

# The Thirtieth Annual Conference of the Association for Welsh Writing in English

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## *Home/Cartref*



Kathryn Le Grice, 'Evening Village II' (2011). Reproduced by kind permission of the artist.

## Book of Abstracts

**AWF**  
THE ASSOCIATION FOR  
WELSH WRITING IN ENGLISH  
*CYMRDITHAS LIAEN SAESNEG CYMRU*

 THE LEARNED SOCIETY OF WALES  
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## ***Panel A: Welsh beyond Wales***

- **Bethan Jenkins: Gorau Cymro, Cymro Oddi Cartref: Eighteenth-Century Welsh Writers in England**

In 1751, Richard and Lewis Morris established the *Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* in London, noting that “There is implanted in the Nature of Mankind, a strong Attachment to that Country which gave them Birth, and a laudable Curiosity to acquaint themselves with the genuine History and Antiquities of those People from whom they are immediately descended.” The society’s purpose was to provide a place to be Welsh far from home for those living in the capital as well as visitors (such as Lewis Morris himself, and the *Penllywydd*, William Vaughan), and its early membership numbered in the low hundreds. This paper will look at how some of these exiled Welshmen (particularly of the Morrisian circle) constructed themselves as Welsh in another country and another language. It will focus on the differences in self-fashioning between their two languages, and how they represented themselves to the rest of the Anglophone city, as well as to their fellow-countrymen back ‘home’ in Wales.

- **Dawn Williams: The Rebecca Riot and the Loss of Home**

“For the exile takes but his body to the sister land, leaving his heart in Wales.” (Alexander Cordell, *Hosts of Rebecca*, 1960)

The Rebecca Riots is known for its dramatic imagery of men dressed in women’s clothing, brandishing weapons and tearing down tollgates in an attempt to right a wrong against the hardworking and poorest of Welsh society. For those caught one form of punishment included transportation to countries such as Australia. Forced to leave their homeland for a strange country, in the nineteenth century, was a cruel fate for those who worked the land, who were majority Welsh-speaking, and for those who were a part of a strong sense of community and who knew only of their homeland.

Being forced into exile is not only a physical punishment, but a mental and spiritual punishment. They must live years on foreign, and strange, soil where their identity is no longer their own; they are now citizens or prisoners of another country. This can be both a benefit and a burden; in the former, it can provide these men with a new start; in the latter, it means losing their family, the familiarity of a close-knit Welsh village life, and the loss of their Welsh identity.

In this paper I wish to discuss the sense of loss brought on by exile from their home country, by looking specifically at texts that refer to the Rebecca Riot, including Amy Dillwyn’s *The Rebecca Rioter*, and Alexander Cordell’s *Hosts of Rebecca*. In a century where Welsh families escaped to America and started their own society, this paper will look at what it means to lose your homeland, and subsequently, your identity in the process.

## ***Panel B: Homeland***

- **Katie Gramich: Home-making: Lynette Roberts and Elective Welsh Identity**

Lynette Roberts met her future husband, Keidrych Rhys, in a poetry reading in Soho in 1939. He asked her if she was Welsh, and she replied ‘I don’t know’. It is likely that her Welsh ancestry had not, to date, figured largely in her sense of her own identity. However, when she married Rhys and moved to a rented cottage in the Carmarthenshire village of Llanybri she set about making it her home and ‘becoming’ Welsh. Lynette Roberts, then, elected a Welsh identity. Of course, in marrying Keidrych Rhys, she had acquired a Welsh identity by proxy, but that was by no means enough for the independent-minded Roberts. She set about learning about Welsh history, literature, mythology, architecture, customs, and natural history, acquiring books by persistent letter writing to librarians and authors. Her work often foregrounds Welshness and champions Welsh difference, referring to ‘my people’ and frequently adopting the first person plural voice.<sup>1</sup> However, an ambivalence remains in Roberts’ Welsh identity. At times, her writing refers to the Welsh as ‘they’, and she judges them to be a ‘jealous’ and ‘distrustful’ people, though she attributes this to their ‘continual subjugation ... by conquerors’. She sees these characteristics as similar to the ‘dual quality’ of the Irish; they have ‘two visions instead of one’.<sup>2</sup> Such a doubleness is echoed in Roberts’ own vision and attitudes. This paper will examine the autobiographical writing and short stories of Lynette Roberts, teasing out the ambivalent ways in which she writes about domestic homemaking and, at the same time, about rebuilding a national homeland.

- **Rhys Kaminski-Jones: Welsh Independence or Welsh Withdrawal?: Richard Fenton’s *Tears of Cambria***

The concept of modern “Welsh independence” is generally thought to be absent from eighteenth-century Welsh literature. However, the overlooked poem *Tears of Cambria* (1773) by the Pembrokeshire-born author Richard Fenton contains a tantalising glimpse of what this idea might have meant for contemporary Welsh people. Inspired by a minor scandal in which the London Welsh were barred from addressing the Prince of Wales on St David’s Day, Fenton’s poem depicts a personified Cambria calling upon her ‘chosen Britons’ to reject corrupted English society, urging them to take advantage of their ‘right of sway’ in Wales. Motivated by the same political currents that would lead to the Declaration of American Independence in 1776, the poem demonstrates how politicized Welsh identities were a notable (though often forgotten) aspect of contemporary patriotism. However, Fenton’s initially strident declaration ultimately reveals itself to be call for retreat into a peripheral private sphere: his Welsh home is imagined as a feminine and childish domestic space, without the purportedly masculine political independence of Anglo-British and American culture. This poem therefore betrays the intensely gendered nature of Fenton’s conception of home and homeland, and reveals both the unexpected strengths and the undeniable limits of eighteenth-century Welsh independence.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include ‘Poem’, which begins ‘We must uprise O my people’, *Lynette Roberts Collected Poems* ed. Patrick McGuinness (Manchester: Carcanet, 2005) p. 13, which is repeated in Part II of *Gods with Stainless Ears*, *ibid.*, p. 53; and the essay ‘Simplicity of the Welsh Village’ which uses ‘we’ for the Welsh throughout, as in ‘We are worse off than our Welsh colony in Patagonia’, in *Lynette Roberts: Diaries, Letters and Recollections*, ed. Patrick McGuinness (Manchester: Carcanet, 2008) p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Lynette Roberts, ‘Carmarthenshire Diary’, *ibid.*, p. 78, pp. 68-9.

### ***Panel C: Escaping the Self: At Home and Away***

- **Michelle Deininger: “I’m growing no roots”: Home and Identity in 1950s Pseudonymous Fiction**

This paper will explore the complex relationship between the notion of home and the construction of identity in novels published by Kathleen Freeman and Liliane Clopet in the 1950s. Freeman, a lecturer in Classics at the University College of South Wales, often wrote under the pseudonym of her crime writing alter-ego, Mary Fitt. As Mary Fitt, she published the detective novel *Love From Elizabeth* in 1954. The novel centres on Lady Elizabeth Carn, of Tristowell Castle, and the party held at the castle for the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday of her adopted daughter, Augusta. Liliane Clopet was Freeman’s longstanding female ‘companion’, a graduate of the Welsh medical school, and a qualified GP. Writing under the pseudonym of Mary Bethune, Clopet published *Doctor Dear* the same year as *Love From Elizabeth*. Clopet’s novel focuses on the experiences of Pauline Moir, a country doctor in an era when ‘lady doctors’ were in the minority. Both novels explore the relationship between identity, place and home but in very different ways. Pauline is conscious that, as a woman who hides her emotions well due to the nature of her profession, she is ‘growing no roots’. Lady Elizabeth, in the opening pages of Fitt’s novel, exclaims ‘People want above all things to escape from themselves’; Elizabeth, we learn, uses her wealth as a means to enable that escape. Both novels engage with the complexities of what it means to be at home, and to belong, exploring the lives of characters who are, in many ways, misfits. This paper will examine what it means to explore notions of home and identity in fiction when the author’s identity is itself masked. It will also attempt to open up debate surrounding the neglect of women writers who distance themselves, often with good reason, from the places they themselves call home.

- **Claire Flay-Petty: “Where had their nymphs gone?”: Reversal and Reclamation in S. Beryl Jones’s “The Woman at the Well” (1935)**

This paper will introduce S. Beryl Jones (1900-1994) to the academy through a reading of her 1935 short story ‘The Woman at the Well’. In this story, Jones’ male narrator spends a short holiday on the outskirts of an unnamed Welsh coal-mining community when he discovers, and tampers with, an ancient well revered by locals for its healing properties. His kindly though superior reaction to an elderly local woman seeking succor from its precious waters brings into question the value of science vrs folklore, outsider vrs local, rationality vrs belief, and the complex question of who owns the land in an area when everyone is ultimately an incomer if you look back far enough.

Born in Pontypridd in 1900 and raised in Resolven, S. Beryl Jones witnessed first-hand the impact of the rise and fall of heavy industry that sets the backdrop to her story, in the trajectory of her father’s career as a mining engineer. Her resultant socialist sympathies meant that Jones found herself in good company at Howell’s School for Girls, Llandaff, and later Cardiff University, where she met Dorothy Edwards, Sona Rosa Burstein and Kathleen Freeman. She became a schoolteacher in Keighley in Yorkshire in 1927 and remained here for the rest of her life, though her status as a long-term holiday tenant of Ceseilgwm Bach in Merioneth meant that she maintained a deep connection with what she termed ‘Wild Wales’.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S. Beryl Jones, *In the armpit of a mountain* (Hereford: Lapridge Publications, 1996), p. 9.

A keen painter, she also had a flair for writing and a creative journal of her tenure at Ceseilgwm Bach reveals her eye for detail, and her extensive knowledge of classical myth and botany. This paper forms part of ongoing research on Jones and her peers for my forthcoming volume *Scholarship and Sisterhood: Women, Writing and Higher Education*, which I am co-writing with Dr Michelle Deininger (Cardiff University).

## *Panel D: Domestic Spaces*

- **Aidan Byrne: “Baron of Beef”: Foreigners, Interlopers, Homes and Domesticity in Welsh Writing in English**

‘...must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country?’ Jacques Derrida, *On Hospitality* (2000).

In a range of Welsh novels in English of the 1930s, the home is a site of gendered struggle, between men and women, parents and children, miners and domestic workers. This paper examines domestic spaces – particularly kitchens – who inhabits them and what goes on in them in Welsh non-fiction, ‘classic’ Anglophone industrial 1930s novels and in a range of post-industrial texts.

Aspects of domestic activity examined include hospitality, cleaning, cooking, particularly in relation to constructions of Welshness, and gendered modes of domestic discourse. What determines whether an individual qualifies for domestic hospitality, what are its norms, and how may the unspoken rules of domesticity and hospitality be breached? Who are the foreigners, the outcasts and the foreigners, what are their roles within the domestic space, and what are the cultural and ideological frameworks for dealing with them? Are there gradations of Foreignness in Welsh domestic spaces?

Starting with the recipes provided and meals eaten in OM Edwards’s *Cartrefi Cymru* and Richard Llewellyn’s *How Green Was My Valley* (1939), moving through the occupation of domestic space by disgruntled unemployed miners in works by Gwyn Thomas and others, before examining fiction by authors including Niall Griffiths, Rachel Tresize and Alys Conran.

- **Mary Chadwick: Secret and domestic histories: At Home with William Vaughan of Corsygedol (1707-1775)**

This paper explores unpublished poetry written by and to William Vaughan of Corsygedol (1707-1775), MP for Merioneth and the first *Penllywydd* or Chief President of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion. Bethan M. Jenkins has recently reassessed Vaughan’s position as a patron of authors working in Welsh and English. I build on her work to begin to consider his own English-language output and the coteries of which he was a part.

The verses which Vaughan wrote and received while on his estates in north Wales focus on local gossip and domestic events. Topics include a reconstruction of Harlech castle as a medieval dwelling, a clergyman who shuts himself up in his study following a preferment, and the domestication of a Chinese tea pot. That they are unquestionably poems of home is emphasised by the fact that their authors barely use the word “home” at all, relying on a shared understanding of the significance of their part of north Wales.

Occasional verse such as this, sometimes burdened by questionable connotations of particularly feminine domesticity, is frequently overlooked by critics. That these poems exist in manuscript and in Wales only increases their marginalisation. They are valuable, however, for their representations of Anglophone-Welsh attitudes to gendered, class and national

identities, and their foregrounding of the influence of English and Welsh, print and manuscript sources on their authors. Further, in their own materiality as well as their depictions of domesticity and domestic objects, they offer valuable insights into the histories of home and material culture in early modern Wales.

- **Daryl Leeworthy: Spaces of Decay? Injured Masculinity, Performative Assembly, and the Home in Gwyn Thomas and James Hanley**

This paper focuses on the presentation of miners' housing and injured masculinity in James Hanley's 'special area' reportage, *The Grey Children* (1937), and Gwyn Thomas's interwar novel, *Sorrow For Thy Sons* (c.1936). Both were written about the Rhondda towards the end of the long Depression that followed the General Strike and Miners' Lockout of 1926 when traditional notions of masculinity were significantly challenged by unemployment and the rise of alternative forms of employment to heavy industry. Adopting a historicist reading of the texts, and taking its cues from Judith Butler's recent work on a performative theory of assembly, I argue that both were indicative of changing gender relations in the interwar period in the South Wales Coalfield that have tended to be ignored by both historians and literary critics. This period marked the beginning of the process of a slow, but nevertheless detectable, privatisation of South Walian politics, with the home central to new (albeit eventual) models of masculinity. But it was also a period in which mass assembly against precarity were highly visible. This juxtaposition, I argue, underpins both works.

## ***Panel E: Unhomed?***

- **Rita Singer: “I have been a wanderer all my life”: Exile and Homecoming in the Writing of Thomas Richards (1800-1877)**

According to the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Thomas Richards (1800-1877), a surgeon and journalist originally from Dolgellau, is regarded as a seminal contributor to the emergence of the Australian short story, following his emigration in 1832. However, Richards not only produced a considerable number of short stories set in Tasmania, but also deserves recognition as one of the first Welsh writers in English to fictionalise Merionethshire, his childhood home. Prior to his emigration, Richards had already published extensively in British literary journals, albeit anonymously or pseudonymously. Much of this writing has only recently been identified as his work. Despite having lived in England since the age of nine, his Welsh stories are written from the point of view of an informed insider or a long-time Welsh expatriate. In revisiting his favourite childhood haunts in the semi-autobiographical, incomplete novella ‘Timothy Templeton’ and his short story ‘The Wanderer’s Return’, Richards transcends the geographical limitations of home. These stories best illustrate the long-lasting emotional turmoil of losing one’s homeland through external circumstances. Be it the relocation to an English boarding school following the death of a parent or the impossibility of returning home as an adult due to economic pressures, the sense of loss, not just of part of one’s identity, but also of familial, social and cultural ties, leaves its indelible mark on the involuntarily exiled. Focusing primarily on the autobiographical elements in ‘Timothy Templeton’ and ‘The Wanderer Returns’, this paper argues that writing helped Thomas Richards come to terms with his prolonged exile. In his stories and novels, Richards recreated his childhood Merioneth as a fictionalised home to which he could return at will thanks to the powers of his literary imagination.

- **Andy Webb: “Cold hearth. Empty house”: The Trauma of Language Loss in Niall Griffith’s *Sheepshagger* and Angharad Price’s *O! Tyn y Gorchudd***

*Sheepshagger* (2001) and *O! Tyn y Gorchudd* (2002) offer an unlikely point of comparison. Certainly, it is hard to imagine their respective protagonists, Ianto and Rebecca Jones, opposites in so many ways, sharing the same corner of Wales at the same time. And yet, these novels are set in adjacent areas of mid-Wales: the villages, towns and uplands between Aberystwyth and Dolgellau in the case of *Sheepshagger*, and Tynybraich, Cwm Maesglasau, an agricultural community in the hinterland of Dolgellau in the case of *O! Tyn y Gorchudd*. In this paper, I contend that both novels nonetheless register the trauma of language loss and the threat of cultural extinction in Welsh communities at the turn of the twenty-first century. Though the culturally-informed, poetic voice of Rebecca Jones, *O! Tyn y Gorchudd* builds a loving portrayal of successive generations of a Welsh-language, farming community in a tranquil, relatively unspoilt part of Wales, only for the ending – in which the main protagonist is revealed as a character who had died in childhood – to undermine its historical accuracy, and raise the spectre of language loss and cultural extinction. *Sheepshagger*, on the other hand, features Ianto, a dystopian figure. He is the muted, psychopathic personification of a Wales whose culture has been denigrated, whose children have been denied their language, and forced to endure their ancestral homes being turned into holiday cottages and rave venues for English incomers. In their different ways, I want to suggest that both texts depict the trauma of language loss and the fear of cultural extinction at the turn of the new millennium.



## ***Panel F: Homeland/Industrial Wales***

- **Tomos Owen: Neighbourly Disputes in the 1930s**

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, first published in 1930, Sigmund Freud famously adopts a 'naïve attitude' towards the biblical injunction to love thy neighbour. Re-thinking the commandment, and listening to it as if for the first time, Freud finds himself unable to suppress 'a feeling of surprise and bewilderment'. Welsh writers of the 1930s were also confronting the figure of the neighbour to find, no less profoundly than Freud, that where there is love there may also be surprise and bewilderment.

Looking at works by Rhys Davies and Saunders Lewis published in the 1930s this paper discusses how the complex negotiation with the neighbour is a frequent problem in the literatures of urban and industrial Wales. Neighbourliness is a source of solidarity at an interpersonal level, a means of solace and comfort which engenders important forms of social cohesion. Gossiping with the neighbour becomes a way for submerged population groups to know themselves and be with each other. Rhys Davies's neighbours are sources of stress as well as support: the sympathetic neighbour in 'Nightgown' plays a crucial role in the story's conclusion. If the glamorous Mrs Mitchell in 'The Fashion Plate' provokes among her curtain-twitching neighbours Freudian surprise and bewilderment, she also draws admiration and homage. Yet Freud also notes that the neighbour is a figure to be feared and treated with suspicion, and that the neighbour 'has more claim to my hostility and even my hatred' than to love. Similarly, Saunders Lewis's *Monica*, from its opening sentences, views the neighbour as a figure of contempt or even disgust.

Rather than simply contrasting the 'good' neighbours against the 'bad', the aim of this paper is to explore how the neighbourly relations inscribed in these texts raise questions around modern Welsh writing and its attitudes toward those who live next door. Writing of industrial, urban and suburban Wales engages a set of social and cultural questions: who, or what, is the neighbour, and how, or why, should we love him or her? And entailed within these questions are considerations of the Welsh specifics of such overarching topics as multiculturalism, democracy and hospitality. The neighbour is simultaneously a person to love as we love ourselves and a bewildering alien; both an intimate friend and completely other; both someone on whom we can lean for support and one who is always slightly too close for comfort.

- **Seth Armstrong-Twigg: 'Hills were torn'<sup>1</sup>: The Industrial Disfigurement of Home in Idris Davies's *Gwalia Deserta***

The rapid industrialisation of Wales represents a profound rupture in the small nation's long history. Beginning in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with the infamous ironworks of the upper Taff valley, Wales made a lasting impact on the global stage through the mass export of coal to each and every corner of the earth. Unsurprisingly, this immense operation had a profound effect on the land from which the coal was extracted, and the resulting topography has influenced representations of Wales, often to the point of caricature. From a literary perspective, Welsh industrialisation marked an irreversible moment of transition, and once

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<sup>1</sup> Idris Davies, *Gwalia Deserta*, IX, l. 3, p. 30.

again, the nation's writers were forced to mourn for that which had been lost, before confronting a new, uncanny homeland; brutally mutilated by the hand of humanity.

This paper considers, specifically, how the Rhymney poet, Idris Davies (1905–1953), constructs notions of home in his seminal poetic sequence, *Gwalia Deserta* (1938). Placing emphasis on the numerous depictions of environmental destruction within the work, I will demonstrate how Davies's renderings of home – and especially, *homeland* – are complicated by the declining presence, and looming spectre, of the coal industry. I also aim to consider how Davies's own heritage adds a further dimension to his lamentation, and celebration, of Rhymney, Wales, Gwalia – *home*. Drawing on the poet's experience of being the child of parents who remembered Rhymney before industrialisation – or in the case of his mother, who hailed from rural Cardiganshire – I will explore how these inherited, pastoral memories influence the poet's construction of his industrialised homeland.

- **Catriona Coutts: Constructing a Welsh Homeland for all: The Vision of Wales in the Work of Harri Webb**

To many people, their nation is their home or at least an extension of it; as is suggested by the term 'homeland'. A person's home and their nation both form an important part of their identity and both arouse strong emotions in people. Both are concepts that people will fight and even die to defend. However, in order for them to be prepared to do that, they must identify strongly with the nation and with their fellow nationals. Even in times of peace, if a nation is to be a cohesive group, it must encourage a sense of belonging, unity and possessing things in common.

It follows then, that differences within the nation can (though do not of necessity) create tensions. People may come to feel that they themselves or other people cannot belong to the nation because they differ in certain ways from other members of the nation. Wales is a nation perhaps more wracked by difference than many: the differences between North and South, rural and industrial/urban, and Welsh-speakers and non-Welsh speakers, to name but a few. Anyone hoping to unite Wales as a nation must find a way to reconcile these differences. In this paper I want to discuss how the writer and activist Harri Webb attempted to do this. I will focus primarily on his political journalism but will also look briefly at his poetry, demonstrating how he constructs a vision of Wales as a home for all of its people, a homeland they can all identify with and invest in.

## *Saturday Keynote*

- **Professor Jane Aaron, Emeritus Professor, University of South Wales: “Societie has snapped its mystic chord”: Home, family and society in nineteenth-century Welsh writing in English**

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries major changes occurred in the domestic and social arrangements of the British elite and their dependants, as the bourgeoisie gradually increased its political and cultural ascendancy over the old gentry. Within the large landowners' mansions, the great open halls of the earlier era were supplanted by drawing-rooms and dining-rooms, as the extended family, which had included not only blood relatives but also a retinue of domestics and tenants of the estate, gradually shrunk to its nuclear core, strictly dividing itself from its 'downstairs' servants. These changes took place more slowly in Wales, however, where there was no large aspiring early-capitalist bourgeois class, and where the old indigenous gentry had had a particularly esteemed role as preservers of Welsh-language culture. The Welsh-language terms for 'home' and 'family', *'cartref'* and *'teulu'*, encode the older more extensive concepts, *'cartref'*, from *'câr + tref'*, initially signifying a settlement of loved ones, and *'teulu'*, from *'tŷ + llŷ'*, a numerous household. Both terms convey an idea of 'family' as a community or society settled in one home location and united by bonds of interdependency as well as blood. Changes to this old-established order, seen as imposed from without by an alien culture, were deplored by both the Welsh- and English-language writers of Wales in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

This paper focuses primarily on English-language fiction, beginning with appreciative depictions of the Welsh squirearchy's extended families in the writings of Anna Maria Bennett, Ann of Swansea and Thomas Richards. By the mid-century, however, Goronva Camlan (the pseudonym of an Anglican clergyman, Rowland Williams) in an 1846 poem entitled 'Modern Assassination', from which the quotation in this talk's title is taken, was deploring a Wales 'shorn / Of all we claimed peculiar'. The old 'societie' with its 'ancient kindness, and homelie mirth' had been killed off, he claimed, leaving but an 'unhomely' array of estranged self-seekers. Others, however, argued that in fact since the mid-eighteenth century, Welsh culture had responded to the gradual erosion of the old order by establishing, or revivifying, 'peculiar' institutions, such as the Eisteddfod or the 'Society', or *seiat*, of the Calvinistic Methodists, which in effect retained in the communities they created the old pattern of extended family loyalties, rooted in place, egalitarian in ethos, and supportive of Welsh-language culture. Fictional representations of these new 'homes' and 'families' are discussed in the second half of this paper, which makes reference to the work of T. J. Llewellyn Prichard, Eleazar Roberts, Mabel Holland Grave, Sara Maria Saunders and Harry Lindsay, among others.

## ***Panel G: The Home Tour: A Panel Exploring the Notion Of Home Through Travel***

This panel explores the layered, contingent and sometimes fractured nature of ‘home’ through three case studies. It begins with a discussion of Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby – the Ladies of Llangollen – as Irish emigrants who quickly became both vitally linked with their adopted Welsh home and forever on its margins, not least via their Gothic cottage overlooking the town. The second paper develops this conflicted sense of home via the subject of gypsies in north Wales. Tracing fieldwork carried out by ‘gypsiologists’ in the early C20th, this paper explores notions of home as shifting, absent, unreliable or unreachable – as something from which to escape as well as to fantasise about. The panel concludes with a different perspective on the theme of escape in an 1802 notebook by Edward Williams, (Iolo Morganwg), which relates his walk home – from London to Glamorgan – in a typically idiosyncratic account. A text made, perhaps, at a moment of crisis, Iolo’s journey through southern England and along the Welsh border brings the form of the tour, and the meanings of home, into sharp relief.

- **Dr Elizabeth Edwards: ‘The Home Circuit: the Ladies of Llangollen, settlement and exile’**

*Proceeded to our walk through the sweetest meadow, shady, a small narrow rivulet gurgling on one side. The meadows in more splendid Beauty than I ever remember them. Pengwern Wood hanging over them dark and gloomy. The Boughs rustling with the wind. Rooks cawing, Kites screaming ... Moel Morfydd with its rich purple heather and golden yellow gorse. The Village smoke. Church steeple. Dinas Bran. The rocks, cottages, gardens, pastures interspersed, clumps of wood, single trees, quarries; with sheep, goats, cattle scattered about. When we had walked many times round these enchanting fields returned slowly to our cottage.*

Diary of Eleanor Butler, 13 May 1788

When Eleanor Butler and Sarah Ponsonby landed in Milford Haven, from Waterford, in 1778 they were in search of a new life together. After travelling up through Wales, they settled on Pen-y-Maes cottage, which they later renamed Plas Newydd, in Llangollen – never to return to Ireland.

This paper uses the theme of home to explore the social, political and literary lives Butler and Ponsonby created for themselves over some fifty years in north-east Wales. Reading, walking, gardening, farming and not least writing shaped their time and located them in place; their letters and diaries show their deep links to the landscapes and communities in and around Llangollen – shopkeepers, poets, tradespeople, gentry families. But they also show how Butler and Ponsonby stood out, becoming not just part of the local landscape but an exceptional point within it. Their cottage, just off the main route to Ireland, became a place where they met curious strangers and passing friends and family: they got news from Ireland via the Dublin-London route, by letter or in person, including updates on the Irish rebellion that disturbed life at Plas Newydd in 1798. In these constantly changing contexts, what might home have meant for two Irish women in Wales, whose domestic arrangements were (and still are) the subject of so much public interest?

- **Dr Sarah Baylis: The scholars and the gypsies: looking for home**

*The Welsh Gypsies – Children of Abram Wood*, by Eldra and A.O.H. Jarman (1979) established the Wood family of North Wales as national celebrities. The principal source was the scholarly writings of Dr John Sampson (1862-1931). His *Dialect of the Gypsies of Wales – being the older form of British Romani preserved in the speech of the clan of Abram Wood* (1926) is still an authoritative text.

Sampson shared a deep fascination with the Romani language and culture with fellow members of The Gypsy Lore Society - linguists, historians, anthropologists, and photographers - based in Liverpool from 1907-73. Their chief aim was to find and record what they saw as the dying days of Europe's gypsies. In the years before WW1, the 'gypsiologists' spent their weekends and vacations travelling in bow-top caravans on a circuit of North Wales. This was not mere recreation – they were driven by their academic and intellectual interests, and pursuing their own personal, romantic agendas. Above all they were keen to meet 'real' gypsies.

When Sampson met Edward Wood in Bala he was enchanted to hear him speak the 'pure' Welsh Romani language. In 1909, Sampson rented a cottage in Betws Gwerfil Goch which served for many years as a second family home as well as an informal HQ for the Gypsy Lore Society. Here they met and befriended other members of the Wood family who were settled in the Corwen area – an established part of the community. Visitors included academics, politicians, poets and artists – including Augustus John – and locals were often disturbed by nights of drinking, singing, fighting and 'dissipation'.

For the gypsiologists, the tensions between conventional university and middle-class family life and their 'gypsying' activities created different predicaments. What if home is the place you are trying to escape and also the place you cannot find?

- **Dr Mary-Ann Constantine: Iolo Morganwg Walks Home: A Journey from London to Glamorgan in 1802**

A small and rather battered pocket-book held in the National Library of Wales contains an account of a pedestrian journey made by the Welsh radical poet Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg) in the summer of 1802. The text, mostly scrawled in pencil, is a mixture of notes and observations made as he went along, and traces his route from the metropolis via Oxford and Stratford to Birmingham, Shrewsbury, and down through the Welsh border counties to his native Glamorgan. Various places and encounters along the way (the Rollright stones, Shakespeare's Stratford, a vile Birmingham inn, Shrewsbury's new gaol) provoke an eclectic range of comments and reflections. Some of these, including notes on soil types and planting techniques, were ultimately intended for inclusion in a government-sponsored Agricultural Survey; others, wildly subversive in content, would have been enough to get him arrested. Many of his comments, though, can be read as forms of locating the self in relation to place: a Welshman in England; a Glamorganshire man in Radnorshire. The notion of 'home' expands and contracts in relation to distance, and in relation to people as well as places.

This paper examines Iolo's travel journal in the light of the 'Home Tour', a highly popular Romantic-era genre which often combined the description of landscape (and the experience

of the traveller in that landscape) with heterogeneous comments on customs, manners, buildings and language – a genre which simultaneously homogenised and differentiated the Britain it described. Tours of Wales, many written by English tourists, appeared in scores from the 1780s onwards, and Iolo was familiar with several of these. Their characteristic tropes and strategies provide an interesting counterpoint to his typically idiosyncratic account.

## ***Panel H: Homecoming: Nigel Heseltine's "Welsh place"***

- **Dr Rhian Davies: At home with the Heseltines**
- **Dr Daniel Hughes: Cariad County: "where lack of love and understanding is most bitter"**
- **Professor M. Wynn Thomas: Heseltine Revisited**

Nigel Heseltine's contributions to Welsh writing have largely been overlooked in critical studies, though recent work by Rhian Davies, M. Wynn Thomas and Rob Gossedge has begun the process of returning it to wider attention. Heseltine published surrealist poetry (*Violent Rain*, 1938; *The Four-Walled Dream*, 1941), short stories (*Tales of the Squirearchy*, 1946), a novel (*Mysterious Pregnancy*, 1953), travel writing and lectures, as well as working on an unpublished short story collection (*Tales of the Landless Gentry*). Born in 1916 and son of the composer Peter Warlock, Heseltine was raised by his formidable grandmother, Edith "Covie" Buckley-Jones. Adopted by her into the anglicised Welsh gentry, Heseltine was brought up amidst the splendour of Cefn Bryntalch Hall (less than ten miles from our conference venue) and the surrounding Montgomeryshire countryside, as the last scion of the family estate.

Heseltine's early literary career is intertwined with the high point of modernist activity in Wales (he edited Keidrych Rhys's *Wales* in Rhys's absence, the two men having met in 1937) and his published writings are not only a testament to the powerful influence of Caradoc Evans over writers of this era, but also a testament to the strength of linguistic experiment and language-play across prose and poetry in anglophone Welsh modernism. M. Wynn Thomas argues that the "hidden, historically-momentous revolution that has befallen the Welsh countryside [...] has been wholly overshadowed by the colourful epic socio-political drama of South Wales industrial history" and, furthermore, the unpublished and out-of-print status of Heseltine's work perpetuates "the marginalization, the effective silencing, by contemporary Welsh social, political and literary history of the important story of Heseltine's Welsh place".

This panel will explore the biographical and literary dimensions of Heseltine's "Welsh place" and renew discussion about his life and work. Rhian Davies will discuss Heseltine's upbringing and home-life at Cefn Bryntalch, drawing on images from private pictorial collections to examine the "scarred background" of his Montgomeryshire home. M. Wynn Thomas will revisit Heseltine's gentry contexts, illustrating that Heseltine can be understood as a border-country writer who used pantomimic comedy to explore the disappearing world of the border gentry. Finally, Daniel Hughes will suggest that Heseltine's "Cariad County" is a land infused with anger and violence which stretches back to Wales's medieval subjugation: its terminal decline both grotesquely dark and surreally farcical, the medieval past used to shape its modernist present. Heseltine's Wales – the surrealist squirearchy of Cariad County born of his Montgomeryshire gentry context – is overdue its homecoming, and this panel will break the silence surrounding Heseltine's "Welsh place".

## ***Panel I: Creative Practice #1***

- **Ruth Raymer: Voices of Hiraeth**

I am a writer. I write to increase my understanding of the world and then to communicate my findings to others. The extracts of writing I propose to present to the conference form part of the creative practice undertaken for a PhD in Creative Writing.

*Hiraeth* is a word which has no analogue in the English language, but it is now appearing in many places in the English-speaking world. From author Robert MacFarlane's Twitter feed, to the Paris Review, and the Cambridge University 'Hiraeth Project', it is being incorporated in the representation of those who are homesick, homeless or are seeking a home.<sup>1</sup>

My own search for the meaning of 'Home' and the feelings of *hiraeth* on being exiled in England for over twenty years, have been stimuli in the writing of a series of short stories expressing some of the many voices of *hiraeth*.

I have been investigating the concept of Home by exploring questions of kinship, culture and geography by travelling and recording stories in East Anglia – the place of my birth, and Wales which remains my spiritual Home. Human beings often spend their lives searching for Home, some never feel they have found it.

Through the lens of psychogeography – the study of the interaction of people and place and encompassing aspects of memoir, travel writing and fiction – the voices of *hiraeth* come forward to tell their stories. It is then my responsibility to retell them and to share them with all who would hear them, for it is in the art of storytelling that humanity passes on its values, experiences and indeed lessons to one another.

- **Brian Roper: Is “hiraeth” Really Untranslatable – and Does It Matter?**

Banzo, morriña, dor, тоска, ʘʘʘʘ, wehmut, kaiho, saudade, hiraezh, hireth: Is “hiraeth” really untranslatable – and does it matter?

As a monoglot English person and Cymryphile I have come only slowly to appreciate the continuing relevance of myths even within modern Wales.

In no particular order, they include:

- That the Welsh are Celts in origin or, more precisely, that Celts ever existed;
- That Wales was ever a “Nation”;
- That contemporary Wales is a “Nation”, albeit one without a “State”;
- That a sense of identity expressed linguistically is sufficient to build a modern nation even if shared only by a (diminishing?) minority of the population and having an insignificant linguistic diaspora;
- That a deep sense of oppression expressed only by a tiny minority and lacking ideological coherence will achieve electoral success;

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<sup>1</sup> Pamela Petro, *Dreaming in Welsh*, The Paris Review website. Sept 18 2012.  
<https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/2012/09/18/dreaming-in-welsh/> [Accessed 25 02 2018]



- That an Independence campaign conducted over 700 years without obvious signs of struggle in the last 500 is likely to be effective in the next 50;
- Finally, and for this paper centrally, that there are words in Welsh that are “untranslatable”.

A Governmental body states that, “As with most languages Wales has those essentially untranslatable words (which it then proceeds to translate) such as *hwyl* (sense of fun and reverie), *cynefin* (home place), *aelwyd* (hearth or family base) and, of course *hiraeth* (a deep, cultural longing)”, perhaps the most familiar to non-Welsh speakers and the most experienced cultural signifier. Note that three of the four untranslatable words are “homely” epithets.

These are important issues, seen as vital by some, but a preoccupation with them risks ignoring the resolution of pragmatic policy issues which must be solved if Wales is to achieve independence and prosper thereafter.

This paper proposes a strategy for the achievement of this objective based upon the author’s own creative practice.

- **Colin Thomas: ‘Coming Home – But Staying Away’**

Although I lived in Wales until I was 18, I had only a minimal awareness of Welsh literature until I was in my 30s. Then reading Ned Thomas’s *The Welsh Extremist* made me aware of the somewhat patronising attitude to Wales that I had acquired first as a student and then as a BBC employee in England.

As I resigned from the BBC in 1978, I had to try and find television work wherever it was available and the creation of S4C forced me to turn my attention back to Wales. I read writers like Glyn Jones, Gwyn Jones and George Ewart Evans for the first time in my life and persuaded S4C and BBC Wales to commission a bi-lingual series called *Tales from Wales*.

The failure of my attempts to learn Welsh compelled me to keep my focus on Welsh literature in English and, through getting commissions to make programmes on Welsh history, I have come to realize how crucial Welsh literature was to an understanding of that history – the *Mabinogion* (in translation) as the basis for the Arthurian myths in the television series *Excalibur*, the poetry of Hedd Wynn (in translation) in analysing Welsh attitudes to the First World War in *The Last Dawn* and *The Corn is Green*, and *How Green Was My Valley* in looking at perceptions of Wales in America in *The Dragon and the Eagle/Y Ddraig a’r Eryr*.

And yet I remain on the wrong side of the Bristol Channel. Does that lead to a certain ironic detachment from my native land – or, like many Welsh ‘exiles’, to my viewing it through a romanticised haze? I hope that, by continuing to read today’s Welsh writers in English, I can avoid both.

## ***Panel J: Home Discomforts***

- **Robert Walton: Home Comforts Under Invasion in *Awakening* by Stevie Davies**

Returning from her honeymoon, Beatrice Pentecost is ecstatic as she runs in stockinged feet through Sarum House in the Wiltshire village of Chauntsey in 1860: ‘My family, my home, my world.’ For both Beatrice and her younger sister, Anna, the house is all of these. It is the home where they have been raised and in which they remain, even when married. As a family property, it is owned by men and possessed by male hegemony, passed from father to husband; a place where the sisters are subjected to repressed passion and jealousy, and where they suffer the pangs of childbirth, sickness and bereavement. But Sarum House is not only the centre of their world for it becomes, too, a focal point of spiritual and scientific dispute as a religious awakening arrives from America via Wales. This paper will examine the ways in which Stevie Davies prises open the *mores* and home comforts of bourgeois Victorian life at this significant point in modern history. For all its material solidity, a home such as Sarum House is occupied by powerful ghosts and the deepest doubts: a site, in effect, of crisis and invasion by the forces of gender, faith and social change.

- **Daniel Williams: “Home to an Empty House”: Post-industrial Melancholia in South Wales**

We begin with the vote in south Wales in 2016 to leave the European Union. That part of Wales that is associated with socialist internationalism, with radical politics, with the welfare state and cosmopolitan solidarity, with coal, became in 2016 the site for right wing regression. Where might analysis begin?

If the movement out of Wales was a familiar narrative development in the literature of the 1930s (*How Green Was My Valley*, *The Corn Green*), the return to Wales is a familiar trope in post-war literature. The question that arises is ‘home to what’? Following the withering of religion, language and class, what is left for society to turn to? Are we then not heading towards the crisis of nihilism that J. R. Jones theorized in Welsh, as did Hannah Arendt in English? With the erosion of those things that had traditionally made Wales distinctive – language, religion, industry – it would seem that there was little left. Nevertheless the second half of the twentieth century witnesses the rise of political nationalism and the establishment of a National Assembly in Wales.

This paper’s resonant title comes from an Alun Richards novel that speaks to this seeming paradox. The narrative of national awakening from the 1960s onwards is well known – the long road to devolution. It’s in the mental and material landscapes of Ron Berry and Alun Richards that we see the development of what we might describe as counter-narrative of South Walian melancholia. These are writers who grieve and mourn the passing of coal and the industrial society that it produced. According to Freud, when private mourning proceeds healthily it allows for the continuation of life, for the making of new loves and relationships. In the case of social mourning, a society that has been the victim of violence or oppression or disaster is able to imagine a future for itself, a flourishing of its capacities, a reconstruction of its social structures. Political hope, as Seth Moglen argues, is a social form of mourning. Political despair and its ironic variant, political cynicism, is a social form of melancholia. Was the Brexit vote a manifestation of social melancholia? That is what my paper will explore.

## ***Panel K: Homes Complex and Insecure***

- **Tony Brown: “A border person”: Issues of Home and Displacement in the Short Stories of Glenda Beagan**

Clare Hanson (*Re-reading the Short Story*) has suggested that the short story is a form which frequently deals with the experience of those individuals and groups who ‘for one reason or another have not been a part of the ruling ‘narrative’ or epistemological framework of their society. [...] It is the chosen form of the exile – not the self-willed émigré, but the writer who longs for a return to a home culture which is denied him’.

Or *her*, of course. The paper will examine the ways in which, in her three collections of short fiction (*The Medlar Tree*, *Changes and Dreams* and *The Great Master of Ecstasy*), Glenda Beagan explores issues of identity and psychological security in her female characters, including her best-known story ‘Scream, Scream’, set in a female psychiatric ward. While here and in other stories the sense of displacement from the security of home is considered in terms of gender, these concerns are consistently shot through with issues of Welsh identity; that phrase of Hanson’s has particular resonance for the Anglophone Welsh writer. Beagan has lived all her life in Rhuddlan, Denbighshire, and has described herself as ‘a border person’, seeing it as an ambiguous place between England and Welsh-speaking Wales. Her stories are largely set in that area – the seaside towns as well as in isolated cottages and hill villages – and a number of them engage the Welsh concept of *cynefin*, the sense of a community’s ‘structures of feeling’ in relation to its local habit, its *bro*. Underlying this exploration is a more universal concern with the risky borders between the sanity which society constructs and mental instability, an unhoming insecurity.

- **Amber Hancock: Historic Parkouring with Raymond Williams: Orientating One’s Identity at Home within *People of the Black Mountains***

For Raymond Williams, there has always been a question of how to convey the layered, transitory identity surrounding his home in the Black Mountains. Within *People of the Black Mountains*, the heart of place is defined by movement. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines parkour as “the discipline or activity of moving rapidly and freely over or around the obstacles presented by an (esp. urban) environment by running, jumping, climbing, etc.”<sup>1</sup> His unfinished trilogy is structured similarly to a visual layout of this sport. The conceit of the novels depends on the same level of spatial awareness of a parkour runner; the mapping aspects of the novels’ structure are highlighted in the introduction, for example, in which the main points of the area Glyn travels through are laid out for the reader using the imagery of a hand. Yet, the descriptions of the time periods themselves while grounded by research and depictions of the developing landscapes depends upon imaginative leaps and a fluidity of identity which mimics the physicality of parkour. The constant reliance of the narrative on naming and detailing the landscape and yet demonstrating the constant shifts of peoples, customs and identities highlight a significant tension within a border identity: its inability to define its identity as wholly one nationality over the other. Through an examination of *People of the Black Mountains*, I will argue that Williams resolves the question of identity

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Proffitt (ed). ‘Parkour,’ in *Oxford English Dictionary*  
<<http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.bangor.ac.uk/view/Entry/276444?redirectedFrom=Parkour&>> [accessed 7 October 2017].

orientation through a dependence on the locality of home – a Welsh Identity is one grown in Welsh soil – while acknowledging that culture is developed through the fluid movement of shifting, one might say parkouring, borders.

- **Kieron Smith: “[M]ore or less of a twist towards wildness”: Spatial and Platial Transgressions in Amy Dillwyn’s *The Rebecca Rioter* (1880)**

Amy Dillwyn’s *The Rebecca Rioter* (1880) begins with Evan, the novel’s narrator and protagonist, asking a rhetorical question about the nature of the relationship between self and home. ‘Do not people’s natures, more or less, take after the place where they are born and pass their lives?’ On first reading, this phrasing appears casual, conversational. But Evan returns to the same sentential adverbial a few pages later, when he refers to those who, like him, call Upper Killay their home, as having ‘more or less of a twist towards wildness’. Upon closer look, this phrase, ‘more or less’, reveals itself to be key to the novel’s thematics. Numerous critics have examined the complex “ventriloquism” that characterises Evan’s narrative voice, with Kirsti Bohata most recently noting that this “mobilises” a ‘possibly enabling and certainly destabilizing array of trans class, linguistic, national and gender identities’.<sup>1</sup> Bohata’s own phrasing here – “possibly enabling and certainly destabilizing” – registers a key feature of Dillwyn’s novel: that of equivocality, ambiguity, and the blurring of boundaries both symbolic and physical.

This paper will examine the ambiguous, transgressive literary cartography of *The Rebecca Rioter*, with particular reference to the novel’s equivocal inhabitation of the symbolic and physical geography of south Wales. Dillwyn’s topographical depiction of her protagonist’s homeland is remarkably accurate, and yet it simultaneously portrays this as a place, like all places, in “process”.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the equivocal nature of Evan’s transgressions within the novel’s complex literary cartography speaks to the curiously unstable, processual nature of his sense of place and, by extension, his sense of home.

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<sup>1</sup> Kirsti Bohata, ‘A Queer-Looking Lot of Women: cross-dressing, transgender ventriloquism and same-sex desire in *The Rebecca Rioter*’, *The Victorian Review* (in press)

<sup>2</sup> Doreen Massey, ‘Power Geometry and a progressive sense of place’, in Jon Bird et al, *Mapping the Futures* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 59-69.

## ***Panel L: Creative Practice #2***

- **Liz Fincham: ‘Leaving the Farms. Journeys of Risk. Finding Home’**

The paper will take the form of twelve linked poems on the theme of Home/Cartref. Home can be both an identifiable place, a settlement (as the marae is perceived in Maori culture) and also the abstract ideas and emotions we carry in our heads. The longing for home expressed in the Welsh word *hiraeth* and in the German word *heimweh* is a powerful leitmotif of what a place and our estrangement or displacement from it means for us as individuals and groups. At the current time when we are perhaps more aware than ever of populations on the move, I am researching and reflecting on journeys of risk undertaken by my ancestors. They left the farms. They travelled from Ireland, Buckinghamshire, Southwark, Bristol, Devon, Ceredigion and Gower to the coppertown magnet of Swansea. These journeys were taken between 1825 and 1895. These men and women were part of the rural depopulation happening across the British Isles and Europe. Most left carrying nothing but the necessity of finding a new place to work and then set up home. Most could not write even their names as late as the 1850s. But now, their names are how I can trace them and their movements from place to place, see the family names that recur, learn about the work they did and often the places where they worshipped. The places of worship and Swansea Market were possibly their key meeting places.

- **Lucy Gough: In the Space of Each Room My Soul**

‘Thus by approaching the house images with care not to break up the solidarity of memory and imagination we may hope to make others feel all the psychological elasticity of an image that moves us at an unimaginable depth’. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*.

When I write a play I have long been aware that to enable me to shape and tell the drama and for this drama to interact with the audience, I employ a particular strategy, that of thinking spatially in terms of construction of dramatic space, in short, I build a structure. A building in which the levels, the doors, the windows, the stairs, where the light is allowed to enter, where the shadows fall, where corridors lead one and for how long, what each room contains, the juxtaposition of rooms, will all articulate the pace, the tone, the meaning, the world. In this way both the building and what is contained in the space between is significant. A few years ago I was commissioned to do an adaption of *Wuthering Heights* for both the radio and the stage; in each, the house became central (in different ways) to the structure of the work. More recently I have undertaken a wild adaptation of *The Tenant Of Wildfell Hall* for the Sherman Theatre and again the house /home central to the novel is key to the way in which this new work is structured.

My intention here is to unpack this notion of my creative writing being architectural and to argue that this appropriating of the notion of architecture is not disembodied or speculative but is key to my artistic practice and so I will attempt to articulate the ‘materials’ used in this construction and how it works on the imagination of the listener/audience. To demonstrate this I will refer to these two pieces of work in detail.

## ***Panel M: Conceptual Frames***

- **Daniel Gerke: Elskaheimr: Loveworlds and *Hiraeth*, or Home as a Born Place**

The English word ‘home’ is incredibly expansive. Its etymological roots include the German *ham*, which encompasses the English ‘village’, ‘region’ and ‘country’ and, on the most massive end of the spectrum, the Old Norse *heimr*, which also means ‘world’. At the same time, home often delineates a self-contained space or residence, a ‘container’ of familial love, memories and traditions, a place of stability and carefully drawn boundaries. There is thus a double movement within the concept of home, outward and inward, from the maximal and impersonal (all of creation) to the most intimate and affective (home as a place where love ‘resides’). We might then ask what it means to ‘make a home’; is it to engage in a process of creation, of world building, as the *heimr* root implies? Or is it in some sense to build oneself, a symbolic or even ‘fantasmatic’ system upon which love, desire and thus subjectivity may be founded?

The translation-evading Welsh word *hiraeth*, which has been described as ‘homesickness for a home you can’t return to or that never was’, makes home into something quite strange. In Tim Davis’s 2007 poem of the same name, it appears as a ‘call’, embedded in the natural world, which must be heeded, and yet which summons the listener to something neither entirely old nor entirely new, and completely ungraspable in language. The word *hiraeth* is strongly resonant with Lacanian themes, and speaks to the gulf between the Symbolic, the realm of language and fixity, and the Real, a ‘posited’ past of pre-linguistic unity that may never have existed in the first place. My paper will explore these psychoanalytic resonances of the word *hiraeth*, using it to position the idea of ‘home’ as a synthesis of ‘love’ and ‘world’ (as in the Old Norse neologism *elskaheimr* in my title), as a name for active, social creativity beyond the limits of individual fantasy.

- **Adrian Osbourne: In Country Cynefin: Home and Wales in Dylan Thomas’s Short Stories**

This paper uses the Cynefin Framework, ‘a sense-making model’, to analyse the short stories of Dylan Thomas and their relationship to Wales. The Cynefin Framework was created by the Management Consultant and Knowledge Management researcher Dave Snowden for IBM in 1999, and it offers a means of assessing and analysing situations into four domains: Chaotic, Complex, Complicated, and Obvious. Snowden, who is Welsh, chose the word ‘Cynefin’ for its sense as ‘place of your multiple belongings’, one that is ‘rooted in many different pasts that profoundly influence what you are’, but of which you can never be fully aware. By using the Cynefin Framework to analyse the narrative methods and subjects of Thomas’s short stories, this paper seeks to chart the progression of Thomas’s prose works from the early, gothic-grotesque tales (the Chaotic and the Complex) to the later, more realistic stories (the Complicated and the Obvious), while considering their multiple yet rooted presentations of home and Wales. Thomas’s short stories are more obviously located in Wales when compared with his poetry, and this paper will discuss how the sense of home changes as Thomas’s depictions of Wales go from a place of witchcraft and incest, to a site of childhood idyll and the workaday world.

## ***Panel N: Houses***

- **Diana Wallace: History, Hiraeth and the Unheimlich in Hilda Vaughan's *Harvest Home***

Hilda Vaughan's historical novel *Harvest Home* (1936) opens with Daniel Hafod returning home from exile in England to take his place as master of Great House, which he has inherited after the death of his uncle. This motif of the returning native connects to Vaughan's own experience of what we might see as an example of hiraeth, that quintessentially Welsh longing for a lost home. Born and brought up in Builth Wells, Vaughan spent most of her adult life in England, although she frequently returned to Wales for periods to write. As Lucy Thomas has pointed out, Vaughan's use of Welsh folklore, particularly in her later fiction 'can be read as a textual search for her lost Welsh past: a cultural search for identity' (2008, 209). In this paper I want to explore some of the ways in which Vaughan's fiction can be read as a textual search for, or reconstruction of, a lost Welsh 'home'. Several of her novels, including *The Invader* (1928), *Her Father's House* (1930) and *The Soldier and the Gentlewoman* (1932), circle around the inheritance of, or obsession with, a house. A house, however, is not necessarily a home as her characters frequently discover. As the most explicitly Gothic of Vaughan's historical novels, moreover, *Harvest Home* repeatedly invokes the notion of the *unheimlich*, the unhomely, through its use of uncanny doubles and the folklore of the Cyhyraeth, the spirit voice which foretells death on Nosclyngiaf or All Hallows Night. Daniel Hafod is doubled by his cousin, Dan Hafod, whose death he attempts to cause because they are rivals for the same woman. The novel ends in an uncanny repetition of its beginning with Daniel dead and Dan returning to Great House, now his inheritance and home.

- **Damian Walford Davies: Triangulating Trauma: T. R. Henn's Big Houses**

This paper takes as its focus the great neglected late-Modernist poem, 'To Wilton House', by T. R. Henn (1901–74). Known more as a pioneering critic of Yeats and Synge than as a poet, the Anglo-Irish Henn published a small body of poems in the slim volume *Shooting a Bat* (1964) and in a section of *Five Arches* (1980), in which the poems constitute a dialogue with a prose autobiography. Taking the tradition of the English country house poem into new psychological, formal and – I argue – cartographic territory, 'To Wilton House' is the work of a Second Lieutenant serving as an Intelligence Officer at the headquarters of Southern Command at Wilton a few months after Dunkirk. Here, in Inigo Jones's exquisite Double Cube – one of the great rooms of England, in which was laid out 'a one-inch map of Southern England, covered with talc' – Henn was charged with preparing for the imminent German invasion. Van Dyck's paintings watched from the wall.

Henn's poem summons the atmosphere of those nights of fear, resolve and military planning in a restive, pathologically allusive and in places phantasmagoric poem that struggles to contain its frame of reference within the arcadia of Wilton's demesne. I argue that the poem accomplishes complex cartographic work by summoning the dead grounds of Europe, past, and passing, and to come. An elided *archipelagic* cartography is also articulated in 'To Wilton House' as Henn reflects at this moment of national crisis on the cultural resonance of Wilton (the seat of the Earls of Pembroke, who, like Henn's family, were originally of Welsh stock) and, crucially, on his own Anglo-Irish homelessness and deracination. That condition was intimately related to a house and an estate, out west in Ireland, that 'To Wilton House'

simply cannot name. The contours of the poem are fundamentally conditioned by Henn's negotiation with this dark other of Wilton; it is a place, and an idea, from whose values, politics and contemporary decline Henn's ethnic and political identity was forged.

Reflecting on concepts of housedness and at-home-ness, this paper develops the concept of submerged triangulation and of the cartographic unconscious to reveal the centripetal, transnational energies of a major, and unaccountably unregarded, war poem.