the English model of metropolitanism is closer to barbarism than civilization. These bardic performances, with their paradoxes regarding Wales and modernity, provide a common connection throughout the literatures of Wales, and particularly during the two major periods and genres that involve the four authors I address. These are Romanticism and Modernism, which, as I argue below, are not entirely separate in Welsh literary works; this linkage forms the basis for many of the unique characteristics of Welsh Modernism.

Linguistic Pragmatism and Periodization

A term’s usefulness comes from its explanatory power. However, a term’s usage may change over time, or the contexts in which it may be used may render its explanatory power inert. An example of this comes in Bakhtin’s discussion of heteroglossia, which shows how
ordinary words used in everyday contexts draw from relationships to historical and contextual positions. Rather than learning completely stable words, as though acquiring a Platonic understanding of the definitional form behind a word, we learn words within heteroglossic contexts; that is to say, we learn words based on how they are *used* (including multiple meanings assigned to certain sounds) by a variety of individuals within a variety of contexts (*The Dialogic Imagination*, 60). Additionally, words are mutually dependent – that is, we define the culturally appropriate contexts of words with other words. Rather than possessing an autonomous stability, language and definitions are cultural constructs based on relationships and statuses of people in society. The discussion of literary periods is based on a similar notion of pragmatic language, which will become important when discussing specific works that, stylistically speaking, may embody elements of several periods without being traditionally aligned with those periods.18 In “Periodizing the 60s,” Frederic Jameson suggests that a given period “is understood not as some omnipresent and uniform shared style or way of thinking and acting, but rather as the sharing of a common objective situation, to which a whole range of varied responses and creative innovations is then possible, but always within that situation’s structural limits” (178). While separated by no more than a few decades, each of the authors I address in subsequent chapters illustrate in this loose, flexible understanding of epochal terminology, illustrating the complication of hard-and-fast rules of periodization while at the same time showing that such

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18 The following argument presents an objection to the notion of periodization. Periodization became, for some Victorians, a way of categorizing epochs in the march towards progress; as such, and under the influence of Darwinian thought, each subsequent epoch becomes more highly evolved than its predecessor. In this case, the terminology of periodization acted as a way to categorize time according to contemporary ideology. This notion of a march towards progress came under attack for the Modernists and Postmodernists alike. Michael Bell writes that the devastation of war and the alienation of individuals from larger culture suggested to Modernists that progress was in fact a Victorian invention. Postmodern thought, in Lyotard’s terms, is the notion of incredulity towards metanarratives. As a result, the Victorian notion of progress comes under suspicion as a totalizing narrative that explains all human behavior. For a more thorough engagement of emerging scientific ideals and the Victorian notion of progress, see Edward Said’s *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, Michael Adas’s *Machines As The Measure of Men*, and Enzo Traverso’s *The Origins of Nazi Violence*. 
terminology has a pragmatic purpose in identifying common conditions among works of various eras. If one is to use language of categorization (which is of course pragmatically useful, since words are defined by negation as much as they are defined by positive attributes), then it would necessary to follow Bruno Latour in the understanding of networks of meaning, rather than binaries. 19

The Paradoxical Relationship Between Nationalism and Modernity

Before addressing Welsh Romanticism and Nationalism, this brief literature review serves the purpose of tracing the overt anti-modern strain of certain kinds of nationalism between the Romantics and the 20th century as well as the philosophical complexities of nationalism in relation to modernity. In Isaiah Berlin’s The Roots of Romanticism, he describes Johann Gottfried von Herder’s proto-nationalism (Berlin calls it a kind of populism) as the desire for “natives to remain as native as possible” and to “preserve the most exquisite forms of old provincialism without the impingement on it of some hideous metropolitan uniformity” (64-65). Ernest Gellner contrasts the “Agraria,” an agrarian pre-modern society, with industrial nationalism. While work in the Agraria is based on local needs and social ritual, nationalists desire uniformity of action to propel a definition of a given nation based on cultural individuality based on a single cultural idiom. He writes, “it must now be a great or high (literate, training-sustained) culture, and it can no longer be a diversified, locality-tied, illiterate little culture or tradition” (37).

19 In other words, while the binary model may suggest that Medieval literature is always X but not Y, the network model suggests that categories are permeable, and that the literary critic can benefit from the fruitful understanding of how periods relate to genres and authors and contexts, rather than focusing exclusively on the limiting concept of differences between periods.
While Berlin and Gellner highlight the contrast between provincial nationalism and modernity, Donna Jones argues that the provincial and the modern are not entirely separate for certain models of nationalism. She writes that the African diaspora based on Négritude involved both a rejection of colonial modernity and a return to “a shared, animist, African cultural experiential base, a vitalist ontology with their countrymen” (160). However, this was not to “consign African cultures to a lost past from which we can now only learn but to see them as the living basis for cultural renewal” (161). To use the language of ethnic performativity, this shared experience serves as the archive from which a current repertoire can be formulated and performed. In fact, for Léopold Sédar Senghor the rebirth of African culture “would guide Europe out of its own calamity” due to the emphasis on “intuition of absolute knowledge, the reconciliation of man with nature, the possibility of communion with the living and the dead, and the immorality of the human spirit” (133). In other words, the performative Négritude has the ability to transform modern Europe, rather than being in complete opposition to it.

Paul Gillen and Devleena Ghosh further complicate the relationship between nationalism and modernity as they delineate three separate kinds of nationalism. They define primordial nationalism as “national identity [associated] with mythical or ancient times” (115), modernist nationalism as based on the notion of the modern nation-state and the need to “create new rituals” (116), and ethnicist nationalism as an approach of continuity to “contextualise the emergence of nations within the larger phenomenon of ethnicity which shaped them” (116). While primordial nationalism seems to accord with the agrarian model (versions of which Berlin and Gellner addressed) that lauds the folk as the authentic remnants of a shared past, Gillen and Ghosh suggest that the latter two models reject the primordial model of reclaiming a historical or mythical past in favor of either embracing new rituals as a nation (modernist) or tracing
continuity between the past and present based on internal ethnic solidarity. As a result, while nationalism often looks to the past for grounding in the present, it can also either embrace modernity as a positive force for solidarity or work to transform modern society instead of supplanting it. The authors I address in subsequent chapters tend to view modernity with suspicion, as they are inclined to look to the past to inform present national and ethnic parameters; however, these same authors at times embrace the mechanics of modern society (such as political parties) and the supra-ethnic conglomeration of the modern British nation.

**Welsh Romanticism & Anti-Modern Nationalism**

Addressing Romanticism in a chapter primarily devoted to Modernism may seem counter-intuitive or distracting; however, Welsh Romanticism provides a key component that carries over into Welsh Modernism – that is, the distrust of modernity as a specifically English force. Rather than being a monolithic movement with entirely unified aims of its central figures, Romanticism is actually a complex discursive interaction between various authors and their sociopolitical contexts. While avoiding reductionism, a strong definition should also avoid a degree of expansion that leaves it so inclusive that it becomes meaningless. As a result, the definition of Romanticism should be broken into necessary conditions (i.e. without these Romanticism is not Romanticism) and sufficient conditions (i.e. elements which frequently occur, but are not necessarily upheld by every Romantic author). According to this particular linguistic construction, the necessary conditions for the main period of British Romanticism are as follows: it is a movement 1) in the United Kingdom (then incorporating England, Scotland,
Wales and Ireland; 2) that occurred from the late 18th to mid 19th centuries, and 3) that engaged contemporary cultural, social and political shifts.

The sufficient conditions flow from this third necessary condition, as the responses to social upheaval at the time may not have been completely consistent across the spectrum of Romantic authors. One common response was the questioning of neo-Classical tenets of previous generations in favor of simple language and a focus on common folk. This is evident in William Wordsworth’s poems in *Lyrical Ballads*, which employ straightforward speech while the poems’ subjects tend to be of lower class (e.g. Lucy, a young peasant girl, in the Lucy Poems) in contrast to the classical focus on nobility. The emphases on both the plight and simple joys of the lower classes relates to several other sufficient conditions of Romanticism, such as the engagement with community and a connection with nature. Part of the radicalism of the Romantic era came from the alienation due to the advent of modern technology, as opposed to a socio-economic system in which human society and labor integrates with nature. As a result, the “folk” and “nature” (in opposition to the social stratification of the modern metropolis) became key values for the Romantics. Percy Bysshe Shelley’s poem “On Leaving London for Wales” reflects this distrust of English metropolises in favor of more rural (and hence “natural”) settings. These elements in turn reflect the social upheaval caused by the various Inclosure (also spelled “Enclosure”) Acts. Such laws were enacted periodically throughout British history but were

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20 Istvan Meszaros suggests that this emphasis on “dehumanising alienation” runs from Rousseau to Marx, whose writings bookend Romanticism. Alienation for Rousseau is due to “a concentration of wealth and all that goes with social mobility produced by the dynamism of expanding and concentrating capital.” Meszaros sees this alienation as an influence on Marx, but suggests that where Rousseau advocates supporting a hierarchy in which each individual has her own place, Marx identifies capitalism as the process through which “objectification could appear as a process of alienation” (meaning that object creation in capitalism does not value the object creator, but only the product in terms of its value as capital) and a classless society returns people to a natural state in which production is socially positive (*Marx’s Theory of Alienation* 64).

21 Raymond Williams, in *The Country and The City*, argues that the dichotomy between a simple, ideal rural life and a chaotic city life is misleading at best, and even the effect of the Enclosure Acts can be overemphasized if it creates a sort of local “noble savagery” (99-107).
especially frequent in the 18\textsuperscript{th} and 19\textsuperscript{th} centuries, and as a result the common land upon which peasants previously lived was privatized. This caused the Romantics to emphasize the need for a return to smaller, more personal communities.

Wordsworth and Coleridge would establish a community in the Lake District, which became a small hub of the Romantic movement, and others (including Coleridge and Southey) would attempt (or at least consider) founding utopian societies as an alternative to contemporary social ills in Britain. Similarly, social upheaval in the forms of the American and French Revolutions prompted authors (e.g. works by the contemporary but rather anti-romantic Burke, such as \textit{Reflections on the Revolution in France}, Wollstonecraft’s \textit{A Vindication of the Rights of Men}) to question the future political direction of the United Kingdom to combat the unjust system which would allow laws such as the Inclosure Acts to pass.

One sufficient condition which can be mistaken for a necessary one is the elevation of the position of the individual author. Most of the Romantic poets sought to engage community in dialogue, both within a given poem (e.g. as the narrator of Blake’s “The Chimney Sweeper” directly engages the titular character concerning his sad and impoverished state) and when considering the relationship between author and community (e.g. direct prose concerning various social issues, such as Wollstonecraft’s address of gender in \textit{A Vindication of the Rights of Women}). Yet the second generation of Romantics – and Byron in particular – would be more open to this cultivation of the special place of the author in society. Byron purposefully encouraged the celebrity-driven “cult of the author,” as evidenced by the way he controlled his image (one painting in particular, by Thomas Phillips, orientally exoticizes Byron by portraying him as a Sultan of sorts). However, Byron would appear to be the exception to the rule here, as Romantics in general sought to engage their communities in dialogue in order to address social
issues. Of course, the special role of the poet and the populist impulse are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as Wordsworth in particular used his role as poet (even, arguably, as the “voice of a generation”) in order to address the issues of common folk in Britain; additionally, the elevation of the position of the author is not unique to Romanticism, and occurs in the medieval bardic system as well as Modernist examples of “the individual talent.”

Romanticism in Wales would very much be on the fringe of general Romanticism, largely due to the severe form of Methodism that was so strong in Wales at the time. This Methodism would focus on the spiritual life, and view the subject matter of Romanticism as being comprised of earthly distractions – meaning that many Methodists would perceive the political, environmental and cultural emphases of Romanticism as drawing attention away more pious endeavors of individual devotion. However, there was a small group surrounding the figure of Iolo Morganwg (the bardic name of Edward Williams, born in Llanearfan, Glamorgan, Wales in 1747), whose Unitarianism would contrast with Welsh Methodism in that the spiritual life permeates “earthly distractions” of nature, culture, politics, etc.

Morganwg is a figure at once disgraced and adored – disgraced by much of the scholarly community for his elaborate forgeries of poetic and antiquarian works, and adored by many in Wales (and especially in his own area of South Wales) for having embellished or invented many of the rituals surrounding the ancient Welsh arts festival, the National Eisteddfod. Forgery and Celtic Revivalism often go hand-in-hand in this period, due to the desire to reclaim a native (i.e. non-English) tradition and culture while suffering from a lack of genuine documentary evidence. Two articles in The Invention of Tradition give evidence of the link between forgery and revivalism. Hugh Trevor-Roper mentions that the modern kilt, rather than being of ancient origin as was claimed, was “designed as part of a pageant devised by Sir Walter Scott in honour of a
Hanoverian king” (19); similarly, Prys Morgan shows certain “native” Welsh folk songs were actually of English origin, and simply translated or adapted to be passed off as ancient Welsh tunes (78). The answer to why cultural figures might resort to somewhat easily provable forgeries comes from the desire to resist colonial mimicry, since the absence of any obvious cultural traditions leads to the desire to rediscover an indigenous culture; in lieu of any historical traditions, the process of surrogation may lead to the invention of new “traditions.” At the same time, such forgers (as I discuss below) often imbue their forgeries with contemporary ideals to make them relevant and appealing to society.

It is perhaps due to Morganwg’s disgrace in the scholarly community that he is not often the subject of academic inquiry outside of Wales, though the fact that some of his writings are in Welsh probably contribute to this. Recent scholarship on Romanticism has linked Wales to the revolutionary times in Europe and America, establishing that these authors both reflect and inform the spirit of revolution. More recently and far less frequently, a few scholars (most notably Cathryn A. Charnell-White) have looked at Iolo’s place in relationship to Romanticism and revolution. I aim to build on this recent scholarly trend by tracing the presence of revolutionary ideas in the writings and actions of this fringe Romantic figure, particularly as they relate to linking Wales to the American Revolution via the Madog Legend. At the same time,

22 While the book does not have a chapter specifically on Ireland, the Gaelic Revival had its own forgeries (or at least anachronisms). The Gaelic Athletic Association existed to promote distinctly Irish games; however, a game similar to hurling and other GAA sports also occurred in ancient Britain and across Europe (Bairner 74). In any of the cases, the nature of the sports changed to become highly formalized according to Victorian trends of establishing spectator sports (Bairner 76) and were integral to Irish nationalism through promoting “native” sports (Bairner 78).

23 Wales and the Romantic Imagination, a collection of essays edited by Damian Walford Davies and Lynda Pratt, serves to highlight the importance of Wales in the minds of Romantic authors from all across Britain, including Robert Southey, Felicia Hemens, Percy Bysshe Shelley, various Scottish and Irish novelists, and of course Iolo Morganwg.

24 As mentioned in the previous chapter, John Dee, who was Elizabeth’s advisor and who also claimed Welsh descent, was instrumental in this foundational construction which served to establish the notion of a British Empire. This linking of Madog to the English monarchy makes Iolo’s appropriation of the myth for his poetry an ironic one, yet Welsh radicals had already established a tradition of connecting Wales to American ideals of democracy and
this discussion serves as an introduction to the nationalist emphases of Welsh Modernism, such as the Celtic-Welsh cultural distinctives and a resistance to equating Britishness (with Welshness as a subset) with Englishness.

Welsh identity, like many national identities in the Romantic period, was in flux due to a variety of factors. The most significant reason for this is that Ireland, Scotland and Wales were all conquered, colonized or both by England at this point (though Ireland would not be officially incorporated until the 1800-1801 Act of Union). Distinct languages and culture had always separated these Celtic nations from England, but with the advent of Celtic Revivalism a newfound sense of nationalistic distinction was stressed. Celtic Revivalism began with general antiquarianism, and moved from there to include a special emphasis on literature. Celtic antiquarianism was characterized by interests in “speculative ethnology, mythology and etymology” surrounding the origins of Celtic culture (Franklin 24). A seminal text in the antiquarian pseudo-history of Celtic Revivalism, which “lauded the druidic fad” of the 18th and 19th centuries, was the 1723 publication *Mona Antiqua Restaurata* by Rev. Henry Rowlands (Davies 294) which asserted that druidism began in Anglesey (Welsh *Ynys Mon*) and situated this Welsh island at the center of traditional Celtic culture (Stephens 657).

Nationalistic authors of these Celtic nations began to hold the belief that their respective cultures were endangered and required action to guarantee their survival, and as a result Celtic Revivalism was primarily based around a sort of literary nationalism in which Celtic nations began to stress that their poetic traditions rivaled (if not superseded) those in England. The literary branch of this movement arguably began with James Macpherson’s publication of forged *Fragments of Ancient Poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland*, surrounding the bardic revolution through Madog. Robert Southey would also find poetic fodder in the Madog legend, culminating in his 1805 long poem *Madoc*.
figure Ossian, in 1760. Thomas Moore and Thomas Osborne Davis followed suit in Ireland, and Iolo Morganwg succeeded in linking (through forgery) the Welsh bardic tradition to political separation from England (Trumpener 10, 111, 295). This literary phenomenon and its association with strong national pride laid the foundation for subsequent political forms of nationalism in the 19th century, such as the Young Ireland Movement and Cymru Fydd in Wales. One of the results of this renaissance of national pride that is very evident in the works of Iolo Morganwg is the search for Welsh self-definition, both in terms of past history and the contemporary colonial situation.

The key component in establishing the uniqueness of Wales, and one which certainly comes to the fore in Iolo Morganwg’s writing, is the idea that “Welshness” does not equal “Englishness.” This is largely a response to the attempted formation of a pan-British identity by the government of the United Kingdom ever since the Acts of Union of the early 16th century which linked Wales politically with England (Charnell-White 2). Along with a lingering distrust for English political and legal systems, Nonconformist religion (i.e. Christian sects which denied the authority of the Anglican Church) grew to dominate Welsh life and further separated Wales from England. Iolo highlights this distaste for all things English in the 1801-07 publication of The Myfyrian Archaiology of Wales, particularly in the poem *Trioedd y Sais* (*The Englishman’s Triads*). One of the poem’s triads gives a sense of the general perspective of the poem: “Three things much loved by a Welshman: a Bard according to the rights and privileges of the Bards of the Island of Britain, he who scorches a miser’s beard, and he who hangs an Englishman” (Charnell-White 50). The triad is a common mnemonic device in Celtic poetry, grouping ideas in sets of three to convey “native learning to [a teacher’s] pupils” (Stephens 735), so the fact that this poem repeatedly slanders English people highlights the fact that the poet intends to
disseminate a negative view of all things English to his readers. More importantly, however, is that the poem’s anti-English sentiment asserts that England has no part in the apocalyptic/Bardic revolution in Britain (this will be discussed in further detail in the section below).

While *Trioedd y Sais* presents a general Welsh distaste for the English, an early untitled poem details the more specific point of separation between these two cultures – namely that England is characterized by the vicious metropolis, and Iolo juxtaposes it with Wales (and especially Iolo’s native South Wales) as a heavenly land. This is a key point in evaluating Welsh Modernism, as each of the authors I address in subsequent chapters identify Welshness as inherently antimodern in some respect. He writes, “Of all the countries under heaven / And under the sun’s purview, / I find that the best country indeed / is truly the land of Glamorgan… / I was long in London grey / Where I saw much lust, / Sin, foolishness, falseness and treachery, / Not like in the county of Glamorgan” (Charnell-White 83). In a standard move of anti-colonial redefinition Iolo turns the English view of the Welsh as barbaric around by suggesting that it is not rural Wales that is backwards, but rather the English city, inverting the view that England is the home of true civilization. Iolo is not alone in this conception, however. In 1812 Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote “On Leaving London for Wales,” which also defines Wales as a refuge from English metropolitanism; in 1812 and 1813, Shelley had attempted to found a utopian community in Wales with fellow radicals Hogg and Godwin in mind as co-founders (Duffy 180-181), suggesting a pan-Romantic view of Wales as both closer to nature (and hence natural virtue) and more politically radical than England. This latter point is also emphasized in Iolo’s poetry, as he links Welsh identity (rather than just the Welsh land) to an inherent sense of democracy.

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25 William Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey” also constructs Wales (or at least a specific place in Wales) as closer to nature and hence an inspirational locale for reflection on life, humanity and creativity.
One group of democratic radicals was the society of The Gwyneddigion, of which Iolo was a member. Founded by London Welsh in 1770 as a literary and cultural society, The Gwyneddigion had a growing interest in the legend of Madog to the extent that the society funded the exploration of John Evans to America to find the posited “Welsh Indians” who descended from Madog (Stephens 301). The growing connection between Welsh radicalism and American ideals is evidenced by the fact that the “anthem of the society was a liberty hymn (to Madog),” suggesting that the allegedly inherently democratic Welshness influenced American principles of liberty (Davies 328). Thus, in reclaiming Madog, Welsh radicals turned a figure that was possibly invented for the advancement of the British Empire against the British Empire by linking him to revolutionary ideals.

Iolo Morganwg’s poem “Ode on the Mythology of the Ancient British Bards,” a thematically unified collection of sonnets, defines America in terms of Madog by referring to the landscape as “Madocian plains” (line 155). Yet it is not just the land that bears the influence of Welsh democracy, but also the very spirit of the nation: “Here the sweet British Muse employ / To teach th'angelic laws of LOVE” (lines 184-185). Given the italicizing of “British Muse” in the poem, Iolo undoubtedly has the Welsh word Awen in mind. Not only does this usage narrow the definition of “British,” since he clearly refers to the original Celtic inhabitants of Britain instead of the English, but it also links the heavenly virtues of America to revolution; Awen can mean “poetic gift,” “muse” and “genius,” but also “rein” or “control,” giving the term more political undertones. This poem serves as a call for resistance by aligning Wales with America, even establishing Wales as the original source of America’s systemic justice.

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While this poem most clearly links Wales with America, other poems more clearly detail the distaste Iolo has for monarchy – a distaste which he in turn retroactively bestows upon the entire Welsh bardic tradition. “Ode on converting a sword into a pruning hook” outlines the ultimate and inevitable downfall of all monarchies by suggesting that heaven is set against them. The title of the poem echoes the Biblical passage of Isaiah 2:4, which describes eschatological restoration of peace: “…they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (King James Version). While the peace in this passage is pan-national and refers to the end of war in general, Iolo’s poem describes monarchy as the primary cause of war. He writes, “Thou, strength of Kings… / Thou shalt no more this earth molest, / Or quench in blood thy thirst again” (lines 57-60), while suggesting that Welsh bards had prophesied the coming of this day: “… so long foretold / By HEAVEN’s illumin’d Bards of old” (66-67).

Having set up both the legendary connection between Wales and America and the not-so-veiled revolutionary call for the demise of monarchical governments, a final poem seals the bond Iolo intends to make between Welsh bardic thought and American Revolution by invoking the writings of Thomas Paine. “Breiniau Dyn” (“The Rights of Man”) was read at the 1798 Gorsedd meeting, and contrasts the “wicked King” who soils “all the Rights of Man in the Mud” with “countries like France [who] give the throne / To the Rights of Man” (Charnell-White 141). The poem specifically invokes Paine’s 1792 publication The Rights of Man, which is especially clear when considering that the poem was first written in 1793 (Charnell-White 141).

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27 Gorsedd Beirdd Ynys Prydain (“The Assembly [lit. “Throne”] of the Bards of the Isle of Britain”) was founded by Iolo Morganwg in 1792 (Stephens 271), and to this day its members serve as the keepers of Welsh cultural tradition. The Gorsedd itself was founded upon the democratic principles evident in Iolo’s poetry, principles which Catheryn A. Charnell-White delineates as “peace, the free investigation of matters with attained to truth and wisdom, equality of members, and the transparency of Gorsedd activity” (21). These principles themselves echo Paine’s 1792 “Letter Addressed to the Addressers on the Late Proclamation,” which stated that a “constitution could only be formed by a democratically elected convention of people” (Charnell-White 20).
Once again the poet pits virtue, Wales, Heaven and Revolution against Monarchy and oppression.

In the reconstruction of Welsh identity via Iolo Morganwg’s poetry, the author repeatedly demands anti-colonial resistance through linking democratic revolution with the bards of Welsh tradition, who in turn serve as a divine conduits calling for the end of monarchy. These strong statements emphasize the need for categorizing Iolo as an anticolonial author, given that he calls for the beginning of a cultural-political resistance against both the domination and the principles of the English colonizers. It is perhaps ironic (but certainly fitting) that while the advocated anti-colonial resistance separates Wales from the English colonizers, his own revolutionary emphasis strongly links his work to the revolutionary ideals of the more prominent English Romantics such as Godwin, Shelley, Wollstonecraft, etc. Despite his previous stigma in academia as a forger, Iolo’s connection to the Romantic era, its revolutionary ideals and its authors shows that the Romantic canon should open itself up to his works. While Welsh Romanticism centered on Iolo Morganwg, neo-Romanticism in Wales would be not only much more common, but also much longer lasting in terms of influence. Neo-Romanticism – by which I mean the works that participate in themes and styles of Romanticism while occurring in a period that is traditionally considered after Romanticism – plays a significant role in Welsh Modernism, particularly as some authors would start with Romantic themes and later adopt Modernist styles (e.g. John Morris Jones).

**Periodizing Modernism**

The main epochal and stylistic links between the literary texts I address in the chapters below revolve around definitions of Modernism. The height of literary Modernism is generally
considered to be around 1922, though this period could easily extend to 1939 to accommodate later Yeats, Woolf, and Lawrence, as well as Eliot’s work as editor of the *Criterion* and Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. While this time frame appears to be unnecessarily limiting, I acknowledge the utility in periodization; clearly, there are certain similarities that are unique to authors such as Eliot, Joyce, HD and Wallace Stevens that are not embodied by, for example, the author of Beowulf. This may be due in part to the fact that authors of certain time periods respond to similar historical events (such as the World Wars), and, as is the case with Modernism, often respond to these issues as a group (or groups). Certain texts problematize the notion of a restrictive period for Modernism, while at the same time give evidence for the pragmatic utility that periodization allows for identifying commonalities unique to certain moments in time.

The text I will be using as my standard against which to evaluate the other texts is T.S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock.” The centrality of the poem in the typical understanding of Modernism is unquestionable. It bears the mark of the literary submarket commodity that was typical of Modernist poets, as it was published in *Poetry* during an era when it was funded by a small pool of subscribers. It bore the endorsement of Ezra Pound, who lauded Eliot for being both self-taught and self-modernizing to the editor of *Poetry* (Pound was also known for being quite proud of the prices that Modernist texts would fetch on the literary submarket, suggesting a degree of complicity in the commodification of Modernist artifacts). It bears the three major qualities of Modernism as identified by Michael Levenson. The first and second are the “fragmenting of unities” and “alienation,” both of which are evident in Prufrock’s thoughts. The poem begins with an untranslated passage from Dante (part of the charge against Modernism of elitism), concerning how hell is inescapable. As Prufrock mentally and physically

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28 The period of 1914 to 1922 would reveal the height of Imagism, the beginning of Vorticism, the publication “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to the publications of “The Waste Land” and *Ulysses*. 
wanders, he thinks, “In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo.” The unity provided by Western (and specifically Italian male) mythology has been fragmented by its domestication and feminization by the modern bourgeoisie, alienating the poem’s speaker. It also bears the quality of linguistic experimentation. Ellipses occur throughout the poem, suggesting an incompleteness of space within the poem. Yet the form of the poem could, loosely speaking, be seen as a series of sonnets (the passage quoted above would be an example of couple occurring in the 13th and 14th lines of the sonnet). However, any sort of regular rhythm or rhyme scheme is missing, suggesting that linguistic experimentation may not mean a complete rejection of literary form.

Yet some contemporary explorations of Modernism place less emphasis on alienation and experimentation as “checklist” items for qualification. For instance, Michael Bell writes that Modernists had to deal with the skepticism regarding consciousness that resulted from the works of three major authors: Marx suggested that the higher classes have a false consciousness that results in their self-justification; Freud argued that civilization is based on the suppression of unconscious desires, as the superego tames the desires of the Id to allow an individual to interact with society; and Nietzsche wrote that Western metaphysics in general is based on falsehood, as Christianity embodies the outer domination and inner suppression of Western peoples (“The Metaphysics of Modernism”). While common notions of Literary Modernism tend to revolve around certain key elements, such as experimentalism and the struggle with new conceptions of consciousness, the limiting of the timeframe obscures the similarities in technique and subject matter of authors who fall outside of the typical understanding of Modernism. This a major reason for using terms such as “neo-modernism” or “neo-romanticism,” as time periods do not strictly contain stylistic elements associated with those periods. This is why the notion of various
Modernisms that may have points of intersection and overlap serves as an appealing alternative.29

The authors mentioned above, in addition to those I address in greater detail below, may be separated in time, genre, or form from the typical association of Modernist authors; however, their similarities allow for a comparison between smaller movements that allow for a fuller cultural understanding of how authors responded to the issues of modernity. In other words, rather than simply separating movements according to time periods, it is possible to relate works of diverging time periods in a manner that allows for a productive understanding of broader cultural concerns that exceed any single given era.

Susan Stanford Friedman provides some clarity when evaluating Modernisms in her article “Definitional Excursions: The Meanings of Modern/Modernity/Modernism.” She argues that

Definitions spawn plurality in the very act of attempting to herd meaning inside consensual boundaries. Definitions mean to fence in, to fix, and to stabilize. But they often end up being fluid, in a destabilized state of ongoing formation, deformation, and reformation that serves the changing needs of the moment (497).

The potential remedy to this, as well as to a collapse of all language as meaningless, is to “insist upon a recognition of how such terms are themselves historical constructions—with their own history, development, function, and effect, all of which invite interpretation and critique” (509). In other words, instead of simply arguing that Modernism equals X or Y, a critic can be free to

29 As Raymond Williams argued, residual elements of Modernism occurred past the so-called “High Modern” period. For example, Osborne’s Look Back in Anger shows the lingering sense of modernist alienation in face of the threat of imperial collapse.
explore why the constructs of different Modernism(s), or precursors or inheritors of Modernist elements, might embody X and not Y at any given moment.

**Welsh Modernisms**

Welsh modernism is a controversial subject, with some critics saying modernism never fully arrived in Wales, others arguing that it arrived but in a small and later fashion\(^{30}\), and still others suggesting that modernism in Wales provides a unique and significant contribution to global modernism. John Goodby, who falls into the latter camp (and has my agreement), notes the current critical trend to focus on modernisms, rather than just Modernism, when he writes that “it is in the nature of modernist poetry, beyond the ‘Men of 1914,’ to seem non-coherent” (52). This not only provides space for geographical differences in modernisms, but temporal ones as well; both of these factors impact the discussion of a Welsh modernism. In the following section I attempt to build a synthesized perspective based on various critical articles, as well as an in-person discussion with Dr. E. Wyn James of Cardiff University\(^{31}\), on the relationship of Welsh authors to modernism.

If international cultural trends came late to Wales, there are several explanations for this. First is the fact that Wales had no (or very little) political autonomy, as London served as its capital rather than Wales having an internal capital. Second, until the Industrial Revolution Wales was more likely to see immigrants leaving Wales than coming in, limiting international contact. Third, the Welsh language and Nonconformity acted as buffers, as Welsh writing for much of the 19\(^{th}\) century and into the 20\(^{th}\) would be dominated by either indigenous poetic trends

\(^{30}\)Matthew Jarvis argues against this minimalist view of Welsh modernisms in his search for post-1960s authors in Wales who had modernist influences. He concluded that while it may be "hard to detect a coherent anglophone Welsh tradition or lineage… of 'parallel' poetry, "more Welsh associated individuals [had] been involved in [such practices] than critical commentary typically suggests" (Goodby 52).

\(^{31}\)26 November 2010, Cardiff, Wales.
of the *eisteddfodau* or the hymnody of the chapels. It is important to note here that Welsh Writing in English (or Anglo-Welsh literature, as it was called earlier) played a very small role in the literatures of Wales until the 20th century, since Welsh was the dominant language until the Industrial Revolution began to shift the linguistic emphasis of the nation to English. Modernism in Britain and Ireland, however, was primarily an English-language movement. One could argue that Irish Modernist literature was the strongest strain of early modernism, due to Joyce and Yeats, as well as the fact that the most canonical modernists working in England were Americans (e.g. Eliot, Pound). In Chapter 3, I argue that Gerard Manley Hopkins’s writings show the presence of a proto-modernism in Wales through his own Welsh hybridity, but for now I will focus on a critical consensus regarding the waves of proper Welsh modernism. Despite differences in language or in time, Welsh modernism holds certain key aspects of modernism in general – both from Levenson’s items of fragmentation, experimentation and alienation as well as Bell’s emphasis on dealing with the crises of consciousness.

**1st Wave: Formal Experimentation and Disillusion**

This wave begins in the 1920s, when modernism as a movement begins to appreciably solidify in Wales. Authors such as T. Gwynn Jones and T.H. Parry-Williams began their poetic careers in a neo-Romantic style, until the First World War caused widespread disillusion. In this way they are akin to Yeats, whose literary styles shifted dramatically over the course of his career due to external, societal changes. Yet earlier appearances of Modernism do exist in the Welsh literary canon. E. Wyn James regards the first Welsh modernist poem to be Parry-Williams’ *Y Ddinas* (“The City”), written in 1915, in part due to its use of *vers libre* (very experimental for its time in the Welsh language) and its avoidance of Romantic themes. This

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32 Cultural arts competitions in Wales and the Welsh diaspora (*eisteddfod*, singular).
suggests that even if Modernism was not as widespread in Wales as in other countries (though popularity is a meager criterion for evaluating Modernist impulses), it did appear rather early and contemporaneously with the works of High Modernism.

2nd Wave: Nationalist and Hybrid

If the first wave inducts the arrival of modernism into Wales, the first crest of the second wave serves as a stronger example of what might critics have historically considered the core of modernism, High Modernism. Figures in this camp tend to be founders, members or sympathizers of the Welsh nationalist party, Plaid Cymru. At the core of this group of nationalists in High Modernist style are Saunders Lewis, David Jones, R.S. Thomas and D. Gwenallt Jones (and, to a lesser degree in relation to High Modernism, Kate Roberts, since her works arguably exhibit fewer modernist mannerisms). Similar to the Gaelic Revival in Ireland, nationalism in Wales has its roots in cultural figures, not overt politicians, as the early stages of Plaid Cymru were defined by literary figures (including Kate Roberts, who I associate with a different wave below). E. Wyn James suggests that this group not only addressed subject matter in a “harsh mode of expression that was realistic with the ills of the modern world,” but also avoided “commonplace language” in favor of the esoteric allusions or colloquial speech. Like other High Modernists (Eliot in particular), these authors were anti-modernity modernists. Lewis’s strain of anti-modernity had the primary emphases of anti-English language and anti-industrial nationalism, which, incidentally, ended up excluding “some four-fifths of the population of the country for which [the Welsh-speaking cultural elite] purported to speak” (Darryl Jones 26). Similarly, Kate Roberts’ emphasis on North Walian communities worked to

33 David Jones sympathized with Plaid Cymru, mainly through his relationship with his friend, Saunders Lewis. I address their correspondence in further detail in subsequent chapters.
“defamiliarize the modernist metropolis,” as “the traditional life of the Welsh countryside stands in opposition to the industrial character of modern society as lived by the majority of the population in the twentieth century” (Joannou). R.S. Thomas, while advocating a “traditional language-based nationalism,” did not learn Welsh until into his 30s, and hence the vast majority of his literary corpus is in English. Again, “like Eliot, he belonged to the current of Modernism which hid an enmity toward the modern world under the cloak of a contemporary style,” and even though his career occurred significantly later than the others in this group he is “not so much a Post-modernist as a late example of Modernism” (Graham Davies 57).

In contrast to this particular form of modernism comes the modernists of hybridity. This group includes Dylan Thomas, David Jones (once again), Lynette Roberts and Caradoc Evans. While Saunders Lewis was born in England, he grew up in a Welsh-speaking community with Welsh parents. David Jones, on the other hand, had a Welsh father and an English mother who did not raise him in the Welsh language. Similarly, Dylan Thomas’s parents were both native Welsh speakers, but due to social pressures decided his first language would be English. John Goodby argues that Thomas, Jones and Roberts each write in a way that is “haunted by Wales' two-tonguedness. This is registered in an English which cannot take itself for granted,” to which Jones and Roberts add (unlike Thomas) “quotations from Welsh itself” (53). Roberts, who was born in a Welsh community in Argentina, has a style that is at once “archaic and avant-garde,” much as Jones employs “lower-class speech [that] interweaves with arcane learning” (54). Evans, while “modernist in content but not in form” (Goodby and Wigginton 98), employs the language of the grotesque that is the central point around which Welsh “modernism

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34 Who John Goodby sees as the seminal figure in Welsh modernism, which I would argue ignores the overt nationalism/culturalism and formal experimentation of the earlier authors who reflect the similar High Modernist impulses of Eliot and Pound.
35 Jones’s overtly modernist style and his hybridity allow for placement in multiple camps.
characteristically shows itself” (101). It is his emphasis on the monstrous, the liminal and the hybrid that joins him to other Welsh modernists, rather than a strong sense of formal experimentation or difficulty. This emphasizes the consistent anti-imperial and anti-colonial nature of Welsh modernism, as his emphases focus on categories of difference from normative identity even if lacking more traditional stylistic elements of modernism.

3rd Wave: Style vs. Content

As with Caradoc Evans, other forms of Welsh modernism can be defined more by their subject matter than by a style that might be more associated with High Modernism, or may employ experimental techniques in addressing subject matter that might be considered uncharacteristic for Wales. This group includes Waldo Williams, Bob Jones, Caradog Pritchard and Peter Finch. The former two authors employ a modernist style, but unlike the more Catholic or Anglo-Catholic and European vision of the High Modernists, they both identify with the traditional Nonconformity of Wales. Peter Finch, on the other hand, founded the literary magazine Second Aeon, which until recently has been relegated to the category “alternative poetry” instead of participating in Welsh literary traditions (Goodby 54-55). E. Wyn James argues that these waves gradually develop into postmodernism in Wales, due in part to the sharp decline of Christianity throughout the 20th century, but that leading figures in Welsh speaking communities still identify as Christians and nationalists. As a result, much postmodern literature in Wales may have literary and stylistic emphases without content that is distinctly postmodern.

John Goodby writes that “there has been a reluctance to acknowledge Welsh modernist poetry as a subject in its own right, let alone the fact that what makes anglophone Welsh poetry most distinctive is its pronounced modernist origins,” and that the greatest poetry in Wales over
the last century not only is modernist but “has specific Welsh traits” (52). This is a point that I take up for the remainder of this project, as I address authors that employ various forms of Welsh modernisms and who emphasize unique methods of ethnic performativity for the people of Wales and the Welsh diaspora.
Chapter 3: “Whát I dó is me”: Gerard Manley Hopkins and Arnoldian Britishness

Gerard Manley Hopkins sees himself as simultaneously English and Welsh, a form of hybridity that takes cues from Matthew Arnold’s construction of Britishness as the virtuous mean between the vicious extremes of Celtic and Germanic elements. This model, as was common in the Victorian era, appropriates a romanticized notion of a Celtic British past, most clearly identified in the figure of Arthur, and combines it with an understanding of Germanic organization. While this hybridity may appear to deconstruct the “us vs. them” mentality that the empire uses to justify colonization, in that the ethnic Other can penetrate and transform Anglocentric society, in reality it is a way of controlling the Celtic Other by incorporating it into Britishness. In other words, Arnold and Hopkins attempt to remove potential conflict by subordinating the “unruly” Celt (and Celtic claims of nationalism) and redefining Celticness as a subset of Britishness.36

Hopkins’s singular use of the traditional Welsh form of cynghanedd also illustrates a tension between the collective and the individual, mirroring a shift from the solidarity of empire projected by the Victorian state to the commonly Modernist lack of assurance. In addition to performing Arnoldian Britishness, Hopkins’ ideal of Welshness comes from his identity as an Englishman who sees himself as partly Welsh but also resistant to contemporary Welsh culture. As a Jesuit missionary in North Wales, he decried the Welsh for being stubbornly Protestant instead of embracing a previous Catholic heritage. As a nature poet, he aligns with a variation of

36 Much as Walter Scott did for Scottishness in the previous century.
“Celtic magic” in nature while condemning the local human residents, the Welsh, in his journals and letters.

Rather than participating in or revising an existing model of ethnic collective consciousness, Hopkins arbitrarily “puts on” elements of Welsh identity to incorporate them into the British self. While Hopkins’s admiration for Welsh culture and identity is obvious, he ultimately acts on an imperial performative impulse. Rather than reiterating collective identity for Welsh society as a whole, Hopkins follows Arnold’s co-opting of Welshness by the British Empire but for the sake of personal identity (in Hopkinsian terms that I explain below, instress performs the inscape of his ethnic identity). Recent scholarship on Hopkins tends to focus on largely traditional concerns (i.e. Hopkins as a religious/spiritual poet or as a nature poet), though gender studies has provided an avenue for recent focus. Political analysis, particularly regarding ethnicity and empire, is largely absent. The discussion of ethnic identity below, particularly in relationship to gendered notions of ethnicity within a colonial/imperial mindset, aims to address this absence in scholarship. In response, I argue that ethnicity for Hopkins is loose, and can be assumed and performed outside of collectivity of a given ethnic culture by the individual, and that Hopkins's poetry and prose reveal the colonial impulse to observe and regulate the unruly. These lead to a third point, which is that Hopkins (in a manner akin to Matthew Arnold) essentializes the Celtic Welsh while making allowances for fluidity regarding English claims to self-constructed ethnic hybridity. These points together show that Hopkins follows Arnold in imperial appropriation of local identities, but at the same time resists the normative, essentialist definitions of identity through fluid performativity; in fact, even when Hopkins tries to uphold binary categorizations (whether dealing with ethnicity or bodily

37 Duc Dau, René Gallet, Peter Groves, Aakanksha Virkar
38 Joseph J. Feeney, Malcolm Hardman, Michael D. Moore
39 Michael Matthew Kaylor, Lesley Higgins, Dennis Sobolov
conceptions of the grotesque and the classical), analysis of his poems and sermons reveals the pitfalls of sustaining the colonial and Arnoldian line of argument.

**Arnoldian Britishness & Colonial Regulation**

While there is evidence that Hopkins went to several of Matthew Arnold’s lectures (Martin 66, 72, 133), there is also evidence that he was not entirely keen on Arnold (Martin 134). However, while there are some key differences between the two figures, Arnold’s discussion of empire, Englishness and Celticness finds strong analogues in the work of Hopkins and, in addition to the racial discourses on the Celts mentioned in Chapter 1, forms part of the colonial discourse that works to justify the suppression of the contemporary Welsh.

In his work *The Study of Celtic Literature*, Matthew Arnold only addresses Welsh (and occasionally Irish) texts in passing as he constructs a theory of English identity. In contrasting the Welsh and the English, he states that while the former have an admirable culture they lack political acumen, whereas the latter have had great political success but suffer from middle class philistinism (x). Some of Arnold’s contemporaries, echoing the argument of inherent, racial inferiority advocated by John Beddoe, take the view that all things Celtic should be eradicated. Quoting an article from *The Times*, Arnold illustrates the vitriol some English people have for the Welsh Eisteddfod: “If it is desirable that the Welsh should talk in English, it is monstrous folly to encourage them in a loving fondness for their old language. Not only the energy and power, but the intelligence and music of Europe have come mainly from Teutonic sources, and this glorification of everything Celtic, if it were not pedantry, would be sheer ignorance. The sooner all Welsh specialities disappear from the face of the earth the better” (xii). Arnold takes a

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40 His emphasis lies mainly on the Welsh, as they have the broadest tradition of Celtic literature on the island of Britain.
less extreme response, but one that is nonetheless colonial in its paternalism. Rather than focus on the shortcomings of the Welsh, he states that it is the role of the English to “develop” the Welsh, “for the Celts, like other people, are to be meliorated rather by developing their gifts than by chastising their defects” (xi). It becomes clear throughout the rest of Arnold’s Studies that “development” really means “Anglicization.” In his attempt to express admiration and sympathy with the Celts, as well as political peace between England and its Celtic territories, he writes (to his obviously English audience), “Let [the Celts] consider that they are inextricably bound up with us, and that… we English, alien and uncongenial to our Celtic partners as we may have hitherto shown ourselves, have notwithstanding, beyond perhaps any other nation, a thousand latent springs of possibly sympathy with them” (xviii).

However, this sympathy does not have tolerance for a distinct Celtic culture; if Celticness is to be appreciated, it is only to be done so as a thing of the past. Arnold expresses a positive outlook on the somewhat recent death of the Cornish language (10), and desires the same for the Welsh language. He writes that no one can “have much sympathy with the literary cultivation of Welsh as an instrument of living literature… For all serious purposes in modern literature… the language of a Welshman must be English” (11). Rather than Celticness being respected as existing in living cultures with separate political identities, Arnold wishes to focus on “What it has been, what it has done… as a matter of science and history; not to what it will be or will do, as a matter of modern politics” (13).

Arnold’s main focus for the duration of this text is on differing sorts of national genius. He states that the common opposition between English and Celt is a primarily cultural one, rather than a genetic one. He does not buy the argument (and in this he is probably correct) that the Saxons literally killed off or banished the Celts in Britain to the extremes of Scotland, Wales and
Cornwall; rather, it is much more likely that Celtic peoples survived in what is contemporary England, but simply intermarried with Saxon invaders and eventually adopted Germanic culture. He approvingly quotes Monsieur Edwards: “and so it turns out, that an Englishman who now thinks himself sprung from the Saxons or the Normans, is often in reality the descendent of the Britons” (79). Arnold considers this an important point for two main reasons. First, it suggests that there is hope for the complete Anglicization of contemporary Celts, given the established precedent of contemporary England. Second, it allows English culture to claim the merits of both Celtic and Germanic genius.

Arnold succinctly defines what he sees as German genius as “steadiness with honesty” (81), while Celtic genius centers on “sentiment” and is attracted by “emotion and excitement” (84-85). This brings in the gendered language of the colonial mindset, with the Germanic genius representing the masculine while “the sensibility of the Celtic nature, its nervous exaltation, [has] something feminine in [it]” (90). When combining Germanic and Celtic elements, English literature is able to attain an approximation of Greek genius. The Greek author, for Arnold, employed “the same perceptive, emotional temperament as the Celt; but he adds to this temperament the sense of measure” (86), which is akin to Germanic “steadiness.” Yet Arnold sees potential for English literature to be superior to that of the Greeks, and this is due to the third major ethnic element absorbed into Englishness. This is the Norman (which Arnold defines as characteristically Latin due to Norman French being a Romance language) genius, the “talent for affairs” and “strenuousness and clear rapidity” (97). So, for Arnold, the English have the Germanic sensibility for steadiness, the Latin propensity for artistic and political control and the Celtic imagination; the combination of these three elements makes Englishness superior to any of the three on their own, as well as superior to complex and developed Greek traditions.
As Arnold defines Celticness by sentiment, it lacks the quality of organized political prowess. It has its own merits that it brings to Englishness, such as “Celtic magic”; “Magic is just the word for it, – the magic of nature; not merely the beauty of nature, – that the Greeks and Latins had; not merely an honest smack of the soil, a faithful realism, – that the Germans had; but the intimate life of nature, her weird power and her fairy charm” (133). This quality breathes life and awe into English works of literature, but needs the Germanic and Latin elements to be organized and governed. The “steady-going Saxon temperament and the sentimental Celtic temperament” may unite in Englishness (93), but a balance needs to be achieved. Rather than “one part clashing with the other, we may bring it in to continue and perfect the other, when the other has given us all the good it can yield” (147). For Arnold, this happens through unity of identity; as English culture already exhibits several kinds of national genius, it is the obvious choice for such a model of identity in which Celticness can be subsumed into Englishness, despite the millennium-old political struggles between these two groups in Britain.

Postcolonial readings of Arnold’s theories of the so-called “British races” abound, and both comment on Arnold’s overt colonial aims and reveal his tacit colonial mindset. Andrew Kincaid addresses the imperialist attitude towards the Celts, as the threat of Celtic nationalism leads to an attempt to engratf Celtic qualities into Britishness, when he writes, “As nationalism became more organized and coherent, the language of imperialism recognized it and, by somewhat unsubtly embracing some of its spirit, tried to appease it” by incorporating Celticness into Britishness (30). Robert Young argues that both Enlightenment “assumptions about the progress of civilization towards perfection” (53) and the “scientific” models of race, such as that of John Beddoe, play a role in Arnoldian thought: “Arnold insists that Celtic culture must be

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41 Kincaid reduced the Celts to the Gaels for his purposes, although Arnold largely focuses on the non-Gaelic Celtic group of the Welsh.
submerged in English culture rather than set against it… Arnold is proposing fusion at the same time as he makes a claim for the permanence of the two racial types” (68). Arnold also served as Inspector of Schools, and “was himself in fact instrumental in the enforcement of English rather than Welsh as the language of instruction in Wales” (67). By insisting that Celticness become a subset of a primarily English Britishness, Arnold reveals that “the colonial relation to other cultures in the nineteenth century” was never more clearly stated than through the proposition that “‘modern civilization' destroys the last vestiges of a vanquished culture to turn it into an object of academic study” (68). Heather Williams traces the foundation of Celtic studies at the hands of Matthew Arnold and Ernest Renan to the “homogenizing terms” commonly found in the way “Orientalists wrote about Eastern themes” (27). In all three cases, the expansion of the British Empire from the initial control of local Celtic peoples to other areas of the world reveals the impetus for Arnold’s racial basis of English (couched in the more inclusive term “British”) dominance over Celtic culture.

**Hopkins and the Hybrid Self**

Arnold’s basic thesis in *The Study of Celtic Literature* is that the Celts had their time in European history, and now it is time to be English. Hopkins would not assert this thesis himself, as will be discussed below. Yet however sympathetic Hopkins may be to the Welsh, he mirrors Arnold in two important ways. First is the paternalism of trying to “develop” (to use the Arnoldian term) an indigenous population against their will, here coming from an educated, Catholic Englishman living in rural, Protestant Wales. Rather than making the Welsh English, Hopkins hopes to convert the natives to the external conception of truth and value of Catholicism. In his letters, Hopkins speaks of the empire positively, as long as it links with aims
of Christianity (and especially the Catholic Church): “Then there is civilisation. It shd. have been Catholic truth. That is the great end of Empires before God, to be Catholic and draw nations into their Catholicism” (Poems and Prose 207). Second is the claim of hybridity, which, while certainly more kindly in Hopkins, still embodies the colonial impulse of an outsider claiming a native (here read “Welsh”) culture in the hope of controlling it. Of course, this hybridity is qualitatively distinct from usual discussions of the subversive potential of postcolonial hybridity (inspired by the works of Homi Bhabha), in which the colonized are set up as occupying the liminal space between the colonizer and a truly “other” ethnicity; Arnold’s (and Hopkins’s) hybridity is a reversal of sorts, in which it is the colonizer who can, via an assumed performative fluidity, take on qualities of the colonized.\(^42\) In other words, the colonizer not only has colonial power over a given people group, along with its land and resources, but also is able to control definitions of people groups according to certain characteristics and take on such definitions at will.

Hopkins clearly identified as English, and derives cultural pride from the literary traditions of England. Citing a review of an article on Milton by Matthew Arnold, Hopkins writes in a letter that “Milton’s art is incomparable, not only in English literature but, I shd. think, almost in any” (Poems and Prose 186-187). Also akin to Arnold is his perception of the role of the literary critic as persuading imperial subjects that “Her [England’s] literature is one of her excellences and attractions” (207).\(^43\) Yet Hopkins also defines his own ethnic identity by hybridity, even if this process does reveal a sense of Arnoldian essentialism. Evidence of this occurs mainly during his three years of Jesuit study at St. Beuno’s in North Wales. During this

\(^{42}\) Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim* provides another literary example of this other kind of hybridity in which the colonizer can assume desirable qualities of the colonized people.

\(^{43}\) Gauri Viswanathan notes that “English literature appeared as a subject in the curriculum of the colonies long before it was institutionalized in the home country” (*Masks of Conquest* 3).
time he writes to his non-Welsh mother (whose name prior to marriage was Smith) that “I have always looked on myself as half Welsh and so I warm to them” (White 57). Yet this claim may be unfounded. Norman White writes, “The surname Hopkins, common in south Wales, was often considered to be particularly Welsh; and Hopkins was probably assuming Welsh ancestry on no more grounds than this,” and as a result, “before he had met any Welsh people Hopkins felt himself romantically attached to them” (111). So this hybridity is one that Hopkins assumes individually, apart from the common postcolonial understanding of hybridity as a new communal culture within imperial contact zones. In other words, this is an assumption of identity rather than a societal result of a collective evaluation, and illustrates how displaced transmission can be used for colonial ends. If the Arnoldian understanding of hybridity is normative and Anglocentric, Hopkins’ hybridity is simultaneously subversive in its performative flexibility and imperial in its external appropriation of an internal Welsh identity. In other words, Hopkins follows Arnold’s imperial attitude to Welshness, but this occurs through the divergence of allowing for a certain amount of ethnic play that both undermines hard-and-fast imperial conceptions of ethnicity and shows how the colonizer can appropriate the culture of the colonized.

Hopkins is certainly aware of certain external stereotypes of the Welsh, and preemptively comes to their defense when writing to his mother, “I ought to say that the Welsh have the reputation also of being covetous and immoral: I add this to forestall your saying it, for, as I say, I warm to them – and in different degrees to all the Celts” (White 57). Yet he makes his own generalizations when he writes that they “are very civil and respectful but do not much come to us and those who are converted are for the most part not very stanch. They are much swayed by ridicule. Wesleyanism is the popular religion. They are said to have a turn for religion, especially what excites outward fervor, and more refinement and pious feeling than the English peasantry
but less steadfastness and sincerity” (White 58). This statement directly corresponds to Arnold’s conceptions of the separate ethnic identities, where the Celt favors “sentiment” (here “fervor”) and the Germanic English favor “steadiness” (here “steadfastness”). This propensity for sentiment, while endearing, is ultimately unsatisfactory for the resolute Catholic. He writes, “I have got a yearning for the Welsh people and would find it in my heart to work for their conversion” (White 57).

While the character of the Welsh seems inferior to Hopkins, or at least in need of “development” and refinement, he differs dramatically from Arnold when it comes to the Welsh language. Hopkins’ desire to learn Welsh himself does not seem to have completely “pure” mission-oriented motives, as his Rector discouraged Hopkins from “learning the Welsh language ‘unless it were purely for the sake of labouring among the Welsh’” (White 113). Yet during a debate on campus, which concerned the proposition “That the sooner the Welsh language dies out the better,” he took an anti-Arnoldian position as he defended Welsh as a living language (85). He seemed to be enamored with the language for its poetic resonance, connecting Celtiness to poetic imagination and potential, when he writes, “People think it has no vowels but just the contrary is true: it is almost all vowels and they run off the tongue like oil by diphthongs and triphthongs – there are 20 of the latter and nearly 30 of the former” (White 58). Yet even here, his guilt over wanting to learn Welsh for the “wrong” reasons illustrates the internal tension Hopkins feels, as it is assumed that the “proper” justification for the language would be to adopt the language in order to change the people. Hopkins attempts to resist the

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44 In fact, Hopkins was likely the only one at St. Beuno’s who had any knowledge of Welsh, which is rather shocking given that it was overwhelmingly the first language of the region. Norman White notes that “St Beuno’s was often called the College of Englishmen. Even the local Welsh Catholics retained their traditional anti-English feeling… Furthermore, Welsh Catholics, like Irish Catholics, had not always seen eye to eye with the Society of Jesus, whose members, unlike the secular parish priests, tended to be more loyal to their own organisation, and less inclined towards local allegiances” (112).
colonial, Arnoldian attitude towards the Welsh language, but such a discourse clearly has a strong presence in his subconscious.

Hopkins’ adopted half-Welshness caused him to engage more deeply in the language, as he took Welsh language lessons (despite his rector’s warnings), read classical Welsh poetry, and experimented in Welsh poetic forms himself. He wrote a cywydd (seven syllable lines with rhyming couplets) in Welsh, which, while his grasp of the language was “subjective and unscholarly,” (White 103) showed his dedication to the language since it requires a decent vocabulary to write in a precise metrical form. He also took a bardic name, Brân Maenefa (The Crow of Maenefa, a mountain), which he used for his Cywydd and The Wreck of the Deutschland (he later used “Brân” on its own after he moved from the area near Maenefa in North Wales, White 131). This is not just a pseudonym, as it is also a Welsh language name, featuring a Welsh place name, according to Welsh custom and possibly alluding to Welsh myth (“Brân the Blessed” is a character in the medieval collection of Welsh tales, The Mabinogion).

More important, regarding the corpus of his writing, was his experimentation with cynghanedd. While the cywydd form employs cynghanedd, he would adapt this strict system of alliteration and rhyme, albeit in a looser form, to much of his English language poetry (I address specific poems that adapt cynghanedd in the section below). Gweneth Lilly writes that Hopkins adapted many attributes of Welsh poetry to his own English language poetry, including “internal rhyme combined with alliteration; the penultimate syllable of a line rhyming with a preceding word, with the last two syllables accented (“call of the tall nun”); and alliteration of pairs of initial consonants and of medial consonants (“cipher of suffering Christ”; White 121-122). In Diana Taylor’s terms, Hopkins mines the archive of Welsh texts in order to develop a living repertoire for performing Welsh hybridity.
Hopkins certainly exhibits more sympathy and admiration for the contemporary Celts than Arnold. In addition to his admiration for Welsh literature he seemed to advocate Home Rule for Ireland (Martin 367, although this may in part be due to his own Catholicism). So while he did not view Celtic culture as contemporarily worthless, he still appropriated Celtic culture for himself and paternalistically hoped to convert the Welsh to his own strain of Christianity. Additionally, evidence in his poems suggests some resonance with Arnold’s idea of “Celtic Magic” in nature and a “Germanic” desire for ordering humanity. The presence of the divine in the natural world is the laudable “weird power” of nature, whereas the language of guilt surrounding humans suggests a separation from the divine and the need for control and order.

The Hopkinsian Grotesque: Celtic Magic and Germanic Steadiness

Hopkins’ nature poetry serves as an inquiry into the complex perfection of nature, while lamenting its destruction at the hands of humans. Much of his poetry addresses both this contrast between nature and humanity and the need to reevaluate “humanity versus nature” by bringing the divine into the discussion. While nature embodies the Celtic Magic, God both creates the natural magic of the universe and provides philosophical steadiness in the assurance that humanity cannot permanently mar the earth. In Arnoldian terms, the Celtic element comes through in nature, Germanic steadiness through the divine, and humanity requires classical (Latin/Greek) regulation. All three elements play into Hopkins’s poetry, which embodies a version of the performative Britishness of Matthew Arnold. The poems I address below were either written in Wales or Ireland, as Hopkins lived in each place, and hint at the notions of idealized Celtic nature with morally negligent (if not vicious) Celtic inhabitants.
Idealized Nature and The “Weird Power” of Celtic Magic

The central symbol of the relationship between nature, humanity and the divine in Hopkins’ journals is the holy well. Common in Wales, these are wells associated with certain local saints and believed to have healing properties; of course, it is likely that these wells have pagan origins and were associated with Celtic deities before they were with Christian saints. It is possible that Hopkins knew “East and West,” published in Matthew Arnold’s New Poems of 1867, and about legends of two holy wells Ffynnon Seiriol and Ffynnon Gybi. While writing the poem in North Wales, Arnold wrote to his sister that “the poetry of the Celtic race and its names of places quite overpowers me” (White 44-45). Yet for Hopkins, it was the nearby Ffynon Gwenffrewi (translated and Anglicized as Winifred’s Well) that drew his attention. The well became for him a kind of sacramental symbol of divine healing and redeeming humanity through nature. The holy well mirrors Hopkins’s view of nature as a whole, since the non-physical divine becomes present in the physicality of the water itself; without this sacramental system (much like communion), bodied humanity would not have to access to the disembodied, spiritual God. In other words, divine grace becomes manifest in the physical world of natural elements in order to redeem humanity. Physicality and embodiment, then, are not bad in and of themselves, since they make evident the glory of God; however, Hopkins sees the disorder of the natural world coming primarily through embodied humanity, and as a result experiences residual guilt in the physical/carnal aspects of humans.

This sacramental view of nature is central to Hopkins’ poems. Rather than viewing the various particulars of the universe as chaotic, Hopkins regards them as uniquely beautiful creations that reflect the beautiful imagination of their creator. Reflection upon a thing’s singular beauty causes Hopkins to write about that thing in a poem, often tying in a redemptive theology;
when he does this, Hopkins believes that the writing develops its own ontology, becoming a unique creation as well. The divine imagination set in motion cycles of creation through a reality in which the human imagination reflects and participates.\(^{45}\)

Hopkins’s disparate attitudes toward nature, the divine and humanity – and especially toward the Welsh people – show most clearly in his *cywydd*. While employing the Welsh language\(^ {46}\), Welsh poetic forms and his bardic pseudonym (Brân Maenefa, or the “Crow of Maenefa”), Hopkins makes strong claims about the apparent incompatibility of the land and its residents. Wales, in general, serves as an ideal model of the divine made evident in the physical: “Under rain or dew, you will hardly find a country beneath heaven which is so luxuriant.”\(^ {47}\) Yet the human inhabitants do not fit: “The old earth, in its appearance, shows an eternal share of virtue; it is only the human element that is faulty; it is man alone that is backward.”\(^ {48}\) The hope of the poem, then, is that God will impart “by faith a sweet healing, the nourishment of religion; and Wales even now will see true saints – pure, holy, virgin.”\(^ {49}\) At this point in history, Christianity would have been nearly universal in Wales – but it would have been mainly Nonconformist (Methodist, Calvinist, Baptist, etc.). The suggestion, then, is that Welsh Christians are relatively impure, unholy and non-virgin, and are in need of conversion to the Catholic faith in order to worthy of their nearly divine environs. In Arnoldian terms, the magical Celtic landscape reveals the steadfast, “eternal virtue” of the divine imprint; Roman Catholicism, then, is to serve as the Classical force to control the unruly human population.

\(^{45}\) This is, of course, a consensus view in Hopkins criticism and is upheld in some form or another by Margaret R. Ellsberg, Ernest Fontana, Alan Heuser, Herbert Marshall McLuhan and. Maurice B. McNamee.

\(^{46}\) The English translation here is provided by Norman White, pages 134-135.

\(^{47}\) “Wlaw neu wltih, ni chei wlâd braidd / Tan rôd sydd fal hon iraidd.”

\(^{48}\) “Hên ddiair ddengys â’i gwêdd / Ran drag’wyddawl o rinwedd; / Ni ddiffyg ond naws ddyniol, / Dŷn sydd yn unig yn ôl.”

\(^{49}\) “Tydi a ddgyi trwy ffôdd / Croyw feddygiaeth, maeth crefydd; / A gwela Gwalia’r awr hon / Gwîr saint, glân i r gwyryfon.”
The subsequent poems I address here are not as overt in their lauding of the Welsh landscape and condemnation of humanity (and especially the Welsh people); however, the apparent subtext provided by the cywydd prompts the reinterpretation of each of these poems. The poem “Spring,” for example, outlines Hopkins’s basic theory of nature, namely that although God created it and human sinning then made it “sour,” it still is reminiscent of perfection. At the start of the poem he moves from a general statement about the singular beauty of spring as a whole to the particular beauties of those things that comprise spring. He contemplates such specific aspects of nature as the thrush, its eggs like “little low heavens” and its song which “strikes [the ear] like lightenings to hear him sing”; “the glassy pear tree leaves and blooms”; the sky, and frolicking lambs that “too have fair their fling.” The speaker even praises weeds for their intrinsic beauty (“weeds, in wheels,” that “shoot long and lovely and lush”), for although they may not be useful to humanity Hopkins values their aesthetic uniqueness over any instrumental or teleological value. Hopkins lauds the particulars of creation and sees them as embodying the unified whole of creation. Each individual thing in creation has a unique set of qualities that makes it a unique whole; Hopkins calls the distinctive identity that a thing possesses its “inscape.” Spring as a whole has a unique inscape, and each thing that participates in the season has its unique inscape. Furthermore, his poetic reflection on all of these things has its own unique inscape. In other words, creation is paradoxically part and whole simultaneously, and he gives due admiration to both part and whole without favoring one over the other. The effect of reveling in the beauty of the individual things provides a basis for reveling in the greater setting of spring as a whole, and ultimately to reveling in the divine mind; this latter response occurs most obviously as the speaker praises God for allowing remnants of joyous innocence to still exist, as “racing lambs too have fair their fling.”
The pastoral scene here, with its divine implications, serves as an analogue to Arnold’s notion of “Celtic Magic.” Hopkins’s description of the Welsh landscape goes beyond what Arnold identifies as the “mere beauty” of classical nature poetry or the “realism” of Germanic nature poetry to the “weird power” of Celtic Magic. Nature is spiritual and sacramental; extended contemplation serves a similar function to the Celtic heroes who wander off normal paths and find the Otherworld, or the reality beneath appearances.50 As often occurs in Hopkins’s nature sonnets, the first stanza focuses on the particulars of nature and the second stanza transports the reader through the veil of appearances by reaching conclusions about the spiritual underpinnings of the natural world. Through the shift in focus from the sonnet’s octave to its sestet, Hopkins moves from praising particulars to commenting on how the beauty of nature is reminiscent of the perfection that once existed on this earth; nature exudes a joy that tells of “A strain of the earth’s sweet being in the beginning/ In Eden garden.” Hopkins makes note of the earth’s “juice,” which leads to “joy”; here he suggests that the individual can perceive the essence or inscape of a thing. Such depth of the understanding of nature does not hide itself from the human mind, but such essence is not reducible to sheer propositional statements either. Rather, it receives joyous awe from the perceiver who engages it.

Hopkins warns, however, that while the fall in Eden caused nature to be tainted, humans who ignore the beauty that remains in nature are further degrading the earth. While the poem appears to be making universal claims about the natures of the physical world and humanity, the fact remains that the immediate environment Hopkins writes in is Wales. The inspiration from natural beauty of Wales contrasts with Hopkins’ view of the Welsh people – who, at the very least, typify the universal fallen state of humanity (if not serve as a special case, given Hopkins’s

50 One example of this occurs in the First Branch of The Mabinogion, when Pwyll follows his hounds into the Otherworld and encounters its lord, Arawn.
frustration with the task of converting the Welsh). Yet the possibility exists for fallen humans to look upon the magic of nature and magnify its intrinsic beauty and underlying spiritual reality through imaginative contemplation. Maurice B. McNamee suggests that Hopkins desires humans to internalize the joyous nature of spring as a type of pre-Fall innocence before sin tarnishes the “Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,” and that exalting spring in particular and nature in general can be used as a means “purging out the poison of concupiscence, the residue of the fall” (245). The use of the word cloy in this section, meaning the disgust that remains from the excess of something once enjoyable, in the context of innocence may suggest that the speaker hopes that children will experience the joys of nature and learn to see remnants of perfection before their perspective is made “sour with sinning.” Nature is not perfect, but the way we view it affects the way we respond to it. Humans, not God, are to blame for the original disorder of nature as well as its continuation; but humans can still revel in or even augment the beauty that is left. Hopkins’s task as missionary to the Welsh is the same as his task as nature poet for the world – to convert the mind of the reader or parishioner to his understanding of the natural world as a sacramental portal to the divine.

“Hurrahing in Harvest” continues and elevates this theme of nature as the revelation of the creative ingenuity of the divine mind, while at the same time making a strong allusion to typical English (and especially Arnoldian) depictions of Wales as unruly. Again, the poem moves from reveling in the beauty of particular aspects of creation, like the “silk-sack clouds,” to some human response to nature. While reveling in such singular beauties, Hopkins unconventionally describes what he sees as “barbarous beauty,” suggesting that beauty has a savage or uncivilized quality. The “barbarous” quality of the Welsh landscape goes back at least to essentialist borders of Shakespeare’s Cymbeline, and was made even more common by
George Borrow’s book *Wild Wales*, which Hopkins was likely referencing in this line from his correspondence: “Wild Wales breathes poetry. Wales, always to me a mother of Muses” (White 72). In the context of inscape, this description of Welsh land as “barbarous” could signify that the splendor that he perceives in the harvest is so assertive that it conquers his senses in order to make its unique beauty known. If a thing’s inmitable ontological status (or essence of an individual thing) is called “inscape,” this individuality in turn is made known through the revelatory process of “instress,” which occurs when a given thing “acts on the senses… of the beholder” (xxi).

Hopkins clearly does not regard this unruliness as negative; in fact, the ability of natural elements to force their way into the human mind is praiseworthy. This is because the mind has the ability to order wild nature according spiritual principles, imparting the Germanic quality of steadfastness onto the wild natural world. “Hurrahing” does not simply reference the unpredictable motion of the clouds, but rather their behavior, anthropomorphically imposing the characteristic of will upon the clouds, for the sake of strong instress again. The speaker marvels at the natural beauty before him as if it is the most uniquely beautiful display of clouds he has ever seen when he exclaims, “has wilder, willful-wavier / Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?” Hopkins then moves on to address how God is seen and known via nature. Rather than focusing on how humans ought to view nature as he did in “Spring,” the speaker illustrates how one can use his sensory perception of nature “to glean our Saviour”; in other words, one not only can praise nature for its intrinsic beauty, but one can also praise God for being evident within nature. As a harvester gleans the substance of wheat, the speaker claims to “glean” the substance of the Savior. Margaret R. Ellsberg states, "Each thing in nature was marked by what Duns Scotus called 'thisness', which connected it... to the universal, to God. All words and the
objects that words exist to tell of, rhyme, chime, and share something because all derive from the same universal original Logos” (73). In other words, Hopkins’s approach to addressing the problem of the “one and the many” is by referring to Scotus’s position that the countless inscapes in nature reflect or embody the universal. Scotus, coincidentally being both Celtic and British, provides the method by which the Arnoldian hybrid can simultaneously appreciate the wildness of the nature (Celticness) while rooting it in “Logos,” an organized structure of spiritual reality (Germanicness).

Despite the abstract philosophical implications of such a position, the final product of acting on this philosophy is sheer ecstasy, for when “man allows himself to catch that revelation he is beside himself with a unique pleasure and satisfaction” (McNamee 234). Through an analogical presence in the unique beauties of nature, Christ becomes known to the nature-marveller (McLuhan 209); the final lines of the poem offer the ideal human response to this “sacramental” aspect of “Christ's divine-human natures” (Heuser 50). As the individual contemplates nature through the harvest, “The heart rears wings bold and bolder.” The word rears commonly refers to an action unique to horses, and in conjunction with the wings this phrase connotes the first flight of a Pegasus. While this may seem strange in the context of a nature poem, it accords with Hopkins’s theory that nature and human thought can meld into a new and unique inscape, the way a Pegasus is a unique hybrid of horse and bird. As Ernest Fontana suggests, this response is not merely excitement, but is the kind of romantic excitement of a supernatural status, like that between Christ and the Church; he writes that these lines depict “the heart responding spontaneously to the presence of Christ in creation… as the mare does to the stallion. The mare-heart responds to the stallion-hills” mentioned earlier in the poem (263).
Just as the magical and fantastical allow for hybridity in nature in the allusion to the Pegasus, the poetic, Catholic mind is able to order and regulate experiences of nature into the Arnoldian hybrid. The ecstatic response of the poem’s speaker also corresponds to the Ignatian sequence of meditation, often practiced by Jesuits like Hopkins, which progresses through "sensation, intuition, and response" (Heuser 52); the observer perceives the various elements in nature, intuits or “gleans” God's presence from that perception, then responds internally by the heart rearing wings. Though Christ is not physically visible himself, his creation is, and it displays his character and requires a human response. The proper response is celebration – not only a celebration of the Creator through reflecting on the created, but also a celebration of the sensuous beauty of creation itself through the organization of poetic form.

Though “Hurrahing in Harvest” establishes that humans can participate in the divine imagination through viewing and responding to nature, Hopkins firmly states in “God’s Grandeur” that the authority of the divine mind is final. God saw fit to reveal Godself in and around creation; in the poem, the world is “charged” with God’s grandeur, like an electric force that causes it to exist and persist. The divine light shines in millions of unique ways, like “shook foil,” as all creatures and objects have their unique inscape. Divine glory also permeates creation like the “ooze of oil”; this simile is particularly appropriate from a sacramental perspective of nature. Oil is a natural substance, but the Church has commonly used it as a means of spiritual anointing; this image integrates well into Hopkins’s view of creation as a whole, akin to the function of the holy well, since the natural reveals and allows one to experience the spiritual more deeply. Yet the human impulse as a whole bends toward disorder and chaos; because humans do not heed the will of God, the earth “bears man’s smudge” as humans limit the overall beauty and majesty of natural revelation. McNamee argues that Hopkins believes that through
human processes “men have insulated [themselves] against that revelation by artificiality and convention, by industrial ugliness and squalor” (229). In fact, for Hopkins it would seem that atheism is almost anti-nature, for those who do not “reck his rod” cannot understand the divine work that permeates the earth. Instead, the poet states that human “Generations have trod, have trod, have trod.” The repetition of this clause accents the continually mundane process of human experience; humans tread the earth, but this merely wears on the earth without contributing anything to the pursuit of beauty or meaning. When humans do act, such action is generally self-serving. The earth is “seared with trade,” so the commoditization of nature depletes its resources and degrades its beauty.

Fortunately for Hopkins, human power is limited. The will of God preserves nature against human corruptions, and hence “nature is never spent”; rather, it is ever ready to fulfill its purpose of revealing God to man (McNamee 234). God programs the earth to have daily and seasonal processes of renewal (for instance the rising of the sun each morning), which embody the “weird power” of a natural world that is constantly changing but also rooted in divine steadfastness. Humans may have a negative effect on nature, but they can never conquer creation due to the inescapable natural means of re-creation. Despite the ongoing power struggle between God and humans over the earth, God makes Godself known as divine comforter through care for the earth. The Holy Spirit, whose imagination created the world, is the same spirit who “over the bent / World broods with warm breast.” Once again, we see Hopkins employing Arnoldian categorization – unruly humanity defies the organizational principles of the divine, but God remains in control over nature and over those faithful humans (ideally, for Hopkins, Roman Catholics) who “reck his rod.” The grotesque is in need of regulation from a complete and pure entity, which occurs most clearly in his poetry as he addresses the grotesquerie of humanity.
Imperfection in Human Bodies and The Necessity of Colonial Regulation

While Hopkins appreciates the symbolism of divine grace in the holy well, it also highlights the fact that human faults are what cause the need for divine grace. In particular, holy wells exist to purify the “fallen” bodies of humans through remedying diseases and infirmities. If embodied humans in general are unruly, this imperfection can only be heightened in a group such as the Celts who are, for Hopkins, essentially unruly. The fact that Welsh nature is lovely but Welsh humans are in need of conversion appears repeatedly in his journals, correspondence and poems. In his cywydd, for example, Hopkins uses the Welsh language and Welsh poetic forms to critique Welsh character – something other authors, such as Saunders Lewis and R.S. Thomas, frequently do as well. Yet the contrast with Hopkins appears in the antagonism between nature and humanity, as he extols the “virtue of the countryside compared with the impiety of its inhabitants” (White 135). His poem “In the Valley of the Elwy” continues this theme: “Lovely the woods, waters, meadows, combes, vales,/ All the air things wear that build this world of Wales; / Only the inmate does not correspond.” This paternalism is similar to Arnold’s but focuses on religion rather than language. For Arnold, the Celtic inhabitants of Britain and Ireland need to forego their native languages to speak and write in English in order to become fully British and fully modern. Hopkins’s appreciation and usage of the Welsh language clearly deviates from the Arnoldian model. However, the underlying principle is the same even if the particulars diverge. For Hopkins, the organizational force for the Welsh comes through the imposition of a foreign religion (Roman Catholicism) rather than through the imposition of a foreign tongue. His view of the role of faith revolves around the notion of a grotesque humanity in a divinely constructed world.
Before addressing the specifics of bodies (or lack thereof) in his poetry, it is worth looking at Hopkins’s philosophical influences. Scholasticism is Hopkins’s main authority for views on God, which is rooted in the works of Aristotle, Aquinas and (especially relevant for Hopkins) Scotus. Aquinas and Scotus both uphold the notion of “divine simplicity” – that God is spiritual, non-physical and outside the categories of created things. Scotus mentions that bodied entities are limited by time and space, whereas God is not (Scotus 142-144). Aquinas argues that bodies create potentialities and allow for change (Summa, Prima Pars, Question 3); it is because God does not have a body that Hopkins can claim in “Pied Beauty” that God is “past change.”

When looking at his attitude towards bodies in his philosophical influences, sermons and poetry, it appears that while Hopkins tries to uphold the standard Victorian dichotomy at times (i.e. that human bodies are negatively grotesque and that God is traditionally unembodied/classical/constant) he is unable to fully do so. Poems such as “The Windhover” and “As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame” complicate any simple understanding, since the figure of Christ (traditionally understood as being at once human and divine) complicates the “humans are grotesque and God is classical” divide. In the former poem, the speaker lauds the titular bird, itself a symbol of Christ, both for its mastery of the air and for the beauty that comes from its falling (literal falling for the windhover, figurative falling for Christ in the incarnation and crucifixion). In “Kingfishers,” the just man “Acts in God’s eye what in God’s eye he is – / Christ.” Christ, then, is incarnate and embodied (as opposed to God the Father), and as a result can redeem natural bodies. As a result, it may appear that Christ is able to remove any grotesqueness from humanity, which would collapse the human-grotesque/divine-classical divide.
Yet in a sermon by Hopkins, he defines the particular embodiedness of Christ versus that of the rest of humanity. Christ “was not born in nature’s course, no man was his father.” Additionally, his “body was framed directly from heaven by the power of the Holy Ghost,” and as a result he “was tempered perfectly, he had neither disease nor the seeds of any” (138). This contrasts to the rest of humanity, comprised of individuals whose bodies are naturally (as opposed to supernaturally) created and are open and susceptible to disease. Although Christ did become incarnate, for Hopkins his incarnate body was distinct from those of the rest of humanity. Hopkins also subordinates Christ’s body to his other, non-bodied traits: “far higher than beauty of the body, higher than genius and wisdom [of] the beauty of the mind, comes the beauty of his character” (140). Even though Christ’s body is superior, it is his mind and character that truly separate him from the plane of regular humanity. In light of these views, the lauding of natural bodies – and particularly those of humans – becomes more qualified. For the “just man” of “Kingfishers,” then, the quality of justice is a temporary actualization of a potential trait, unlike the permanently just Christ; in other words, if the just man of the poem is Christ, it is not a permanent status of equivalence. This highlights the need for sacramental experiences in Catholic praxis, such as communion or visiting the holy wells, since even the most just human is transient and in need of perpetual renewal. Finally, if the incarnate Christ is on a different plane of embodiedness from general humanity, this only highlights the distinction from the non-incarnate person of God the Father (the creator) who, unlike the incarnate Christ (who, even though could not be sick according to Hopkins, could age and hunger, is “past change”).

Hopkins’ other poems, “Pied Beauty” and “Carrion Comfort,” seem to construct embodied nature as secondary to the disembodied spirit of God; yet at the same time, the broken or inconstant aspects of nature can lead to an appreciation for the God who creates natural
bodies. The most ambiguity comes with the human body specifically. Hopkins frequently addresses animal bodies in a direct fashion, but the human body, though occasionally hinted at, is often relegated to the background.\(^{51}\) Despite Hopkins’s desire to glory in particulars in opposition to, for example, a Gnostic or neo-Platonic disavowal of the body, when it comes to his own body there is a suspicious absence – an absence that can be read as evidence of Hopkins’s own views of the human body. The speaker(s) of Hopkins’s poems serves as an all-seeing eye, distinct from nature in that the world is an external reality to be observed. Thus, even though Christ negotiates between the spirit and the body, Hopkins still conceals a partiality to the spirit. This absence of human bodies in Hopkins’s poems is the likely cause for the lack of critical inquiry into Hopkins’s singular (re)vision of the grotesque; in contrast, much scholarship has been devoted to other models of Victorian grotesquerie, particularly that of Charles Dickens.\(^{52}\) While Hopkins falls in line with the Victorian discourse surrounding the grotesque, it also prompts him to view the Roman Catholic Church as the proper method of containing unruly bodily desire. This would contrast with Hopkins’s view of Welsh Christianity, in which unruly fervor (Arnold’s “Celtic excitement”) is the standard measure of true faith, versus Germanic steadfastness and Classical order.

Hopkins, as a Victorian and a Jesuit, still suffers from Victorian and priestly pressures; the fear of human corruption and of divine punishment is evident in his works. Here I read the animal bodies, the human body of Christ, and the absence of other human bodies in terms of the

\(^{51}\) One exception to this occurs in “Felix Randal,” where Hopkins laments the death of the long-infirmed titular character. Although the language is obviously homoerotic (such as the description of Felix’s body as “big-boned and hardy-handsome,” or the speaker’s admission that “My tongue had taught thee comfort, [my] touch had quenched thy tears), this poem does not contain the same level of sexual guilt found in other poems and in Hopkins’s journals. I would argue that this is due to the fact that the poem redirects sexual desire down the church-approved avenue of priestly duty, where care and comfort are able to be categorized as a virtuous expression divine love by the priest for his parishioners.

\(^{52}\) For this and other more standard Victorian notions of the grotesque, see *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression* by Peter Stallybrass and Allon White.
Bakhtinian grotesque/classical distinction (especially as nature is “open” to God’s penetration while God is classically impenetrable) and the Foucauldian panopticon (e.g. bodily absence and mental self-monitoring). Hopkins’s strained dichotomy between the classical and the grotesque occurs through “Pied Beauty” setting up the beautiful grotesqueness of nature in contrast to the classical divine, while “Carrion Comfort” addresses the ugly human grotesque by asserting that humans need to be open to divine discipline. Before proceeding to particular analysis of these two poems, I intend to explore the political ramifications of contextualizing notions of the body within the Victorian period. The shifting social values of the Victorian era called for spiritual and physical discipline, in contrast to the Rabelaisian emphasis on communal feasting and social indulgence, upholding the era’s gender constructions of the masculine as self-disciplined and feminine as in need of regulation. Particularly important here would be the Arnoldian equation of Victorian control with modern Britishness – a hybridity of Celtic, Germanic and Classical impulses – in opposition to the unpredictable and vicious nature of non-modern imperial subjects. In other words, colonial and imperial ideals are embedded in Hopkins’s poetry about the body, and the successful governance of bodily desires can reveal the ability and effectiveness of British identity and hence British rule. Yet Hopkins’s poetry also reveals the ineffectiveness of the very dichotomies that he tries to uphold through an obvious appreciation for the grotesque, the broken and the multifaceted; the default positions of the Victorian age regarding the grotesque (linked with Celticness) and the classical (linked with the Germanic and, for Hopkins, the Catholic Church) work to sustain a binary that cannot be sustained.

In *Rabelais and His World*, Mikhail Bakhtin sets up the distinction between classical and grotesque bodies to highlight the latter as a social celebration of life. The former kind of body is

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53 See *Charlotte Brontë and Victorian Psychology* by Sally Shuttleworth for a more detailed discussion regarding Victorian ideals of regulation.
both a “strictly completed, finished product” as well as an “isolated, alone, fenced off from other bodies” (29); in other words, the classical body is a closed body, self-sufficient and impermeable. The grotesque body, in contrast, is characterized by its “passing of one form into the other, in the ever incompletely character of being” (32). This quality of being “incomplete” is not a cause for alarm, however, since for Bakhtin such openness is associated with festivities and images of the banquet – “food, drink, swallowing” (278) – which would not be possible, strictly speaking, for a closed classical body. In addition, the openness to pleasure and companionship at the table is mirrored in the openness to pleasure and companionship in the bed, as other common banquet images are “the fat belly, the gaping mouth [and] the giant phallus” (292). The grotesque becomes an arena for revelry in general, versus the staid classical body that neither needs nor enjoys the interplay and exchange of the banquet; as a result, this grotesque body becomes revolutionary in that it is a body of the people, rather than of an unattainable and inaccessible ideal.

Variations of the grotesque do occur, however, as not all grotesquerie can be truly labeled Rabelaisian; the Victorian era in particular, with its efforts to sanitize and control the body, can present different versions of the grotesque that may be indebted to the Bakhtinian model but with diverse manifestations. The characters representative of the Dickensian grotesque, for example, may still engage in the revelry of food, but the frank sexuality apparent in Rabelais is absent here. For example, the Micawbers in *David Copperfield* ignore their financial woes in order to keep high spirits resulting from food and banquet merriment; David relays that Mrs. Micawber can at one moment be ill, “lying… under the grate of a swoon,” while the next being “more cheerful… over a veal-cutlet before the kitchen fire, telling me stories about her papa and mama, and the company they used to keep” (154). While having neither the degree of festivity found in
Rabelais nor the overt sexual element, the Micawbers here still embody the communal revelry found within the central banquet image. Another Dickensian reworking of the grotesque occurs with the character Pickwick who, rather than having the “unusually obese” body of the 17th century figure Fat William that represents “bread and wine in bodily form” and “the abundance of earthly goods,” has a “little paunch” which is “far more ambiguous” for English audiences (Bakhtin 292). This element of ambiguity in the symbol of the belly leads to an uncertainty of the signified, so that Dickens’s grotesque figures become close approximations to Victorian normalcy rather than previous characters who symbolize communal revelry and resistance to the political and socio-economic status quo.

Just as Charles Dickens presents a unique form of the grotesque, so does Gerard Manley Hopkins. Both authors participate in the Victorian shift regarding the concept of the grotesque, but in distinct ways. Thus, while certain broad trends can be traced in the Victorian era, Victorian values are by no means monolithic, as Dickens’s model is still very much rooted in representations of the physical human body, while Hopkins’s version is much subtler as he does not often present human characters in his works (or at least not to the same degree of bodily detail as in Dickens or Rabelais). Instead, Hopkins upholds the classical/grotesque distinction through the broader notions of nature and the divine. On the one hand, nature is both open and permeable: natural bodies can interact with one other, and God can create, change, destroy or preserve from destruction various elements of nature. On the other hand, the divine is presented as unchanging and impenetrable, the unmoved Mover of classical antiquity. Mirroring Matthew Arnold, bodily revelry in sex and food is not an option for the contemporary British individual; this is something relegated to the “heroic society” of Britain’s Celtic past, rather than the modern control and steadfastness of the Classical and Germanic portions of British hybridity. Of course,
in the Arnoldian model Wales is the strongest link between Britain’s Celtic past and its modern present, and while no longer in a distinct heroic age the quality of unruliness remains in modern Wales.

Hopkins aims to praise both changeable nature and the unchanging God who made it, but this ultimately collapses as “mutable” comes to mean “imperfect.” Hopkins’s own body (or rather the body of his speaker) rarely appears in his poems; Hopkins’s awareness of the mutability, and hence imperfection, of the non-divine causes there to be a lack of human presence in his “positive” poems (as represented in “Pied Beauty” below), while his “terrible sonnets,” as exemplified by “Carrion Comfort,” present the human body as corrupt and in need of (and hence, open to) divine discipline. This necessity for divine correction stresses both the openness of the human body to such imposed restraint as well as the perfection of discipline that comes from an unchanging disciplinarian, and this principle is especially evident in the cywydd as Hopkins invokes divine correction for the “impiety of [Wales’s] inhabitants.” In other words, while all humans are imperfect, the Celts receive special attention in Hopkins’s poetry as an entire people group, suggesting a more particular emphasis on corruption of the group as a whole.

“Pied Beauty” was written in Wales in 1877, falling much earlier than the common modernist timeframes. However, it at the very least embodies a similar experimentation in form that one could identify as modernist, as well as a (coded) skepticism towards humanity common in modernist poetry. The poem is a curtal sonnet, a form invented by Hopkins that is ¾ of a Petrarchan sonnet; the final line and a half or so represent the traditional “turn,” as Hopkins shifts the perspective of the poem from the beauty of changing nature to glory of an unchanging God. While the alienation of, for example, Prufrock is clearly absent here (even things as
different as nature and God have a familial relationship, as God “fathers-forth” nature),

Hopkins’s structural and linguistic experimentation acts as a precursor to that of Modernism. The language of the poem is also quite difficult, suggesting another similarity to the “elitism” of Modernism (e.g. the poem praises God for “dappled things,” such as “rose-moles in all stipple upon trout that swim” and “fresh firecoal chestnut falls”). The rhythm is also semi-irregular, as Hopkins uses “sprung rhythm,” in which each line is governed by the number of stressed syllables, rather than a strict pattern of stresses.

“Pied Beauty” establishes Hopkins’s apparent view of God in contrast to nature. The poem’s first line, “Glory be to God for dappled things,” at once demarcates three basic principles to this effect: 1) Nature is varied (as “dappled” both literally refers to “spotted things” in nature and symbolically to dissimilarity that occurs across nature); 2) God is responsible for variation (and, by analogy, the “weird power” of Celtic Magic”) in nature, and 3) the human response to this variation should be to give glory to the one responsible for such varied beauty. The rest of the poem continues with these basic themes, as the speaker begins to name several aspects or qualities possessed by things in nature, before returning to praise God again at the end. However, before this praise occurs, the speaker adds in a fourth dimension in the penultimate line: 4) God is not varied, but rather is “past change” (line 10).

Regarding this opposition set up between God and nature, Hopkins seems to be attempting to negotiate the classic philosophical problem of the one and the many; that is, how can we speak of nature as one unified thing when it not only has numerous and conflicting aspects (vegetation, minerals, predator vs. prey), but that these aspects are also always in flux (e.g. growing, dying)? To view this issue in Bakhtinian terms, this contrast establishes nature as being comprised of many grotesque bodies (or that nature itself is a grotesque body with many
grotesque parts), while the divine is perceived as a unified and constant disembodied essence in the more classical vein of understanding. For Bakhtin, the grotesque is natural; he writes, “the distinctive character of this body is its open unfinished nature, its interaction with the world” (281). Several of Hopkins’s examples of varied nature appear more as snap-shots, such as the mere mention of “finches wings” (line 4) apart from any sort of context. Yet the overall impression these images give is variety and an interaction among natural elements.

The poem links the variation in nature to change in two key moments. First is the use of the word “fickle” to describe natural variety. This is not used as a slur, but rather as praise for the ability of natural elements to be open to change and interaction with each other (bodily “openness” being the key to the grotesque). Second is the turn of this curtail sonnet in the penultimate line, as God’s beauty (in contrast to nature’s) is “past change.” The logic of the poem implies the contrast between the main portion of the sonnet at its turn. Bodily interaction occurs prior in line 3 as the trout “swim” in natural bodies of water (an active interaction with the world), and in line 5 as landscape is “plotted and pieced” (a passive instance of being acted upon). Such landscape is still considered part of nature, rather than an aspect of civilization; that is, the plotting and piecing of the land is seen as natural in that it is listed among the “dappled things” (line 1) of nature without any qualifications. In contrast, the divine presence is a classical presence; “past change” here can mean “beyond the ability to be changed by outside elements” – that is, the divine creates the dappled and changing universe but, according to the tenets mainstream Roman Catholicism, is closed off to change via outside influence.

One also gets the sense that here, as in Bakhtin, the grotesque is good; the praiseworthy differences in nature serve as cause for the “triumph of the people as a whole” and the “banquet for all the world” (302). This sense of aesthetic pleasure being available to all who can perceive
it continues with the theme of Bakhtinian camaraderie. Negatively speaking, the poem seems to be removing the inherent classed nature of “popular-festive tradition” and the carnivalesque as rebellion against restrictions placed on the lower class by hierarchical powers (e.g. church, state, economics; Bakhtin 301). Indeed, Hopkins’ hope that the Welsh people would adopt Catholicism in order to be worthy of the land they live in taints the political underpinnings of his grotesque. However, Hopkins’s appreciation of diversity does carry a degree of political weight; other poems (such as “God’s Grandeur”) draw more explicitly on Hopkins’s environmentalist leanings, but here (and especially while considering the intertextual links between Hopkins’s works) it is clear that nature is to be appreciated, rather than exploited, and accordingly diversity of all kinds (including animal species) is something to be preserved – especially since, for Hopkins, such diversity exists according to God’s plan. Thus, Hopkins’s emphasis on diversity places him in the broader scope of environmental ethics, as his care is not only for sentient beings but his work also implies a “moral consideration for inanimate things” (Garrard 140). In addition, Hopkins here does not fall prey to the tendency to anthropomorphize the animals in the poem, looking at them as mere spiritual symbols (as would be the case in Medieval bestiaries); thus, individual creatures are lauded in their own right for their uniqueness, instead of simply for their symbolic utility for humans, emphasizing again that natural beauty is “for all the world.”

This appreciation of diversity in nature occurs within a larger schema of Hopkins’s theoretical ontology. As mentioned above, Hopkins’s Scotian philosophy holds that all created things are unique individuals, rather than mere incarnations of a greater Platonic form, and that individual things reveal themselves observers through actions. As Hopkins writes in the poem “As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame,” “What I do is me” (line 8). This line is the crux of Hopkinsian performativity, as a thing’s inscape or identity cannot be known without an
accompanying action (instress). While this is the standard Hopkinsian model of instress and inscape, which he uses to understand nature, the application to humanity and ethnicity in particular strains these categorizations. Interestingly, Hopkins’s Welshness is put on in order to be performed – that is, whether or not he really has Welsh ancestry or (more importantly) cultural heritage, his poetic works serve speech acts that perform aspects of Welshness (whether through poetic form, language, etc.). There are at least two ways of thinking about enacting identity – the essentialist model and the performative model. From an outside perspective, Hopkins seems to approach Welshness using both models. On the one hand, the essentialized Welsh are compelled by “nature” to act spontaneously (to use the virtuous term) or in an unruly manner (to use the vicious term). On the other hand, Hopkins is free to play with attributes of Welshness while distinguishing himself from other conceptions of Welshness. Of course, from an internal perspective it would seem that Hopkins believes himself to be acting according to the Arnoldian hybridity of Britishness, embodying certain Welsh virtues (such as linguistic play and structure in the cywydd) while avoiding certain vices (Nonconfirmist unruliness).

Hopkins’s highly experimental approach to poetic form, which is often seen as foreshadowing modernism, comes via instress and his attempt to mimic what occurs everywhere in nature. Just as a thing’s inscape is shown to others through its perceptible qualities, so too does Hopkins attempt to establish his distinctiveness as a poet and also the distinctiveness of each poem through often highly rigorous poetic constructs. Nature as a whole has a unique inscape, and each thing which comprises nature has its own inimitable inscape; furthermore, his poetic reflection on all of these things has its own unique inscape. In other words, creation is paradoxically part and whole simultaneously, and he gives due admiration to both part and whole without favoring one over the other. Thus the poem is like nature in that it expresses the
individual, but not individualism (that is, a person or thing is not seen as in competition with the rest of world, but rather as companion to other created entities which possess their own inscape). The grotesque, then, appears in Hopkins due to the fragmentation that still exists in nature, even if these fragmented parts interact amicably; in other words, nature is both “many” and changeable, as it is open to changes in time (i.e. nature is transient) and natural bodies can interact with one another (i.e. they are permeable), as evidenced by the swimming trout – one body (the trout) can penetrate another body (the body of water).

The coded skepticism towards humanity that I mentioned earlier comes through the conspicuous absence of human bodies in the idyllic grotesque of “Pied Beauty.” The only visual hint of a human presence in this very visual poem is the reference to the “landscape plotted and pieced” (line 5); such landscape is presumably acted upon by humans, but there is no mention of any bodily human presence. Despite the fact that humans are bodied (and the assumption that the speaker/viewer is a bodied human), the only human presence in the poem seems to be a sort of “all-seeing eye,” or sheer perspective that can see without being seen. This lack of a visible narrator leads the reader to identify with the human gaze, thus implicating the reader in the poem’s fetishism. Just as the filmic apparatus, according to Christian Metz, projects the film from behind the spectator “precisely where phantasy [sic] locates the ‘focus’ of all vision”– that is, the “back of the head” (824) – so Hopkins visually places animal objects before the reader-spectator in order to create the association with the disembodied perspective of the poem; this is especially apparent when considering that there is no other human character with whom to identify, as often is the case in narrative film.54 Mary Louise Pratt argues that the depopulating of landscape and the lack of a “face-to-face encounter” is a common trope of colonial writings, as it

54 The Windhover also employs the disembodied spectator as the all-seeing eye/I (“I caught this morning morning’s minion”).
allows the speaker to comment on a landscape from her own political moorings, uninterrupted by
the voices of the native Other (“Scratches on the Face of the Country” 139). Any native Celtic
inhabitants in the region do not play a role in this poem.

In contrast to nature, God’s “beauty is past change.” Christian theology figures God as
spiritual and thus not a physical or bodied entity, and is hence classically impermeable. While
not being entirely orthodox on all matters, such as his preference of Duns Scotus over Thomas
Aquinas that he admits in a letter to Robert Bridges (Hopkins 177), Hopkins’s place in the Jesuit
community suggests that in this matter he would uphold orthodoxy. Still, the fact that God is
disembodied does not mean God is ungendered for Hopkins. Given what little Hopkins does say
about God in the poem, gender is strikingly obvious: “He fathers-forth” (line 10, emphasis
added). Hopkins then presents his theology of God as both unchangingly masculine and yet,
ironically, unchangingly un-bodied; that is, God appears to be a gendered essence. This view
presented in the poem has complications as well, however. First of all is the notion of family
resemblance. If the classical God “fathers-forth” grotesque nature, how does one account for the
fact that nature has not inherited God’s unchanging nature? Again, Hopkins presents a
paradoxical view of the problem of the one and the many that cannot be neatly resolved. For
Hopkins, God’s distinctness from but immanence in nature is explained elsewhere; he calls
creation “God's utterance of himself... outside himself is this world” (Moore 143). Thus the
similarities between God and the poet come through; God appears to “father” nature in a similar
way as Hopkins would “father” a poem. The offspring are distinct, not even being of the same
kind (i.e. nature is not divine, the poem is not human,) and possess a unique inscape; however,
they still proceed from their respective creators. In other words, the gendered notion of God here

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55 Besides, while not going into great length as to the nature of divinity in this poem, the contrast between “dappled”
nature and constant God is central to the poem.
is not linked to sexual reproduction or genetics; rather, it seems in Hopkins’s view to be an attribute of the disembodied and creative spirit of the divine being.

The second complication concerning Hopkins’s gendered view of God is that elsewhere he seems to view God as having traditionally feminine attributes. “God’s Grandeur” shows the Holy Spirit as protecting nature from the corrupting human influence (another area in which humans might be said to be “unnatural” or “anti-natural” for Hopkins); the poem states, “the Holy Ghost over the bent / World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings” (lines 13-14). The language of these lines hints that the divine role here is feminine; just as a mother bird broods over her young, so the Holy Ghost broods over its “offspring,” the world. Here God seems to have “mothered-forth” nature, in opposition to “Pied Beauty,” as the language of progeny is still employed. How does this fit into the notion of God’s unchanging, classical body? Helena Michie writes that the Victorians tended to view gender as a pure dichotomy; she writes, “the Victorians organized gender difference horizontally, where men and women were seen, not as part of a continuum, but as polar opposites” (409). “Masculine/feminine” is just as oppositional as “classical/grotesque,” in other words. If this is the case, however, then God would appear to be changeable, adopting different gender roles depending on the circumstances, and hence thwarting Hopkins’s classical designation of God.56

Much of Hopkins’s poetry deals with general principles regarding the interaction of nature, humanity as a whole, the self and the divine, and usually does not address specific people groups such as the Welsh. However, when he does mention the Welsh this provides an arena for analyzing how this particular ethnic group fits into the general principles. If classical order is divine, for example, then it would seem that the British (as well as the Germanic and Latin

56 Unless, of course, God holds both genders at all times; while I do not see overt evidence of this view in Hopkins, it would help uphold this element of Hopkins’s view of God as classical. However, the fact that Hopkins is unable to sustain the dichotomies he tends to hold elsewhere resonates with this particular moment of collapsing the classical.
groups) are closer to divinity in that respect than the Celtic Welsh. From an Arnoldian perspective, this only becomes more evident when considering religion. The English may not have adopted the full Catholicism upheld by Hopkins, but the Anglican Church certainly has a more widespread uniformity and sense of regulation than the Nonconformist chapels of Wales which govern themselves on a denominational or even congregational basis. Divinity as order, then, has an ethnic dimension as well as an individual one.

While “Pied Beauty” sets up the opposition between classical deity and grotesque nature, “Carrion Comfort” attempts to somehow fit humans into this schema. Once again, this highlights the Arnoldian language of regulation, which for Hopkins takes the angle of the necessity of Catholic/imperial control of the grotesque and unruly by the classical and ordered. While not mentioning Wales or the Welsh specifically, the poem does continue the Arnoldian and colonial language of regulation that informs poems such as his cywydd or “In the Valley of the Elwy.” Unlike “Pied Beauty,” where human absence from nature was suspect, the very human speaker of this poem is now the focus. However, the poem does not praise the embodied human, as a reader of “Pied Beauty” might expect; rather, the human speaker tries to resist “Despair” (line 1) while seeking God’s discipline. The speaker is so overwhelmed by guilt that he barely recognizes himself as human when he refers to the “last strands of man / In me” (line 2-3). As a result, the poem further problematizes Hopkins’s schema in that the glory the speaker sees outside of himself in nature is not to be internalized. Yet the speaker of the poem hints at the bardic persona of Hopkins’ earlier years in Wales through the adaptation of cynganedd. It is by no means strict, but we know that Hopkins perceived the roots of such sequences of alliteration through the poem (e.g. “wring-world right foot rock,” “lay a lionlimb” “darksome devouring eyes my bruised bones,” etc.) as coming from Welsh poetry. The fact that it is not strict suggests
that, for Hopkins, ethnicity can be performed loosely; as long as one picks up a strand of an external referent, it can be woven into a sense of ethnic self.

In contrast to the benevolent and protecting version of God seen in “God’s Grandeur,” this poem presents an anthropomorphized, and hence bodily, God as a figure of punishment. The poem initially sets God and speaker in opposition, particularly regarding their respective wills. The speaker conceives of “despair” as a kind of food, signaling from the outside that the human body is permeable and open to outside influences; of course, the openness here is dangerous, given the feast that lies before the speaker. While trying to refuse despair, the speaker also tries to avoid contemplating suicide in a Hamlet-esque manner of speech: “I can… not choose not to be” (lines 3-4). Adding to the speaker’s misery is the sense of God as antagonist; the hunter-God’s “darksome devouring eyes” scan the prey’s “bruised bones” (line 7). The language used both for the speaker and God is very bodily; the speaker figures mental torment in physical terms, as God wields a punishing “rod” (line 10) and has a “foot” (line 12) that treads the speaker, while both actively engage the opposing force through “wrestling” (line 14). It is evident in the language that God alone possesses power in the relationship; while the speaker attempts to “wrestle” or struggle with God, the other actions in the poem all belong to God (e.g. “devouring,” “flung,” “tród”), as do the instruments of punishment (such as the “rod” and the “lionlimb”). In contrast to “Pied Beauty,” particulars here are not comforting; rather than marveling at the aesthetic beauty of varied natural experience, the speaker only feels dread while being hunted by God. At the same time, the sonnet’s turn on the ninth line establishes that this correction is in fact appreciated by the speaker, that the speaker desires a life-restoring discipline that can lead him to “laugh, chêer” (line 11). In fact, the speaker even describes such discipline
as heroic (line 12), thus shifting the role of antagonist onto himself. This change from dread to pleasure can be seen as evidence of the discipline already at work in the speaker.

Hopkins’s speaker is usually in the position of the observer and all-seeing eye/I; yet here the speaker becomes the object of the divine gaze. David Spurr links the gaze with colonial regulation when he writes, “The gaze upon which the journalist so faithfully relies for knowledge marks an exclusion as well as a privilege: the privilege of inspecting, of examining, of looking at, by its nature excludes the journalist from the human reality constituted as the object of observation” (13). The key here is that the gaze acts as an impetus for normalizing, whether that be morally or culturally, imperial or ecclesiastical. For Hopkins, such normative behavior is defined by Britishness and (Catholic) Christianity.

While Hopkins previously presented the human perspective as the all-seeing but unseen monitor of nature, in this poem God is able to see into the speaker’s consciousness; the previously obscured source of perspective now becomes subject to the controlling gaze of another. The bodily language is still preserved, but it is clear now that it is being used merely anthropomorphically – ultimately the poem depicts a spiritual battle between God and human, thus making the body subordinate to the spirit since in the extended metaphor the body is merely the vehicle to the spirit’s tenor. In Foucauldian terms, the previous human panopticon (the observer of earth in “Pied Beauty”) is now the subject of a divine panoptical presence. God acts as a sort of internal panopticon, having epistemic access to the minutiae of the human spirit without the human having clear epistemic access to the divine will. Foucault writes that the panopticon “is a machine for dissociating the see/being seen dyad: in the peripheric ring, one is totally seen, without ever seeing; in the central tower, one sees everything without ever being seen” (108-109). Instead of simply obstructing one from avoiding the greater power’s will (a
system called the “discipline-blockade”), the panopticon is “the discipline-mechanism: a functional mechanism that must improve the exercise of power by making it lighter, more rapid, more effective, a design of subtle coercion… The movement [is] from a schema of exceptional discipline to one of a generalized surveillance” (115). As the observed can never know if she or he is being watched, the panopticon forces its viewed subjects to self-monitor in order to avoid further punishment. By turning the gaze (the “darksome devouring eyes”) of the divine panopticon onto and even into the human speaker, the divine presence instills in the speaker Victorian England’s traditional value of self-monitoring via submission to the divine monitor; this is all the more true for the omniscient God, who, in contrast to the human panopticon, is certainly always watching. If self-monitoring is an English value, then the assumption that the Welsh need to adopt such monitoring is a tacit case for subsuming Welsh identity into modern British identity though the ideals of control and order. The internal reach of the spirit further emphasizes the Hopkinsian grotesque; while bodily punishment can only mar the exterior, the classical and spirited God is able to penetrate through the human body and into the human soul and thus can manipulate the human spirit (e.g. causing guilt, correcting the direction of the will) without any risk of being manipulated in return. As a result, it is the human grotesque that allows the individual or ethnic group in need of rectification to be manipulated by the corrective force and attain a greater level of divine order.

In addition, the syntax and structure of the poem presents the two given parties in terms of this classical/grotesque opposition. The human speaker presents a very frantic and even fragmented point of view; the syntax itself is disjointed, even for a Hopkins poem, as the speaker starts and restarts certain phrases until they finally come out as whole (e.g. “Not, I’ll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee,” line 1). Hopkins constructs the poem methodically, as he
tends to do (i.e. it is a sonnet, the typical alliteration is there, etc.), but he uses the structure to simulate a mind figuring things out as it writes: “I can; / Can something, hope, wish day come” (lines 3-4, emphasis added). God, in contrast, is shown to be resolute and unswerving (akin to Germanic steadfastness); change in the speaker is required, and the divine being pursues and hunts the speaker until such change is accomplished. Yet what is particularly interesting about this sonnet is that this uncertain self continues even after the turn in the sonnet; even though he begins to embrace divine punishment with celebration, he cannot decide if he celebrates “the hero whose heaven-handling flung me” (line 12) or “me that fought him” (line 13). As a result, the speaker is presented in the terms of the Hopkinsian grotesque as fractured and hence “many,” while God’s resolution of will accords with the classical, regulating force that is represented most clearly by “the rod” – whether this is a royal scepter or a shepherd’s crook, both serve as symbols of control and phallic power.

The shift from the overall positive view of the cosmos in “Pied Beauty” to the desperation evident in “Carrion Comfort” is a rather drastic shift. When considering this, the immediate resulting questions are both “What caused the shift,” and “what is the source of all this guilt?” While the potential answers to these questions can be merely speculative, their extension into the realms of the body and discipline certainly merit their exploration. In one respect, guilt and the feeling of separation from God would not be foreign ideas for the Jesuit; as René Gallet notes, St. Ignatius of Loyola (the founder of the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits) wrote of the sensation of “desolation,” where the soul feels "as if separated from its Creator and Saviour" (78). The labeling of sonnets such as “Carrion Comfort” as “sonnets of desolation” then places them in this broader (and hence, “normal”) context of a common spiritual experience.
However, there may be a more distinctly personal struggle that leads Hopkins to write poems such as this.

Figuring Hopkins as participating to an extent in the Victorian era’s Uranian tradition of pederastic poetry, Michael Matthew Kaylor argues that the depression leading to these sonnets of desolation, or “terrible sonnets,” may be rooted in the poet’s own sexual guilt (though these negative feelings occurred in part as a result of his dissatisfaction of life in Ireland as a professor). Kaylor states that earlier in his life, Hopkins made “a fetish” of sorts around Digby Mackworth Dolben (126), a poet who is elsewhere overtly connected to Uranian poetry, as Timothy d’Arch Smith calls Dolben a “Christian Uranian” (188). In addition, Hopkins seems to have made some sort of confession to a priest regarding Dolben, since his “High Anglican confessor [forbade Hopkins] from having any contact with Dolben except by letter” (Kaylor 201; how much this is due to Hopkins’s sexual attraction to Dolben and how much it is related to Dolben’s literary reputation in general is unclear, however). During the two and a half years Hopkins knew Dolben, he would send him numerous unreturned letters; Dolben’s death at the end of those two years prevented Hopkins’s supposed affections from ever being requited.

While it is unclear to what degree Hopkins’s admiration or sexual attraction for Dolben extended, his personal written confessions further link him to homosexual pederastic or other non-normative sexual desires. These confessions seem to list various occasions of the poet-priest feeling sexual desire for boys: “Parker’s boy at Merton: evil thoughts”; “looking at boy thro’ window”; “Looking at chorister at Magdalen, and evil thoughts,” etc. (Kaylor 153). Robert Bernard Martin notes that “Victorians separated deeds from personality; a man whose sexual impulses were aroused by other men was not to be called homoerotic unless he actually committed homoerotic acts” (50). This suggests that normative control over desires was
considered possible for Victorians, whether through imposing moral order on sexuality (i.e. linking sexuality to actions rather than to an inherent identity) or imperial order on non-Anglo colonial subjects (i.e. Arnold’s desire to make the Welsh more English/Germanic in behavior). However, such internal guilt in Hopkins swayed him from pursuing painting, since “the higher and more attractive parts of the art put a strain upon the passions which I shd. Think it unsafe to encounter” (likely talking of nude figure painting; Martin 77). He also confessed guilt regarding voluntary masturbation, involuntary nocturnal emissions, sexual attraction to stallions, and sexual attraction to the body of Christ on the crucifix (Martin 101, 113, 114).

Viewing these confessions in terms of the poem “Carrion Comfort” highlights several aspects of the poem which can be read in terms of ethnicity. First of all is the poet’s desire for self-monitoring. This is especially true given the nature of the confessions – that they are self-confessions, only meant for the eyes of the repentant confessor. The act of crossing out the confessions also reveals the desire to conceal oneself from outside surveillance; the poet seems to admit fault, but hopes to contain the moral “shortcomings” of his desires. Such self-monitoring was a value of Victorian Englishness, and may be somewhat out of place when considering Catholicism at large (in which sins are communal when shared with an external confessor). While falling short of a given standard, the fact that the speaker observes faults and seeks correction illustrates this English virtue of self-improvement – one which the Welsh seem to be lacking in “In the Valley of the Elwy,” as Hopkins pleads on their behalf to “Complete they creature dear O where it fails.” Hopkins confesses his sexual longings in the hopes that “my chaff might fly; my grain lie, sheer and clear” (line 9). Thus, Hopkins pursues a spiritual method of dealing with guilt rooted in bodily desires, showing the primacy of the spirit over the body once again; the fear of exposing bodily desire to others is accompanied by the pursuit of personal
mastery and drive to acquire spiritual correction from God. It is no wonder, then, that Hopkins would feel compelled to obscure human presence in nature in “Pied Beauty,” for the shame accompanying his own bodily desires might threaten to mar the aesthetic perfection that he sees God as having created in nature.

Complicating this further is the fact that Hopkins preached sermons against fleshly desire. Duc Dau writes that one such sermon, based on the biblical passage of 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 and resonating with “Carrion Comfort” (although several decades earlier) argues the following points: “fornication is sin against the body”; “the body is the temple of the Holy Ghost”; “we are not our own, to take our own pleasure,” and “we are Christ’s, he has bought us” (83). The stakes of fornication, then, are very high for Hopkins. For the Christian who feels such shame for sexual desire but wants to remain within an orthodox structure, there seem to be few measures of recourse. However, the Tractarian movement of High Church Anglicans, with which Hopkins (and Newman) was associated before converting to Catholicism, seems to offer one such option which Hopkins may have carried with him. Since guilt comes from nearly any sort of bodily sexual desire (and how much more so for desire that does not fit into the traditional Christian schema of heterosexual marriage), channeling such sexual desire into an erotic spiritual fervor becomes a validated possibility and a method of English control over vice.

For the celibate priest, looking to God as the bridegroom allows for an orthodox expression of erotic longing aimed towards a male figure (though, as mentioned above, gendering God does not seem to be as simple with Hopkins). Such a configuration preserves the element of Germanic control regarding sexuality. Dau notes that Hopkins writes multiple poems in which the central figure or voice (whether as a male or female perspective) chooses celibacy in order to have a chaste marriage to God; “St. Theola” in particular stands out, as the main
character, “though promised in marriage to a man, chooses to dedicate her life and virginity to God after hearing [St.] Paul preach on chastity” (84). Poems such as this seem to transmit the homosexual erotic longing of the writer into a spiritual direction, essentially “sanitizing” a shame-inducing desire into a form that can be validated by traditional Christian belief since it adopts the biblical model of Christ as the groom and the Church as the bride and thus encodes homosexual desire in heterosexual terms. This sanitization allows the individual to cling to desire through redirecting it. Christ provides a virtuous orientation for sexual desire, much like he does in The Wreck of the Deutschland” on a national level: “Let him easter us in” and “be a crimson-cresseted east” to “rare-dear Britain.” The language of orientation shows how, for Hopkins, divine correction can redirect both individual and nation away from shame and toward virtue.

This eroticizing of Christ might seem very out of place at first for a poem that uses such violent language. Yet there is a tradition of Christian poetry in which the human, feeling sinful, desires a divine corrective process that is figured in the language of sexual dominance and submission. For example, the speaker of John Donne’s “Batter my heart, three-personed God” states that even though “dearly I love You” (line 9), true devotion is not possible unless God imprisons the speaker, who declares “[I] never shall be free, / Nor ever chaste, except You ravish me” (lines 13-14). Here, as with Hopkins, erotic desire and desire for spiritual discipline enter into the language of sadomasochistic sexuality, in which the classical body of God – both unable to be changed as well as not requiring change – is dominant, while the grotesque human body – in desperate need of correction, or else its erotic longing for God will never be satisfied – willingly acts in the submissive role. The language of sexuality here uses the same terminology of colonial discourse, in terms of dominance and submission, and echoes the Matthew Arnold’s essentialist definitions of Germanic order versus Celtic disorder. The moment in which the
speaker derives pleasure from having “kissed the rod” (line 10) can be read in two ways: literally, the rod exists as a tool for corrective punishment, but metaphorically as a symbol for phallic pleasure; sexual pleasure and the pleasure of punishment are brought together in this same image. Whether his imagined audience\textsuperscript{57} would have been attuned to the sexual nature of this line is unclear; however, that Hopkins, even as the Jesuit priest, would be unaware of the double-entendre presented in this phrase seems unlikely, especially given his knack for homoerotic poetry elsewhere. The irony of such language is that behaviors which would normally be frowned upon as “aberrant” (i.e. homosexual longing and sadomasochism) become permissible when directed towards God – the ideal perfection of the impermeable classical body – in spiritual terms. Thus, the poetry of Hopkins once again slips into a seemingly unwilling admission of the primacy of the spirit over the body, as the erotic longing of the “flesh” is perceived as shameful while the erotic longing of the spirit upholds normative Christian ideals.

Just as Charles Dickens employed his own version of the sanitized Victorian grotesque in the figures who revel in food but not sex, Gerard Manley Hopkins also presents his own vision of grotesquerie in which all natural bodies in general (and by extension, nature itself) are seen as grotesque and in contrast to the classical divine and disembodied essence; that is to say, natural bodies are grotesque in that they are unable to remain consistent and static, while the divine is classical in that it is one unified, unchanging being. In terms of ethnicity, Hopkins subtly links classical divinity with Germanic order and grotesque bodies with Celtic magic and disorder. Such a figuring of the grotesque removes the food imagery entirely, except as a metaphorical object of spiritual or mental desire (e.g. “Despair”), illustrating the shift from bodily pleasures to pleasures (or “comfort”) for the spirit. In “Pied Beauty,” the tradition of banquet revelry, in part characterized by the excess in amount and kinds of food, is transferred to the revelry of visually

\textsuperscript{57}I say “imagined” here since these poems in question were published posthumously.
feasting upon aspects of nature; as such, nature becomes a banquet, with as many courses as there are natural bodies, whether animal or mineral. At the same time, this removes the aspect of the communal human celebration, and hence the socio-political benefits of the grotesque banquet, since the lone individual’s perspective is all that it takes to feast upon nature. However, Hopkins adds a sense of spiritual companionship to the grotesque, by which I mean that he connects the individual human perceiver to God and nature, since the recognition of the multifaceted aspects of nature by the perceiver leads to an appreciation of the univocal God. The desire to construct a classical versus grotesque framework is evidence of Hopkins’s Arnoldian sensibility, yet this framework cannot be sustained as grotesque nature achieves a sort of familial union with the classical divine, since the latter created the former.

However, this companionship between the natural and the divine, which is initially perceived by human observers, breaks down within the human. “Carrion Comfort” suggests that human sexual desire (celebrated in Rabelais) is cause for shame, and requires the discipline of the classical essence of God, though erotic desire may lawfully take a spiritual turn. This desire for discipline admits that the natural (and hence, grotesque) human body is not sufficient as “Pied Beauty” may suggest, but gestures towards a desire for the human to break from its changing whims in order to approximate more closely the unchanging and consistent form or nature of the classical deity. Hopkins’s initial emphasis on the union and kinship between the natural and the divine is called into question, and thus his poems may appear to assert the primacy of the classical spirit or essence over grotesque nature (and particularly over the human body). Despite the tensions between these two poems, the collapse of any sustained dichotomy challenges the Victorian status quo even if it does not do so by means of a logical, linear argument which might result in more solid conclusions; rather, the poems reveal the faults in the
binary that sets the masculine/dominant/classical against the feminine/submissive/grotesque in his amorphous gendering of God and the familial unification between body and spirit.

The pleasure of discipline and order in “Carrion Comfort” ameliorates the Celtic propensity for mere sentiment in “Pied Beauty,” and unites Hopkins’ identity as an English Catholic with his admiration for Welsh fervor. As a result, a variety of Germanic and Celtic elements – order, tradition, discipline, natural magic, etc. – all come into play in Hopkins’ performed hybrid identity, which, as with gender, shows the fluidity and slippage of Hopkins’ notions of identity. Yet the strong sense of the individual in relation to nature and the divine in the Hopkinsian grotesque prevents this version from having the political weight of a Bakhtinian performative; rather than building a sense of resistance and solidarity among oppressed people who hold a Welsh ethnic identity, Hopkins adopts Welshness in isolation and thus reinscribes the norms of the colonizer appropriating the culture of the colonized. While Hopkins does perform a kind of Welshness, he also critiques the qualities of Celticness if not tempered by the Germanic aspect inherent in Britishness. Hopkins overtly links the morality of the Catholic Church to the control Anglicization offers via the British Empire. Hopkins follows Matthew Arnold in the understanding that British ethnic hybridity can serve as an enforcer of normative morality, but brings Catholicism into the equation as the true aim of all regulation (e.g. the British Empire can participate in the establishment of proper order that is the global aim of the Catholic Church). Although he does not fall into Arnold’s colonial mindset of ridding of native culture, he cannot escape the Arnoldian discourse of Britishness (and, even more narrowly, Englishness) as the all-encompassing national and dominant ethnicity of the island of Britain and, through empire, of the world. At the same time, he shows how such dichotomy-oriented thinking does not hold in his appreciation for the grotesque and the Other. It is not entirely clear if Hopkins wished to
sustain colonial binaries and was simply unable, or if overt rebellion against the Victorian
categorical would have be a cause for further personal guilt. Either way, Hopkinsian
categorization is not a simple matter of the divine versus nature, or English versus Welsh –
rather, a categorical fluidity occasionally presents itself in his work to challenge the very
Arnoldian models that he at times seems to uphold.
Chapter 4: Saunders Lewis, The Irish Influence, Pan-Europeanism & The Welsh Language

As Hopkins did earlier, Saunders Lewis also performs a hybrid identity. Yet rather than emphasizing Welshness within Britishness, he constructs a Welsh identity in opposition to Englishness – a Welshness which exists primarily within a broader European context, rather than in relation to Englishness. Although born in England, Lewis would come to the conclusion that Welsh political independence is necessary to preserve the distinct Welsh culture that is centered around the Welsh language. In terms of double-consciousness, Lewis appears to advocate a European-oriented Welsh identity and condemns the notion that Welsh is a subset of or even equal partner to broad Britishness – in other words, the ideal Welsh identity comes via double-consciousness on the part of the Welsh person as being both European and Welsh, as opposed to the Arnoldian narrative of Britishness as being English and Welsh.

Lewis upholds that independence and self-governance are necessary for the survival of Welsh culture. The title of Lewis’s Welsh language play, *Cymru Fydd* (“Tomorrow’s Wales” in Joseph P. Clancy’s English translation) is an allusion to the failed Home Rule movement in Wales in the latter part of the 19th century called Cymru Fydd, which was itself modeled after the Irish Home Rule movement (Stephens 137); the failure of Cymru Fydd and the attempts at formulating pan-British solidarity in the World Wars meant that no other nationalist movements had risen to succeed Cymru Fydd until Saunders Lewis’ co-founding of the political party in 1925 that would become known as Plaid Cymru (Party of Wales). Lewis’s drama connects to watershed moments of historical oppression in the Welsh collective memory, but for Lewis this also serves as a call for foundational change as he links inextricably the future survival of Welsh
language and culture with continuing pressure of anticolonial resistance. Amidst the turmoil of the modern world, in which elements of Welsh identity shift, Lewis’s play prompts the audience to consider how and if Wales can remain distinctly Welsh as well as to consider what might take the place of Welshness – whether that would be English/imperial ideals of Britishness, international ideology (such as Communism) or referencing the archive to perform a new, surrogate Welshness.

**The Influence of the Young Ireland Movement on Cymru Fydd**

Lewis’s allusion to the Home Rule movement in Wales is a complex, implication-laden move, and requires some contextualization before proceeding to discuss the play specifically. Ireland and Wales clearly have a strong and extensive history of cultural exchange, and have shared similar experiences of colonization by the English. This tradition informs the interaction between these two nations during their respective nationalist movements in the 19th century, particularly between Young Ireland and Cymru Fydd, the former having directly influenced the latter (Stephens 137). Of course, separate circumstances led to the nationalistic thoughts and actions of each nation, such as the Merthyr Rising and nonconformism of Wales, or the Penal Laws and Rebellion of 1798 in Ireland, which are distinct. However, I intend to address the following query as I compare the nationalist movements of these two nations over the last two centuries: In what ways did Cymru Fydd model itself on the Young Ireland movement, and in what ways did each movement construct notions of an “authentic” national identity?

Young Ireland began as a continuation of Daniel O’Connell’s aim of the repealing the 1800-1801 Act of Union, in which Ireland was incorporated into the United Kingdom. From the very beginning, then, this movement primarily concerned itself with degrees of political

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autonomy. O’Connell succeeded in endowing Catholics with the right to sit in the UK’s Westminster Parliament, culminating in the 1829 Catholic Relief Act. Yet soon after the movement’s formation, Young Irelanders took this common basis of cultural separateness and began to develop more radical views than those held by O’Connell. In general, Young Irelanders became increasingly secular, rather than upholding O’Connell’s view that Irish government should reflect Irish Catholic tradition, and grew to advocate violent resistance in opposition to O’Connell’s more diplomatic tendencies. Most significantly, however, was the shift from the mere repeal of O’Connell, which would have had Ireland linked to Britain as it had been before the Act of Union, to the aim of complete independence. For Young Ireland, “national sovereignty was justified by the cultural individuality of the Irish nation, and they [began] to use their newspaper, the Nation, to construct and disseminate a feeling of ethnic distinctiveness amongst the Irish people.” In other words, the driving force behind the movement was political autonomy, and ideals of “ethnic distinctiveness” were cultivated in order to justify this aim. To analyze the progression of Young Ireland according to the issue of “authenticity,” this suggests that Young Irelanders saw “true” Irishness primarily as governance by the Irish. Supporting this notion is the fact that later Home Rule movements would even allow for governance by Anglo-Irish Protestants, such as Charles Stewart Parnell. As a result, the issue of ethnic or cultural difference was only engrafted into the narrative at later points, suggesting that political autonomy

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was not enough to convince a majority of Irish people to pursue Home Rule without appealing to the additional argument of “ethnic authenticity.”

Internal fracturing among Irish nationalists manifested itself not only in a general resistance among Young Irelanders to O’Connell but also within the Young Ireland movement itself. In 1846, the movement had fissured along the lines of support for violent action, and by 1847 Young Irelanders had established the Irish Confederation as a direct adversary to the Repeal Association. 1848 would reveal the first significant act of violent resistance by Young Ireland, when William Smith O’Brien led residents of County Tipperary to revolt against the English government at Ballingarry.

The failure of the uprising, along with clerical resistance to the movement and Young Ireland’s failure to incorporate peasant anti-landlord nationalist organizations, proved to be the demise of this particular phase of Irish nationalism.

These two issues – the fact that Young Ireland primarily concerned itself with political autonomy, and the eventually willingness to take up arms to support this aim – provide significant contrasts with Cymru Fydd. When looking into the roots of Cymru Fydd, it is evident that 19th century nationalist movements in Wales began with religious disestablishment as their primary goal, rather than Home Rule, starting with the foundation of the Liberation Society in 1844. This suggests that, once again, “authenticity” and separation from Englishness was not defined primarily by cultural difference. While the Welsh faction of the Liberal Party provided the main political voice for Welsh nationalism in the 1800s, nationalism in this period was bookended by a focus on disestablishing Anglicanism as the state religion.

However, as with Young Ireland, the nationalists of Wales eventually found a cultural basis for their advocacy of political change. Cymru Fydd was founded 1886 by London Welsh

64 Davis, “Young Ireland.”
65 Rhys Jones and Carwyn Fowler, Placing the Nation, p. 49.
members of the Liberal Party, with the first Welsh branch being established in 1891, in Barry.\textsuperscript{66}

One of the movement’s founders, MP Thomas Edward Ellis, emphasized a “concept of nationality which connected history, literature, art, social values and political institutions in a single organic whole.”\textsuperscript{67} The journals surrounding the movement were \textit{Cymru Fydd} and \textit{Young Wales}, which published articles for and against Home Rule. In the latter category were the writings of Stuart Rendel, an English-born Liberal MP for Montgomeryshire, who supported disestablishment of the Anglican Church and the creation of the University of Wales but wrote against Home Rule in an 1888 publication of \textit{Cymru Fydd}.\textsuperscript{68} In contrast, Ellis argued that such lofty aims for Welsh cultural ideals could not be accomplished without a degree of Home Rule. He gave a speech in Bala in 1890, suggesting that a legislative assembly would be the only sure “means of achieving our social ideals and our cultural interests... an embodiment and a fulfillment of our aspirations as a people.”\textsuperscript{69}

The movement suffered a brief lapse when Thomas Edward Ellis left the organization in 1892 to pursue a more stable political career in PM William Gladstone’s new administration,\textsuperscript{70} but was resurrected by future Prime Minister David Lloyd George in 1894.\textsuperscript{71} Lloyd George’s attitude towards Irish Home Rule was anything but certain and appears to call into question the degree to which he was personally influenced by Young Ireland. Just prior to this, Gladstone’s second Irish Home Rule Bill (1893) was the focus of much parliamentary debate, while disestablishment remained the Welsh priority. Lloyd George did not at first seem to take a strong stance on Irish Home Rule, as his personal sympathies for Ireland were outweighed by his

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{66} Davies, \textit{A History of Wales}, pp. 441.
  \item \textsuperscript{67} Davies, \textit{A History of Wales}, pp.442.
  \item \textsuperscript{68} Kenneth O. Morgan, \textit{Modern Wales: Politics, Places and People}, p. 357.
  \item \textsuperscript{69} Davies, \textit{A History of Wales}, pp.442.
  \item \textsuperscript{70} The National Library of Wales, “Ymgyrchu!” <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/Datganoli/index-e.htm>
commitment to the British Empire.\textsuperscript{72} This is in obvious contrast to Saunders Lewis, who, as outlined below, argued that Wales should be treated as a separate entity to the governmental entity of Britain, rather than as a constituent part. By 1890, however, Lloyd George did begin to support Gladstone’s endeavors.\textsuperscript{73} Echoing Ellis, he also came to suggest the formation of a Welsh assembly, though he stopped short of advocating full Welsh independence as Irish republicans had done for their own country.\textsuperscript{74}

Despite Lloyd George’s ambiguous stance towards Irish Home Rule and outright rejection of Irish independence, several scholars have argued that his leadership of Cymru Fydd borrowed directly from similar movements in Ireland. The very name Cymru Fydd clearly bears the influence of early Young Ireland (though not the influence of Parnell), and like the Irish movement it was initially founded upon the principles of guaranteeing the preservation of local culture.\textsuperscript{75} In fact, Welsh nationalism in general had more in common with the primarily Catholic Ireland than with fellow Protestants in Scotland, as “Ireland offered for Wales the template of a set of social, cultural and economic demands resembling a coherent national programme.”\textsuperscript{76}

With the arrival of WWI, however, much of the discourse of nationalism was put on hold while the government placed primary emphasis on issues of national security. Lloyd George became the main face of this shift in national consciousness, particularly as he took the office of the Prime Minister in December, 1916, previously having served as Secretary of State for War.\textsuperscript{77}

This shift occurred in part due to the success of Welsh industry leading up to the war and to disestablishment, as these seemed to be enough progress for the moment for many Welsh

\textsuperscript{72} Morgan, “George, David Lloyd.”
\textsuperscript{73} Morgan, \textit{Modern Wales}, p. 367.
\textsuperscript{74} Davies, \textit{A History of Wales}, pp.452.
\textsuperscript{75} Morgan, \textit{Modern Wales}, pp. 205, 366. Of course, it is worth noting that the label of Cymru Fydd is in Welsh and Young Ireland is in English, indicative of the divergent emphases on the centrality of the indigenous language in these movements.
\textsuperscript{76} Jones and Fowler, \textit{Placing the Nation}, pp. 51-52.
\textsuperscript{77} Morgan, “George, David Lloyd.”
people. After Ellis and Lloyd George had both abandoned the movement for their own political careers via integration into the broader Liberal Party, the aims of Cymru Fydd and the movement itself had essentially disappeared.

Both Young Ireland and Cymru Fydd began for the same basic reason, namely the belief that their respective cultures were endangered and needed political action to guarantee their survival. It is no coincidence that the previous century saw the advent of Celtic Revivalism, which was primarily based around a sort of literary nationalism in which Celtic nations began to stress that their poetic traditions rivaled (if not superseded) those in England. This literary phenomenon and its association with strong national pride laid the foundation for subsequent political forms of nationalism in the 19th century. Matthew Arnold witnessed the political power of literature and cultural revival for nationalist aims, which (as mentioned in the previous chapter) is why his book on Celtic Literature actually deals more with ethnic identity and political discourse than with specific literary works.

Though both Ireland and Wales in general aimed for degrees of political separation from England to aid in the thriving of their respective cultures, they did have distinct goals in mind. Young Ireland was inherently more political from the start since their nationalistic sentiments were informed by the fact that they had not only just recently become incorporated in the United Kingdom, but also that they desired recognition that Ireland had a stable system of social organization which provided a strong literary tradition before English colonial forces ever arrived. In contrast, Cymru Fydd was most unified over the issue of disestablishment. Yet the

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78 As Kenneth Morgan writes, “They saw the advancement of the Welsh nation within the context of a wider process of liberalization and social equality within the United Kingdom… There was simply no need to pursue the chimera of Welsh home rule when so much progress was so easily obtainable within the fabric of the union and the empire.” The Rebirth of a Nation: Wales 1880-1980, p. 412.
fact remains that without the common stress on preserving indigenous culture from the threat of Anglicization by English institutions, these movements might never have occurred as they did.

Not only was each movement founded upon the same basic principle, but they both also ceased due to the same cause: internal fracturing regarding the degree of participation or separation from the government of the United Kingdom, particularly as the general sentiments of their respective leaders became increasingly separatist. The leaders of Young Ireland led its transition from a repeal movement into an independence movement, but their advocacy of violence also led to dwindling support to the extent that only a small number of individuals participated in the failed uprising of 1848. Cymru Fydd resisted the impulse for full independence, and instead attempted to provide a means for more political freedom within the British state through the disestablishment of the Anglican Church (achieved in 1914, with a final compromise in 1920) and through the founding of distinctly Welsh institutions, such as the University of Wales. Yet this emphasis on a degree of Home Rule only provided the South Wales Liberal Federations another cause to reject Lloyd George and the movement which had grown to be so associated with his leadership.

The Impact on Saunders Lewis

The fact that religion was a major focus of Cymru Fydd rather than complete independence is important for the play that bears its name. As we will see, Lewis recognizes the increasing secularization of Wales through the character Dewi; religion could not possibly serve as the impetus for countrywide movement when the country was no longer defined by Nonconformism. While Lewis’s personal ideal for Wales would be a Catholic, European nation, on the same international level with France or Spain, the practical recognition of contemporary
realities leads to a focus on political independence as the method of protecting indigenous Welsh culture takes precedence over concerns of religion. For Lewis, the Welsh language comes first – it is the most significant distinguishing factor in terms of authenticity and ethnic separateness (i.e. other countries may be Nonconformist or have industrial coal-mining roots, but they do not have the Welsh language). Additionally, all of what is unique about Welsh culture flows from the Welsh language for Lewis, since through the language one can tap into Welsh history, literature, music, etc.

Saunders Lewis was influenced by preexisting notions of Irish nationalism. Lewis’s wife, Margaret, was of Irish descent, and upon meeting in Merseyside, England (where Lewis was born into a Welsh-speaking community) they together developed a fierce loyalty towards their respective languages and cultures. The major difference between Lewis’s nationalism and the various kinds of Irish nationalism that he encountered through his wife is one of emphasis and priority. Irish nationalism (including that of Douglas Hyde, the founder of the Gaelic League) tended to highlight the distinctions of Irish culture to mobilize political resistance to English rule. Lewis’s nationalism, in contrast, sought political independence as the only method of guaranteeing the preservation of the Welsh language and culture. In other words, the distinctions revolve around the question of does an emphasis on culture exist to marshal governmental change, or is governmental change necessary in order to protect culture? Lewis became a co-founder of Wales’s nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, and would become its president from 1926-1939, when he resigned due to his belief that his Catholic faith would harm the acceptance of Plaid Cymru in the largely Protestant Wales (Pritchard-Jones).

While he spent much of his career on literary endeavors, many in Wales remember him best for his 1962 BBC Wales radio lecture Tynged yr Iaith (“Fate of the Language”). This
address can provide more of a theoretical framework for the decline of the Welsh language, as it references specific historical events that provide the background for the fatalism of Cymru Fydd. Lewis traces various actions which belie a systematic attempt by the English to eradicate Welsh language and culture, including, among other things, the release of the previously mentioned “Blue Books” of 1847 which suggest that the Welsh educational system was in shambles. Despite his defense of the Welsh language and culture against English (and even other Welsh) attempts to squelch them throughout his life, the lecture is ultimately pessimistic, due to the rapid decline of native Welsh speakers over the last century; considering the fact that the decline of the language may continue, at one point Lewis even states, “Welsh will end as a living language, should the present trend continue,” and that “Wales without the Welsh language will not be Wales” (Alun R. Jones 127). Fortunately, Wales responded positively to Lewis’s pessimism, forming Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (The Welsh Language Society) between 1962 and 1963; the society advocated (and still advocates) non-violent resistance, and played a key role in the Dolgellau protest of 1965.

Lewis specifically denies Cymru Fydd’s emphasis on Nonconformist religion as the central quality of Welshness, replacing it with the Welsh language and culture (the latter being secondary and logically following the former). It is language, not religion, which provides distinctive authenticity for the quality of Welshness. The radio address argues specifically for “opposition – harsh, vindictive and violent” in order for Wales to “seriously [demand] to have Welsh as an official language on a par with English” (Jones 137). Here Lewis refers to acts of civil disobedience, such as refusing to pay taxes if government documents are not translated into Welsh. Yet as a proponent of Welsh independence, it is clear that Lewis upholds that political resistance and self-governance are necessary for the survival of the Welsh language and culture –
that is, since the English government systematically aims to destroy or undermine the Welsh language, independence becomes not an end in itself but rather the only possible course of action to preserve culture. Thus the reference of the title of his play to the Welsh Home Rule movement links Lewis’s vision of the future of Welsh language and culture inextricably with anticolonial resistance.

Land, Language and National Identity in *Cymru Fydd*\(^9\)

Saunders Lewis builds a conceptual framework for understanding his nation as colonial in order to reevaluate the past and evaluate possible future directions for Wales, mainly through the characters of Bet Edward and Dewi Rhys. The manipulation of language plays a key role in the attempted Anglicization of Wales; as with other British colonies, education and the promise of success in the British system provides an incentive for mimicry. The role of the colonizer is to redefine the land and language of the colonized, creating a sense of foreignness at home\(^80\); thus, the task of many postcolonial texts is to redefine their respective nations in return, providing an indigenous alternative to the categorizations imposed by the external authority. As addressed below, this text suggests that the failure of colonial promises leads to the indigenous alternative of reiterating archival elements of traditional culture to literally and figuratively reproduce the nation (as embodied in Bet and her womb\(^81\)) and serves as the only viable Welsh response to Anglicization that does not lead to cultural disillusionment like that of Dewi.

\(^9\) Very little criticism in English exists regarding Lewis’s plays. Two exceptions are Iolo Williams’s *A Straitened Stage: A Study of the Theatre of J. Saunders Lewis* (1991) and Bruce Griffiths’s “Aspects of His Work: His Theatre” (1983). These works emphasize biographical elements and connections to his religious views, and address the theme of the relationship between the individual and country as one of mutual assurance through cultural nationalism. My work here builds on this latter theme by addressing how the mechanics of ethnic performativity show the potential possibilities as well as the pitfalls of cultural revival movements in Lewis’s contemporary Wales.

\(^80\) Brian Friel addresses the same issues that occurred in Ireland in his play *Translations*.

\(^81\) In her discussion of medical discourses surrounding endometriosis, Ella Shohat identifies a strain of thought in which “women who postpone or forego childbearing betray the telos of their natural role” (“Lasers for Ladies” 247).
Jones 144

Saunders Lewis participates in postcolonial discourse by his representation of a colonial power’s subjugation of another nation through the redefinition of its land and language. Lewis’s drama represents the disillusionment and fear of probable failure in reclaiming any “authentic past” or constructing a distinct future after centuries of cultural oppression in Wales. The play, then, can serve as a testing ground for Joseph Roach’s theories of surrogation – that is, when a cultural gap forms, how can a society or people group form new cultural traditions that more or less approximate the functions provided by the previous culture? The text ultimately ends unresolved, prodding the audience to come to its own conclusions about how each represented nation should proceed to take action in a post- or anti-colonial context. Implicit in the characterization of the play, however, is the suggestion that men must be the protectors of culture while women are the traditional keepers of culture.

This model of women as the keepers of culture is certainly not universal, and several postcolonial feminist scholars have critiqued the trend to identify universal, monolithic causes for female oppression. Chandra Talpade Mohanty writes that there is “no universal patriarchal framework”; rather, there is a “particular world balance of power within which any analysis of culture, ideology, and socioeconomic conditions necessarily has to be situated” (“Under Western Eyes” 20). Nira Yuval-Davis identifies trend in feminist criticism in which “women tend to be identified with ‘nature’ while men tend to be identified with ‘culture’” (Gender and Nation 6), in opposition to Bet in this particular play. Yet Bet’s role is not unique in the realm of nationalism, as Anne McClintock notes that, according to Afrikaner nationalism, “white men were seen to embody the political and economic agency of the volk, while women were the (unpaid) keepers of tradition” (Imperial Leather 275-276).

This normative ideal of female reproduction, in which male labor is ideally through external action (in the workplace or politics) and female labor is ideally through “producing new human beings” (247), informs Bet’s desire to reproduce the nation.
The plot of the play establishes the opposing reactions of the characters Dewi and Bet to the outcome of a protest in Dolgellau (in Gwynedd, North Wales). Bet and her friends were protesting the “contempt for the Welsh language” in the area; when a crowd formed that grew violent against the protestors, the police forcibly removed the protestors from the premises and they (the police and other onlookers) did nothing to protect the protestors from the crowd’s violence. This only serves to spur Bet’s actions onward, as such strong resistance to the protest only confirms the need to campaign for Welsh culture. Dewi resolves, however, “to cut [himself] off forever from people so insipid that they have no respect for their country or their language, because they have no respect for themselves,” and turns to a life of crime out of nihilistic resignation (150). Lewis bases the background for the play on a historical event, with the Dolgellau protest having actually occurred two years earlier in 1965. The colonial presence of England is felt as an underlying force throughout the text, through the reference to historical events of Anglicization and anticolonial reactions against it such as Tryweryn (mentioned below) and Dolgellau, but we do not see any English characters. However, by polarizing the reactions of the two main characters the text is able to imaginatively explore two potential futures for Wales; that is to say, cultural abandonment finds its counter through a creative interpretation of past events that allows a nation to achieve a sense of cultural bearings (or at least opens the door to exploring such a possibility) in order to make sense of the present and future of the nation.

Dewi’s character embodies a version of Lewis’s own disillusionment and frustration with the people of Wales for allowing Anglicization to occur, as represented in Lewis’s radio lecture. The play deals with the fact that notions of Welsh identity had been in turmoil due to major cultural shifts. As mentioned above, some Welsh people used to define Welshness in terms of Nonconformist religion. Dewi’s father (John) is a Calvinist preacher (just as Lewis’s father was)
and represents this older definition of Welshness but Dewi’s mother (Dora) recognizes that their “religion is something that’s dying” (130). Dewi accuses Bet of being devoted “to things that are dead or about to die. God, religion, church or chapel [meaning Anglicanism or Nonconformism], Wales, the Welsh language…” (150). In other words, Dewi reminds the audience that the foundations of Welsh identity are crumbling, prompting the drive to seek viable alternatives. If a colonized culture stays rigid, Fanon warns that it may be in danger of death; “the withering away of the reality of the nation and the death pangs of the national culture are linked to each other in mutual dependence” (“On National Culture” 46).

Alternatives to these decaying Welsh values do exist for Dewi, but are mostly unsatisfactory. International ideology, such as Communism, is not an option – possibly due it its similarity to Nonconformism in that it is not inherently Welsh. Yet the actual reason Dewi gives for rejecting it is that the “Communist way of life is Puritanism without God,” and “Wales has had her bellyful of Puritanism” (151). Another alternative is international pop culture. When John and Dora discuss the fact that “[e]ight out of ten people in Wales think as [Dewi] does, that there is no truth,” John mentions that some “people find it [truth] on the television set, in English pop songs from Liverpool” (161). The obvious insinuation is that the Beatles, as both foreign and popular (and, John would argue, frivolous), cannot provide the surrogate for the current but dissolving Welsh culture.82

Bet serves as the only potential for cultural re-creation. Although Dewi dismisses her nationalist hopes for Wales and the Welsh language, the fact that Bet grounds her devotion in practical activities of resistance shows that attempts to root surrogate cultures in cultures of the past can be possible through mining the cultural archive and adapting it to a present-oriented

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82 Lewis also grew up in and around Liverpool, a fact which may contribute to his frustrations with Liverpool as a proponent of globalized culture in opposition to the localized cultures offered by Wales.
repertoire. She roots her surrogation on language and folk culture (such as lullabies) – things that are actually Welsh, rather than the imported elements of pop culture, Communism and Nonconformism. The fact that she is willing to work with Dewi – an atheist who rejects a major aspect of the prior conception of Welsh identity – to create a new Wales shows the ability of surrogation to cling to certain archival elements while jettisoning others in order to create the illusion of a new stable identity through praxis.

Of course, Dewi rejects this alternative as well. When Dora speaks of the *hiraeth* (loosely translated as longing or homesickness) she assumes Dewi felt before his escape from prison, Dewi responds by mocking “that word ‘*hiraeth*.’ I haven’t heard it for centuries. To my generation it’s a meaningless word, something out of the Welsh poetry book long ago in school” (124). Although the word was (and is) still commonly used in Wales, Dewi relegates it to the archive rather than seeing it as a practical element in the repertoire, suggesting that the cultural traditions that Bet and others value are irrelevant in the modern world. Rather, Dewi argues, “I must create my own meaning in life. I must choose, and in choosing stand alone facing the world and society, turn life into a challenge and a thrill. Defy society, defy law and opinion, choose the life of a criminal and an outlaw. That’s the answer to the crisis of absurdity” (151). In rejecting the archive and any sense of a collective unconscious, Dewi rebels against previous ideals of Welshness without considering any alternative surrogation.

Without any cause to provide meaning for Dewi’s life he attempts to live outside of any moral code, eventually being arrested for his crimes and, at the start of the play, escaping from prison. In fact, Dewi even uses the result of a national tragedy for his own personal gain illustrating his utter disconnection from his national culture. Making his way back to his parents’ house after escaping from prison, Dewi physically beats a truck driver to steal his vehicle;
needing to dispose of the evidence, he sinks the truck in Tryweryn and later tells his mother, Dora, “whatever the Free Wales Army may think… I’m very grateful to the Corporation of Liverpool for flooding a certain valley” (138). Dewi alludes to the previously mentioned event in which an English corporation, acting with government approval, flooded the town of Tryweryn, which until then had been a center of Welsh language and culture (and particularly renowned for its harping traditions). Thus Dewi acts upon his solipsist nihilism by ignoring the economic and cultural exploitation of his people and using the tragedy of Tryweryn for personal gain.

For the Welsh audience, especially those familiar with Lewis’s politics, Tryweryn acts as a monument for colonial oppression (in fact, cofiwch Dryweryn, or “remember Tryweryn,” is a common saying in the discourse of Welsh anticolonial resistance). Tryweryn, then, becomes a symbol for ongoing colonial acts, calling to the contemporary reader’s mind others not mentioned specifically in the play such as the closing of Welsh coal mines by Margaret Thatcher in the 1980s (destroying the foundation of Welsh mining culture in the Valleys). In these cases, Wales is valued in terms of its utility to England, with no regard for the destruction of Welsh culture. Colonialism in Wales may have started in a precapitalist era, but it is clearly present in economic exploitation and cultural destruction referenced and alluded to in the play as the English take advantage of Welsh resource, including the land itself.

Part of Dewi’s rebellion against prior incarnations of Welsh identity comes from his hatred of imitation on the part of the colonized. So while Dewi’s actions may be rooted in a version of nihilism, they also serve the function of helping to diagnose the present cultural crisis for the audience. As mentioned, we do not see any English characters, nor do we overtly see any external (i.e. English) definitions of Welshness. However, we do get a sense of what Welsh people think Welshness ought to be according to external definitions, and that is “respectable.”
First of all, the characters of the play see England as the site of “law and order.” It is where Dewi was imprisoned and is where Dewi must return after his escape. Social pressure for respectability according to external definitions of law and order is evident among Dewi’s family, showing the force of internalizing the mimicry the colonial standards of behavior, even without the immediate presence of individual colonizers.

This family concern in large part is due to Dewi’s father’s role as local preacher. When he (John) learns of Dewi’s escape, he says, “Your picture will be on every television screen in the realm tonight” (139). The term “realm” is one Lewis would not use without irony and vitriol, given his conviction of Welsh independence, but it reveals John’s concern with respectability as well as his assumption of Wales as a subordinate part of Britain and subject to British laws. Dewi has harsh words for this mentality, as he describes the obsession of the Welsh bourgeoisie with things like a “career” and a “good name” (147), and links “bourgeois morality in Wales” with “servile slavery” (149). Dewi’s rebellion is a rebellion against the tacit imperial promise – that if the imperial subject acts respectably, (s)he can attain the valued lifestyle of respectability. Of course Dewi sees this as an external imposition, based on external ideas of law and order, and the cause of Welsh servility to the foreign British value system.

Although Dewi is the obvious rebel, “respectability” soon becomes “oppression” to the Rhys family after they reevaluate their own value systems. They abandon the notion of respectability, at least for the moment, because they see it as conflicting with their own views of Christianity. When John admits that he is willing to phone the police to inform them that Dewi is hiding out at their house, Dora realizes that “[t]o me the rules of society and the law of the land don’t matter now… We’ve stopped being respectable. We have a chance to be human” (136). This suggests that she was willing to submit to foreign values as long as family had its
respectability intact – that is, as long as the family could hope to attain the rewards of the imperial promise. Due to the realization that they cannot, however, the Rhys family experiences a paradigm shift – “humanity” is set in opposition to “respectability,” showing that the latter is now regarded as a vice rather than a virtue. John experiences a similar shift himself, when by the end of the play he admits, “If I knew of one way in the world to hide him safely, I’d do it now,” to which Dora replies, “John, you’re growing more like a Christian every day” (162-163). So not only is “respectability” a foreign imposition, the Rhys parents also begin to see it as un-Christian (which, for them, would also suggest un-Welsh).

In lieu of imperial values and promises, Bet, Dewi’s girlfriend of sorts (he does not regard her or anyone else very highly), attempts to find a viable and distinctly Welsh alternative that would still allow for societal engagement. She attempts to sway Dewi back to societal and cultural engagement by first trying to understand Dewi’s motivation for his worldview. After several pages of evasive answers (such as blaming his choices on being a philosophy student), she finally coaxes Dewi into admitting that it is the “servile slavery” of the Welsh people that initially aided in setting him on his path of rebellion; he responds affirmatively when she asks, “So rebellion was the starting point? Rebellion against the fear and the lack of daring in Wales?” (149) As Dewi opposes both English rule and the Welsh “slavery” that it creates, he turns to personal thrill seeking as the only livable alternative. Ironically (since it could potentially overcome Welsh oppression), Bet’s social activism and campaigning against Welsh subjugation does not seem to be a viable answer for Dewi, since he has already set himself in opposition to the perceived gentility and submissiveness of mainstream Protestant Wales, illustrating the vacuous nature of rebellion for its own sake instead of rebellion against something for a cause.
Biographically speaking, Bet is more in line with Lewis’s own actions; as an act of non-violent resistance against England setting up a bombing range in Penyberth (once again a center for Welsh language and culture), Lewis set the bombing school on fire and, after turning himself in in 1936, was imprisoned for nine months (Pritchard-Jones). Like Lewis, Bet is willing to sacrifice herself to do whatever she deems necessary for the advancement of Welsh culture; when nothing else seems to work, she agrees to sleep with Dewi (a socially stigmatizing act for the daughter of a vicar in a small Welsh town) if he promises to turn himself in and, eventually, marry her. She persuades him by admitting, “I want children, Dewi, your children. I want that thrill, to sing my Gran’s lullabies to your sons. You see, if there’s no Welsh nation for you to be faithful to, I want to make one; and love it too” (158). Dewi initially acquiesces to this gendered arrangement for salvaging the nation, but when the moment comes to turn himself in he chooses suicide instead, hurling himself from the top of the roof – an act which his mother laments as “his final thrill” (175). Thus, Bet appears to be the incarnation of the direction in which Lewis wishes the Welsh people would move – one of anticolonial action and passive fostering of culture for subsequent generations – while Dewi represents the author’s fear of the possible annihilation of Welsh culture should resistance against the forces of colonization fail.

These few sentences are heavily loaded with colonial ideology. First is the notion that cultural preservation is a female project, as Bet learned traditional lullabies from her grandmother. This position may occur in colonial nations, where aspects of culture become feminized and is in need of masculine protection. As Partha Chatterjee argues, it is possible for colonized peoples to internalize the “inner/outer distinction” of the colonizer. He writes, “The world is a treacherous terrain of the pursuit of material interests, where practical considerations reign supreme. It is also typically the domain of the male. The home in its essence must remain
unaffected by the profane activities of the material world – and woman is its representation” (120). It is then the internal, “spiritual” world that remains beyond the governance of a colonial power. In the attempt to reiterate the archive of folk songs in this particular fashion, Bet unknowingly appropriates the mentality of feminizing culture. The fact that Bet participates in protests challenges this colonial binary to some extent, as she is an activist and not merely the passive receptacle of culture; however, it is evident that in relationship to Dewi, she defaults to an argument that relies on colonial notions of gender in culture. This leads to the second instance of underlying colonial ideology, which is that while culture is seen as feminized, the leaders of the nation are seen as masculine. Bet describes the Welsh nation that they could create in terms of Dewi’s sons, rather than “our children” (the more gender inclusive alternative). This brief snapshot reveals that anticolonial resistance may rely on colonial mentalities, betraying the sense of stability through the practical reiteration of identity (e.g. raising a nation with traditional folk songs).  

This binary, of course, brings up issues of intersection between anticolonialism and gender. If land or domestic tradition is to be gendered feminine, then the structure or idea of the nation is gendered masculine (in order to protect the vulnerable, feminized traditional culture). Here the land is not specifically gendered (the allusions made to the exploitation of Welsh land by English government or corporations do not contain explicitly gendered language), but the future of the nation does at first appear primarily embodied in the male Dewi. This would be immediately apparent to the initial Welsh (and Welsh speaking) audience, as Dewi Sant (St. David) is the patron saint of Wales. This is bolstered within the play itself, when Dewi states that his motivation is to “create my own meaning [and] defy law and opinion… I have nothing,

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83 This is not to say that colonized cultures cannot be patriarchal before colonization, but rather that anticolonial responses can reflect the colonial narratives of men as the builders of nations.
nothing but my own life. I am Tomorrow’s Wales!” (151) If this is true, then not only does the future of Wales appear rather bleak, but Bet appears to situate herself in relation to the future of Welsh nationhood as both a mere supporting figure for the more central masculine figure as well as the embodiment of the traditionally feminized domesticity, through her desire to bear and raise the children of Dewi.

This problem is complicated (though not removed), however, by two main elements. The first, as mentioned above, is her political activism; while other activists are mentioned, none appear as characters in the play, and hence a woman becomes the embodiment of nationalist action (in contrast to stereotypically feminized passivity). Second, she possesses her own creative vision for Wales, intending to claim it through her actions (both political, through activism, and sexual, through reproducing the nation with Dewi) instead of leaving the task of national imagination up to male theorists. Despite the tragic nature of the ending (the play abruptly ends with Dewi’s death with no further exploration in the play itself of alternative Welsh futures), Bet’s survival allows for a degree of hope. As she stated earlier, “A woman doesn’t only imagine the future – she shapes the future, carries the future, nurses the future. That’s what her womb is good for” (157). Again, this is problematic in that Bet does not seem to view herself as the embodiment of the future (while Dewi does); yet the possibility of pregnancy from her night spent with Dewi is left open, which is, for her, the possibility of actively creating the embodiment of new Wales, as she hoped. If the Wales she desires does not yet exist, she will create it through her emphasis on community – she wants to create it with Dewi, in sharp contrast to his individualism. Thus Dewi appears to only be one potential avenue for Wales’s future, and either the activist Bet or her child could provide an alternative future based on community-oriented action. In other words, Dewi’s criticism of Welsh inaction may not have led to any
productive construction of nationhood due to his own apathy or disgust with the present Welsh situation, but Bet possesses the drive to reclaim Wales through both domestic and political spheres.

The pessimism of the ending, then, is tempered by this element of hope for the future. However, the pessimism itself could be productive as a motivating force for the audience. Lewis must have been aware of the immediate response to his all-but-fatalistic 1962 radio address, which led to the creation of the Welsh Language Society; if so, the ending of this 1967 play may be serving a similar purpose of trying to shock society into the necessary steps of action, rather than appealing explicitly to a hopeful vision of the survival of Welsh culture. A problem occurs with this shock appeal, however, due to the nature of Lewis’s intended audience. Lewis presented both *Cymru Fydd* and *Tynged yr Iaith* in the Welsh language (although the latter was also available in the English language in print), limiting the initial audience to those who already have a vested interest in the preservation of Welsh culture rather than appealing to the majority of people in Wales who were unable to speak the native language. In fact, many in Wales do not view Welsh as their own language.84 Regardless, the ambiguity of the ending does call the Welsh language audience to decide how it will respond to this vision of Wales’s future – either through a continued apathy which will eventually lead, for Lewis, to the demise of Wales entirely, or via a political and communal activism which could lead to the survival and even thriving of Welsh culture.

The manipulation of language plays a key role in the attempted Anglicization of both of the Celtic nations of Wales and Ireland; as with other British colonies, education and the promise of success in the British system provides an incentive for mimicry, and the failure of such

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84 A famous example occurs with Dylan Thomas’s father who, being able to speak the language himself, chose to not teach Dylan since he feared it would impede his son’s success in the modern world (Walford Davies 108).
promises contributes to the sense of personal cultural abandonment on one hand (which may lead to an attempt re-embrace of traditional culture, as seen with Bet) or cultural disillusionment on the other (e.g. Dewi). In either case, the role of the colonizer (whether seen explicitly or merely referencing colonial monuments) is to redefine the land and language of the colonized; thus, the task of these postcolonial texts is to redefine their respective nations in return, providing an indigenous alternative to the Anglicizing categorizations imposed by the external authority in order to create a uniformity of Britishness. Problems arise in this task, however, as such redefinitions may have the tendency to exclude marginal groups (such as women) from occupying central roles within the given postcolonial nation.

_Cymru Fydd_ explores the possibility of stability of self within an ethnically Welsh context by exploring models of identity through practical activity; at the same time, it suggests that emphasizing that an individualist alternative to the problem of contemporary Welsh identity could be disastrous. More specifically, it argues that the current hedonistic/apolitical path Wales might be taking is cultural suicide, while only activism and reiterating traditional Welsh identity for subsequent generations can lead to survival. This is a clear and strong contrast, with little ambiguity, making a literary work serve the role of a polemic. For Lewis, it appears that a direct lineage of culture (e.g. passing down lullabies from Gran to Bet to her offspring) must occur before the line dies out. This suggests the inauthenticity of reclaiming culture at a later point. If surrogation fails (as Joseph Roach argues it is inclined to do), this leaves a people group open to cultural imitation to fill in the cultural gaps with colonial or foreign material (such as adopting English laws and values versus native Welsh ones, or elevating the pop music of the Beatles over native Welsh music). Of course, I argue that we already see this in process in the play, even within Lewis’s ideal for cultural revival, through the gendered language of national roles that are
apparently unnoticed by Lewis. Yet for Lewis, the primary concern with language and secondary concern with culture leads to the necessity of preserving a direct line; ensuring survival of culture might be more important than the way in which survival occurs, but certainly is essential if the Wales is to continue to be Wales rather than become merely a subordinate nation within Britain.
Chapter 5: David Jones and Catholic, Masculine Pan-Britishness

As with Lewis, David Jones sees Wales as aligned with broader European culture; also like Lewis, as a Catholic (having converted in 1921) he is not against empire per se. However, his distinct perspective comes through his belief that Wales becomes a necessary part of Britain as a whole within a European context, instead of Wales being pitted against England within Europe. The irony here is that Lewis would likely perceive Jones’s positive attitude towards the contemporary British Empire as tacit support for the anti-Welsh colonialism that Lewis decries in Cymru Fydd. However, David Jones’s long poem In Parenthesis (started in 1927 and published in 1937) works to construct a national identity which, mirroring the response of Britain’s fear of global strife during World War I, focuses on a broad Britishness by opening its arms to include differing factions within the population of the island. In Parenthesis takes a unique approach to the problem of establishing a common British national identity by underscoring a collective national consciousness while at the same time highlighting distinct ethnic variation; in fact, Jones asserts (at least in the case of Britain) that the former is not possible without the latter – which is to say that communal sharing in the historical and mythical Welsh narratives is essential to the project of defining a unified pan-British identity. Through mining the archives of identity models in historical Britain, Jones asserts the validity of contemporary and historical Welshness; he creates an interrelationship between the categories of Welsh and British, via the Welsh underpinnings of the British Empire, which serves as a mythological and historical basis for the reiteration of a hybrid British
identity. To synthesize the terminologies of Roach (and Connerton), Taylor and Gilroy, Jones mines the historical archive of myth to create a surrogate repertoire of embodied practice; as collective memory becomes sedimented in his characters, WWI becomes the site of displaced transmission in which soldiers reiterate prior bodily performances – such as Dai’s claim of bardic reincarnation and the continuity of collective Western memory in the Welsh individual – in a new context to create an illusion of stable identity over time.

The task of unifying a nation or empire comprised of distinct cultural elements is often performed by the empowered group. However, Jones’s own heritage (being born in England to an English mother and Welsh father) complicates the binary between oppressor and oppressed. Jones’s attempt to define a pan-British national identity is based in part on his own sense of personal identity. Though born in Kent, Jones developed a strong affinity for his father’s homeland of Wales, along with its cultural and literary traditions (Ross). Thus, one could argue that Jones himself is a hybrid figure; he simultaneously identifies with the oppressor and the oppressed. The attempt to negotiate his own sense of identity leads Jones to explore the relationship between Wales and The United Kingdom in a way that works to preserve and even laud the distinct culture of the Welsh, rather than having it be entirely subsumed in an Anglocentric “Britishness,” while suggesting that it plays an essential role in the development of a broader “British” identity.

Jones’s poem In Parenthesis works within this very tension between the ethnic, historical and cultural distinctions of the Welsh (that is, separateness from English culture), yet establishes this distinction as an essential thread of “Britishness” in the present, modern era. The poem attempts this qualified union in the microcosm of soldiers
at war; such comradeship between men-at-arms is shown to be a subset of national experience, as the company contains both English and Welsh soldiers with very distinct cultures and manners of speech. Jones not only draws England and Wales together through the characters of the poem, but through style and allusions as well; the juxtaposition of ancient Welsh heroic poetry (e.g. *Y Gododdin*), Malory’s Arthurian cycle, and contemporary hymns and folk tunes highlights this model of diversity within union to assert that Britain as a whole can claim the ancient heritage of the indigenous Celts (i.e. not only Celtic culture, but the Celtic connection to the Roman Empire, etc.).

Thus Jones assembles a pastiche of styles from past and present to portray Britain as a unified entity, as the particulars of each distinct group (such as geographic locale, national histories, etc.) exist individually but also under the cover of “universals” (read “Western metanarratives”). However, the historical subtexts in the poem betray the union which Jones attempts to establish. For example, the 6th century poem *Y Gododdin* lauds the bravery of Welsh warriors attempting to rout Anglo-Saxon (i.e. English) invaders, and the historical Arthur (if there truly is one) would have been a warlord fighting against the Germanic trespassers who would become the English. In either case, the subtexts present in these allusions testify more to the division between the ethnic groups of Britain than to a unified essence; Arthur, for example, would be appropriated by the English (particularly in Malory, where Arthur is described as English rather than Welsh or even British), and the present unification between England and Wales stands in direct contrast to the warriors of *Y Gododdin* who attempt to keep Britain a distinctly Celtic land. As a result, irreconcilable paradoxes exist at the level of Jones’ subtexts and allusions.
While Jones is not traditionally considered a central Modernist, praise from the lips of T.S. Eliot and W.H. Auden has led to his eventual acceptance in the canon (if still a fringe figure). Existing scholarship of Jones tends to analyze the following: why Jones has not been considered canonical and why he should be heroic and anti-heroic conventions in war poetry; religious elements in his poetry; medieval influences on Jones’s language and subject matter, and the rooting of identity in the past as opposed to the chaotic present. The chapter contributes to the general discussion of Britishness within several of these articles, which tend to focus on the construction of a common past through mythical allusion, by adding the dimension of ethnic consciousness and performativity. While other works do address relationship between Welshness and Britishness (especially as Welsh legends become Britain’s legends), the discussion here opens up scholarly consensus by showing how this process happens - that is, through the performativity of a mutually supportive British consciousness, in which Welshness is both a subset of Britishness and a central pillar for supporting mythical and historical bases of that Britishness.

National Discourse

85 “David Jones: Mythmaker” by Elizabeth Ward; Elizabeth F. Judge’s Notes on the Outside: David Jones, ‘Unshared Backgrounds,’ and (The Absense of) Canonicity.”
86 Paul Fussell’s “The Great War and Modern Memory”; “David Jones’s In Parenthesis: New Measure” by Vincent B. Sherry Jr.
87 “Eliot, David Jones and Auden” by Stephen Medcalf; Joe Moffat’s “Anglo-Saxon and Welsh Origins in David Jones's The Anathemata.”
88 Vincent B. Sherry Jr.’s “A New Boast for ‘In Parenthesis’: The Dramatic Monologue of David Jones”; “The Undoing of All Things: Malorian Language and Allusion in David Jones' In Parenthesis” and “‘It is our duty to sing’: Y Gododdin and David Jones's In Parenthesis,” both by Paul Robichaud; Anne Price-Owen’s “From Medieval Manuscripts to Postmodern Hypertexts in the Art of David Jones.”
89 Duncan Campbell’s “David Jones: Writing into History” and Thomas Dilworth’s “Antithesis of Place in the Poetry and Life of David Jones,” both of which provide a relatively rare focus on Welsh identity in Jones’s work, and “‘Two Alleluias and a Heil’: David Jones's In Parenthesis and the Civilisational Crisis of the Thirties” by Gareth Joseph Downs.
Before going into *In Parenthesis* itself, it is necessary to establish the historical discourse in which the poem would participate to see how Jones fits into a larger cultural debate. Previous to the Great War, in which Jones himself fought and which serves as the setting of the poem at hand, the notion of a common British Empire that includes Wales came under intense scrutiny. Several events leading up to the Great War and its subsequent years were keys to this wide-scale shift in national consciousness (although there have consistently been pockets of Welsh resistance, from England’s conquering of Wales in the 13th Century to the Acts of Union in the 16th century and afterwards).

Through the act of labeling Wales as cultural and educationally inferior through official report such as the “Blue Books,” England inadvertently gave new impetus for nationalism in Wales.

The “Blue Books” also denounced the Nonconformist sects of Christianity (i.e. the non-Anglican denominations), prevalent in Wales at the time, for their influence in resisting Anglicization due to their embracing of the Welsh language in chapel services. This tension between Nonconformism and the official Anglican Church led to the second major avenue in the discourse of Welsh nationalism, namely the issue of disestablishment. The journal titled “The New Age”\(^90\) acted as an occasional forum for these debates, particularly between the years of 1911 and 1914. The discussion was largely sparked by the articles written by a Welsh Anglican clergyman, R. Rev. David, who argued that traditional Welsh culture (marked by a rural way of life) had been invaded by industrialism and Nonconformism which in turn were rooted in England, specifically Manchester (David “Welsh Disestablishment” 559). In contrast, residents in the industrial South Wales, with their commonly held emphasis on Socialism, would

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\(^90\) Edited by A.R. Orage, it was, at the time, a primarily socialist-themed publication.
argue that the Anglican Church was a vestige of feudal society and that disestablishing the Church (i.e. removing its public funding and official status with the state) would lead to communal freedom in Wales (T. Eric Davies 619). I would argue that the debates over the Church can be seen as a microcosm of larger state relations, particularly as both sides claim to be closer to the heart of traditional Welsh culture. Antidisestablishmentarianists uphold a unity with the English-based Church on the basis of keeping out industrial England’s influences, since they linked industrialism with the newer Nonconformist movements coming out of England rather than traditional Anglicanism. Those in favor of disestablishment claim it would alleviate England’s historical oppression of Welsh culture. The former view, then, upholds the unity and diversity model, in which religious union with the British state can protect rural Wales from the modernizing forces of contemporary English industrialism, while the latter argues that religious separation from the state is the key to protecting Welsh culture.

With the arrival of WWI, much of the discourse of nationalism was put on hold while the government in Westminster placed primary emphasis on issues of national security. Lloyd George, who earlier participated in the Cymru Fydd movement for Welsh Home rule, became the main face of this shift in national consciousness, particularly as he took the office of the Prime Minister in December, 1916 after serving as Secretary of State for War (Morgan “George, David Lloyd”). This shift occurred in part due to the success of Welsh industry leading up to the war and to disestablishment. The industrial movement that spread throughout Britain, centered around the rising Labour Party, addressed issues of the working class which had previously been perceived as uniquely (or rather especially) Welsh, while disestablishment satiated the segment of the
population for which religious issues would have outweighed any call for political independence. Together these two areas seemed to provide enough progress for the moment for many Welsh people; as Kenneth Morgan writes, “They saw the advancement of the Welsh nation within the context of a wider process of liberalization and social equality within the United Kingdom… There was simply no need to pursue the chimera of Welsh home rule when so much progress was so easily obtainable within the fabric of the union and the empire” (Morgan 412). Lloyd George’s new relationship to British union became firmly established with the Treaty of Versailles, when he “pressed for extending the empire, notably in the Middle East,” as well as through his role in negotiating the retaining of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom (Morgan “George”). Since he was often known for being “internally conflicted,” it is uncertain whether he actually believed in these imperial projects, or simply acted in the interest of the British Empire due to his official position, or out of political expediency; however, what is clear is that the Great War changed the emphasis of many Welsh nationalists to more imperial concerns, potentially causing an identification with broader Britishness (even if temporary) for the sake of national security.

For some, however, the end of the war would mark a shift back to nationalism. Saunders Lewis co-founded Plaid Cymru (or “Party of Wales”) which formed around the basis of Welsh nationalism in 1925; he also served as its president between 1926 and 1939, eventually resigning when he realized that his Catholic faith marred the image of the party due to Wales being mostly Protestant (Pritchard-Jones). As mentioned in the previous chapter, Lewis advocated that the only way to guarantee cultural preservation in Wales was a degree of self-governance, as the English governmental system did not value
Welsh culture (he even referenced the Blue Books to support his claim). Thus even after the war, the Welsh-English relations continued to be a divisive issue in national consciousness.

**Jones’s Place in the National Discourse**

To an extent, David Jones appears to be somewhat in the middle of the road concerning these debates. Regarding the issue of religion, Jones was neither Anglican nor Nonconformist; rather, upon converting to Roman Catholicism in 1921 he began to view his faith as having roots which run deeper in Wales than either of the two prominent Protestant sects, back to Medieval Welsh culture (Ross). In fact, in his collection of essays called *Epoch and Artist* Jones asserts that Catholicism is part of the legacy Wales bestows upon the island of Britain, particularly as the invading Germanic tribes (which would become the English) were not Christianized during their first contact with the Brythonic Celts; as he writes, “for the invading English barbarians the terms ‘Welsh’ and ‘Roman’ were interchangeable” (58). At first glance, Jones would seem to agree with the aforementioned Anglican clergyman, as unity between England and Wales does not proscribe the thriving of Welsh culture. However, Jones would assert that rather than the proper form of Christianity coming from the English via the Anglican Church, it comes through the Catholicism which was present in Britain before the English ever arrived.

When it comes to the issues of state nationalism and Welsh devolution, however, Jones appears to prefer to focus on the contribution of Welsh culture to British society rather than addressing the issues headlong. He clearly separates Welsh and English culture, suggesting that Wales was and is (at least in large areas) pastoral, Catholic and
arts-oriented, versus the “megalopolitan technocracy” upheld by modernized England (Epoch 16; of course, this largely ignores the industrial South Wales, known for its coal mines and steelworks). However, he seems to be of kindred mind to David Lloyd George in the emphasis on Welsh culture simply being a part of the greater Britishness. While Jones did not write on Lloyd George in either of his two major essay collections (i.e. Epoch and Artist and The Dying Gaul), given his own military service during the politician’s tenure as Prime Minister and his own Welsh cultural patriotism, there seems to be some reflection of Lloyd George in Jones, whether these are related causally or correlative. Like Lloyd George, Jones is ultimately less concerned about Welsh independence from Britain than he is about the Welsh contribution to Britain. The separateness of Wales, for Jones, resides largely in its pastoral and Roman connections. Wales has provided the Island of Britain with a rich literary and musical tradition (64), influencing even recent poets such as Gerard Manley Hopkins and Dylan Thomas (who both worked, if loosely, with the Welsh system of alliteration known as cynghanedd). Wales also establishes an unbroken line of monarchs that leads back to the Roman era in Britain, and provides a justification of sorts for the British Crown (if one considers Welsh kings inheriting the throne from the last Roman emperor in Britain, and the later kings of England “inheriting” the throne of the Welsh kings via conquest). Llewellyn the Last (the final native Welsh ruler) could trace his lineage back to Roman occupation, and as the English King Edward I conquered Llewellyn, this appears to mean that such lineage now belongs to all of Britain (41). In fact, he connects the separateness of Wales to its place in the UK by stating “Nowhere else [other than Wales] in this Island was there a line of mediaeval princes that stemmed straight from Roman Britain”; thus, Wales provides the
Island’s “link… between these present latter days and those other latter days of the crumbling Roman West” (*Epoch* 41). Rather than viewing this as an act of usurping the Welsh legacy, Jones argues that “It is very proper and necessary that the people of Wales should see the monarchy through the eyes of that most complex and unique tradition. It is their special inheritance and it is theirs alone to offer [Britain]” (47). Jones is able to justify his own appreciation for Welsh culture and history without becoming a Welsh nationalist. As a result he can remain, simultaneously, both “English” and “Welsh”; in other words, he avoids needing to claim that England’s rule and possession of Wales is unjust, but instead argues that Wales forms a necessary part of the pan-British identity that stands for stability within a war-torn, technocratic modern age. In so-doing, Jones apparently glosses over the practical questions of Home Rule and survival of the Welsh language.\(^\text{91}\)

Ironically, Jones dedicated the very collection of essays in which these quotations appear to Saunders Lewis, with whom he participated in years of correspondence. While relating to each other by both being Welsh Catholics born in England (Lewis was born in Merseyside, though to a Welsh-speaking family), their views on Welsh participation in the British Empire appear in almost utter opposition. Jones clearly had sympathy for Lewis and his views, but true nationalism does not fit with Jones’s inclusive idea of Britishness – especially as constructed in his poem *In Parenthesis*. Jones would assert that Britain must protect Welsh culture, as it is an integral part of Britishness and the connection to the past great empire of Rome; Lewis, in contrast, argues that since Britain

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\(^{91}\) Of course, the influence of Saunders Lewis on Jones is not entirely absent regarding language. Though unsuccessful for legal reasons, Jones intended to “make a major bequest to Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg,” the Welsh Language Society formed in the wake of Lewis’s radio lecture “Tynged yr Iaith” (The Fate of the Language; Encyclopedia of Wales 185).
has done nothing positive for Welsh culture, Welsh people need self-government to keep
the culture from dying out altogether (i.e. self-government is the means to the end of
protecting Welsh culture). Here Jones sounds less like Lewis, the quintessential Welsh
author, and more like the quintessential Modernist author, T.S. Eliot. Jed Esty writes that
Eliot’s position towards individual cultures within a single nation (as delineated in the
1948 essay, “Notes Towards the Definition of Culture”) is that “subnational units (such
as Scotland and Wales) are understood as components within a culture and supranational
units (such as Europe) are understood as systems to which a culture or cultures may
belong” (130). Thus in the view of modernity to which Eliot\(^2\) and Jones subscribe it
appears that the modern nation state or larger transnational conglomerates takes
precedence over individual ethnic cultures, even if those ethnic cultures may be necessary
elements in comprising the national or “supranational.”

The Correspondence of David Jones and Saunders Lewis\(^3\) \(^4\)

The ideal of authenticity repeatedly comes to the fore in the letters exchanged
between Jones and Lewis between 1937 and the 1970s. Jones, being both unaware and
uninitiated into the archives of much Welsh (and especially Welsh language) ethnic
performativity, mines Lewis’s expertise to build a repertoire for language and allusion to
use in his writing. As would be appropriate for two Welsh Catholics, their dialogue

\(^2\) A chapter in Notes Towards the Definition of Culture, called “Unity in Diversity,” advocates a similar view of
concentric circles in Western culture (for example, a parish church participates in the Anglican Church which
participates in Western Christianity).

\(^3\) Quotations and reproductions of Jones’s works are made by kind permission of the Estate of David Jones. I am
also indebted to the US-UK Fulbright Commission, The National Library of Wales and their staffs for providing
funding and allowing my research into the archives in Aberystwyth, respectively. David Jones (Artist and Writer)
Papers, GB 0210 DJONES. Additionally, the MA Thesis of Geraint Gwilym Evans provided transcriptions for
several letters that were not currently found in David Jones Papers during the 2010-2011 academic year.

\(^4\) I include the correspondence in this chapter rather than the chapter on Lewis since I am not convinced that Jones
had nearly as significant of an influence on Lewis as Lewis did on Jones.
mirrors the relationship between priest and parishioner. The letters find Jones in the role of the grateful tutee and supplicant, ready to receive instruction and correction regarding Welshness as well as matters of love, money and physical health. This is significant since Jones attained much more international acclaim than Lewis, both for his visual art and for his writing, but as Lewis is “proper Welsh,” Jones approaches him in the posture of the novice. As will be discussed during the section on *In Parenthesis* below, which was already published by the time their correspondence begins, their exchanges serve to strengthen what Jones began in his long poem – that is, he learns more about Welsh culture from the expert Lewis in order to have more details in his subsequent work to continue to create his take on the concentric circles of Western British identity (i.e. Welsh and English participate in Britishness, which participates in European Christendom). At the same time, their letters highlight the differences between the two authors regarding ethnic identity, largely due to Lewis’s denial of hybridity through the proposition that one either is or is not Welsh, based largely on possessing knowledge of the Welsh language.

Their correspondence begins during Saunders Lewis’ imprisonment for his participation in the Penyberth arson (mentioned in Chapter 4). Jones presumably learned about Lewis’s conviction and not only felt sympathy but admiration for Lewis’s act of resistance, and decided he would want Lewis to read his newly published work *In Parenthesis* since it “deals largely with Wales & might interest him” (Evans 2). Early on in their correspondence Lewis admits being an admirer of Jones’s visual art, but says

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95 Lewis acknowledges Jones’s love for Valerie Price, but discourages him from any action since, unfortunately for Jones, she was engaged at the time and would soon become Valerie Wynne-Williams (Evans 28, Note 1).

96 Lewis suggests Jones (whom he refers to in the Welshified version of his name, Dafydd) should take a payment of £5000 to have his manuscripts housed at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth (DJONES 59-60).

97 Jones was of a frail disposition, and Lewis suggests that he purchase a better heating system (DJONES 43-44).

98 Welsh artist Augustus John seems to have played a role in introducing Jones’s work to Lewis (DJONES 4; Evans 7, Note 3).
very little about his writing at this point. This absence may be due to the lack of survival of some letters; if this is not the case, however, then the absence is much more conspicuous. It does not necessarily indicate disapproval of Jones’ handling of Welsh material, but at the very least works to preserve Lewis’ authoritative status as the expert in all things Welsh.

When Lewis does comment directly to Jones about his writing, and not just his art, it usually deals with radio productions of Jones’ material (occasionally read by the author). He expresses his admiration for one such production in 1965, 28 years into their correspondence, when he writes,

Just a note to say that I listened to you last night, and I very seriously thought your poem and your delivery of it magnificent. It was big stuff – worthy of the Palestrina that followed it. I don’t pretend that at the one hearing I grasped all the allusions by any means, but the impact was tremendous, major poetry. It seemed to me that you were using rhyme more than you have done before (DJONES 47).

Here Lewis acknowledges Jones’ primacy as poet, especially when considering Jones’s stature as a modernist.

Yet Jones often asks Lewis for help with translations and other input regarding “authenticity” (by which I mean a performativity that is accepted by an expert). Lewis gave the stamp of (a kind of mitigated) authenticity for Jones through a radio introduction

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99 Lewis admired Jones’s watercolors that were on exhibition in Aberystwyth, and offered repeatedly to purchase Jones’s “Aphrodite in Aulis” (DJONES 5, 8).
100 “DJ read ‘The Fatigue’ on the BBC 3rd programme on 16 Apr 1965” (Evans 70, Note 2).
101 “I’m awfully sorry to bother you with questions but I wonder if you could tell me what the etymology is of the name of a hill near Holywell called Moel Ffagnalt?” (Evans 9; Evans mentions that Jones hoped to use this reference in his Anathemata, but apparently Lewis was unable to help in this [9]. In a note on 233 of Anathemata Jones writes, “Moel Ffagnalt, which I was once told signified hill of despair or dereliction, but I can find no confirmation of this supposed meaning nor anything resembling it”).
to an exhibition of the artist’s catalogue at the Tate. Even though it begins with “It is one of David Jones’ griefs that he knows no Welsh,” which is the primary standard of Welshness for Lewis, Jones writes Lewis years later in 1959 to thank him for the note.\(^\text{102}\)

In between discussions of Jones’ Catholicism and classical aesthetics, Lewis continues to highlight Jones’ interest in Wales, but as an Englishman rather than a Welshman:

> He reads all that he can get in English translations of the old prose and verse of Welsh; he corresponds with Welsh scholars about the ancient poetry and the old history, and treasures every crumb thus gathered. He feeds his meditation and his imagination on the past of Wales and that is one key to his work as English poet and painter (DJONES 11).

Though certainly an Englishman in Lewis’ eyes, Jones’ relationship to Wales is not mere interest; Lewis opens up the possibility of hybridity, even if diluted, when he writes, “David Jones was born not far from London, and so has lived, but his father was a Welsh-speaking Welshman and gave the painter his Welsh consciousness… He lived some years with Eric Gill after the first war and so spent three years in Wales” (DJONES 13).

That Jones would find this introduction so positive is telling. Lewis does not acknowledge Jones as “London Welsh,” but rather as fully English due to not having the Welsh language. Yet Jones seems happy with this sense of limited hybridity from the acknowledged expert of the performative archive (as addressed in the section below, this sort of hybridity actually serves as the basis for understanding Britishness and the British

\(^{102}\) “I re-read the short Rhagair [“prologue” in Welsh] you kindly wrote for my Tate etc show in 1954-5 & I still think it the best thing written about my bothersome activities” (Evans 30).
Empire for Jones). As a result, Jones continues to pursue Lewis’ thoughts on how to become more Welsh (or at least less diluted in his hybridity).

Lewis consistently gives Jones small language lessons while criticizing Jones’ native English, and Jones shows his limited grasp of Welsh to Lewis on occasion (such as his referring to Lewis’ introduction to his catalogue as a “rhagair”). When Jones compliments the translated version of Lewis’ play, Siwan, Lewis writes, “Let me say how glad I am that you liked Siwan, even in English, and I’ll end up with wishing you Blwyddyn newydd dda a bedith Duw a Mair [Happy New Year and Blessings of God and Mary]” (DJONES 19-20, emphasis added). Lewis would certainly be happy to have Jones’ literary approval, but the weight he gives to language is key in both his dismissing of Welsh language work in translation and as he quickly turns the discussion to linguistic matters to educate Jones.

Even with a lack of fluency in Welsh, Jones’ hopeful sense of performative identity as fluid comes through in a letter concerning Cardiff becoming the capital of Wales in 1955. While skeptical of the choice of Cardiff, being an industrial center and not a quintessentially “Welsh” area, Jones writes, “Perhaps Cardiff, having received the crown, will, with it, in some way, ‘put on’ (I mean ‘put on’ in the Pauline sense) the whole paludarment [sic] of Welshness. I wonder – I can’t see how, I confess” (Evans 19). Even though Jones does not see a specific way for this to happen (or at least does not admit it to his Welsh expert), Jones hopes for the possibility that the people in an already hybrid area can learn to collectively perform Welshness in some fashion. Given his desire to achieve a hybrid status, the tacit hope appears to be that if an entire city can become more Welsh, the chances for an individual are likely much greater. The other key part of
this statement is the notion of “putting on,”\textsuperscript{103} which is suggestive of a kind of “ethnic drag” that may, with an Aristotelian underpinning of habit informing reality, prompt a genuine change in ethnic identity.\textsuperscript{104} Jones may be writing with the temporal assumption that Cardiff once was entirely Welsh and that it may become so again, which is similar to the notion that Jones might be able to reclaim and “put on” the Welshness of his father.

A major assumption that Jones holds here, and Lewis in their correspondence as well, is that Wales is essentially anti-modern. They regard modern encroachments onto Wales as a cultural invasion; rather than giving consideration to distinctly Welsh forms of industrialism or cosmopolitanism, both authors see modernity as depleting genuine Welshness. Jones writes,

\begin{quote}
In reading your \textit{Siwan} in English I was taken back to my childhood because I used to be taken from a London suburb some summers to stay with a relative who lived near Llys Eurin a ruin in Llandrillo-yn-Rhos which was supposed to be connected with Ednyfed Fychan. I supposed I was about 8 or 9 & I remember thinking a lot about Llywelyn Fawr & his chief minister Ednyfed when I sat in the ruins of Llys Eurin. It was \textbf{wonderful} that bit of the coast then, wasn’t it – almost untouched. But the last time I was, there, 1937 it was solid red brick – almost as continuous as between Brighton & Worthing!
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{103} Apparently a reference to Ephesians 6:11 (“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”; KJV).

\textsuperscript{104} I address “ethnic drag” a bit more in the conclusion, with a more fully nuanced critical angle. Instead of simply “putting on” in an attempt to become an “authentic” version of the desired thing (akin to Pinocchio becoming a “real boy” through acting like a good, real boy), Dylan Thomas’s ethnic drag follows Judith Butler’s conception in which drag mocks and destabilizes notions of uniformity and stability in identity.
Just as Jones links architectural modernity with Englishness, he idealizes what he perceives as an ancient Welshness in the personality of the woman he loved, Valerie Price:

I think Valerie has got something of what I’ve always, perhaps fondly, imagined our own tywysogesau [princesses] must have had in the old days… that is a kind of real Welshness with a real cultivation – a blessed thing and one which, as far as I can see, is now pretty rare (Evans 27).

Here Jones identifies with his Welsh lineage, claiming members of Welsh royalty as “our own tywysogesau,” in opposition to Lewis’ previous categorization of Jones as distinctly English. Yet he admits to Lewis that he does not embody his perception of the ancient and traditionally Welsh quality of orality when he writes, “Some chap is coming to interrogate me about Epoch & Artist etc on behalf of Network Three, B.B.C. I don’t think I shall much enjoy this – for I’m very bad at answering questions orally. I can never say what I mean in time. I’m very un-Welsh in this!” (Evans 29). The assumption here is that writing is not as quintessentially Welsh as orality; Jones may be hinting that his writing ability must be rooted in some other origin (e.g. Germanic Englishness or Catholic scholarship). Lewis seems to uphold the sense of a medieval “golden age” for Wales as well when he writes,

Alas, how true what you say of Idris Bell’s translation of Tom Parry’s History of Welsh Literature. Unhappily too the original is not a good book. It is stodgy in itself, it is most ill-constructed: - for example, the greatest period of all Welsh poetry is 1340-1540 and ought to get all the
space that Parry gives to the generally mediocre and uninteresting 19th century (DJONES 19-20).

Of course, for a Welsh Catholic the 19th century would be characterized by the hymnody and piety of Methodism, versus the era of Welsh poetry that was influenced by broader European (and hence Catholic) traditions. Lewis and Jones would see that period not as a having one-way path of influence from Europe to Wales, however, but rather a mutually influential circle since European notions of chivalry developed through continental adaptations of the Welsh legend of King Arthur.

In addition to Welshness being anti-modern, it is clear that both authors believed it to be primarily characterized by the Welsh language. Allusions and cultural knowledge play a role in Welsh identity, but (particularly for Lewis) these are secondary to the native tongue. Jones apparently had a decent grasp of Welsh, but was embarrassed to write much to Lewis and admits it as his primary weakness:

Illtud Evans O.P. called on me this afternoon… Now he’s a bloke who, being a real Welshman with the language & all. Nos da, Duw bo gyda chwi¹⁰⁵ * wish I bloody knew this language of ours, but I never shall master it now. But I try & seek some consolation in Augustine’s tag that ‘it is better to love than to know.’ Though it’s poor consolation in this connection (Evans 30).

Although Lewis defines Jones as primarily English, he does recognize his influence even within Wales and pursues his signature for a petition to continue the tradition of holding the Welsh language as the primary language for competitions in the National

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¹⁰⁵ Geraint Evans translates this as “Good night, God be with you” (Evans 30, Note 16). Evans notes elsewhere that although Jones, writing in Welsh, will occasionally qualify with something along the lines of “I hope that isn’t all wrong,” is usually correct (19, Note 12).
Eisteddfod.\textsuperscript{106} This acknowledgement of influence does not mean an acknowledgement of Welshness, however, for Lewis frequently returns to the issue of the Welsh language and the use of English as a sort of betrayal to Welshness.\textsuperscript{107} Additionally, Lewis often responds to Jones’ letters by giving him more items of linguistic and cultural education, such as the various terms for Candlemas Day in Welsh\textsuperscript{108}, translations between Welsh and Greek (DJONES 38-39), descriptions of figures from Welsh mythology (DJONES 29) and advice for artistic subject matter based in Welsh mythology (DJONES 36).

Although Lewis and Jones each recognize the lesser degree to which the latter participates in Welshness, they also uphold a common ideal of Welshness that is unique to them and excludes much of the country (even Welsh-speaking Wales and nationalist Wales). Lewis admits to Jones that he dislikes attending the National Eisteddfod, even though it is the major annual event to celebrate the Welsh language and Welsh culture (DJONES 30-31). Lewis, along with Eric Gill (with whom Jones lived and studied in Wales), followed common Catholic political thought of the day and was committed to distributionism rather than socialism. This provided yet another distinction between Lewis and the other members of the nationalist party he helped to co-found, many of whom would have been religious Nonconformists and industrial socialists. Lewis voices his frustration with Plaid Cymru to Jones, particularly over the issues of socialism and Welsh language activism (DJONES 38-39 and 41), but in so doing suggests that he and Jones are more similar in their view that Wales should be a Catholic nation – not just in

\textsuperscript{106} Lewis hoped to gain Jones’s signature on a petition against English language competitions in the National Eisteddfod of Wales (DJONES 49).
\textsuperscript{107} “I’ve been pondering since I saw you whether I can write a little introductory volume on you in English, as the Welsh Arts Council ask. It’s mostly a matter of conscience – I don’t mind an occasional review or article in English, but a book? I don’t want to set a bad example for Welsh writers, and nobody was ever quite first rate in two languages. However, a little informative book on a very particular friend is, I have concluded, not a betrayal, and I’m writing to the Council to accept the commission” (DJONES 57).
\textsuperscript{108} “Candlesmas Day: - in Welsh, Gwyl Puredigaeth Mair, of course, and as you know, but also and in old books: - Gwyl Fair y Canhwyllan (The Fest of Mary of the Candles)” (DJONES 27).
terms of religion, but also culturally and philosophically. Though Lewis suggests that Jones does not necessarily agree with Welsh Home Rule or independence\(^{109}\) (a point that proves noteworthy in the discussion of *In Parenthesis* below), they both long for a Europe-oriented, anti-modern and Welsh-speaking\(^{110}\) future for Wales.

**Jones’s *In Parenthesis***

David Jones’s project of unifying this view of Wales within a broader understanding of Britishness first publicly occurred in his 1937 poem, *In Parenthesis*. Apparently unsatisfied with his knowledge of Welshness during the writing of this poem, Jones’s interaction with Lewis serves to develop the concentric circles of British identity established in his 1937 work, suggesting that honing the details of such a project was an ongoing process. What remains constant is that although Jones is wary of an imperial mindset that glosses over internal difference\(^{111}\) (and particularly the distinctives of Welsh culture within the British Empire), empire itself is not negative for Jones. In fact, an empire that acknowledges difference and the Welsh contribution to both Britishness and Europeanness is the Jonesian ideal. Jones attempts such a vision of contemporary Britain

\(^{109}\) “My television play is not on any theme you will care for: it is a satirical farce on Welsh M.P.s, on the Welsh Nationalist Party, and on Welsh socialists, - the pent up anger of twenty years. Quite possibly the B.B.C. will refuse it. But it is funny, though I says it etc.” (DJONES 35).

\(^{110}\) Lewis assumes Jones’ sympathy for the Welsh language, even if Jones may disagree with the independence element of Lewis’ nationalism, when he writes to Jones, “I should have written at once about your Christmas inscription card. But I was desperately working as I’d promised the B.B.C. their annual radio lecture by the first of January. I finished it on the day. It is on the prospects of the Welsh language and urgent: so I think you’ll forgive me” (DJONES 37).

\(^{111}\) Lewis comments on this in a letter to Jones. “Your present to me of the [poem] *Tribune’s Visitation* arrived yesterday and last night I read it twice.

Do I understand it rightly? I find it moving and terrible. An indictment of all empires of all that destroy the local thing, not merely military conquests but industrial and commercial expansions; and it’s all put into the mouth of the representative of all that uniformity, - and it even kills willingly its own fountainhead, its own local thing. So that poem is a cry to the England of today also, - for the English cares as well as the Welsh are being quite forgotten. It’s a very contemporary poem” (DJONES 58; emphasis original).
through employing pastiche in a variety of ways to unite several distinct factions in the text. Here pastiche works to break down barriers of different kinds, whether they be national or ethnic (Welsh-English), prose and poetry, high and low culture (e.g. expert allusions and popular folk songs), etc. Frederic Jameson delineates the parameters of the term pastiche, as he writes,

Both pastiche and parody involve the imitation or, better still, the mimicry of other styles and particularly of the mannerisms and stylistic twitches of other styles… Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique style, the wearing of a stylistic mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse.

Jones juxtaposes various styles and subject matters, without the intention of parody; unlike Joyce’s parodic take on various styles throughout history in *Ulysses*, *In Parenthesis* aims rather to unite experiences across time and space within the rubric of Britishness. Jones’s goal, then, is to unify the nation through a construction of a national narrative, in which comrades-in-arms are a subset or microcosm (based on the author’s experience in WWI). Despite the task of unifying via pastiche, the historical subtexts in the poem betray this project and reveal the underlying tensions through style and allusion, and undermines the goal of uniting soldiers in the troop under the reiterative banner of Britishness.

In addressing how soldiers develop bonds on the battlefield, Sarah Cole describes the difference between comradeship in war and personal friendship; “Rather than functioning as allied principles, intimate friendship and corporate comradeship work
against one another, rival forms whose incompatibility produces some of the central
disruptions in the soldier poet’s language. Male intimacy ultimately becomes the vehicle
not for communal strength, but for individual isolation” (18). Jones touches on this
difference briefly in his text Epoch and Artist, when he writes that among his fellow
soldiers in WWI, there was an initial sense of friendship which he describes as an
“intimate, continuing, domestic life of small contingents of men” (32). However, as the
war continued this male bond was interrupted by a more mechanistic approach in simply
getting the job done, regardless of the cost – he calls this the “wholesale slaughter of the
later years” (32). Jones’s view of the initially personal relations among soldiers mirrors
his idealization of Wales, in that the domestic and pastoral alike foster human connection
while the goal-oriented mindset (which resulted in the loss of countless lives) appears to
be linked to the “technocratic” perspective of modernity which diminishes the value of
human life and culture in favor of the accomplishment of corporate tasks. This is in direct
contrast with the relationships encouraged by the military as the fighting progressed;
rather than being individuals in a friendly community, the soldier becomes an abstract
part of the English whole – that is to say, one soldier’s relationship to another is based
simply on rank and function, rather than the individual’s personality.

The poem works to establish distinct individual identities, and this is evident
during the roll call at the outset of the poem as the speaker points out individual quirks –
such as Lance-Corporal Aneirin Merddyn Lewis, who brings “a manner, baptism, and
metaphysical order to the bankruptcy of the occasion,” or Private Ball, whose “ill
adjusted” pack suggests that “a sense of ill-usage pervades him” (2). A second sort of roll
call occurs later in the poem, but in more intimate terms as one soldier bids goodnight to
several other soldiers by name. This scene also highlights the diversity of the troops, as the soldier addresses individuals with Welsh names (Dai, ‘Waladr) and English ones (Mick), and even uses the Welsh language (“Nos dawch,” meaning “goodnight to you” according to Jones’s footnote; 29, 194). This is suggestive of Jones’s own experience in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, which was comprised of Welsh and Cockney English (Ross).

The sense of individuality held by most of the soldiers stands in contrast to the efficiency of official acts, as officers command tasks while referring people to their rank: “Take his name, corporal” (1). This model of unity in diversity among regular soldiers, which echoes Eliot, establishes WWI as a new site for displaced transmission in which English and Welsh ethnicity find a commonality under the heading of Britishness.

The poem’s sense of pan-Britishness occurs most strongly in the comradeship between English and Welsh soldiers. The very first page present the roll call that includes a variety of English and Welsh names, such as Wyatt, Ball, Gwynn, Jenkins, Snell, Quilter and Aneirin Merddyn Lewis. These soldiers, thrust from their own regional areas of Britain into the trenches of war, quickly develop collective intimacy. “They rested cozily at night in thick straw. They crowded together in the evening – hours full of confused talking, the room heavy with the haze of smoking” (13-14). John Ball (whose name bears the obvious similarity to John Bull, the British equivalent of Uncle Sam in national personification) keeps in touch with the “disposition of his companions” through his “brother keeping” watch. These companions include a mix of English and Welsh names (e.g. Siôn Evan for the latter), and he deems them all “his friends” (69-70). Of course, Ball is a private and not the authority figure that his name might suggest, highlighting that even though he monitors his friends this distinctly English individual
does so as an equal. This is most evident when he seeks his friends to escape the disturbing din of nearby carpenters to talk “of ordinary things,” such as “how they would meet and in what good places afterwards. Of the dissimilar merits of Welshmen and Cockneys. Of if you’d ever read the books of Mr. Wells… Of the Lloyd George administration” (139). The “dissimilar merits” discussion emphasizes the separate but equal attitude of British ethnicities, while H.G. Wells provides commonality through popular British literature and Lloyd George stresses their common political governance. In other words, while English and Welsh are distinct categories of identity, these categorical differences are not insurmountable for the soldiers who participate in what is for Jones the inherently hybrid category of British (particularly as they fight for the hoped stability of their even more ethnically diverse Europe).

This intimacy between soldiers injects heterosexual references as a sexual safeguard in this homosocial world. While all of the soldiers are men, they look for feminized elements all around them, including the sun (27), their rifles (28), the moon (39), and the earth itself (75), all of which employ the pronoun “she.” However, the men do have terms of endearment for each other, which can be read either as expressions of muted (and possibly ironic) affection or masculine competition. For example, the term “china” can suggest both a soldier’s value and his fragility, as one soldier warns another on the battlefield to “Mind the wire, china\textsuperscript{112} –keep yourself low” (47).

While there already is a tension for Jones between the friendly relationships soldiers can have and reducing them to their mere function, Jones invests in building a sense of pan-British identity among the soldiers which, in effect, actually highlights the

\textsuperscript{112} This is also an example of Cockney rhyming slang, as “mate” rhymes with “china plate.”
differences between the English and Welsh soldiers that are traditionally irreconcilable.

As far as the basic differences are concerned, there appear to be three main segments in the battalion: English (and particularly Cockney, an outcast segment of normative English society), Welsh, and Anglo-Welsh. The latter group, comprised mainly of London Welsh (“from Islington and Hackney / and the purlieus of Walworth…”), is contrasted with the “genuine Taffies” who sing Welsh hymns (160). Thus, they act as a sort of hybrid or go-between for the other two categories while not fitting in either – especially as they are not “genuine” – while the Welsh characters consistently reveal their distinction, through the singing of hymns, as Lewis “sings where he walks… of the hills about Jerusalem, and of David of the White Stone” (42; Jones mentions the specific names of the hymns in his footnote on 197). In addition, the poem emphasizes the binary opposition within Jones’s theoretical schema between Wales and the modern world (especially, but not limited to, England). For Jones, Wales is associated with a rural past, represented in large part by the wood – fairy figures (such as the Queen of the Wood) even make appearances, testifying to Britain’s ancient and mythologized roots. In contrast, Jones portrays the Great War as a technological nightmare, where the city (represented by technology and machines of war) invades the country; in fact, Thomas Dilworth writes that the war even causes the land to bleed in the poem, as “vegetable sap is no mere metaphor but a sort of biological synecdoche implying the shedding of blood that occurs on a massive scale at the end of the poem in the attack on a wood during the Battle of the Somme” (68). Despite these immediate cultural and ethnic differences, through his allusions and style Jones attempts to create a unified bond among the soldiers that goes beyond the differences to achieve a kind of essential British unity.
The character named Dai places distinctions of Welsh culture in a narrative that becomes nearly universal (or at least essentially Western), calling to mind Jones’s theory that contemporary Britain as a whole serves as the heir to ancient Welsh culture. This narrative occurs in the often cited section in the poem referred to as “Dai’s boast,” in which the Welsh character relates the history of his people (in English, “with alien care,” suggesting that it might be his second language) in the style of the ancient Welsh bard, Taliesin¹¹³ (Robichaud 159). Among a few of his boasts are the following: “I was with Abel when his brother found him,”; “I was the spear in Balin’s hand / that made waste to King Pellam’s land” (79), and “I knew the smart on Branwen’s cheek and the turbulence in Ireland” (83); these refer to, respectively, the Biblical narrative of Cain and Abel, the Arthurian legend of a variation on the wounded fisher-king, and the insult given to Branwen by the Irish which cause strife between the two lands in the Welsh collection of tales known as The Mabinogion. This section unites the Welsh distinctive (e.g. The Mabinogion) with a more generally British distinctive (Arthur), which in turn for Jones is connected to the universal Christian metanarrative (Cain and Abel).

Of course, the use of the first person “I” in this section acts to unite the present with a collective experience of the past. Gareth Downs suggests that Dai “quickly moves from being the embodied voice of a Welsh tradition [kinesthetic imagination, in Roach’s terminology] to become an archetype of the West itself” (7). Stephen Medcalf takes a slightly different approach, suggesting that a pan-British culture can provide an answer to the chaos of Western modernity. For example, the frontispiece of In Parenthesis, in which a nearly naked soldier appears trapped in trench warfare, bears a similarity to

¹¹³ Saunders Lewis addresses this in his introduction to Jones’ catalogue “Turn to the fourth chapter of In Parenthesis which describes Dai in the trenches in France in 1915; one should read the entire chapter for it borrows something of its plan from a poem in the Book of Taliesin” (DJONES 11).
paintings of the crucifixion, suggesting for Medcalf that the soldiers of WWI seem to participate in the sufferings of Christ on the cross. Additionally, the poem alludes to the biblical narrative in that the soldiers desire for the “cup” of suffering to pass from them, again mirroring the struggles of Christ. Here the influence of Christianity serves as the unifying force for the world, going beyond the mere national and ethnic elements regarding “Britishness” to a universal human condition that Jones links to the spiritual (532-533). In other words, and echoing Eliot once again, Britishness becomes the collective narrative for the British soldiers, who in turn participate in the overarching Christian metanarrative, thus rooting the soldiers in a collective identity in a modern and un-rooted technocratic world.

However, Jones’s more extensive allusions betray this unity he intends to construct, illustrating the fragility of the surrogate constructions of an intended consistent “authenticity.” Each section of the poem begins with a quote from *Y Gododdin*, the earliest known Welsh writing in which the Welsh men of the north fight the Germanic invaders, ultimately losing but revealing their heroism; the poem is a succession of elegies for fallen Welsh warriors during the battle of Catraeth (now Catterick in Yorkshire). Paul Robichaud suggests that the epigraphs before each section provide thematic unity for the poem, as the comradeship accompanied by loss in Medieval Britain provides a basis for Jones’s own experience as a soldier in WWI (“Y Gododdin” 4). For example, Part I’s epigraph reads, “Men marched, they kept equal step… / Men marched, they had been nurtured together.” Occurring right before the aforementioned “roll call” section, this quote serves to link Welsh heritage with the present troop comprised of English and Welsh, suggesting (as Jones does in his prose) that each of the individual
soldiers inherits this element of Welsh culture. However, for the Welsh nationalist this medieval poem would signify something else entirely, since Catraeth was fought between Welsh and Saxon warriors; rather than uniting the two groups under the common heading of the “British,” the historical context of the poem actually reveals that the English usurped Welsh land and continue to subjugate the Welsh people into the modern era.

The second extensive subject for allusions in the poem is Malory’s *Le Morte Darthur*, which Robichaud says provides less of a thematic unity than a narrative structure for Jones’s poem as the decay of the fellowship of the Round Table over the course of *Le Morte Darthur* acts as a symbol for the clash of Western civilization during WWI (149). Near the end of Dai’s boast, he mentions “that Lord Agravaine. / He urges with repulsive lips, he counsels: he nets us into expeditionary war” (83). Agravaine, being the half-brother of Arthur’s son Mordred and fellow plotter against the king, links the treachery and betrayal of the end of the Arthurian cycle with the end of peace and fellowship of Christianized Europe in WWI. Unlike Joyce, who parodies Malory’s style in *Ulysses*, Jones integrates Malorian style and structure into his poem without any satirical intent (Robichaud 156). However, this does suggest that the reference to Malory marks the end of an era of chivalric warfare, as the warfare of modernity bears the indelible influence of technology. At the same time, the soldiers in the poem are united in fellowship against the decay of modernity and Western civilization – a fact which is particularly emphasized during the Queen of the Wood scene, where the Queen bestows a blessing and memorializes each of the fallen soldiers (185-186). The presence of Malory may seem a bizarre reference at first, given Jones’s preoccupation with Wales

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114 This is particularly relevant to the discussion of pan-Britishness, as she “plaits torques of equal splendour for Mr. Jenkins and Billy Crower” (185), showing no preference to any of the constituent ethnicities of Britain.
and the fact that Malory firmly appropriated Arthur as an English King; however, it is the layers beneath this legend that are appealing to Jones, as the Arthurian legends of an ethnic minority (the Welsh) become a symbol unifying all of Britain, and even all of Europe. Though Arthur provides the standard for reversing the decline of Western culture – in which Wales and Britain play a part as concentric identities in the unity within diversity model held by Jones and Eliot – Jones appears to betray his own sense of Welsh particularity, as the particulars he repeatedly struggles to preserve end up being dissolved within the larger schema of the British Empire.

Finally, Jones’s take on modernist style itself reveals the deconstruction of the British unity Jones attempts to construct. His style participates in modernist innovation, particularly subject interiority (as evidenced by Dai’s boast, which would have been unlikely to occur literally) combined with fragmentation of various sorts (including narrative point-of-view moving from omniscience to subject interiority of individual characters) and a wide range of allusions to other cultural artifacts (poems, folk songs, etc.) As far as voices in the poem are concerned, Jones uses Cockney, Malorian, contemporary and medieval Welsh language, either occurring within a stanzaic-poetic structure or, more frequently, paragraph-based prose (though this is similar to Joyce in the disorienting nature of the prose). On the one hand, the variety present within this single work mirrors Jones’s project to unite disparate elements within the single rubric of Britishness. On the other, however, Jones’s style limited his audience so that his encompassing vision of Britishness was only available to a select few. Jones’s in-depth endnotes, which are marked throughout the text, are the result of his distaste of criticism of the day that simply discussed an author’s creative influences; the notes made the
influences on the text explicit, thus avoiding the aforementioned kinds of analysis. Elizabeth Judge writes, “Notwithstanding that his poetry shares many parallels with the modernists and that he was championed by influential principals of the modernism movement, Jones, inspired to annotate by a solicitude for the common reader and his distrust of certain academic exegeses, prevented his own assimilation into academic discourse and thus precluded his canonization” (202). As a result, he is typically regarded as a “war poet” or a (Anglo-)Welsh poet, rather than a modernist. Thus, despite the fact that he responds artistically to the Britishness debate in attempting to construct a national identity that includes many disparate parts (including his own beloved Welshness), Jones in fact isolates himself from full participation in academic literary discourse, due to both his resistance to critical analysis as well as his subject matter leading to the unforeseen fact of his work being lumped in with “fringe” aspects of modern studies instead of more traditionally “central” aspects surrounding more canonical modernist writers.

David Jones attempts to construct a national identity which, mirroring the response of Britain’s fear of global strife during WWI, focuses on a broad Britishness by opening its arms to include differing factions within the population of the island. In so-doing, Jones attempts to create a stable, multiconscious national identity for Britain in which continuity from the mythical and historical past finds embodiment in his soldier characters. Jones does this, however, while trying to emphasize the distinctness of Welsh culture within that schema; as a result, he suggests that Welsh culture is a kind of British culture, but that it is also necessary to the project of Britishness – without the Welsh connection to the Roman Empire, the British Empire loses its own grounding (e.g. Wales provides the connection to the ideal monarch, Arthur, etc.). However, looking into the
historical subtexts behind the allusions which are meant to unify reveals specific ethnic divisions in the surrogate narrative of national identity and their accompanying power struggles which undermine the very project of British unity by emphasizing ongoing political tensions on the island, rather than the newer, shared identity of Britishness. Just as his alienating style and resistance to academic reception of his work brackets himself from unity with broader culture, the poem’s project of constructing an embodied repertoire for a unity of national identity ultimately ends in divisions between ethnic groups in Britain.

Apparent within the ethnically equalizing schema of David Jones’s pan-Britishness, which I argue eventually fails in his poem when deconstructed, are both similarities and contrasts to Saunders Lewis. Both authors emphasize the necessity for understanding Welsh identity as a central participant in Western European Catholic Christendom. Yet Lewis departs from Jones in his conviction regarding Welsh independence, in which Wales bypasses any sense of hybridity or double/multi-consciousness with Englishness – that is, Wales can justify a pursuit of independence through ethnic separation since, for Lewis, general “Britishness” is a myth created to foster a sense of commonality between the ethnic groups of Britain and enlarge the scope of Westminster’s rule. In other words, while Jones sees Wales and England on equal footing within common Britishness to the extent that Britain could not be the Britain it is without both components, Lewis sees Wales as simply another European nation with a distinct language and culture – on an equal European level as France, Spain, Germany, etc., but outside any sense of collective Britishness. Both authors offer performative ethnic identities to establish Welshness as Western and Christian (and ideally Catholic)
but differ on the role Britain as a whole, with all of its ethnic components, plays (or does not play) in their schema of concentric identities.
Chapter 6: Kate Roberts, Complex Nostalgia and Local Challenges to Britishness

Kate Roberts, like David Jones, also formed part of the literary circle surrounding Saunders Lewis; unlike Jones, however, she was a firm nationalist and Plaid Cymru member. Roberts’ literary influence in Wales is clear, as she earned the moniker *Brenhines ein llên* (“The Queen of Our Literature”) for her contributions to Welsh prose, and she delves into issues of class and gender in her writings more overtly than any of the other authors. Her 1936 novel *Traed Mewn Cyffion* (“Feet in Chains”)\(^{115}\) shows how she addresses performing the particular, regional Welsh identity of the small slate-quarrying towns of North Wales. Hence, Roberts has the distinction of being the only author I address in this project who deals overtly with various kinds of Welshness, rather than a uniform or monolithic ideal of Welshness. While adherence to community values and the Welsh language provides a definition by negation for such an identity (i.e. “we are Welsh in that we neither speak English as a first language nor participate in broader British, imperial and colonial concerns”), this communal abstinence from the assumed forces of modernization (most evident in the arrival of the Great War) and her challenge to traditional gender roles redefine both local and broader understanding of what it means to be Welsh in Britain in the 20\(^{th}\) century.

As she is a Welsh language author, much of the critical work surrounding Kate Roberts is in Welsh as well. However, there are at least three critics who each represent a

\(^{115}\) I am reading this novel in translation, from the 1977 English translation by John Idris Jones which was approved by Kate Roberts.
critical trend in English language analysis of Roberts.\textsuperscript{116} The first is Tony Brown, who argues for the universality of Roberts as opposed to an existing understanding of her as mere an unknown/unknowable “other” (“Stories From Foreign Countries”). I would argue that he perhaps goes too far in stressing “universality,” by which he means that certain issues (particularly regarding the relationship between families and a given culture) occur in every society; rather, there are some transcultural issues present in the text (generalities such as love, loss, familial and communal struggles, etc.) but that these are grounded in specifics of local community. Katie Gramich has a similar approach to this counter-argument in emphasizing that Roberts’s works are “culturally specific to Wales” (77), and highlights the distinctly colonial particularities of Roberts’s characters. Francesca Rhydderch also brings the unique aspects of Roberts’s societal subjects to the fore as she discusses models of working class Welsh femininity that differed dramatically from the English ideal of the Angel of the House (I will address Gramich and Rhydderch’s arguments in greater detail below).

Keeping in mind the non-universality of Roberts’s work, \textit{Traed Mewn Cyffion} bears several distinctions worth mentioning. First is the simple fact that she writes primarily fictional prose, in contrast to the more traditional poetic literary traditions of Wales. Second, she grounds Welsh identity in the present, as opposed to any relation to a medieval “Golden Age”; this present identity focuses on the poor, industrial, rural and Welsh-speaking areas of North Wales. Third is the centrality of women in her conception of contemporary Welsh identity. This latter point is arguably most evident in her later

\textsuperscript{116} Tony Brown presents an argument for “universality” that Katie Gramich and Francesca Rhydderch deny. Following the latter two authors, I make the case that arguments based on universality work to assert that a given text is relevant outside of its original context (i.e. globally), rather than focusing on the specific ways in which a text responds to internal contexts (e.g. regarding issues of gender, class, ethnicity in early 20th century Wales).
short story collection *Te yn y Grug* (“Tea in the Heather”), in which male characters only make occasional appearances and often appear more in terms of setting and subtext than any physical presence. While male characters are certainly more central to the story at hand, she redefines traditional gender norms through her commentary on how many traditional aspects of community life are challenged or lost in the turmoil of modernity. The typical role of women as passive or peripheral to a given society are subverted through Jane Gruffydd, who, after being relocated to a different area of Wales through marriage, fights for a place in the society without being passively molded by cultural norms. In addition, she makes some of the strongest claims against the injustice of the UK government thrusting Wales into the Great War without democratic representation.

Of course, there is an obvious irony in writing a novel – a uniquely modern form of writing that connects to commodified notions of the book in modern print markets – in an anti-modern setting, from an anti-modern point of view, and in a purportedly anti-modern language that resists the equating of the English language with progress. Roberts constructs a practical reevaluation of the purview of the novel and offers an alternative to its role as an arbiter of normative domestic values in modern Britain. The opposition to the forces of modernity links Roberts to each of the previous authors I have addressed, and provides a key component in understanding Roberts as a participant in a form of modernism. Her anti-modernity is not romantic or archaic, however; rather, it presses for a resistance to the uniformity of the particular kind of Britishness that excludes local concerns in favor of imperial and colonial ones. In particular, the novel reacts against modern Britishness through scrutinizing forms of *power* in relationship to language,
education, class, gender and war.\footnote{Other arguably modernist elements occur in the unique and occasionally unsettling passage of time (the narrator may hint at the course of major events in passing, often after the present setting has been established) and, while lacking the more iconic element of stream-of-consciousness writing, the narration utilizes shifting subject interiority.} This occurs mainly through Jane and Owen’s questioning of the justice of contemporary political ties between Wales and the UK as a whole, as the novel makes the case that Anglicization (both linguistic and the pressure to adopt normative English gender ideals) and Wales’s participation in the Great War are forced upon the Welsh people. This is, of course, in direct contrast to David Jones, whose work \textit{In Parenthesis} constructs the battlefronts of the Great War as a contact zone for formulating and reiterating a hybrid Britishness.\footnote{Both perspectives have their own ideological flaws. Jones’s inclusive identity would, for Roberts, be an example of pandering to England’s foreign policy concerns, as she sees the Great War not as a site for building commonalities but as England forcing the Welsh people to serve its political aims. However, Roberts’s local nationalism could lead to xenophobia, in which any outside influence (i.e. outside of Wales and/or the Welsh language) might be regarded with suspicion. The focus of this chapter is, however, to analyze how communities in North Wales reevaluate their own allegiances and spheres of identity when presented with new degrees of colonization from England.} Through this process she deconstructs the notion that forms of identity – whether local (North Welsh), national (Welsh) or supranational (British) – are stable, revealing in their stead the phallogocentric ruse of coherence and the actuality of fluid identity.

As mentioned previously, for Bhabha hybridity is usually an alternative to both nationalism and colonialism. Here Roberts presents a kind of internal hybridity, which is anticolonial but not antinationalist; that is, she allows for some variation within Welshness as long as any threats against native, Welsh language-based societies are removed. Roberts’s view of Welsh identity is perhaps the most complex of the authors I address in this project, in part due to this allowance for variation in ethnicity; yet at the same time, hybridity is limited to Welsh language speakers who resist cosmopolitan modernity, rather than opening up hybridity to include these outside elements. The protective instinct of nationalism is relatively subtle in Roberts, especially when
compared to authors such as Saunders Lewis. However, this instinct is most apparent in her usage of nostalgia.

Svetlana Boym identifies two major types of nostalgia. The first is *restorative*, which “signifies a return to the original stasis… the past is not a duration but a perfect snapshot” (49). That is, restorative nostalgia is essentialist and bases identity on a fictitious illusion of uniformity across time. The second type is *reflective*, which “suggests new flexibility, not the reestablishment of stasis. The focus here is not on recovery of what is perceived to be an absolute truth but on the meditation on history and passage of time” (49). She writes that the former kind of nostalgia is serious and works to form a picture of a “national past and future,” while the latter is often ironic, playful and based on fragments of “individual and cultural memories” rather than a monolithic narrative of nationhood and recognizes that there can be no recovery of identity through resemblance (50). What is unique to Roberts is that she creates a more recent basis for an understanding of stasis – one which can include figures from various locales and individual experiences. In other words, her nostalgia is actually somewhat fluid in that it allows for difference in contemporary society, rather than basing an ideal form of ethnic identity on an unbroken understanding of the past. As such, she exhibits elements of both kinds of nostalgia. There is flexibility, but there are limits to her flexibility (particularly around the issue of the Welsh language); this is some stasis, but the stasis allows for variety in the present rather than uniformity in the past. As with the other authors in this project, a distrust of modernity and cosmopolitanism is evident in her work; while she offers the most diverse range of Welsh perspectives, she also seems to be aware of the fact that these forces (i.e. modernity and cosmopolitanism) enter Wales as forces of
Anglicization and offers a comparatively nuanced form of nationalism to counter the colonial threat. In other words, Roberts’s is clearly a nationalist (particularly regarding language and issues of political representation, as I discuss below), but while restricting definitions of cultural belonging in typically nationalistic ways her particular kind of nationalism offers more nuance and flexibility than the past-oriented models of nationalism presented by Lewis and Jones especially.

The novel begins in 1880 and ends around 40 years later, shifting in focus from different characters in the Gruffydd family with Jane (the matriarch of the Gruffydd family) serving as the most common unifying figure. Each section of the text that focuses on one particular character over the others emphasizes a distinct aspect of the struggle for local North Welsh identity, while the ending that centers around the effects of the Great War reveals how fluid identities, rather than being soft or powerless, can coalesce through individuals coming together as a group to resist colonial impositions of mimicry and Anglicization.

**Jane Gruffydd: The North Walian Outsider & Local Identities**

Upon first consideration, a reader might look at the dust-jacket summary of “Feet in Chains” and assume that identities in late 19th and early 20th century North Wales would have stable parameters due to the ubiquity of the Welsh language, Nonconformist Christianity and slate quarrying culture. Yet from the introduction of Jane Gruffydd on the very first page, a strong opposition to any sense of uniform Welshness – even North Welshness – is clear. This is not to say that the novel argues against any potential for understanding Welsh identity in some unified fashion, but rather that such uniformity simply does not exist when looking at the
allegiances within a given community. This is a testimony to the concentric circles of identity and multi-consciousness present in the narrative – broad ethnicity (Welshness), local geographical identity, religious denomination, gender, etc. The passage that introduces Jane begins with a Methodist preaching festival. The narrator describes the pastor, a figure who would usually be considered quintessentially Welsh, as having a “Roman nose” and “red wavy hair” (7). These features hint at the “melting pot” nature of Wales historically, from the arrival of the Roman empire in the 1st century to the Vikings in later centuries who would bring the physical attribute of red hair. Although, as with any culture, many other cultures fought, interacted and synthesized to contribute to the contemporary Welsh people, Jane is still set up as an outsider. She is still from North Wales, but from the culturally distinct Lleyn peninsula and, just as oddly to the new community into which she has married, is an Anglican. The local identity of her new husband, Ifan Gruffydd, is apparent in that his father bears the toponymical nickname Ifan Y Fawnog (“Ifan of the peat bog”). Ifan Y Fawnog and Ifan (and later, his son Wiliam) serve as local quarrymen while working a smallholding on the Fridd Felen farm near the town of Caernarfon. While Jane is willing to take on tasks that are new to her such as working the farm and managing the family finances (61), she resists attending chapel services simply because her husband would desire her to attend.119 Soon after their marriage Jane is scrutinized by other local women, such as Sioned Gruffydd (her mother-in-law) and Doli Rhod Garreg (her husband’s ex), to see how she measures up to local standards. Jane’s response is to return spite with spite. She admits, “I’m so glad I put the best things on the table” when Doli came for tea (9), and when Sioned suggests that her deceased husband (Ifan Y Fawnog) would not approve of a Church-goer

119 The text makes the common Welsh distinction between “chapel” (Nonconformist services) and “Church” (Anglican services); at this time, the Anglican Church would still be the established state religion in Wales, although the vast majority of Welsh people would identify with one of the Nonconformist denominations (such as Methodist or Baptist).
in the family, Jane retorts, “What a blessing it is that the dead can’t think at all” (11) – in other words, it does not matter that Jane resists the family’s commitment to Nonconformist chapel. Sioned speaks approvingly of Doli during her encounter with Jane, though Geini (Jane’s sister-in-law) notes that Sioned “never had a good word for [Doli] until she married that Little Steward [the second in command, under the Steward, at the local quarry]” (13). While Jane is an “outsider,” allegiances can shift even among “insiders” based on self-interest and notions of status within the community. In other words, multiconsciousness can at times be flexible enough to allow identity to be negotiated between members in a community; this in turn creates alternative definitions of “insider” and “outsider” based on reprioritizing identity markers.

Due to her outsider status, Jane finds herself needing to negotiate a place in the local community by forming alliances. Although Jane feels that “[t]his land here was alien to her,” causing her to feel hiraeth (loosely translated as longing or homesickness) for her home on the Lleyn, she finds an ally in Ifan’s Nain (grandmother), Betsan, who was also from the Lleyn. Their bonding begins over food, as Betsan notes that the “people of Lleyn like eggs,” and continues with the familial advice that “[y]ou can’t stand up for yourself too much where Sioned is concerned” (15). Betsan’s notion of local Welshness may favor the Lleyn to an extent, but it dismisses anything that might seem as quintessentially or romantically Celtic in the broad sense. She remembers visiting her grandmother on the Lleyn and how “there wasn’t a house there worth calling a house: a house was only four walls and a thatched roof. There was a peat fire on the floor and two wooden beds” (16). Instead of finding roots in the restorative nostalgia of a romanticized past, these three women (Jane, Betsan and Geini) find camaraderie in their stand against Sioned’s method of belittling others to elevate herself as the narrator notes, “Strange what little things brought people together in strong ties of friendship” (16). Here individual
character plays a part in identity, as a micro-community forms around the common rejection of Sioned’s self-elevation over Jane, Betsan and Geini.

Years later, after having a couple of children, Jane still feels like an outsider in the broader community as she is unable to “follow the talk about local people and events from the past” at elevenses with other families (17). In a moment of subject interiority, the narration suggests that she regards the nearby landscape with disdain as “everything associated with the mountain seemed stunted” (18). Yet by this point, Jane has also resigned herself to her circumstances when she thinks to herself, “what was the use of daydreaming?” (19) Jane’s mother visits when Ifan becomes ill, and confirms her own view of the environment when she thinks it is a “pity that her daughter had to live in such a poor area” and that “the woman of Sarn Goch [on the Lleyn] could not imagine anything growing in that bleak countryside” (22). Up to this point the text is characterized by discord among local North Welsh people. As Jane’s children grow, however, social changes on a national and international level put pressure on local identity through what the text clearly constructs as an unjust imposition of non-Welsh elements. While this does not immediately create any sense of companionship among local people, it begins to define a common Welshness that can include people from different areas and demographics within Wales. As a result, the fluidity of performative identity comes to the foreground through reprioritizing core identity – that is, the devotion to local identity begins to wane as national identity comes under attack from external forces.

**Owen & Twm: The Scholarship Boys**

The term “scholarship boy” comes from Richard Hoggart’s *The Uses of Literacy* (1957). In this book he takes a stand against the influence of Americanization on working-class Britain
in order to preserve its unique culture (in this case, however, it is Anglicization that is the enemy of Welsh culture). The “scholarship boy” is a figure who can appear in the power struggle between local and exported societies. The result of education within the system of the exported culture is that the scholarship boy no longer fits within the local culture, and may be viewed as either a corrupted version of the local “original” or as a posh substitute. However, the same is true on the other side; while considered the “educated elite” by his teachers at home, the scholarship boy would be a provincial outsider at best among his new peers.¹²⁰ This kind of hybridity and mimicry of the enforced educational ideal creates a liminal rather than integrated figure, as he is removed from his own culture rather than working as part of a movement within a culture. According to Bhabha’s terms, such hybrid figures “are caught in the discontinuous time of translation and negotiation” (55). In this case, in order to be accepted the scholarship boy must reiterate local and familial culture when at home and must reiterate the expected cultural norm in the environment of education. This is a kind of double consciousness, but one that reveals the illusion of coherence behind Gilroy’s model – that is, it is not a simultaneous consciousness that one can live out consistently, but rather one that constantly shifts its performance based on the immediate environment. Since performatives vary drastically based on the proximate setting, they rarely have a substantial, broader communal impact outside of the minority of scholarship boys (if the scholarship boy is fortunate enough to have local companions to share experiences).

The Gruffydd family’s first scholarship boy, Owen, is the second son. The first, Wiliam, is expected to work at the quarry to provide for his family. Owen, who is not as naturally strong as Wiliam (23), finds that matters of education come easily to him. He participates in a “competition for putting words into correct Welsh” at a local chapel. The competition revolves

¹²⁰ Similar observations occur in the memoir *The Horse of Pride*, by the Breton author and scholar Pierre-Jakez Hélias.
around the ridding of loan words from English in favor of the original Welsh terms; for example, *iwsio* ("use") becomes *defnyddio*, *trowsus* ("trowsers") becomes *llodrau*, etc. (26). At this point in his education, a true mastery of his native Welsh is equated with a de-Anglicization of the language. He wins a competitive scholarship (which involves competing against students from the town) to attend the County School; this new school offers more cultural cachet and the promise of a better, town-based and cosmopolitan-oriented education than the local rural schools. However, he must learn English, since it is an English-medium school. This removal from his native tongue, the mastery of which he had worked so hard to develop, as well as his immediate locale creates a sense of distance from his home; in addition to needing to adopt foreign ideas and ways of expressing ideas via language, Owen “realised that, from now on he would not be able to spend as much time on Ffridd Felen land” (32).

Enforced and regulated mimicry heightens this separation from the identity derived from the lived stability of his home area. Apart from learning the actual language of English, his new school also expects him to not have a Welsh accent. “The first few weeks (when he found difficulty in getting his tongue round the strange English words when talking to his teachers) were unpleasant ones, he found it difficult to understand voices using an English intonation” (47). This passage contains two major implications for Owen’s status as “scholarship boy.” First, it suggests that education based on mimicry is not merely additive, in that new knowledge is attained, but is also subtractive due to the removal of anything considered distinctly “native.” The process of education, then, a part of the process of Anglicization. Second, the status of English, while hierarchical, is limited to only being of value when speaking to teachers; the tacit suggestion here is that the students continue to speak Welsh to each other. ¹²¹ This shows the non-

¹²¹ The novel does not mention the Welsh-Not, a system whereby students monitor each other to prevent the speaking of Welsh in the classroom. A student caught speaking Welsh in school would be forced to wear a board
pragmatic quality of Anglicizing education, since English is irrelevant to local life apart from the institution of education itself. Owen’s particular strain of double consciousness leads to constant code-switching between English and Welsh, depending on the immediate environment, rather than any sense of coherence across time and place. At the same time, and following Bhabha’s identification of agency in hybridity, Owen is able to adapt to this hybrid situation so that he has the power to act in the two arenas rather than be powerless in both. Any temporary respite from the school day would be greeted by the reappearance of alienation, however. “Returning home in the evening, he felt released from the atmosphere of the school, and yet during the day it was his home environment which seemed the alien one” (47). Unlike communities of subjects who participate in a collective double-consciousness, the scholarship boy has no real home. This brings him closer to what James Weldon Johnson called “dual personality,” in which an individual “could cross the colour line and pass for a white man whenever he wished. His duality is signified by the literal doubling involved in being somehow both black and white” (Gilroy 131). Yet even this categorization is unsatisfactory in this case since Owen does not have the opportunity to pass for English in a context among English people. While Owen’s education exists to make him a modern Englishman, his home life is that of a North Welshman – in other words, in practice he is not somehow both English and Welsh, but rather a Welshman who is groomed to being an approximate Englishman. This highlights the problematics of various understandings of hybridity that can occur simultaneously in the individual. On one hand, Owen does have a degree of power in both English and Welsh language based environments, according to Bhabha’s agency in hybridity and Johnson’s duality; on the other hand, and at the same time,
his status as “scholarship boy” limits him from integrating fully into either environment. The resultant sense of alienation he experiences comes from the imposition to reconcile multiple modes of consciousness into a coherent sense of self. This is not to say that all forms of hybridity are inherently traumatizing, since entire communities can build or perform hybrid identities, but rather to highlight that the unique status of the scholarship boy can lead to feeling excluded in both home and school environments.

His initial impulse in overcoming this alienation is to attempt a (failing) mental construction of his home as he thinks, “[w]hy couldn't his home always be like this?” (33) The awareness of temporal change creates a longing for stability, which he also attempts to create through a superior self-projection based on ideals of gender. Whether this is due to the influence of the townsfolk first is unclear, as they employ their own gender stratification based on notions of rural and urban masculinity. “To the town boys, the country boys [e.g. Owen and his brothers, Wil & Twm] were ignorant, especially where good manners were concerned, whilst to the country lads, the town boys appeared over-faddish and more like girls than boys” (46). Here we get the sense that the townsfolk define urban masculinity according to civility, which would bear the external influence of a cosmopolitan (and, hence, more “English”) program of conduct. Opposed to this is rural masculinity, defined by a life of strenuous work rather than a concern with etiquette (although, in section on Sioned below, it is evident that rural femininity is just as arduous). Ironically, Owen’s position in relation to his older brother Wil could be similarly construed, as the strong quarryman would be a more traditionally “masculine” figure than the well-educated bookworm. This exchange highlights the interconnection between gender and locale, as Welsh identity is anything but uniform given the multiple layers of performativity that occur in social subsets of North Welsh life.
For Owen, “prize day” can serve as a temporary reconciliation of the layers present in his two worlds. It is initially a source of disconnect with family, as the invitations are in English; Owen “took home the invitation, inscribed in English on gilt-edged card, for his parents. But they, because they could not understand it, put it aside” (48). Yet Owen is able to negotiate these two worlds by setting the tone for his family, which, even though he desires the praise of his family for his academic accomplishments, is primarily one of derision: “Everyone will be talking Welsh except those on the stage” (53). By admitting that the English language has nothing to do with the lived experience of his family, he draws their attention and they agree to attend the event. When Jane expresses being impressed by the man giving the prizes (“Didn't he look a proper man!... Isn't it a pity one can't understand just a little bit of English?”), a family friend retorts, “I don't know, really. One understands enough in this old world already. There's no knowing how much pain one avoids by not knowing English” (55). Owen is pleased by this response and by the family’s laughter, as it illustrates that they do not need to possess any knowledge of English in order to participate in his academic life. As English is unnecessary for their own shared experiences, it gives Owen a temporary foothold into both worlds – he can learn English without becoming English. This shows the potential for communal resistance, which occurs here through communal support of the scholarship boy by using the system while also rejecting it. This illustrates Homi Bhabha’s principle of subversive hybridity. In “Signs Taken for Wonders,” Bhabha writes of the imposition of the “English book” as the standard of literature in colonized territories:

If the effect of colonial power is seen to be the production of hybridization rather than the noisy command of colonialist authority or the silent repression of native traditions, then an important change of perspective occurs. The ambivalence at the
source of traditional discourses on authority enables a form of subversion, founded on the undecidability that turns the discursive conditions of dominance into the grounds of intervention (112).

Stated otherwise, hybridity can allow colonized peoples to utilize a colonial system while simultaneously working to disrupt the reach of that system’s power into a given community.

By the time Owen’s younger brother, Twm, also earns a scholarship to the County School, the general pattern of society is in upheaval. “The wages in the quarry were lower than they had ever been and the cost of living was rising… The slate industry was in a precarious position because things were very slack in the building trade and because slates were being imported from abroad” (61). This causes Twm to be more open to life in the town and prompts the oldest brother, Wiliam, to develop interests outside the community as well. As Twm starts his scholarship by lodging in the town rather than commuting from the farm – not to mention the fact that most of his siblings now live in the town – he does not experience the same disdain from and for the town boys. When he tries to convince Owen that they are not so bad, Owen replies, “Even if they were like angels… they are different from us” (60). For Owen, it is the difference that matters, not superiority or inferiority in any category. The contrast between Owen and Twm reveals what Raymond William’s *The Country and the City* identifies as an overly rigid opposition of rural and urban environments. Owen sees inherent difference between the two, which is based on his personal experience of being mistreated in the city, but to suggest that the city and country are unrelated monoliths without crossover shows that he may have internalized the notion of a rural Golden Age – which Williams calls “a myth functioning as a memory” (43). At the same time, this perceived opposition illustrates the fracturing of even local
identity and the need for a stronger external force (such as the First World War) to create social bonds on a local level.

Before the arrival of the full scope of the war, the narrative section surrounding Wiliam shows a level of distrust for any external ideology that, in attempting international unity, might obscure the particularities of local identity. Wiliam begins to attend night school for English and Arithmetic, at first for primarily utilitarian purposes: “A knowledge of Arithmetic was useful, and English allowed you to make your way in the world” (64). Yet the classes also expose Wiliam to “new ideas that were gaining ground in England and South Wales. Where their fathers (the more interested ones) had absorbed the ideas of Thomas Gee and S.R. [Samuel Roberts; both Welsh non-conformists], their children grasped the ideas of Robert Blatchford and Keir Hardie [both socialists, the first being English and second Scottish]” (64).

Kate Roberts’ friend and fellow Plaid Cymru member, Saunders Lewis, was anti-socialist in part due to its allegedly transcultural emphasis; any society could adopt mass socialism, which (in his view) equated lower classes from any society, rather than looking for a more indigenous approach. In the novel, Wiliam’s co-founders of the Quarrymen’s Union “gathered their ideas from English books, or from the Welsh papers that echoed the English ones. The worker in Wales came to be recognised along with his counterpart in England,” potentially elevating class over nationality and ethnic culture (64). Roberts provides such a local approach (in opposition to an international one) in her text, in an uncharacteristically didactic aside, when the narrator states, “while [Wiliam] was wrestling with these problems nobody bothered to tell him that the very quarry in which he was working had, in the beginning, been worked by quarrymen themselves, sharing the profits” (64). Here she makes the point that there was already a local

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122 As mentioned earlier, Lewis later decried the progressive adoption of socialist ideals into the political party that he helped co-found.
alternative to both capitalism and to the international movement of socialism in Wales – the local co-op. For Roberts, the co-op avoids the removal of locality that she seems to fear from international socialism while upholding the basic anti-capitalist tenet of the workers owning the means of production. The narrator’s critique of Wiliam’s non-local predilections continues by stating that he was admired for his “eloquence,” as people’s “admiration for Lloyd George sprang from the same source” (66). By this point, Welsh nationalists regarded Lloyd George primarily as Britain’s Liberal Prime Minister, rather than as the Cymru Fydd member who advocated for Welsh home rule.

Wiliam’s broader socialist leanings eventually lead him to move to South Wales, which, due to its larger cities and coal mines, quickly adopted principles of the international socialist movement. The narrator seems to have more sympathy for Wiliam acting on his convictions at this point, for his move to South Wales would be the “first time he was going to spend the night away from home” (83). What seems like “the other side of the world” to Wiliam is worth the relocation, however, since “he would not be a beggar in the quarry any more and that he was going South” to work in the mines (84). In fact, Wiliam’s convictions are the impetus for the novel’s titular line, as he thinks of those who refuse to join a worker’s union that “perhaps they were content to have their feet in chains” (86).

Wiliam’s initially positive choice eventually turns into a kind of self-imposed exile, however. In a letter expressing a typically laconic masculinity, “the nearest hint of his longing for home was a postscript mentioning the loaf of bread and the butter his mother had put in his pack, which was very good” (89). Much like Owen, Wiliam’s choice to move outside of his community creates a sense of longing for a home that no longer exists in the same relation to him. During a visit home, he tries to speak of the great benefits of living in South Wales, but
eventually “he would speak less about the South and would go and lie in the fields and gaze in the direction of the sea” (100). The novel suggests that Wiliam’s alienation reveals the pitfalls of an identity orientation that eschews locality in favor of broader identity affiliation. Although initially committed to international socialism he cannot seem to escape the pull of his home landscape, suggesting that global consciousness is ultimately an ineffectual identity basis for the individual who does not also root identity in local concerns.

**Sioned (The Younger): The Cosmopolitan as Imperial**

As much as scholarship and politics serve as a kind of Anglicization for the three Gruffydd boys, Jane and Ifan’s daughter Sioned’s disregard of local culture marks a symptom of an invading imperial modernity. The increasing presence of the symptoms of globalization, which can easily move from a cultural contact-derived plurality to uniformity based on a globally dominant culture, appears throughout the text in terms of physical objects. For example, Owen wears an “India-rubber collar” (32) and Sioned’s future husband, Bertie, wears silk (77), showing the global reach of British imperial trade at the time from the Far East to rural Wales. This is not to suggest that trade was one way, however, since Owen “could visualise many countries all over the world, where there were great cities with countless streets, and they had Moel Arian slates on their roofs. And the same moon which shone on the houses in Moel Arian tonight would be casting its beams to slide over the roofs of those houses in distant lands” (131). Even though rural communities can seem insular, they are not beyond the reach of imperial economics. It is this constant international presence that causes a longing in Sioned for a life of mimicry that she considers a greater alternative to any basis of identity that her community has to offer.
Unlike her brothers, Sioned appears to dislike her home surroundings from a young age. Rather than seeing the reach of global and imperial affairs into Welsh life, she thinks of her community as “[a]n old place like this… cut off from the world, way behind the times, eating the same thing day after day” (34). The monotony of daily life prompts Sioned to seek culture elsewhere, as she begins to meet up with “Dic Edwards, a shopkeeper from the town” (36). To her, the local town center would serve as a significant hub for the small surrounding rural farms. A reader might expect some sympathy for someone who feels trapped when often reminded by physical products of the wide world outside, but the narrative is very critical of Sioned, especially as her attitude is detrimental to the community. When the elder Sioned, her grandmother and namesake, passes away, Sioned’s “first thought was: Will I look well in black? (When she had convinced herself that she would, she found pleasure in the thought of having new clothes”; 67). The narrator sees little to no importance in fashion for its own sake, and is critical of any trends that do not serve a communal purpose. When Sioned first begins meeting with Dic, she stays with her grandmother under the ruse of her wish to “sew and alter some old clothes for her grandmother” (37). This communally helpful act of service is socially acceptable, but after the ruse runs its course it ultimately creates a scandal. Yet beyond the generally productive task of mending clothes, this passage also hints at Sioned’s desire for updating (“altering”) fashion, betraying what the narrator regards as frivolous concern with appearances based on trends.

The emphasis on cosmopolitan fashion also draws upon gender assumptions. When Sioned ultimately marries Bertie, he wears a “silk hat and tail-coat” (77). Sioned’s brothers respond to this display by thinking of Bertie as a “la-di-dah” (the same term used by the scholarship boys to feminize the boys from the town). Here the narrator explains, in a humorous
understatement, that Sioned learns “the simple fact that country people are not always taken in by grandeur” (79). In this sense the cosmopolitan impulse can be linked with the pomp of empire; rather than uniting the world with common values and ideals, the cosmopolitan-imperial drive can alienate local communities. This link becomes all the more evident when considering linguistic elements. Bertie begins to refer to Sioned as “Janet,” which is the Anglicized version of her name. Not only does this linguistically remove a connection between Sioned and her immediate family (via her grandmother/namesake), but in renaming his wife he also acts upon the typically masculine understanding of colonization in which the colonizer restricts, contains and claims the feminine/feminized colonized object (not to mention the fact that it comes off as obviously posh and alienating to the Gruffydd family). Clothing and fashion serves this same purpose throughout the text, as the narrator begins the text by calling attention to bodily restrictions imposed by clothing; “[t]heir new shoes were pinching, their stays were too tight and the high collars of their new frocks were almost choking them” (7). This colonial mindset seeps into Sioned’s consciousness, as her mother (Jane) comments that any person can be “very nice in Sioned’s eyes if they speak English and wear bracelets” (95). Jane, who was originally an outsider as a “Lleyn Anglican,” now serves the communal role of protector from the forces of Anglicization and of the superficial fashion trends of the cosmopolitan mindset.

Francesca Rhydderch connects the roles played by Welsh women with broader narratives concerning “proper” gender performance. The periodical *Y Gymraes* (The Welshwoman) offered an alternative to broader British notions of femininity when an “author rails against the inactivity and laziness of the English Angel in the House,” which serves as a “testimony to the main differences between English bourgeois femininities and the realities of life for Welsh women, the majority of whom had to work very hard to make a living” (35). Jane represents the ideal Welsh
woman, who “was no English Angel in the House: her body was moulded by heavy physical work” (Rhydderch 36). In contrast Sioned, in keeping with the Victorian English ideal of feminine submission, allows her husband to rename her “Janet” and concerns herself more with fashion trends than with the industriousness of the ideal Cymraes. As a result, Jane and Sioned performatively embody two models of normative femininity that were competing in Wales – one constructed as ethnically Welsh, the other identified as a English import that bears the marks of colonial globalization.

**War, Globalization and Local Communities**

When the war broke out, nobody in Moel Arian knew what to make of it. They did not understand its causes; they believed in what the papers said, that Great Britain was going to the help of smaller nations… Nobody in Moel Arian, or Fridd Felen, thought that the war could affect them personally; war was something for soldiers and politicians (110).

While cosmopolitan fashion trends do serve as an imperial and even Anglicizing force, the most significant shock of this kind for the community as a whole would come through the effects of the Great War on Welsh soil. Although Wales itself was a small nation, and Great Britain was allegedly aiming to help “smaller nations” through the war, the local community had no say in whether to participate in the war or not. The sentiments of some Welsh Nonconformists tended towards pacifism, and general disapproval is evident in the text: “A man here or there belonged to the Militia, but that was not something to be proud of. The Militiaman was rather an

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123 And, as Rhydderch argues, so does Kate Roberts’s own mother, Catrin, in Roberts’s memoir *Y Lôn Wen* (Rhydderch 38).
124 Due to Welsh mutations, the word *Cymraes* becomes *Gymraes* when preceded by the definite article *Y* (“The”).
object of scorn, and the same was true when the first army uniform was seen in Moel Arian in 1914, although its colour was different from that of the militia” (110).

Twm serves as the main character for this section of the text, which begins with his discontent with his job as a schoolteacher. Twm focused on the Welsh language during his time at college (which he was able to attend in large part due to his own scholarship to the County School); in addition to the fact that he loathed that the headmaster of the school where he teaches regularly beat the students, he “was allowed no opportunity of using his knowledge of Welsh, and he was forced to teach subjects he knew little about” (110). Since the educational system prevented any positive role for a Welsh language specialist, Twm decides to enlist in the army. Twm expresses his contentment with the decision by composing “a scurrilous englyn on the subject of the headmaster” (111). This act participates in the ancient Celtic tradition of satirizing individuals in positions of authority through poetry. While this appears to be a community-affirming act of rebellion (particularly as he presents the poem to his friends), it is also an alcohol-fueled response to the impulsive decision to leave the community; in other words, while the text may be satirical, the context serves an elegy to his former life and panegyrical anticipation of his new life abroad.

When Jane sees her son in uniform for the first time, she thinks, “this uniformed figure was not Twm” (114). Since British imperial affairs did not historically involve Welsh concerns, the donning of an imperial uniform makes Jane’s own son feel alien to her. Twm’s personal response seems to shift from one of excitement at the prospect of exploring the world to idealizing even the toil of home. While exploration itself may seem ideologically neutral, the marketing of the explorer’s lifestyle is a key part of imperial project as it simultaneously acts as a recruitment tactic and assumes the right of the empire to colonize other territories. Yet he would
soon write a letter to Owen that reveals the dissatisfaction with the imperial narrative, as he states, “[i]sn't it a pity that we do not have enough time to watch the hens, and sheep and dogs, and not worry about anything?” (117) Of course, the toil of home would change as a result of the war efforts as well; “The young and middle-aged had gone either into the army or into ammunition factories, or else to work in the docks in Liverpool and other places” (119). This would have a devastating effect on his home community’s sense of identity and place in the universe:

Those people who were at home began to ask themselves and others what was the meaning of it all. They had seen bad times very often. They had endured wrongs and injustices in the quarries; the tyranny of masters and owners, the oppression of favouritism and corruption. They had seen their friends and sons killed alongside them at work, but they had never experienced their children being taken away from them to be killed in war. Trying to find some explanation for it all, they discussed it from every angle in the Sunday School, for there was no quarry hut now in which they could talk things over (119, emphasis added).

While suffering resulting from the local work environment had long been a part of lived experience, the war had a very different effect on the community. Young men would be taken away as soldiers to fight in a war that the Welsh people only found out about after the decisions had already been made in Westminster, and the economic impact of the war meant that many others would have to leave for larger industrial hubs – in effect shattering the backbone of the local community. The novel suggests that communal identity diminishes in proportion to the
intrusion of foreign concerns on their lives, which calls for a reformulation of identity to combat external forces of power.\(^{125}\)

Of course, this is not to say that reactions to the war were unilateral, although the narration has some strong words for this segment of the population. “In that small town, there were people who spoke of the glory of war and the bravery of the boys, and they believed the newspapers word for word… their silly, empty talk and their cliche-ridden opinions, endlessly repeated, were enough to drive a person wild” (120). The narration usually remains either descriptive in nature or within the confines of subject interiority, so the uncharacteristic anger in this passage stands out. The emotional response to the sudden demise of the traditional cultures surrounding quarry and farm life is only heightened as a result of the way in which the Gruffydd family discovers the news of Twm’s death. Jane receives government forms in July of 1916 (presumably during The Battle of the Somme), which is “written in English. She saw Twm's name, and his army number, and there was another sheet of thick white paper with only a few words on it in English” (122). Given that her community thrived without the requirement for any knowledge of English, she is forced to go to a shopkeeper in town to translate the letter for her.

The rest of the novel addresses various communal and individual responses to the injustice of a dissolving community, suggesting the need to utilize the fluidity of performativity to establish an alterative identity that would preserve some degree of local unity and camaraderie. Individuals in the local community offer lip-service to the suffering of others while merely focusing on their own grief – “[i]t was the same for every family in such circumstances but no one here knew or cared about any sadness but his own” (123). Even Twm’s parents consoled themselves by simply looking forward to working to the point of being “free from debt

\(^{125}\) Of course, in reality this is not the only possible result of foreign intrusion; hybridity identities regularly form in contact zones, as seen in the camaraderie between English and Welsh soldiers in David Jones’s *In Parenthesis*. 
and to enjoy[ing] a retirement without worry at the end of their lives” (132). In contrast, focusing on personal grief can lean to a lamenting of what could have been. “Sometimes [Owen] thought it would have been better if his ancestors had stayed on the other side of the Eifl mountains in Lleyn and just tilled the soil” (133). This carries the danger of romanticizing the past without leading to any immediate action in response to injustice. Owen avoids this by suppressing such feelings to focus solely on utility, when he remembers their earlier life together as a family and subsequently asks himself, “[b]ut what was the use of dreaming? These things belonged to another life. It seemed almost as if it had happened to another person” (127).

Yet when it comes to action, rather than just processing the past or present, the novel suggests that one can either participate in the external imperial system of injustice or resist it. Participation in injustice occurs when a military pension officer comes to Jane’s house to offer her a pittance for Twm’s death. Jane offers an immediate act of resistance as she hits him with the nearest object (a clothes-brush) and chases him out of the house. Her indictment of such a betrayal of their shared community is clear when she laments, “My dear son… And something like you is allowed to live” (129). Owen comments on this situation when he thinks about how he had heard of War profiteers; he had even seen them from a distance. But today he had come face-to-face with a cruel action by one of his own people [the pension officer], as it were… That's how it was in war; it was not only the killing and the suffering that was cruel, but also incidents like this. And there was his mother having to have somebody translate into Welsh the news that her son had been killed! (130)
Katie Gramich notes that “the experience which made [Roberts] into a writer was the desolating one of losing her brother in the First World War” (91). This scene mirrors Roberts’s own experience, as the novel begins with the characters being “at best, indifferent colonial subjects, unaware of their own subject status or their own stake in the colonial enterprise” (93). However, the shock of losing loved ones in a war about foreign concerns begins to prompt subtle acts of resistance, as Jane, “archetypal Welsh Mam takes up her brush, not to scrub and scour, but to attack the representative of the oppressive British state, which extends its tentacles even as far as her own domestic hearth” (96). The novel begins to hint at another course of action for responding to political and linguistic injustice as well. This occurs through the open and equal conversation between Owen and Ann Elis, who also lost someone in the war. “They talked endlessly about the injustice of everything, and above all about the inability of people to see things correctly. They always felt better after having a chat like that” (128). This exchange suggests that both men and women have a role to play in identifying injustice in order to reform society, rather than A) simply adapting to a modern world, or B) leaving the task of reforming society to men, which would be a common postcolonial embodiment of colonial notions of masculine leadership.

This hint of subversive and community-building action does not conclude the novel, however. Owen longs for a more engaging method of subversion as he thinks,

    his eyes were opened to the possibility of doing something instead of simply enduring like a dumb animal. It was about time that somebody challenged this injustice and did something about it. Come to think of it, that was what was wrong with his people. They were courageous in their capacity to endure pain, but would do nothing to get rid of what caused that pain (132).
This passage serves as a challenge to the original readership, since the reader is not allowed access to see how Owen would do it (or if he would). Much like Saunders Lewis’s approach to the ending of *Cymru Fydd*, leaving the audience dissatisfied through Owen’s refusal to provide an overt course of action puts the onus on “his people” to come up with responses and to act upon them. Of course, anyone who knew Kate Roberts would be at least familiar with her ideal vision for action, namely pursuing independence through participation in the national party Plaid Cymru. Yet the fact that she does not provide such a conclusive answer in a text that concerns itself with reforming communities and alliances hints at the possibilities for anticolonial resistance that could come through a reassessment by Welsh people of what it means to be Welsh in the modern world. Such reassessment and action works through the fluidity of identity, in that the Welsh people can choose to separate their interests from the broader British interests through communal redefinition – whether on linguistic terms (e.g. Welsh-medium education), governmental terms (i.e. the increasing levels of Welsh devolution in recent years and the resulting increase in democratic power) or other cultural terms (i.e. combing through the archive of ethnic identity to provide a surrogate for recent trends in forced Anglicization). This anticolonial resistance is not about merely returning to a vision of the past through restorative nostalgia, although one can see this kind of nostalgia at work in matters of linguistic and cultural de-Anglicization; rather, Roberts also incorporates elements of reflective nostalgia into her anticolonial perspective through the varied fragments of experience on the part of individuals in the Gruffydd family. Such a hybrid understanding of nostalgia appears to prompt contemporary Welsh readership to be aware of prized cultural links (especially linguistic links) between the past and present, while at the same time allowing a certain amount of freedom in the

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126 Lewis and Jones offers examples of this kind of nostalgia, through the idealized vision of an politically independent, Welsh-speaking and Catholic Wales of the early to middle medieval period.
call to pursue a democratic resistance to colonial forces that does not merely rely on a recovery of a static idealization of the past.
Conclusion

By looking at these different four authors I hope to have established the flexibility of the explanatory powers of ethnic performativity as it relates to postcoloniality in Welsh writing. This project contributes to the fields of Postcolonial Theory and Welsh Studies through evaluating how authors construct and perform identity markers in the late 19th and 20th centuries for political purposes. Ethnic performativity in general is a relatively new critical concept, since Judith Butler’s theory of performativity usually serves as a catalyst for evaluating gender, as is considering Wales and the literature of its two languages in relation to postcolonial theory. Applying these critical paradigms to the four authors I address shows how constructions of ethnic identity do serve divergent political ends – particularly in relation to how notions of ethnic identity respond, whether through resistance, participation or some combination of the two, to the broader aims of the British Empire.

However, I hope this project does not simply illuminate how definitions of identity work in past literary texts. Identification of models of Welshness, or of ethnic or national identity in general, can play into contemporary politics – particularly as a post-devolution Wales grapples with defining contemporary nationhood. While the past can play a role in understanding present identity, the authors I have addressed show that there are numerous ways of configuring the relationship between past, present and future understandings of identity. The recognition of a nationalist drive for a surrogate culture, the allowance of contemporary hybridity, the use of reflective nostalgia – each of these
concepts can inform ethnic identity so that performativity can influence collective, democratic conceptions of nationhood rather than constraining participation in a nation according to the definitions of a romanticized past. I do not aim to impose (akin to the colonial mindset) a model of how Wales or any other nation should define itself, but rather my hope is to analyze certain models of ethnic identity that can be used for evaluating definitions of identity in contemporary and future political discourses.

Despite their range of differences in approaching Welsh identity, the key unifying element among the authors I address is that they view Welshness as a way to resist any culturally neutral understanding of modernity. These authors identify how notions of essential difference inform the concept of modernity, as the imperial narrative of progress is, in actuality, a method of persuading colonized peoples to become English (through technology, industrialization, education, etc.). Of course, the promise of success through becoming more English is a method of control – to keep ethnic groups passive through the illusion of power, as the approximation to Englishness can never be completely fulfilled in a colonial system. At the same time, emphasizing recent critical discussions of modernisms – that is, in simple terms, the various literary responses to the issues of modernity – instead of a singular and uniform Modernism opens up the discourse to addressing the variety of ways in which authors responded to significant cultural and historical shifts in the late 19th and 20th centuries. While each of the authors I address participates in some form of literary modernism, from a political perspective this happens most clearly in the rejection of imperial definitions of modernity in favor of an alterative worldview based on particular notions of Welsh ethnic identity.
Welshness as Anti-Anglocentric Modernity

Gerard Manley Hopkins’s proto-modernist poetry sets up an avenue for exploring how individual identity can participate in Matthew Arnold’s notion of the British as a Germanic/Celtic hybrid (as Hopkins considered himself “half-Welsh”). While his nature poems perform a kind of “Celtic Magic,” which explores the mysteries of the proliferation of kinds of natural people, they also are highly organized according to the common racial narrative of typically “Germanic” structure. He combines Welsh themes and traditions in his poetry with a contemporary British colonial impulse – that is to change the Welsh natives in order to make Britain more uniform according to neo-Catholic ideals of the Oxford Movement. The irony here is that his poetry lauds the proliferation of variety in nature, but Hopkins struggles to appreciate variance within Britain’s ethnic groups. Although reiteration creates a ruse of a stable hybrid identity – one that participates in the Arnoldian concept of Britishness – analysis of disparate elements in his life and work reveal the tensions underlying the stable facade of such a model of Britishness.

In contrast, Saunders Lewis works to emphasize a notion of Welshness that is independent of Britishness. He responds to a model of resistance provided by Irish nationalism, but unlike his Irish counterparts he gives stronger weight to language than to religion as the impetus for resistance. For Lewis, independence ought to be pursued so that language and culture will not be threatened (which I argue are subordinate impulses for Irish nationalism). Yet religion still plays a part in external alliances. Resisting uniformity, he desires Wales to be on an equal level with other European nations in a model of identity where local national variety occurs within the context of a shared
European (and Catholic) heritage. Lewis proposes an alternate performative to both to mainstream Welshness (by this point typically Nonconformist) and to mainstream Britishness (English speaking). His strain of modernism reiterates a medieval model of identity of Welshness within Europeanness that is elevated due to being temporally prior to contemporary (and hence, for Lewis, more transient) Welsh identity. Lewis’s ideal Welshness is Catholic, but it plays out on an international level through cultural, linguistic and political independence.

David Jones provides a similar European emphasis as Lewis, but sees Wales as an overlooked but essential part of Britain as well (that is, Britain would not be what it is without Wales due to the connections to the Roman Empire, King Arthur, etc.) rather than Wales as separate entity from Britain. In other words, his model of identity bases itself on a reiteration of Roman history within Welsh culture, which, when combined with other ethnic groups on the island of Britain, creates a complete Britishness. He works to create a collective national (read “British”) consciousness in response to international upheaval caused by The Great War; while it is one which gives primacy to Wales, it is performed both by the speaker of the poem (through historical and mythical allusions) and through the union of the English and Welsh soldiers. Ultimately, he proposes an alternative Britishness based around a hybridity that could not exist without the Roman-influenced and myth-based Welshness. As with Lewis, Jones’s modernism roots identity in the past rather than in modernity.

Kate Roberts is also a nationalist, like Lewis, but deals primarily with identity conflicts within local communities. She takes a very different response to World War I from Jones; she sees it as the result of outside imperial and generally British concerns
being imposed on local Welsh communities and regards it as a foreign matter, since the Welsh people as a whole did not have any say in going to war. This is her strongest resistance to the concerns of British modernity and modernization. Her characters employ different internal models of ethnic identity, suggesting that (in contrast to David Jones and Saunders Lewis) Welshness is not and should not be monolithic. She presents a community that might, at first glimpse, embody a typical association of what it means to be Welsh – that is, Nonconformist and based around the male-centered occupations of the coal miner (in the south) or the slate quarrier (north). Yet she throws a Welsh Anglican woman from the Lleyn peninsula (which is culturally distinct from North, according to the characters from the Caernarfon area, but not part of the South either) into the mix, forming the argument that individuals such as Jane Gruffydd can also be Welsh. However, the key to any hope of stability is again, like Lewis, the communal reiteration of the Welsh language. The flexibility of Welshness in Roberts’s work shows the fluidity of performativity that can accommodate subsets of ethnic identity. In Butlerian terms, the pre-scripted roles of identity are less concrete than those proposed by hard “scientific” models of identity, as long as the language of identity scripts (i.e. Welsh) is common. Internal struggles between models of Welshness fade in importance when dealing with imposition of external threats, such as Anglicizing education and the war in which Welsh people fight without having any true political voice.

Clearly, identity-based responses to the British imperial project of uniformity vary among these authors. As a result, writers negotiate the concentric circles of Welsh identity (i.e. region, Wales, Britain, Europe, and the world), and each level contains different visions and tensions regarding race, class, gender. While this suggests that
identity is anything but uniform, there is at least one common trait among these authors: whether explicit or hidden, each one references varying reiterated models of Welshness as resistance to the forces of (Anglocentric) modernization.

**Testing the Waters: Dylan Thomas & Consciousness Wars**

This project has focused on authors who claim Welsh identities of various sorts, and who may even advocate for overt Welsh nationalism. In other words, political considerations come to the fore as the construction of individual identities cannot be disconnected from the process of negotiating a national identity. Dylan Thomas, in contrast, does not fit as nicely with the other authors on this positional basis; rather than acknowledging the value in regarding Welshness as distinct from Britishness, Thomas is commonly understood to be a subject or victim of the Anglocentric modernization that works to subsume Celtic identities into an English-oriented Britishness.\(^\text{127}\) He seems to believe, at least at times, that he would need to jettison Welshness to be internationally accepted as a poet. While the other authors embrace Welshness as a part of multiconsciousness, Thomas seems to have been groomed to regard Welshness as irrelevant in the modern world.

Yet rather than simply acquiescing to the understanding of Thomas as generally British, I see Thomas as a complex figure regarding identity politics. On the one hand, he can serve as an example of internalized oppression regarding ethnic consciousness, since the concepts of ethnic performativity can show how a denial of Thomas’s Welshness depends on a notion of ethnic purity – that if he does not have certain qualities, the all-or-

\(^{127}\) Despite categorization as generally British, there has been a burgeoning trend of regarding Thomas as distinctly Welsh. This is most obvious in John Ackerman’s book *Welsh Dylan*, but also in the criticism of Roger Craik, Damian Walford Davies and James A Davies.
nothing model of ethnicity means that he is not Welsh. As I address below, some critical discourse around Thomas shows the desire to regulate his ethnicity based on possession of certain criteria, even from opposing perspectives (i.e. both nationalist and anti-nationalist/pan-European viewpoints make claims about Thomas’s identity). On the other hand, Thomas reveals that an author can play with signifiers of ethnicity, breaking down the model of ethnic purity by showing how qualities of ethnicity are not inherent or essential. Thomas seems to be aware of the ability to manipulate scripted positions in his hybrid performances of the modern Welsh bard and his (at times) explicit rejection of national (Welsh) and local (Swansea) identities. Yet Welshness is still a part of his consciousness, and he draws on ethnic the archive of Wales – even if in a more covert or possibly subconscious fashion.

While other authors overtly address Welsh ethnicity, culture and politics, the lack of such topics with Thomas’s work lead to critical attention focusing on whether or not he should be considered a “Welsh poet” – partly based on the discussion of whether or not he is “political.” This falls into the trap of binary thinking – not only regarding identity (i.e. the simple categories of whether one is Welsh or not), but also regarding history (i.e. understanding peoples and epochs as unitary). If part of the postcolonial project is to decenter a colonial and Eurocentric view of the world, including ideas about identity and history, then a postcolonial model for understanding such ideas must make obvious their constructed underpinnings. For this brief analysis of Thomas, I will apply the same notions of ethnic performativity that I used throughout this project to address three major objections to understanding Thomas as distinctly Welsh. My goal is not to argue that he should be categorized as categorically Welsh, since doing so would merely
be reversing (while still maintaining) the model of ethnic purity and uniformity. Rather, I argue that Thomas’s periodic engagement or disengagement with the archive of Welsh ethnic markers reveal a sense of play with the constructed signifiers of ethnicity, which in turn reveals the bases of ethnic identity in social discourse.

The first objection to Thomas’s Welshness is linguistic. For one thing, he did not speak any Welsh, even though both of his parents were fluent Welsh speakers. Second, his father’s disgust with his mother’s “Swansea Welsh” accent and the desire to see his son succeed in the world even led the senior Thomas to enroll Dylan in elocution lessons in an attempt to eradicate his son’s own Welsh accent. The second is that Thomas himself denied the influence of Welsh literature on his own poetry; for instance, he states, “I'm not influenced by Welsh bardic poetry. I can't read Welsh” (Ferris 855). Paul Ferris also writes, “Thomas was usually following rules [of strict rhyme and meter] that he invented for the purpose of a particular poem, not traditional rules” (Biography 105). This has led critics to read Thomas as distancing himself from the Welsh people through elevating individual experience over a sense of community. The third is less an objection than a tacit acceptance of Thomas in the British Literature canon without qualification of his Welshness. In other words, Thomas is often read (especially in anthologies) in a setting that does not engage the arguments of Thomas’s ethnicity beyond general Britishness.

Through addressing these issues, I set up Thomas as a test case for the postcolonial framework of ethnicity that I have set up in this project (involving ethnic performativity, double consciousness, hybridity, the archive and the repertoire, etc.); in so-doing, I present a revisionist account of a canonical poet who is often placed in binaries.
(Welsh/not-Welsh, political/apolitical), and suggest that he (whether entirely conscious or not) manipulated ethnic categories in a manner that reveals their constructedness.

**Categorizing Thomas’s Ethnicity**

The very project of categorizing an author as Welsh or not Welsh depends on the notion of ethnic stability. As Thomas deconstructs this notion of stability, it leaves a sense of ambiguity for critics who are invested in this categorization and leads to arguments claiming or discounting his Welshness. Instead of arguing for inclusion or exclusion, this section explores what performativity reveals about his ethnicity and what it reveals about Wales' colonial/semi-colonial/post-colonial status. It is possible to see Thomas’s approaches to identity as masks that can be put on or taken off, depending on the audience, rather than as any sense of internal or inherent stability.

Multi-consciousness plays a key role in these matters, as it provides a way to analyze Thomas’s apparent rejection of Wales while simultaneously acknowledging the distinct ways in which he performs Welshness as a poet. The categorical dismissal of Thomas as a Welsh poet is fed by a colonial impulse; rather than the often employed rejection of the colonized as an incomprehensible or unruly “other,” the collapsing of Welshness into Britishness in the case of Thomas falls in line with the Arnoldian project (as outlined in Chapter 3) of pacifying the Celtic “other” by stating that the various peoples of Britain and Ireland form an ideal union. To present a multi-conscious ethnicity in Thomas – even as he plays roles that may or may not be perceived as quintessentially Welsh – serves as a form of anticolonial resistance to the Arnoldian project, while at the same time expanding notions of Welshness beyond the categories of insular and
provincial in order to see its potential as a globally engaged form of a constructed ethnic identity.

**Welsh Hybridity and Ethnic Drag in Thomas’s Poetry**

In order to show the theoretical power of ethnic performativity beyond the main focus of this project, I will briefly analyze Dylan Thomas as a case study for my framework of postcolonial ethnic performativity. To put it as a question, what might ethnic performativity have to say about an author who does not embrace Welshness to the degree that Hopkins, Lewis, Jones and Roberts do? The two poems I address here, “Fern Hill” and “After the Funeral,” are quite distinct in many ways, but form a natural pairing based on their common setting (and related themes pertaining to rural Wales) at the farm of Thomas’s extended family, Fernhill.¹²⁸

“Fern Hill” may utilize a solipsistic narrator, yet the poem also takes refuge in understandings of both Welsh form and the idea of Wales as a pre-modern outpost. The solipsism of the poem as been duly noted by several critics: James A. Davies mentions that the poem presents the speaker as a sort of “feudal lord” over nature, with no other human contenders (Davies 59). Thomas biographer Paul Ferris similarly describes the poem as one “without people, occupied only by child, house, countryside and animals” (29). The irony of this solipsism is that not only did Thomas have several playmates while at Fernhill, but that his sister Nancy came with him for years (David N. Thomas 46).

¹²⁸ The actual name of the farm is spelled without a space (“Fernhill”), in contrast to the name of the poem (“Fern Hill”).
However, much like the other authors I address, Thomas’s rejection of the broad movements of modernity led him to view rural Wales as a personal sanctuary; his Aunt Anne’s countryside home of Fernhill (in Llangain, Carmarthenshire) became the nostalgic setting for his poem “Fern Hill” [*sic*] which concerns itself with fond memories of childhood play at the titular farm from ages 8-16 or so (David N. Thomas 46), though not without the sadness of an adult’s understanding of mortality; as Roger Craik writes, the poem “reads as an adult remembers, not as a child speaks” (Craik 373). He even ultimately settled in the country village of Laugharne after his years in London, writing many of his most renowned poems there as well as his radio play *Under Milk Wood* (Davies 54). His aunt and her family eventually had to leave Fernhill, and Dylan’s immediate family soon took up the close at hand cottages of Blaen Cwm as their holiday residence; it is here that Dylan, fondly remembering his childhood adventures which occurred nearby, wrote “Fernhill” (Maud 90).

Despite some arguments to the contrary, several critics note that his poetry does bear the influence of the Welsh poetic tradition, whether Thomas was aware of it or not (or simply did not want to admit it). Mererid Hopwood notes that the final line of “Fern Hill” is in fact an example of strict *cynghanedd*: “Though I sang in my chains like the sea” (the bold letters denote the repeated sounds, while other sounds in between are legally skipped in consonant sequence; Hopwood 82). Hopwood does not mention the several lines throughout the poem that may be considered a “loose *cynghanedd,*” however, such as “Flying with the ricks, and the horses / Flashing into the dark”; here

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129 Aneirin Talfan Davies, a Welsh BBC producer... suggested that ‘Dylan's whole attitude is that of the medieval bards. They gave themselves tasks. He said he knew nothing about Welsh bardic poetry, but I often talked to him about it. You have to be wary of Dylan - he was always laying false trails. Is there a communal memory that a man taps?’” Ferris, *Biography*, 104.
the line has a clear repeated sequence of alliterated sounds, but has too many excess sounds (e.g. the “w” sound in “with” breaks the pattern in that it is not repeated in the second sequence). Evidence such as this leads John Ackerman to be suspicious of Thomas’s denial, stating that Thomas’s father not only spoke and taught Welsh, but may have instructed Thomas in the rules of \textit{cynghanedd} at some point (Ackerman 12).

Unnoted by other critics, though, is the manner in which Thomas seems to be playing with \textit{cynghanedd} in the broader structure of the poem. In fact, four instances of either loose or strict \textit{cynghanedd} occur in the six stanza poem: the first line of the first stanza (“Now as I was young and easy under the apple boughs”)\textsuperscript{130} and the last lines of the fourth stanza (“Flying with the ricks, and the horses / Flashing into the dark”) act as the initial sequence of looser to stricter \textit{cynghanedd}, and the sequence is then repeated in the first line of the fourth stanza (\textit{And} then to awake, and the farm, like a wanderer white) and the last line of the sixth stanza (\textit{Though I sang in my chains like the sea}).\textsuperscript{131} Thus, the mirroring of the \textit{cynghanedd} sequence in the first three stanzas and the last three stanzas creates an overarching structure that might be considered “stanzaic \textit{cynghanedd}.”

The question of whether Thomas was aware of this (and simply tried to hide or deny it) or not is relevant, but ultimately the influence of the Welsh form of \textit{cynghanedd} at least on some level is too strong to deny – and almost especially if it reveals an unconscious engagement with Welsh cultural forms.

\textsuperscript{130} Apples are also significant from the standpoint of Celtic allusion, as they were considered sacred and are linked to immortality. Notably, Arthur’s voyage to Avalon, the island of apples (\textit{afal} being Welsh for “apple”), suggests the possible return of the “Once and Future King.” If the validity of this reading is granted, the poem may be linking the naivety of childhood the romantic notion of the immortal Celt, in contrast to the modern concerns about age, death and confines (chains).

\textsuperscript{131} This may also be an allusion to Welsh mythology which puts the emphasis on the individual rather than the group. According to legend, Seithennin served as the guard for the kingdom of Cantre’r Gwaelod on Cardigan Bay; when he failed to close gates of the embankments after a drink-induced sleep, the kingdom was drowned. Occasional claims of being able to hear the kingdom’s church bells from Aberdyfi still occur.
While the poem may be solipsistic in scope and does not contain the Welsh language, it does engage literary form from Welsh language poetry and suggests that Thomas’s poetic performance references the archive of Welsh poetic culture. If that is the case, what is to be made of Thomas’s disavowal of Welsh influences? It would appear that, in lieu of any proud or nationalistic claim to participating in the line of Welsh poetic conventions, the poem provides a surrogation of hybridity. As mentioned in this project’s introduction, hybridity reveals the elasticity of categories rather than their purity. While there are formal qualities from the Welsh archive (i.e. cynghanedd or the adaptation into stanzaic cynhanedd), the isolation of the poem is more in line with cosmopolitan modernisms than the socially engaged poetry of the Welsh bard; the lauding of the innocence of the speaker’s childhood is complicated by the adult, skeptical consciousness that admits that even the romantic child is “dying” and bound by (at the time) unseen “chains” of mortality. The ambiguity left in the absence of any strong claims to a Welsh poetic influence allow Thomas to shift roles – he can claim a contemporary identity when it suits him, or play up the mystique of the bardic attitude (as he did during his BBC radio talks or reading tours of the United States). As Paul Ferris notes, Aneirn Talfan Davies “suggested that ‘Dylan’s whole attitude is that of the medieval bards,’” but that “You have to be wary of Dylan – he was always laying false trails” (104-105).

In contrast to the solipsism of “Fern Hill,” “After the Funeral” concerns the acknowledgement of the death of another person, namely Thomas’s aunt who resided at Fernhill, Ann Jones. As this poem appears chronologically prior to “Fern Hill” in his body of work, this outward-looking position should not be seen as a progression or maturation on the part of the poet, but merely as a differing point-of-view for this
particular poem. Ralph Maud presents a rather skeptical view of this attention of another person, however, writing that the poem ultimately acts “not as an elegy, but as a struggle of the poet with his own feelings” (Maud 1). Both elements (i.e. references to the Welsh archive and a modernist questioning of any assurance of consciousness) occur in the poem, as the poem participates in the tradition of Welsh elegiac writing while presenting moments of retreat into the speaker’s psyche.

The medieval Celtic bards served in various societal roles, among them being to “sing the praises of their patrons [kings or chiefs], memorize their genealogies, celebrate their victories, and lament their deaths” (Jackson 227). While the heroic tradition of poetry can be traced back to Taliesin and Aneurin, Jackson suggests that the period of the *Beirdd y Tywysogion* (or “Poets of the Princes,” lasting from “the coming of the Normans in the eleventh century to the extinction of Welsh independence at the end of the thirteenth”) was the peak of such official bardic poetry (Jackson 228). Thus, when the speaker of the poem calls himself “Ann’s bard,” he is, for the moment, placing himself in this historical and social context. Additionally, the poem provides a specific geographical context as the speaker gives exaggerated praise for Ann’s virtues (especially her kindness and her meekness, in contrast to military prowess) when he writes that her “fountain heart once fell in puddles / Round the parched worlds of Wales and drowned each sun / (Though this for her is a monstrous image blindly / Magnified out of praise; her death was a still drop…).” In establishing the poem’s context, the implied argument is that the ethnic archive of Welsh bardic roles is still relevant in the contemporary praxis of the poet’s repertoire.
However, the poem’s reference to a “druid” invokes an even older social order; according to Diodorus Siculus’s *Historical Library*, the druids circa the beginning of the Common Era were “a third group, after the poets (bards) and soothsayers (Vātēs), described as highly respected theologians and philosophers, responsible for all matters of sacrificial offerings” (Maier 62). Presumably, Thomas regards the druid as the one who would perform funerary rites for the deceased aunt, though her humility would lead her to deny pomp, insisting instead that she “need no druid of her broken body.” Despite the lack of traditional Welsh form (which was hinted at in “Fern Hill”), Thomas here positions himself in relation to the traditional and distinctly anti-modern role of the bard. In spite of Thomas’s aforementioned denial of any knowledge of bardic poetry, with “After the Funeral” he participates in a larger social structure surrounding the role of the poet through the bardic tradition of providing an elegy for a great person. His hybridity synthesizes modern style and form with an anti-modern role, suggesting that his aspects of Welsh identity need not jettison elements of its cultural heritage in order to relate to international poetic trends and discourses.

The fact the Thomas engages Welsh culture on possibly unconscious (“Fern Hill”) and conscious levels (“After the Funeral”) is telling. If the presence of distinct Welsh forms in “Fern Hill” is unconscious, it suggests that aspects of performativity do not have to be consciously enacted; to put it in other terms, Thomas’s particular strand of ethnic multi-consciousness may bear international influences of Romanticism and Modernism, but regarding the Welsh material he does not have to utilize the Welsh language or overt allusion (as the other authors in this project do) to engage with the archive of Welsh identity. The fact that he also consciously engages Welsh material in
the latter poem suggests that he may switch between identities based on the particular work at hand, depending on whether or not he wants to emphasize a particular aspect of his own multi-consciousness in a given moment. Of course, this still puts him on the fringe of the other Welsh authors, but broad and international influences are not unique to Thomas.132

These poems have at least two major implications regarding postcolonial understandings of ethnicity. First, from a political and imperial view, Thomas’s work highlights the shame of local identity and subsequent desires for mimicry. While he draws from the poetic archive of Wales, he seems to attempt to hide its influence at times. Though Thomas himself does not provide an explicit model of Welshness, unlike Lewis, Jones, Roberts and (less overtly) Hopkins, his reiteration of elements of Welshness suggests the possibility of an Anglophone Welsh identity based on poetic forms (such as cynghanedd) and subjects (e.g. the antimodern landscape, the social role of the bard, etc). In other words, his occasional embracing or shunning of a Welsh identity suggest that he could be seen as a periodically “closeted” Welshman.

The second major implication, in contrast to any essentialist definitions of Thomas, is that his playing with ethnic markers suggests that such qualities are not inherent, permanent, stable, etc., and that the destabilizing of ethnicity occurs whether or not shame or pride accompanies a performance of ethnicity. A deconstructive look into the historical underpinnings of an ethnic archive shows how a referenced element in the archive must also make a reference to a previous element, ad infinitum in lieu of any

132 In this aspect, Thomas bears similarity to Dafydd ap Gwilym – often considered Wales’s greatest poet, and known for writing Welsh language poetry in strict cynghanedd, but who also engaged international poetry trends as he was influenced thematically by the French tradition of courtly love (versus the traditional Welsh heroic poetry lauding successful or fallen warriors).
original document or source. In the language of ethnic performativity, an ethnic body is not “prior to discourse” but instead is constructed through the performance of a discourse. The implications of these notions for the Welsh people (or any other ethnic group in a colonial or postcolonial position) are manifold. While it may appear that Thomas simply plays with ethnic signifiers for personal gain, such play can also serve as a method of anticolonial resistance. Both colonial and nationalist definitions of identity tend to be based on the concepts of unitary, essentialist or inherent traits. In other words, the anticolonial resistance offered by nationalism may simply be reversing the discourse of colonialism without undoing the restrictive concepts of (i.e. nationalism may identify with categorical trains in the attempt to empower people claiming those traits). Thomas’s ethnic play, on the other hand, serves to question the basis of identification itself, just as drag can mock the essentializing of gender and calls attention to the fact that gender is imitative. For Judith Butler, drag goes beyond either simply adopting an existing category (or switching from one existing category to another); rather, “in imitating gender, drag implicitly reveals the imitative structure of gender itself” (Gender Trouble 187). In other words, Thomas’s ethnic drag can serve as an example of simultaneously celebrating aspects of the performative code of Welsh ethnicity (e.g. 
\textit{cynghanedd} in the poetic archive) while mocking the discourse that prescribes essential traits for participation in “authentic” Welshness.

\textbf{Implications for Further Analysis}

My brief analysis of Dylan Thomas suggests that there is room for other subjects and methods regarding the understanding of ethnic performativity beyond the main scope
of this project. There are at least two other specific implications for further analysis, which I will briefly address here. First of all, while my project has focused on Welsh ethnic performativity in works by authors who consider themselves (at least partially) Welsh that respond to an already existing empire, other work could explore ways in which such performativity was used in the construction of empire. This would require a deeper look at earlier Welsh texts, from the poetry and histories addressing the arrival of the Saxons and Normans; through the earliest phases of the Welsh Marches and the Norman conquest of Wales; to literary works around the time of the Acts of Union, and through the participation and resistance on the part of Welsh individuals to the imperial projects of conquest and colonization as the British Empire became a global empire. It would be additionally illuminating to analyze texts from the reaches of the British Empire that address Wales and Welsh characters from an outside perspective – first, in order to see how other nations viewed Wales in relationship to Britain as a whole (i.e. as colonial participants, as fellow a fellow colonized group, etc.), and second, once a more thorough system of rationalization for the empire began to be developed and employed, to see how imperial propaganda worked in terms of race (specifically white Welshness) and gender (i.e. if the Welsh land or people were thought of by other nations as feminized).

The second implication for further analysis would be to go beyond Wales specifically to address a broader theoretical concern. While I focus on hybridity and double-consciousness through this work, I have left much to be said about formulations of “Ethnic Queerness.” Pierre Nora makes the distinction between the repertoire of “true memory”/“environments of memory” (those cultural memories that are remembered and recited by individual bodies) and “modernity”/“places of memory” (the impulse to make
static monuments). Nora provides the specific outlet for Diane Taylor’s sense of archive, in that the places of memory act as “artificial sites of the modern production of national and ethnic memory” (Roach 26). Identity markers such as race and sex are deemed to have scientific and genetic/chromosomal bases (i.e. they are perceived as static), whereas ethnicity and gender often follow archival narratives. However, Queer Theory provides a distinction between such typical bases of ethnicity and gender. While normative constructs of gender cite previous authorities in the aim of categorizing normal and abnormal genders, queerness breaks down such binaries of thought – in other words, Queer Theory shows that any notion of applying “true memory” and stasis to gender is mythical (Butler’s “phallogocentric ruse”) rather than scientific. Applying the principle of queerness to ethnicity may provide some fruitful contributions to the issue of ethnic performativity. One major hurdle to overcome here is that a common impulse behind ethnicity is to provide shared historical roots, rather than an indeterminate or flexible model of shared identity. However, this is not to say that such theorization is impossible, and I would be fascinated to see what can come of such explorations (particularly any discussion on “ethnic drag,” which I have only begun to develop here).

This project is the first of its kind to address at length the application of performativity and postcolonial theory to Welsh modernist literatures. Such an endeavor would, ideally, serve both academic and political purposes. Through responding to existing critical discourses and initiating new areas of discourse, other critics may continue exploring similar concepts while addressing other authors, texts, eras and performative identities. Though I regard postcolonial ethnic performativity and Welsh literatures to be mutually informative and supportive, particularly when considering local
responses to the proposed Anglocentric uniformity of the British Empire, other critics may be able to focus on other ways in which critical concepts of political and cultural identities inform understandings of nationhood beyond my scope here. One of the most obvious potential avenues for pragmatic consideration of the conceptual frameworks in this project occurs in the contemporary political landscape in Wales. In this post-devolution age, in which Wales has its own assembly and Plaid Cymru is closer than ever to reaching its aim of genuine independence, the public (re)construction of Welsh ethnic and political identities will likely come to the fore in stronger ways. It remains to be seen whether Wales will fall into the common trap (mentioned above) for newly decolonized nations, one which reinscribes colonial categories into a normative and exclusive definition of nationhood and its people (for example the feminizing of Welsh culture while a newly independent governmental body becomes a masculine protector aiming to achieve cultural stasis through regulation, etc.). However, a critical analysis of past models of ethnic identity, including their benefits and failures, could serve to inform future discussions of Welsh identity as the nation’s political landscape changes. My hope is that this and future work may improve our understanding not only of the critical paradigms themselves, but also of national histories, literary traditions, performed identities and the workings of the broader political concerns of postcolonial and imperial power.
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