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Outside Inside

the first of three essays

Three Landscapes Project

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I

From two years in my early twenties, I lived and worked in the small Upper-Egyptian town of Qena. Like most visitors to modern Egypt, from Napoleon onwards, I went there with the wish to have something to take away with me - a souvenir, a scrap or sacrament of the country to remind me of my travels and to remind me of Egypt. Knowledge of the past, and a record of my experience or perceptions of place, were what I meant by "Egypt." (1) The fashionable tourist in Wales of the late 18th century - like me in Egypt, rich outsiders - came equipped with a claudes-glass, a concave prism through which she might filter her views, to make them resemble the paintings of artists which had influenced the genre of landscape paintings of the Welsh landscape. I, on the other hand went to Egypt equipped with a small discreet Rolleiflex 33, then the smallest camera easily available. This, I assumed, would enable the fact that I was actually taking picture of them to pass unperceived by Egyptians, so that I would be able to garner portraits of the true, essential Egypt, generally unavailable in the tourist jampots (2).

Without my realizing it, my picture-taking conformed to a pre-existing aesthetic. Unconsciously and unreflectedly, I was carrying within myself a whole vocabulary of perception and interpretation - of landscape, of Egypt, and of myself as photographer. My picturesque amateur photography involved a selection within each frame; each picture was a search for an essence which might be conveyed in one shot. The camera inevitably frames, involving decisions, conscious or otherwise, of inclusion or exclusion of content and interpretation. And so the tourist minibuses were carefully filtered out of my viewfinder; (3) peasants dressed in jallabeyahs appeared in the off-foreground of my photographs, setting off the composition in a studied theatrical convention: foreground in a certain light, defined by the wings of the stage I created with my viewfinder; a middle ground of darker shade and a distance which faded off into eternity and which suggested infinite transcendence. Ancient ruins - and - appeared even more ancient

¹ Nid oedd yn ymddangos i mi o gwbl fod cysylltiad uniongyrchol rhwng imperialaeth a minnau. Fel gwirfoddolwr a oedd yn byw ymhlith y werin ac a fu'n medru Arabeg, credwn o ddifri fy mod ar wahân i'r brosiect drefedigaethol. Ond rwy'n cofio i gymrodyr i mi gael ei gyhuddo gan Ali, un o'n disgyblion mwyaf eofn a huawdl, o ddysgu mewn ffordd imperialaidd. Nid oeddwn yn deall ystyr hyn ar y pryd.

² Eto i gyd, roedd fy nghydwbybod yn ddigon sionc i mi sylweddoli bod rhywbeth o'i le ar yr hyn a wnawn. Cofiaf yn awr fod yn Salamanca am y tro cyntaf a gweld y bythynnod bach tlawd lle trigai'r Sipsiwn a'u disgrifio i Sbaenwr fel rhywbeth pert. "Son la verguenza de España" - cywilydd Sbaen ydynt - oedd ei ateb parod, ac yntau'n anfodlon cytuno â'm syniadau Rhamantus am egsotigiaeth slymiau.

³ Byddaf erbyn hyn yn teimlo'r un mor anghyfforddus gyda llyfrau lluniau tebybg am Gymru - Cymru'r bwrdd coffi - oherwydd anhawster cynrychioli'r anghynrychioladwy, oherwydd nad wyf am ddangos Cymru i'r tu fa's, oherwydd amheun a ydyw'r Gymru rwyf yn trigo ynddi yn bod mewn ffordd faterol, gyrychioladwy, o gwbl.

and moody in the shadows of dawn or dusk. (4) In the literature of tourism, ancient Egypt or at the most modern, medieval Abbasid Egypt is the essential Egypt.

Only now, at a distance of a quarter of a century, as I look again at those artfully composed black and white pictures of melancholy decay in Egypt, can I begin to decipher my own visual language. So familiar is the grammar of representation that we become aware of it only at the point of grammatical mistake, fragmentation, disjuncture. I found myself initially surprised by the unwillingness of Egyptian peasants to have their pictures taken unposed. Portraiture, not landscape, was what interested them, whereas I wished them to remain unaware of the camera, unselfaware figures in my essentialist landscape. Where I chose to steal pictures in their streets, hoping to pass unperceived by them, they would change into their best western clothes so that I might portray them, often holding their own or others' borrowed symbolic possessions - the ostentatious watch, the ghetto blaster, in a manner which reminds the cultured Western art-enthusiast of genre paintings or emblematic portrayals of saints. The more socially-mobile did not wish to be portrayed in their mud houses. And it was culturally impossible to take pictures of women at all, unless one knew them really well or they were the few occidentalized Cairenes I came across, who occasionally ventured, though not for too long, into Upper Egypt. Market-scenes which I had wanted to be busy and quaint were ruined by people staring at the camera, and village panoramas of mud brick houses were marred by the construction of the new concrete and brick houses which were rapidly replacing them. Children especially, obtruded into the moody mysticism of the photographs, spoiling them by looking directly into the lens and destroying the measured composition: their direct gaze, their excitement gave the lie to the fact that my eye and my person - a young Welshman - stood behind the lens and controlled the perspective. What my pictures attempted at portraying was what could not be seen. What I in fact portrayed was a narcissistic self-portrait, an extension of myself rather than any essential Egypt. In a manner of speaking, the object and the subject of the portrait were the same.

Like some 18th, 19th - and 20th century - visitors to Wales, I became angry at the wrong sort of rags and the wrong sort of ruins: they were not picturesque.

To the eye of the oppressor, his own oppression of others may be invisible or unreflected upon: you do not see what you don't see, nor even the fact that you do not see it. You have to be brought to see what is there. What I only gradually learned to become aware of - and through the knowledge of language, not image, by dint of struggling to speak and understand Arabic - was my own relationship with the camera and with what I sought to portray. Language, after all is the my prime interpretative hermeneutic tool. As a volunteer worker in Egypt, from a richer country, in no way would I have been happy to have been called a tourist. Consciously, I avoided tourists like the plague, turning down side-streets to avoid them

⁴ *Mutatis mutandis*, mae'r un peth yn wir am Gymru - sef Cymru'r twristiaid a "Chymru" Cymry'r "pethe" hefyd, sydd yn dueddol o fodoli'n unig fel petai'n llechi mewn coedwig ramantus, hynafol, dryslyd.

and speaking voluble Arabic loudly in an attempt to express my distance from them. I felt similarly ill-at-ease amongst ex-pat older Brits in Cairo whose experience of Egypt was not impacting on them in the same way as was mine. My own identity as a Welshman, a member of a nation which has its own historical experience of oppression, poverty and colonization made it easier, so I thought, for me to identify with Egyptians. I thought I might learn to see Egypt through the eye of the insider, and that Egyptians might realize that I was interested in more than taking decorative pictures of them. (5) But I am a post-colonial subject who carries within himself a hybrid DNA of perception, so that to a certain extent, I cannot but see with the eye of the colonizer - either my own reality or that of others. And the weight of the tradition of artistic representation is such that, without realizing it, I could not but help forming my photographs like those of a genteel sketcher on her fashionable tour of Wales in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

Eventually I gave up trying to include people in my photographs: I knew too many Egyptians. Instead, I took pictures of buildings, mostly ruins and ancient, crumbling houses redolent of past splendour, until I stopped noticing them too. The eye had lost its outsider's taste for the picturesque, and Egypt had become more or less like anywhere else - a place I lived and worked in. (6)

When after two years, I moved to a peasant village in Java, the humidity caused a fungus to grow on the lens of my Rolleiflex. This clouded all images equally in an identical pattern, and exposed the fact that each apparently unique photograph was somehow anything more than a technical apparatus. Mostly the photographs I have of Java are taken by Indonesians rather than by me: they show me with various groups of people, at parties and weddings. We stand in line, wearing batik shirts, and all of us smile. Sometimes Indonesians have their arm around me. In an ironic inversion, in those photographs, I have become the trophy foreigner, a picturesque ornament.

Having given up on photographs, despairing at the possibility of ever photographing anything than my own perceptions, and expectations, when I began to paint at the age of 40, I included no people in my paintings. (7) Yet the syntax of the traditions of perceptions inevitably invaded my eye and informed my interest. For me, as for so many educated northern Europeans across the centuries, inevitably the landscapes of the Mediterranean were charged with associations and desire: the Classical tradition which

⁵ Mor hawdd yw 'uniaethu' gyda'r gorthymedig, a chymryd yn ganiataol mai un yw'r gorthrwm ac yn yw'r ymdrech. Gyda thraul amser, rwyf wedi dod fwyfwy i amau'r cyffredinol hyn, a'i weld fel ffordd arall o imperialiaeth gudd.

⁶ Collir apêl yr egsotig trwy adnabod a dod yn gyfarwydd. Lle mae'r egsotig yn golygu mewn gwirionedd "yr hyn nad wyf ond yr hoffwn fod," mae pwyslais penodol yn erbyn dod i adnabod yr arall yn iawn, gan ddymuno ei gadw'n bell fel y ceir taflunio dyheadau arno. Mae 'adnabod', cydsyniad canolog Waldo Williams, yn sefyll ar y pegwn pellaf i egstotigiaeth.

⁷ Rwyf eto heb ddeall yn iawn paham yn union na chynhwyswn bobl yn y lluniau hyn. Ai embaras cynnwys pobl oherwydd peryg eu troi'n wrthrychau, ai problemau technegol darlunio pobl nad oedd yn sefyll yn stond? Ai oherwydd byddai presenoldeb pobl rywfodd yn tarfu ar lonyddwch y darluniau tawel?

had informed so much of my formal education, the appropriation of Latin and Greek literature by later European literatures, the whole high art tradition of European landscape painting, the cultured gentlemen's Grand Tour, the age-old idealization of the rural retreat, the fetishization of age and decay. Lemons on trees, the *locus amoenus*, city and the countryside, ruins and goatherds, fallen columns and past glory. The icons of the rural retreat are as plentiful and recognizable as those of Christmas at the shopping mall, and yet by their very ubiquity, they become invisible.

And so the subject of my paintings chose themselves, as it were: variously the intricate, dappled stone of a crumbling Italian farmhouse wall, the varicolor washing hanging out to dry on the terrace of the unkempt 17th century house where we holidayed in Languedoc, the deep shadow in the severe narrow valley above Cwm Ystwyth in rural West Wales where I went on a hike of Wordsworthian length across the mountains. Behind my choice of these places as interesting subjects for portrayal lay millennia of associations of which I was only dimly aware, and whose implications have only dawned on me through study and reflection.

It is not only content that chooses itself: I have received purposely no art tuition, and yet my hand and eye automatically seek and find, and render more or less perfect disappearing perspective - what has been called the myth of depth, which convinces the brain that things which are smaller are in fact further away. But given the weight of my cultural inheritance, naive painting is beyond me, and instinctively, in my amateur attempts at sketching, I followed perspectives laid down centuries earlier. A new perspective, the perspective of what Paul Ricoeur called a second naiveté - required harder work than I was prepared to put into my own leisure painting. (8)

That same Euclidian practice of perspective informs the paintings of most landscape art. What I wonder is whether landscape representation itself can only ever honestly deal with the surface, with appearance. (9) The lines of vanishing perspective converge at a non-specific distance, in a theatrical convention which is based on an illusion, a pretence that that which in fact is (i.e. canvas, oil and pigment, human labor and an editorial perspective which is at once individual and collective), is not; and that which is not ('real' land, history, or the essence of a place being somehow "present" in a painting, universally-perceptible and unconditioned, simple meaning) in fact is. What landscape art so often attempts to portray - an essential and non-contingent concept of land - exists necessarily within a history which is anything but essential and unproblematic. By its apparent evacuation of ideology from land, it is often are even more ideologically-oriented than the most blatant of political imagery.

⁸ Ac yn ogystal, ni ellir bod yn naif os yw rhywun yn ymwybodol ohoni. Fel arall, cwmpid mewn i'r fath o werinoldeb ymwybodol sy'n nodweddu erchylltra Llangollen, lle perfformir cenedligrwydd hanfodol mewn ffordd geidwadol iawn. Mae Billy Connolly yn disgrifio cerddoriaeth werin fel 'bank clerks in polo-necks.'

⁹ Ai gweithred *angenrheidiol* o ormesol yw darlunio tirwedd Cymru a'i droi'n dirlun? A fyddai'n gwneud gwahananiaeth petai'r darlunydd yn Gymraes, neu'n byw yng Nghymru, neu'n medru'r Gymraeg?

But are all landscape pictures necessarily superficial representations of realities which are really beyond total portrayal? There is, you might wish to argue, a celebratory or ludic element to the landscape-art tradition. Yet reading from a hermeneutics of suspicion, the history of the complex relations between culturally and economically dominant groups and what they choose to designate as 'primitive,' shows that it not always easy to distinguish what is celebratory from what is in fact predatory. To "celebrate" cultural specificity or plurality, to discover and cherish the primitive, may well involve affirming the ownership of the center by one class of people, and the commodifying of a marginal group. (10)

Can the landscape picture really show depth? Or is it rather about curiosity : that same distancing technique of engagement-with-disengagement which typifies the attitude of the tourist? Is not the landscape art tradition a sort of aesthetic pietism, which plays with the experience of place rather than engaging with its more ragged and uncomfortable aspects? I believe that an associated family of such apparently innocent activities as tourism, the 'empty beautiful place' landscape painting tradition which derives from the Picturesque school of painting which this essay discusses, retirees and good-lifers retreats to the countryside, with their enthusiasm for walks and gardening, are all reductionisms, forms of cultural imperialism which tend to ignore significant dimensions of land.

Important ethical questions arise concerning such ignorance: whose needs are meet, wilfully or otherwise, by the omission of depth in the perception or portrayal of landscape, either in the camera view-finder or on the sketchbook? Whose interests are served by ignoring the social dimensions of a place and the impact of the outsider on the internal social ecology? The practical analogues of these questions are ones which bear on my own experience in contemporary Wales. The picturesque filtrations which so affected my experience as an outsider, of other cultures, is not only part of the history of Welsh culture: they are its present.

The lineage of these portrayals and perceptions of Wales is a long one. Whilst the Welsh word for Wales, Cymru, is a variation on the of the Welsh, the Cymry (which derives from a root which may mean variously 'comrades,' or 'us' or 'those who share this land'), "Wales," derives from the Anglo Saxon wealas meaning outsiders, those who are 'not us.' The long, fractured and problematic relationship between England and Wales is beyond the scope of this essay: it is one which involves two invisibilities -

¹⁰ Yr ydym ni Gymry, wrth gwrs, yn dra ymwybodol o hynt ffasiwn a ffansi yn hyn o beth. Nodweddir agwedd Lloegr tuag at Gymru gan drai a llanw diddordeb. Pwy sydd biau'r canol? Pwy sy'n safonol a phwy sy'n amrywiaeth ar safonolrwydd? Fel Cymry, daliwn i ein bod yn ein hystyried ein hunain yn ganolog ac yn ymylol ar yr un pryd, gan ddibynnu ar ba sbectol yr ydym yn syllu trwyddi - Prydeindod neu Gymreictod. Ond eto i gyd, oni cheir yng Nghymru, yng "Nghymru" y Cymry amlwg, llengar, dosbarth-canol ac hunan-ymwybodol (sef y garfan rwyf yn aelod ohoni), duedd i feddiannu'r canol ac ymylu a gwrthyrchu grwpiau hefyd - y di-Gymraeg, y Saeson? Ond yr hyn sydd gennyf yn bennaf mewn golwg yw y ffordd mae dymuniadau da tuag at grwpiau lleiafrifol - boed yn Gymry neu'n Frodorion Americanaidd - yn gallu bod yn gyfrwys o gymysg. A gwelaf fwy nag ôl y duedd hon mewn 'ysbrydolrwydd Celtaidd.'

on the one hand the invisibility of dominant modes of thinking and speaking and 'natural' assumptions, and on the other, the invisibility dominated peoples. It is a story negotiated and fluctuating identities, of collusion and accommodation. (11) Not an insignificant part of the relationship involves portrayal - of the English by the Welsh, and of the Welsh by the English.

After centuries of trouble, domestication, trade, and cultural interchange between the inhabitants of England and Wales, only in the 18th century did the land of Wales become a visible category in the English sensibility, with the 'discovery' of the dramatic and beautiful scenery of the Welsh landscape by English travelers, diarists and artists. In the eighteenth century too, a complex national consciousness of Britishness arose - a Protestant project embracing the Welsh and their land, in which the Welsh, although in ways different to the English, willingly colluded.

A major development in the history of representation of Wales came with the school of literature and painting known as the Picturesque: leaving behind a moralizing attitude towards land, and inheriting a fashionable delight in the Sublime, first delineated by Edmund Burke in his 1759 essay, "A philosophical enquiry into the origins of our ideas of the sublime and the beautiful," the theoreticians, poets, gardeners, and consumers of the Picturesque found in the dramatic variations in scenery in Wales, a congenial stage for their interests and preferences. This aesthetic fashion was according to Malcolm Andrews

the building into experience of the countryside of a comfortable myth... the gypsy could be an interesting piece of local colour rather than a peripatetic threat to the status quo.... it was a holding operation, by and for the squirearchy which had lost ground and continued to lose ground in the dynamics of country life.

The notes of comfort and interest remind me disquietingly of my own experience as a traveler - even an informed, well-intentioned and would-be inculturated traveler - in the Third World. Andrews also claims that

¹¹ Gor-symleiddiwyd y berthynas hon droeon er mwyn gwasanaethu mythos statig, ceidwadol parthed natur diwylliant, boed hwnnw'n Gymreig yntau'n Brydeinig. Mae'r hyn a elwir yn *victim culture* yn nodweddiadol o sawl garfan ddifreintiedig: o'ch gweld eich hunain fel aberth yn atgyfnerthu synnwyr o undod fewnol gydag aelodau o'r un garfan. Ond perthyn nifer o sgil-ffeithiau andwyol i feddylfryd o'r fath: cymysgu undeb ag unffurfiaeth, gan arwain at gydymffurfiaeth diliw; atgyfnerthu'r agwedd passiw sydd yn derbyn y status quo; ymgynffwrdd â bod yn orthymedig nes iddi droi'n hanfod hunaniaeth. Mae astudiaethau modern yn dangos mor gymhleth a deinamig yw'r trafod rhwng gwahanol grwpiau a chenhedloedd. Fel Cymry, gosodir syniad am Gymreictod digymysg a hanfodol ochr yn ochr gyda phrofiad 1500 o flynyddoedd o fyw'n gymydog iLoegr. Mae'r berthynas â Lloegr felly'n rhan hanfodol o beth yw Cymry. Mae Edward Said yn dangos hefyd bod y gwrthwyneb yn wir hefyd: diffinir pwerau a chyn-bwerau imperialaidd gan eu perthynas â'u trefedigaethau, ffaith na sylwir arni'n aml gan y pwerau mawr hyn. Gellid honni felly bod perthynas gudd Lloegr â Chymru'n rhan annatod o beth yw Seisnigrwydd, o'r cychwyn cyntaf.

The picturesque interregnum between classic and romantic art was necessary to enable the imagination to form the habit of feeling through the eyes.

That "habit of feeling" is one which, as we will see, services an aestheticist attitude towards landscape, one which, in the case of Wales, has gone hand in hand with a confident and almost unassailable British cultural imperialism. (12)

Nowhere in Wales is more connected with the Picturesque than Hafod, the landed estate in rural Ceredigion, connected with its most famous owner and occupier, Thomas Johnes, 1748-1816.

II

Hafod today is a loaded landscape, a place of strange historical presence and of simultaneous cultural emptiness, in that the historical presence it vehicles is one of vacuity, or rather limited dimensionality.

And for Hafod, one might easily read Wales.

The land at Hafod as it is today is strange for me to stand in as Welshman, in that it embodies little sense of being anywhere in Wales at all. Instead, it carries vague reminiscences of other places: Scotland, Switzerland and because of that, there is a sense in which at Hafod, I feel, certainly, out of place: not in Wales, but not in England either. It is a loaded landscape, a place of strange, theatrical presence and simultaneous emptiness, in that the historical presence it carries is one of vacuity, of disappearance. The

¹² Yn fy llyfr *Sacred Place, Chosen People*, ysgrifennais:

Mae traddodiadau ysbrydol Cymru at ei gilydd yn ymddiddori mewn hanes a gwleidyddiaeth, agweddau cymunedol a moesol. Ond ceir hefyd heddiw agwedd or-esthetig ac unigolyddol tuag at le, agwedd nas ceir bron byth ymlith y Cymry. Dengys holl waith Peter Lord sut y 'darganfuwyd' Cymru gan deithiwr a darlunwyr o Loegr gan bennaf yn y 18eg ganrif - portreadid hi fel gwynfyd gwag, gan anwybyddu ei realii cymdeithasol a gwleidyddol i bob pwrpas, a bychanu ei thrigolion yn gyntefigion lliwgar. Erys yr agwedd wladychiaethol a rhamanteiddus hon yn gref ac yn sionc o hyd - yng Nghymru, ac mewn sawl lle y mae cenhedloedd bychain o bobloedd brodorol yn trigo. Ceir presenoldeb cryf iawn ohono mewn rhai ffurfiau ar 'ysbrydolrwydd Celtaidd.' Fel gydag imperialaeth, methu mae'r model hwn ag ymgorffori agwedd gymdeithasol le, gan ei gyfyngu i ystyriaeth allanol yn unig. Yma, os ystyrir y sanctaidd mewn perthynas â lle o gwbl, fe'i ystyrir fel profiad unigolyddol yn unig, a phe cynhwysir y cymdeithasol yn y model hwn, gwneir hyn gan ystyried cymdeithas y gorffennol yn unig. Serch hynny, goblyga sancteiddrwydd perthynasau cymdeithasol ac felly gwleidyddol. Annigonol yw seilio ysbrydolrwydd lle ar esthetigiaeth ddilychwin yn unig. Mae Rowan Williams yn cynnig sylwadau deublyg sydd yn cywiro agweddau pur esthetigaidd: "Nid yw agwedd esthetig tuag at dirwedd yn cynnwys syniadau. Mae creu syniad y sanctaidd heb y moesol yn ei droi'n esthetig." Er bod esthetigiaeth yn aml yn ymddangos fel agwedd anwleidyddol neu'n annueddiadol, mewn gwirionedd syniad llwyr ideolegol yw, ac yn amlach na pheidio yn ffurf gyfrwys ar drefedigaeth ddiwylliannol neu diriogaethol, sef yr hyn a alwais yn 'hunan-addoliad ysbrydol.' Mae gan y gwahanol agweddau hyn tuag at le gyfatebiaeth mewn materion gwleidyddol ymarferol: er lles pwy mae ystyried lle fel "gwlad fy nhadau," neu "a quiet place to live," fel gwarchodfan bod neu wrthrych masnachol? Mae esthetigiaeth unigolyddo, llawn cymaint â threfedigaeth ac imperialaeth, yn esgor, yn bwrpasol neu'n ddamweiniol, ar ddinistr lle fel lle, a dileu gwahaniaethau lleol arbennig ac anhepgor.

pile of rubble and masonry which is all that remains of the mansion at Hafod, the air of decay and the evidence of constant manipulation of the landscape, mean that today's Hafod is very strongly a reminder of the past. Its existence is a retrospective one. The landscape there, described by some loosely as 'nature' or 'the countryside', is a cultural one, created by thousands of years of human habitation and by the work of successive owners of the place in the last two centuries- particularly by Thomas Johnes, and the British Forestry Commission, who acquired it in the mid 20th century.

To talk of "Hafod" at all is potentially misleading, for the name embraces so many realities: the land which occupies a grid or two of the Ordnance Survey Maps; the various geological, agricultural, environmental, botanical, linguistic and cultural histories of the place; the large house in its constantly evolving appearance and architecture; Thomas Johnes' experiments in agricultural improvement or the whole of his life-long project to merge economic and aesthetics in land-use. The name carries conflicting strata of meaning; and there may be no way of reconciling these into the sort of simple, unproblematic conceptual whole which the Picturesque art tradition suggests is possible. The term itself is vague, meaning at once the various versions of dwelling that have stood there, the estate in its continuously evolving form, and what remains of the mansion and the landscaping today.

The result of this is that it is impossible to see Johnes' Hafod - other than through that Picturesque imaginative habit of feeling through the eyes, for there is no it to see. Only from a few engravings, which vary in detail, do we know the external appearance of Hafod, and these show one elevation, and one perspective only, which means our knowledge will have no depth. Turner's representation of Hafod of 1799 is probably as accurate a representation of the main front of the mansion as his depiction of Pumlumon, the mountain behind it, dressed up to look like Vesuvius or Chimborazi. We cannot see Hafod, quite simply because the dangerous ruin that was there was blown up in 1962. But even what was destroyed was not Johnes' Hafod, particularly since Johnes' first Gothic mansion - itself built on the site of an earlier substantial dwelling - and much of its artworks - along with the original architectural drawings, were destroyed in a fire of 1805. To the lasting chagrin of the members of the Hafod Society, most of Johnes' correspondence concerning Hafod was burnt by Jane Johnes after his death, so that we do not know even know its architectural plan. Not only Johnes himself, but many subsequent owners radically changed the interior and the exterior of Hafod.

There are however specific objects which do remain from Johnes' time : the supports of the bridge across the river Rheidol or the Icehouse; the stumps of some of those more than the six million trees that Johnes had planted, and perhaps even some of those trees themselves; the crumbling Regency estate houses where Jane Johnes, mistress of the estate ran a school for poor girls, and whose gatehouse architecture signals that it is a minor part of a significantly larger and richer whole. There remain small and poignant details of Johnes and of his family: the exact tree where the cripple daughter of the estate, Mariamne Johnes, grafted a south American tree on to a north European root, the holes in the rock which Johnes had made in order to view the torrents and waterfalls from their best, picturesque advantage. More detailed knowledges which can be gained from the Hafod archives will enable the more

intentioned visitor and enthusiast to guess roughly at roughly the walk where Johnes' Scottish gardener fell off his horse and went rather strange afterwards. But Johnes' Hafod itself, is not here. Nor is that world of our here, nor of our now. And I suspect that in some ways, Hafod itself existed as a state of becoming, an ongoing project of potentiality which would and never could be realized, other than as a permanent aspiration. (13)

The strange non-presence of Hafod, its slippery quidditas, means that like Wales itself, it has become a stage for desires, a contested landscape. Two bodies, the Friends of Hafod, and the Hafod Trust, whose membership sometimes has overlapped, have vested interests in the land, and differing attitudes towards its past, present and future. Some dream of restoring the estate, and even rebuilding the house to a state resembling its former glory, the peak years of the Hafod of 1805 or so; others maintain that it should be maintained in its current state of more-or-less picturesque decay, remaining as a stage on which, imaginatively, the past may continue to be dreamed of.

The membership of both bodies reveals, interestingly, that few of the people involved have deep roots in the surrounding area. (14) The antiquarians of the 18th century, the Picturesque lovers of ruins and dramatic landscape all find modern-day descendants still interested in the land of the Hafod estate. Yet antiquarian concerns, and an interest in ruins of the past, although they have a distinct outside flavor, are far from being strangers to Welsh tradition.

Peter Lord's work in Welsh art history shows how the same visual symbol may speak to both Welsh and English, insider and outsider, and yet mean very different things: the inclusion of ancient Welsh ruins in 18th century landscape paintings by Welsh artists or for Welsh patrons fit into a general fashion in art history: but the different knowledges held by Welsh or English viewers and readers meant that the same images, the same places, carried very different meanings and associations for different readers and viewers. Yet Hafod seems to have escaped the Welsh-language imagination. Significantly, although Hafod has generated a whole archive and a literature involving art history, archaeology, novelistic

¹³ *Mieri lle bu mawredd.* "Yma yn awr lle bu unwaith yno a phryd hynny" yw un o *topoi* mawr barddoniaeth Cymru, lle mae'r 'yma' daeryddol ar yr un pryd yn ein cysylltu â'r gorffennol ac yn ein gwahanu rhagddo, gan ymgorffori'r gagendor amhontadwy rhwng ein pryd hynny ac ein nawr. Mae'r daith rhwng y ddau amser bob amser yn ddirywiad, bob amser yn croniclo colli tir, hunaniaeth, balchder, unigrwyedd, bod, gwybod, iaith, llais, eiddo, teulu a chymdogaeth, crefydd a nerth. Nid oes yn y byd barddonol hwn 'adref' posib, dim ond presennol mewn deilchion lle mae'r gorffennol yn herio'r heddiw eto gan ei gysuro mewn yn ei alar. Eto i gyd, mae'r drylliogrwydd hwnnw'n rhyfeddol o wydn, yn *status quo* sy'n rhannol dderbyn gorthrwm, tra'n yn cydgyllwynio gyda'r gorthrwm hwnnw. Mae derbyn maeddiad fel hyn yn golygu derbyn gweld trwy lygaid y treisiwr tra'n goroesi fel thema barddonol - ond fel thema barddonol yn unig: a dyma'r ffurf Gymreig ddiarebol ar ôl-wladychiaeth.

¹⁴ Ceisiais ddaddansoddi'n barchus ac yn ofalus y rhesymau am apêl Hafod i gynifer o Saeson sydd wedi ymgartefu yng Ngheredigion, a'r diffyg apêl i Gymry'r fro. Ni hiraethir fel arfer am y plasdai mawr diflanedig gan y Cymry, oherwydd nid ystyrir y rhain fel rhan o'n hanes *ni*. Ond mae swmp a pwys seicoleg Hafod megis fel pot jam i gynifer o bobl a ddaeth i'r ardal gan chwilio am rywbeth tebyg i Johnes yntau: gwireddu breuddwyd, lledfu ar aflonyddwch bodolaethol. Yn ôl Cliff McLucas, yn ei liaws weithiau theatrig ar Hafod, diffinir Hafod gan ei bellter o'r metropolis, mewn perthynas gymhleth rhwng y canol daeryddol a diwylliannol a'r mylwl.

romance, the vast majority has been written in English alone. I know of no accounts written in Welsh of Thomas Johnes or of his estate during his own lifetime. And only one history, as far as I know, exists in Welsh of Thomas Johnes and Hafod, Dafydd Jenkins' "Thomas Johnes o'r Hafod."

The reasons why the Hafod estate of today raises furious partisan passions amongst its largely English-born and English-speaking enthusiasts, and why, in contrast, I, Welsh-born and Welsh-speaking find the experience of visiting Hafod to be one of distancing, confusion, and alienation, have to do precisely with such differing sets of attitudes towards the past, its meanings and associations, the hopes and desires it evokes. There is a sense when I am in, say, a 19th century Welsh chapel or a medieval church - that I might be tempted to believe I can somehow feel the past quasi-materially present there, by tapping in to an imaginative reconstruction of it, through my own habit of "feeling through the eyes". But such emotional connections with the past, I believe, are purely subjective ones, lying within the individual : a study of the great variety of responses to places and the political uses to which these have historically lent themselves leads me to mistrust any sort of claim to an objective, universally - perceptible *genius loci*. These are sentiments which I mistrust as being self-indulgent, conditioned, learned reflexes, nostalgic and largely aesthetic ones, tied up with simple, apparently a-political notions of history.

So often the Welsh experience of such sentiments is that they have been no more than the latest projection of fashionable English desires on to the apparently blank page of landscape, an act and a mentality which may be generously construed as naivety, or, more suspiciously, as an artistic form of imperialism. (15) Peter Lord has articulated how Wales itself has so often been considered a 'beautiful empty place,' an apparently fresh canvas full of potential, where no apparent history imposes limits on individual imagination and freedom . The cultural vagueness and national ambiguity of Hafod makes of it a similarly seductive opportunity for romantic projections into the past, the most purple example of this being Elizabeth Inglis-Jones' historical novelette, "Peacocks in Paradise" of 1950, which places in the mind of Thomas Johnes ideas which by no means can be assumed to have been there.

The past is so much more easily occupied by imagination and portrayed than the complexities of the present. Yet in the Sisyphean task of interpreting of physical and literary fragments, our only safe guide - and indeed our most valuable one - may well be our own categories and considerations. Perhaps the only

¹⁵ Ond â chrafu'n ofalus, gellid canfod hefyd agweddau nid anhebyg o fewn y Gymru Gymraeg, ac mae olrhain y nentydd hyn i'w llygaid yn waith ditectif addysgiadol. Gan fy nhad cefais y rhan fwyaf o'm haddysg gynharaf a phwysicaf am Gymru ac am Gymreictod. Addysgwyd ef trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg yn Ysgol Cadle, Abertawe yn 20au a 30au'r ganrif ddiwethaf. Gyda threigl y blynddyddoedd deuthum i raddol adnabod ôl O. M. Edwards ar syniadaeth genedlgarol fy nhad. Mae "Cartefi Cymru" O. M. Edwards er enghraifft, â'i weledigaeth o wladaid o gartrefi'r werin ddiwylliedig, yn ddyledus i ddarlithoedd Ruskin yn Rhydychen. A gellid dadlau mai syniad nodweddiadol o Ramantus ei darddiad am *genius loci* - ond gan wisgo amdano frethyn Cymreig - yw agwedd O.M.Edwards tuag at Gymru. Iddo ef hefyd yn anad neb arall, mae'r pwyslais ar y gwledig fel rhan anhepgor o Gymreictod yn ddyledus; iddo ef hefyd nid tipyn o'r anwybyddu neu ddirmyg tuag at Gymry di-Gymraeg - chwedl Gwenallt, "bratiaith Saeson y De" . Dilynydd O.M.Edwards yn y duedd gwledigaidd hon gan y rhelyw o genedlgarwyr Cymru.

thing we can ever be sure of discovering in a search for the lost paradise of Johnes' Hafod is will be what we are secretly hoping to find: reflections of ourselves and our contemporary concerns.

III

I have talked of the history of Hafod as one involving portrayals and invisibilities. Not far from the Hafod estate- perhaps a good morning and half an afternoon's walk, along today's metalled roads, lies the small village of Llangeitho, the scene of the first and one of the most dramatic religious revivals of the 18th century, centered around the charismatic leadership of its parish priest, Daniel Rowlands. During the 1740's, crowds of up to 4000 would travel to Llangeitho for *seiadau*: these Methodist meetings included long, loud preaching; religious jumping and enthusiastic shouting which was interpreted as a regular sign that the spirit was moving and that God approved of people's experience; and dramatic conversions. Although by time that Thomas Johnes inherited the Hafod estate in 1784, the Llangeitho revival had died down, it was still attracting many visitors and converts, including the future leaders of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism. An ongoing series of revivals across Wales following on from Llangeitho and the development of a chapel-based culture would over the course transform Welsh society by the creation of a literate, middle class, the growth of a disaffection with the British Establishment - of whom Thomas Johnes, as an Eton-educated, rich landlord and as colonel of a country militia, was a typical example.

Yet neither the social changes wrought in Welsh consciousness by the growth of Methodism, nor the physical transformation of parts of Wales by rapid industrialization, find little echo in the world of the Picturesque. (16) Johnes, it is true, unlike some other Welsh landlords of the time employed Methodists :

¹⁶ Mae fy nghyfaill Margaret Ames wedi tynnu fy sylw at uchel eironi y cyferbyniad rhwng agweddau Methodistaidd ac agweddau pendefigaidd a bourgeois yr ymwelwyr o Saeson tuag at dir ar adeg yr ymweld mawr â Hafod. Ffordd o grefydd - neu'n hytrach o grefyddda - oedd "Romantic Transcendentalism" a oedd wedi dechrau egino yn y Picturesque. Yn y Picturesque nid oes lawer o le i ystyriaethau crefyddol - *teimlo* tirwedd y mae'r ymwelwyr, yn hytrach na'i ddarllen fel testun crefyddol fel y gwneid mewn oes o'r blaen. Nes at theatr na litwrgi yw byd y Picturesque. Eto i gyd, ceir yn llenyddiaeth y Picturesque elfen nid bechan o'r crefyddol, yn yr ystyr bod tiroedd Cymru yn cael eu disgrifio - gan Saeson yn unig i ddechrau - fel darn o wynfyd, a'r *locus amoenus* (mewn ambell i baradwys ar y ddaear megis Hafod) yn darparu rhyw rhagflas nefol. Erbyn dechrau'r 19eg ganrif, cafwyd tro arall yn y berthynas rhwng tir a chrefydd: yn lle gweld natur fel rhan o gread Duw, ac felly fel gair yn y *Liber Naturae* (yn ôl y traddodiad diwinyddol canoloesol), dechreuwyd gweld natur fel nerth dwyfol ynnddi ei hun, rhyw ddychwelyd i baganiaeth.

Gwahanol iawn yw agweddau Methodistaeth gynnar tuag at y byd o'u cwmpas, sydd a'i bryd ar brydferthwch nefol yn hytrach na tlysnï Cymru, ac sydd yn pwysleisio - yn ddealladwy iawn, o gael yr amodau economaidd oedd ohoni yn y cyfnod - bendithion y byd i ddod, a'r angen i ddianc iddo. Yn hyn o beth, dilynent draddodiad Cristnogol hynafol iawn sydd yn ystyried y byd hwn fel man alltud: *hoc exilium, lacrimarum valle*, chwedl y *Salve Regina*. Prydferthwch nefol sydd yn nodweddu ysbrydolrwydd Unionged y Dwyrain ac Ann Griffiths hithau.

Ond mae yno debygrwydd hefyd. Teimladrwydd, drwgdybiaeth gwerth y deallus, a phwysicrwydd profiad sydd yn nodweddu'r Picturesque a Methodistaeth fel eu gilydd. Cododd Methodistaeth yn yr un cylchoedd breintiedig yn Lloegr â'r Picturesque: ceir ystyried felly y ddau fydd meddylol hyn - sef Methodistaeth Cymru a thwristiaeth Saesneg - nid yn unig fel gwythgyferbyniadau pegynnol i'w gilydd, ond yn ogystal fel dau ymddangosiad cyfochrog a dau ymateb i'r un cefndir cymdeithasol.

his voting as a Member of Parliament, for Catholic emancipation suggests a tolerant and liberal attitude. A desire for change certainly is present in Johnes' own world, in his untiring efforts for the betterment of agricultural practice. Yet there is a sense in which Johnes' class exists in or rather aspires to a certain static timelessness. Where human activity intrudes into so many landscape paintings of it is in a wistful, unchallenging way. The landscape-artists' Wales is comfortably unchanging and ancient, static and stable. It is easy to see the comforting appeal of this vision at the turbulent end of the 18th century, especially to members of a class whose social equivalents across the Channel were being guillotined with wondrous efficiency, in the name of universal brotherhood and liberty.

Methodism appears in the accounts of many 18th and early 19th English travellers in Wales as a bizarre and unwished-for modern development, characterized by enthusiastic and bizarre charismatic behaviour, its very novelty going against the grain of those who, guidebook in hand, desired, hoped and expected to find picturesque primitivity, remote from centers of civilization. In fact, Methodist preachers of the early period were educated men of a certain class, faithful subjects of the King bilinguals by education and by inclination. In constant touch with Whitfield and Wesley, they were frequent visitors to London. Travelling almost incessantly throughout Wales, on circuits which would take them to north and south through all the places mentioned in the English travelers' diaries books and journals, they never mentioned the beauty of the mountains nor the appearance of Wales. Their correspondence deals with named people, with the urgent business of salvation, not with grotesques or picturesque peasants.

So many of the early travellers to Wales experienced and produced an edited version of land : one which is exclusively concerned with its sublimity, and which whose center of interest is not the land per se but the emotions and sensations produced within the viewer and traveler. Theirs is a purely aesthetic experience, in that it apparently deals above all with a surface reality - the physical appearance of certain areas of Wales: the lush pastures and woods of South East Wales, the Wye tour (Wales being packaged at a very early stage into neat commodities, defined as a series of Tours), and the sublime mountains and waterfalls of the North Wales tour, which included as an optional tour a visit to Johnes' Hafod.

From 1750 or so onwards, the landscape artist had risen in the ranks of the scale of artistic esteem, with the concomitant result that in landscape art, human presence and activity became increasingly marginalized. The rise in the status of landscape coincided and it could be argued, was intimately connected with increasing numbers of fashionable English tourists who traveled around Wales, precisely in order to view its sublime and beautiful, rough and dramatic scenery. Prime among the promoters both of Picturesque portrayal and tourism was the humorless clergyman William Gilpin, whose published Tours of parts of Wales, Scotland and the Lake district established these areas as worthy of being examined and portrayed.

Famously, the inhabitants of places enter into view rarely in the Picturesque art tradition, and when they do, it is at the edge of the frame, - as in the manner of Claude - generally at the edge of the composition;

ideally, these should be interesting but genericized and nameless rustics who set off the harmonized perception of foreground, middle distance, wings, and further distance in a highly formalized portrayal. The native is therefore at the service of the spectator's acts of perception, setting off the natural world, an accoutrements to the central exercise, which is the monied tourist's act of "discovering" places which corresponded to the Picturesque canons of taste, then surveying, describing, and portraying them. She is framed in a purview whose cultural references are those of another class - the educated, leisurely class; she is viewed from a perspective not her own - that of an outsider; and the landscape in which she is set is imagined and interpreted through the filter of the Mediterranean, evoking Classical landscapes and Classical ideals of rurality. An authoritative canon of things that a person who seeks to belong to that class has to know is mirrored in a canon of places to visit, sights to see, behold and capture. Perception is specific to class and culture, most signally so when it claims to be objective and universal. The Picturesque involved not a little social aspiration on the part of the middle class towards the past-times of the aristocracy. The landscape with castles which could be found all over Italy could also be re-located in Wales, for travellers who were unable to undertake the Grand Tour by reasons of politics, finance or convenience. The Arcadian "Land of pure delight" redolent of an idyllic past, all goat herds and ruins, the prospect best seen framed by the shade of trees reveals itself to be a versatile mindset, capable of being projected on to any potentially empty piece of landscape. The same relics of decayed nobility which could be found in Sicily could be discovered amongst the ruins of Wales - Wales itself being, according to some early travellers, the very rubble of creation, Cambrian rocks being among the most ancient of geological strata, and the Welsh language a primitive survival, worthy of being detailed and mapped, surveyed, cherished, and displayed to a discerning audience. In the library at Hafod lay Thomas Johnes' substantial collection of medieval Welsh manuscripts: the act of cultural acquisition turns the owner of ancient artefacts into epistemological gatekeepers with the right and duties of maintain interpretation of the past.

If the peasants of the Picturesque and of Johnes' estate are silent, visitors to Wales - Dr Johnson, Coleridge, George Borrow, Faraday, de Quincy being only a few of those who made the Grand Tour of Wales between 1750 and 1850 - are however far from voiceless. The authors of the more than a hundred books on touring in Wales published between 1770 and 1839, let alone the many manuscripts on the same subject today kept at the National Library of Wales, express themselves without exception in a language and manner and with the stentorian authority of a class which guarantee them a hearing. They are the speakers of discourse of a class which itself literally owns the landscape as well as the right to survey and describe it. And they embody a natural wide gamut of attitudes: from delight at finding amongst Welsh a rude and natural hospitality and noble-savage gentility, to dismay at the dirt and poverty of the Welsh farmers. Sometimes, the Welsh are the wrong sort of natives, with inappropriate attitudes - surly rather than servicial, cheating and exploitative rather than naive and generous. And sometimes the Picturesque desire for the primitive meets with overgratification, as in the case of the tourists who come face to face with the practice of public defecation and who are attacked in their lodgings by fleas. Neither Picturesque paintings of Wales, nor the many "Descriptions of Wales" published between 1750 and 1850 pay much attention to the social and political dimensions of land. Social change and unrest finds no echo in these portrayals.

In that Thomas Johnes' own Hafod is a rural retreat created according to the imagination of the metropolis, it illustrates the fact that the Picturesque, whilst ostensibly about descriptive attention being paid to the concrete detail of the here and now in which the gaze of the viewer finds itself, is precisely so often not about that here-and-now. Rather its center of gravity is elsewhere, and its sense of history one which is about a romantic past which has no living connection with the present. Consequently it appropriates the here, the specific place it visits, observes and portrays, into a cultural and perceptual world which is far from it, dissolving its temporal and historical specificity into a vague a-historicity. And so, what is pictured is precisely what is not geographically there - i.e. the cultural center of gravity, several hundred miles away.

The picturesque gaze is one of appropriation. Inexorably it results from and contributes to other, more material appropriations: wide-assuming embraces which assimilate the local and the particular into a the uniformity of empire commonwealth or empire. It is this continuing dominance of the embrace of culturally vague non-locatedness with all its imperial arrogance, that I find still present and still unsettling and alienating at today's Hafod, and in contemporary Hafodic enthusiasm.

Paradoxically, in that search either for a difference experience of land, which might somehow be experienced or acquired and exported, the travellers brought and bought nothing but their own essence and their own desires. Tourism so easily reflects back to us our own desires, our own hopes, in a closed circle of cultural narcissism. Hafod was on a well-established tourist route; indeed Andrews claims that it was built as a tourist attraction. And like so many tourist attractions, it became victim of its own success. An original aristocratic sensibility - accessible to those with cultural and financial access to places remote from cultural and financial centers - was inevitably followed by middle-brow, middle-ranking and middle-class aspirations, so that the earliest Picturesque travellers, conversant with their Virgil, give way over time to a more populist, popular and populated version, in which less educated travelers had to be provided with the correct Classical references and English translations of these in order to experience the appropriate, authentic Picturesque experience. What does not change with the centuries, in this process, but actually becomes more pungent, are the dichotomies involved in the visitor's encounter with inhabited land: the outsider's eye cannot see even the insider let alone see through her eyes. And outsider and insider are part of a wide universe of associated polarities which the Hafod invokes: uninhabited and inhabited, desert and habitat, rootless and rooted, unlocated and located, internationalist and nationalist, a-historical and historical.

Part of the very appeal of the Picturesque was the promise of secession from history into the staginess of timeless essentialism. One strange picture of 1804 by Thomas Stothard, which once hung in Hafod's library shows a *fête champêtre* in the grounds of Hafod: it is not clear in which century the elegant revelers are, whether they are in fancy dress or whether this is an anachronistic evocation of a bygone era to which Johnes aspired, yet the house pictured is clearly that of Johnes. By seceding from history, the discomfort of uncomfortable social realities and moral issues is assuaged in another manifestation of

distancing, avoidance and denial. The tone of the painting is performative, imbued with a knowing self-consciousness, nostalgic for a naivety which has been lost - and yet, by the presence of a very solid-looking Hafod in the distance of the picture, it is an affirmation of stability and immutability in the face of the threat of change and decay. But an a-historic pose is as chimerical and impossible as is an a-political stance. Both mask a series of highly-contingent, historical and political templates through which all reality may be read as being the only possible reality. (17)

Hafod's own apparent a-politicality - both the fragmented, ruined and dreamy Hafod of 2001 and the Hafod of 1804 are equally as contingent. That aestheticist, a-temporal, essentialist world of Hafod - and the Wales portrayed and colonised by the outsider eye - is no more than an illusion - one which is variously comfortable (for those who the illusion benefits) or frustrating one (those who are actively disempowered by its surprisingly tenacious existence). What I wonder is to what extent the very tradition itself of landscape portrayal of rural Wales, the consideration of Wales as being primarily a landscape - an object for ideological viewing - has been an act of cultural disempowerment for the people and histories which have been absented from those representations of Wales by the pointing finger of the visitor.

IV

A well-established contemporary debate brings together theories of cognition and their foundations in various ideologies. The written observations on Wales of Picturesque tourists are closely related to the particular physical perspectives chosen by Picturesque painters to maximize dramatic effect of their composition: Gilpin's directions, for example, favour a low center of gravity within a picture, so as to emphasize the grandeur of mountains and the height of waterfalls, and advice the adjustment, addition or subtraction of real details in order to improve the view and the portrayal of it. Increasingly, from the Italian Renaissance onwards, what constituted a picture had been defined by the spectator and his position: the sense of reality was based on a separation between subject and object, and the presence of an individual ego who rationally reconstructs a world according to the tenets and processes of his beholding. Here, only one perspective is possible, one which is both visually and ideologically obvious, tantamount to universal; such 'natural' views are held to be beyond rational question or doubt. Alternative experiences and views quite literally, find no place within this rigid grid of perception.

¹⁷ Pur wael o ran ei dechneg yw'r darlun hwn o waith Thomas Stothard, ond eto i gyd mae wedi aros yn hir yn y cof gennyf: â bwrw bod y peth yn hongian yn llyfrgell, Hafod, pa agweddau, pa ddyheadau fu'r Hafod ffantasiol yn eu cynrychioli, tybed? Beth oedd y berthynas rhwng y cwmni di-hid a bortreadir ar lawnt Hafod yn eu gwisgoedd ffansi, a'r teulu go iawn a drigai yno. O fewn y teulu, cecrus iawn â dweud y lleiaf oedd pethau rhwng Thomas Johnes a'i fam a'i frawd-yng-nghyfraith, a bu rhyngddynt gyfreithia di-ball; roedd Mariamne, merch yr Hafod, yn dechrau dioddef yn enbyd o scoliosis. Er gwaethaf awyrgylch hyfryd y llun hwnnw, nodweddyd blynyddoedd caled y 1790au gan derfysgoedd (gan gynnwys rhai ar gei Aberystwyth) a newid cymdeithasol cyflym a dybryd.

That pointing finger of the Picturesque belongs to a man - and sometimes of a woman - of a certain class, nationality and period. The definition of the Picturesque as a 'holding operation' suggests the existence a potentially troubling world outside the pleasant parameters of the beautiful: the world of the Picturesque in its very search for a-politicality and a-historicity suggests, by their very absence, that it is a retreat from discomfoting realities. Cultural historians note the Lisbon earthquake as the beginning of a modern era, the stripping away of the comforting idea that in a beneficent, providential universe, all is ordained and static. The French Revolution and the Revolution Wars that followed made foreign travel dangerous for the British upper classes. Earlier, religious certainties - a divinely-ordained social order, a providential universe, had already shown that they were untenable. Scholarship had begun to suggest that Babel, as Biblical evidence for a common origin of language, was simply not true, or rather, that it was not simply true. Late eighteenth-century, Enlightenment religion had retreated into a safe concern with socially-useful morality rather with metaphysics.

Such factors meant a transfer of intellectual interest away from the classical world of the Mediterranean and a 'discovery,' by English intellectuals, of the primitive world co-existing on England's very doorstep, a discovery which was far from being hostile. The developments of better roads in Britain in the eighteenth century made access to Wales more possible for the English, likewise for the Welsh intelligentsia who had made London their capital. Thomas Grey's two most famous poems, the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* and *The Bard* of 1757 had established respectively, two traditions of national representation, English and Welsh. *The Bard* had become a motif of the Welsh spirit, a mainstay of the iconography of Wales, in both English and Welsh variants, and had highly influenced the image of Welsh landscape as being a theatre of dramatic events. One of the most famous of bardic images was made in 1774 by Thomas Jones of Pencerrig, himself a frequent visitor to Hafod. An iconic variant on the Bard was the Druid, a truly British figure (with all the historical slipperiness that that epithet embodies) who was both present in Classical literature yet who also resisted Roman domination. In painting and in literature, both figures and the interests they represent would long outlive the Picturesque. They are part of the rediscovery of the Celtic periphery, to which the Picturesque is intimately related. In a more complex way, they also played part in the domestication of Wales and, by the mechanism of the characterization of the Celtic as eccentric. And yet bard and druid also form a historical part of the resistance by the Celtic periphery to cultural and imperial British assimilation.

Such considerations of culture and imperialism are relevant to Hafod, and the treatment of the Celtic periphery is closely connected, practically and ideologically, with the development of the British Empire during the course of the 18th century. A genteel Welsh interest in antiquarian linguistic matters gradually gave way to a British and German-influenced science of comparative linguistics: the work of William Jones, London-born son of a Welsh-speaking father, establishing the concept of Indo-European language families depended on the discoveries, mistakes and enthusiasms of previous Welsh scholars, and formed a significant political milestone in the relations between Britain and India. In Ireland, whilst resistance movements to English domination continued to bubble up, military surveyors mapped and

quantified land. Celticism itself is easily read as a sister-movement to Orientalism, with all of the latter's cultural complexity and longevity. A respectful interest in Wales and an awareness of its ancient culture co-exists paradoxically with less obvious and benevolent attitudes: a desire that it should exist exclusively as an antiquarian curiosity, and an assumption that its only future could be that of cultural assimilation.

Such complexities apparently lies a million miles from the would-be timeless world of Hafod: yet they were part of the worldview of Johnes and his cultural peers. More directly relevant for us is the fact that these complexities continue to exist, co-implicated in Hafod's contemporary manifestations, to which we might give the name hafodism. Typical of this mentality are the projection of existential needs on to an idealized rural landscape, the search for a simple, less pressured lifestyle than that of the metropolis yet which embodies metropolitan values, the appropriation and commodification of land as "empty place" or as beautiful landscape, and the separating-out of oneself from the social ecology, in an assumption that the individual has no impact on - and therefore no moral responsibility - to the social environment in which she chooses to live or to move to. Such values are essentially Picturesque ones.

In so many ways then, Picturesque attitudes are children of their own time and place, a retreat into comforting realm of feeling and sensation. At an earlier point in the 18th century, the contemplation of landscape had been thought of as providing an opportunity for moral thought. At this point in the late eighteenth century, certain mental attitudes had not yet fully developed. It is still too early for us to find amongst the sketchers and writers a sense of transcendental interests, that interest in wild and semi-divine freedom which so would so characterize later Romantic attitudes towards place. Indeed, in the essentially conservative world of the sketchers, visitors and gardener, the word 'liberty' at this juncture begins to take on a particular suspect coloring. The Picturesque represents the foregrounding of the aesthetic in the consideration of land, and as the Welsh theologian Rowan Williams points out, the aesthetic in respect to landscape does not involve morals nor indeed intellectually-dense ideas. It is the world of immediate sense-data which dominates, the dizzying height of mountains and rocky torrent, the marvel at venerable age of twisted rocks and oaks. Since the Picturesque visitor brings along with her guide book, a large number of assumptions and attitudes, then she is more or less inured against unpleasantness, and more or less assured of pleasant surprise and novelty and a limited but rapidly changing spectrum of emotions: awe, giddiness, rapture, dread, curiosity. Sound and sight sensations are dramatic and varied.

The evaluating criteria for the picturesque is which and which degree of sensations the various elements of land evoke within the perceiver. George Cumberland's *An Attempt to Describe Hafod*, in his gushing account of the walks created by Johnes, praises the naturalness and beauties of this cultural landscape. And in the same way as I find the Hafod of today an embodiment of a way of looking at land which is not my own, Cumberland's enthusiasm for Hafod, with its total exclusion or unawareness of even the existence of its inhabitants, let alone any cultural resonance, is for me an alienating reminder of the ways

in which I feel that my own existence has been factored out or diminished by so many visitors to contemporary Wales in their perception of my country.

Cumberland's pages abound with literary references - Latin, Greek and English references. His guidebook describes and defines the experiences of finding civilization (i.e. the cultured intimacy of Johnes' family circle) amongst what he terms as wildness (a savagery and absence of civilization). And significantly, in the few places in his text do we gain any sense of Hafod as being an inhabited landscape, then this is through the agency of a few dwellings - a humble cottage, a mill. Such history as exists is either 'natural history,' or so bardically or druidically ancient as to have no repercussions upon the visitor's reality, no demands upon his response to it other than that of playing the role of being spectator at a drama whose text is 'nature.'

I have talked of the Picturesque as a conservative movement yet also described Thomas Johnes an member of an avant garde circle, well versed and interested in agricultural experiments just as in literature and art. A letter of 1783 describes his satisfaction at Hafod which was becoming his theatre of experiment. Early on in the development of Hafod, in accordance with Payne Knight's theories, Johnes had had walks set out in a way which would maximize the variety of gradual and theatrical unfolding of sights: what appeared to be a spontaneous discovery of place actually involved a high degree of dexterous planning and execution of landscaping. The walks were carefully planned so that they would occlude then reveal, frighten and then delight, intrigue and then surprise the sensations of the visitor: this is the vocabulary of entertainment for a leisured class.

Neither formal pleasure garden nor wild, uncharted and untamable wilderness, Hafod sought to partake of both these things, involving pleasure and a certain safe danger together. The physical danger of true exploration was presented here in a sedate, limited way. The land at Hafod was experienced by Johnes and his visitors as a locus amoenus: nature tamed, clipped and formed, channeled, described, viewed and appreciated. From the reign of Louis XIV onwards, the European garden of the aristocrat and landowner had become considered as an extension to the house. Such devices as the haha and the grand avenue at Versailles lent the lie to the idea that a world of civilization and rationality, meaning and order extended out seamlessly from the house into the garden, and thence to the horizon.

To an extent, the Picturesque stood in reaction to such cultivating manipulations. And yet there is a sense, through its very cult of the natural, that the Picturesque, in its most naturalistic mode, is the least natural thing possible, for it appropriated the natural world into the sphere of gardening. Johnes' own extensive estates included mountain moorland, pasture and arable land, woods and rocky valleys: it was possible to walk beyond the Hafod estate and still remain within its mental demesne. As Rebecca Solnit points out in "Wanderlust," "The.. aristocrates cultivating a taste for nature were... politically positioning themselves and their social order as natural. As the walls come down, the garden proposes that there is already an order in nature and that it is in harmony with the 'natural' society already enjoying such gardens.' And the portrayal of Wales as she appears in the landscape pictures in the travel books of the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, although apparently claiming to celebrate and reproduce her natural splendors for a distant and appreciative public, is in fact as contrived a garden as the pathetic Versailles farm of Marie Antoinette as she played out the age old pastoral idyll with her perfumed cows and laundered sheep.

Hafod was home to various forms of gardening: Johnes' own landscaping, through the creation of paths and the damming of the River Ystwyth; the market garden which supplied the mansion; Mrs. Johnes' more formalized Flower Garden, and the peculiar garden of Mariamne, daughter of Johnes, with its picturesque moss house and grafted trees. The botanical impulse expressed a desire to inhabit the land, to shape and possess, to beautify and civilized its roughness.

I have talked of Hafod as a cipher for the whole of the country of Wales, a microcosm of attitudes and practices, and of the links between this country, John Bull's other island, and the wider empire. India, Ireland and Wales are the outlying gardens of the British Empire: each of these is regarded, imperially, as virgin territory with inhabitants whose land 'calls out' to be tended, pastorally, by Britain's benevolent shepherds, its original wildness beautified into civilization, landscaped into conformity with pre-existing ideals. (18)

In this relationship, the other is experienced as exotic and eccentric, and frequently functions as a screen on which are projected desires and fears, the shadow side of the powerful, the voiced and visible. All danger of deep encounter is potential and possible, but not actual, since actual encounter would demand an internal change on the part of the perceiving colonizer. The object of perception - the landscape (and its inhabitants if they enter into the equation at all) have no choice but to be perceived, chartered, described, surveyed, visited, gardened and sometimes colonized, culturally or materially. The result of this limited and muzzled encounter is that land is experienced by the visitor at a juvenile level of flirtation, no more, for the encounter is with its surface appearance only, an encounter at two dimensions, which leaves out historical and social factors. The Picturesque tour catered successfully to an adolescent, touristic desire for quick sensations and unchallenging, easy gratifications.

¹⁸ Yng Ngwanwyn 2001, fel rhan o ymateb y wasg Seisnig i sylwadau Seimon Glyn ar Radio Wales ynglyn ag effaith y llu mewnfudwyr o Saeson ar ecoleg cymdeithasol, ieithyddol ac economaidd Gogledd Cymru, ymddangosodd nifer o erthyglau wrth-Gymreig a gwrth-Gymraeg yn y wasg Seisnig a Chymreig. Ymhlith y rhain, safai allan am ei mileindra erthygl yn yr *Independent on Sunday* gan Janet Street-Porter, golygydd y papur hwnnw. Gellir olrhain tras ei sylwadau adweithiol syth yn ôl i'r 17fed ganrif. Ymhlith cynnwys ei beirniadaeth emosiynol o hallt ar y Cymry'n gyffredinol oedd canmol mewnfudwyr Seisnig diweddar am 'making beautiful gardens.'

Mae'r awch i ddofi a phrydferthu tir a'u troi'n faethlon yn wir yn rhan o orchymyn diwylliannol Duw i Adda ac Efa wedi'r Cwmp... noder mai tir diffaith yw'r tir hwn cyn iddo gael ei ddi-wyll(τ)io, a gyfieithir yn y Fwlgat gan *desertum*, sef tir lle nad oes neb yn trigo. Nid anodd felly yw gweld y bras-gysylltiadau sydd yn cyplysu meddiannu tir, a gwladychu tiriogaeth a'r 'making beautiful gardens' hwnnw. Pan ystyrir gwlad fel tir gwag, hawdd iawn ystyried ei droi'n ardd fel braint neu ddyletswydd hyd yn oed.

Such half-engagement, half-disengagement is, I believe, what typifies the Picturesque attitude towards place - and as such, it is a variation on a theme which is heard in so many places and times. Socially and culturally, Hafod stood apart from the sort of rural society in which it found itself - a society which was un-self-reflective, stoic, and unsentimental about its connections with land, and for whom 'nature' was not a category of thought and for whom the land was where they sought to survive rather than an object to be appreciated for its beauty.

For all the claims made for the charms of the rural retreat from Virgil and Horace onwards, this is a rurality filtered through urban eyes which have somehow lost a connection with an originary paradise, and through a Fall in consciousness, become aware of disconnection with the countryside, so that the experience of the rural is one of nostalgia. In the world of the Picturesque, the city and urban culture are ever present by their conspicuous absence - in the values and techniques and very structures of portrayal.

Nowhere is this mixture of proximity and separation more evident than in the treatment of the people who inhabit these gardens of innocence. Johnes' own letters evince a complex, if patrician, attitude and sensibility: he complains of his peasant tenants' unwillingness to accept his innovations, yet they are his tenants, and although often absentee, Johnes is nevertheless, by the changing standards of his time, a benevolent and interested landlord. For Johnes was not only aesthete: he was also landlord with a serious commercial investment in his own property, an indefatigable agricultural improver and innovator. We, in our age and with our categories, might easily classify the Picturesque as a conservative movement: within the terms of his own times, Johnes might equally well appear as an avant-garde theoretician and pioneering practitioner.

At this juncture, then, a more sophisticated treatment of Johnes himself is called for, one which distinguishes him from many visitors to Wales. Sometimes, in a simplistic, non-historiographical mentality typical of school-taught history, people ask whether Thomas Johnes and the Hafod project was a good thing or a bad thing, looking for reasons to approve or disapprove of Johnes and his work. Such questions are simple and treacherous, since they can only be answered with simple answers, with categories of our own times and places, in which we will tend to find reflected our own partialities and cultural habits: how we view Hafod now, what we think it was about then, will inevitably be affected by who we are, by our own history, and by what we expect to find there.

In the same way, writers and Hafod enthusiasts will through the very act of portrayal, inevitably project their own concepts and concerns on to Johnes, making a Johnes in their own image and likeness. The one Welsh-language account of Thomas Johnes differs noticeably in tone from most other 20th century accounts: art history or landscape or the ups and downs of Johnes' domestic life typify the accounts in English. These elements find their place in Dafydd Jenkins' account, but he denotes significant space and a detailed account to a decided interest in Johnes as agricultural pioneer - an element which receives less attention in English writings on Johnes and Hafod, which tend to be more preoccupied with the Hafod myth, the romance and drama of the Johnes family, or the importance of Hafod for art history.

Noticeably too, Jenkins stresses Johnes' Welsh background, ancestry and antiquarian interests, presenting him - fairly, I believe - as a generous and sympathetic host to Welsh scholars interested in his significant collection of Welsh manuscripts. Jenkins' Johnes is no distanced aesthete, nor is Hafod defined by its distance either from the metropolis or Welsh tenant society: instead, we see a reasonably benevolent landlord, thoroughly involved in local affairs.

A more complex response to how we view Johnes and his place in the development of the Picturesque would seek to see and experience the world of Thomas Johnes in order to better understand the meaning for him of his grand obsession and life-long project: Johnes was scion of ancient but not particularly distinguished Welsh family of squires, belonging vaguely to minor aristocratic circles, educated at Eton and Edinburgh University; a traveler like so many of his class, on the Grand Tour through France and Italy; a cultured Classicist, translator of Latin and medieval French, and avid bibliophile and art collector; a magistrate and a Member of Parliament and a colonel of a militia, a member of a class which would not for a moment question its own sense of privilege and noblesse oblige responsibilities. Such knowledges as we can acquire through study might help us to believe that we can understand Johnes: yet such belief is an act of faith and maybe of naive hubris, for we can neither see the landscape that Johnes saw at Hafod - since it is materially past and gone for ever, place being always fluid in its nature - nor can we see as Johnes did.

But if it is impossible to know Johnes, or the mentality of his class other than by their literary and material remains (which we inevitably interpret according to our own schemata), then the attitude of his tenants towards land, is even more remote from us for they lack any corresponding material culture to represent them as individuals in the same way that Johnes and members of his class are represented. Later generations of Welsh writers, poets and scholars, many of whom were from humble backgrounds, articulated a close connection between local identities and land as being an essential component of Welshness. These cultural entrepreneurs created the powerful myth of an industrious, sober, cultured rural folk rooted in a sense of place, and retro-projected this ideal into previous centuries of peasant existence. But it is impossible to know to what extent this nexus already existed, even inchoately, at the time of Johnes, and how much later generations' evocations of Welshness owes to an internalized Romanticism.

Yet there is a way in which we can find at least fragmentary suggestions of what Welsh tenant farmers' and peasants' attitudes towards land might be: historical and legal records show the importance placed by tenant farmers upon maintaining and expanding their land-holding, the desire of tenants to remain on their tenanted farms, their unwillingness to expend capital on improving their holdings lest this weaken their financial security, and the desire to buy land. The image of Welsh rural societies - such as that at Hafod at the end of the eighteenth century - that emerges is that of tightly-knit communities, bound together in a complex web of mutual responsibility, suspicious of outsiders, and imbued with a strong sense of loyalty to a particular neighborhood. Yet such information as we have is fragmentary: any attempt to enter reconstruct mental attitudes is filled with potential traps. But what we have access

to suggest an attitude to land which is very different from that of the visitors: one in which attachment to land equals an unsentimental attachment to life and which is part of a whole fabric of interlocked social relations. There is no evidence in this ecology which suggests that land was experienced as the aesthetic commodity of landscape. And as a mindset very different to the mainstream of British political and intellectual life as represented by arts and letters at the turn of the eighteenth century, dominated as these are by class considerations, it is one which is within that world, invisible, insignificant peripheral and inaudible.

There is of course an obvious reason for such silence, which is the matter of language. The squirearchy to whom Johnes belonged were gradually becoming anglicized in language and culture. Though he read and translated French and Latin, Johnes spoke no Welsh. Gwallter Mechain (1761-1849), one of a group of literary Anglican priests who were seeking to sustain the relics of medieval Welsh literature, is our source for the observation that Johnes regretted his knowledge of lack of the Welsh language. In common with most inhabitants of most of late 18th century Wales, Johnes' peasantry was almost entirely monoglot Welsh in language, and he consequently could not converse directly with them, other than through an interpreter. (19) Yet in the contested matter of national identities - British, English and Welsh - , Thomas Johnes illustrates the fact that such delineations are never hermetically-sealed, discrete identities. Along with his incunabulae and his Roman cameos, Johnes owned a valuable collection of ancient Welsh manuscripts: and unlike certain other members of the gentry, was, as I have noted willing to allow Welsh antiquarian enthusiasts of various social classes to them. Keen that his tenants should understand his concern for the improvement of their land, Johnes wrote and published his "Cardiganshire Landlord's Advice to his Tenants" and had it translated into Welsh by the lexicographer and antiquarian William Owen Pughe (1759-1835). We know nothing of the response to this venture: Pughe's dogmatically unorthodox reconstruction of Welsh grammar, syntax and orthography would probably have ensured its total incomprehensibility to those of Johnes' tenantry who were literate in Welsh.

The matter of language invisibility is a central one in the consideration of the Picturesque and the habit of touring. It is simply wrong to depict all visitors to Wales as ignorant of the existence of the language or antagonistic towards it. The fashion for the Celtic had ensured that English intellectuals were aware of the existence of ancient literature in Welsh. Such Celtic enthusiasm totemized the language as a valuable cultural survival from a primitive, golden age, a linguistic analog of the landscape and its primitive inhabitants. Coleridge, one of Hafod's many distinguished visitors (and who reputedly was inspired by Hafod and its way of life to write his "Kublai Khan") at one point expressed an interest in mastering the

¹⁹ Pam, tybed, bu'n bosib i oruwchwyliwr o Albanwr, a gyflogwyd gan Johnes, i ddysgu'r Gymraeg, tra bod hyn yn gamp tu hwnt i allu'r meist'r tir, ac yntau'n Gymro o ran tras a diddordebau a theyrngarwch dras? Beth yw'r amodau seicolegol angenrheidiol at ddysgu iaith? Gellir tybio bod gwir angen ar ei asiant cyfathrebu'n uniongyrchol a'r tenantiaid, tra bod yn well gan Johnes ei hun gadw'r pellter angenrheidiol rhagddynt. Nid anodd gweld yma yr anwybyddiaeth ddewisol y soniais amdani.

Welsh language. (20) The diaries of the genteel, monoglot-English travellers record the fact that little English is spoken in those most dramatic landscapes rural Wales which, for them is "Wales." Although this linguistic deficiency is sometimes portrayed as an impediment to progress (the progress of the travellers' journeys, as they struggle to make themselves understood, and the material of the Welsh themselves), the language is also often considered to a charming curiosity, particularly when sung.

With notable exceptions, however, few visitors appear to be aware of the numerous platforms on which life was lived through the medium of the Welsh language: the almost totally monoglot-Welsh world of religion, of Methodist revivals, is recorded in the travellers' diaries, but the content of the energetic preaching of its luminaries is opaque to them. The sophisticated theological arguments of the early Methodists are indistinguishable to the monoglot English ear from the cries of market sellers, and the Methodist Revivals themselves, are for the essentially conservative Picturesque eye, a disturbingly newfangled element in their apprehension of Wales. The existence of Welsh intellectual life in London, of publishing ventures, of a bilingual middle class, of constant intercourse with England, is not included either in the diaries of Picturesque nor in the landscapes, for these, like the Egyptians in European dress who intruded into my photographs, were the wrong sort of subject for portrayal. 21 The result of this is that the social rôles which the Welsh are given in the theatre of the Picturesque are limited to that attendant upon the main action: the appreciation, by the connoisseur of the Welsh landscape, of sensation and surface appearance.

The landscapes of the Picturesque are largely silent, tranquil, leisured and unpeopled. The sublime mountains of Snowdonia in North, part of the same tour which included Hafod, are for the mindset of

²⁰ Dyma ddim ond un o lu o fythau y mae Hafod wedi esgor arnynt. Yr enwocaf ymhlith y rhain yw 'hanes' ymweliad Handel â Hafod. Yn ôl y chwedl - fu'n goroesi ar lafar am amser maith - teithiodd Johnes a'r cyfansoddwr draw i eglwys Llanbadarn Odwyn gerllaw i wrando ar y torfeydd yn gorfoleddu mewn gwasanaeth a arweiniwyd gan Daniel Rowlands. Eu bloeddio, tybid, a ysbrydolodd Hallelujah Chorus Handel. Perthyn y chwedl hon i stori arall am Wagner yn ymweld â Nantoes gerllaw, a chael ei ysbrydoli gan gwpan Nanteos (sydd yn ôl rhai, y Greal Sanctaidd), i gyfansoddi *Parzifal*. Cyfetyb y straeon hyn am wn i i ddyheadau gwleidyddol sydd yn nodweddiadol o grwpiau gorthrymedig, yn eu patrwm o gysylltu'r grwp israddol â ffigur neu ddigwyddiad sydd yn ganolog yn y prif ddiwylliant: cwyd y straeon hyn mewn ymgais i ennyn parch a bri yn y prif diwylliant hwnnw - strategaeth sydd yn ddau-finiog, oherwydd mae'r clod a'r mawl a eill godi o'r straeon bob amser yn cadarnhau hegemoni'r prif ddiwylliant. Yn ôl Frantz Fanon, dyma newrosis diwylliannol dioddefwyr gwladychiaeth: gweld eich hunain trwy sbectol diwylliant cynhenid ond ar y llaw arall trwy lygaid y grymoedd sy'n gwladychu, a'ch cydnabod eich hunain fel person a diwylliant diffygiol.

²¹ Strategaeth egsotig glasurol yw hon, sef pwysleisio'r gwahaniaethau rhwng y prif ddiwylliant a'r diwylliant 'ymylol,' gan gadw at yr anghybwysedd grym rhwng y ddau. Gyda thraul amser, gall y gwahaniaethau hyn ddod i gael eu hystyried fel hanfodion bod y is-garfan, ac mewn proses o ymfewnoli, ddod hyd yn oed yn rhan annatod o hunan-hanfod y garfan honno. Felly o gael y Cymry canu-gar, crefyddol (fel yr oeddent yn ymddangos i'r ymwelwyr o Saeson ar ddechrau'r 19eg ganrif) cawn cyn pen cenhedlaeth neu ddwy gan y Cymry hwythau "Gwlad y Gân," sef fersiwn "gynhenid," frodoredig yr un ddelwedd. Tystiolaetha diddordeb Cymry tramor yn y Gymanfa Ganu (sydd yn cynrychioli ffurf ffosil ar genedligrwydd totemig, nodweddiadol o gymdeithasau alltud yr ail a'r drydedd cenhedlaeth) i ba raddau y mae arweddau allanol diwylliant gwladychedig yn dueddol o gael eu dyrchafu'n 'hanfod' di-amser.

Welsh Methodist missionaries such as Daniel Rowlands, Howel Harries, Thomas Charles o'r Bala, William Williams Pantycelyn, instead, geographical nuisances which impede easy travel to people in urgent need of salvation. Differing social class and differing theologies, language use and varying attitudes towards land, artistic taste and what counts as important in life all contributed to producing a situation in which the same geographical location, namely Wales, signified two totally different, and mutually exclusive modes of representation. (22) Later in the 19th century, a hardening of theological attitudes within Welsh Methodism would lead to suspicion of any sort of artistic representation at all: an accommodation, on religious grounds, which had the undesirable side-effect of maintaining Welsh cultural invisibility and British imperial hegemony.

The result of this situation was that two, mutually separate epistemologies of land have historically been at work in Wales: on the one hand an outsider-view of Wales which is largely visually-interested, and aesthetic, and individual and apparently a-political; and on the other, an insider experience of Wales which is aniconic, largely linguistically-defined, social, whose existence may be easily ignored and which is visually and materially representable only with difficulty. The roots of this bifurcation lie, I believe, firmly in the soil of the Picturesque movement.

V

Now it is perfectly possible, from the informed, cool, heights of early 21st century academic thought, to dismiss the enthusiasms and repulsions of the travellers of Johnes' time. A simplistic and solipsistic monologue villanizes Johnes just as easily as it canonizes him. But to do that is to enter into the rhetoric of distanced encounter which so typifies the Picturesque tourist. We cannot dialogue with Johnes himself, nor with the genteel watercolorists and those irascible or delighted tourists, and so what we have to say about them cannot be challenged nor challenging. But hafodism, with which we can engage with in our own time has long survived Hafod. The ethical value of examining Hafod is that it enables us to examine ourselves and our attitudes towards land, be we the lineal descendents of Johnes' illiterate and silent tenants, or their political equivalents in other cultures, or the descendents of Johnes' genteel visitors, practitioners of tourism in our own times, or, more likely, a mix of all of these.

Among the currently surviving offspring of that 18th century discovery of Wales is all modern tourism: the battery of tactics - cajoling, exploitation, deceit, servility, tourist-directed invented legends,

²²Ceir felly gysylltiad agos iawn rhwng profiad lle, gwybodaeth am le ac ymwybyddiaeth ohono. Mae ymateb celfyddydol, esthetig i le ynu dueddol o nodweddu'r ymwelydd: hawdd iawn y gall ymateb ymwelwyr fod yn dra gwahanol i berthynas trigolion yr un man; gall newydd-ddyfodwr aros yn newydd-ddyfodwyr gydol ei oes, heb iddo sylweddoli ystyr lle i'w drigolion. Ys dywed Belden Lane, *sacred place can be tread upon without being entered. Its recognition is existentially, not ontologically discerned... moving into an allegedly sacred place does not necessarily make one present to it. Being bodily present is never identical with the fulness of being to which humans can be open in time and space* " - sylwadau sydd yr un mor berthnasol fersiwn seciwlar o dir, mewn llefydd megis trefedigaethau.

hospitality, sullenness Uncle-Tom folkloric performance of 'typical' national characteristics, kindness and ingenuousness, - reported as being typical of tour guides in Merionethshire in 1796 are today employed by tourist touts in Pattaya and Macchu Piccu.

I have already asked who and what the aesthetic principles embodied in the Picturesque, in art and landscape, literature and gardening enfranchised, and who and what 18th century leisure travel hobbled, crippled, and ignored. These are merely rhetorical questions: the answers, to a 21st post-colonial subject, of necessarily creole intellectual ancestry, are obvious ones. For if the particular class of Welsh squirearchy and the world view that Johnes embodied have disappeared, then certain elements have survived with tenaciousness, in Wales and elsewhere: for the Picturesque is not only a part of Welsh art history: it remains part of its present, in the varying attitudes to and use of land by its inhabitants and visitors. For Picturesque painting, one can read, *mutatis mutandis*, modern depictions of the land of Wales; for the travellers, one can easily substitute so many other tourists, those who have come to settle in Wales in search of their own Xanadus. The apparent tranquility of remote spaces and distant dwellings, far from the metropolis continue to offer a seductive daydream of a life of fuller meaning, a restful escape from difficult and threatening realities. If Methodism and its world of Welsh-speaking piety was invisible or opaque to the 18th and 19th century painters of the Picturesque, purposely or accidentally excluded, it remains more than possible to be unaware of its cultural linear descent in the present, or at best to view its ruins or remains from a safe distance and with non-engagement.

Daniel Rowland's chapel in Llangeitho is now on a good Sunday, attended by a handful of people, who continue to worship, think and feel through the medium of Welsh. Llangeitho school yard on the other hand, now echoes with the accents which have traveled there from Leamington Spa or Basildon. (23)

²³ Mewn fersiwn gynharach o'r traethawd hwn, roeddwn wedi ysgrifennu am 'aceniion sur a glywir bellach yn iard ysgol Llangeitho, yr aceniion hynny sydd wedi teithio i fanna o Basildon a Leamington Spa - dau le, tybiwn, a oedd yn cynrychioli hacrwydd aceniion Saesneg. Roeddwn wedyn wedi ysgrifennu'r canlynnol:

" Rhwng Llangeitho - o leiaf y Llangeitho honno a fu unwaith yn bodoli - a'r Hafod a fu ac sydd, saif mur. Nis gwelir. O un ochr, mae'n dryloyw: gall Llangeitho weld Hafod. Ond mae'r ochr arall yn debycach i drych: nid yw Hafod yn gallu gweld Llangeitho, dim ond adlewyrchiad o'i hunain. Er mwyn gweld Llangeitho, byddai'n rhaid eich bod wedi dod i'w adnabod, a gwybod amdani: trwy fagwraeth yn y diwylliant Calfinaidd Cymraeg sy'n gwywo ers dros cant o flynyddoedd ac sydd erbyn hyn yn prysur fynd i ebargofiant a chwedl; trwy ddarllen amdani; ond hefyd trwy fyw yng Ngorllewin Cymru ac wedyn ddewis dysgu gweld trwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg. Heb y rhain - a chan fod amgyffrediad yn diwgwydd yn ôl galluoedd yr amgyffredydd - ni wyddech fod y mur yn bodoli, na bod dim byd i'w gael tu draw iddo. Ni allwn weld yr hyn na allwn ei weld. Gallwn ddychmygu ein bod yn medru ei weld, neu ddychmygu sut beth fyddai. . Ni allwn weld yr hyn na allwn ei weld. Ni wyddom yr hyn na wyddom. Ni wyddom nad ydym yn gwybod, hyd yn oed.

"

Erbyn heddiw, wn i ddim ydw i'n cytuno. Oherwydd mewn gwirionedd, nid yw rhethreg y Mur yn gwneud cyfiawnder â sefyllfa gymysg, heibrid a chyfnewidiol. Yn hytrach, mae'n perthyn i syniadau statig, hanfodolaidd, am natur diwylliant. Y gwir amdani yw na ellir cymryd yn caniatool bod "Llangeitho" heddiw (sef byd y diwylliant capelaidd, Cymreig) yn gyfarwydd â "Llangeitho" y gorffennol. A'r duedd i ddamnio'r mewnfudwyr am eu bod yn fewnfudwyr, yn or-sym. Bu'r Mur, mewn gwirionedd, bob amser yn dreiddiadwy. Ac mae'r meddylfryd argae a gwyd o'r Mur yn strategaeth wleidyddol sydd ond yn gallu bod yn rhannol lwyddiannus, gan fod ynddi hadau ei dinistriad ei hun.

Over the last 25 years, massive immigration from England to rural Ceredigion has changed the nature of Welsh rural society. It is impossible to deny within the intellectual lineage of this wave of immigration the presence of a number of the factors I have been discussing: the Picturesque, the Celtic as an insular version of Orientalism, eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, the Classical inheritance - and not a little vagueness as to the complex nature of British, Welsh, and English nationalities.

Such complexities around national identities are an important indicator that the matrix of polarities I have talked of as being present in Hafod - uninhabited and inhabited, desert and habitat, rootless and rooted, unlocated and located, internationalist and nationalist, a-historical and historical - is in fact a conceptual one, a simplification. Certain modes of perception may be more typical of an outside view of Wales: but to define people in terms of such polarities as insiders or outsiders is to do a crude injustice to the complexities of the situation, for each of us is located on a multidimensional spectrum of different vectors of polarities, of which outsider/insider is only one.

Amongst the reasons why the Picturesque (and its offspring) is, in my opinion, politically offensive are not only that it tends towards disenfranchisement, but also that it tends towards an essentialist, static view of cultural identity. At its worst, this degenerates into a blood-and-soil nationalism of Us and Them, a victim-culture which functions according to a bipolar universe of rigid separations. But the complex nature of Welsh and English interaction across the centuries is a good illustration of the fact that the nature of national identity is one of fluid hybridity. A more rigorous examination of Us and the Others reveals a less simple schematics of opposition (insider or outsider; male and female; rich man at his castle or poor man at his gate). For the richer, more fragmented and problematized reality is that we share each other's DNA, biologically, culturally, and historically, and in all sorts of dynamically-evolving, hybridized ways.

Edward Said's "Culture and Imperialism" points out how easily historical experience and perceptions can diverge according to the nature and status of the perceivers. That the Raj, the historic experience of imperialism is part of current Indian psychological experience is fairly obvious to all. What is less obvious is that the Raj is also an essential element in what it is to be British today, for the experience of acquisition and gradual loss of global dominance is part of Britain, and there is no essential, a-historic Britishness which can exist as if the British Empire never had been. And at a more local level the same, *mutatis mutandis*, is true of Wales and the Welsh, England and the English. It is only against this large, transhistorical, transnational background of imperialism and reactions to it, that Hafod and the Picturesque may be understood. (24)

²⁴ Nac anghofiw'n ychwaith berthynas y Cymry â'r Ymerodraeth Brydeinig. Testun cywilydd - neu ar y gorau, efallai, cydymdeimlad hael am ei dallineb gwleidyddol - yw taogrwydd Cymry'r 19eg ganrif a'r 20fed. Stori rhy gyfarwydd i glustiau Cymry cenedlgarol y 21ain ganrif. Ond erys stori arall i'w hadrodd, sef y Cymry nid yn unig fel dioddefwyr gwladychiaeth, ond fel asiantau'r Ymerodraeth, y Cymry fel gwladychwyr brwd. Yn fras - mae profiad hanesyddol bod yn rhan o Ymerodraeth rymus wladychodd canran helaeth o'r byd am dros pedair canrif - yn ffactor mewn Cymreictod o unrhyw fath.

The fact is that, if such a thing exists as the Welsh mind, (25) then it is by necessity a hybrid mind, since it is that of a person or a people whose country has lived through the whole of its 1500 or so years of its existence, side by side with a dominant neighbor which itself has been deeply shaped by its imperial rôle. The work of Frantz Fanon shows how the colonized mind sits in the uncomfortable position of being forced to reflect on its own experience, to perceive simultaneously two mutually-irreconcilable realities : how he is viewed from the outside, whilst yet to experiencing the view from the inside as being very different.

Insider and outsider perspectives on landscape employ different dimensions, cartographic grids, narratives and forms of representation. The hybridized, educated post-colonial subject, precisely because she is a political subject, learns through her education to perceive and portray her own native geographical setting through a colonial claude-glass, with the reductive and limited categories of visitors. She also sees and reflects upon her own reality from an insider perspective; she forms an organic part of a social fabric which engages with the viewed landscape in a different way - a way which the visitor must remain totally unaware of, if he is to retain a visitor's particular engagement-in-distance. (26) In consequence, the educated post-colonial subject experiences knows something that the visitor's gaze cannot not, namely that there is more than one way of looking. And these alternative ways of looking bring about a whole set of alternative social relations.

²⁵ Amau ydwyf erbyn heddiw defnyddio categorïau hanfodolaidd tebyg, am nad wyf bellach yn siwr pa mor adeiladol - i'r Cymry o leiaf - yw termau megis 'y meddwl a'r dychymyg Cymreig.' Mewn dehongleg sydd yn archwilio gwreiddiau syniadau nerthus, rhaid gofyn pwy sydd yn cael ei nerthu gan syniadau o'r fath, a phwy ei wanhau? Mewn araith yng nghynhadledd Adran Athronyddol Urdd Graddedigion Cymru yn 2000, soniais am 'wahanol Gymreictodau,' syniad a wrthodwyd gan rai yn y gynulleidfa y byddai'n well ganddynt sôn am 'wahanol fathau o Gymreictod.' Mae'r gwahaniaeth geiriol rhwng y ddau gydsyniad yn fach iawn, ond dengys y gwahaniaeth geirio anghytundeb ynghlych natur Cymreictod: ai casgliad hanesyddol o wahanol agweddau yw, neu amrywiaethau ar gyffredinolyn sydd yn byw uchlaw cymylau amser? Byddai syniad tra cheidwadol yn mynnu mai hollol ddigynfnewid yw natur cenedl (syniad Rhamantus fu'n priodoli enaid i bob cenedl); ceir wedyn ffurf 'feddal' ar Gymreictod, sydd yn ystyried cenedligrwydd fel traddodiad di-dor a gododd yn yr oesoedd cynnar ac sydd yn parhau hyd heddiw, fel patrwm meddwl a byw lle mae allanolion yn cyfnewid, esbylgu a diflannu gyda thraul amser ac yn ôl amgylchiadau ac anghenion, ond gyda chnewllyn digynfnewid yn bodoli'n barhaol ac yn dolenni'r gwahanol fynegiannau cenedlaethol, mewn cadwyn debyg i olyniaeth apostolig. Ond deil damcaniaeth arall nad oes hanfod o gwbl i genedl, ac er bod tir cyffredin rhwng pobl yr oes hon a'r oes uniongyrchol o flaenorol o'r blaen, nid oes tir cyffredin o gwbl rhwng gwahanol genedlaethau. Golgygai hyn fod Cymry'r 19eg ganrif yr un mor estron ac anhygyrch i'r Gymru sydd ohoni ag unrhyw ddiwylliant estron arall. Byddai hefyd yn golgygu bod mwy mewn cyffredin rhwng Cymry a Saeson yr oes hon na rhwng Cymry heddiw a Chymry'r gorffennol, syniad a fyddai'n wrthun i ddeiliaid y ddwy ddamcaniaeth gyntaf.

²⁶ Ysgrifennais ei bod yn *rhaid* i'r ymwelydd aros yn anymwybodol o ddyfnder diwylliannol lle os yw am gadw ei bellter â lle penodol. Yn aml iawn, beirnedir yr ymwelydd neu'r newydd-ddyfodwr am *ddewis* peidio ag ymddiddori mewn iaith a diwylliant: ond mae'r feirniadaeth hon yn cymryd yn ganiatol fod yna ddewis ymwybodol i gael iddo. Ond ymhlyg yn union natur ymweld fel twrist neu setlo'n wladychiaethol yw *anallu* gweld gwe gymdeithasol y lle mae wedi dod iddo. Fel arall, ni dewisasai'r man yn y lle cyntaf.

Golyga hyn nad yw achwyn yn ddigon i'r gwladychiedig: rhoir ar ei ysgwyddau, er yn ddi-ofyn-amdano, faich cyfrifoldeb ceisio esbonio natur ei fodolaeth i'r ymwelwr, ynghyd â natur effaith dyfodol o'r ymwelwr ar yr ecoleg cymdeithasol.

In the case of Wales, two understandings of land have historically co-existed in tension with each other for at least the last 200 years: an experience of place fundamentally as a social reality, and one as aesthetic reality - the world of Johnes' tenant farmers, and the world of his visitors, Thomas Johnes representing a hybridic, *tertium quid* position which imbibes from both. I know of no literary description, in Welsh, of anything resembling an English concept of landscape, with all the weight of overview, distance, and aesthetic appreciation of surface that that involves, before the mid 19th century. Access to English - medium education and English literary traditions of landscape representation brought Welsh-speakers into contact with the Romanticism of Wordsworth and others. Yet such Romantic transcendentalism, despite its alien provenance, gradually became part of the stock-in-trade of the Welsh literary tradition, without the involvement of much cultural violence, so that say, Islwyn (1832-78) whose poetry is influenced by both Calvinist and Romantic motifs is regarded, unquestionably so, as being the most indigenous of Welsh poets.

In this complex process of one culture's encounter with another, a tension exists between static, essentialist notions of identity and dynamic, contingent ones. The mythologies about Wales viewed from the outside, and the internal mythologies experienced from within the country mix and coalesce, collude and contrast, fragment and conflict constantly. The mythic essential Wales exists not only as an Picturesque English reductionism which excluded the dynamic, linguistically-diverse nature of the whole of the country and its industrial base. Accepting and embracing elements of this essential, Picturesque Wales, Welsh intellectuals, poets, writers, preachers and artists, in the 200 years since Thomas Johnes built Hafod, also constructed their own set of myths, portraying a culturally -pure, static and religiously-defined Wales in both ruralist and industrial versions. In this hermeneutic cycle, national identity and traditions of national representation have continued to involve and produce each other. And landscape representation has been part of all of these myths and realizations. If successive generations have created in their writings and imaginings, a Hafod and a Thomas Johnes made in their own image and likeness, then the same is true also of later Welsh generations' sem-self-conscious Romanticization of the world of Welsh Protestant religiosity.

The long and continuing history of cultural purism in Wales over the last 200 years may be viewed as a reaction to the tendencies of the Picturesque towards imposing a rigid grid of representation upon the land of Wales. It is possible to view the acceptance and performance of such reductive versions of nationality as a sort of post-colonial pathology, an adaptive strategy of collusion with the aggressor. To take one example amongst many, the portrayal in English literature and visual art of the Welsh Bard, placed often in extremis, amongst wild and ancient mountains, was a genre which was equally popular amongst Welsh writers too, none more so than the antiquarian and literary forger Iolo Morgannwg (1747-1826), another of Hafod's many visitors, and to whom we owe the modern druidic pageantry of Wales' Order of Bards, which is itself equally a knowing performativity as was Johnes' *fête champêtre* at Hafod.

The acceptance by such a small and fragile culture as Wales of essentialist projections whose source is an aggressive, dominant neighbor, has had the beneficent effect of aiding survival - but with the deleterious side effects of limiting the definitions of what constitutes 'the national,' and of corralling cultural attitudes into 'Us vs. Them' essentialism. Cultural conservatism is one of several typical responses to the threat of what the Welsh philosopher J.R.Jones called 'genocide by cultural assimilation.' Yet despite its tendencies towards fetishizing static purism, the Welsh version of the land and landscape of Wales actually includes in its intellectual lineage Wordsworth and Turner, Calvin and Herder, Kossuth, Virgil, Rousseau and Ruskin. And revisionist histories, the discovery of forgotten figures and the recent creation of a Welsh art tradition all suggest the existence of a plurality of Welsh cultural manifestations far wider than the commonly-canonized version.

The history of Wales - like the history of Hafod - is one of endless cultural encounter and reaction to that encounter. Various aspects of contemporary Welshness are often conceived of and portrayed in static terms from both insider and outsider perspectives. A culturally conservative point of view will tend to view nationality in terms of conservation or reconstruction, and hybridity as a weakness. Yet "Welshness," however defined, may also be portrayed as a textbook example of post-modern nationality, precisely because it is non-essential. The late Welsh historian Gwyn Alf Williams, in his "When was Wales?", refutes any sense of a continuing Welsh historic essence: the essence of Welshness across time is its ability to constantly re-invent itself, consciously and unconsciously as being different-from, performing nationality in stage clothes which are begged, borrowed and stolen - a learned tactic for survival, and an embodiment of wilful cultural heterogeneity, in which difference is conceived of as essence. As the historian John Davies says, Wales never is but is always becoming.

The work of such writers as Frantz Fanon and Edward Saïd helps to place Hafod and the Picturesque, beyond the usual contexts in which it is normally placed, namely art history or Welsh-English relations. Hafod may be usefully viewed in the international historical and cultural context of imperialism and reactions to it. Such a wider setting gives Welsh commentators a greater range of concepts and vocabulary with which to interpret and describe their historical experience, not only for their own sake, but for the sake of others. Amongst the side-effects of imperialism is the ability of colonial subjects, due to commonalities of experience, to make easier connections with each other than with the forces which have historically oppressed them: the value of this mutually-shared ground is that it aids the demasking and problematizing of those strategies which foster and perpetuate imbalances of power. I have made a case that Hafod represents, microcosmically, an element of Welsh national experience. I believe also that the Picturesque movement in aesthetics and the tourism of Wales - and indeed of Scotland and the English Lake District which it caused to avalanche - are examples of the process of Britishness. (27) But

²⁷ Gwell gennyf ystyried Cymreictod - a Phrydeindod yntau, o ran hynny - fel prosesau, yn hytrach na chyflyrau di-amser. Mae'r prosesau mewn-hanes deinamig hyn yn cynnwys elfen o gyd-ddigwyddiad, ond maen nhw hefyd yn cynnwys lle i ystyriaethau rhyng-bersonol ac unigolyddol hyd yn oed. Oherwydd y ffaith amdani yw nad yw dyfais cenedligrwydd yn gallu goroesi am yn hir heb ganiatâd a chytundeb rhydd pobl, boed yn anymwybodol. Yn rhinwedd ei hanesoldeb, mae pob cenedligrwydd yn angenrheidiol o gyfnewidiol. Ac fel prosesau, gallan nhw gael eu gyrru gan unigolion neu garfannau cryf, neu gan ideolegau.

Hafod and the Picturesque may equally stand for the experiences of so many oppressed people. The experience of the battery of practices and perception involved in the Picturesque - silencing and selective exclusion, the imposition of a grid of perception, an apparently 'a-political' use of aesthetics - will be familiar to minorities everywhere.

VI

Since national identities in both the colonizers' and the colonized - the ignorance of the Welsh experience of Wales being part of the English picturesque tourists' experience of exactly the same landscape - , then dynamic hybridity affects both perspectives. Yet the lived experience of such bi-culturality and of change in a fragile social ecology is far less likely to impinge on the awareness of the dominant partner in this encounter. Such an imbalance of perception is both cause and result of an imbalance of political power.

Hafod and Llangeitho, geographically so close to each other, stand for two different experiences of land. But the imbalance of perception means while that what I have referred to as hafodism is visible to and impinges upon Llangeitho (the world of Welsh-speaking rural society), I am not sure that Llangeitho, its values and mores, is equally as evident and obvious to Hafod. Indeed, the movement of people and the change of language of today's Llangeitho means that that village, like so many others in rural Wales, have to a large extent turned into a Hafod. Today's Llangeitho - unlike that of the time of Johnes - occupies the same grid on the Ordnance Survey map, but in contemporary Wales stands for at least two major blocks of experience of place, experiences defined largely by language - Welsh or English - , and of place of origin.

Essentialist reactive attitudes are part of my own responses to this painful social and economic change. It would be easy to dismiss such this complex movement as merely another variation on the theme of 'visitors to Wales,' in search of rural arcadias to meet existential hungers, to demonize such immigrants as wilfully ignorant colonizers. This would be to exclude economic conditions and other social factors from the equation - for some of these people belong to groups which themselves are victims of invisibility and silence - , and to fall into an easy posture of Them vs. Us, which admits no possibility of creative encounter, only antagonistic stand-off.

Rather, fully aware of the danger of creating a rigid and Romanticized Llangeitho-ism to correspond to hafodism, I tend to think of outsider perspectives - and the praxis in land-use and land-appropriation which derive from them - as being insufficient and incomplete, rather than incorrect. For my experience of Wales is that is not only landscape - in the sense of "landscape" being primarily an object of connoisseurial appreciation and depiction involving a distance between the observer and the observed. Rather, in the case of Wales, I perceive myself as being within a country rather than in a landscape (with all the sense of distancing that that term implies), in relationship with a country whose political and social history repercussions fully upon my own sense of identity, and vice versa.

It is worth considering this insufficiency of perspective involved in outsider views. The Picturesque, it is true, tends towards being the oversimplified view of a unreflective middle class: historically, it arose as a cult of feeling, inimical to intellectual reflectivity. A visceral distaste and disdain for it notwithstanding, we cannot take other people's ignorance as always being an exercise in willful, selfish blindness.

The idea that one's own cultural specificity affects one's perception and therefore one's interpretation of reality, is an ancient idea, expressed succinctly in the medieval theological adage *Quidquid recipitur secundum modum recipientis recipitur*: who you are affects how and what you see how you interpret it. Identities and perceptions are conditioned by two classes of factors - those we have some control over and can change: our social class, the place we now live, our national identity, who our friends are, what language we experience the world through; and those which are beyond our control: our times and places of birth, our gender and sexual orientation, who our parents and what our upbringing were. There exists perhaps too a *tertium quid* of more murky psychology - a middle-ground of perception, somewhere between conditioned and free, in which we may locate willful unknowing, namely the choice to remain ignorant, not to look nor to seek to understand, the attitude of systemic denial. It is hard to know where on this typology to locate colonialist attitudes: generally perceived by the oppressed as being things the colonizers may easily change but choose not to, perhaps they more rightly belong to the realm of semi-conscious desire.

Amongst the assumptions challenged by the claim that perception is fundamentally contingent, is that of the existence of a set of universal, non-contingent, changeless set of values which are self-evident and which demand undemurring acceptance and obedience. Any subaltern group knows from first-hand experience that such worldviews are generally held by those of people who are enfranchised by the supposed existence of universal values - generally those of the ruling or dominant class. The Picturesque painters - at least those of them who did not move the scenery around overmuch - portrayed that which was obvious to them. Such obviousness was as much epistemological and political as visual: what was evident to them was what was universally perceptible, namely the outward appearance of the landscape. Yet given the polyvalence of the concept 'obvious' - i.e. visually evident and logically indisputable, then it is easy to see how such obviousnesses tend and take on self-justifying pretensions of universality, which may stress such dubious obviousness of the inferiority of certain races and superiority of others, the ineluctability of market forces as governing principle in economic and social theory, the unchallenged desirability of empire, and even to occupy moral high ground. At this point, obviousness, desirability, common sense, convention and universal truth have all come to mean the same thing. Such claims to universality are in fact incarnated within an interlocking series of specificities, including those of class, background, gender, and nationality. There is no perception which is not located in a body of interpretation.

And the issue of location is central to the problems concerning perception and representation raised by Hafod of the 18th and 21st centuries and its collateral manifestations. For one of the illusions held by

tourists such as myself has been that we have - or should have - somehow no impact (other than an economically beneficial one) on the places we visit and sometimes settle in - a point of view which is profoundly individualistic, and distanced from the realities we encounter and portray with our cameras and interpret from our guidebooks. Tourism, after all, is posited on the illusion of discovery of the unspoilt, and by its very nature, destroys that which it goes in search of. Closely connected to this mentality is the mistaken idea that it is possible somehow to be non-specific, non-located in our actions and perceptions - an idea generally held by those in power, who have the economic and cultural freedom to choose to see themselves as being non-specific, who assume that human beings are united in shared values - their values. My attempt to photograph Egypt painfully showed me that my assumed universals were in fact highly partial.

Yet if all perception is conditioned by our own cultural specificities - so that we will find in Hafod what we are looking for - and if our perception depends on our identity, then it follows that the relationship between what we see and who we are is one of mutual and ongoing effect: how we see also creates who we are.

Cultural essentialism is a perception of society and individual which stresses those elements which apparently do not change. Hybridity on the other hand stresses both the voluntary and involuntary effects of dynamic encounter. And since our identity is at least in part composed of elements which we are free to choose to change - then it follows that our perceptions can also change or be changed.

An interesting question arises with the matter of choice: not what or how much we see, nor how we see, but why we choose to perceive as we do, and what guides our preferences as to that which is attractive and worthy of our attention? The answers, in the case of the visitors to Wales, have already been described: on the one hand, their inherited traditions of perception by which they saw and described and portrayed that which was "obvious" to them; on the other hand, they were guided, consciously and unconsciously, by their desires, towards finding on the blank canvas and empty stage of Wales, the realization of a dream of freedom from historical constraint. In a letter of 1783, Thomas Johnes compares the constraints, financial and social, which would have been placed upon him had he chosen to carry out his experiments in aesthetic living in his English estate of Croft Castle, Herefordshire, with the open possibilities represented by Hafod: "This place is my own. And I trust when finished will realize my idea of resembling a fairy scene." The year that Johnes wrote of his hopes was known as the Starvation Year: the failure of the wheat harvest due in particularly bad summer caused widespread famine and rioting over the price of corn. The end of the eighteenth century saw crisis after crisis in Welsh society; the fabric of traditional rural life was changing rapidly. It is hard not to see the Picturesque as a psychological mechanism of denial, a choice to perceive and portray within a self-imposed frame of representation.

But need this necessarily be so? Is there no other way of representation?

If the outsider-view, the Englished Wales proposed by the Picturesque is simply wrong, morally and ontologically, then the only alternative to that would be to portray another static reality, that of an essentialist and static "Welsh" Wales. This, I firmly believe, is yet another over-simplified denial, which does not do justice to the realities of land, its multi-layered, overlapping and conflicting meanings for different people at different times. For the fact is that Hafod and Llangeitho co-exist on the same terrain: the insider and outsider eye arise from and produce co-terminous but different dynamic experiences of the same place. But if the Picturesque and its mindset is thought of in terms, as I have suggested, of insufficiency, then the possibility arises of honoring and incorporating the outsider's perspective in a pedagogy of expansion of perception, with the aim of leading it towards an awareness of the possibility of other ways of seeing (an experience with which the colonized eye is already familiar, as we have seen).

A surface view - which is largely that of the visitor - defines land as landscape, understood primarily as the aesthetic aspect of physical environment. The distance between object and subject, the spectated and the spectator, embodied in the art, the physical landscaping and the tourism of the Picturesque, is not however one of balanced relationships within that distance: rather, it tends towards a cultural narcissism. In a narcissistic mind-set, there is no Other: all is Me, or Us, all reality is viewed as an extension of the self and valued in terms, not of its intrinsic value, but only so far as it impinges on the ego. Now within the Picturesque mindset, social and historical dimensions of land are only tangentially and very conditionally present within this relationship between the viewer and the viewed. The shallow, flirtatious enthusiasm for a place and the quest for easy and sentimental sensation there - the pose of the tourist -, actually serve to maintain distances rather than produce knowledge. I hold consistently and with passionate conviction that the social and ethical dimensions of land are essential elements in any mature encounter with place. And the practical consequence of this is the difficult business of encounter with the human societies who have inhabited a location - those who have lived there over centuries and whose existence is written into the cultural landscape, as well as those who live there now.

My own experience of Wales, in which I am, at least by birth and language, an insider, is that it is two-dimensional - by which I mean experienced in terms of surface appearance or natural beauty - only to the eye of the outsider, and that an insider epistemology perceives it as depth: my land is not only trope or symbol or desire, but thisness, embodied in a specificity which is diachronic - a cultural specificity with roots in the past. In this specificity, there is human action rather than aesthetic contemplation, society rather than the individual, tension conflict and rather than any inherent harmony, politics rather than artisticism, and growth, change and decay rather than stasis. Land can only begin to reveal previously unsuspected depths and dimensions when the perspective of the viewer shifts, a change which will involve recalibrating relationships and power balances, and discovering ways of thinking and feeling. But what are the conditions for bringing this shift about? How then, is it possible, to move away from being Picturesque tourists towards becoming people fully and maturely engaged with the land we live in or choose to visit? What knowledges, preconditions and psychological dispositions are required to produce this growth?

Such a shift of perspective requires the active, willing and open co-operation of the insider-eye. In such a contested landscape as Wales, such willingness and open-heartedness is not easily obtained: minority cultures know too well how easily their cultural particularity can become debased currency in the voracious but fickle market for the exotic.²⁸ They may not be accustomed to articulating and sharing their own perceptions of place nor willing to do so; when - as in the case of Wales - the historic experience of encounter with the outsider has been that of being exploited, than the typical of retreat into a simplistic, siege-mentality cultic purism can sympathized with. Such diametrically-opposed ideological stances admit no amelioration. But outsider does not necessarily mean oppressor (nor indeed insider champion or saviour, as a serene examination of the history of Welsh collusion illustrates). (29)

More difficult work, psychological and political, is required of those who wish to move beyond a planar, two-dimensional apprehension of landscape, into a three-dimensional experience of land. For the outsider this demands a certain humility, a willingness to be led and be taught, to be guided and confused, to accept that feeling lost, frustrated, alienated and angry are healthy elements in an encounter with place. To be physically present in a place - as were the many visitors to Hafod and who followed Thomas Jones' circular walks - is no guarantor of depth of experience. Present in does not equal present to, since the former denotes separation, the latter encounter. An emotional availability is the sine qua non of growth: and if this is not at hand, then we are at an impasse, a cultural confrontation which will tend inexorably towards violence.

But if such open-heartedness is available - on the part of both sides of this encounter - then I believe that perceptions can be changed, and along with them, relationships. (30) Cultural narcissism obviates even

²⁸ Mae olrhain hanes portreadu Cymru a'r Cymry yn Lloegr yn dangos mor anwadal yw Cymru'r Saeson: weithiau'n anweledig, neu'n rhanbarth o Loegr; weithiau chwerthinllyd, neu brydferth, neu gyfriniol. Hanes hir sydd i'r esgotig ym mhrif ddiwylliannau Ewrop. Pwysig yw nodi nad oes, am wn i, ddiddordeb yn yr esgotig er ei fwyn ei hun, mewn llenyddiaeth Gymraeg.

²⁹ Un pwynt pwysig i'w ystyried yma yw yn rhinwedd eu swyddogaeth fel dinasyddion ymeradraethol neu ôl-ymerdraethol, mae union hunaniaeth pobloedd megis y Cymry'n ddeublyg, symudol, ansefydlog: cnawdolor ynddyn nhw ddwy hunaniaeth, dwy iaith, dau genedligrwydd a dwy ddinasyddiaeth. Trafod a dadlau fydd y ddwy ochr, gan esbonio a chyfieithu eu hunain i'w gilydd, nes bod cyfathrebu a phontio yn dod yn elfennau canolog yn eu hanfod. Nid ar hap mae athrawon a chenhadon o Gymru ac o'r Alban wedi bod yn asiantau effeithiol yn hanes twf yr Ymerodraeth Brydeinig.

³⁰ Mater o ddewis ymwybodol a gwleidyddol yw'r credu hwn o'm heiddo - *fides fiducialis*, yn ôl diwinyddion canoloesol - sef ffydd fel gweithred yr ewyllys. Yn y traddodiad llenyddol-ysbrydol Gymraeg, ochr yn ochr cawn ddwy fersiwn begyddol o gyferbynnol â'i gilydd yn wyneb y trai diwylliannol cyson: ar un llaw, cawn y galaru di-obaith cyfarwydd, sefyllfa seicolegol sydd yn golygu aros gyda'r galar a'r gwae, ymgartrefu yn y gorthrwm a hyd yn oed ei ddathlu; ac ar y llaw arall, ac yn brinnach o lawer, y gobeithio bwriadol, agwedd sydd yn golygu gweithredu er mwyn gwireddu'r gobaiith. Waldo yn anad neb i'm tyb i sydd yn coroffori'r ail duedd.

the existence of the Other, let alone the possibility of encounter and dialogue with it. The distanced, flirtatious encounter with place which hafodism represents allows for alterity, yet is based on an individualist ego, separated rather from major elements of geographical location. The insider's eye view of Wales represented, say, by the diaries of the peripatetic Methodist ministers, conceived of the country largely as a social reality, in which there is intersubjectivity rather than individualism. The move from two into three dimensional relationship with land requires and forces the recognition of such intersubjectivity, the realization that I and the place in which I live, in its social and geographical dimensions, are part of each other's meaning, a realization not easily arrived at in a world of rapid mobility and transience.

Thomas Johnes' desires to transform Hafod, to improve the land, to modernize his industry, to build and furnish his house, point to a certain febrile energy which did not allow slow knowledges to gather into a growth. Admittedly, too, he was caught up in a historical cycle of bad harvests, revolution on the continent, wars and hyper-inflation, and to be equitable, Johnes did plant for the future. Some of his trees, or at least their offspring, still stand at Hafod. Respectful attitudes to place demand an investment of time which tourism cannot allow for, since the business of tourism is about the creation and quick slaking of appetites, not the fulfillment of deep desire. In other writings, I have talked about place as icon, a medium which is sumptuous and multidimensional, and slow in its creation. But if land is understood under the species of icon, then how it is perceived demands a version of that quality of contemplation that religious icons are designed to invite: a slow epistemology in a fast world. To encounter land with a certain contemplativity demands the practice of good listening, of sitting with awkward silences. The landscape art tradition is silent, it is true, but there is good silence - which is a way of communication - and bad silence, which is a way of silencing others.

Much of this essay has been an argument for the value of locatedness in representation, but also within intellectual and academic labor. The pre-conditional need for a Picturesque composition to be beautiful and harmonious and for the travellers' experience of land to be sublime, to conform with set canons of beauty are precisely what meant that they could never ever achieve their goal of capturing essence, since their own perceptions were dis-located, arising from a place, namely the world of Classical appropriations of the rural, other than that which they spectated. The comforting experience of contemplation and portrayal of the sublime sought to silence aesthetic disjunctures, smoothing away ambiguities and disharmonies. But it is precisely by honoring those jarring, incongruous, fractured and ugly aspects of places that we discover and define their specificity and locatedness. True encounter arises from and causes a sharpening of one's awareness of one's own locatedness and particularities - personal, collective, national : in the case of Wales, a generic and foggy "Britishness" historically acted against the interests of the Welsh and, one might argue, the English. Now the impossibility of Britishness, its manufactured state is being unmasked as relationships with Europe reveal different perspectives, and as a result new Welshnesses and new Englishnesses are made possible.

The Picturesque arose as a reaction, inter alia, to a moralizing attitude towards land. Gilpin's aesthetic, proscriptive Picturesque separated the aesthetic from the intellectual in the consideration of landscape, a divorce which I believe continues to inform hafodism, typified by a certain lack of self-reflectivity, and a lack of factual knowledge about place. One cannot underestimate the value of applied and serious learning - of history, of cultural density and fabric, of language - as one of those many types of knowledge which help us to come to know a place more deeply. The wall that stands between the many Hafods and Llangeithos in the contested areas of this world is partly opaque. Both sides of that wall suffer from differing degrees and areas of opacity, but this is an opacity which can be overcome, if only partly, through the laborious task of conscious awareness-making, of learning to see through the eyes of the other, and discovering each other's languages of perception.

VII

I took up painting out of a desire to do something at which I knew I would not even remotely be able to excel. But now that I am unable to paint innocently, with a lack of self awareness and the sort of bold energy with which I took up watercolors initially, I hardly paint at all - only on vacations, and only on certain types of vacation: rural, leisured, mostly Italian or French. And even then, in the choice of things to paint, I am no longer able to think, simply and uncritically, "what a beautiful scene to paint," for generally, I do not see scenes as such. In the course of my reading and looking at pictures, "landscape" for me has become a loaded, and a rather jaded, category, which I tend to eschew for a different loadedness, that of "place," a multi-layered, social term with which I am more comfortable, since it represents many of the Welsh myths which constitute part of my being. But in representing that nexus of history, language, people and society imagistically, I would not know where to begin, and indeed, on my walks in Wales, tend to feel vaguely uncomfortable and culturally treacherous by the very act of walking through beautiful locations. Only in words do I feel that I can begin to move beyond superficial apprehensions, and then only within limitations. The desire which lies behind some of my very technically-modest paintings was Promethean in its intensity and passion - and yet the very nature of the act of painting is one which in my experience seems to be to be inevitably doomed towards its own bathos.

Only rarely do I return to my photographs: I have kept all the pictures, in large albums, awkward to file on library shelves, and I look at them perhaps once every eighteen months. With the passing of time, they have stopped being mementoes, objects to stimulate the pleasurable reliving in memory, of the past. Instead, at a distance of time and of emotional involvement with them, for me they are more like anthropological objects in the dusty display-cases of the museum of my own life. The snapshots of Java - and largely, they are snapshots, taken deliberately as such, rather than straining after artistic effect - are of a me who is radically different from the me aged 25, and therefore they serve not to preserve time but almost to measure its flow. Not even in imagination can I return to Pogung Kidul where I used to live. I do remember with affection some of the people who appear in the photographs, whilst the memory of others has faded, so that I cannot recall the names, or even the faces of people I once knew and called friends.

The Egyptian photographs more or less fit into a rough chronology (i.e. a period of my life called "Egypt"), and are glued roughly into some twenty pages of two of those thick scrap books. At one period, when the photographs still carried a sort of totemic, relic mana, I resisted cropping them at all. But lack of space with the pages finally led me to crop the photographs, changing their proportions and focus in order to make them fit into particular places on pages which are as crowded as I imagine Johnes's walls to have been. The aesthetics of crowding all the pictures together was not something I reflected on - it was a revulsion against the art print, I think, a inchoate instinct or desire to show by jumbled assemblage what Egypt had meant for me - a whole immersion into a society, an awareness of land as palimpsest, a Romantic engagement with the past, a conflicted relationship with a contemporary country which, like Wales, was defined by and burdened with a past which it could never regain nor excel.

Mostly developed at Mr Shawky's studio in Qena, and now well over twenty years old, somewhat battered and beginning to fade, these photographs have now turned into something else. They are not so much a record of a place or a visit, as ritual objects from a world perceived in sepia tones. So bright was the light in Egypt, and the desert dust the same color as the buildings, that I had instinctively understood that I would get more artistic results with grainy black and white film. Mr Shawky was not able to process color photographs, and I had no refrigerator in which to keep color film anyway. In the same way, I deliberately sought out difficult to find black and white slide film, in which the black frequently has a blue or green tinge, reminiscent of government educational documents of two generations ago. So "Egypt" in those books, deliberately unlabeled, uncatalogued and badly curated as it is, is largely a series of textures and shadows. But the memories of what was my encounter with Egypt (with some of its people, with a three-dimensional country which was full of reminders of its colonial past and which charmed me and irritated me), I do not know how to represent. That particular Egypt will die with me. The photographic scrapbook has become a picturesque landscape in itself.