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CRYING LIKE THROWING UP: ABJECTION AND RESISTANCE IN CARADOG PRICHARD'S *UN NOS OLA LEUAD*¹

Caradog Prichard was brought up in the early years of the 1900s in Bethesda, a slate-quarrying village in North Wales. In the late 1920s he won awards for his poetry, written in Welsh. By the time he had published *Un Nos Ola Leuad* (1961), however, he had been living for many years in London: working as a journalist for the *Daily Telegraph*, and also taking part in the London Welsh social scene. Taking these biographical points into consideration, one may permit oneself to discuss the novel as a novel of exile, or at least as a novel written in emigration. Such a reading ultimately unsettles simple mimetic readings of the novel; Simon Brooks implies as much in his inspiring reading of the novel as a book about London rather than about Bethesda.²

Ostensibly, the novel strings together a series of childhood memories set in a North Wales slate-quarrying village—unnamed, but very much like Bethesda. In this return to a childhood landscape, it clearly fits some of the expectations one might have of a novel of exile. What doesn't fit is its bizarre and often improbable gruesomeness and horror. This is no novel of nostalgia for the rural Wales of Prichard's childhood, and in this it also breaks with the tradition of the Welsh novel. Written in a childlike dialect, *Un Nos Ola Leuad* also subverts the norms of Welsh literary language.³ The handling of its subject matter further subverts the idealizing mimesis of cultural nationalism in Welsh-language literature. In his short literary history of Wales, Dafydd Johnston writes that "the ideal of the virtuous *gwerin* [people, *Volk*]" is "entirely shattered" by Prichard's novel.⁴ Johnston immediately recuperates this *shattering* within literary discourse by identifying the novel as "harrowing depiction of a community in the process of disintegration" (109), thus falling back on both literary mimesis—"depiction"—and cultural mimesis—"disintegration" (implying a previous idyll).⁵ It is the novel's resistance to such recuperations which I wish to discuss.

The Moon of Exile

The title of the novel, *Un Nos Ola Leuad*, may be approximately translated into English as "One Moonlit Night".⁶ John Rowlands points out that it is the moon that regulates the more extreme events of the novel.⁷ He reminds us of the etymological connections between *moon* and *lunacy*, or in Welsh, between another word for moon, *lloer* and its adjectival form *lloerig*, meaning "mad". The moon dominates also in its relationship to the sun. It is thus important to note where the sun is in fact mentioned in the novel. In his reading, Simon Brooks focuses on the scene where the child protagonist climbs the mountains surrounding the village and gains a kind of epiphanic perspective promising escape from the village and transcendence of its boundaries.⁸ It is precisely here that the sun comes to the fore (164; trans. 138).

Here I would like to trace the connections between the theme of exile and the paradigm SUN/MOON. First I would like to refer to the comparativist Claudio Guillén's discussion of the sun's role in the life of the exile or émigré.⁹ He traces an ambivalence in the exile's attitude to the sun. On the one hand one finds a stoic cosmopolitanism, wherein the sun is seen as being the

same for all nationalities, and seen as shining on all lands, making the world one's country.¹⁰ On the other hand, the sun may represent a nostalgic nationalism, as when the Italian emigrant in New York sees the sun and identifies it as the only thing in this alien place which reminds her or him of home—or imagines family members left behind in Italy as seeing the same sun.

This nostalgia of the exile is thus a repetitive experience of loss and a form of melancholy. This suggests that the *moon* of *Un Nos Ola Leuad* may be seen as figuring in its negativity a *black sun*: the black sun of melancholy.¹¹ Climbing the mountains outside the village, the protagonist moves from the realm of the moon (black sun) and grasps at the sun (bright sun).

Language Breakdown and Mythic Discourse

Moving from the title to the form of the novel, the rhythm of the moon—as Rowlands suggests—also regulates the fragmentary time of the novel. The episodes of *Un Nos Ola Leuad* are not recuperable to a single time scale, inviting retrospective interpretation from the perspective of the singular moon of the title: “*un nos ola leuad*”—“*one moonlit night*”. Retrospective interpretation is figured in the novel as the occasionally explicit voice of the child as a grown-up returning to the village. Though this return from exile within the novel is made problematic by the fictional narrator having spent his years since childhood in institutions. He has also retained the language of the child he once was. But there are also other discourses in the novel besides that of the child and the childlike adult. It also contains strange travesties of a biblical discourse feeding on the language of the psalms and of Welsh Methodist revivalism.

The fragmentary discourse and the lack of external perspective suggests that the novel belongs to a tradition of literary modernism. In his book *Exiles and Émigrés*, Terry Eagleton suggests that there is indeed an intimate connection between exile and modernism.¹² To reduce (if I may) his concluding argument and generalize it somewhat in the process:¹³ preceding modernism, realism is the literary product of a hegemonic bourgeoisie which as it turns to naturalism reveals the confrontations which underlay that hegemony, creating a sense of discomfort which in modernism is realised in figures of guilt, cynicism, nostalgia, impotence (another important theme of *Un Nos Ola Leuad*), idealism, and fantasy. Furthermore, this process results in two separate forms of literary discourse. 1) A denial of realism's faith in reference, expressed as a *breakdown* of language. In *Un Nos Ola Leuad*: the language of the child and of the madman. 2) In compensation for this breakdown we find the formation of a *mythic* language, more symbolic than referential, creating an internally coherent world outside society—that is, creating the condition of literary exile. In *Un Nos Ola Leuad*: the mythic language of pseudo-biblical discourse. Prichard's use of this mythical discourse tends towards the absurd, however, and in its note of travesty it pre-opts Eagleton's critique of this recuperative movement in modernism.

The Mouth Deterritorialized

Having dealt with the title, form, and language of *Un Nos Ola Leuad*, I now turn to its topography. This is, basically, what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari would perhaps refer to as a *village-machine*, a labyrinthine structure without hierarchical organization implicitly

emphasizing the possibility of escape-lines.¹⁴ Indeed, much of the novel is concerned with escape routes from this labyrinth, be they through madness, being sent to prison, death, emigration to South Wales or over the sea, or being condemned to fight in the trenches in World War I.

Terms from Deleuze and Guattari's work on minor literature seem especially appropriate to a book about children and quarrymen: minors and miners. In the chapter of their book on Kafka called "Qu'est-ce qu'une littérature mineure?"—"What is a Minor Literature?"—Deleuze and Guattari explore the deterritorialization of meaning in what they call "minor literature"—literature which creates its own space within a larger literature.¹⁵ They mention not only Kafka but also Joyce—both modernists. Kafka, with his "poor" language of intensives¹⁶ and a breakdown of reference—a child's language—is contrasted against the "enriched" symbolic language of Joyce, a language in Deleuze and Guattari's terms less properly "minor"—a mythic language comparable to the pseudo-biblical language of *Un Nos Ola Leuad*. More specifically and strikingly, *Un Nos Ola Leuad* is replete with figures for what Deleuze and Guattari call "the deterritorialization of the mouth", for them a central concept since it stands for an unease inside language about language itself. The mouth is the proper territory of expression and of meaning, but it is also a territory of incorporation and of eating.

First I would like to refer to just one example of the mouth being deterritorialized in the sense of being moved, displaced, dislocated, *de*-limited:

Dyna lle oedd Wil Elis Portar yn gorfadd ar wastad ei gefn yn lle piso, a sgôr fawr yn ei wddw o, nes oeddwn i'n meddwl mai ei geg o oedd yn agorad, a'r lle'n waed i gyd. Wnes i ddim ond cymryd un golwg arno fo, a rhedag fel fflamia i ddeud wrth Preis Sgwâl, a finna'n crynu fel deilan, a fonta'n methu dallt be oeddwn i'n dreio ddeud.

W-W-Wil E-E-Elis P-P-Portar, syr, medda fi. Yn g-gorfadd a-allan yn f-fanna. M-mae o we-wedi ma-marw. (167-8)

There was Will Ellis Porter, lying flat out on the toilet floor, and he had such a great gash in his throat that I thought his mouth was open, and the whole place was swimming in blood. I just took one look at him and ran like the devil to tell Price the School, and I was shaking like a leaf, and he couldn't understand what I was trying to say.

W-W-Will E-E-Ellis P-P-Porter, sir, I said. L-L-Lying ou-ou-outside th-there. H-He's d-dead. (141-2)

This is the first of the three major traumatic episodes which end the book. The child protagonist finds a villager—the epileptic porter—dead in the school toilets. He mistakes at first the gaping wound for a mouth. Out of this wound pours blood instead of words. His own words stutter out as linguistic intensives, in a meaningless repetition of hyphens.¹⁷

There is a reversal here in the movement from a strong impression to strong expression—from eating (so to speak) to speaking. This reversal is also apparent in the second traumatic episode at the end of the book, where the child protagonist accompanies his mam to an asylum. After she is taken in, he realizes that she is not coming back, and starts to cry:

Ond crio run fath â taflyd i fyny. (192)

But crying just like being sick. (165)

The word *crio* in Welsh, like *crying* in English, can have several meanings. On the one hand it can mean “to weep, shed tears”, on the other “to shout, scream, wail”.¹⁸ *Crio* dislocates the mouth to the eyes and is again a breakdown of referential language into intensives. The rest of the sentence reinforces this deterritorialization of the mouth; this is more immediately obvious in the Welsh “crio run fath â taflyd i fyny” than in the English “crying just like being sick”. *Taflyd i fyny* means literally “throwing up”; less euphemistic and more specific. Crying is thus likened to the regurgitation of food, a reversal of eating.¹⁹

My third example is from the beginning of the book, though the episode presages the unhappy sexualized violence of the third and last traumatic episode at the end of the book. The narrator explains that he has been out playing with his friend Huw; they meet two girls, Nel Fair View and Cêr Rhesi Gwynion—Nel Fair View and Kate White Houses—and then the village idiot, Harri Bach Clocisia—Little Harry the Clogs:

Un golwg bach, Harri, medda Huw, a dyma Harri’n rhoid i fasgiad ar lawr, a dyma fo’n agor i falog a tynnu’i bidlan allan. Hi! hi! hi! medda fo trwy’i locsyn a’i thynnu hi i mewn yn i hól mewn hanner chwinciad run fath a jacynbocs. Hi! hi! hi! medda fo wedyn a codi’i fasgiad ac yn i flaen a fo. Hi! hi! hi! medda’r ddwy hogan tu ôl inni. (8)

Give us a quick look, Harry, said Huw, and Harry put his basket down, and then he opened his flies and pulled his willy out. Hee! hee! hee! he said through his beard and pulled it back again quick as wink just like a jack-in-the-box. Hee! hee! hee! he said again then picked up his basket and off he went on his way. Hee! hee! hee! said the two girls behind us. (2)

Here the mouth is dislocated to the flies and the penis reverses the gaze: “Un golwg bach”, “mewn hanner chwinciad”—“Give us a quick look”, “quick as wink”. Harri’s only expression besides exposing himself are the intensives “Hi! hi! hi!”, which turn out to be infectious when the two girls also say “Hi! hi! hi!”.

National Unease

While *Un Nos Ola Leuad* is dominated by the village-machine, the space this creates is also intersected by Welsh and British spaces, national and imperial dimensions. Some of these national dimensions are brought together when the village is visited by a choir made up of striking coal miners from South Wales. North and South Wales are brought together, crossing a traditional divide in the Welsh nation. But this national union is somehow marred. The child protagonist finds the South Welsh dialect strange (92; trans. 74-5). He also learns that the South Welsh miners are in fact better off than the local North Welsh quarrymen from whom they are collecting charity money (171; trans. 144). And the conflict between North and South figure is

more directly figured in the boxing fights which take place after a Southern visitor, Johnny South, challenges all-comers (89-96; trans. 74-79).

The episode with the choir meeting brings together several historical events: the great strikes/lock-outs of 1921, 1926 and also previous occasions; the First World War—for we learn that the South Choir sings on the Sunday after the unveiling of a memorial to the war dead; and the religious revivals of the turn of the century. These revivals are also portrayed as threatening to the child protagonist, who identifies in the novel with the Anglican church in Wales rather than with the Methodists.

The memorial service held previously to the choir meeting activates the ambivalent pronoun *we* of British colonial ideology in Wales:²⁰

Diwrnod trist ydy hwn yn ein hanes ni, medda Huws Person ar ei bregeth. [...] Ond balchder hefyd, medda fo. Balchder am aberth ein bechgyn; am eu parodrwydd i offrymu eu bywydau ar allor rhyddid ac i amddiffyn eu gwlad rhag trais a gorthrwm. (136-137)

This is a sad day in our history, said Hughes the Parson in his sermon. [...] But of pride too, he said. Pride for our sons' sacrifice; for their readiness to offer up their lives on the altar of freedom and to defend their country against violence and oppression. (115)

What is “*ein hanes ni*”—“our history”? Is it the history of Wales, or the history of Britain? Or is it the history of the village, or even of some more universalist principle of “*rhyddid*”—“freedom”?

I will here offer a reading of the choir meeting episode as an allegory of national identity; more specifically, I read *Un Nos Ola Leuad* here as in itself a critical reading of a much later model of nationhood, that of Benedict Anderson.²¹ At one point in his book *Imagined Communities*, he figures the imagined community of the nation as a “unisonance”: the simultaneous coming-together of the nation in song.²² This he contrasts (in a footnote) against the “dialogue and exchange” typical of “everyday life”.²³ He also associates it with the ability of language to create solidarity across the centuries, weirdly resulting in “a ghostly intimation of simultaneity across homogeneous, empty time”²⁴—this “homogeneous, empty time” being implicit in the concept of the nation as an imagined community.²⁵ *Un Nos Ola Leuad* however takes precisely “dialogue and exchange” as its starting point in the representation of nation across an (ultimately unavoidable) internal difference in the imagined community of Wales. The South Choir sings hymns at an outdoor meeting, in the evening, to a mixed Anglican and Methodist audience (representing a national union across the Welsh religious divide):²⁶

A pawb o'r bobol yn gwranddo'n ddistaw, run fath â tasa nhw yn Reglwys neu Capal, tan nes daeth y Côr at y pennill dwythfa. (139)

And all the people listened quietly, as if they were in Church or Chapel, until the Choir came to the last verse. (118)

Suddenly, the local Temperance Choir sings in answer to the South Choir, echoing their lines,

North responding to South. The last, repeated line is then sung by both choirs together and all present join in what we may interpret as national unisonance.

This unisonance does not last for long. A new division is created when a singer from the South Choir begins to sing a solo before the rest join in again:

A dyma hwnnw'n dechra canu solo ar ben ei hun, a'r arweinydd wedi troi rownd yn ôl i'n gwynebu ni, a sefyll hefo'i freichia i lawr yn gwrando run fath â ninna. (142)

And he began to sing a solo on his own, and the conductor turned back round to face us, and stood with his arms down listening just like us. (119)

This division may be read as the both metonymic and metaphoric relationship between individual and society—between the singular and the general—which is the key to Anderson's discussion of national "plurals"²⁷ and is indeed what allows us to read small groups of men as representing South and North Wales. This is also the divide between the imagined community and the one who does the imagining. As Homi K. Bhabha writes of national representations: "There must be a tribe of interpreters of such metaphors".²⁸ Thus a new divide is instated in the homogeneity of the nation: one between individual interpretation and national unisonance.

When all are again joined in unisonance, the narrator says: "Mi aeth petha'n waeth byth wedyn" (142)—"Things got even worse then" (119). He finds the situation threatening as the collected mass of people seem to lose control of their song, singing louder and louder:

Oedd Huw a finna ddim yn siŵr prun ta canu ta crio oeddan ni. Oedd gen i lwmp mawr yn fy ngwddw, beth bynnag, [...] (142)

Huw and me weren't sure whether we were singing or crying. I had a big lump in my throat, anyway, [...] (119)

Language begins to break down, and the protagonist becomes even more uncomfortable:

Ond mi aeth petha'n rhyffeddach byth ar ôl i'r bobol stopio canu. Oedd y distawrwydd fel tasa fo'n gwasgu arna ni, nes oeddan ni'n methu'i ddiodda fo. Oedd yr haul newydd fynd i lawr dros ben Braich a hitha'n dechra twyllu. A rhyw hen wynt oer yn dechra chwythu trwy'r coed o'n cwmpas ni, a gneud sŵn annifyr yn y dail, a gyrru ias oer trwyddan ni, run fath â tasa'r lle'n llawn o ysbrydion. A'r ochor arall i Lôn Bost, ar y dde draw'n fan acw, oedd y llechi'n symud yn hen doman Chwaral, a gneud twrw run fath â ma nhw'n neud rwan. Ond oedd Huw a fi'n meddwl radag honno mai lleisia'r bobol yn canu oedd wedi'u styrbio nhw. (143)

But things got stranger than ever after the people stopped singing. It was as though the silence was pressing in on us until we couldn't stand it anymore. The sun had gone down behind the Braich and it was beginning to get dark. And a cold wind began to flow through the trees all around us and make an eerie sound in the leaves, and it drove a cold

shiver through us, as though the place was full of ghosts. And on the other side of Post Lane, on the right over there, the slates were shifting on the old Quarry tip, and making a noise like they are now. But at the time, Huw and me thought it was the voices of the [sic] all the people singing that was disturbing them. (120)

Silence presses in, and suddenly the place is full of ghosts; their unisonance has even woken the very rocks as slates shift in the nearby quarry. To return to Deleuze and Guattari's terminology, the voice and meaning are deterritorialized into crying and silence; or even across the limits of the human.

Before I leave the highly ambivalent theme of the national in *Un Nos Ola Leuad*, I would like to examine one more example, sending me back to the problem of the ideology of Britishness. Early on in the novel, the child protagonist is asked by the school teacher to read an English-language poster out loud to the church canon:

Felly wir, medda Canon, fedar o ddarllan Seusnag?
Medar 'nenor Tad, medda Sgwyl, a finna ddim yn dallt beth oedd o eisio brolio.
O'r gora, gad imi dy glywad ti'n darllan hwnna, medda Canon, a rhoid blaen ei
ffon ar y papur oedd wedi'i bastio ar y wal. Finna'n darllan yn iawn nes dwad at Society.
So-ci-eti, medda fi, a Canon yn rowlio Chwerthin.
Naci, medda Preis Sgwyl yn reit gas, So-sai-eti. (20)

Is that so, said Canon, can he read English?
He can, by Jove, said the School, and I didn't know why he wanted to brag about it.

Alright, let me hear you read that, said Canon, and he tapped the poster on the wall with his stick. I was reading it okay until I came to Society. Socky-etty I said, and Canon roared with laughter.

No, said Price the School, really annoyed, So-sigh-ee-tee. (13)

Both teacher and (Anglican) canon are formal representatives of the British state. The school teacher is indeed explicitly a purveyor of stories about "Doctor Livingstone yn pregethu am Iesu Grist wrth y canibaliaid" (167)—"Doctor Livingstone preaching about Jesus to the cannibals" (141). The child protagonist manages to read the English correctly until he reaches the word "society", which he pronounces "So-ci-eti"—in the English translation, "Socky-etty". That is to say, as the Welsh original makes doubly clear, he pronounces the English word as if it was Welsh.

Cultural Resistance

Un Nos Ola Leuad brings together several figures of resistance. Its modernist discourse and unsettling of mimesis results in a relative unreadability from the perspective of a Welsh nationalist canon,²⁹ while the child protagonist's reactions to both British and Welsh national discourses reveals a deep unease with the national. Cultural resistance is here not a heroic

struggle against globalization and neo-colonialist economics. During the memorial service, the protagonist thinks only of his friend Moi lying dead in the graveyard, not of the Welsh or British “national” dead sacrificed in World War I (136; trans. 115). Rather, cultural resistance is revealed as part of a circuit of energies, where resistance slides around relative to attempts at re-territorialization at all levels. Thus *Un Nos Ola Leuad* resists all attempts at recuperation.

However, the ambivalence and irony of the novel does not necessarily relativize it away from a minority position. The resistance in *Un Nos Ola Leuad* takes the form of abjection: its protagonist and readers are subject to the horrors of what Darryl Jones has called a “Gothic industrial novel”³⁰—which he connects with “a general feeling of political and cultural disenfranchisement” (31). In its national minority position, national union seems always forced into the surplus, narcissistic sexuality of masturbation which Brooks claims is characteristic of the novel.³¹ And if one is not able to say “So-sai-eti”—“So-sigh-ee-tee”—but must reverse it into the resistant intensives of “So-ci-eti”—“Socky-etty”—it is because of a specific cultural and political situation in which *society* is caught unpleasantly between the cultural and the political.

NOTES

1. Thanks go to participants in the Joensuu seminar for their response to this paper. I am also indebted to students at my seminars on “Nasjon og roman” (University of Oslo) and “Roman og nasjon” (University of Tromsø), and to Ulrike Spring for her comments. Thanks are also due to Simon Brooks, John Rowlands and Darryl Jones – all referred to below—who have in discussion helped in forming this paper

2. Simon Brooks, “La Mort de Bethesda,” *Tu Chwith* 1 (1993): 14-28. For a description of the social scene centred around the home of Mati and Caradog Prichard in London, see Hafina Clwyd, “Mati Prichard,” *Taliesin* 88 (1994): 56-59.

3. For a more detailed discussion, see Brooks 27.

4. Dafydd Johnston, *A Pocket Guide: The Literature of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1994) 109.

5. In Johnston’s defence it must be said that he writes this in a popular introduction and obviously doesn’t have the space for a more detailed approach. As such however, his description is an indicator of a general reception of the novel.

6. This is the title used in the new English translation of the novel: Caradog Prichard, *One Moonlit Night*, trans. Philip Mitchell (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1995). There is an older translation by Menna Gallie with the title *Full Moon* (1973). Here I use Mitchell’s translations in quotes; for quotes from the original, I use Caradog Prichard, *Un Nos Ola Leuad* (Caernarfon: Gwasg Gwalia, 1988 [1961]). Note, given the nature of the original, that I do not “sic” deviations from standard literary Welsh.

7. John Rowlands, *Ysgrifau ar y Nofel* (Caerdydd: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, 1992) 258.

8. Brooks 19.

9. Guillén, lecture on exile in Oslo, April 28, 1995. I refer those with the linguistic competence I lack to Guillén.

10. For a detailed presentation of the cosmopolitanism of the stoic philosophers, see Martha C. Nussbaum, “Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism,” *Journal of Political Philosophy* 5 (1997): 1-25; and Nussbaum’s essay “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism,” published with responses in *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, ed. Joshua Cohen (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996—essays first published in the fall 1994 issue of *The Boston Review*).

11. A black sun being a traditional figure for melancholy, as indicated by the title of Julia Kristeva’s *Soleil noir: dépression et mélancolie* (Paris: Gallimard, 1987); trans. by Leon S. Roudiez as *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). The protagonist’s fixation on his mother fits with this

diagnosis.

12. Terry Eagleton, *Exiles and Émigrés: Studies in Modern Literature* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970).

13. See Eagleton 221-223.

14. Some of these escape-routes have already been suggested by Brooks in his discussion of the mountains outside the village (19-20).

15. Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Kafka: pour une littérature mineure* (1975; Paris: Minuit, 1989) 29-50; trans. by Dana Polan as *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). Note that Deleuze and Guattari are writing about "minor" or "lesser" literature written within the language of a major literature, and not about minority language literature as such. *Un Nos Ola Leuad* fits the description of minor literature in relation to the (major) Welsh literary tradition; and it is also arguable that much of what Deleuze and Guattari have to say about "minor" literature also has applicability to much "minority language" literature. Brooks has most probably Deleuze and Guattari in mind when he constructs the Welsh word "islenyddoli" to describe Prichard's language. *Islenyddoli* means to write literature (the verb *llynyddoli*) in a "lower" (*is-*) mode (27).

16. *Intensives* being syntactical devices, interjections, and other vocal noises supplementary to referential meaning, yet present in the flow of language. Deleuze and Guattari borrow the term from the linguist H. Vidal Sephipa. See also Jacques Derrida's discussion of the "between" and in extension Homi K. Bhabha's writings on "colonial nonsense" and the "in-between". Jacques Derrida, *La dissémination* (Paris: Seuil/Points 1993 [1972]); trans. by Barbara Johnson as *Dissemination* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981) 220-221; Homi K. Bhabha, "Articulating the Archaic: Cultural Difference and Colonial Nonsense" in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) 123-138.

17. For another example of the de-limitation of the mouth, see the description of the Canon's smallpox scar (20-21; trans. 13-14).

18. This is not so in all languages. In standard Bokmål Norwegian, one finds two separate words: *gråte* ("to weep") and *skrike* ("to scream"). Though as my students in Tromsø point out to me, Northern Norwegian has only *skrik* for both meanings.

19. For another example of displacement combined with reversal, see the episode with the circus monkeys which the protagonist's friend Moi feeds with laxative pills (12312-4; trans. 104-105). This episode signals another recurring theme in the book connected with Deleuze and Guattari's concept of deterritorialization: humans becoming animal and animals becoming human.

20. For discussion of the strategic ambivalence of the word "British", see Hugh Kearney, *The British Isles: A History of Four Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 [1989]) 2-3; and Johan Schimanski, "The 'Lyric Pastoral': A Natural Genre? (With an Introduction to a Debate between Genette and Derrida)," *Skript* 9 (1993): 74-84.

21. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991 [1983]).

22. Anderson 145.

23. Anderson 145.

24. Anderson 145.

25. Anderson 24. I have discussed Anderson on this point before, though then with the focus on problems of incorporation into the nation. See Schimanski, "A Poetics of the Border: Nation and Genre in *Wythnos yng Nghymru Fydd* and Other Texts by Islwyn Ffowc Elis," Dr. art. Thesis (University of Oslo, 1996) 143-4. Homi K. Bhabha also comments on Anderson's "unisonance", deconstructing its image of 'aural' presence in "Sly Civility" in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) 123-138. The major critique of Anderson's concept of the nation, focusing especially on the problem of temporality, is Bhabha's "DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation" in *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994) 123-38; but also see Albert F. Reiterer, "Nationen: Erfundene oder ewige Realitäten? Über eine irreführende Alternative und ein reales Problem aus Anlaß Benedict Andersons *Imagined Communities*," in *Neues Europa—alte Nationalismen: Kollektive Identitäten im Spannungsfeld von Integration und Ausschließung: Analysen und Perspektiven*, ed. Helmut Guggenberger and Wolfgang Holzinger (Klagenfurt/Celovec: Drava, 1993) 39-50. I would like to emphasize

however that Anderson already lays the grounds for his own deconstruction in his own (path-breaking) text, by for example hyphenating *representation* into “re-presentation” (25), thus opening for a play of repetition and difference within his concept of national simultaneity.

26. The “Church” of the following quote is the Anglican church, and the “Chapel” is the Methodist chapel.

27. Anderson 32.

28. Bhabha, “DissemiNation” 141.

29. This is an uncomfortable novel in many ways, as the recuperations in its reception reveals. This is made clear in the two translations into English. I am grateful to Darryl Jones for pointing out to me that Gallie’s translation is partly incomplete, leaving out the pseudo-biblical discourse of Chapter 8, for example. This kind of deficiency confirms a readerly resistance to the modernism of the novel. Mitchell’s translation, on the other hand, tones down the carnivalesque, bodily language of original. Thus “lle piso” becomes—in my first quote above—“toilet floor”, though it actually means “pissing-place” (similarly, “[y] pot piso yna” [204]—“that pissing-pot”—becomes “that pot under the bed” [174]).

30. Darryl Jones, Response to a questionnaire, special issue on Celtic Nationalism and Postcoloniality, *SPAN* 41 (1995): 32.

31. Brooks 23.