NORMA: International Journal for Masculinity Studies

Imagining the Welsh Nation in a Post-patriarchal, Post-national World: Y Gwyll/ Hinterland and the Re-construction of Trans/National Masculinity

--Manuscript Draft--

Full Title:	Imagining the Welsh Nation in a Post-patriarchal, Post-national World: Y Gwyll/ Hinterland and the Re-construction of Trans/National Masculinity
Manuscript Number:	RNOR-2018-0033R2
Article Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	masculinity; Wales; post-national; post-patriarchal; imagined community, TV drama
Manuscript Classifications:	Globalization; Masculinity
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Biographical Note:

Elke Weissmann is Reader in Television and Film at Edge Hill University, UK. She has published on transnational television, feminism and new media. A particular research interest is crime drama, its production and its audiences. She is a member of the editorial team of *Critical Studies in Television* and on the editorial board of *The Journal of Popular Television*. Her books include *The Forensic Sciences of CSI* (2010) and *Transnational Television Drama* (2012).

Abstract:

Television drama has been a key site to investigate masculinities. This article examines *Hinterland/Y Gwyll* (S4C, BBC, 2013-2016) in order to understand the interrelationship between critiques of masculinities and the construction of post-national imaginations of the nation. It draws largely on Saskia Sassen's work (1996;1999; 2003) on the post-national, developments of R.W. Connell's (1987) theorisation of hegemonic masculinity and Raymond Williams's (1977) conceptualisation of 'dominant', 'residual' and 'emerging' forms of culture in order to understand how the programme imagines the emergence of a new, post-patriarchal Wales.

Keywords: masculinity, Wales, post-national, post-patriarchal, imagined community

Word Count: 7,958 words including references

Introduction

> What we're getting fed back to us is that people believe in its own kind of authenticity. The stories come out of the area [of Ceredigion] and people feel the stories are about family, soil, blood, belonging […] all the kind of stuff that fits with what I know about Wales. (Executive Producer/ Writer Ed Thomas, cited in *The Killing Times,* 2015)

> From very early on we pitched to our distributors that this was all about a big, little country. […] They bought into that. If we could give that big, little country thing a kind of Sam Shepard frame they'd come on board. (Ed Thomas, in the same interview)

Reading the interview with Ed Thomas, *Hinterland/ Y Gwyll*'s (S4C, BBC, 2013-16) creator/executive producer/writer/director, there emerges one key paradox. Thomas emphasises the local, the specific, the Welsh, without the traditional stereotypes, only to say a few sentences later that he has used the stereotypes that still exist about Wales to tell stories that are similar to American ones. Sam Shepard, who is mentioned several times, is clearly a key influence. *Hinterland*, like Shepard's plays, focuses on the struggle of men against their fathers and suggests that the dream of a stable, patriarchal society is both the source of the protagonists' suffering and is crumbling away.

This paradoxical connection of the specifically Welsh and transnational, to which Thomas points, thus plays out in the construction of masculinities in *Hinterland*. This article investigates the relationship between the national and transnational in the construction of masculinities in the programme in order to understand the interrelations between critiques of patriarchy and the emergence of new national imaginaries. It will argue that *Hinterland* constructs several generational masculinities that have different relations to Wales and, by doing so, contributes to 'structures of feeling' (Williams, 1977) that suggest the emergence of a post-patriarchal nationhood. It can thus be understood to relate to larger developments in which critiques of hegemonic masculinities co-exist with imaginings of post-patriarchal societies and nostalgia for traditional patriarchal structures.

The local-global paradox can be resolved with the work of social theorists who have described the inevitable emmeshing of the local and the global. Robert Robertson (1995) makes this most explicit through his redefinition of 'glocalization', a term normally associated with the Japanese business practice of adapting global marketing strategies to specific local markets. Robertson expands the meaning to emphasise that all globalization is actually glocalization: a moving together and further away from each other, and an increased homogenization *and* heterogenization. Similarly, Saskia Sassen (1996; 1999; 2003) underlines the need for a complex understanding of globalizing tendencies that also involve the development of specific local fields. In relation to television, this complex interrelationship between the national, transnational and global has been discussed in relation to the format trade (see Esser, 2007; Esser et al., 2016; Moran, 1998). But in television drama too, the national and global constantly intersect. As Sheldon H. Lu argues in relation to Chinese soap opera, for example, 'we need not treat these texts as national allegories but, rather, as images of *imagined national identity* in the paradoxically transnational postmodern hyperreality' (2000, p. 29, emphasis in original). In sum, this research examines television by recognizing the complexities of spatialities in the production, distribution, textual construction and consumption of programmes. What makes *Hinterland* particularly interesting in this respect is that this complexity is evident in how the construction of the nation is played out in the development of distinct generational masculinities. As Thomas puts it, *Hinterland* is about Wales, blood, and myth. More than that, by investigating different masculinities, it creates a myth about what Wales was like and what it may become.

The imagination of an emerging post-patriarchal nationhood can best be understood by drawing on Raymond Williams's (1977) concept of 'structures of feeling'. Williams introduces the term in his critique of Marxist thought in relation to culture in general, and literature in particular. He critiques Marxist understandings of fixed relations between base

and superstructure, and instead stresses the role of processes in which material experiences and cultural production, and social systems and individual expression constantly speak to each other. Thus, dominant, residual and emerging cultural forms and ideas also constantly coexist. These dialectical relationships facilitate at points significant change which before their consolidation into ideological frameworks are experienced as structures of feeling which coexist with other ideologies and, potentially, other structures of feeling. While Williams was particularly interested in the role of class in relation to culture, I here want to put the emphasis on gender.

This article will provide an analysis of *Hinterland* in relation to the way the national myth is constructed through the investigation of masculinities. It will draw on textual analysis, but will consider both the production context – Thomas's acknowledgment of being influenced by Shepard – as well as the reception which regularly emphasised the programme's relationship to Nordic Noir (e.g. Frost, 2014). I understand national media as inherently transnational, operating both in collaboration and contradistinction to other media cultures (Esser, 2016). Considering the open construction of the programme in production and reception as national and transnational at the same time, *Hinterland* must be understood as an artefact that operates with and within a post-national understanding of culture. However, whilst *Hinterland* might be post-national, it also imagines an emerging nationhood that is apparently post-patriarchal. This poses the question as to whether the larger post-national context is able to imagine gender in less restrictive ways. However, before a detailed textual analysis can be provided, the context of post-nationalism, national identity and Wales needs further introduction.

The National, Post-National and Welsh National Identity

Benedict Anderson’s ‘working definition’ of the nation as an ‘imagined political community’ (2006, p. 6) has been widely used in the study of nation, nationalism and media (see amongst others Baker, 1997; Tomlinson, 1991). Anderson explains his definition by pointing to the limitation of being able to know everyone even in the smallest of nations (imagined), by referring to the imagined limitedness and sovereignty of the nation, and by suggesting that it is imagined as a *community* because

> regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings. (2006, p. 7)

Although Anderson’s theories have been used as a starting point for many feminist critiques of national theories (Wilford, 2005), we can see that this definition also problematically imagines the nation as the project of men. I nevertheless want to use the definition of ‘imagined community’ to highlight precisely how the nation is imagined in ways that emphasise gendered relations in which men ‘are invariably represented as its chief agents’ (Wilford, 2005, p. 1). But I also want to question whether the community of the nation is actually seen in terms of ‘comradeship’ as this suggests that members experience this in an active and positive way: they choose to participate in this imagining of the nation, this definition suggests, as something beneficial and positive.

Sassen (2002) in her comprehensive overview of literature examining the loosening of national ties points to the multiple allegiances that structure contemporary citizenship. This ranges from local to transnational and cosmopolitan connections. As she argues, some of these shifts connect to post-national experiences, i.e. experiences where the nation state is increasingly challenged by larger structures, including supra-national organisations such as the European Union (EU) or frameworks such as the emphasis on international human rights.

And some of it is connected to experiences of denationalisation, i.e., experiences of a nation state being weakened from within, whether by limiting national regulation or by reducing support for national institutions such as the welfare state. Experiences of a weakening state are central in undermining feelings of national citizenship, but do not fully account for ambiguous cultural identities. Indeed, one might want to ask if national belonging is experienced as something positive, or if indeed national belonging can be imagined as shared experiences of suffering. Taking a more cultural approach, 'post-national' may then be defined as a fundamental disenchantment with the imagined community – as a relationship to the national which is not dissimilar to that between post-modernism and modernism (Lyotard, 1983). This would mean a 'not just coming-after', but a critique and at the same time taking to extreme of the notion of the nation as imagined community.

In many ways, such an understanding of contemporary citizenship as post-national is also visible in contemporary activist work (Sassen, 2003). Aiming to understand different forms of globalisation and arguing for a multiscalar understanding for the intersection of local, national and global elements and forces, Sassen gives the example of local activist groups as sub-nationally operating forms of globalisation. As she observes, these groups are often highly critical of national and global policies, but nevertheless identify strongly with their locality and operate in relation to other such local groups internationally. Drawing on her work, Simon Avenell, who similarly looks at local activism, concludes that

> although local identities remain intact, transnationalism can and does have transformative effects on activists and their imaginations of post-national citizenship. Because the struggles "here" are connected to struggles "over there", imaginations of citizenship necessarily become more broad-minded and inclusive, and arguably far less self-indulgent. In a sense, transnationalism deterritorialises without eracinating, infusing post-national citizenship with a genuinely post-national and global potential. (2015, p. 376)

Although both Sassen and Avenell understand citizenship largely as political, I nevertheless want to use their theorisation of the post-national in order to investigate a cultural imagination of a specific post-national place, namely Wales. As I will argue, *Hinterland* constructs the local by drawing on this understanding of the nation: it is highly critical of and disenchanted with the nation as it has been imagined in the past and uses the recourse to other local and sometimes transnational tropes in order to provide this critique, whilst also at the same time emphasising such an imagined community.

That masculinities would be at the forefront of the critical investigation of nation in *Hinterland* is probably not surprising, considering the place of masculinities in the historical construction of Welsh identity. Ian Pritchard (2012), examining the development (and decline) of public house culture in Wales in relation to the construction of national identity in the nineteenth century, indicates:

> the male-only major heavy industries of coal and steel combined with the emerging constituents of the new industrial leisure culture, such as public houses and rugby football, to produce a Welsh collective consciousness that was overwhelmingly masculine. (p. 336)

In this description, the nation is not only enacted by men, but also culturally constructed with reference to them. This is somewhat unusual as the representational burden usually falls on women (Yuval-Davis, 2005). However, for stateless nations such as Wales, sport becomes a key outlet for patriotism (Johnes, 2000). As David Andrews (1996) observes, such a construction of national identity around the sport excluded women and constructed the nation in explicitly masculine and patriarchal ways.

Welsh national identity is, however, not constructed purely around rugby and the pub. Indeed, Martin Johnes (2000) highlights the origins of the contemporary vision of Wales as being closely connected to industrialisation, leading to an image of Wales deeply connected to ‘coal, terraced houses, choirs, radical politics and of course rugby, developing alongside

the chapel, pub and musical societies' (p. 95). Whilst this suggests a close relationship of Welsh national identity with industrialised urban environments, there is a recognition that its rural areas are also specifically Welsh. In this respect, the gothic and uncanny play key parts in creating a specifically Welsh rural national identity which 'is inscribed with a mixture of history, myth and religion' (Ames, 2013, p. 29). In the rural areas the Welsh language also remains more widely spoken. As Iolo Madoc-Jones et al. suggest, 'those who speak Welsh are frequently cast as "more Welsh" than those who do not' (2013, p. 396). Their empirical work into the ethnolinguistic identity of Welsh speakers indicated that they were '"imagined" as the same; a people united by the social practices of using the Welsh language with each other, living in rural settings, attending Welsh language cultural programmes and chapel, and watching Welsh language television' (2013, p. 406). What emerges, then, is a national identity that incorporates the complexities of the realities of contemporary Welsh life, and one which, Johnes (2000, p. 100) insists, remains malleable.

A key moment of change occurred in the 1980s, when Wales saw the wide-scale dismantling of its manufacturing base. Graham Day (2002, pp. 55-56) shows that 125,000 of 331,000 manufacturing jobs were lost in the two decades until 1986, and not just in the traditional sectors of the coal mining and steel industries, but also in many emerging manufacturing industries. The devastation caused by this had 'major implications […], including the shift towards part-time employment, the associated de-skilling of the workforce and the decisive feminization of the Welsh labour force' (p. 56). The loss of the newer manufacturing industries devastated rural areas: there, new factories had been built as part of a centralised policy to counter rural depopulation trends. By the late 1980s, however, these factories were largely closed again (Long and Wood, 2011).

Rural depopulation had started in tandem with the industrialisation of southern Wales and was closely connected to it. However, it experienced periods of acceleration: Johnes (2000) points to the mass emigration of Welsh working classes in the 1920s and 1930s as a result of the ongoing depression, whilst Hualou Long and Michael Woods (2011) cite figures that emphasise that rural depopulation was particularly evident in the 1950s. A weak infrastructure up into the 1960s meant that a significant number of farms were without piped water supply, and additionally created a sense of rural Wales as inaccessible for anyone without private transport.

Whilst the centralised strategies discussed above were meant to alleviate some of these problems, Long and Wood indicate that they were only moderately successful, and by the late 1980s were shown to have failed. Thus an image emerges of a rural Wales that is largely stuck in the past and where new developments are generally introduced from the outside, leading to a divided population. It is important to note that, since then, other strategies of funding local projects have been adopted and have eventually included a mixed approach in which farming remains important, suggesting that things have moved on. However, the image Long and Woods create about the late 1980s is remarkably similar to the representation of rural Wales in *Hinterland*. The programme thus draws on an understanding of Wales's national identity that is marked by a key opposition, namely industrialised, English-speaking and modern urban spaces in which women increasingly participate in the workforce and as a result more generally in public life, and a more traditional rural environment in which Welsh is more dominant, but which also continues to see the effects of depopulation and decline.

Hinterland's emphasis on Wales and Welsh originates from the fact that it was originally commissioned for S4C (Sianel Pedwar Cymru), a public service channel with a remit to represent Welsh national life in the Welsh language. Somewhat unusually for S4C content,

the TV drama gained wide distribution beyond Wales, largely because it was the first in a line of dramas co-produced by S4C and the BBC, the latter being made responsible for funding the former in 2013. The two broadcasters pitch the co-productions to separate audience groups on their different channels, each scene being shot twice: once in Welsh and once in English. The Welsh version is screened on S4C and the bilingual one on BBC One Cymru (aimed at Wales's general audience) as well as BBC Four (the digital channel most clearly aimed at a cosmopolitan elite). *Hinterland* was the first drama to be produced in that way and its monolingual English version was sold globally.

The multiple versions of *Hinterland* indicate that, although S4C clearly has a remit to support the Welsh language and, through it, Welsh national identity, the closer alliance with the BBC has meant that its prime-time drama has the social and economic obligation to satisfy both local needs and transnational desires. As the placement on BBC Four indicates, *Hinterland* aims to satisfy a specific international audience, one which already has an interest in international drama and film. Such an audience is likely to look for the specifically local and to get to know the 'authentic' culture of Wales; at least, that is the aim of the European Union funding that Fiction Factory, the production company, and All3Media, the distributor, accessed in order to cover some of the development and production costs. Overall, then, the production is clearly situated in such a way that reflects its identity as much inwards and locally, as it does outwards, globally. However, this also means that Wales – and the Welsh-speaking part of Wales – is constructed in ways that suggest at the same time a nostalgic desire for an authentic, patriarchal culture and the imagination of a cosmopolitan, modern way of life. The close textual analysis that follows will make evident how this national identity is constructed through a recourse to generational masculinities that represent what Wales was, is and may be like in the future.

Patriarchy, the Old Wales and the Suffering Second Generation in *Hinterland*

Television drama's construction of masculinities has attracted increased attention in the last decade or so (Albrecht, 2017, Byrne et al., 2019, Feasey, 2008, Lotz, 2014). Much of the research has focused on American cable and British mainstream television drama, with less space given to more marginal masculinities or masculinities clearly bounded by their relationship to space (see for example Waade, 2017). In most of the work, R. W. Connell's (1987) description of 'hegemonic masculinity' is a starting point, which is also a helpful concept for an understanding of the representation of traditional masculinities in *Hinterland*. However, the concept has been rightly criticised for its generalising tendencies. Juanita Elias and Christine Beasley (2009), for example, observe that the assumption of a monolithic hegemonic masculinity within the global realm is problematic, and I want to heed their warning by recognising the specific local elements and to see masculinities as relational (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Connell (1987) indicates that hegemonic masculinities are enabled when institutional power and cultural ideal coincide. Indeed: 'it is the successful claim to authority, more than direct violence, that is the mark of hegemony (though violence often underpins or supports authority)' (2005, p.77). As Richard Howson (2005, p. 154) observes, this constructs hegemonic masculinity as necessarily a 'dominant and dominating ideal type' which negates the opportunity for positive change unless we see its demise. His redefinition of hegemonic masculinity in line with the processual understanding of hegemony by Gramsci enables him to historicise and empirically investigate the construction of hegemonic masculinities. As he indicates, for social justice to emerge, activists 'must be able to express their particular demands as antagonism towards a hegemonic ideal' (2005, p.6). This requires a re-gendering, an emphasising of the masculinity of the hegemonic ideal. This

also entails that hegemonic masculinity does not only remain an oppressive force, but is also a complex system of knowledge that can be operationalised to engender change.

Such a re-gendering is evident in *Hinterland* regarding the perceived hegemonic culture of Wales which is, however, believed to be in decline. Here, hegemonic masculinity lays claim to its authority through the institutions of the police, the church, community leadership and the role of the *father*. The inclusion of fathers in the construction of hegemonic masculinity in *Hinterland* indicates that this ideal is largely generational: the true patriarchs, who asserted their authority through their hegemonic masculinity, are now perceived as old or are sometimes already dead. The new generation of men often reject their ways, but are at the same time stuck with their inheritance. In Williams's terms, their masculinity can be perceived as 'residual': as formed in the past, but still actively present, even if it 'may have an alternative or even oppositional relation to the dominant culture' (1977, p.122).

This is perhaps most evident in 'Aftermath' (Moon & Bryn, 2016), which focuses on the murder of a local minister. Considering the centrality of the chapel to traditional Welsh identity, the minister's position is imbued with authority as a 'pillar of the community'. But as the investigation ensues, we find out that he was a cruel and violent man. This is uncovered through the witness of the local community. The confessions of truth are often framed in close-up, allowing us to empathise with the characters. In addition, a melancholic musical theme, consisting only of some simple chords as well as some ephemeral sounds, underscores the experience of suffering that we observe. In contrast, the victim's face is never shown, allowing little development of compassion for the minister. Eventually, the son is revealed as the murderer, but he hangs himself before he can be arrested (figure 1). The backlighting achieved by hanging the body in front of the chapel's window gives the image a near-religious quality: it clearly draws on a history of Christian iconography connected to the

resurrection and martyrdom. The perpetrator, then, is framed as sacrificial lamb, as victim; the second generation are the sufferers of the will of the patriarch.

[insert figure 1 about here]

The legacy of tradition, perceived to be problematic and often fatal, especially for the patriarchs themselves, is a recurring theme in *Hinterland*, and is emphasised by the return to a key painting – namely 'Salem' by Sidney Curnow Vosper (1905, see figure 2). As the description adjacent to the original work in the Lady Lever Art Gallery in Port Sunlight intimates, the painting's meanings are multi-layered, including a critique of the sin of vanity, the disappearance of a Welsh way of life, and, as many people have remarked by pointing to the hidden image of the devil in the shawl, a key myth. But the image is now mostly understood to be iconic for Wales. In the context of *Hinterland*, the painting's relation to tradition, and in particular a disappearing or dying world seems important. Interestingly, here, the representation is focused on the body of the old woman rather than the men who are half-hidden in the background. She, although old and somewhat frail, nevertheless appears defiant, particularly in the light of the fact that she has arrived late to chapel. Traditional Wales, then, is steeped in myth and gothic tales, where moral propriety is foregrounded to suit individual needs and where the devil hides in the detail. The fact that the painting reappears as a print in most homes of the patriarchs suggests a critical approach to tradition which, although mythical and thus exerting an indefinable pull, is nevertheless seen as corruptible, susceptible to abuse.

[insert figure 2 about here]

Such a representation of tradition as steeped in myth, but dying, corruptible and harmful to a new generation of men is very close to the work of Shepard. In his work too, the patriarchs

are often dying or dead, and it is the sons who bear the mark of their ill deeds. As Katherine Weiss indicates, ‘the subject of the family and in particular its dysfunctional, violent male members has dominated Sam Shepard’s imagination’ (2007, p. 77). Weiss connects the patriarch’s dysfunction and violence to his experiences of fighting in the war; experiences which perpetuate a culture of violence in the next generation. Again, however, the focus is on the younger generation who are marked by this violence and who become dysfunctional themselves – even in terms of their communication which Weiss goes on to show is fragmented and disjointed.

The inability to speak, the focus on short sentences, and the many moments of silence are also very noticeable in *Hinterland*. In the pilot episode, ‘Devil’s Bridge’ (Buckley, Thomas & Evans, 2013), this inability goes so far that the original arrest scene with one of these second-generation men at first contains only grunting, and even in the following interview the suspect sits for a long time in silence, just shaking, until DCI Tom Mathias (Richard Harrington) shows him a picture of the suspect with the victim. In response, the suspect starts speaking, but in staccato sentences: ‘I was happy. *She* was happy. It was a happy day.’ Of course, such lack of dialogue is partially necessitated by the production context itself: the less dialogue, the less the production team have to reshoot the scenes back-to-back in Welsh and English. Thus sparse dialogue makes financial sense. But it also makes creative sense as the trauma of intergenerational violence dominated by traditional patriarchs is played out through the recourse to transnational ideas, namely the ‘frame of Sam Shepard’, but for very specific local settings. This means that the viewer is offered something potentially familiar at the same time as encountering the strange world of the imagined Welsh hinterland.

The familiarity also continues into the construction of traditional, hegemonic masculinity and the suffering it creates. But as indicated above, the representatives of this form of masculinity

are often either already dead or dying, and we have little chance to identify with them. An exception to this rule is provided by the serial narrative that is played out over the three seasons and that hinges on the Devil's Bridge case. Indeed, the traditional patriarchs are very evident in the institution of the police itself. The most apparent is Chief Superintendent Brian Prosser (Aneirin Hughes), who often looms in the shadows and regularly attempts to get the team to move in a different direction, apparently led by the wish to protect the establishment. In 'The Tale of Nant Gwrtheyrn' (McNamee &Jones, 2015), Prosser regularly reminds the team of the importance of the family to which the victim belonged. However, in an interesting moment of dialogue, Prosser's relationship to the establishment is revealed to be more complex:

> Prosser: His family were well-respected.
>
> Mathias: What about Owen [the victim]?
>
> Prosser [visibly struggling to find the right words]: His death won't go unnoticed.

His hesitation points to Prosser's strong moral conscience. Rather than being part of the establishment, like the victim, Prosser is thus shown to be its messenger or stooge. That he is not simply part of the first-generation patriarchs is also hinted at with his name: Prosser is a patronym derived from ap Rosser, meaning son of Roger (Reaney, 1995, p. 363). Prosser, then, though behaving like a first-generation patriarch, is actually a second-generation man.

In contrast, his former superintendent Robert Owen (William Thomas) is one of the few dominant patriarchs that we encounter. He is, due to his retired status, no longer visibly connected to the authority of the police. He is usually shown in his home, a large, traditional country house surrounded by a significant park. Thus, although less apparently connected to the establishment than Prosser whose uniform makes him visibly a representative of the

police, Owen inhabits much more obviously the world of tradition. His clothes, which usually include either a sweater or a cardigan, and his facial hair make him resemble a kindly grandfather, an image also reinforced by the fact that he smokes a pipe. But this image is proven to be a mask when Superintendent John Powell (Richard Lynch) goes to speak to him about a man who was murdered by Prosser. Though continuing to speak with a gentle voice, Owen threatens to publicize Powell's relationship with DI Mared Rhys (Mali Harries), a liaison which produced a daughter. The scene is shot in a slow pan, starting from behind Powell looking at Owen to a medium shot of Powell. As we hear about Owen's insider knowledge, our visual focus is directed to the impact on Powell: this is authority exerting itself upon a man's body. Thus, Owen's innocuous appearance is belied by the palpably forceful impact of his authority and knowledge.

Traditional Wales, as it was structured in the past and as it still impacts upon today's Welsh people, is perceived to be strongly marked by traditional hegemonic masculinities, as represented through the different patriarchs. The mythical 'old Wales' seems to rest on the traditional pillars of society, specifically the church and the justice system. However, whilst these pillars are believed to provide a clear delineation between right and wrong, good and bad, they are seen to be deeply corrupted and indeed, like the shawl of the old woman in 'Salem', hide the devil themselves. The violence on which their authority is based– whether physical or psychological violence – is deeply troubling for the second generation of men who, indeed, can only largely perpetuate it. The difference between these two masculinities can then be understood as that between dominant and residual forms of culture. Thus, the imagined community of old Wales is not one of comradeship, it is a community of blood, held together by family, the institutions of the church and police, and violence.

Multiple Masculinities of the In-between: Wales now

As we have seen, the second-generation men are often violent or at least marked by the violence of their fathers/predecessors. But there is another group of second-generation men who are perceived as different. These are the returnees who left Wales at unidentified moments in the past to try their luck elsewhere. There, they were confronted with their own capacity for violence which they now try to redress. Their masculinity can also be understood as residual, though it is of a different kind: their opposition to dominant forms of masculinity is based on their own failure, which means that they are at once closer and at the same time further distanced from the dominant form of masculinity. Whilst their number is limited, crucially they include the main protagonist, DCI Mathias, and thus demand some scrutiny. All of them have experienced a form of trauma connected to violence or death, with which they struggle to come to terms. As a result, they are indefinitely separated from their children.

All of the returnees attempt to live a relatively secluded life, away from the community to which they have returned. This is made evident by their accommodation: either a sparse caravan or a farmhouse that, like those described by Long and Wood (2011), lack piped water and electricity. In part, their attempt at isolation is also made evident by their taciturnity. This is particularly clear in Mathias who often only observes without speaking. Indeed, most of the initial interviews with family or community members are conducted by Rhys, with Mathias asking questions only later. As a result, Mathias is presented as an outsider who doesn't entirely belong. His backstory of having lived in London marks him as more cosmopolitan and transnational than local. This transnationalism is stressed further by the fact that his wife decides to emigrate to Canada, the place towards which, in the very last scene, he seems to look.

As indicated above, the transnational can enable local identities to become more inclusive and open, thus facilitating a potential redefinition of local identities. Montes (2013, p. 474) emphasises that migration can result 'in changes in local patterns of masculinity and femininity.' Indeed, migration can lead to challenges to the perception of the fixity of hegemonic masculinities which allows some men, as Suh (2017, p. 319) comments 'to come to terms with their marginalized masculinities in multiple geographic contexts'. Thus, migration makes visible to the men themselves the relationality of their masculinities (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Crucially, this international comparison also enables a reflexivity which can facilitate the critique of hegemonic masculinity and thus enable societal change (Howson, 2005).

For Mathias and the other returnees, the other place has meant a confrontation with their own inadequacies as patriarchs. And it is this inadequacy that brings Mathias close to several men in Scandinavian crime drama: Waade (2017) describes them as 'feminised anti-heroes' (p. 384), and discusses them as having

> a hard time trying to balance their private life with their working life. Working relations challenge their relationship with partners, and many of them fail as a parent (they forget appointments, get upset, lie and betray others) and they are characterised by emotional complexity including traumas, struggles and melancholic thoughts and emotions. (pp. 384-385)

In Mathias's case, this failure includes being able to save his daughter from drowning, which, it is suggested, happened as a result of his being distracted by his job. The jeopardising of his family's life brings him close to *Bron/Broen*'s Martin Rohde (Kim Bodnia), who himself proves to be a liability for the safety of his family.

The relationship to Nordic Noir is highlighted in the context of *Hinterland*'s British reception and distribution. Not only was *Hinterland* scheduled in a slot normally reserved for European crime drama (including *The Killing* and *Bron/Broen*) on BBC Four, but Arrowfilms, the

distributor of the DVD box sets, includes it within its catalogue of 'Nordic Noir and Beyond'. In addition, critical reviews describe it as 'The Welsh answer to *The Killing*' (Buist, 2014) or as 'Nordic Noir Done the Welsh Way' (Frost, 2014). Whilst most reviewers emphasise the landscape, Frost also points to the 'brooding detective' who 'makes Kurt Wallander look positively cheerful'. Thus, in the process of reception the relationship to one key trope of Nordic Noir is emphasised, making Mathias doubly transnational: both on the textual level as someone who has lived in different places and is likely to follow his wife abroad, and on a meta-level where the construction of character is constantly foregrounded as transnational. Whilst Ed Talfan (producer/writer of *Hinterland*) suggests that this relationship was not intentional (BuzzTV, 2015), the fact that audiences see this relationship and that the distributors and critics point to it means that the text itself is marked by this additional meaning. The programme, then, although clearly wanting to address something specific about Wales (Talfan in BuzzTV, 2015), nevertheless constantly bases its construction of masculinity on transnationally circulating tropes which are highlighted for and recognised by the audience.

Importantly, the transnational here is closely connected – both textually and meta-textually – to the failure and critique of patriarchy, suggesting that the specifically Welsh way of life (the patriarchally structured rural life) can be changed only if it is met by a transnational masculinity fully imbued with the failure of patriarchy. It is a masculinity, then, that is both external and yet fully aware of its similarities to the patriarchy at the root of Wales's problems. This paradoxical inside-outside relationship, which can be understood through Williams's (1977) description of the residual, is regularly made visible by the image of the map of the Ceredigion region against which the members of the team are framed. Mathias is often shown to be sitting or standing just to the side of it (see figure 3), rather than being surrounded by it, as Rhys usually is. Such a framing indicates Mathias's outsider status,

which in the bilingual version was emphasised by the fact that he was not a Welsh speaker. Mathias, then, is the outsider who nevertheless belongs, as his regular framing against the map – even if he sits off its coast – indicates.

[insert figure 3 around here]

The men in the middle, both those who have stayed and the returnees, clearly still exist in relation to hegemonic masculinity and therefore can be understood to represent residual forms of masculinity. It is the returnees - who had the opportunity to develop their own version of a family and failed at it - that confront the failings of traditional Welsh society. Whilst they act and lay bare the violence instigated by traditional patriarchy and thus offer a critique of this system, they are not really able to offer change. This can be facilitated only if women are given access to power, as shall be shown in the final section.

Future Wales: The Rejection of Patriarchy

As the above has indicated, *Hinterland* ends with the death of the ultimate patriarch, the arrest of his successor and Mathias's move to Canada. As a result, the most senior person left in the police, is a woman: Mared Rhys. Thus, the series seems to suggest that the future of the Welsh nation will be much more strongly in the hands of women. Until the very end, however, the women are largely seen as passive: often seen sitting down, able only to answer questions and largely restricted to the home (see figure 4). This is true for both the women who have stayed in the rural regions of Ceredigion and the women who, because they have moved to Aberystwyth, are now seen to be part of the more urban landscape.

[insert figure 4 around here]

Mared Rhys too seems to have a passive role within the team. Although she originally leads the investigation into the Devil's Bridge case, this is taken over by Mathias as soon as he arrives. Within the investigation, she is often restricted to interview situations where she is placed on a level similar to the witnesses, thus bringing her physically close to the passivity of other women. In contrast, Mathias is often shown either to investigate the outside of a house or, if inside, to stand or perch on higher furniture (see figure 4). This, of course, expresses their rank, but it also emphasises the traditional gendered distinctions between women as passive and men as active. The programme suggests, however, that this is part of the deliberate discrimination against women: Rhys is shown in several scenes expressing her frustration with being overlooked for promotion. She seems unable to affect chan, both because she is restricted to passivity and because she cannot access the relevant power.

However, this reading must be tempered by two observations: first, Rhys doesn't quite blend into the landscape as a result of wearing a bright red coat. As the production team points out, the red parka was meant to make Rhys stand out in the long shots of the countryside (BBC, 2016). Rhys, then, takes a position not dissimilar to Mathias's. Although she is clearly completely immersed in the landscape and life (she is also bilingual), she nevertheless resists fully blending in. Second, we need to question if Rhys's form of investigation which involves a lot of sitting down both when conducting interviews and when sifting through files, is really passive.[1] After all, it is through this work that the truth is revealed. It thus comes as no surprise that it is often Rhys who finds out what really happened and who brings cases to a close. Rhys's position, then, needs to be read as more complex than it first appears.

The need for complexity is also required as, in the end, the file that Iwan Thomas (Geraint Morgan) had accumulated about the Devil's Bridge case lands in her hands after another man, John Powell, is coaxed into not taking it any further. Whilst Rhys has as much to lose as

Powell, she decides to take the file to Mathias and, together, they build the case. Rhys's decision to go behind patriarchy's back is mirrored by her daughter's own rejection of it: in a short scene between the two, Rhys asks her daughter Elin (Sioned Dafydd), who is in her very girlish bed, if the latter wants to meet her father. But Elin says no. This is the clearest rejection of patriarchy, but such a rejection is evident also in other women who now live without their partners with their children in the city. What thus emerges is a new society in which women's competencies as parents and as detectors of truth are valued over the old power structures. It is in this new society that the next generation of men will grow up, being nurtured and looked after, rather than scarred by the violence of patriarchy.

As the shortness of this section indicates, this emerging Welsh culture is imagined to a very limited extent. It remains a shift in structures of feeling which are yet emerging and in which only the past is certain: Welsh patriarchal culture based on a hegemonic masculinity, articulated in *Hinterland* as the antagonist to the nation's happiness. The Welsh nation is thus imagined as existing in a moment of change when the critique of tradition is the beginning of a new structure of feeling that seems to be post-patriarchal.

Conclusions

Hinterland presents us with an image of Wales that can in the future be both post-patriarchal and post-national, an image in which these two elements are deeply enmeshed. If traditional Wales was a strongly patriarchal culture (Andrews, 2006), then its shift into a healthier future, the programme suggests, can happen only if it embraces transnational masculinities and femininities. This new Wales is both denationalised in so far as the authority of its traditional (patriarchal) institutions of the chapel, the justice system and the bloodline focused

on paternity are weakened, and at the same time post-national in that it connects much more strongly to the transnational critique of patriarchy, achieved by drawing on transnational tropes adapted from Shepard and Nordic Noir respectively. It is in the embrace of a bloodline based on matriarchy, however, that the potential for a new imagined community can emerge: a Wales still held together by blood, but now without the violence inflicted on it through patriarchal authority.

What such a myth-making of the nation suggests is that transnational masculinities might be used to develop new, but only marginally different imaginings of the nation: still largely based on its relation to the land and on kinship (rather than comradeship), but now matri- rather than patrilineal. Importantly, such a re-imagining is post-national in several ways. Disenchanted with the traditional cultural identity of the nation, but also reliant on the global in the local and the local in the global to facilitate this re-imagining, it utilises both the tropes of transnational culture and the transnational experiences of its people. For the new nation to emerge, then, both patriarchal masculinities and national myths need to be critiqued through the prism of transnational masculinity.

Declaration of Interest: The author declares no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Figure 1:

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure Captions:

Figure 1 The Perpetrator as Sacrifical Lamb in ‘Aftermath’

Figure 2 The Painting 'Salem' in the Patriarch's Home in ‘The Tale of Nant Gwrtheyrn’ (Murphy & Thomas, 2015)

Figure 3 Mathias framed against the Ceredigion Map in ‘In the Dead of Night’ (Murphy & Thomas, 2015)

Figure 4 The passive woman, sitting down, restricted to her home; Mathias is elevated as he perches on the arm of a sofa (in ‘Both Barrells’, Murphy & Bryn 2016)

[1] This question has already been raised in relation to soap opera (e.g. Brown 1994). There is no space to discuss this in any detail here, however.

Imagining the Welsh Nation in a Post-patriarchal, Post-national World: *Y Gwyll/ Hinterland* and the Re-construction of Trans/National Masculinity

Elke Weissmann, Edge Hill University, weissmae@edgehill.ac.uk, @TellyElk, OrCid no: 0000-0001-6957-1395