

**A National Architect?  
The Percy Thomas Practice and  
Welsh national identity**

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## **Abstract**

The Percy Thomas practice was responsible for designing a large number of structures in Wales throughout the twentieth century, for a range of functions that are part of the essential infrastructure of modern urban nations. The aim of this thesis is to show that the practice has made one of the most significant contributions to the built environment of modern, twentieth century Wales and that some of this work contributed to nation building, through the scale and scope of its projects, especially given the number of these that contributed to the fashioning of key institutions of the state or civic life. These buildings have contributed to the developing awareness of Wales emerging as a separate nation, through their particular function or even form. The practice's role within that nation building and modernising agenda has yet to be evaluated, prior to this research project.

The contextual framework for the research has been an understanding of nationalism. National identity is socially constructed and nationality has been, for the last two centuries, part of the political agenda of nation- states. Welsh nationalism and nation building are part of a wider European movement, as will be demonstrated, through the exploration of the development of nationalism in Wales and its manifestations.

How the built environment relates to socio-political and cultural ideas of nation building and identity formation and then whether and how the built environment can contribute to the process of nation building and identity formation, given that it is often the product of complex power infused social relations, will be demonstrated, once it is established that buildings are able to communicate meanings. The role of the built environment and iconic buildings, in particular, are an important part of the process of drawing attention to often contested conceptions of national identity, this role is often overlooked and its importance under-estimated, this is particularly the case in Wales.

The work of the practice is explored through a historical narrative account that sits within the critical realist research tradition for examining and explaining socially constructed phenomena, such as nation building activities. It will be shown that the practice was on some occasions, self-consciously undertaking work of this sort and displayed a degree of freedom regarding design.

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This work has not been submitted in substance for any other degree or award at this or any other university or place of learning, nor is being submitted concurrently in candidature for any degree or other award.

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It has been very tough, on times, to know which to prioritise: my passion for conserving our conserving our heritage or recording it in this way

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# Chapter 1 Introduction.

## *1.1. The focus of the research.*

A key contention of this thesis is that the architectural practice of Percy Thomas made one of the most significant contributions to the built environment of modern, twentieth century urban Wales. Also, more importantly, this work contributed to a developing sense of Welsh national identity and helped shape our ideas and perception of Wales as a separate nation through the fashioning of key institutions. Acknowledging that the production of the built environment is a complex process in which the architectural influence can sometimes be small (Bentley, 1999; Tiesdell and Adams, 2011), the thesis explores-through an extended case study-whether at least some of the buildings associated with Percy Thomas were heavily architecturally influenced and, if so, how this ‘space’ opened up. This complex of inter-related concerns raises many questions which will be answered in due course; it also highlights the context of the research, which is nationalism and nation building in its various forms.

Mitchinson claims that ‘Nationalism is one of the great, if not the greatest, force in modern European history’ (1980:1). This statement may be over three decades old but the power and relevance of the ideology of nationalism for modern societies seems to be ever greater, as Llobera argues ‘the success of nationalism in modernity has to be attributed largely to the sacred character that the nation has inherited from religion. In its essence the nation is the secularised god of our times’ (1994:221).

It is undoubtedly one of the most contested concepts of our time and as such, the subject of much scholarly and theoretical debate: about its origins, how it has developed, what it means, what are its effects, whether it developed from the historic idea of nation into an ideology or whether the development of the ideology is consequent upon social, economic and political changes and finally, the reason for its continuing relevance and power. These issues will be explored in chapter 2 to help

identify and define the characteristics of this extremely complex phenomenon so that a framework for the research focus of this thesis can be formulated.

This Chapter 2 will take the form of an historical narrative and theoretical examination, as part of the methodological approach of exploring the various concepts involved, to provide answers to questions about: origins, effects, whether meaning can be conveyed etc. in order to formulate the theoretical framework.

This approach sits within the critical realist research tradition. It sets the development of nationalism and its expressions in context. The context informs the meanings of the nation building expressions through the causal relationships and intentions. The signifiers can then be interpreted later by studying and understanding the historical context in a hermeneutic circle of the one process informing the other. This form of qualitative methodology will be explained fully in Chapter 5.

The strengths and perceived limitations of the narrative approach and how these are addressed is discussed in 5.5. We know a lot about how nations and national identities are constructed through the more obvious nation building activities and our experiences of the various related manifestations, for example: forming national sports teams, encouraging the population to adopt the pre-eminent and historic language of the country and constantly perpetuating the history and foundation myths of the region through selective narratives. Some of these activities will be explored to illustrate that these nationalist manifestations are often more complex, subtle and widespread than many people consider them to be. This exploration will also highlight that we know relatively little about the role the built environment, including essential infrastructure, plays in the process of nation building. Often the significance of a building is acknowledged, but its wider role as part of a nation building agenda may not be acknowledged. Butina Watson and Bentley (2007:4) explore this 'interweaving of place identity and human identity' in relation to a number of cities, having acknowledged the 'lack of useful theory' related to the process. How the built environment relates to socio-political and cultural ideas of

nation building and identity formation and how it contributes to this process needs to be examined to establish what is known both generally and in Wales.

This examination will be undertaken after it has been established that meanings can be conveyed by the built environment, through a study of associated literature that aims to explain this phenomenon. This form of communication appears relatively unproblematic when considering buildings that rely heavily on symbolism that is easily understood but when considering less overt imagery and cues and abstract concepts such as civic values and nation hood, decoding can become very complex requiring detailed analysis of the structure and its commission. This is because consensus about the meanings can be hard to achieve and are dependant on a shared understanding of the various elements involved and the language used for these elements. Meanings change over time according to the use of the structure and its context and can therefore offer diverse readings of the cues encoded in the structure. In order to test the contention that buildings can express subtle meanings like nationhood, a survey of architectural styles, structures and functions of buildings from the period of the eighteenth century classical revival through to the twentieth century is made.

This thesis will demonstrate that the visual expression of identity through the built form has been important to nation building projects in many countries, including Wales.

Chapter 3 will focus on the cultural and political awakening in Wales, relating how the ideology of nationalism was embraced by certain individuals associated with Wales, in order to progress the development of modern urban Wales. This chapter will therefore, also be in the form of an historical narrative, particularly stressing the role of institutions for the process of nation building.

The thesis will examine the work of a particular architectural practice of significance to twentieth century Wales. The Percy Thomas practice existed in an identifiable form under slightly different names from 1912 to 2004. The research proposition is that the practice made a significant contribution to the built environment of

modern, twentieth century urban Wales and that this work also contributed to a developing sense of Welsh national identity. This contention is based on the length of time that the practice existed and the range, scope and scale of work undertaken by the practice in Wales. Included in their portfolio of work are a number of commissions for key buildings throughout Wales that help the country function as a modern urban society and draw attention to Wales separate identity. Therefore Chapter 4 will narrate the development of the Percy Thomas practice set against the context of a modernising Wales that was becoming more self consciously political and culturally distinct.

This Chapter will also establish the extent of the PT practice in Wales and refer to the database compiled (see Appendix 2 ) and explain how this information was gathered and from what sources. The case study was chosen from this database. The research findings will demonstrate that their contribution can be argued to be the most significant of any single practice operating in twentieth century Wales. Crucially, the case study-see below-will demonstrate that the practice had an important influence over the built form of at least some buildings. Why this was so will be explored.

This thesis will also show that it is reasonable to speak of important and high profile buildings as iconic and part of the essential infrastructure that is understood to play a vital role in the process of building a modern urban nation. A high profile iconic building designed by the Thomas practice will be chosen for study and analysis, as a representative building of the nation building agenda. The choice of building for the case study will be that of the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building. This will be justified by considering the history and development of the National Museum and subsequently the Welsh Folk Museum within the context of the nation building project in Wales. Their roles as significant institutional components in the process of creating a nation will be highlighted, as ‘museums became locations where culture and history were used to give specific content of the nation’ (Bouquet, 2012:45).

## *1.2. Nation, identity and Wales.*

As will be demonstrated through a narrative analysis of Welsh identity, Wales came late to the process of nation building. Britain's suppression of Ireland, Scotland and Wales dates back many centuries and was so successful at the time of the expansion of the British Empire that the terms 'England' and 'Britain' became almost synonymous (Berger et al, 1999:10) and as late as 1985 one Cambridge College was proclaiming 'British history was English history' (Lowenthal, 1994:16).

Through brute force initially and later homogenising policies and integrated institutional arrangements, England achieved cultural and political hegemony in many countries around the world. However as indicated this relationship was not always one of straightforward oppression. In the mid-nineteenth century 'Welshness, as conceived by the education movement was compatible with Britishness' (Day and Suggett, 1985:110). This inter-relationship was repeated in the industrial areas and continued into the twentieth century and indicates the complex relationship between England and Wales.

Welshness can be traced to origins in a pre modern ethnic foundation but nation building activities date to the cultural and political revivals of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which are set within a broader context of nation building across Europe, 'when nation building throughout Europe pressed on civil society with a new intensity' (Woolf, 1996:33). In Wales, these narratives allied with the social radicalism of the Nonconformist religions and the later establishment of national institutions such as the universities, library and museum fuelled the growth of Welsh national consciousness. The cultural and educational developments were supported politically by the ascendant Welsh Liberals, many of whom were from a Nonconformist background who articulated issues of land reform and disestablishment. Some notable Liberals, such as David Lloyd George and D.A. Thomas, the 1st Lord Rhondda, advocated an independent Welsh party. The first inspector of the Welsh Department of the Board of Education, who had been made to wear the 'Welsh Not' as a child, recommended devolution in 1907 but circumstances conspired to delay fulfilment of this aim for nine decades. In 1997 the Referendum

was won by a small majority in the ‘second age of devolution’ (Morgan, P. 2007:13) but only after ‘the rejection of ‘Wales’ by the Welsh’ (Williams, 1991:297) at the time of the devolution referendum in 1979 which highlighted the awareness of the diversity and complexity of what constituted Welshness. ‘The meaning of Wales is not only variable but it is a matter of struggle to locate it in the symbolic where it achieves significance’ (Day, 2002:248). This characteristic is shared by many other countries, and the Welsh experience as explored in this thesis will have a wider resonance.

The origins and history of Wales and the complexity of Welshness will be examined to establish how Wales has developed, how this has been achieved and how much of this is due to nation building activities. This will then indicate what we know about these activities and any omissions can be identified. As noted before we know very little about the role and significance of buildings that often play an important part in the process of constructing a nation, especially in Wales. Also overlooked is the essential infrastructure that plays a fundamental part in the proper functioning of modern society.

An historical narrative of the role of the Thomas practice in the making of modern Wales will address some of the omissions and provide considerable evidence to demonstrate that their role was significant. This will be supplemented by a comprehensive list, the first of its kind that will show the range and importance of the various projects undertaken by the Thomas practice over nine decades during which time Wales was modernised. The data will be compiled from a wide variety of sources.

The contribution of the built environment to the broadly defined political project of modernising Wales and helping it function as a separate urbanised nation has not been very well explored. Also the role that the Thomas practice played in this process has been overlooked. From the historical narrative, data findings and analysis it will be possible to conclude that the practice played a major role in the nation



building activities of Wales and made the most significant contribution of any architectural or design practice to the built infrastructure of Wales.

### ***1.3 The structure of the thesis.***

The thesis's structure is dictated by the strategy adopted to answer the research questions and the function of each chapter. Chapter 2 and Chapter 6 are long chapters: the former sets out the context of the research issues and the latter is the case study. These long chapters frame three shorter chapters which examine issues specific to the case. The long chapters are, in turn, framed by shorter introductory and concluding chapters. Headings are used throughout to guide the reader but are especially helpful for the longer chapters.

*Chapter 2* as noted above will explore literature related to the rise of nationalism in Europe and the various theories about its origins. The role of visual culture in the development of identity and the social construction of nationality will be examined before establishing the way that meanings can be expressed by the built environment. Finally the role of architecture in identity formation activities and nation building will be discussed.

*Chapter 3* will focus on the development of Welsh nationalism through the cultural and political awakening of the intelligentsia. It will examine nation building in Wales through the development of a modern infrastructure and the establishment of Welsh institutions, particularly the National Museum of Wales and the Welsh Folk Museum. From this discussion a key iconic building designed by the Thomas practice that defines an emerging Wales is chosen as the case study - the Main Building at St. Fagans, in that its rôle is to draw attention to Wales' separate identity.

*Chapter 4* will explore the growth and role of the Thomas practice within the context of the wider transformation of Wales from one dependent upon traditional heavy industries to a modernised urban nation supported by an essential infrastructure, much of which was designed by the practice. Several databases will be established, including one listing all of the main projects undertaken by the practice in

Wales and another listing the sources for information on the practice. Various sources of architectural information will be investigated to supplement the data collected as part of investigating the practice generally.

*Chapter 5* is the research design and method chapter. The choice of case study will be fully justified. The epistemological approach will be explained and the case study approach will also be fully justified. A series of interviews will be undertaken with key informants related to the chosen case study of the Main Building at St. Fagans. Additional information will be gathered that is specific to the development of the Welsh Folk Museum and particularly the Main Building. Concerns about the validity, reliability and authenticity of data will be addressed, as will any ethical issues.

*Chapter 6* will be the case study chapter. Certain key themes that have emerged throughout the research process will be emphasised in the introduction and these will help structure the chapter, which is necessarily a substantial narrative account of findings related to the long struggle involved in realising the project. The analysis section of the building and its setting will provide evidence to demonstrate that the research hypothesis can be confirmed.

The concluding *Chapter 7* will reiterate the hypothesis and its purpose before considering how it has been tested and proven. The outcomes of each stage of the investigation will be repeated and the analysis drawn out of the research findings will also be reiterated to demonstrate that they confirm the contention. The value of the approach used for the case study will be assessed so that a theoretical framework can be proposed for future use. Themes that emerge from this exercise will inform the generalisability of the approach. In this way it will be concluded that the research has been valuable and can be justified and that the contention that the contribution of the Percy Thomas practice to the making of modern urban Wales is more significant than any other architectural practice and has helped shape perceptions of Wales is proven.

Thereafter there will be a section of supporting evidence in the form of a number of appendices, including as comprehensive a list as is practically possible of projects in Wales designed by the Percy Thomas practice.

## **Chapter 2 Nation, Nationalism and built form**

### ***2.1. Introduction***

This chapter will show that the role the built environment and essential infrastructure plays in nation building activities has not been fully explored, especially in Wales. It will highlight this oversight by looking at what we know about nationalism and identity formation activities, and finally explore how built form can be understood to contribute to nation building activities.

The concept of nationalism is inter-related with the idea of nation and the consequent development of nation states and nationalist consciousness. It is a complex and contested concept that is an important factor in political and cultural assertions of independence. It has increasing contemporary relevance and appeal as globalization changes geo-politics (Stiglitz, 2002). Therefore the formation of the state system of governance needs to be explored first along with the emergence of the idea of nation; this will be followed by the history of the development of the nation state, from the alignment of the idea of nation with the territorial unit by accounting for the historical factors and forces involved to its development into a mass ideology.

Nationalism is among one of the most significant and powerful phenomena in the world today but it is also one of the most complex, with little consensus amongst theorists about the key concepts and reasons for its emergence and survival (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994 pp. 4-13). Therefore the next section will discuss the major theories of this complex phenomenon and consider a broad definition of nationalism in order to establish a theoretical framework for understanding nationalist activity. It adopts a narrative approach, as theoretical discussion requires juxtaposition with concrete historical examples. In addition, an understanding of contemporary Wales is deeper if set within modern European history (Williams, 1991).

Having established the theoretical framework based on the idea of nation as the source of sovereignty and political legitimacy, achieved through the deep resources of history, it will be possible to study expressions of civic nationalism that contrib-

ute to the social construction of nationality and to interpret the processes involved. This analysis of the more overt symbolic and emblematic processes will lead to an analysis of the more subtle, often overlooked, symbols in visual culture and how imagery is used to convey messages about collective identities.

Grand architectural projects have traditionally been used to convey ideas of power, status and authority often in very bombastic, monumental ways (Sudjic, 2005:5; Vale, 1992:8; Butina Watson and Bentley, 2007:21-23) but other meanings can be expressed through the built environment (King, 1980:8; Psarra, 2009:7; Abel, 1997:154). However, how these meanings are conveyed and understood is the subject of often conflicting debate which needs to be examined in order to establish a framework for analysing buildings, especially those that have been used to convey other meanings, such as nationhood, which is of particular concern for this thesis. Messages of national identity are sometimes expressed in an overt way and sometimes they are expressed in more subtle ways in accordance with the function of the buildings. From a short survey of buildings and institutions it will be concluded that we know little about this aspect of nation building, particularly in Wales.

## ***2.2. The shaping of the modern nation state.***

This section will describe the historical factors and forces that shaped the state system of territorial organisation and how the idea of nation emerged. It will also describe how that idea ultimately developed into nation states and the concept of nationalism, which according to the sociologist Anthony Smith, as quoted in Gruffudd (1999b:199), is ‘perhaps the most compelling identity myth in the modern world’.

Highly significant and seminal events in history are the conjunction of social, economic, political and intellectual forces, which in their turn, are formed out of previous conjunctions, events and ideological factors. It is these processes and constructions that will be examined to understand the origins and causes for the development of the idea of nation and the subsequent growth and power of national con-

sciousness in Western Europe which continues to lead to the formation of new nation states in Europe and beyond.

The development from sovereign, territorial, ethnically based states centred on an absolute monarch into nation states is complex and part of other changes that began in the early modern period, from approximately the late fifteenth century.

Herz claimed that the territorial state emerged as the solution to the problems of security caused by new methods of warfare, as it was more effective than the personal militias of the mediaeval dynasties (Taylor and Flint, 2000:157). The formation of these states is also associated with the rise of absolute monarchs in Europe, centralised functions of state and the emerging world market resulting from the mercantile activities of territorial states like Holland and later England (Taylor and Flint, 2000:157). This emerging capitalism aligned with the formation of territorial states was fundamental to the development of modern Western Europe.

Llobera (1994:106) notes McNeill's claim that 'the idea that a government rightfully should rule only over citizens of a single ethnos started to develop in Western Europe towards the end of the Middle Ages'. This connection between a territory, its inhabitants and government is crucial to the later development of nation states. Many of the countries in Western Europe, at this time, reflected the early administrative divisions of the Roman period but they had not been reunited on the model of the Roman Empire. Hutchinson and Smith (1994:6) claim that this failure, along with 'the rise of competing absolutist states, meant that the territorial and economic basis for national states had been well prepared as far back as the later fifteenth century if not earlier'.

It was in the bringing together of territory and sovereignty that the legal basis of the modern inter state system was provided, eventually guaranteeing constitutional rights to that geographical region. The date of the origins of this process may be disputed but it was finalised by the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 between the Holy Roman Empire and the King of France, in that, 'it recognised that each state was sovereign in its own territory; that is, interference in the internal affairs of a coun-

try was the first offence of international law' (Taylor and Flint, 2000:156). The Treaty was a result of the strife that followed the religious wars of the Reformation and the Counter Reformation. It accorded equal legal status to Protestants, Catholics, monarchies and republican forms of government both in the Treaty tenets and in the negotiations. It was the first treaty defining modern international law. The political and legal changes that began as a result of the Westphalia Treaty had implications for the development of the idea of nation. In Britain, there were influences, too, of the Civil War followed by Britain's Glorious Revolution of 1688, which resulted in the formation of a constitutional monarchy, a form of parliamentary democracy that was to prove influential globally later. It should be remembered that England had already developed as the first centralised modern state of Europe during the period 1100-1300 (Llobera, 1994:24).

The rise of a wealthy mercantile class that traded and travelled across the world brought economic prosperity to Europe. Contact with other cultures prompted intellectual enquiry and increased awareness of the variety of different ethnic groups, who became identified with specific territories. This led to philosophical questioning of accepted values (Koenigsberger et al, 1990:8,160; Hampson, 1987:25). Scientific knowledge and understanding increased rapidly with the advent of empirical analysis of observed evidence which resulted in advances in the knowledge of history, natural history, geography and science (Koenigsberger et al, 1990:8,427,432).

The spread of knowledge, ideas and the scientific discoveries of the 'Renaissance' were facilitated by the advent of the Guttenberg printing press in the fifteenth century, which Eisenstein (1979:30) argues led to a 'communications revolution'. Books were the first commodity produced on an industrial scale. Commercial printing presses quickly developed at the same time as trade routes were opening up around the world, after the discovery of sea routes to the East and West. The consequent growth of the mercantile classes ensured a greater demand for books which led to a further increase in the numbers of educated citizens. As books became cheaper and more widely available demand for books in vernacular languages grew, which subsequently aided the fixity of regional vernacular languages.

This 'print capitalism' is the foundation for Benedict Anderson's (1991) claim that communities sharing common languages and collective cultural and political experiences could imagine themselves as belonging to a community existing simultaneously in time and space. This 'imagined community' is fundamental to Anderson's concept of nationalism.

Vernacular translations undermined the privileged status of knowledge formerly only gained through the medium of Latin, Greek and Hebrew. The wide circulation of Martin Luther's Theses, in German, in the years following 1517 directly challenged the status of the Catholic Church and the religious authority of the Papacy. The theses are considered to be the catalyst for the Protestant Reformation that aimed to reform the absolute power of the Roman Catholic Church. In Britain, Henry VIII declared himself supreme head of the church for political reasons. These acts of dissension were a crucial, if unanticipated, factor for the gradual process of democratisation and the transference of power from the church to the people.

Also, new church buildings were established to provide for the variety of denominations that were often specific to a particular region. For example, almost forty chapels were built in Wales in the decades after the Act of Toleration was passed in 1689 to accommodate Nonconformists. It is believed that the oldest extant chapel in Wales, at Maesyronnen, was converted from a cow-house into a congregational meeting house in 1696 (Jones, 1996:6). Purpose built chapels deliberately retained this vernacular architectural style for some time after. Betjeman noted that '[t]hey were anxious not to look like the Church, which held them in contempt' quoted by Jones (1996:30). Looking ahead a phenomenal chapel building programme followed the 1811 separation of the Welsh Methodists from the Anglican church in the nineteenth century. These kinds of developments deepened the sense of belonging to a geographical territory, after the fragmentation of the universal church.

The discoveries of the 'Age of Reason' that followed the Renaissance laid the foundations for the eighteenth century Enlightenment. The rationalist secularism of



the philosophical radicals of the time was formed against a background of profound social and economic change as the Industrial Revolution began in Britain, fuelled by technological developments like the steam engine and industrialisation of the manufacturing process of iron. The mainstream of modern economic thought traces its origins to Adam Smith's 'The Wealth of the Nations' written in 1776 which advocated competitive capitalism and free markets between individual countries and states operating as important economic and political units (Taylor and Flint, 2000:130). Intellectuals and the emerging bourgeoisie met in the coffee houses of the expanding urban centres to discuss the progressive ideas and technologies that were disseminated through an increasing number of journals, books, cheaper periodicals and newspapers, made possible by the new methods of manufacture. It should be noted that the general populace was largely illiterate at this stage.

The discourses of the Enlightenment emphasised the progress of civilisation through individual nations, particularly the French nation, based on classical models of patriotism and solidarity. It was believed that through liberation, the people would be in control of their destiny by uniting together as equal members of a fraternity. This doctrine of popular freedom and sovereignty helped foment ideas of national self determination, with the 'nation' as 'a political entity embodied in the state' and its 'citizens' as democratic entities (Jackson and Penrose, 1993:8).

Rousseau, one of the great thinkers of the Enlightenment, challenged the existing geo-political system by calling for 'sovereignty to reside in the will and institutions of the people' (Jackson and Penrose, 1993:8). Llobera (1994:154) notes that Rousseau's definition of the term 'patrie' (which roughly translates to mean the place of birth and is the term from which patriotism derives) was both democratic and romantic. Llobera (1994:154) repeats Godechot's (1971) observation that with Rousseau the 'word patrie increases its revolutionary charge', whilst his definition of nation was loaded with a sentimental charge, '[i]t is in this way that nation and patria converged' (Llobera, 1994:154) thus aligning love of the homeland with the sentiments of its peoples and the identification of a particular state with its territ-

ory. Carr (1994:243) describes Rousseau as the ‘founder of modern nationalism’ for identifying ‘nation’ and ‘people’. Ideally, each nation would be centred on a separate state, with polity by consent of its patriotic citizens.

Hutchinson and Smith (1994:4) emphasise the importance of appreciating the range of definitions for nation and nationalism. Largely though, the founding fathers of nationalism-‘Rousseau, Herder, Fichte, Korais and Mazzini’- saw it as an ideology and movement ‘incorporat[ing] political and cultural dimensions’ with the civic ideals of autonomy, unity and identity.

The idea of transferring sovereignty and political legitimacy to individual nations was used to legitimise the First Partition of Poland in 1772, followed by the American Declaration of Independence of 1776, then the first and second phases of the French Revolution in 1789 and 1792 respectively.

This was a period of extraordinary social and political change. As the numbers of powerful and wealthy people increased with the success of new technologies and markets and the middle classes expanded, the old social order was threatened by the rise of new kinds of social classes who were seeking to exert influence over state governance. In France it was a period of violent change and bloody revolution as the ‘ancien regime’ was overthrown or executed. ‘The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen’ was published in France in 1789. It was a fundamental text adopted by the Assembly that abolished feudal rights and enshrined the rights of individual males to liberty and political equality. Then in 1791 the Federation and Constituent Assembly made all Frenchmen equal and defined the nation state as a popular sovereignty with equal representation and a constitution. These democratic, patriotic ideals quickly spread across bourgeois Europe (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:7).

In 1807, Fichte’s ‘Addresses to the German Nation’ signalled a further major shift in politics; a nation became a political entity embodied in the state and later the territory. This was a development of von Herder’s definition of the previous century which defined a nation as a cultural entity defined by the shared attributes of

language, customs, religion and sometimes race (Breuilly, 1994:104). This form of ethnic nationalism was at the heart of German nationalist philosophy throughout the nineteenth century and underpinned their racist approach to nationalism in the twentieth century (Schleier, 1999:177). It was rooted in the need to promote Germany's shared culture and language at the time of the invasions of Napoleon and the dissolution of The Holy Roman Empire in 1806. The collective fight to repel Napoleon by the independent German speaking states activated a greater sense of geographic unity which laid the basis for eventual unification, roughly based on the ancient region of Germania.

Hutchinson and Smith (1994:5) make the point that the early neo-classical ideological phase of the Enlightenment was quickly succeeded by parallel developments in Romanticism, which was another important influence on the formation of the ideology of nationalism. Romanticism's anti-rational discourse effectively formed a counter Enlightenment (Hampson, 1987:186). It was based on an intellectual interest in history, ancient cultures and languages and the past for its own sake plus a desire to discover the true nature of societies (Forster, 2002:xxv). This was all part of a wider philosophical enquiry into nature, personal experience, emotion and expression (Swenson, 2000:55, 302-313).

Rousseau and von Herder, albeit impressed by classical virtues, encouraged research into the wide diversity of ethnic cultures and their respective histories and values which in turn informed their political philosophy. Herder stressed the singularity and distinctiveness of 'Volk' understood from these researches (Forster, 2002:xxviii). Recording folk culture from the newly discovered folk tales, epics, sagas and folk music became part of the process of creating a regional heritage that was inspired by and inspired national consciousness. This elevation of folk culture was partly in opposition to prevailing aristocratic values and partly a reaction to the spread of industrialisation that was obliterating traditional rituals and knowledge (Forster, 2002:xxxii,381,386).

The stories became the source of inspiration for art, opera, poetry, literature, music and architecture that claimed to express the shared essence of the 'nation' and its folk heritage. All of these activities added to the growing awareness of cultural distinctiveness and fuelled national awareness and pride. So, for example, Sir Walter Scott's romanticisation of Scottish Highland culture had a profound impact across Europe (Llobera, 1994:173). His novels established the romantic, historic genre and contributed to the increasing interest in forgotten histories and the awakening of patriotic interest, although historical accuracy was not a prime concern.

On the other hand, historical accuracy was of concern for the small group of Welsh Antiquarian scholars who formed the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion in the mid eighteenth century 'to defend the purity of the Welsh language, to stimulate interest in the history and literature of Wales and to promote economic and scientific ventures beneficial to Wales' (Davies, 1994:305). Their motivation was partly inspired by a romantic idea of the origins of Wales but also by the keenly felt need for an institution like the Royal Society (Davies, 1994:304). The Cymmrodorion hoped to enlighten English intellectuals about Celtic culture and so were effectively cultural nationalists, whose researches would later form part of a corpus of knowledge that would inspire nationalist politicians (Davies, 1994:305).

After the French Revolution state institutions were set up to express national individuality. This included the formation of national museum collections to convey knowledge of their cultural heritage to the people and provide a place where the nation can be 'imagined' (Anderson, 1991). In 1789 the National Assembly of France declared that the former royal collections were to be made national property. Four years later, the Louvre was opened to the general public becoming the first modern national museum in Europe (Bouquet, 2012: 39-41). Three further museums were established that played an important role in the shaping of French national identity and legitimised the nation state through the construction of narratives of the nation. 'Each country uses its museums as part of a repertoire of instruments with which to define itself' (Sudjic, 2005:294) and through such narrative forms 'disseminate the idea of a shared temporal and spatial unity' (Dicks,

2000:80). Nairn notes that in this way the past is ‘memorialised into time present, and so acquires a future’ (1997:4) thus looking both forwards and backwards in the manner of a modern Janus. Often these museums were established in former palaces but when the rebuilding of Paris began, classical precedents were favoured ‘to create a modern version of the metropolis of the ancient world’ (Hall, 1997:80). Hall (1997:79) also notes that Haussman and Napoleon III, as nationalists and patriots, believed that ‘France should lead developments in Europe’ with Paris as heir to Rome. They were building a capital, nation and Empire based on Roman ideas and architectural forms.

The invasions of Napoleon I, in the period 1796-1814, awakened a sense of solidarity and stimulated ‘intense new national feeling’ (Lane, 2000:41) in many countries, through the need to maintain boundaries. As noted above, nationalism was a central theme of Enlightenment political philosophy but crucially it was the ideas of the Romantic Movement that confirmed the connection of liberalism with nationalism through the developing liberal values and ideas of political representation, individualism, economic progress, freedom of the press and effective state bureaucracies. Revolutionary ideas and nationalist ideology spread across Europe.

The Greeks fought for independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 1820s. This was the first successful national movement in the nineteenth century. Significantly it was supported by the liberal-minded elite drawn from across Europe and America and educated in the Classics and Greek. They were romantically moved to protect the original seat of democracy that they understood as the cradle of Western civilisation through its legacy of civilised ideals and civic values, based on their studies of Antiquity. This idealistic intelligentsia included members of the aristocracy and the expanding, educated, bourgeois, middle class who believed, as noted by Ciuffoletti and quoted by Llobera that the ‘struggle of the Greek people seemed to embody in the most suggestive and extraordinary way the awakening of nationalities’ (1994:196). Encouraged by the political discourses of the Enlightenment, they aimed to achieve political reform and to mobilise other classes as had occurred in revolutionary France.

This 'pattern of mobilization' is repeated in many other nationalist movements (Hutchinson and Smith, 1994:5). For instance, Italy was, at least nominally, unified and established as a Republic in 1861 after decades of revolutionary activity against the occupying Habsburgs and through the efforts of the country's active intelligentsia raising awareness of national consciousness and agitating for greater influence over government (Llobera, 1994:130).

Later in the 1800s many of the major countries of Europe entered an expansionist phase which is often referred to as the 'Age of Empires', e.g; thus nearly all of Africa was sub-divided into colonies for Britain, France, Germany, Italy and King Leopold II of Belgium in 'the scramble for Africa' (Taylor and Flint, 2000:123). This was driven by geo-political rivalry based on trade and the need to improve status, as the nation state was increasingly judged according to its international power and prestige. The reasoning was that 'the possession of empire was essential if a European nation were to be rich and powerful' (Fage, 1985:320). These imperialist, authoritarian state nationalisms superseded the period of nationalisms against the state which had been democratic, progressive and humanitarian. Europe was ironically entering this 'grand finale of ceremonial monarchy' (Hall, 1997:328) and control by autocratic rulers at the same time as social and economic reform was leading to an increase in enfranchisement which impacted on democratic processes.

Awakening nationalities and emerging nationalisms within the borders of the larger states were suppressed. Homogenizing policies were adopted, which ignored multi-national realities, with the result that there was a certain amount of cultural and linguistic obliteration in the drive to form one nation, one state in a climate of cultural imperialism and state nationalism (Berger et al, 1999:10). Some of this nation building took the form of militant nationalism, as in the Franco-Prussian War, after which Germany achieved greater unification (Taylor and Flint, 2000:207). Some historians argue that the German states patriotically sided with Prussia to defend the German 'nation', or more accurately the 'Volk', through an intensified fear of further invasion by the French (Thompson [Alistair], 1999:97). Others argue that Bismarck exploited French fears over the maintenance of the balance of power and

provoked a war as a means of state building and expansion and to justify unification and the formation of the Empire (Llobera, 1994:129).

Hobsbawm argues that state-sponsored nationalism became a civic religion with a fully worked out liturgy of national anthems, flags, monuments, ceremonies and the worship of national history (Hobsbawm, 2002, chaps. 1 and 7). Schlesinger (1981:ix) is quoted in Llobera (1994:197) 'The state appropriated the capacity of nationalism 'to provide psychic and emotional sustenance in an age marked by the decline of religion and by the dehumanisations of industrialism... Nationalism can strengthen the state by endowing it with quasi-religious loyalty'.

Architecturally, a grand French Baroque Classicism was favoured for the design of the magnificent public buildings that were erected in this period for 'glorification of the monarchical system' (Hall, 1997:329). The European monarchs and emperors in power at this time were, Victoria, Franz Joseph, Napoleon III, William II, Victor Emmanuel, Leopold II and Oscar II (Hall, 1997:328). They ruled over an increasingly wealthy and growing bourgeoisie who emulated their taste for grand statements in architectural form and were ambitious to enhance the image of their city and display its 'resources, power and taste' (Hall, 1997:328). The Baroque style was revived as part of this aggrandisement, referencing exuberant and extravagant Baroque forms that were originally meant to express the triumph and power of the Catholic Revival after the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century (Watkin, 2000:283).

Nationalist sentiments were evident across most of nineteenth century Europe. In parallel with the expansionist phase of the larger states, already described, there were assertions of nationality in several small subject nations. These were inspired by the discourses of the Romantic Movement and the campaigns of the south Slavic movement resisting rule by the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Some historians claim that 'with the advent of mass politics, all states in Western and Central Europe engaged in a process of nation building' (Jones, 1999:85). Some smaller would-be nations such as, Catalonia, Norway and Finland agitated

for reform and independence. However Norway was the only successful case of self determination between 1870-1914, gaining independence from Sweden in 1905.

For many of Europe's inhabitants, the liberalising, democratic ideology was 'a solid refuge for the individual at a time of accelerated secularization and of disintegration of traditional allegiances' (Llobera, 1994:213). This reactionary nationalist sentiment was consciously expressed in all art forms including literature, music, opera, dance, art and architecture both in the smaller nations and in vast regions like Russia, as each country sought to find culturally meaningful forms that expressed national identity upon being faced with increasing cosmopolitanism and homogeneity and the possible loss of a distinctive cultural heritage. Curtis claims that 'the idea of a distinctly Catalan expression in architecture was already formulated in theory in the 1870s' (2002:132). Later in the century, the implementation of National Romantic ideals in architecture occurred in several aspiring nations around the Baltic, who used traditional forms and imagery to express their nationhood (Curtis, 2002:132).

Gramsci later identified the hegemonic role of these nineteenth century intellectuals, who were the creators of art and producers of knowledge that helped forge a 'national popular collective will' (Adamson, 1999:54). The interest in folk culture, histories, origin myths etc. grew as industrialisation and an increasingly urban existence threatened the loss of traditional cultures and value systems. Initiatives like Swedish National Day instituted by Dr. Artur Hazelius and the establishment of his folk museum at Skansen in the 1890s were evidence of the desire to enhance, retain and sometimes create distinctive traditions.

This growing cultural awareness was also significant for helping spread nationalist ideas across Europe. The Catalonian Civil Society of 1835-1885 began as a cultural forum, out of which a 'fully fledged nationalist ideology' grew, which was the basis for a 'political movement of self-determination' (Llobera, 1994:131). It was at this time, and in this context, that Cymru Fydd was formed in Wales, in 1886,



modelled on other European nationalist movements such as this and Young Italy. The Welsh political movement had effectively grown out of the cultural movement that began with the Celtic Revival in the previous century (Mayo, 1974; Day 2002; Tanner et al, 2006; Morgan P. et al, 2005).

The Great War of 1914-18 was a turning point for nationhood, the ideology of liberal nationalism and the nation state. Amidst the devastation that was experienced across Europe, the Hohenzollern, Habsburg, Romanov and Ottoman Empires collapsed resulting in a European wide diaspora of mass migrations and the creation, or recreation of nation states such as Finland, Estonia, Lithuania.

President Wilson's speech to the U.S. Congress set out his ideological proposals of Fourteen Points for lasting peace in Europe which, in principle, encouraged national self-determination based on historic rights, but military expedients and strategic necessities were given preference over ethnographic characteristics. The fourteen points later underpinned terms for the Treaty of Versailles at the Paris Peace Conference, which is usually interpreted as 'the apogee of national self-determination' with the fourteenth point recommending an association of nations (Taylor and Flint, 2000:160). The League of Nations was established in 1919, with the nation defined by its geographical territory rather than its ethnic population.

Europe descended into economic chaos and political instability in the inter-war years as evidenced by the Depression, which was experienced across the Western world, the General Strike and the Wall Street Crash of America. Democracy, capitalism and the liberal system of politics and economics appeared to have failed. The horrors of the war left many people disillusioned with their governments' economic and foreign policies. Some people rejected nationalist ideology for internationalist solutions but many allied themselves to the far right as it represented a different solution to the failed liberal-capitalism and the oppressions of Marxism and communism, which many feared would bring socialist revolutions as Russia descended into a totalitarian state under Stalin.

Llobera claims that ‘Fascism was the culmination of state nationalism.... focuss[ing] on the supremacy of the nation conceived inseparably from the state’ (1994:204) and that ‘the fascist model of nationalism spread in one form or another all over Europe’ (1994:204) due to a major crisis of confidence in the nation state. This was especially the case in Germany, Italy and Spain where extreme policies of nation building were being pursued which would eventually lead to a second world war.

Hitler’s totalitarian dictatorship had begun with the promise of elevating the German nation to a new era of national glory and power through strong leadership. In reality though, there was a Nazi drive for hegemony and expansion with all opposition brutally suppressed. Nazi ideology was based on ‘Volkish’ theories of the strength and purity of the blood and race of the German peoples leading to a spiral of xenophobia, ethnic hatred, the practice of eugenics and eventually extermination in order to purify the German race (Thompson, 1999:108; McNeill, 1994:300; Schleier, 1999:176-188). This extreme ethnic nationalism is characterised in a quote by F.G Junger, written in 1928 ‘Nationalism is born out of a new consciousness of a community rooted in the blood; such nationalism will ensure that the blood will rule supreme...’ (Schleier, 1999:180).

Mussolini had become Prime Minister of Italy in 1922, as leader of the National Fascist Party, and is credited with the development of this form of political ideology. Interestingly, the term is derived from the Latin word ‘fasces’ meaning a bundle of sticks. Fasces were widely used, in the period of civic expansion in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, as symbolic imagery on civic buildings to denote power through unity.

The architectural expression of virulent Italian nationalism differed from the German, largely because Mussolini embraced the younger generation of architects unlike Hitler who exiled young German, often Jewish, architects (Curtis, 2002:360). The Italians were keen to convey a sense of a modern, progressive nation drawing inspiration from the International Style of architecture to formulate a style known

as Italian Rationalism, whilst the Nazi use of architecture was propagandist, theatrical, and for rhetorical display drawing on Classical models to convey heavy handed authoritarianism (Curtis, 2002:354-356).



See Figure: 2.1 Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana.



See Figure: 2.2 House of German Art by Paul Troost.

The International Style may be seen as a modernising, functionalist response to new architectural problems, new technologies and new materials and as part of the wider modern movement in art but, it should also be remembered that internationalist architects like Gropius, Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe ‘had experienced

the traumas of the First World War, and optimistically hoped to encourage a new world to rise out of the ashes' (Curtis, 2002:159).



See Figure: 2.3 The Bauhaus by Walter Gropius



See Figure: 2.4 Villa Savoye by Le Corbusier

The United Nations was established in 1945 after the end of World War II to address the atrocities of the War, replace the weak and ineffectual League of Nations

and to provide a platform for dialogue and co-operation between nations, in an attempt to avert a third world war. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948 and for the first time in history prescribed basic civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for individuals. The thirty statements of objective towards the 'common standard of achievement' of human rights and fundamental freedoms for 'all peoples and nations' include Article 15 which states that: Everyone has the right to a nationality; No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

This is evidence of the power and centrality of the ideology of nationalism that had developed out of the discourses of Enlightenment political philosophy.

As the countries of the world industrialised, developed and modernised so the ideology of nationalism spread. National liberation movements became active in the former colonies of European countries where there was a growth in national consciousness and awareness of a distinctive cultural heritage. Countries seized the opportunity for greater independence, self determination and democracy as colonial structures lost power.

These movements were partly responsible for the reappearance in Western Europe of 'minority nationalisms against the state in the 1960s' (Llobera, 1994:205). which have continued to the present. It was also partly a revival of pre-War ethnic movements resurfacing after the traumas of World War II. Mayo describes the campaign of terror of 'The Front de Liberation de la Bretagne' and the state of emergency being declared in the Basque regions (Mayo, 1974:48 and 115).

Liberation and separatist movements appeared all over the world in a revolutionary decade of assertion of civil rights for racial, national and gender minorities against a background of ever more rapid technological change and continuing transformation of traditional values, hierarchies and social boundaries (Taylor and Flint, 2000:212,213).

Multi- ethnic states across Europe have continued to fragment over the last half century, including Great Britain. After increasing nationalist activity in Wales and Scotland through the middle decades of the twentieth century referendums for devolution were held in 1979, but they failed, whilst the crisis in Northern Ireland deepened, leading to bombings in Ireland and in Britain. This eventually led to powers being devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive in 1999, which was later suspended and restored in 2007. Referendums were again held in Wales and Scotland in 1997 leading to the Scotland Act and the Government of Wales Acts of 1998 as part of its programme of the 'modernisation' of government. These Acts led to the establishment of the Scottish Parliament and the National Assembly for Wales in 1999 each with certain devolved powers which are still under negotiation.

Many of the 1960s 'freedom' movements led to political destabilisation or new political structures. After the death of General Franco in 1975, a new Spanish constitution established autonomy for Catalonia, Basques, Galicia and Andalusia which acknowledged their historic nationalities. Social and economic reforms in the Soviet Union led to nationalist agitation in many of the Soviet countries which culminated in the official end of the Cold War in December 1989. The Warsaw Pact was officially dissolved in 1991 and so was the Soviet Union in December of that year.

The European Union was enlarged to include many of the former independent nations. Some of these nations achieved independence and transference of power peacefully whilst others suffered bloody revolutions and wars due to internal separatist movements based on long standing ethnic tensions fuelled by nationalist sentiments.

The Maastricht Treaty founding the European Union was signed in 1992 and became effective a year later. It is now a bureaucratic super state of twenty seven members with more countries to be added. Forming a European identity is even more problematic as it will add another layer of identity above that of the nation state and will necessarily mean many different things to millions of people.

This section has discussed how the origins and causes for the development of the idea of nation include centuries' old political structures beginning with the development of sovereign states centred on a monarch and later territories being awarded constitutional rights. (Britain effectively became the first functioning, centralised modern state after the Glorious Revolution when Parliament gained powers at the expense of the monarchy in the emblematic form of the Crown). These structures and other antecedents such as millennial Christianity, civic virtue, classical humanism, increasing awareness of ethnic differences and cultures all form the deep resources of 'la longue duree' that Llobera and Smith argue are crucial for the success of nation building. Their theories will be discussed in the next section.

The Renaissance, the Reformation, mercantilism, the communications revolution and improvements in technology caused significant social and economic changes which affected the development of political thought and resulted in Rousseau's call for popular sovereignty. This revolutionary idea was enacted in America and France. An emerging bourgeoisie and the industrial revolution helped spread the modernising political ideas of individualism and liberalism in which sovereignty was to reside in the nation.

The ideology of nationalism was so successful that several large states in the second half of the nineteenth century exploited it to improve their own status through nation building activities and Empire building that ignored multi national identities. This model of state nationalism culminated in fascism. It is interesting to note that the Great War is believed to have been caused by the suppression of nationalisms against the state and this is reflected in the peace proposals thereafter, whereas the concept was completely discredited after the Second World War, which was fought to overcome extreme state nationalism.

The 1960s revival of the ideology of nationalism across the world was fuelled by liberation movements, born out of decolonisation, the growth of trade and capital markets and greater awareness of human rights. It is now a very dominant ideology, even though individual national identities are often contested and constructed.

Often they are fragile and are constantly being remade as minorities gain greater power and hegemony.

It would seem that the power of the ideology comes from its apparent ability to achieve political goals and as such it has become an elemental force but it is also its ability to evolve according to context and be interpreted to suit individual political circumstances. Whatever form it takes it is evident that it is one of the fundamental forces in modern life and a powerful phenomenon; why this is so will be examined and analysed in the next section.

### ***2.3. Theories of nationalism.***

Pyr's Gruffudd notes that while in 'its broadest sense, nationalism is simply an ideological movement that draws upon national identity in order to achieve certain political goals' (1999b:199) with the nation state providing the framework for these rights through a form of civic nationalism there is often an ethnic element of nationalism involved in these processes which offers a more powerful sense of identity and belonging based on traditions and ethnic characteristics. Taken to the extreme though, this ethnic nationalism has been the cause of violence and death.

This section will describe and analyse the range of theoretical approaches that examine and aim to explain the causes and consequent power of the ideology of nationalism. This analysis is important in order to establish a theoretical perspective and argue for a related theoretical framework through which nationalist activities and expressions of nation building, as identified in the earlier section of this chapter, can be interpreted.

All theorists are agreed that modern nationalism, as it is understood through its discourses and mass belief in ideology, only appeared after the French Revolution but there is very little agreement on the origins of the concept of nation which underpins the ideology and draws on cultural and social bases. It will be argued that this has implications for the validity of the claims for nation-hood.



The broad terrain is as follows: several theorists claim that the spread of industrial capitalism, and the consequent impact of socio-economic change in the form of modernisation, was essential for the genesis of the ideology of nationalism. It was 'a manifestation of modernity' (Nairn, 1997:7). These theorists are known as Modernists. Others believe that the Modernists explanation is too limited and that the reasons for the emergence of the ideology are much more complicated. The theory of nationalism is itself relatively young and is a highly complex and contentious field of study, with conflicting explanations for the emergence of the phenomenon of nationalism and its continuing power. By outlining the Modernists' explanation and then examining the criticisms of this and other key explanations it is hoped that it can be seen why scholars agree that the mass belief in the ideology is a modern phenomenon. This is not the case regarding the reasons for its emergence, where there is much disagreement. However in order to explain the continuing power of the phenomenon, its complexity has to be embraced.

Nairn and Hechter argue that nationalism provides countries that are peripheral to the modernised, industrialised core nation with a way of defending themselves and their resources against exploitation by the core. This claim can be countered by considering the economic successes of Catalonia and the Basque region of Spain, whose nationalism is not rooted in such protective measures. Gellner proposed a socio-cultural version of this model with the process dependent upon a mobile and literate society able to generate the necessary ideology. It was therefore the unavoidable outcome of an industrial society (Llobera, 1994:99).

Nairn (1997) claims that Gellner's (1964) essay was the foundation of the social scientific theory of nationalism. Nairn also credits Gellner with demonstrating how industrialisation produced modern political nationalities, employing a version of philosophical materialism that is linked to Marxist historical materialism. Gellner believed that the uneven nature of the process of modernisation through the spread of industrial capitalism from the core to the periphery caused socio-economic changes that fostered nationality based politics. Gellner argued that culturally or geographically defined communities formed nationalist movements to protect their

own markets and ensure a fair share of the rewards of industrialisation. This theory is popular among economists and geographers: '[n]ation as a concept rose to express competition between states' (Taylor and Flint, 2000:29). This was based on Marx analysis of power and class with the fundamental conflict between capital and labour, that is, the bourgeoisie owns the means of production and buys the labour power of the proletariat leading to class conflict and exploitation. It is accepted however that Marx did not develop a theory of the state (Taylor, 1993:177).

Marxist theories see nationalism as a device through which the bourgeoisie consolidates its hold on the means of production and retains class domination. Both Hobsbawm and Gellner believe that nationalism is invented; Gellner even argued that nationalism invents nations where they had not previously existed (Anderson, 1991).

Marxist analysis has been criticised by World Systems Analysis (WSA) (Taylor, 1993:181). WSA finds Marxist theories of the state too dependant on the concept of relative autonomy as an explanation for the variety of politics and forms of state that occur under capitalism (Taylor and Flint, 2000:181). WSA is a highly complex analysis of the relationships of the state to the economy, and the world political map to the world political economy in which there are core, peripheral and semi-peripheral states, the latter two using 'nationalism' as a consensus force to challenge their position and survive. These are all now being re-negotiated by the impact of world wide corporations and 'globalisation'.

Nairn also regards the theory of nationalism as representing 'Marxism's greatest historical failure' (1997:329) because nationalism, not universalism, according to Nairn, is the most effective form of solidarity against oblivion; 'in adapting its inheritance, the nation awakens its dead and rehouses them in this world - the past ceases to be immemorial it gets memorialised into time present and so acquires a future', thus looking backwards and forwards, Janus faced (1997:4). Nairn adds that the histories of these emergent nations may be fake, but all have equality of pasts, even if invented, and by this means are saved from obliteration. He criticises

traditional modernist theory for its limited analysis and claims that the traditional Modernists infer a rational and bloodless process whereas in fact much blood is spilt. Nairn also argues for the importance of psychological structures of adhesion and dissent, of shared technologies and communal responses for the development of nationalism, and for a 'more differentiated approach'. To a certain extent this idea anticipates Anthony Smith's argument, which will be discussed below.

Other theorists, for example Blaut (1987), argue that these analyses are too limited and only consider 'change from above' through concentrating on the bourgeois classes. These analyses also neglect the anti-colonial struggles which Blaut believes are essentially a 'multi class struggle directed against imperialism' (Taylor, 1993:224). However Smith argues that theories like Blaut's are really only another form of Modernist theory which are in opposition to the primordialist's view which believes that nations are composed of historical communities of 'tribes'. Smith recommends a synthesis of the two views seeing nations as communities merging cultural identity with political demands (Taylor, 1993:195) with '[t]he timing of national resistance depend[ing] largely on material and geopolitical trends' (Smith, 1999:274). The relationships between economics, territory and politics could be thought of as the 'external' functions of a nation, whereas it is the 'internal' functions that engender social cohesion (Smith, 1991) 'this leads on to a whole raft of cultural relationships through which a people make a land, their land' (Gruffudd, 1999b:201).

Smith and Josep Llobera, argue persuasively that '[i]ndustrialism may accelerate the nationalist process but it does not create it' (Llobera, 1994:104). Woolf clarifies this distinction by noting that industrialization and modernisation are 'necessary' but 'insufficient preconditions' (1996:7). Therefore this section will consider the complexities of the phenomenon through the work of Anderson, Smith, Llobera and Billig in order to establish a theoretical perspective.

Benedict Anderson's analysis has been among the most influential in recent decades and therefore warrants particular attention. He claims that 'nationality, or, as

one might prefer to put it in view of the word's multiple significations, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind' (1991:4). These cultural artefacts, in their turn, were created by the coming together of 'discrete historical forces' in the late eighteenth century, which for Anderson were the material and political forces described in the previous section 2.2., specifically the political struggles in Europe emanating from the discourses of the Enlightenment, the transfer of sovereignty and political legitimacy to individual nations following the American Declaration of Independence of 1776 and the impact of industrialisation.

Anderson admits that nation, nationality, nationalism 'have proved notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyse' (1991:3) due to three paradoxes that he identifies as: its objective modernity, as understood by many historians as opposed to its subjective antiquity that is claimed for it by nationalists; its universality versus its particularity; the political power of nationalisms versus their philosophical poverty, incoherence even (1991:5). Anderson concludes that nationalism would be easier to define if it were considered as an analytical expression, like one's age, rather than as an ideology, that is as a unit of value. That said, however, Anderson in attempting to define the ideology accounts for these paradoxes and argues therefore that 'it is an imagined political community-and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (1991:6) the product of a cultural shift due to the philosophical, socio-economic and industrial forces of the time that he claims made it possible to think the nation. Community is fundamental to the concept as it engenders the necessary sense of belonging at a socio-cultural and personal level. Also, the awareness of what Anderson calls homogenous empty time, that is, 'transverse, cross-time, marked...by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar' (1991:24). This sense of the concept of 'meanwhile' was developed in the new genre of novels and newspapers and led to a revolutionary awareness of simultaneity in time in which readers could imagine others lives moving calendrically through time that paralleled their experience of time, even though they had no physical connection with these persons' lives. Anderson argues that this was an important concept for the development of the idea of nation as it allowed people to

imagine others in situations similar to their own, at the same calendrical time, and identify with them as members of a community, albeit an imagined one. This he argues was made possible by the development of print as commodity and the interaction between the systems and productive relations.

The production of books had grown quickly after the invention of the Guttenberg Press in the 1400s. It is estimated that 20,000,000 were printed by 1500 (Anderson, 1991:37) which enabled languages to become standardised and fixed, 'by the 17th. Century languages had generally assumed their modern forms' (Anderson, 1991:44). This in turn offered unified fields of communication and exchange, which Anderson argues created new languages of power. These print languages laid the basis for national consciousness, according to Anderson's theory.

Print capitalism was important for spreading ideas and fostering a sense of contemporary imagined community amongst the reading classes (often the new bourgeoisie, created by the mercantilist and capitalist activities) sharing language and a sense of belonging. Anderson claims that these 'were the first classes to achieve solidarities on an essentially imagined basis' (1991:77). Llobera however, posits the idea that '[i]n one respect nationalist ideology can be pictured as a reaction against the cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment' (1994:218). Also this analysis seems to suggest that the medium has more power than the content.

Even though Anderson claims that newspapers and the singing of national anthems provides regular reinforcement of nation-ness, it isn't clear from his analysis how these imagined communities are tied to a particular ethnic group or specified territory and how this psychological and emotional connection evolves to an economic and political solidarity needed for the creation of a nation. Also, it should be noted that a lot of the Protestant literature published in Holland was written in vernacular language and censored in deeply Catholic countries, including France, so not all literature was widely disseminated to all groups.

Anthony D. Smith criticises Anderson's analysis for its failure 'to explain how nationalism can have such a profound popular emotional appeal, how the possibility

of imagining the nation turns into a moral imperative of a mass dying for the nation, and why imagined print communities should become prime candidates for nationhood and mass self-sacrifice' (1999:8).

Smith's analysis of the major explanations of 'the nature, power, and incidence of nations and nationalism' (1999:3) are categorised as four paradigms: the primordialist explanation which accounts for nationalism as a natural, universal and ubiquitous state; the perennialist explanation in which it is understood as an historic fact and not part of the natural order; the modernist version which explains it as a result of the social changes brought by industrialisation particularly the related political changes of the French Revolution; and finally, the ethno-symbolist, which is the product of the other three paradigms.

The early explanations of nationalism viewed nations as natural, primordial divisions of humanity, existing in the state of nature like some natural organism. A refinement of primordialism argues that nations and ethnic communities are extensions of kinship units and a third version argues for cultural, territorial and blood ties. All of these forms fail to explain the causes of nationalism.

The perennialist paradigm is held by historians who claim the existence of nations from ancient times, like the Egyptians. Smith admits that 'it is quite possible to demonstrate...a continuity of national identity going back beyond the Reformation, at least for their elites' but he warns of 'the danger of imposing a retrospective nationalism onto communities and cultures whose identities and loyalties were local, regional, and religious, but barely national' (1999:5).

The third paradigm is Modernism. As discussed earlier, Modernism's fundamental flaw is that it fails to explain the precise boundaries of claimed nations, nor the history and symbolism they draw upon. Modernists, like Hobsbawm, Gellner and Nairn regard the primordialist and perennialist paradigms as flawed and limited. They date the inception of nationality based politics to the era of industrialisation and the French Revolution, after the transference of sovereignty to individual nations.

Smith argues that the theories of the Modernists are too flawed and reductionist because they do not account for social effects but instead assume that cultural cleavages and ethnic sentiments can be derived from purely economic and spatial characteristics (1983:xvi). He also argues that Modernists fail to address the ‘pre-existing cultures and ethnic ties of the nations that emerged in the modern epoch, thereby precluding any understanding of the popular roots and widespread appeal of nationalism’ (1999:9). It is in these pre modern precursors and ethnic antecedents that the roots and ties are found. Smith makes the persuasive point that these roots are crucial to the understanding of the power and popularity of the ideology. There is also the continuity and persistence of cultural components that Breuilly highlighted (1982). Further, the Modernists stress on the cultural and political phenomena of Modernism seriously limits their analysis by overlooking popular beliefs and actions and the powerful affective dimensions of nations and nationalism and their long term processes and structures. Smith claims that ‘[t]hese rather abstract, materialist schemata are overly deterministic’ (1999:7).

The fourth paradigm is the ethno-symbolic alternative which draws on the previous three paradigms, while addressing their flaws. Smith argues that ‘[f]or ethno-symbolists, what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories and traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular living past has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias’ (1999:9). It is widely accepted that these myths and memories informed the nineteenth century nationalist, cultural awakening across Europe. This ‘political archaeology’ (1999:12) re-appropriated and reconstructed by nationalist intelligentsia still has power and resonance, as can be seen in countries like Kashmir, Palestine and many others, where there are competing claims for ancestral territory and heritage. It is an essential element in the complex process of reinterpretation of the past for the present and future.

‘It is from these elements of myth, memory, symbol, and tradition that modern national identities are reconstructed in each generation, as the nation becomes more inclusive and as its members cope with new challenges’ (1999:9). Smith believes

that in order to ‘grasp the power and understand the shape of modern nations and nationalisms’ (1999:10) the ethno histories must be accounted for and the nation viewed as the product of ‘la longue duree’ which should account for its origins, its formations and how futures of nations are to be shaped out of collective pasts, cultural identities and shared memories.

Smith shares this ‘methodological postulate’ with Llobera ‘[i]f the nation is...a product of the longue duree, we must probe the mediaeval structures for an answer to the question of how nations were formed’ (Llobera, 1994:3). He notes that Bede was writing about the English people as early as 731, which could indicate a sense of solidarity amongst some English (1994:26) and, as a corollary, a sense of Welsh identity grew out of, and was sustained by, shared ideas about its past and its geography through the language of the common folk (1994:30).

Llobera claims that ‘most social scientists are obsessed with the modernity of the phenomenon’ of nationalism (1994:83) even though the great mediaeval theologian and philosopher, Thomas Aquinas, is known to have believed in the thirteenth century that language ‘determined the essence of the nation’ (1994:81). There is also the mediaeval use of the terms ‘natio’ and ‘patria’ to ‘indicate the presence of developing political and cultural realities’ (1994:81) that effectively paralleled the gradual transference of loyalty from ruler to territory. Llobera cites the research of Marc Bloch who concluded that a sentiment of national consciousness was evident from the twelfth century onwards. Bloch’s research considered the common elements and mental traditions that were formed out of each different language. These languages then survived in literatures written in the vernacular form (1994:81).

Llobera concludes that ‘[m]odern nationalisms are recreations of mediaeval realities’ (1994:85) and that ‘they can only be successful if they are rooted in the mediaeval past’ (1994:86). He adds that there was a cultural and political conception of the nation often centred on the monarchy. Llobera distinguishes between the modern fully fledged secular ideology of nationalism and that which has ‘the roots of the nation, of national identity and even of an incipient patriotic nationalism...



firmly anchored in the mediaeval period' (1994:214) finally concluding that the modernising elements and the processes of industrialisation 'accelerated the existing nationalist tendencies' (1994:215).

Billig (1995) notes that there is often a mundane 'banal' element to nationalist activity, beyond the political and ethnic struggles, which is expressed in overt signifiers of nation hood that become so familiar they are often overlooked, such as flags 'hanging unnoticed' (1995:8) on public buildings or through other more subtle cues such as particular language forms. These reinforce connection of the particular 'imagined community' on a daily basis and become part of a wider ideological discursive consciousness.

It can be seen therefore that there is widespread agreement that the ideology of nationalism is a modern phenomenon along with the related family of political practices, including the political use of the idea of nation. However, as Smith and Llobera argue nations have long histories and pre-modern roots and describe the continuities and discontinuities (real and illusory) essential for the development of the 'complex tapestry' of states and nations that make up modern Western Europe. Llobera concludes that '[w]hat is modern about the nation, then, is fundamentally its potential as a mass belief' (1994:120). It is the dominant ideology in spite of the multinational realities behind each state.

Smith agrees that 'the processes of modernisation... create the conditions for the formation of national states and the spread of nationalism in general' but they fail to account for the 'resources, that underlie all nationalisms: the uneven distribution of ethno- history, the varying impact of religious ideals, and the differential nature and location of the homeland' (1999:262). All types of nationalism focus on the land and its traditional inhabitants, both of which are prone to become idealized and emblematic as evidenced in the romanticisation of folk cultures. These form the continuities and deep resources for each particular nation as part of the deep resources of memories, myths, symbols and values that explain the diversity, power and persistence of the phenomenon (1999:271).

Therefore Smith's definition of nation is a named human population sharing a historical territory, common memories and myths of origin, a mass, standardized public culture, a common economy and territorial mobility, and common legal rights and duties for all members of the collectivity (1999:231). Also '[d]espite the obvious overlap between the concepts of state and nation in terms of common territory and citizenship, the idea of the nation defines and legitimates politics in cultural terms' (1999:232).

Smith's theory of nationalism is the most comprehensive, as it accounts for the origins of nations with a genealogy traceable to pre-modern ethnic foundations which modern civic nationalisms are dependent upon. It allows for the importance of deep resources of shared history and culture for ethnies which engender a shared sense of belonging to a particular ancestral territory. These historic continuities and discontinuities are formalized as memories and inform the ideology of nationalism but Smith's definition also accounts for the institutional aspects of the concept tied as it is to politics and economics. It provides a way of understanding how national identity is, and needs to be, constantly reinforced and reconstructed, while often drawing upon historical resources to do so. This property is important for the success of nation constructing activities, as will be demonstrated in the next section and in chapter 3 when the development of Welsh nationalism is examined.

The next section will establish that visual images are fundamental for our cognitive development and understanding but they are also fundamental in the process of constructing identities, in particular national identities.

#### ***2.4. Visual imagery and identity.***

The complexity of the ideology of nationalism was described in the last section and was shown to cover a wide range of contexts and narratives. Therefore it follows that the material and conceptual manifestations of the ideology will be equally various. This section will explore some of the ways in which national identity is expressed and constructed, both overtly and through more subtle and 'banal' imagery, with particular reference to Welsh examples to demonstrate that British and

Welsh national identity is constantly being reinforced through a range of visual imagery.

We are daily subject to an astonishing array of visual images and other sensory stimuli that provide information about the environment. In order to make sense of it all, the human mind categorises and classifies all stimuli received through a developmental process of cognitive assimilation, intrinsic motivation and accommodation, by matching mental representations against evolving schemata (Light and Oates, 1990:93).

Modern society is 'besieged' by visual imagery that aims to convey messages about the instigator, this can include everything from the livery worn by the employees of a supermarket chain for example, to the particular colours used in the stores and the design on the shopping bags. This 'branding' aims at instant identification of the visual elements associated with a particular corporation, other messages such as the values of the company can be often inextricably bound up with the imagery and become symbolic of those values (De Chernatony, 2003). Often consumers 'read' this imagery and recognise it without registering it consciously along with the associated values. This particular symbolic quality has been exploited by condensing the various elements of imagery associated with a company, charity or institution into a clearly legible and identifiable logo that conveys more than just the brand name, as demonstrated by the black and white panda of the World Wildlife Fund ([http://wwf.panda.org/who\\_we\\_are/history/](http://wwf.panda.org/who_we_are/history/) accessed 5/7/11).

Having highlighted the central role of visual stimuli for the acquisition of knowledge and for the purposes of identification, this role will be analysed further to illustrate the importance of visual imagery and subtle visual cues for the development of national consciousness. 'The visual image is an essential medium for the assertion of national identity: the denial of the aesthetics of the one is the denial of the politics of the other' (Lord, 1993:8). This will also underline the degree to which concepts of nation and identity are social constructions.

As a child growing up in the 1950s this researcher became aware of her British citizenship through lessons on British history in the English language and through the many visual images that were used as teaching aids, including World maps with Great Britain at the centre astride the Prime Meridian and coloured pink along with the remaining countries of the British Empire. Benedict Anderson describes these maps as logo-maps with ‘each colony appear[ing] like a detachable piece of jigsaw puzzle’. As the maps are ‘infinitely reproducible’ people’s awareness of their geography and status can be widely understood with the logo-maps becoming ultimately ‘powerful emblems for the anti-colonial nationalisms’ (Anderson, 1991:175).

There was also the less overt imagery that was used for identification purposes such as the ‘test card’ on the television for the B.B.C. (the British Broadcasting Corporation) and the regal image of Britannia on one side of coins. Letters were dispatched for posting with colourful stamps bearing the Queen’s profile set in an oval within the rectangular stamp. Each of the corners, thus formed, had a floral symbol representing the individual nations that constitute Great Britain, [otherwise known as the United Kingdom, a name which more accurately reflects the process of integration and unification that had taken place since the early sixteenth century]. The higher value stamps had images of iconic buildings for each of the four nations. Caernarfon Castle was the emblematic building for Wales as one of Edward I’s ‘Iron Ring’ of fortresses built to subdue the Welsh uprising of the late thirteenth century near a symbolically significant imperial Roman site. King Edward’s second son was born there and was subsequently created Prince of Wales, thus founding a tradition of office for the eldest surviving son of the ruling monarch of Britain. Edward VIII was invested as Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle in 1911 and Prince Charles in 1969. However, Thomas Pennant described Caernarfon Castle as ‘the most magnificent badge of our subjection’ (Lord, 2000:138) which elegantly describes the complex inter-relationship of Wales and England and also the contested way in which historical and cultural resources described earlier by Anthony Smith can be drawn upon to foster national identity.

See Figure 2.5. Stamp showing Caernarfon Castle.



Anderson claims that images such as these where archaeology is used as a logo is a form of ‘political museumizing’ with the monuments stripped of their original meaning and appropriated by the state as regalia indicating the legacy of the grammar of the colonial state (1991:183). The use of the image of the Castle for the stamps is an example of Anderson’s print capitalism, in that the imagery helps grow a community, as described in 2.3. It is also an example of the past being memorialised for the present and the future, looking backwards and forwards, Janus faced (Nairn, 1997:4).

Coins, stamps, maps, flags and other barely noticed items routinely reinforce our sense of national identity, almost on a subliminal level. Billig distinguishes between this ‘banal nationalism’ (1995:6) and the deliberate flag waving kind arguing that the former also has a powerful effect (1995:8). Billig’s broader definition of national identification also includes forms of allegiance, solidarity and identity that are often overlooked by many that profess to have no time for ‘nationalism’ which they see as the preserve of extreme right wing factions or groups struggling to create new nation states. Billig claims this narrow perception and understanding ignores the nationalism of established nation states. This sort of nationalism is all too evident in sporting events in particular, which have become the main arena for displays of patriotism through visual imagery and music. The national teams wear sporting kit that displays the colours of the national flag and associated emblems and begin proceedings with a rendition of the national anthem. The daf-

fodil of Wales, in nature a small and delicate flower, is often carried as a type of banner, in the form of a huge, brightly coloured plastic flower as a very visible symbol of Welsh nationality at national events. These examples illustrate Billig's argument that nationalism and awareness of national identity is virtually ubiquitous, as noted in 2.3., with some examples expressing overt nationalism and others expressing subtle reinforcement. Billig's claim also supports the contention that the built environment plays a role in nation constructing activities in that many buildings that play an important role in the infrastructure of the nation are often unnoticed and not consciously considered as playing an important part in nation building activities.

The visual display of Welshness has a long history beginning in the Tudor period with portraiture and the traditional Celtic artwork used for illustration in the Welsh translation of the Bible of 1588. The most potent visual symbol of Welshness is the Welsh flag bearing the red dragon of Cadwaledr. Henry VII is said to have unfurled the standard of Cadwaledr on the field of the Battle of Bosworth to indicate his ancient lineage and descent from the Welsh kings thereby justifying his birthright and claim to the British throne. On the eve of his coronation, Henry instituted the red dragon. It is now a very powerful and often highly visible emblem for the nation. As part of the national flag the image is appropriated in a variety of ways to symbolise Welshness- for example, it is stencilled onto supporters' cheeks in sporting and cultural events. However the use of the dragon on the civic buildings of Cathays Park, Cardiff had a rather different purpose. The symbolism indicated Cardiff's aspirations for city and capital status. At the time of the development of the site at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Cardiff was a regional town but was also the 'Metropolis of Wales' and the 'coal metropolis of the world' aiming to dominate Wales (Evans, 1985:369). This aspiration is also evident from the setting, layout, design and quality of the buildings and the use of other highly symbolic imagery, 'the magnificent civic centre at Cathays Park, laid out from 1901 onwards, pointed towards Cardiff's growing sense of itself as the premier city of a nascent nation' (Malaws, 2008: 245). This was later reinforced by the com-

missioning of ten marble sculptures of national heroes for the piano nobile, the first floor of the City Hall in 1912. Lord describes these as ‘the first (and still the most important) piece of public Welsh national academic art’ (1993:17).

Even though industrial south Wales had become anglicized by the 1880s the national cultural revival of the nineteenth century meant there was a lively appreciation of the emblems that represented Wales and the celebrations of St. David’s Day, eisteddfodau and other ritualised festivals, amongst those with the economic means and time to participate.

J.M. Staniforth, a cartoonist for the Western Mail for three decades from 1889, is considered by Lord (1998:164) to have been ‘the most important visual commentator on Welsh affairs’ and developed the character of Dame Wales as the voice of ‘middle Wales’. Staniforth’s character then featured in works of art and was one of the central ‘historic’ figures in the grand ‘National Pageant of Wales’ held in Cardiff in 1909, for which the wife of the fourth Marquess of Bute dressed up as the allegorical figure of Dame Wales, Lord Tredegar as Owain Glyndwr and the town librarian as Merlin. It was promoted as a ‘Great National Spectacle’.



See Figure: 2.6 Postcard from the National Pageant of Wales.



See Figure:2.7 Dame Wales painted by Christopher Williams.

The Cardiff Pageant is an illustration of the kinds of practices to which Hobsbawm (2002:6) refers, when he notes that: '[e]xisting customary traditional practices...were modified, ritualized and institutionalized for the new national purposes' and [a] powerful ritual complex formed round these occasions'. Hobsbawm also notes that '[s]uch movements, common among intellectuals since the Romantics, can never develop or preserve a living past ...but must become invented tradition (2002:8).

The eisteddfodau are another example of this sort of 'invented tradition'. These musical gatherings had ancient origins but the form, content, ritual and regalia were nineteenth century enhancements for reinforcing ideas about a separate distinguished national culture. Lord Tredegar commissioned the Hirlas Horn for the Gorsedd of Bards for the 1898 Eisteddfod. Pearson (1979:13) describes its cover as 'an embodiment of the Gorseddic idea' displaying bardic iconography that recalls Thomas Gray's 1757 poem of 'The Last Bard' who is supposed to have committed suicide rather than be captured by Edward 1 and thus became a powerful emblematic symbol of resistance.



Hubert von Herkomer, a well known artist and adjudicator at the eisteddfodau in the late 1800s, was so impressed by the Gorsedd and the Archdruid that he designed new regalia and robes in the Celtic style, which reached a high point with the Celtic Congress at Caernarfon in 1904 as part of a pan Celtic revival. This ancient imagery mixed with Arthurian myths and Welsh legends was a rich seam for inspiration for creating a particular Welsh visual identity at the turn of the century until the 1920s.

The contribution of the eisteddfodau to a contemporary Welsh visual imagery, prior to the establishment of national institutions like museums and galleries, was largely limited to the copy portraits of Welsh notables which were superseded by photographs. Professor Herkomer complained that art was seen as secondary to the poetry and music. The art and sculpture competitions aspired to produce great Welsh academic art and did achieve many notable pieces but the visual arts in Wales were hampered by limited patronage and suitable permanent exhibition space until the turn of the century (Lord 2000, chap. 8). Ellis had argued in 1897 for ‘a native school of art’ to illustrate Welsh cultural life but suggested this could only be achieved with ‘the priceless gift of self-government’ (1912:30).

Public statuary fared rather better as many were commissioned, between the 1890s and the 1930s, to commemorate important historic figures, intellectuals and political and social reformers who had taken an active part in the nationalist revival. Lord claims the statuary conveys ‘a people improved and successful in a modern British world’ (Lord, 2000:351- emphasis added). Yet episodes in British history could provide opportunities for visual assertions of Welsh identity. After the Great War most of the sculptural commissions were concerned with commemorating the fallen, the most significant being the Welsh National Memorial erected in 1928 in Cardiff which further reinforced the capital city aspirations and claimed for Wales a monument to the Welsh dead, as distinct from British memorials. It also illustrates the importance of power for art patronage (Lord, 1993:17).

Visual art was generally conservative and focused on imaging rural Wales. This effectively denied the existence of industrial Wales which was considered too ugly and grim to be depicted by most artists. Eventually, there were a few artists who were able to see the potential of industry as modern subject matter and who recognised the need to critique the awful living and working conditions. Largely though, the paintings of rural and industrial Wales reinforced stereotypical ideas about the nation and its inhabitants.

The focus largely moved away from patriotic sentiment in the 1930s as nationalism became discredited and considered too parochial when set against the contemporary developments in art and architecture and a background of political and economic upheaval. There was continuing pressure to express art and architectural ideas in accordance with the academic European high art tradition which consequently affected the reception of indigenous art works. Iorwerth Peate, of whom much will be said later in this thesis, argued for the value of the vernacular craft based artefacts as the true visual expression of the nation. His ideas eventually led to the foundation of the Welsh Folk Museum, under his leadership. However it also illustrated the divide between those advocating the traditional, rural culture as representative of ‘y werin gymraeg’ and those from an industrial background who felt equally Welsh, and were ignored, at first.

The National Museum was established in 1907 with the purpose of teaching ‘the world about Wales and to teach the Welsh people about their own Fatherland’ (Bassett, 1993:6) through the display of artefacts that were interpreted for the audience. The aims of the Art Department were to ‘illustrate the artistic achievements of the Welsh...; create a National Portrait Collection; illustrate the Welsh scene’ but in order to attain international recognition for the collection there has been a focus on main stream European art, led by the gift of the Davies sisters collection, an art collection of heiresses of one of Wales’s wealthiest coal owners. Petts remarks that ‘Cardiff is now an essential port of call for anyone devoted to French nineteenth-century painting’ (1990:109). This illustrates the difficulties for young nations trying to achieve recognition, international prestige and status through their cultural

institutions whilst at the same time representing their nations, in this case 'Wales in Miniature', through collections of indigenous visual products that are subject to a different value system. The display of Welsh visual material has long been effectively devolved to the museum at St. Fagans, although Lord has argued that this museum's interpretation, critique and display of its collection of images is limited and ignores the development of Welsh national consciousness through this crucial visual medium (1993). Lord's magnum opus 'The Visual Culture of Wales' addresses this issue and adds to the process of nation building through visual means.

This section has established the central importance of visual stimuli and imagery for understanding our environment and gaining knowledge about the world.

Through this same process we learn about our own and others sense of identity and how that is constructed from the various cues that we absorb consciously and subconsciously from the related socio-cultural context. National identity is constructed in the same way but the context has a cultural political dimension that incorporates ideas on nation hood set by the dominant ideology as noted in 2.3. National consciousness is therefore multi-layered and experienced situationally, with awareness of nation constructing activities subject to sensitivity to the cues and their related visibility.

Buildings, and particularly their role in nation constructing activities, tend to be 'unnoticed' and invisible except for a few significant exceptions. Some nations use architecture to aid in the creation of national identity, by drawing on references to historic precedents or other symbols that are considered to be emblematic of the nation's past, these buildings are the significant exceptions. This process is explored in great detail by Butina Watson and Bentley (2007). Their study of the historic city of Prague shows how the built environment can portray and help create an imagined (national) community, through consciously connecting historic buildings and spaces that evoke shared memories and myths and connect to people's lives, which are enhanced by modern culturally specific initiatives. Implicit in this kind of project is that some minority communities will be overlooked, or even deliberately excluded, as was the case with the Jewish community in Prague, a hun-

dred years ago. The authors claim that Prague is the ‘birthplace of modernist thinking about place–identity’ (2007:18).

How buildings and places are able to express messages and convey ideas about identity and function will be explored in the next section to confirm that this can occur and to help establish a framework for the analysis of the case study building. Also, how subtle and discreet ‘messages’ can be conveyed will be examined so that the role of architecture in national identity formation and nation building can be explored, before focussing on nation building in Wales and the role of the Percy Thomas practice in that agenda.

### ***2.5 The symbolism of built form.***

Following Bentley (1999, pp. 40ff) we may think of the built environment as the product of a number of inter-acting factors, the precise relationship of which is a contingent matter. Central to the interaction, however it plays out, are power relations (see also McGlyn and Murrain, 2007). Under this term, we can include leverage which particular actors may have in relation to each other, e.g. developers in relation to designers, or financiers in relation to developers. But there are also power-relations involved in less directly personal terms, e.g. in relation to cultural norms and conventions which may structure the nature of the process by which a building is designed, developed, constructed and used.

Tiesdell and Adams (2011) argue that on ‘problematic’ sites, the influence of designers over the final built form of a development is greater vis-à-vis the influence of the developer than it is on less problematic sites. ‘Problematic’, in this context, can include, for example, sites which have difficult topography, sites being developed for a client/user with distinctive, precise, needs, and sites where regulatory regimes are especially onerous (see also Imrie and Street, 2011). In these circumstances, the designers/architects can present themselves as having the expertise and experience which will optimise the outcomes in a potentially difficult set of circumstances. Buildings which symbolise, or help construct the identity of social institutions are potentially ‘problematic’, in that they present a very demanding, and

specific, challenge, occasionally in circumstances of social change and conflict. Consequently, the role of the architect/designer may well be more significant than is usual in such cases. Evenso, they will still usually draw upon a style vocabulary which has cultural and historic sanction to express their design ‘solutions’ for a site and building (Bentley, 1999).

Grand architecture has traditionally been used to convey ideas of power, status and authority often in very monumental ways. This monumental architecture is usually considered to be easy to read as an expression of power, ‘it is used by political leaders to seduce, to impress and to intimidate’ (Sudjic, 2005:2).

This section explores the different theories that suggest that meanings can be expressed through the built environment and how each theorist supports the claim that meanings can be read from the design and setting of a structure and sometimes the function of the building but particularly from the context of its production. This discussion will enable a framework to be established for analysing buildings and sites but will involve considering first principles on how ideas and meanings can be expressed by a material, built form.

The relationship of meanings to built forms is a highly complex subject as the contention raises many questions, such as; who is framing the meaning? how it is to be achieved? how is it understood ? is there a single translation of the meaning or do different audiences translate the meanings according to their own assumptions and cultural background? do these meanings change over time? After considering the various aspects inherent in the process of framing meaning through some sort of shared language, which is itself subject to philosophical discourse, it should be possible to establish a basic operational list of elements with relatively stable meanings to aid analysis in a rigorous and meaningful way. Conversely if the decoding of buildings offers a variety of readings to various audiences, it may be shown that the process of decoding can be very illuminating but that the intentions of the designer are always important for understanding why a building takes the form it does.

The idea that meaning could be socially constructed and expressed through domestic architecture was first articulated by Amos Rapoport in 1969 (Moore, 2000:xii). Rapoport's theory claimed that the built form of vernacular dwellings was influenced by socio-cultural factors, as well as other necessary considerations such as economics, defence, climate, available materials, site limitations etc. Rapoport argued that these material factors and forces should be considered as modifying or secondary to the cultural choices. This argument was completely at odds with the conventional ideas at the time, which claimed that only physical factors determined the shape of dwellings. His hypothesis was 'that house form is not simply the result of physical forces or any single causal factor, but is the consequence of a whole range of socio-cultural factors seen in the broadest terms' (1969:47). Paul Oliver describes Rapoport's 1969 book as 'a landmark in writing on vernacular architecture' (Moore, 2000:xiii). Moore explains that Rapoport's work 'was seminal in the formation of the multi-disciplinary field of Environment–Behaviour Studies' (2000:3) impacting on archaeology, anthropology, architectural history etc. through his aim to understand the 'complex nexus between culture and architecture' (2000:2).

Rapoport began his studies when the architectural profession was still largely subject to the functionalist dogma of the Modernist movement that aimed to provide universal, functional solutions in architecture. Through the critical work of Charles Jencks and others 'the issue of culture grew in significance with post-modernism, which raised to the fore the issue of meaning' (Moore, 2000:1). Rapoport argued that 'the human mind basically works by trying to impose meaning on the world through the use of cognitive taxonomies, categories, and schemata, and that built forms, like other aspects of material culture, are physical expressions of these schemata and domains' (1982:15). Earlier Rapoport had argued that our behaviours are conditioned by our sets of values and beliefs, which are influenced by our ideals and affect our choices, as 'environments are thought before they are built' (Rapoport, 1980:284). Through this process, four elements-communication, time, space and meaning are organised to become 'physical expressions of

schemata and cognitive domains' (Rapoport, 1980:284) and a setting is therefore provided for certain relevant activities; '[t]he setting helps to communicate the context and thus elicit the appropriate behaviour' (Rapoport, 1980:300).

In 2005 Rapoport claimed that the settings actually act as cues and mnemonics guiding behaviour, as would be the case in a library or theatre. He also distinguished between the fixed, semi-fixed and non-fixed components of the setting, which all interact to shape the meaning. Each of these components are described as being made up of particular elements. The first category of fixed components includes standard architectural elements and how these elements are organised. The second category of semi-fixed components is described as furnishing, which can involve a wide range of objects including trees, signage etc. How these objects relate to each other and to the context is also considered important. The final category of non-fixed components accounts for the occupants of a space where, as with the other two categories, the inter-relationships of the elements (occupants) of the setting are equally important and interact to shape the meaning.

The settings and activities need to be discovered to reveal the meanings as they are often culture-specific and related to cultural preferences (2005:chap.6). This relates to an earlier argument of Rapoport's that states that the physical elements 'can be decoded if and when they match people's schemata' (1982:15). This is illustrated by considering examples of the heavy symbolism used in mediaeval churches and cathedrals which the contemporary congregation understood or learnt to decode and understand. Of course a mismatch in understanding can occur between discourses and understanding. Also, as Rapoport notes, some cues are very subtle and almost latent, because they are only known within the group (1982:147). This indicates a considerable amount of social cohesion within the group which is itself important for the meaning (1982:138).

The methodology adopted by Charles Goodsell (1988) is similar to Rapoport's but is adapted for investigating court spaces by applying Rapoport's theories on meaning (Goodsell 1988:46) and relating them to comparative studies of functionally

and structurally similar places, through an analysis of composition of the structural space and plan form, the design and location of semi fixed features and patterns of applied decoration and object display. Following Jung, Goodsell argues that because of the authoritarian and political nature of civic spaces, special attention has to be paid to the third category of fitted features which may mask reality.

In a very thorough study of the various approaches to understanding the relationships between spatial elements and society, Goodsell explored the theories of Rapoport that relate social meanings to material forms and settings in order to analyse civic space and particularly law courts. Goodsell also analysed discourses on the importance of ancient symbolism in architectural design and the related psychological and philosophical processes involved. This analysis entailed clarification of the concept of semiotics and the 'structuralist' approach to analysing language, art history and architecture including the ideas of Norberg-Schulz, who based his architectural ideas on the philosophy of Heidegger. Norberg Schulz identified the phenomenological detail that accrues to places through the process of gathering symbols over time thus creating the genius loci specific to the place. Norberg-Schulz argued that 'architecture means to visualise the genius loci'. However site-specific meanings in themselves can be problematic; e.g., Stonehenge has acquired layers of meaning for various groups throughout time and its original purpose is the subject of debate, but essentially its role as a place of gathering has remained intact and therefore so has its genius loci or its essential spirit or identity.

In order to validate the relevance of this approach Goodsell argues that cultural historians regard understanding symbols as fundamental to their investigations. There is some consensus amongst theorists and philosophers regarding relativism and universalism in architectural expression, which offers Goodsell the hope of some 'conceptual anchors of stable meaning' (1988:48). He cites the importance of conventional use of symbolic spaces, shapes and proportions, such as, the dome standing for heaven, the round shape for the universe and key geometric features such as the axis mundi which is considered to connect the underworld with the celestial realm and the 'transcendent' significance given to architectural features such as the



threshold (1988:27). Goodsell also notes the categories of dichotomies, for example front versus back, sacred versus profane, public versus private etc. but these categories carry more fluid meanings than was intended in past societies so the elements and their relationships need full investigation to establish a culturally relative meaning.

Further to this is the body of commentary regarding the importance of distinguishing between functionally necessary features and 'decorative' features, the design of which is meant to add interest to the building and convey certain ideas. Choice of materials can be also symbolic as described by the Post Modernist architect Charles Jencks. By using these ideas for analysis Holston, a political historian argues that 'urban architecture constitutes a vivid inscription of the political order', as quoted by Goodsell (1988:47).

Goodsell's analysis of the contemporary chamber in a modernist idiom has particular relevance for this thesis, noting that Norberg Schulz's concept of *genius loci* is 'conveyed by volumetric space' which is itself symbolic and contributes to the process of place making. The ancient Roman concept of *genius loci* was revived by Alexander Pope in the early eighteenth century. Pope advocated landscape design principles that respected context and captured the essential spirit of the place.

Goodsell's description of the design concerns of architects promoting the International Style is worth noting ahead of the case study analysis in this project. These are: an interest in aesthetic form as an end in itself as if it were a sculptural item, treatment of spatial volume as an important element in the sense of the space dictating the positioning of the walls, anti-historical bias so that references to traditional design ideas are consciously limited, interest in materials and asymmetry so that the focus is on the built form, aim for clarity and sparse design (1988:143). However it must be remembered that the original 1920s and 1930s Modernist obsession for prescribed ideas, regarding the form of buildings, had been diluted by the mid 1950s. This was due to a growing awareness of the limitations of trying to apply universal design solutions to all situations and disenchantment at subsequent

failures caused by not accounting for climactic conditions etc. Even so it was becoming an increasingly fashionable style, as Kincaid notes, ‘this ascetic style... staked its claim in the wider urban vision of state sponsored architecture and planning that had swept across Europe and America in the decades after World War II’ (2006:134). ‘It sought design principles ‘beyond’ any particular locality’ (Butina Watson and Bentley, 2007:33). The internationalist architecture reflected the new internationalist economy that had led to substantial social changes. Kincaid repeats Harvey’s suggestion ‘that the project of modernist architects and planners... became welded to the technocratic and positivist vision of the postwar bureaucratic state’ (2006:136). The fashion for international and universal solutions in architecture reflected the globalising trends of companies and ideas and was embraced by the state.

Goodsell adds two further points that have relevance for the analysis of the case study building and support Kincaid’s observation on the design preference of the modern international style for post war state sponsored architecture; ‘other writers on politics and architecture stress how the structures that governments build express the values and ideology of the prevailing political regime’ (1988:29). Lord Raglan’s interpretation of ancient structures, that led him to conclude that contemporary public buildings are a combination of temple and palace (1988:29), refers to the meanings conveyed by contemporary buildings associated with the state which centuries ago were only religious and monarchical buildings.

The importance of the idea of the temple as a continuing influence in design decisions is explored by Unwin (1997), who argues that the discipline of architecture has grown out of the activity of place making and not just from the need for a shelter to contain the various activities of living, working, worshipping, dying etc. thereby supporting the argument that buildings are meaningful cultural artefacts. Unwin’s book is a set reader in many schools of architecture around the world. He notes that even though the act of producing architecture has become more sophisticated, the fundamental requirement of identification of place has remained and ‘[i]t is the concept of place that links architecture to life’ (1997:53). His theories

focus on the formal concerns of architecture and how users experience built form, without regard to the wider context and social understanding of places. His ideas are important for the analysis of the case study building and the formal intentions of its designers.

Unwin identifies four primitive place types that are still at the heart of much architectural design and place making, these are: the hearth, the bed, the altar and the performance place. The related activities within these categories are 'framed' by architecture that is organised according to geometrical principles. In this way all architecture is necessarily related to the people who occupy space. It is important to understand the potential of this dynamic connection between the occupants who can move about the space in many directions and the 'built' space itself which can be understood as a cube with six possibilities of movement and its centre forming a social geometry within the material geometry. Architects use the potential geometries created by the space and the movement of the occupants throughout the space to enhance the experience of the space and to add power to the identification of place, through lines of sight and lines of passage, axes, grids, circles of presence etc. They can also advantageously utilise and exploit existing features and conditions for impact, climatic benefit etc. and manipulate abstract modifying elements such as the movement of air and light to benefit the building whilst keeping in mind essential restrictions, functional requirements and other limitations.

Added to the potential and limitations of the geometries of place making are the potentials and limitations imposed on design solutions by the innate qualities of the various components and their materials (1997:117). The importance of geometry to an architect cannot be over stated; the degree to which the design aspires to the ideal geometry of crucial proportions and harmonies will depend upon the attitude of the architect, which in turn may be personally or culturally inspired. This is not an archaic and esoteric architectural device; many twentieth century architects, including Le Corbusier, have used ideal geometry to add interest to their designs. Fundamental to this conceptual framework is the relationship between space and structure, which can be further sub-divided into the ratios inherent in the process of

planning spaces where either the structure dominates the space or vice versa or there is a harmonic blending of the two. Twentieth century Modernist solutions and new building technologies allowed freedom from the traditional constraints of the structure, as shown by Le Corbusier in the Dom-Ino system in which the structure helps to identify places/spaces but does not determine them, as with traditional architectural planning solutions. Horizontality was another feature celebrated by some Modernist architects who sometimes subverted conventional ideas about the location of functions within a building and the organisation of places within the strata to give this modern space a distinct character. This contrasts with the verticality expressed in mediaeval cathedrals, Victorian terrace housing and high rise buildings.

All architecture has to be experienced through the senses and through movement: 'cultural landscapes are experienced through inhabitation, not passive contemplation' (Butina Watson and Bentley, 2007:20). Some spaces are dynamic and others are static, some are private and some public, some are arranged hierarchically in relation to a system of values that are manifested in the quality of architectural detailing and the positioning of spaces. All of these places display characteristics which are subject to modifying elements and are made up of basic elements of architecture in order to fulfil the important role of identifying place within its context. In this way, Unwin argues, the focus shifts from the building being an end in itself to 'a means to an end' (1997:163) and reinforces the primary importance of architecture as identification of place encoded with the design decisions inherent in the process of creating places.

Abel's approach (1997) to architectural analysis is to highlight and consider the difficulties inherent in architectural discourse because of its dependence upon metaphor and analogy. He believes that each building has its own language '[w]hen we compare one building with the other, we compare distinct languages, each with its own rules and internal logic, each offering a quite different interpretation of reality. We do not just compare building with building, therefore, but ideas with ideas, values with values' (1997:99). This linguistic relativism is supported by Wit-

tgenstein's theory of meaning that claims that 'meaning is use' thus meaning in architecture is governed by the dynamics of social custom and practice' (1997:152). This also relates to Norberg Schulz's 'phenomenology of architecture' which is dependent upon our acceptance that a place has character. It then gathers meaning as it is used, which gives the place its 'unique presence or genius loci' (1997:147). This relates to Rapoport's proposal that settings and components can reveal meanings.

Some argue that architecture is relatively autonomous, as with parallel arguments in linguistics, but the opposite can also be argued; 'both architecture and language give expression to the differences as well as the similarities' but architecture alone among all the major culture-forms offers what Norberg-Schulz describes as a 'tangible existential foothold in the landscape' (1997:153).

Abel claims that the Modernists were initially aiming to provide universal architectural solutions, as noted by Goodsell. However, the regional variations to so called universal forms, attest to the attachment of individuals and societies to familiar ways of building within their culture but also tell us about relations between a specific society and its built forms (1997:153). A variation of this perspective is the more self conscious 'critical regionalism' that according to writers like Lewis Mumford and Kenneth Frampton deliberately countered the placeless, universalist solutions of the early CIAM Modern architects, like Le Corbusier and Mies van der Rohe as noted in the section on Goodsell's research. Therefore universalist solutions are always tempered by local and regional forces, 'frequently couched in the plaintive terms of a 'search for identity' (1997:167). This point will have more relevance when the form of the case study building is analysed

Harvey's (1985) interpretation of the processes of urbanization focuses, like Bentley (1999), on the contradictions and contested nature of creating urban space, which he regards as a physical landscape made in the image of the capitalism that drives the process but is resisted by community struggles and protest movements. To illustrate this approach Harvey (1985) narrates the complex and long history of

the development of the Basilica of the Sacre Coeur in Paris describing the layers of meaning that have attached to the building and its contested site. Ultimately this has meant that the Catholic and monarchist conservatives as well as the Republican communards can claim the site as significant.

The cult of the sacred Heart had its origins in the visions of Marguerite-Marie Alacoque in the C17th. Louis XVI was buried at Montmartre after the French Revolution, when a chapel of Expiation was built to fulfil his promise to the cult. The site then became the object of national contrition at the time of the Siege of Paris. Later acts of slaughter by both sides, at the time of the Second Siege, made it a place of martyrdom. The Catholic Church wanted a new monument which would symbolically dominate Paris by being positioned overlooking the city and enlisted the state, to ensure its construction. This was interpreted as a provocative act of triumphalism and control by the state, in collusion with the church. Delays occurred due to political, financial and technical difficulties The Socialists gained more power and tried to get the project cancelled but it was saved by a legal technicality.

Harvey questions whether it expresses the spirit of revolutionary France or the sins of the country. The Basilica of the Sacre Couer demonstrates how meanings can be ambiguous and interpreted according to one's own cultural perspective and understanding of the site. This gleaming white basilica may be understood as a mausoleum for the Catholic martyrs but its inception and realisation is intimately entwined with the long and bloody struggle for the principles of equality, fraternity and liberty of Republicanism. It may also be one of the earliest buildings in Europe promoted as a national shrine. The complicated partisan politics of the Catholics and their expression of faith was successfully challenged and changed during the course of building the church, with the need to liberate the space from domination by one group, at a time of capitalist transformation in France.

Harvey claims that urban planners, architects and other professionals have always ignored the importance of the social dimension and human needs for space and

time, concentrating largely on spatial, formal and aesthetic considerations (1985:83). This point was illustrated by considering Unwin's perspective on design considerations and process. Harvey argues that 'Planning as ideology...transposes all that comes from history and consciousness into spatial terms' (1985:99). 'The city writes and assigns, that is, it signifies, orders, stipulates.' 'What?...to be discovered by reflection' (1985:102). As noted before the wider social context of the production of a building and the effects of this and its uses, need to be explored to establish a full understanding of the building's meanings. These are what Harvey terms as the 'deeper processes'.

Harvey's analysis is influenced by Lefebvre, a Marxist philosopher whose theories on the importance of the production of space have impacted on many disciplines. Lefebvre argued that 'the city can be read because it writes'. '[h]owever it is not enough to examine this without recourse to context.' that is, it's constantly evolving and adding narratives to its story. Lefebvre argued that cities and places are an open system of significations and the analysis of these 'requires all the methodological tools: form, function, structure, levels, dimensions, text, context, field and whole, writing and reading, system, signified and signifier, language and metalanguage, institutions etc.' (Kofman and Lebas, 1996:111) with 'those of architects deserving the greatest critical attention' because 'they have an immediate relationship with dwelling as social act, with construction as a practice' (Kofman and Lebas, 1996:117). Lefebvre's terms relate to his philosophy about the multiplicity of spaces created by the layers of narrative associated with the context. To be able to analyse places successfully requires an operational knowledge of the processes of making places which includes understanding the specialist language of architectural components used by the professionals.

As noted in the introduction to this section, expressions of power and authority in monumental architecture are considered to be the most easy to understand. Sudjic analyses the often bombastic architecture of totalitarian states and global corporations to explore the use of architecture as propaganda, sometimes as an instrument of statecraft, whilst acknowledging that precise political meanings and ideology

can be difficult to convey and can change over time. He also accuses the architectural profession of claiming autonomy, also commented upon by Abel, as a way of avoiding explaining the complex issues involved in establishing meaning; architecture is after all 'the most visible of all the cultural artefacts' (Sudjic, 2005:279). This observation reflects Norberg-Schulz's description of architecture; as an existential, material form of meaning.

Sudjic illustrates the iconic power of architecture by noting the desire to destroy buildings like the Twin Towers at the World Trade Centre, made more pertinent because one of the Islamist fundamentalist attackers was an architecture student who in his thesis had dedicated his death to Allah (2005:10). A deeper analysis of this point would note that, as the symbols of capitalism and the global corporate world they were an even more potent symbol of the political, social and economic principles that underpin their construction both for their advocates and the critics of 'decadent' Western values.

The power of architecture for expressing and shaping identity is illustrated by the example of Potsdamer Platz in Berlin where each regime, from the Third Reich to the current re-unified one has attempted to impose its own identity and authority (Cochrane, 1999; Butina Watson and Bentley, 2007). Sudjic notes that architecture 'is the most visible expression of cultural and civic values; It has a history of being at the very heart of statecraft' (2005:279). Museums are described as part of the repertoire of instruments used by countries to define themselves (2005:294). Another tool is location, the setting of a building can be enormously significant to the meaning of that building as evidenced by the appropriation of former sites of importance by new regimes to materially express their dominance. Butina Watson and Bentley (2007:21) describe the 'enhancement' of Wenceslas Square, which was itself symbolic of the pre-Hapsburg 'golden age' of freedom, by the National Museum in 1890 and the equestrian statue of King/Saint Wenceslas in 1912, 'thus reinforcing the national and religious symbolism of the square's name' in a time of emerging national consciousness.



It can be seen from the foregoing that the concept of conveying meaning through the built environment can be highly complex and often problematic. But there are areas of consensus as to how meanings can be expressed and therefore discovered through analysis of the building, the site and the context of its production.

There are many cases, throughout history, of buildings expressing powerful meanings that are easily understood by the majority of the population. For example, heavily fortified castles are understood as defensive and protective structures, cathedrals express the church's power, wealth and status through the primary purpose of celebrating Christian faith, high rise skyscrapers commissioned by global corporations express the hyperbole and multi-national reach of these corporations. The power of the symbolism of these structures is evident from destructive acts to the monumental architecture of a dominant or threatening regime by those who oppose what they represent. Conversely dictators throughout history have understood how to manipulate the iconic power of architecture to aggrandize and legitimate their own regime, over-awe other regimes and leave a lasting legacy of their occupation. In this way, regimes build an identity and it is this aspect of conveying meaning that this thesis is concerned with.

The relationship between the dominant cultural values of a society and how these influence the design of its artefacts is accepted. Therefore in order to analyse and understand the meanings consciously or unknowingly encoded in the artefacts it follows that the social, economic and political values prevailing in that society must be known.

Another area of agreement is the importance of setting and place making for conveying ideas and communicating information. As described, the setting which includes the use of the building, can act as a mnemonic, shaping human behaviour and how we relate to the space. Conversely as occupants of a space, that is, as Rapoport's non-fixed elements we also shape meanings. This aligns with Wittgenstein's 'meaning is use' and the Norberg-Schulz's phenomenology of the concept

of genius loci, that is meanings accrue to a place through our use of them giving them an unique character and meaning for each individual.

The semiotics of architecture are further elucidated by the various elements of the design, either in the form of Rapoport's fixed, semi-fixed and non- fixed elements or Unwin's design choices for materials, geometry etc. that are dependant upon the physicality of the material and cultural factors. Through an analysis of the design decisions of the architect and elements of the building itself, such as, its function, composition of space, plan form, functional and other features and the hierarchy of spaces it should be possible to discover intended meanings.

Therefore through the analysis of design decisions that affect a building and its setting, attending to the prevailing social, cultural, environmental and sometimes political contexts and consideration of how a building is intended to be used and has been used it should be possible to understand why it is designed the way it is and what it means. In this way it will be possible to identify elements and cues that are meant to convey ideas about the buildings purpose and identity. King argues that if 'we are to understand buildings and environments, we must understand the society and culture in which they exist...by focusing our attention on built form and spatial organisation, we can understand much more about the society in which such forms exist' (1980:8). This approach will inform the case study analysis to enable the meanings embedded in the building and in its production to be revealed.

The next section will explore the role of architecture in identity formation and nation building across Europe over the last several centuries to establish that this role has played an important part in nation building activities.

## ***2.6. Architecture and nation building in Europe.***

It was concluded in section 2.3 that the ideology of nationalism is a modern phenomenon along with the related discourses and political practices, including the political use of the idea of nation. Therefore, the use of architecture for expressing nationhood and reinforcing solidarity should also be a relatively modern phe-

nomenon and related to the profound technological, political and socio-economic changes that began in the 'Age of Enlightenment' and with the Industrial Revolution. This is partly true, in that as 'nations' developed politically and the effects of industrialisation impacted, new building types were needed and became part of the nation's essential infrastructure and so helped 'build' nations. But it should be noted that prior to the spread of democracy and nationalism, some countries already had a well developed sense of identity which could be expressed in architecture and landscape design in subtly different ways to the other countries, as will be demonstrated. These differences were emphasised for political reasons later in the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century, with some buildings being designed deliberately to convey traditional, national characteristics and reinforce national identity and some were designed to convey messages about the power and authority of the nation.

As noted by Abel, many architects claim that architecture as a discipline is relatively autonomous and only concerned with contemporary ideas on aesthetics and fashion and not with wider socio-political concerns. If this were true it would be difficult to discover anything about the socio-political context in which the structure was designed but as will shown, by this survey of western European architecture of the last few centuries, quite a considerable amount of information can be understood from even a superficial exploration of buildings, particularly when architecture is used as part of identity formation activities and as part of a nation building agenda.

We shall also see that in the twentieth century, a strand of architectural development adopted a 'universal' approach to design, partly in response to the horrors of nationalist inspired battles in the Great War and partly to express Modernism. The principles of this movement were quickly compromised as explained in section 2.5, but the reaction of the architects to the forces of nationalism is testament to the fact that they do not design in an artistic vacuum, divorced from the wider context of politics, technological developments etc.

Initially however, the social and political changes brought by industrial capitalism were not immediately reflected in architecture. Public and private grand buildings continued to be designed in the classical form which had been popular since the Renaissance, which in turn drew on antique models. The preponderance for these neo-classical models was grounded in the eighteenth century when it was believed that this style expressed Enlightenment ideals and the progress of civilisation as opposed to the excesses of the Baroque classicism of the Counter Reformation, which were eventually tamed by scholars of the French Academy in Rome who established the ‘language of international neo-classicism’ in the 1740s (Watkin, 2000:369). This classicism has remained popular around the world, with political parties of the left and right using it to express a range of ideals and values, from democratic to imperial and even megalomaniac.



See Figure: 2.8 Capitol Building, Washington.



See Figure:2.9 Viceroy's House. New Delhi.



See Figure: 2.10 Zeppelinfeld, Nuremberg.

A cultural sense of nation already existed in many European countries prior to the political changes of the late eighteenth century, as explained in section 2.3. This pre-modern nationality was expressed in a variety of ways, in architecture it was through ideas about grand buildings and their settings. At the opposite end of the social scale, vernacular buildings expressed regional characteristics through the specific use of local materials, building methods and particular site conditions.

In the eighteenth century Lord Burlington promoted neo-Palladianism as the English national style, ‘in steering architecture in that direction Burlington could see himself as reviving both Antiquity and a native golden age’ (Sutton, 1999:229). Burlington was in turn influenced by the seventeenth century British classicism of Inigo Jones ‘who single-handedly dragged England to the forefront of architectural fashion’ (Sutton, 1999:159). Risebero notes that ‘we now classify this very English style of architecture ... as Georgian’ (2011:190), This style was complemented by William Kent’s Picturesque landscape architecture and gardens which became known as the ‘English garden style’ or ‘jardin anglais’ and together with the neo-Palladian mansions was copied across Europe (Watkin, 2000:413,417,421).

Increased urbanisation, changing working conditions and the growth of the middle classes brought calls for better planned towns with modern facilities to serve the inhabitants (Risebero, 2011:193). Classical elements, elevations and plan forms

were used for all modern buildings, from theatres to academies in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries reflecting the continuing power of ancient Roman ideals and imagery for conveying status, hierarchy and order (Risebero, 2011:190). Contemporary archaeological finds of ancient Greek temples and urban sites led to a Greek Revival style which the patrons believed expressed ancient democratic ideals. This style was embraced by Jefferson for the new republican buildings of America (Watkin, 2000:434). Somerset House was built in London in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in a British/French Palladian style to express its imperial function as government offices. Its scale was unprecedented in Europe (Watkin, 2000:384).

Some new national building types were housed in former palaces, as was the case with the Louvre (Bouquet, 2012:9). The Revolutionary National Assembly of France established the first truly public museum in 1793 with the express intention of preserving the national memory through the display of the contents in a national institution. These consisted of the former royal collection and confiscated church property. Bouquet quotes Sloan on this transfer of treasures from the private to the public domain as ‘one of the most potent acts of the Enlightenment’ (2012:12). This initiative was in contrast to the accepted practice of existing museums which mostly displayed the private collections of the wealthy. During the ‘Age of the Enlightenment’ and second scientific revolution there had been a significant growth in collecting and forming museums but access to these collections of art, sculpture and cabinets of curiosities was restricted to the bourgeoisie and upper classes, whereas the Louvre museum was for the people and was to play a fundamental part in ‘making’ France and French people (Bouquet, 2012:chap.2). It became a model for other countries as ideas of nationalism and democracy spread and nations were shaped as political units.

The first half of the nineteenth century was a period of great flux in many European countries as radical boundary changes occurred, caused by wars, unification and separatist independence movements inspired by the model of French nationalism and the Congress of Vienna, which re-mapped Europe as described in

2.2. The campaigns of Napoleon had heightened the sense of territorial sovereignty and national identity in many countries across Europe, particularly in the Kingdom of Prussia which had made significant territorial gains after the Congress of Vienna and laid the foundations for a programme of nation state building and unification of the German Confederation, in response to the invasions (Llobera, 1994:196). Prussia's cultural and political ambitions for the German principalities were to be expressed through architecture; the Crown Prince of Prussia aimed to 'fuse Greek, Gothic and Teutonic elements in a vision of a united Germany' which he spelled 'Teutschland', following the patriotic fashion which had become popular during the Wars of Liberation against Napoleon' (Watkin, 2000:477). This illustrates the perceived power of architecture and how archaeological and historic research motivated by antiquarian, Romantic interest had opened up the concept of Antiquity, offering equal value to architectural periods of the past and leading to a range of revivals of ancient styles of architecture (Curtis, 2002:21).

The 'battle of styles' was played out in many European countries from the 1840s as research into historic building types took place and ideas about what was a relevant idiom to convey ideas about identity, function and status changed (Risebero, 2011:207). Gothic architecture had been considered to be the embodiment of the national spirit by some Continental architects in the late eighteenth century but in the mid- nineteenth century it was imbued with a moral force by Pugin because of its perceived structural honesty (Sutton, 1999:274). This chimed with the Church of England's spiritual revival, the emancipation of Catholics and the work of the Ecclesiologists. The Gothic Revival was given further impetus by intellectuals responding to the effects of the working practices of the industrial revolution on the workers and the products (Ruskin, 2002: chap.12). Industrialization was a hugely disruptive force across society. There were initiatives to improve the squalid living and working conditions and restore respect for the newly emerging mass working class. Social reformers like John Ruskin and William Morris advocated a return to mediaeval working practices which offered greater respect for the workmen, their

craft, materials and products (Risebero, 2011:232). William Morris pioneered the Arts and Crafts movement which became internationally influential.

All of these ideas left a lasting and very influential legacy. Initially they were expressed in many ways including the promotion of Gothic architecture for churches, colleges and national institutions, the most famous example being the Palace of Westminster which was meant to convey the historical continuity and integrity of the British parliamentary system (Watkin, 2000:465).



See Figure 2.11. Palace of Westminster.

New building types were needed to fulfil ‘demands created by the industrial revolution and by the growth of democratic institutions which accompanied the transference of power to a newly prosperous bourgeoisie’ (Watkin, 2000:462). The choice of style for each type of building often reflected the function of the building or, as in the case of railway stations all styles were utilised. Many of the new institutional and commercial buildings were without precedent and utilised new technologies and materials in innovative ways (Risebero, 2011:226-230) but with an eclectic approach to the architectural details, which reflected the confusion about what was considered an appropriate image. It was clear that architects needed a modern approach in order to be able to respond to the various challenges brought by industrialisation and nationalism, not least in accommodating the mass movements of populations as people poured into national urban centres, driven by the



agrarian and industrial revolutions. These centres, some of which were capital cities along with ‘other large towns in Europe were subject to vast improvement and expansion programmes’ many of them becoming ‘national capitals during the later nineteenth century’ (Hall, 1997:1).

Contemporary with the Palace of Westminster was the University Library of Copenhagen designed in red brick in a historicist style known as ‘rundbogenstil’ that was meant to express a German national style of architecture in German speaking countries. It heralded a Scandinavian National Romantic style which interpreted local distinctive historical motifs, indigenous styles, materials and building methods and was intended to be less superficial than historic revivalism and referencing. It was popular from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. Copenhagen and Stockholm Town halls were widely influential exemplars. Stockholm’s Town Hall was understood as both a national and civic monument, partly because of the gilded mosaics within the Great Hall that illustrated historical narratives and myths (Donnelly, 1992:288) and partly because of its use of generalized, traditional, local imagery (Curtis, 2002:135).



See Figure: 2.12. Stockholm Town Hall.

The architectural language of National Romanticism was not confined to Scandinavia. This disparate ‘style’ of architecture was seen as an alternative to the neo Baroque, High Gothic or classical architectural forms which were largely favoured

for public, institutional and monumental architecture in the established capital cities of the imperial powers. National Romantic architecture was meant to convey the distinctive sense of place, affirm cultural identity and form a new tradition of architecture for the emerging nations. Curtis notes that '[i]t responded to currents of nationalism in the political culture around the turn of the century, and represented a reaction against both the uprootedness and homogeneity of industrialism and the imposition of cosmopolitan formulas derived from the classical Beaux Arts' (2002:131).

The regionalist approach was quickly seen as too provincial by many architects whose concerns were with monumentality and universal aesthetics. So it was largely superseded by a return to Beaux Arts classical solutions and values for key public and institutional buildings (Watkin, 2000: 567). However the desire to take account of the vernacular tradition and the search for a local style of architecture that was distinctively different from universal solutions remained with some architects, especially in Scandinavia. The architecture that was produced at this stage laid the foundations for the development of modernist Scandinavian architecture later in the twentieth century, through a process of formal simplification but still with complex meanings that were specific to the Scandinavian countries, and hence contributed to their sense of national identity.

The flow of ideas, influences, fashions and counter fashions across borders, as promoted in newly emergent periodicals like *The Studio* is often difficult to trace (Curtis, 2002:58). Improvements in technologies, building materials and methods and the need for new building types also drove the desire to respond appropriately to a rapidly changing society (Curtis, 2002:75; Risebero, 2011:254).

Art Nouveau developed in opposition to the heavy academic styles of the late nineteenth century in order to express the sense of a modern age and enhance the potential of 'new' materials (Risebero, 2011:240). It was influenced by Arts and Crafts philosophy regarding the 'moral quality...of...objects in daily use' (Curtis, 2002:57). It has a very distinctive Gothic derived form with examples in many

European cities, particularly in Brussels where it could be considered a national invention and more significantly in Barcelona where it became ‘inextricably involved with the cultural and political revival’ from the 1880s in Catalonia (Watkin, 2000:556). The Spanish architect Gaudi was influenced by Art Nouveau and embraced Ruskin’s influential ideas, that promoted the individual expression of artisans, as a means to fulfil his obsession with forming a Catalan style of architecture (Curtis, 2002:59). His style is so fantastical that it was hard to reproduce ‘nationally’ but other Catalan architects were inspired by the nationalist movement to utilise local materials, techniques and imagery to produce a very distinctive style.



See Figure: 2.13. La Sagrada Familia.

Avant garde architects like Otto Wagner, designer of the Vienna Stadtbahn stations, disliked the historicism of Art Nouveau and wanted a more direct, honest style appropriate to modern living and the new age of industrialism and mechanization

(Curtis, 2002:66). Wagner was a great admirer of the Scottish architect C.R.Mackintosh who had developed a distinctively Scottish style based on the vernacular ‘baronial’ style of architecture by exploiting abstracted elevational details and local materials, with the interior space arranged to great effect in a more modern way. Mackintosh’s architecture responded to local types but in a completely modern way, as was also the case in England where traditional models were adapted and interpreted to form a distinctive domestic building type by architects such as Voysey, Baillie Scott, Webb, Shaw and Lutyens (Risebero, 2011:244-245).



See Figure: 2.14. Hill House.

The rise of socialist ideals inspired many British architects to develop a vernacular style that was appropriate for the era and for the majority of the inhabitants (Risebero, 2011:253). It was known as the English Free Architecture. The British Garden City movement exemplifies their approach through which they developed ‘an enviably relaxed style of domestic architecture’ influenced by the legacy of the Arts and Crafts movement (Watkin, 2000:546). This style and philosophy were very influential among architects across the western world. A German architect, Hermann Muthesius, was even sent to Britain to study Englishness as part of the quest to discover the social, cultural and aesthetic reasons for Britain’s pre-eminence in industry. On his return to Germany Muthesius published ‘Das englische Haus’ and set up the Deutscher Werkbund through which he aimed to develop a

national 'Kultur' of good quality, modern design for all sorts of objects that were deemed appropriate for the new nation and empire and which expressed the 'zeitgeist', or spirit of the nation at that time. One of the most important architects of the Werkbund, Peter Behrens, declared that 'German art and technology will thus work towards the one end: the power of the German nation' (Watkin, 2000: 586).

As discussed in 2.2, the Great War of 1914-18 had a devastating impact on societies and economies across Europe leading to a re-evaluation of pre War ideas and values, notably that of nationalism, which was seen by some as an ideal- as in Wilson's recommendations for national self-determination and the establishment of a League of Nations -and by others as a divisive ideal.

Quite a lot of the rich plurality of architectural ideas from the turn of the century continued, but the experiences of the War left some architects struggling with the idea of using the previous means of expression, which the iconoclastic avant garde considered inadequate and old-fashioned. The architectural modern movement sought a new minimalist architectural language that aspired to be 'universal, democratic, functional, economical and beautiful' (Sutton, 1999:318) transcending national boundaries. It was based on classical theory and traditions but responded to new materials, technologies and lifestyles, to achieve a modern aesthetic through the simplification of building elements and the use of certain so called modern materials; concrete, steel and glass in an entirely new way that emphasised functionalism and formal qualities (Risebero, 2011:262). Le Corbusier in France and the Bauhaus architects in Germany developed what came to be called the International Style in the 1920s (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4). In fact, this collective label over states the degree of consensus about the 'style' as '[i]ndividual works of high intensity do not lend themselves to superficial stylistic description' (Curtis, 2002:149). Sutton's comment that 'between the purely commercial products of Art Deco...and the more serious, high minded Modernism of Gropius and Bauhuas, there is a middle ground which shares something of both' (1999:322) supports this judgement. Sutton adds also that this middle ground is ignored by 'critics and historians' (1999:332). However there is general agreement among historians about

the existence of a shared optimistic, utopian aspiration ‘to encourage a new world to rise out of the ashes’ (Curtis, 2002:159). This was to be expressed internationally and universally through architectural abstractions of classical forms, albeit applied asymmetrically, as displayed in the workers housing at Weissenhofseidlung near Stuttgart, which ironically was seen as anti-German because it drew on English Garden City ideals.



See Figure: 2.15. Weissenhofsiedlung estate.

Before too long, the Bauhaus architects were also seen as anti –German and left Germany, under pressure from the Nazi regime, to practice in Britain and America within the decade, ‘most of them were outlawed, unpopular or simply decided to leave’ (Curtis, 2002:353). This further helped spread the ideas of the modern movement internationally although these ideas were still slow to catch on in Britain, with most architects rejecting the functionalism and formalism of the avant garde ethic, preferring to draw inspiration from the Arts and Crafts tradition of the English vernacular or from neo-classical and revival styles until some time after World War II; ‘[t]he stark flat-roofed buildings seemed little adapted to the English climate or countryside’ (Watkin, 2000:645). Examples of pioneering modernism were relatively unusual in Britain where the public response ranged from indifference to hostility (Risebero, 2011:275). This may have been evidence of conservatism but there is an element of Billig’s banal nationalism operating, in the desire to

retain conventional solutions for building design that expressed an essence of Britishness.

Conversely Finnish architects embraced modernism and developed it as part of their 'quest for a new national identity' (Curtis, 2002:330) having achieved independence from the Russian Empire in 1917. This enthusiasm was repeated to a lesser degree in the other Scandinavian countries, where the foundations for an ascetic regionalised modernism had been laid at the turn of the century and the early years of the twentieth century (Sutton, 1999:324). The simplified vernacular classicism of the Scandinavian school of Modernism chimed with Social Democratic political ideals for urban and institutional reform (Curtis, 2002:338). It also offered a synthesis, that was specific to the region, of the schemata of international modernism with local, vernacular elements. This demonstrates a form of critical regionalism that takes account of local traditions, materials and conditions and hence expresses a distinctive form of Scandinavian modernist architecture.

Prague's Baba housing area, built under the auspices of the Czech Werkbund from 1932-1936, is a further example of a contemporary development effectively critiquing the International Style but in this case, in spite of 'its radically 'modern' future-orientated detailed appearance' it is 'firmly rooted in its particular landscape...of culture and place' (Butina Watson and Bentley, 2007:35).

A crude, nationalist type of architecture known as *heimatstil* (home style) was promoted by the Nazis for domestic buildings. It could hardly be considered vernacular or traditional, given that the scale of the buildings was so distorted and exaggerated compared to the originals. It was meant to promote a complementary outdoor, natural image of rural Germany in contrast to the totalitarian, urban imagery conveyed by the megalomaniac, classicist projects in the German cities, that were laden with Nazi emblems and imagery. These were extreme forms of building identity through architecture and symbolism, that was as much about conveying messages of power and authority as German nationalism.



See Figure: 2.16. Heimatstil.

Post-War recovery depended on international co-operation (Risebero, 2011:282). There was even greater cross fertilization of ideas as communications and trade speeded up and culturally the world became a 'global village'. However there was still a need for a functional architectural language as the process of rebuilding got underway in Europe. Curtis claims that in the 1950s the architect 'was most likely to find it through a considered and critical re-examination of earlier modern architecture' (2002:471). But by the 1960s the common complaint was that 'every city looked the same' (Sutton, 1999:337). Modern architecture was seen as 'progressive' until the 1970s when 'there was mounting disquiet...with the aggressive new world that had been created' (Watkin, 2000:648). Since then there have been examples of architects designing buildings that are meant to be understood as emblematic of a nation as with the Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff.





See Figure: 2.17. Wales Millennium Centre.

It has been shown that the forces which shape architecture are extremely complex, using elements from the past and present mediated by architects to provide a solution to a social and cultural need. Curtis claims that the ‘universalizing ambition is traceable to the Enlightenment’ (2002:685). This may be the case but it could also be argued that the universalising ambition has a long history related to the political and cultural ideas of the dominant system of government or ruling elite as evidenced by buildings of the Roman Empire and Neo classical architecture. However there are many examples where architecture is used to express ideas about the individual country. This may be a conscious project to create a national style as with National Romanticism and Gaudi’s Catalan architecture or it may be that differences made to suit the local climate and conditions express a style that becomes particular to that region as with the ‘jardin anglais’ and English Free Architecture and is thereafter associated with the country. Sometimes these differences are very subtle and barely perceptible, except for experts trained to identify them, but they are evidence of local traditions impacting on universal design ideas and forming a distinctively different style that is not just a diluted form of the original.

There are also examples where the function of the building is used as a political tool to construct a sense of modern nation hood, as with the Louvre Palace, where

the ‘national memory’ was deposited by the National Assembly of France after the Revolution. The importance of the role of buildings that function in this way and essential infrastructure, such as institutions, universities, hospitals etc. that also have a role in the business of ‘building’ or modernising a nation has not been fully explored until recently. We know very little about this aspect of nation building in Wales, as the contribution that the built environment and essential infrastructure to nation building activities of Wales has been largely undervalued. Indeed there has been relatively little written about architecture in Wales: ‘[t]his field has been largely untapped in Wales by writers and journalists’ (Owen, 1990:88). Cherry (2006:1) notes that ‘little has been written about the post war architecture of Wales’. This may be due to the political situation pertaining in Wales, prior to its dramatic change in the last two decades which has initiated a growing awareness of identity. Therefore the next chapter will study the development of nationalism in Wales, its cultural rehabilitation and the cross party political project that has aimed to reconstruct Wales as a modern urban nation since the late 1800s. The role of infrastructure, institutions and architecture in this process will be examined, with a particular focus on the role and development of the National Museum of Wales and the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans to set the development of the Main Building, designed by the Percy Thomas practice, in context.

## ***2.7 Conclusion.***

This chapter has explored the nature of national identity and nationalism. Contextualising the development of the nation state within Modern European history, it has nevertheless argued for a realist theory of nationalism in which a necessary condition of nations emerging is a distinctive historical experience in which certain kinds of identity are forged. Yet, national identity is constantly being re-forged and re-imagined, and buildings and the built environment play their part in this process. The production of built form, as has been argued, is a complex outcome of power-infused social relations in which the influence of the designer/architect will depend upon particular contingencies. Yet, the very significance of buildings involved in major statements of national identity may make them ‘problematical’ in precisely

the way that is necessary for architectural /design influence to be maximised. The thesis will explore this question in relation to nation-building in twentieth century Wales, the context for which will be described in chapter 3.

## **Chapter 3 The development of Welsh nationalism and nation building in Wales**

### ***3.1 Introduction.***

It was shown in Chapter 2 that the ideology of nationalism, with its related mass belief and discourses, emerged in the late eighteenth century. Since then the ideology has spread around the world, in the wake of modernising forces, often due to being inextricably linked to liberal ideas of democracy and self government.

There is broad agreement about the origins of the political use of the idea of nation; however, as discussed, there is little consensus amongst theorists about the origins of the concept of nation. Some theorists argue that for nationalisms to succeed, regions have to display the deep resources of cultural continuities. This chapter will argue and illustrate that this framework provides a persuasive account of the Welsh case. Wales can draw on persistent cultural components and ‘la longue duree’ in order to reconstruct a ‘nation’ and national identity in terms of a modern civic form of nationalism. The chapter, which will be in the form of a narrative analysis, will first examine the history of the establishment of Wales as a distinct cultural entity that can be placed within a rather fluid geographical space. It will then examine the socio-political and institutional developments and finally, the various means of reinforcing the sense of national identity. This chapter will also contextualise the case study, the National Museum of Wales as an institution and specifically St. Fagans as a Folk Museum for the Welsh Nation. The Main Building for St. Fagans was designed by the Percy Thomas practice and will be the subject of the case study as a significant institutional component. The case study will form an important part of the thesis’s empirical contribution to knowledge. The justification for this choice will be discussed below.

### ***3.2 Political and cultural reawakening in Wales.***

‘For Wales, see England’; this ‘notorious’ entry in Encyclopaedia Britannica which was still being reproduced in the 1930s ‘encapsulated all the humiliation and patronising indifference which helped to launch the modern nationalist movement in

the principality' (Morgan, K.,1982:3). It was the invisibility symbolised in this quote that helped to fuel the 'first age of devolution' (Morgan, P., 2007:13) in which the cultural nationalism of the preceding hundred years was articulated as a political movement to establish the institutions and infrastructure necessary for the formation of a modern urban nation. For a number of reasons the politicians of Wales were relatively late to call for greater status and parity for their country. This was to be achieved through the provision of the essential institutions and formed part of a European wide movement, as was shown in chapter 2.2, in which national minorities asserted their identity and aimed for cultural and political independence.

The history of Wales from early times is one of warfare, shifting boundaries and allegiances. Incorporation of the country into a union with England in the sixteenth century threatened identity, but the future of its distinctive language was bolstered by a translation of the Bible into Welsh (see Appendix 1).

In spite of growing Anglicisation amongst the elite, a small group of Welsh scholars at the end of the seventeenth century were moved to record ancient lore and learning to ensure its survival, which was distributed from newly established native printing presses (Jenkins, 2005:207). Abbe Pezron's far fetched theories about the Celtic languages published in 1703, partly motivated some of this work and increased Celtic consciousness (Jenkins, 2005:208). In the 1690s Edward Lhuyd, scientist and antiquarian at the newly established Ashmoleum Museum, began noting the language, baptismal names and strings of patronymics for publication in his *Archaeologia Britannica* in 1707 (Morgan, P., 2002:52, 68). It was at this time that the eisteddfodau were revived, probably as a result of the huge increase in the reading public, with bookish amateurs 'wishing to enjoy the beauties and the glories of their own native arts' (Morgan, P., 2002:57). The lifting of printing restrictions in 1695 to allow printing beyond London had affected the size of the reading public. Welsh books were printed in Shrewsbury and then in Trerhedyn some years after. These helped preserve the language, literature and music (Jenkins, 2005:202).

Wales was 'discovered' as a place with a distinctive ambience in the 1760s by English intellectuals influenced by the ideas of Burke, whose 'Philosophical enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful' meant that Wales became the height of aesthetic fashion in the developing Romantic and Picturesque movement. Richard Wilson, the Welsh painter 'seems to have made an original and independent discovery of the Welsh landscape in the 1750s and 1760s' (Morgan, P., 2002:88). Thomas Gray's poem, *The Bard*, of 1757 is an example of Romantic interest in the ancient past:

*No more our long-lost Arthur we bewail.*

*All Hail, ye genuine kings, Britannia's Issue, hail!*

These lines refer to the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecy with the ascent of the Tudors to the English throne (Johnston, 1966:15).

The work of a small group of Welsh antiquarian scholars, which included Thomas Pennant and the Morrises of Anglesey, who were influenced by the scholarly ideals of Lhuyd, led to a historical revival which inspired the expatriate London Welsh to reform the Society of Ancient Britons as the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion in 1751 (Davies, 1994:304). The more populist Society of Gwyneddigion was formed in 1771. This Celtic Revival was part of a growing awareness of ancient and exotic cultures that were studied, by the cultural elite, in newly founded societies and institutions in the great urban centres of Europe. As for the Welsh scholars, it stemmed from their desire to protect and record their culture before it disappeared. Solkin argues that 'Wales had come to symbolise a particular social ideal which seemed critically threatened elsewhere' (1982 :102).

However, fact and myth were often confused, as in Iolo Morgannwg's recreation of the Gorsedd in 1792. His revival of Druidism, albeit conflated with bardism, 'involved myths which showed the cultural tradition of Wales to be older than any other in western Europe' (Morgan, P., 2002:66). These kinds of myths were used as subject matter by the Romantic artists constrained within Britain by the Napoleonic campaigns in Europe. Other symbols of national identity were adopted in the

eighteenth century, e.g; the three ostrich plumes of the Black Prince of Wales, whilst the wearing of leeks had a centuries old history (Morgan, P., 2002:90). It is interesting to note that this display of nationhood predates the era of revolution and industrialisation and led to a sense of Welsh particularism, in that the historical inheritance of Wales was being recorded and emphasised without being translated into a political concern for Wales and Welshness.

The Methodist Revival of the eighteenth century was to prove fundamental to the development of a political nationalist movement in Wales in the nineteenth century (Williams, 1991:197). The Calvinistic Methodists joined the Nonconformists and split from the Anglicans at the Sasiwn in 1811, which meant that ‘the vast majority of the devout among the Welsh were associated with denominations other than the Established Church’ (Davies, 1994:342). The congregation of Nonconformist working people were able to communicate in Welsh, were treated as equals, became practised in public speaking and gained an education in the Sunday schools, all contributory factors for their growing confidence and awareness of their situation (Davies, 1994:360). Nonconformism drew on Enlightenment ideas about the role of reason, the importance of the individual and questioning authority within a framework of religious faith; ‘Welsh democracy was a thriving and creative one. It was its Nonconformist leadership and ideology that largely made it so’ (Morgan, K., 1982:180). By 1851 87% of worshippers attended Nonconformists places of worship compared to 9% attending church (Morgan, P., 2005:243). It should be noted that gifted, Nonconformist students would have found it difficult to get into the Anglican colleges of Oxbridge (Mayo, 1974:73). Davies argues that this affected the development of Welsh nationalism as the ‘universities were the nurseries of the nationalism of the non-historic nations’ at a time when the Anglicans were ‘becoming alienated from Welsh culture’ in the second half of the nineteenth century (1994:419).

This was a period of immense social change and disruption as industrialisation spread rapidly across Britain whilst the ideas of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution inspired radicalism; this was originally interpreted as evidence of sym-

pathising with the enemy in Britain (Davies, 1994:339). Inflation caused by the Napoleonic wars, poor harvests and the protectionism of the Corn Laws led to increases in rent and basic commodities which in turn led to food riots (Williams, 1991:160; Davies, 1994:348). The widening application of the Enclosure Acts meant that grazing rights were lost and this led to tenant insecurity and dissent (Adamson, 1991:95). In Wales, there was a miner's strike in 1816, the Merthyr Rising in 1831, the Rebecca riots of 1839-43 and in 1839 the Chartist movement, centred on John Frost who was one of the key figures campaigning for a further increase in the franchise after the 1832 Reform Act had left out the lower middle classes and working classes (Davies, 1994:375, Morgan, P., 2005:234). All of these events are evidence of a politically aware working class who were part of a European wide dissent that was rejecting the establishment and pushing for social reforms amid rapid demographic change (Davies, 1994:375).

Wales was in transition from a feudal, agrarian society into an industrialised society. 'The conflict that arose as a consequence of these changes in rural society proved the basis for the formation of a nationalist political movement in Wales' (Adamson, 1991:97). Adamson supports this by quoting Kenneth Morgan (1963) on the role of agitation for repeal of the Corn Laws; it was 'of great importance in the political development of the nation, for through it, Welsh non-conformism became politically articulate for the first time' (1991:102). The issue of a seven per cent increase in church tithes also polarised attitudes between the Nonconformist tenants and the 'alien' Anglican church (Adamson, 1991:102).

The riots, social unrest and dissension in the form of Nonconformity were blamed on the lack of education. William Williams, MP for Coventry but originally from Wales, called for an inquiry into the state of education in Wales whilst blaming the government for not helping the Welsh learn English. The damning report of the three Anglican educational commissioners was presented in 1847. It caused a furore, partly due to the perceived treachery of the Welsh Anglican clergy responsible for the report, who repeated inaccurate testimony from fellow clergy on the moral standards of some and it exaggerated the weaknesses of education in Wales



(Davies, 1994:391). Coupland writing in 1954 claimed that it ‘stung Welsh nationalism awake’ (Day and Suggett, 1985:107). It became known as ‘The Treason of the Blue Books’ because it was seen as ‘a gross libel of a nation’ based on biased evidence (Morgan, P., 2002:92). It did however start a drive for progress, modernisation and educational institutions modelled on the English system with support from expatriate Welshmen in major English cities, who viewed their own success and progress as a result of adopting modern, English ways. Prys Morgan notes that ‘another response was a strong movement to reconfigure a Welsh nationality around Nonconformity’ therefore involving a different kind of leadership to that which existed (2007:13). He also suggests that the newly established local Boards of Health were the ‘nursery of political involvement’ (2005:237). All are agreed that a sense of national distinctiveness was central to political awakening.

Local politics remained under the domination of the landed classes until the Second Reform Act of 1867 increased the number of voters by enfranchising all male householders. In Wales, this included an increasing, indigenous, petty bourgeois middle class in the industrial centres who sympathised with the impoverished and exploited lower classes that they encountered in chapel, amongst whom were tenants who had been evicted for voting against their Tory landlords, before the Secret Ballot was introduced in 1872. Henry Richard of Merthyr Tydfil became the first Liberal Nonconformist MP in 1868. Kenneth Morgan characterises this event as the key event for the developing nationalist ideology, which he regarded as the re-awakening of the Welsh nation (1982:4). Richard’s pre-election address leaves no doubt about his sense of nationality or loyalty:

‘We are the Welsh people and not you. This country is ours and not yours and therefore we claim to have our principles and sentiments and feelings represented in the Commons’ House of Parliament’ (quoted in Adamson, 1991:106).

This statement overlooks the contribution made by some of the Anglican patriot clerics and gentry especially that of Lady Llanover, who Prys Morgan describes as ‘one of the leaders of the picturesque romantic side of the Welsh revival in the

early and mid-nineteenth century' (2002:80). It also illustrates the gap between the politically motivated, sober, Nonconformist activists and the patriotic, traditional elites who were largely interested in preserving and promoting the culture of Wales, albeit a romanticised version, and can be credited with rescuing the 'nation' (Morgan, P., 2002:98-100). It was mostly through the eisteddfodau that the work of this 'brilliant circle of people' reached the common people (Morgan, P., 2002:94). Iolo Morgannwg's revived eisteddfod of 1819 had initiated an important platform and institutional framework for the development of a contemporary Welsh identity.

### ***3.3 Establishing Welsh institutions.***

By the 1866 Eisteddfod the importance of using English was being stressed for social and career progress following the example of expatriates who had succeeded through the medium of English; this initiative showed acceptance of the limitations faced by the Welsh language given the paucity of educational institutions in Wales (Morgan, P., 2005:219-221; Williams, 1991:202). An endowment fund for a University College for Wales had been set up in London after the 1863 Eisteddfod, which was partly realised at Aberystwyth in 1872 with Sir Hugh Owen as the chief founder of the College (Davies, 1994:438). University Colleges were founded at Cardiff and Bangor in 1883 and 1884. The report of the Liberal, Lord Aberdare in the 1880s formed the basis for the 1889 Welsh Intermediate Education Act which placed Wales before England in educational provision for the first time and stimulated the movement for the provision of university education in Wales. The Charter forming the University of Wales was granted in 1893 (Davies, 1994:463).

Meanwhile, other Welsh institutions were established or revived in this period including, the Society for Utilising the Welsh Language, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, at the 1885 Eisteddfod, which may be considered an irony considering the English language initiative of two decades before. It promoted the use of the Welsh language in education and aimed for a bilingual population in the face of a decline in the percentage of the population able to speak the language. One of its founders

was Henry Richard who had published his 'Letters and Essays on Wales' in 1866, in which he 'virtually equated being Welsh with being a nonconformist' (Morgan, P., 2002:95), thus forming the basis for a new cultural image of the Welsh as non-conformist and radical. Prys Morgan argues that this transformation was essential for survival of the idea of Wales by 'creat[ing] a new Welshness which would instruct, entertain, amuse and educate the people' (2002:99).

By 1874 the balance of power in Parliament had changed, with more Liberal MPs than Tory MPs from Wales. The Liberal ascendancy increased, especially after the franchise was extended in 1884 and 1885 and, after the Local Government Act of 1888 created county councils that returned Liberals from the new urban areas (Davies, 1994:450, 457). Soon after there was a distinctly Welsh group of MPs in Westminster who were focussed on Welsh issues of disestablishment of the Anglican church, land and educational reform, better advocacy and 'home rule' appeals. In 1895 David Lloyd George won a House of Commons vote approving the principle of 'Home Rule All Round' (Davies, 1994:465).

Cymru Fydd (Wales to be), a nationalist movement, was formed in London in 1886 within Welsh Liberalism. Its key figures were D. Lloyd George, D.A. Thomas and T.E. Ellis. It was based on the Young Italy movement and 'had a historical and romantic vision of the Welsh past' (Morgan P., 2007:15). It aimed to raise aspirations and demonstrate 'the potential for the creation of national institutions and a Welsh political and cultural life separate from England' (Adamson, 1999:57) as part of the movement's 'vision for a new Wales' that would remain under the sovereignty of the 'Imperial Parliament' at Westminster (Davies, 1994:465).

The Welsh Liberal Nonconformists were highly articulate and saw themselves as filling the vacuum left by the landed classes. They also claimed to speak for Wales and expounded a 'special vision of Welsh society' based on their characteristics and virtues (Day and Suggett, 1985:106). In the Gramscian sense they were the 'organic intellectuals,' formulating an ideological focus essential for their claim of hegemony over the former ruling class of the landed elite; that is they formed a

new dominant class who employed nationalism to justify and legitimate their position (Adamson, 1999:54). Their conception of themselves formed the basis of the myth of the 'gwerin'; preferably rural and Welsh speaking, but also classless, educated, religious, cultured, aspirational, hard working, law abiding, temperate and an example to the world. (Morgan, P., 1986b:139). This obscured reality and ignored the non Welsh speaking, increasingly assertive, working class with an interest in social justice based on class lines and employed in some of the most technologically advanced industries in the world. Here was a fault line that has persisted within Welsh nationalism

The values and characteristics of the Welsh Liberals were reflected in their ideological strategy, which was to prove highly effective in what was to become known as The Welsh Revolt of 1904 over the operation of Balfour's new Education Act of 1902 which aimed to put all schools on the local rates. Lloyd George harnessed popular support for the protest seeing it as a means to achieve basic changes in elementary education. It also emphasised 'the centrality of sectarian questions' through Liberal demands (Morgan K., 1982:38) which helped forge a Gramscian 'national popular collective will' around these central issues.

The Welsh Liberals saw themselves as leaders of a cultural renaissance and the means of setting up the requisite national institutions for a progressive and distinctive country with its own cultural autonomy. The Welsh Department of the Board of Education was created in 1907, which some argue was the beginning of administrative devolution ([www.assembly.org/abthome/role-of-assembly-how-it-works/history-welsh-devolution.htm](http://www.assembly.org/abthome/role-of-assembly-how-it-works/history-welsh-devolution.htm) accessed 6/8/12). Jones argues that 'the Welsh renaissance was, first and foremost, cultural, literary and educational, rather than separatist. The Welsh sought equality and recognition within the British system of government not exclusion from it' because there was no popular support for home rule campaigns (2005: 264).

Cardiff Council positioned itself to benefit from the demands for reform and the provision of national institutions made by the Nonconformist Welsh Liberals

(Morgan, P., 2007:16). There had been persistent calls for a Library and a Museum from the 1850s, which had become more focussed with the re-establishment of Cymmrodorion and the reform of the eisteddfod. The nineteenth century progressed and efforts failed until, possibly because of the Welsh Revolt, the climate was more favourable to funding Welsh institutions (Morgan, P., 2007:17) with the result that the Library and Museum opened in temporary accommodation in 1907 in Aberystwyth and Cardiff respectively, instantly giving institutional credibility to the language and culture and consolidating the intellectual development of the nation. Prys Morgan notes the hostility and disdain of the British Museum, who had been traditionally neglectful of Welsh material, as representative of Imperial British culture of the time (2007:20).

O.M.Edwards, an Oxford historian who founded 'Cymru' and other Welsh periodicals and was the first chief inspector of schools in Wales, spoke of the need to 'give the nation her memory back' quoted by Adamson (1999:61) with a heritage traceable to the origin legends of an heroic age of Maccsen Wledig, 'Welsh princes and beyond into Celts and Druidic culture' (Adamson, 1999:60). This romantic form of intellectual archaeology was characteristic of similar activities across Europe, as nations excavated the past and 'invented traditions' as part of the process of nation-building (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 2002). Wales had arrived relatively late to this process, its romantic interpretation had the concept of the gwerin 'central to the development of this sense of nationhood' (Adamson, 1999:58) evoking an image of 'common people in harmony and at prayer' (1999:59) in a rural Arcadia. Crucially this image was 'used in opposition to Anglicization and to the imposition of an urban-industrial Britishness on Wales' (Gruffudd, 1999a:151).

This mythological pantheon set up a polarity with the industrial region and ignored its distinctive culture and contribution to the nation until sociological analyses challenged this hegemonic discourse in the 1960s, with the revival of interest in nationalism. As late as 1964 the geographer Emrys Bowen was distinguishing between Outer Wales where industrial development was concentrated and Inner Wales (uplands and interior) whose culture 'has given Wales its personality, its lan-

guage, its religion and song' (Day, 2002:96) This concept was reinforced by the work of Alwyn Rees, Iorwerth Peate and others in the first half of the twentieth century who believed that the gwerin of the Welsh countryside were the reservoir of civilised, moral values that had to be preserved along with the language and culture. In fact, their research was conducted against a legacy of agricultural depression and rural depopulation (Jones, 2005: 269).

In 1911 the future Edward VIII, as heir to the monarch, was invested at Caernarfon Castle as Prince of Wales. The Castle was built on a significant Roman site by Edward I and this significance increased when Edward proclaimed his son, who was born at the castle, Prince of Wales. Lloyd George, as M.P. for the borough, conceived the idea of holding the investiture there for the first time in 600 years to promote awareness of Wales and probably the role of the Liberal party (Davies, 1994:482). The adoption of the daffodil as the national symbol dates from this event, and illustrates the continuing invention of traditions through the appropriation of emblems and logos to symbolise national identity.

### ***3.4 Competing ideologies and Welshness redefined.***

Soon after, the country was at war leaving a legacy of severe economic chaos, mass unemployment and political instability across Europe. Devolution remained on the agenda however, until a series of conferences to promote Home Rule, held between 1919 and 1922, failed to achieve anything (Morgan, K., 1982:204). Scottish and Welsh bids for autonomy were overshadowed by the Irish determination for independence, which were brutally handled by the British government. There was also a feeling in Parliament that the social and economic difficulties in the country required centralist solutions and control whilst the populace looked to Socialism to provide the answers. The Welsh electorate had increased over 50 per cent after the 1918 Reform Act enfranchised mature women and all men (Morgan, K., 1982:180) with the result that working class support for the Labour Party grew throughout the 1920s, finding solidarity along class lines. This was also a period in which internationalist ideas became more widespread as society became more secular, commu-

nications improved and increased and some reacted to the nationalism evident in the War.

The Liberal Party was in decline and seemed to have lost touch with the industrial electorate, many were disillusioned with Lloyd George, who's 'premiership had brought few dividends' (Morgan, K., 1982:208). The Liberals had achieved some success in devolving administrative departments, notably disestablishment of the Church in 1920, but it was time for a new nationalist party; Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru was founded in 1925 to protect and promote the language and culture.

As before, Wales was imagined as rural, pre-industrial and populated by the gwer-in, particularly by Plaid activists like Saunders Lewis, president from 1926 to 1939 and responsible for Economic Policy Ideas in 1934 (Morgan, 1986a:134). The reality in the industrial areas was grim, as the effect of the losses of international trade and overseas markets impacted, resulting in hunger marches. There were some government initiatives to address this, at the Treforest Trading Estate and Ebbw Vale steel works, but a 'whole society was crucified by mass unemployment and near starvation' (Morgan, K., 1982:230). The Labour party consolidated its hold with Marxist socialists, like Aneurin Bevan, attacking the failures of British capitalism but K. Morgan (1982:240) claims, the Valleys Welsh still 'emerged with a somewhat more powerful sense of belonging to a community and a nation with a heritage and shared values all its own'.

The Welsh language suffered from the mass migration of youngsters looking for employment between the wars but the literary culture was healthy and in 1927, the Welsh Board of Education encouraged teaching of the Welsh language at all ages. The Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the Welsh League of Youth movement, flourished, as did the eisteddfod. The BBC began broadcasts in Welsh in 1937. It was in this year that Saunders Lewis and two other Plaid luminaries were imprisoned for burning an RAF bombing school on the Lleyn peninsula (Morgan, K., 1982:254) in frustration at failing to protect the 'heartland' of Wales. This development had previously

been characterised as a threat on the scale of Edward I's campaigns (Gruffudd, 1999a:161).

After World War II the issue of devolution was dropped by the ruling Labour party in favour of post war reconstruction on a 'British' scale. Britishness had been a functional identity for a long time (Tanner, 2006a:16). This policy, ironically, repeated Conservative policy of the previous decade, to shape Britain around Crown, traditional history and other common values, hence Chamberlain's rejection of the request for a Welsh Secretary in 1938 (Cragoe, 2006:205). Atlee also rejected the creation of this office in 1945 believing Wales could not achieve economic well being alone (Tanner, 2006b:255). The nationalisation of the coal and steel industries by the state and the setting up of centrally organised Regional developments with Special Areas funding was seen as the best solution to the economic and social problems. Gruffudd argues that this was politically and culturally defective as it overlooked Wales as a separate unit and the role of industrialism in Welsh life (1999a:165).

Plaid Cymru had continued to fight Anglicisation since its foundation and struggled 'to define and defend a particular Welsh national identity' based on the 'gwerin' (Gruffudd, 1999a:160). Nationalist politicians adopted geo-political discourse to represent the struggle to retain the heartlands in the 1930s, against incursions into the Epynt mountains and Lleyn Peninsular by the military (Gruffudd, 1999a:161). Iorwerth Peate's criticism of the Scott Report on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas in 1942 was more realistic and aimed to revive Wales through historically integrated rural and industrial activities. Gruffudd (1999a:162) places this approach in the context of the romantic socialism of the Danish co-operative movements and the Arts and Crafts movement. Peate is considered by many as the 'guru founder' of the Welsh Folk Museum of ethnographical displays who 'verged on the near mystical' in his 'glorification of pure Welsh culture' through his folk studies (Sprott, 2000:105). Sprott further claims that Peate's work was 'an antidote to the barbarities of the twentieth century', a philosophy with which William Morris would have had some sympathy. The Folk Museum was certainly a built expres-



sion of similar ideas and initiatives prevalent in Scandinavia from the late nineteenth century. These themes will be explored in greater depth in Chapter 6.

A campaign for a 'Parliament for Wales' having all-party support was founded in 1949 under the auspices of Undeb Cymru Fydd but it soon failed for a variety of reasons, not least the dependence of the Labour party on support from the Celtic fringes (Adamson, 1991:125) resulting in key Labour Members from Wales being opposed to the campaign (Morgan, K., 1982:381).

The flooding of Tryweryn valley in 1957, to provide free water for Liverpool, aroused a lot of anger but also 'demonstrated the intrinsic weakness of the local state in Wales' in its failure to stop the flooding (Adamson, 1991:127). The methods of protest against the building of the reservoir provided a 'model for the subsequent activities' (Adamson, 1991:127) of Cymdeithas Yr Iaith Gymraeg, the Welsh Language Society reformed at a Plaid Cymru summer school in 1962 following a powerful plea to save the language by Saunders Lewis earlier that year. Lewis envisioned the language with a status equal to English through official and governmental use (Morgan, K., 1982:383).

During the 1960s and 1970s there was wide social unrest and rebellion across Europe and America. Lifestyle changes fostered, among other ideological changes, a resurgence of nationalism generally in the Western world which led to renewed demands for recognition of Wales's separate identity and parity with England. This rising political consciousness was also due to new collective identities being formed as the traditional industries were superseded (Day, 2002:134). Threats to the culture and language from English language media led to acts of civil violence by the Free Wales Army and later Meibion Glyndwr's burning of English owned holiday homes. These acts caused Plaid Cymru to distance itself from its ethno-nationalist emphasis on exclusively language and culture questions to adopt a broader appeal to a sense of Welshness based on territory and civic nationalism (Day, 2002:220), especially after Gwynfor Evans won a by-election in 1966 to become Plaid Cymru's first M.P and other victories followed. K. Morgan notes that the

‘swelling tide of national consciousness since the early sixties had needed a political outlet’ (1982:386).

The Secretaryship of State for Wales and the Welsh Office were established in 1964 and 1965, respectively, by the newly elected Labour government, building on the office of Minister for Welsh Affairs that was created by the Conservative government in 1951. Adamson argues that this represented ‘a transformation in state ideology’ which later became the means to ‘defuse the challenge to [Labour’s] support that nationalism came to constitute in both Wales and Scotland’ (1991:129). K. Morgan notes that Plaid seemed to offer something ‘new, youthful and dynamic’ (1982:387).

The largely ineffective Council for Wales that had been established in 1949 was replaced by the Welsh Economic Council in the same year, 1966, that Plaid Cymru broadened its remit to consider economic issues and established a Research Group to formulate an Economic Plan for Wales (Adamson, 1991:133). This change of policy by Plaid Cymru led to electoral success in previously secure Labour constituencies that were suffering from economic difficulties and social disorganization as a result of the demise of the traditional industries. It also marked the greater politicisation of the Party and as Clavel noted ‘the growth of territorial consciousness in Wales and the inability of government to respond to it’ (see Day, 2002:51). Rawkins identified the new radicals, who wanted to address the decline and deep seated weaknesses of industry, as ‘Modernists’. They were English speaking and English university educated as opposed to the ‘fortress nationalists’...’ characterised by their attachment to the Welsh language, Nonconformism and rural lifestyle’ (Adamson, 1999:64). This form of analysis also allowed for an alternative idea of Welshness.

Divisions in the Labour Party Cabinet led to the failure of the Secretary of State for Wales, Cledwyn Hughes’s, scheme for an elected Welsh regional council in 1967 (Morgan, K., 1982:390) but the local government system still needed reorganising, which occurred in the next decade. K. Morgan argues that this delay and apparent

duplication of government in the intervening period led to the failure of the Devolution proposals of 1979 (1982:391). These had been recommended by the Kilbrandon Report of 1973, and implemented by the Wales Act of 1978, against a background of Labour losses in the 1974 elections and internal divisions in the Labour Party over the issue and national pressure. The failure also highlighted the cultural divisions in Wales and the largely historic unionist identity (Morgan K., 1982:405).

With the post war demise of the traditional industries, the development of a secondary manufacturing sector and the growth of a new service class, many of whom were Welsh speaking (Adamson, 1991:166) the social bases of labourism were eroded. A distinct middle class emerged in Wales in the 1960s (Jones, 2005:279). Adamson (1991:166) and Day (2002:134) note that this created 'room for the promulgation of alternative ideologies; this may include variants of nationalism'. The increase in the numbers of the new bourgeois, who regarded themselves as Welsh, undermined the dominance of the concept of the classless rural 'gwerin' which, as noted by Day, was such a powerful construct that it had left everyone else feeling half Welsh for almost a century (2002:142). Conversely, the Welsh Language Act of 1967 was highly significant for its symbolic role of restoring the legal status of the language after more than four centuries, Welsh and English were to be considered equal in public life. Plaid Cymru and the Welsh Language Society continued their often militant campaign to promote the use of Welsh more widely.

Meanwhile Wales had become the object of 'sustained sociological attention'; Day adds that this was related to 'a rising political consciousness of Wales' (2002:75). Several of these sociological analyses repeated old ideas about the duality of Wales, ignoring the complex reality in a period when 'old community patterns' were breaking up everywhere (Day, 2002:113) or, aimed to identify social and economic problems based on false or limited assumptions and methods of analysis. Wales' economic contribution was central in the industrialisation of Britain and as such was integrated with England. This relationship continued through the devel-

opment of decentralised government offices and ‘branch plants’ of large companies being established in Wales.

There was scarcely a text book on Welsh history in the 1950s but by the 1970s, ‘Llafur’ (the Journal of Welsh People’s History Society) was established and there were many academics writing about Welsh industrial, social, political history inspired by the 1960s ‘history from below movement’. The Welsh People’s History Society had in fact begun as Welsh Labour History and illustrates the marrying of an interest in class and nation. Day notes that ‘as Wales grew more diverse and disjointed, so the awareness of it as an entity seemed to grow’ (2002:75). This paradox is noted by Smith, Wales is ‘a singular noun but a plural experience’ (Smith, 1984:1). Wales has had many of the problems of other regions of Britain but added to these are the issues of language and culture.

### ***3.5 A Capital city for Wales, symbols of Welsh identity and the second age of devolution.***

Throughout the twentieth century the number and type of organisations and institutions particular to Wales increased. The BBC had begun radio broadcasting from a tiny studio above a shop in the centre of Cardiff in February 1923, followed by Swansea in 1924 and Bangor in 1934 and ‘[a]fter a great deal of agitation, a Welsh home service finally came into existence during July 1937’ (Jones, 2005:292). Davies notes that this ‘was the only Welsh national institution to come into existence in the 1930s’ (1994:590) but another national initiative that is now regarded as an institution began in 1935, the BBC Welsh Orchestra which eventually grew into the National Orchestra of Wales in 1993. It was housed in Broadcasting House, which was opened in Llandaff in 1964, until the orchestra’s recent move to the Wales Millennium Centre, which also houses a number of other national organisations including the Welsh National Opera which was founded in 1943.

During the 1960s there were further advances in media and cultural developments for Wales including the establishment of separate BBC and TWW television channels. S4C followed in 1982 after a vigorous campaign. The Welsh Arts Council

was established in 1967. Petts noted that this had the ‘greatest impact on the ... visual arts and the growth of indigenous art in Wales’ (1990:109). The Main Gallery at the Welsh Folk Museum was finally started in 1964.

Cardiff was designated a Capital city in 1955 by the Minister for Welsh Affairs. It beat off competition from Aberystwyth and Caernarfon, which suggests that an integrated, business and administrative centre was considered more suitable as the capital of new Wales. The Empire Games were held in Cardiff in 1958 giving tacit acknowledgement of the status of Wales in the family of countries of the Empire.

The establishment of these national cultural bodies, state institutions and agencies have added to the sense of distinctiveness that the ability to speak Welsh, claim a ‘Welsh’ lineage or be a member of the ‘gwerin’ had formerly offered. Perhaps crucially for rising national consciousness and identity politics, the Welsh Language Act of 1967 may have done more for a sense of identity and distinctiveness than the efforts involved in advancing regional democracy, as the language became more visible through the ‘banality’ of bilingual documents, television and signage. Even for non Welsh speakers this would have added to their sense of Welshness, albeit in a different form to that envisaged by earlier advocates of the concept. The 1993 Act strengthened the provisions of the 1967 Act for promoting and facilitating the language and established a Welsh Language Board.

In spite of these various developments however, it was only by the narrowest of margins that in 1997, following reconstructed New Labour’s devolution proposals, that a referendum was won and the National Assembly for Wales was established. The results were 50.3% in agreement with the proposals for a Welsh Assembly and 49.7% against. For some it was recognition of the nationhood of Wales that already existed (Day, 2002:253) for others who feared for the future of the Union it was seen as a step towards separatism. Many saw it ‘more like a project to build and animate’ a nation (Day, 2002:255) concluding that, it is another stage in the ongoing process of nation building and shaping a shared collective identity based on an inclusive civic nationalism ‘which can incorporate all those living in Wales...and

based on identification with institutions and place, and the values they represent, rather than ethnic markers such as place of birth or ancestry' (Wyn Jones and Trystan, 1999) cited by Day (2002:254). Thus Wales becomes an 'imagined community' with a national identity that is continually being shaped and overlapped and is only one identity amongst others that people possess.

This narrative analysis of Welsh identity suggests that there is a core of national identity that is linguistic, cultural, historic and place based and that the elements of this core form the deep resources and persistent cultural components that are considered by some theorists to be essential for the success of constructing a modern nation. Added to this is a fluid identity that is shaped by the context and current discourses. For instance, one's sense of national identity is reinforced at national rugby matches and other similar competitive events where national anthems are sung and national symbols reinforce the identities of the competing nations. This is a form of branding exercise that has grown out of commercial applications of visual imagery and ideograms. Television news uses this sort of imagery and symbolism to 'locate' viewers in the nation. The Tourist Board uses emblematic landscapes to provide a strong visual identification with places in a more passive way sometimes using residual elements of the rural, pastoral heartland to promote a certain stereotypical image of Wales. These images are often the subject of contemporary art, reinforcing a romantic idea of the landscape of Wales which can include stereotypical images of singing Welsh miners etc. whilst the images formed in the Heritage industry, often obscure reality through the process of commodification of Wales (Dicks, 2000). Therefore the vast array of differing discourses that produce national identities 'relies on a complex web of institutional and cultural practices' (Thompson, 1999:248) and a variety of icons, from flags to buildings, to unify national identity and aid in the process of 'imagining' the community of the nation (Adamson, 1999:60) that is experienced individually, according to context. This is an ongoing process that has accelerated in this 'second age of devolution', as evidenced by the strategy for the Archives and Records Council in Wales which

initially was to help ‘create a sense of identity and citizenship in Wales’ (see The National Audience Development Plan,

[http://www.archiveswales.org.uk/fileadmin/arcw/doc/NADP\\_Report\\_05-Feb-08-v2.pdf](http://www.archiveswales.org.uk/fileadmin/arcw/doc/NADP_Report_05-Feb-08-v2.pdf) accessed 30/4/2013) whilst in the built environment key civic buildings are expected to express Welshness, however that is interpreted.

### ***3.6 The development of the National Museum of Wales and the Welsh Folk Museum.***

Two of the most prominent national institutional buildings associated with the project of constructing modern Wales are the National Museum of Wales and the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans. The development of the Main Building at the latter institution will be the subject of the case study because it was an important project for the Percy Thomas practice between the 1950s and 1970s and it has played a key role in the nation building project.

The context for the establishment of the National Museum has been briefly described and will be explored in greater detail below. The context for the Welsh Folk Museum will be expanded in chapter 6 to account for the wider context of the influence of Scandinavian developments on memorialising the nation’s memory as identified by a group of intellectuals. Their ideas and projects had a profound effect on Iorwerth Peate who was inspired to produce a folk museum of the ‘gwerin’ in Wales. His singular vision however overlooked the complexity of contemporary Wales.

The portfolio of buildings designed by the Percy Thomas practice will be examined in the next chapter to establish how their buildings and structures in Wales have contributed to a developing sense of Welsh national identity over the course of the twentieth century.

One of the most important and iconic projects undertaken by the practice was the development of the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans, near Cardiff. It had its origins in ideas about protecting and enhancing Welsh national identity that were cur-

rent before the First World War in ‘the first age of devolution’ (Morgan, P., 2007:13). In a speech given on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2010, the out going Director of the National Museum of Wales, Michael Houlihan, claimed that this was ‘a period of confidence and assertiveness in Welsh identity’. However the process from concept to the physical realisation of the idea of the WFM was a long and complicated one that took decades to be realised, as was the case with many Welsh institutions. It illustrates the complex interplay of forces which lead to a particular building, and that building’s having the form it has.

National museums and other national institutions are regarded as ‘prerequisites for nation building’ in that they advance the case for a separate nation state (Mason, 2007:24). This chapter will show that the development of the National Museum of Wales was crucial to the Welsh Liberal project of developing home institutions for Wales to achieve cultural autonomy and parity with the other home nations at the turn of the nineteenth century and then show that the development of the Folk Museum was perceived to be crucial to the nation building project that gathered momentum as the twentieth century progressed and has played a part in the successful ‘second age of devolution’ (Morgan, P., 2007:13).

### *The development of the National Museum of Wales*

The National Museum of Wales, out of which the Welsh Folk Museum was eventually formed, was itself subject to various complications and false starts. As noted above there had been calls for the establishment of a national museum since the 1850s to act as a crucial component of the fundamental array of institutions that are considered essential for a nation to function and for the idea of Wales as a nation to be acknowledged by its own populace and other nations. Shaping national identity through institutional buildings and the spread of the ideology of nationalism was discussed in chapter 2.

The Blue Books scandal of 1847 had motivated a drive for progress, modernisation and education, which was debated regularly in contemporary eisteddfodau and later in the Cymmrodorion. The Mold eisteddfod of 1873 energised and focussed dis-



cussions around the need for national institutions to aid social progress (Morgan, P., 2007:14). Society was changing rapidly due to industrialisation, modernisation and the growth of knowledge which all impacted on traditional structures including ideas about identity.

‘National museums are one of the most important expressions of nineteenth-century nationalism, and Wales was slow, in European terms, to acquire this central symbol of identity’ (Lord, 1993:31). The delay in providing institutions and in particular a national museum was due to complicated historic, political and governance reasons explained above and the reluctance by MPs in the House of Commons to pass the motion ‘for a national museum in Wales’ ‘similar to that made for Scotland and Ireland’ (Bassett, 1993:4). Fundamentally, since the Union of 1536 Wales’s needs had been fully integrated and subordinated to those of England until the franchise was widened and nationalist voices were raised in the nineteenth century.

In the spirit of this nationalist revival, William Jones (Member for Arfon) proposed the motion for ‘a national storehouse for Welsh treasures in Wales’ on March 10<sup>th</sup> 1903 (Bassett, 1993:4). This issue had been debated almost annually since 1894 but, this time the Financial Secretary suggested that the Welsh Members should produce a plan for the Chancellor of the Exchequer which would be met ‘with something more than sympathetic consideration’ (Bassett, 1993:4).

The National Museum of Wales was formally established by the granting of the Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1907 by King Edward VII. This had been preceded by several years of ‘battle’ as to where it and the National Library should be sited, due to the absence of a capital of Wales. In the event, Cardiff, as ‘the largest centre of population’ won the Museum in June 1905, the year in which it attained City status, and the Library was sited in ‘more healthy and tranquil’ Aberystwyth (Bassett, 1993:5). Cardiff, in the form of its ruling elite and entrepreneurs was ambitious to capitalise on its economic success as the coal ‘Metropolis of Wales’ and become the capital city of Wales.

In fact Cardiff's bid was supported by a 52-page document detailing pertinent information and reasons for its claim, the offer of a prestigious site, various monies and the whole collection of the Municipal Museum which had been 'astutely' re-named as The Welsh Museum of Natural History, Arts and Antiquities in 1901 after pursuing a collecting policy befitting its national aspirations (Jones, 2007:41). The Cardiff museum was 'a central manifestation of the late-Victorian and Edwardian city's growing civic pride and the expansion of its Welsh profile' (Jones, 2007:29). This relationship with the new museum had implications for its development as a national museum for several decades but more importantly it is evidence of the aspirations of the local political and cultural class and the Welsh Liberals to achieve separate national institutions from the English. The final design of the building and the collections were also shaped by the dominant ideas of the time, which were Victorian and effectively Imperialist, based on the idea of the museum as a temple to culture as defined by the elite in society. However as Mason (2007:27) notes it also signified that Wales's history and culture was not to be subsumed into that of Britain anymore.

The Library and the Museum were 'the most glorious' of the institutions set up at that time (Morgan, P., 2007:13) but started life in temporary accommodation; the Museum was in a corner of the newly built, grand, City Hall in Cardiff, that had been planned as the town hall. It was fortuitous that the Welshman David Lloyd George was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1908 and able to support the establishment of the two national institutions. Their establishment granted Wales 'official recognition for its national distinctiveness. In the process a symbolic space was carved for its cultural autonomy' (Mason, 2007:27) and 'a rib cage for nationality' was formed (Morgan, P., 2007:21).

At the grand ceremonial laying of the foundation stone by King George V on Wednesday 26 June 1912, the Museum's founders vision was articulated thus:

'It is intended that the new Museum shall be primarily and essentially national in character. Its special and characteristic function must, according to the views of its

Council, be to teach the stranger about Wales and to teach the Welsh people about their own country...’ (Mason, 2007:28).

Houlihan argues that this illustrates ‘the Celtic definition’ of a museum, that is, a ‘museum of the nation’ unlike the English definition which required repositories of quality international collections to be built ‘for the nation’ to learn about the world and the British Empire (Houlihan, 2007:93).

Kavanagh (2007:50) notes, that in reality the Wales portrayed by the National Museum in fact conformed to the ‘dominant political and cultural meta-narratives’ of the time with many ‘gaps and silences’. This refers to the way that the lives and experiences of many in Wales, was overlooked by this singular narrative approach. It was a reflection of the ideas current at the time about collecting, memorialising and display (Kavanagh, 2007:48). This limited narrative ignored the diversity of Wales and the full complexity of what it meant to be Welsh. This has perhaps only been fully studied and understood in the last few decades, e.g Charlotte Williams (1999). The plurality of nationalism has been explored above, as has the idea that identities are situational and diverse and often overlaid within one overarching national identity. In this way the associated meanings of places, objects, events etc. become deeper and richer.

However the key issue is that Wales’s language and culture gained institutional credibility with the opening of the Museum and the Library. These institutions also added to the debates about ‘Wales’s status as a nation and which national institutions were tasked with its representation’ (Mason, 2007:27).

### ***The development of the Welsh Folk Museum***

Prys Morgan (2007:20) claims that the establishment of the National Museum and National Library were ‘founded as an act of criticism’ and ‘out of bitter protest at British neglect of all things Welsh’. However he also comments that the institutions were rooted in romantic ideas about Welsh nationality and history (2007:20). These ideas were informed by the European wide movement described in chapter 2 which

originated in antiquarian studies and as a counter discourse to the rationality of the Enlightenment, particularly Rousseau's emphasis on the diversity of ethnic cultures and the importance of 'Volk' for von Herder. These ideas were elaborated through literature, art, music and architecture and fed into nationalist discourses and powerful anti-industrialisation discourses which were expressed through the philosophies and activities of intellectuals like John Ruskin and William Morris, who cherished mediaeval working practices for treating the worker as a human and not as a component (Curtis, 2002:22).

Parallel and sympathetic to this position was another strand of thought that feared the loss of distinctive rural cultures, languages and traditional community structures in the face of rapid urbanisation, migrations and increasing pan European trade. Karlsson (1980:81) notes Herder's philosophical approach, 'every nation was endowed with its peculiar national soul or national spirit' and consequently it was believed that the expressions of a specific culture represented the peculiar national spirit. To that end, in the second half of the nineteenth century Artur Hazelius began collecting ethnographic artefacts in order to 'document the entire range of Nordic life' (Lane, 2000:40) before it was lost to history.

Artur Hazelius is the key figure in the development of the Scandinavian Folk Museum movement, which will be described fully in chapter 6 when it will also be argued that this movement provided the context for the development of the Welsh Folk Museum and influenced its setting and design. Hazelius was motivated by the cultural nationalisms of the nineteenth century, which were fuelled by patriotism, an interest in history and diversity, political ideology and other changes in society, to institutionalise the national memory (<http://www.skansen.se/pages/?ID=1064> accessed 8/3/2010). It was intended to house the ethnographic collections in the grand formal urban museums, which had also been developed as expressions of nationalist consciousness but he purchased a site in Skansen near Stockholm to display his collections which included buildings, in a park like setting (Donnelly, 1992:212). A programme of 'Nordic' events was established to give full expression to the imagined idea of the true rural Nordic past in the open air folk museum (<http://>

[www.skansen.se/pages/?ID=1064](http://www.skansen.se/pages/?ID=1064) accessed 8/3/2010). These activities were very influential across Scandinavian countries and similar institutions were established in Norway, Denmark and Finland within the next couple of decades (<http://www.nor-skfolkemuseum.no/> accessed 8/3/2010)

It is difficult to say if news of these activities inspired the committee of the Cardiff Museum to collect Welsh 'bygones' or whether it was inspired by the original tableau of folk items arranged by Hazelius for the Paris Exposition Universelle of 1878. The Museums Association (MA) established in 1889 to improve museums in Britain would have acted as a conduit for news of developments in museums across Europe. The Curator of Cardiff Museum, John Ward appointed in 1893 was actively involved in the MA and therefore familiar with new ideas and was ambitious to see the national museum developed in Cardiff (Jones, 2007:38). The 'national' collecting policy instigated as part of this campaign in 1893 included an initiative to collect Welsh 'popular antiquities', this was considered the most significant aspect of the policy. It was so successful that it was said that 'Wales would soon possess...the finest collection of articles illustrating folk-life of all the countries in the British Isles' (Jones, 2007:43).

This collection was later enhanced by Iorwerth Peate in the 1920s who had been introduced to folk museum ideas whilst at Aberystwyth University by a young Norwegian scholar who 'opened his eyes to the new developments in folk museums in Scandinavia' (Stevens, 1986:14). Cyril Fox, the Director of the National Museum of Wales visited Sweden in 1930 and returned full of enthusiasm to form a sub-department of Folk Culture and Industries and advised the Museum Council to recommend in principle the foundation of a Welsh Folk Museum (Stevens, 1986:64).

The collection was elevated to a full department and designated the National Folk Collection shortly after. It illustrated a disappearing culture that was also considered by some, at that time, to be the true Welsh culture of the rural, heroic, educated 'gwerin'. Lord claims that when the Department of Folk Culture and Indus-

tries was established in 1931 to ‘provide the people of Wales with a source hitherto untapped of national self-knowledge’...[t]he national role of the National Museum was effectively devolved onto one Department’ (Lord, 1993:38).

The tortuous story of fulfilling Fox’s advice will be described in chapter 6 but the significance of the Welsh Folk Museum to the nation building project is evident. Wales may be a very different place now to the place it was when the National Museum was originally built and when the various branches were added, especially the Welsh Folk Museum, but their existence, impact and expansion are important contributory factors to that change, which ultimately led to devolution.

The gift of land, on the outskirts of Cardiff, by the third Earl of Plymouth and his mother, the Countess of Plymouth in 1946 helped realise Fox’s and Peate’s ambitions. Peate was a deeply patriotic Welshman who was ambitious to elevate the status of Wales and his beloved ‘gwerin’. Stevens claims (1986:72) that his contribution to Welsh life in the twentieth century was considerable and ‘he imposed upon the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans a more profound responsibility and an intensely challenging mission,’ as evidenced in this quote by Peate about the museum: ‘It will strengthen and deepen the best in our national life so that we may attain new standards in our life and culture and serve civilisation yet again for long centuries to come as a small nation which is conscious of its past in a larger world’(cited in Stevens, 1986:72). By the time of his retirement in 1971, the ‘Folk Museum had acquired a European reputation comparable to that of the great Scandinavian open-air museums on which it had been modelled’ (ODNB accessed 4/02/12).

Sir Percy Thomas and Son were appointed to design the various new elements that were needed for the ‘Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, St. Fagan’s Castle’ in 1948. Hilling, a key informant for the research reported in this thesis, notes that this was due to the reputation of the practice, as will be explained in chapter 6. This relationship was to last for decades as the Folk Museum was gradually developed,

often against seemingly insurmountable obstacles, to become one of the most important and popular institutions in Wales.

### ***3.7 Conclusion.***

It has been shown that, in spite of a fluid eastern boundary, it is possible to identify Wales as a geographical area with a distinct cultural and social heritage, based on the 'deep resources' of historical, linguistic and cultural components.

As the discourses and ideology of nationalism spread across Europe throughout the nineteenth century, a very influential group of Welsh individuals strove to achieve cultural recognition and political parity with England. This was to be achieved through the provision of cultural practices and socio-political institutions which are understood, in post-Westphalian Europe, to be essential for the successful functioning of a modern nation state. The aim was to ensure that 'all those living in Wales', and those beyond Wales with an interest in the idea of Wales, were to identify with these civic initiatives.

Shaping a collective identity in this way necessarily subsumes within that overarching identity, multiple, plural, complex identities that are multi-layered, evolving and often experienced situationally. It can also mean marginalising or suppressing identities and experiences deemed for whatever reason to be potentially undermining, such as visible ethnic minorities (Williams et al, 2003).

To aid the process of 'imagining' the nation and constructing a distinctive civic Welsh identity are a range of icons; from flags to built environment projects of a particular form and more especially of a particular function. The form that these built projects take and the functions associated with them can reveal the dominant ideas pertaining at the time of the creation of the projects, as to how the collective identity was to be shaped.

As ideas about identity, how to shape it and interpret it, are evolving all the time this is only one way amongst others of revealing identity.

With the above in mind it has been shown that the development of the National Museum was a fundamental part of the late nineteenth, early twentieth century Welsh Liberal project of achieving institutions for Wales. Crucially, it was developed in the context of the European museum movement that had begun with the development of the Louvre to shape French national identity. More museums were developed to legitimise nation states that were forming across Europe as boundaries changed according to the local political situation, through the construction of the narratives of the various nations.

The city museums were developed as grand formal structures in capital cities where the style and quality of the architecture was important for projecting the status of the institution. The more informal folk museums, that were first developed in Scandinavia, were located quite near to the capital cities but in a rural park land setting that was an essential part of the imagery to be conveyed; of ‘threatened’ pre-industrial cultures in a ‘contrived landscape to create impressions of timeless rurality’ (Adamson, 1999:62). These folk cultures were perceived as the heart and spirit of nascent nations. Therefore both types of museum are expressions of nationalistic consciousness and act as nation building institutions that ‘grow’ with the host nation and become iconic symbols of the nations.

The next chapter will examine the work of the Percy Thomas practice in Wales and suggest that there is a case for exploring further the degree to which it self-consciously sought to develop a visual vocabulary for Welsh identity in the twentieth century



## **Chapter 4 The role of the Percy Thomas Practice in making modern Wales**

### *4.1 Introduction.*

This thesis investigates the notion that the Percy Thomas Practice consciously designed buildings as part of a nation-building project in twentieth century Wales. The last chapter described the process of Wales's cultural reawakening and political awakening and showed how these integrated processes gained momentum through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries leading to the development of national consciousness, against a background of enormous social and economic change. The consciousness of ancient identity experienced by some, developed into a wider cultural consciousness as the effects of the socio-economic changes that were happening, provided the impetus for enhancing and developing an essential institutional framework to protect the culture and provide better opportunities for its expression.

The process of nation building is always underpinned by a complex web of cultural and institutional practices and a range of icons, that can include buildings, to help unify and 'imagine' the nation and help it function. The development of cultural and institutional frameworks, the complex and multi-layered nature of the concept of nationalism and the contested construction of identity through subtle imagery and overt icons was described generally in chapter 2 and specifically for Wales in chapter 3. The role of the built environment in this process generally was analysed separately in section 2.6 which explored how buildings can convey messages about power, status, nation etc. It was concluded that there are many examples of the use of architecture for constructing a sense of nation hood and thorough interpretation of the meanings to be conveyed could only be achieved by understanding the full context of production.

This aspect of identity building and nation building has been largely overlooked in Wales, except for notable examples of 'flag waving' projects commissioned since devolution such as the Senedd in Cardiff Bay.



See Figure 4.1. The Senedd.

The built environment fulfils an important role in the process of modern nation building by creating structures that allow modern industry and an urban society to function and through their appearance demonstrate that a modernising agenda is being followed. This thesis contends that no architectural practice has been more involved with this process in Wales than the Percy Thomas Practice (PTP).

This chapter will demonstrate the significance of PTP as the designers of a very significant number of key buildings and other structures that form part of the fabric associated with an increasingly self-conscious, modernising Wales. It does this through the compilation of a database and by arguing that there are no other obvious contenders for the mantle of architect of modern Wales and that the practice completed an enormous number of very influential commissions and other structures that are fundamental for the operation of a modern urban nation (see Appendix 2). This infrastructure is evidence that a modernising agenda is being followed, as will be demonstrated below. Later chapters will explore the extent to which the practice consciously engaged with a particular politically dominant interpretation of the nation-building agenda.

An extensive survey by Jonathan Vining and Malcolm Parry of 260 significant projects undertaken in Wales from 1901-2000, lists almost thirty key projects by PTP whereas the other main architectural practices each have less than ten projects. This is admittedly a crude measure of the scale and scope of the work of each practice and overlooks the exceptional design work of many of the younger practices undertaken in the last two decades. But, it also has to be acknowledged that, as is noted in the Welsh Academy En-

cyclopaedia of Wales, Percy Thomas and his practice were responsible for a ‘vast number of buildings’ (Davies et al, 2008:866). The Times obituary for Thomas records that he had built ‘up the largest practice in Wales and one of the largest in the British Isles’ (18/8/1969). It was ‘the company which dominated architecture in post-war Wales’ and ‘Percy Thomas... was the first Welsh architect to win an international reputation’ (Davies, 1994:659). Of course there are notable buildings that were not designed by the practice such as latterly, the Senedd, the Wales Millennium Stadium and the National Botanic Garden. Nevertheless the practice designed important buildings in every sphere of a modernising nation-building Wales over ninety three years. The chapter begins by reviewing the sources available on Percy Thomas’s life and work. It then examines in some depth the intertwining of the commissions that Thomas and his architectural firm enjoyed with a particular, politically dominant project of nation-building in twentieth century Wales.

#### ***4.2 Biographical information.***

As noted above the task of researching twentieth century architects and architecture in Wales can be quite difficult, due to the paucity of literature available. There is one short autobiography for a twentieth century Welsh architect written as a memoir by Thomas, ‘Pupil to President (Memoirs of an Architect)’(1963). This is a relatively limited document that lists the advancement and main professional achievements of Thomas’s life, including details of his war time service, which he believed taught him skills that later proved advantageous for the progress of his career and the growth of the practice.

A personal recollection of this sort can be very useful for its insights into the motivation and personality of the subject, furnished by some very interesting anecdotes and comments. It can also be used to confirm details about the projects that Thomas undertook and the various roles he fulfilled, through which he gained valuable contacts and experience. It is however a memoir and therefore not necessarily accurate unless it was compiled from a series of contemporary diaries or note books, and this information is not given in this particular memoir. It is also a record of one person’s perspective on, for

example, how a contract was won, which may not fully align with another architect's account of the situation.

The Welsh Biography Online (<http://wbo.llgc.org.uk/en/index.html>) was checked for information on various contemporary Welsh architects. Only the biography of Percy Thomas is available as entries are limited to those that have died before January 1st. 1971. Also the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography was searched and revealed only the biographies of two Welsh architects, Sir Alex Gordon and Sir Percy Thomas. National records and biographies such as these, prepared by state institutions, are expected to display certain standards of accuracy and to have adhered to academic conventions of gathering and authenticating information. The authors commissioned to write the articles are usually chosen for their knowledge of the person and are aware of the need to demonstrate accuracy. Editors will be employed to corroborate some of the information. However, because some of the lives and achievements of the personalities listed are not well documented, it is sometimes not possible to completely authenticate references or be able to account for every comment. A biographical article is also necessarily selective which means that not all of the information on a particular person is included (Scott, 1990:23).

Various obituaries on Percy Thomas have been gathered (see Table 5.2). The obituaries of Norman Percy Thomas, Thomas's son (RIBA Journal, January 1990) and Dale Owen, a partner at the practice (The Independent, November 28 1997 and Touchstone, April 1999) have also been collected and are drawn upon. These texts, as sources of information, are usually more limited than the biographies described above, as the time and space restrictions associated with newspaper copy are often greater than for biographies (Scott, 1990:136,146). Also, the newspaper editor may add to those restrictions, depending upon the demands of the layout of the newspaper on the day. The information conveyed in the obituary may contain errors that are duplicated from previous articles that are not checked due to the time restrictions. These mistakes can sometimes be copied from one newspaper to another, without the journalist or editor checking that the information is correct. Conversely obituaries can be written by authors with a thorough and accurate appreciation of the achievements of an individual who are able to write

concisely about the most significant features and impact of a career, whilst maintaining a sense of perspective regarding those achievements. Scott warns that researchers should remember that ‘newspapers process events to construct a particular image of reality’ when using them ‘as sources of evidence about the events themselves’ (1990:156).

A visit to the RIBA Library in Portland Place, London in March 2009 yielded a small but interesting group of articles, effectively forming a biographical file, from journals such as *The Builder* and *The Architects Journal*. It included: obituaries, news of Thomas’s retirement from the practice and the Welsh Board for Industry, his election as President of the RIBA twice, the notes from the presentation ceremony of the award of The Royal Gold Medal and an article about the RIBA competition results, for the new headquarters in Portland Place (Thomas and Prestwich were placed third). Much of the information is repeated in other texts but the choice of texts and articles about key periods or events in Thomas’s life seems to reflect what the librarian considered important for a biographical file. A letter from Thomas written in 1967 directs the unknown recipient to his memoirs in the RIBA Library and notes that ‘I am no longer in practice, and hardly think, therefore, that anyone will be enquiring for my biographical notes’.

An informal interview was undertaken with the widow of Norman Percy Thomas on 16th April 2009. The informality was out of concern for her advanced age. This meeting produced a small scrap book of newspaper cuttings compiled by Percy Thomas, about his achievements in his early years, particularly that of entering and winning competitions. Most of this has been photocopied for its importance as evidence of Thomas’s pride in his increasing success and his ambition for greater success after his return to Wales. Some of the newspaper cuttings indicate his pride in being part of the successful development at Cathays Park, both for himself and for Wales. The competition system facilitated Thomas’s return to Cardiff after he came first in the Technical Institute competition to work on the building which is now known as the Bute Building and houses the Welsh School of Architecture.

### *Contemporary perceptions of Percy Thomas and the Percy Thomas Practice.*

The British Architectural Library Catalogue, that is the on-line archive of the RIBA, has been checked for all references to the Thomas name to highlight commentary and perceptions of the practice in the professional press. This search yielded well over five hundred references, many of which referred to projects within Britain and across the globe, including a report of an invitation to three UK architectural practices, one of which was the Percy Thomas Partnership, to take part in the competition to design China's National Grand Theatre in Beijing (AJ, April 1998. vol. 207. no.17. p.11). Many of these articles were not directly relevant for the research question addressed in this thesis but are evidence of the scope, scale and status of the practice. The articles were printed in all of the popular architectural and building journals including the RIBA Journal, the AJ (the Architect's Journal), Building Design, the Builder and Building and less frequently in Architecture Today, Touchstone, Country Life, the Arup Journal, AJ Focus and Architectural Review. The archive of the Royal Society of Architects in Wales, the regional organisation of the RIBA in Wales, was also checked for any information on the practice.

Journals and newspapers kept in the Cardiff University library have also been searched and a significant file of articles has been created, supplemented by notes of the shorter articles and copies of papers written by Thomas and read to the RIBA.

The products of the architectural press can be a major source of evidence but are subject to greater concerns for 'the quality control criteria of authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning' (Scott, 1990:143) than articles produced by academic institutions. There can be confusion regarding authorship and authenticity due to the increased input from editorial teams and the need to align with the editorial position (Scott, 1990:144). The issue of bias that can be displayed through content analysis is often difficult to prove except in the reporting of political situations (Scott, 1990:155).

In order to demonstrate the significance of PTP throughout its long history, as designers of the largest number of buildings and infrastructure projects associated with an increasingly self-conscious modernising Wales, comparisons were made with other architects

in Wales, largely through the Vining and Parry (2003) list of all major projects undertaken between 1901 to 2000. It was noted that the large portfolio of work undertaken by the practice includes many influential projects that are crucial to modern, urban nation building, as argued earlier.

The databases at the RIBA and Cardiff Library were also searched for references to material on several other prominent architects working in Wales during the twentieth century, namely, T. Alwyn Lloyd, Sir Alex Gordon and S.C. Foulkes. The quantity of references noted for each architect was used as a crude but effective measure of comparison and helped highlight the prominence of Thomas and the practice.

#### ***4.3 Percy Thomas Practice's work: establishing its extent.***

A database (see Appendix 2) of the main schemes completed in Wales by the Percy Thomas Practice (PTP) was compiled. This was itself a contribution to knowledge in relation to PTP, as the information was fragmented existing in a variety of places, some under threat (see below). The database established that PTP was heavily involved in designing buildings and other structures at the heart of standard narratives of the development of 'modern' twentieth century Wales. It also provided the database from which an appropriate case study for detailed investigation could be selected. This was initially compiled by noting all the relevant buildings in the set of photograph albums formerly kept in the Capita Percy Thomas offices. The albums of slides were also checked for projects completed in Wales but this was rather difficult as the indexes were not always complete. These photograph and slide albums represent the most comprehensive record of past projects that has been kept by the firm, which is now part of a multi-disciplinary consultancy.

The first draft database was supplemented by checking the projects listed in the promotional handbooks that were produced by the practice in the 1970s and 1980s, also now kept at the Capita Cardiff office. The archive is relatively small due to documents being stored in the basement of the headquarters in Cathedral Road Cardiff, which was subject to flooding. Other documents were abandoned at the time of the removal of the office, following the take-over of the practice in 2004.

All the relevant buildings mentioned in the short biography ‘Pupil to President’ (Memoirs of an Architect) written by Thomas in 1963 were added to the database, as well as the date of design and completion, where possible. Further buildings, attributed to the practice, in the ‘Buildings of Wales’ series of gazetteers, published by Penguin Books and Yale University Press, were added along with the dates, location and function of the building. These gazetteers are widely regarded as accurate surveys of the building stock, drawing on expert knowledge, specialist authors and archival information from local county records offices and local authorities, the National Library of Wales, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, the National Trust, the four Welsh Archaeological Trusts, London architectural publications and the London archives of the RIBA, Society of Antiquaries and Lambeth Palace. Some information was verified, adjusted or added from the individual List Descriptions of PTP Listed Buildings, written by Cadw officers, and forming part of the database of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest that Cadw organises as the official guardian of the built heritage of Wales. This Cadw database provides an indication as to which buildings are so far considered historically important enough to be given statutory protection and they, in turn, depend upon thorough research and specialist knowledge.

The relevant architectural and building press journals and articles have been checked in the Cardiff University Library for commentary on buildings designed by the practice. These are listed in Appendix 3. A bibliography, formed out of an exhibition organised and held in the then University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology (UWIST) in 1983 to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Sir Percy Thomas (Thornborrow 1984) was also a source of information.

The databases at the RIBA and Cardiff Library were also searched for references to material on several other prominent architects working in Wales during the twentieth century, namely, T. Alwyn Lloyd, Sir Alex Gordon and S.C. Foulkes. The quantity of references noted for each architect was used as a crude measure of comparison and helped highlight the prominence of Thomas and the practice. The following discussion does not draw on all the buildings designed by the practice throughout its many decades of existence, nor is it intended to diminish the role or contribution of other contemporary archi-



pects working in Wales in the twentieth century, for example: T. Alwyn Lloyd, Sir Alex Gordon, S. Colwyn Foulkes and Bowen Dann Davies. What emerges is a picture of a practice at the heart of the physical expression of twentieth century Welsh nation building. But to what extent did this influence the nature of its designs?

#### ***4.4 Percy Thomas and a modernising Wales.***

As described in chapter 3, Wales was thrust into the modern world of the Anglo-Saxon Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth century, largely due to the wealth of its mineral and natural resources. Heavy metal and extractive industries were developed that helped fuel the spread of industrial capitalism around the world. Hence the nineteenth century was a period of unprecedented industrial and economic growth in Wales allied with phenomenal social change (Morgan P., 2005 pp. 211-254).

All of these industries had over-expanded by the Great War (1914-1919); some were already suffering from structural weaknesses and competition from new markets and materials, but their decline was delayed by war time demands and a post war boom. Severe depression finally hit the Welsh (and British) coalfields in 1925 as the effects of the loss of international trade, competition from overseas markets and ‘a marked lack of entrepreneurial foresight and investment’ impacted (Jones, 2005:261). Davies notes that ‘[i]t was responsible for halting and reversing the industrial growth which had been in full flood for a century and a half’ (1994:549). The rural areas were suffering from depopulation and a protracted agricultural depression; poverty and hunger gripped many communities.

Even though greater state intervention, as a result of the War, had brought significant changes to every area of life (Jones, 2005:265) the situation in Wales worsened, especially in the Valleys. Thomas Jones, writing angry satire, suggested south Wales should be scheduled as ‘a grand national ruin’ (Morgan K., 1982:219). John Maynard Keynes and David Lloyd George frustrated at the inactivity of successive governments advocated ‘pump priming’ the economy through initiatives such as public works programmes and encouraging new methods of capital investment (Morgan K., 1982:221) but the government failed to act and the economic situation worsened after the Wall Street

crash. Hilary Marquand, a professor at Cardiff, called for a ‘plan’ to stimulate recovery through development of new light industries, tourism and improved transport links including perhaps a Severn Bridge (Morgan K., 1982:223,224). Marquand’s analysis indicated that the traditional industries were no longer viable and Wales needed a broader industrial base.

Hunger marches finally forced the ‘national’ government to act; the Special Areas (Development and Improvement) Act was passed in 1934 followed by the setting up of the Reconstruction Association to help ‘distressed’ areas. These initiatives were too limited and largely ineffective, but the development of the first government assisted trading estate at Treforest in 1936, with Percy Thomas as Honorary Architect to the Wales and Monmouthshire Industrial Estates Ltd., was a success boasting over sixty firms by 1939 and employing 2500 people and starting the process of economic diversification. The sixty factories designed by Thomas were mostly to a standard pattern, but the whole initiative received UK wide recognition as an example of the modernising of the economy, and nation (Short et al, 2003).



See Figure 4.2. Treforest Trading Estate Unit.

Thomas was asked shortly after, to be the architect for the new Euston Station in London. This project was never realised due to the 1939-1946 war and post war nationalisation of the railways; but it is evidence of the quality of commissions that he was attracting by this stage of his career. Thomas’s early rise to eminence was largely due to his phenomenal success in open architectural competitions; one of the first successes was his design in collaboration with Ivor Jones, as his clerical partner and Quantity Surveyor, for the Technical Institute (now known as the Bute Building) on Cathays Park in

Cardiff in 1911. This was a wonderful start to his career, to have a winning design for a building on what was considered one of the most prestigious developments in the whole of Britain at that time. Jones and Thomas had been 'scholars' at Cardiff Technical School so the result was particularly satisfying for the building and sites committee of the Cardiff Education Committee, as the 'first competition for buildings on the Cathays Park that ha[d] been won by a local firm' (Western Mail, 7/4/1911).

Percy Thomas was articled to E. H. Bruton FRIBA of Cardiff, when he won the design and planning prize for the 1903 National Eisteddfod held in Llanelli. Thereafter he regularly entered the monthly 'Building News Designing Club' competitions under the pseudonym 'Viking'. Thomas and his old friend, Ivor Jones won the competition for the Cardiff Technical College, to be sited on Edward VII Avenue. This was Thomas's first major competition win and the one that he regarded as the most thrilling because it meant that he could return to Cardiff to start a practice (Thomas, 1963:20). He had left Cardiff to become an Assistant in the office of J. C. Prestwich of Leigh, Lancashire in 1904, even though 'the growth of Cardiff [was] attract[ing] architects like moths to a flame' (Newman, 1995:104) at the time.

Before the College was completed however the First World War had begun and Thomas was commissioned into the Royal Engineers. Thomas wrote that the administrative and personnel experiences he had gained in the war increased his confidence and ability to communicate with all kinds of men (1963:28). The skills he gained from organising engineering works would have also added to his abilities to understand and design structures.

Upon his return to Cardiff after the war, Thomas was fortunate to gain some notable commissions: the Marments store in Queen Street (1922), Empire House and Imperial Buildings (now demolished) in Mount Stuart Square, The Edward Nicholl Home at Penylan and several Arts and Crafts Cotswold Vernacular style houses. These commissions are evidence of Thomas's awareness of fashionable styles from across the country that could be remodelled to suit these relatively prestigious commissions.

Cathays Park was designed to ‘express Cardiff’s claims to be a city of international importance at the peak of its economic power’ (Cadw List Descriptions). Cardiff had become ‘the artery of empire and the jugular vein of capitalist Wales, within which every other Wales had to live’ (Williams, 1991:223). As such ‘Cardiff’s elite ...sought to dominate Wales’ (Evans, 1985:369) based on its status as ‘the coal metropolis of the world’ (Daunton, 1977:7). They believed that ‘Cardiff, with its wide streets, civic buildings and its experience of the outside world, would lead [Wales] into the twentieth century’ (Evans, 1985:370).

Cardiff had already won the battle for the University in the 1880s and the National Museum in 1905, the year that it was also granted city status which, as stated above, was seen as ‘recognition of [its] position as the ‘Metropolis of Wales’ and tacit recognition of its role as the capital of Wales’ (Evans, 1985:374). At the time, thinking of Wales in this way, was something quite new for many in Wales; ‘there was a real need for an overarching vision of Welshness to transcend the parochial denominationalism of most Welsh people of the period’ and that ‘[t]he romantic but secular Welshness of the late nineteenth century came just at the right time to provide an overarching power and vision, touching many different institutions’ (Morgan P., 2007:18).

The Welsh School of Architecture (the only national school of architecture in Britain) was founded in March 1920 and moved into the Technical Institute, which was the first of several buildings designed by the Thomas practice on this symbolically important civic centre. Thomas and T. Alwyn Lloyd were probably active in lobbying for the school to be established and certainly were active participants for decades after its establishment (Powell, 2009:1,3,7).

Many of Thomas’s early winning designs were undertaken with Ernest Prestwich: for Police Headquarters, Fire Stations, Law Courts and some Civic Centres to be built in England. The success of these led directly to what Thomas judged to be his ‘greatest success’, Swansea New Guildhall, which he won with Jones in 1930 (Thomas, 1963:29). It was awarded an RIBA Bronze medal and is Listed as Grade 1 by Cadw as ‘the most important building in Wales of its period’. It owes its existence to the availab-

ility of unemployment relief schemes under the Unemployment Relief Works Act and ‘helped to alleviate local hardships’ at a time of chronic economic depression (Alban, 1984:vii). It became a prime centre for social and cultural life as well as being the focus of local government and justice. It has an interesting iconographical scheme with some Viking imagery referring to Swansea’s ancient history. Overall however, ‘[i]t was a deliberate policy that Welsh national and local associations should play an important part in the decorative scheme throughout the building’ (Woolley, 1984:85). It also contained the only large purpose-built concert hall in Wales until St. David’s Hall, Cardiff was built almost half a century later (Fussell, 1984:55). It was during this contract that Jones suggested they dissolve the partnership as he felt it was rather one sided and he wanted to continue working in a small practice (Thomas, 1963:30). Professor Sir Charles Reilly wrote in 1931 that Thomas had made ‘the name of the firm ... one of the best known in the whole country’ (1963:60). Thomas’s approach to design through a thorough study of the clients’ requirements meant that he became the acknowledged expert in the design and planning of public buildings and in this capacity presented a paper to the RIBA on ‘The Planning of Municipal Buildings’ in February 1935 (RIBA Journal 23/2/1935 pp. 469-487). In Cardiff, the built expression of this increase in local government business was a massive extension to E.V. Harris’s exceptionally fine Glamorgan County Hall on Cathays Park in 1932. This was a direct commission and further evidence of Thomas’s reputation and skills, as it was larger than the original building and needed to be designed as a good companion to such an important civic building. Later in the decade Thomas designed the County Hall of Carmarthenshire in a striking, historicist style on a prominent site, which was not finally completed until well after the War. It is Listed by Cadw ‘as one of the most notable mid C20 public buildings in Wales, by a leading Welsh architect’ (Cadw List Description).

Thomas was also interested in the organisation of his profession. He was elected President of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1935. Upon his appointment, at the age of 52, he became the youngest architect to have served in the history of the RIBA and the first Welshman, or architect of any of the ‘provinces’, to hold this office (Thomas, 1963:35). He had in fact only gained his RIBA in 1920, qualifying as an Associate after

taking the 'War Special Final' and becoming a Fellow in 1922, the year in which he became the President of the South Wales Institute of Architects. This meant that he presided over the RIBA Annual Conference that was held in Cardiff that year to study and celebrate the new civic centre and forged a relationship with the Council of the RIBA. This was consolidated by his election to the Council after his term of office as President of SWIA was completed in 1925. He wrote in his memoirs 'the only Welshman ever to be elected by the general body' (1963:33). This was another means of establishing his reputation and that of his practice. Characteristically, Thomas threw himself into this role serving as Chairman on the Allied Societies Conference for two years. Whilst serving as a Vice President of the Institute in 1927-28 he was rewarded with a trip to America and Canada, visiting New York, Washington and Toronto.

Lord Davies of Llandinam, a leading figure in the social reform movement, commissioned a building from Thomas for Cathays Park, The Temple of Peace and Health-to promote peace, health and international understanding; the appeal of internationalism after the horrors of the Great War was strong, culminating in the establishment of the League of Nations. A Welsh branch of the League of Nations Union was formed in 1922 (Jones, 2005:269). In spite of their internationalist outlook the opening speeches in 1938 were a celebration of notable Welsh individuals, past and present who had achieved and promoted high ideals of justice, equity and peace. Lord Meston declared that, it was 'most fitting that a Welshman should have endowed Britain with its first great temple dedicated to the cause of international understanding'. Messages of encouragement were sent from across the world from 'illustrious sons of Gwalia'. The Temple of Peace and Health was clearly meant to be an important symbolic, national building in memory of the fallen of the Great War and housing the Welsh Council of the League of Nations Union and the offices of the King Edward VII Welsh National Memorial Association who worked to eradicate tuberculosis, regarded as a peculiarly Welsh phenomenon (Morgan K., 1982:234). It was Thomas's third large public building on Cathays Park and described by Lord Davies as a 'gem to the galaxy of public buildings'. Thomas was invested with the King's Royal Gold Medal for Architecture for services to the Institute and architecture in 1939 'as a designer of important British buildings'.

The firm was by then a major presence in Wales; and it brought to the country a reputation as an important UK architectural firm, for example, immediately prior to the outbreak of WWII in 1939, the practice was engaged on the re-planning of Euston Station.

Possibly as a result of the growing portfolio of important buildings or his increasing reputation for ‘understanding the needs of the building’ Thomas was invited to meet the Principal of Aberystwyth University and produce the formal master plan for the University in 1935, and so began a long relationship with the University and the Principal. The Development Plan for Bangor University followed soon after. Percy Thomas Partnership promotional literature from the late 1970s describe these as ‘national projects’.

Whilst President of the RIBA, Thomas was asked to serve on a sub committee, to select a sculptor for the King George V Memorial, with the President of the Royal Academy (Sir William Llewellyn) and that of the Royal Society of Sculptors (Sir Goscombe John) plus the 1st. Commissioner of the Office of Works (Lord Harlech). Upon being invited to include the President of the Royal Scottish Academy as a representative from Scotland, Percy pointed out that an English representative was needed first as they were all Welsh (Thomas, 1963:36). This little anecdote serves to illustrate the confusion over origins in a multi-national state that was largely mediated through an English perspective at the time, and that these intellectuals perceived themselves as Welsh.

The only other key initiative in Wales between the wars was the reopening of a modernised strip mill at Ebbw Vale which provided a unique but controversial example of cooperation between central government, private industry and the local authority with interventions by Welsh MP’s and Lloyd George (Morgan K., 1982:228). This was not designed by Thomas but demonstrates that there were only a limited number of projects to be undertaken at this time. This was to change.

#### ***4.5 The ‘Chief creator of modern Wales’: post WWII reconstruction, nationalisation and transport.***

Wales was further integrated into the British state during the Second World War through the national war effort which created employment for many servicing the war machine both locally and away. Vast areas of land were requisitioned by the War Office and the

population became aware that the war 'front' was not only on the Continent, as strategic sites were bombed and evacuees arrived. Factories were set up to supply the war effort and introduced the Welsh workforce to new skills, Davies (1994:605) notes that this was 'a key contribution to the success of the efforts to diversify the Welsh economy after 1945'.

The Welsh Survey Board recommended the establishment of a Welsh Office in 1941 as part of its planning on a regional scale for post war reconstruction, but this advice was ignored by the coalition government. However, the number of local and national civil servants increased sharply during the war (Jones, 2005:275). Amongst their number was Thomas who was made Regional Controller for Wales in 1940 for the Ministry of Supply and became Chair of the Welsh Regional Board in 1942 for the Ministry of Production, which meant accompanying the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Cripps, to factories around Wales when necessary (Thomas, 1963:44).

Thomas was made the first Chairman of the Welsh Board for Industry in 1946, the year in which he was awarded a knighthood by the King for services to architecture, was re-elected for a third year in the second session of his Presidency of the RIBA and his son, Colonel Norman Percy Thomas joined the practice. The Boards were a continuation of the Regional Boards structure to aid the transition to peace. It is plausible to suppose that Thomas gained valuable negotiating and organisational skills whilst also making influential contacts that would serve the growth of his practice in peace time.

Meanwhile there were further demands for a Welsh Secretary but they were always rejected; Wales was seen by Whitehall civil servants as a rural and insular backwater without an effective administrative class (Edwards and Griffith, 2006:140). It is recorded that Thomas 'incidentally transformed the establishment [of the RIBA] from being London based to being truly national', having reconciled the 'interests of private practitioners and the official body of architects' (Welsh Biography Online, accessed 7/3/2009).

In 1945 Labour won a landslide victory and set about reconstruction on a 'British' scale based on a programme of centralist and integrated economic planning, building on the



success of collectivist ideals and practices in the war. The party also aimed to achieve radical change and social justice through Beveridge-inspired community interventions to achieve a welfare state and public ownership of major industries (Jones, 2005:275). The Barlow Report of 1942 advocated the relocation and redistribution of industry to ‘to diversify, stimulate, and modernise the industrial structure’ (Morgan K., 1982:312) in order to achieve a well-balanced industrial substructure. This was enacted in 1945 designating two Development Areas in Wales, one across the south and another in the industrial north east. This policy changed the emphasis from that of the ‘distressed’ areas of the 1930s and encouraged relocation of secondary industries through the granting of Industrial Development Certificates and other Board of Trade incentives. South Wales was a preferred site because of its relative proximity to the prosperous areas, ‘[t]he results were spectacular...[l]ong depressed communities were rejuvenated’ (Morgan K., 1982:312).

Thomas had become a central figure in Wales, during the War, acting for the Ministries of Supply and Production and becoming well known in government circles. His administrative skills were well respected by business leaders, fellow professionals and public servants. He became one of the best known figures on the Welsh industrial scene and the valuable contacts he had made during the War and after, whilst serving as Chair of the Welsh Board for Industry, subsequently helped the practice to grow, as he ‘obtained the lion’s share of the new work’ (Hilling, 1979:153).

An important commission for Thomas’s practice and the Development Area of south Wales was the factory for British Nylon Spinners at Pontypool in 1945. It was the sole source of all the nylon yarns produced in Britain. The factory is considered to be ‘a pioneering example of industrial architecture applied to a pioneering industry’ and a ‘centre-piece of post-war reconstruction’ (Cadw List Description) and was acclaimed at the time of its completion as one of the finest examples of modern industrial architecture. In many cases the workforce had to adapt to suit the new working conditions; British Nylon Spinners was a particularly successful example of a new type of industry reaching full production relatively quickly with a workforce that had no previous experience of producing this type of product (Morgan K., 1982:313).



See Figure 4.3. British Nylon Spinners at Pontypool.

However, as noted, Prime Minister Clement Atlee believed that Wales could not achieve economic well being on its own in spite of the revival of the economy, both industrial and rural, which had been ‘a consequence of the collectivism which resulted from the war’ (Davies, 1994:608). Policies of central planning solutions with direct investment were continued after the War, resulting in chief industries and services being nationalised. Crucial for Wales was the formation of the National Coal Board in 1947 followed by the Steel Company of Wales which was formed out of the leading steel companies. Both industries were to be reconstructed and modernised with investment in new works. The SCW’s ‘showcase’ Abbey Works at Port Talbot, a technological giant, came into production in 1951 allied to the new cold reduction plants at Trostre, Margam and Felindre.

The Directors of the newly formed Steel Company of Wales appointed Thomas as their consulting architect. The great Abbey steel works at Port Talbot were laid out to his designs which were based on efficient detailing and highly functional planning. Thomas’s planning skills had been officially acknowledged in 1944 when he became a member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. An office headed by Thomas’s son Norman was opened in Swansea to cope with the SCW work which included, by then, the

Strip Mills at Trostre (Llanelli) and at Felindre (Swansea); ‘these were the first of a long series of industrial buildings which at that time formed the greater part of my practice in the early post war years’ (Thomas, 1963:49).

Energy is essential for the smooth running of modern industry so the Atlee government in ‘full acceptance of Keynesian economics’ (Jones, 2005:275) nationalised the supply of electricity in 1947 amongst a series of centralist initiatives and investments. As consultant architect for the Wales region of the newly formed British Electricity Authority, Thomas was commissioned to design power stations at Burry Port in Carmarthen Bay, Aberthaw in Glamorgan and Rogerstone in Monmouthshire before the work was taken ‘in house’ to the London headquarters with Thomas remaining as a consultant and responsible for all BEA’s activities in Wales (Thomas, 1963:53).

After the formation of the National Health Service in 1948 there was a national programme of hospital expansion and building. Thomas’s practice was responsible for a large number of projects commissioned by the Welsh Regional Hospital Board from the 1950s. One of the first was the Cardiff Maternity Hospital, parts of which were in Thomas’s interpretation of the ‘International Style’, as shown in the photograph here and compared with the previous photographs of buildings designed by Walter Gropius and Le Corbusier.



See Figure 4.4. Cardiff Maternity Hospital, Glossop Terrace, Cardiff.

Many more hospitals were built all over Wales over the next three decades to designs by the practice (or advised by the practice) which included Glangwili in Carmarthen, Rhyl District General, Nevill Hall in Abergavenny, Llanfrechfa Grange in Cwmbran, Prince Charles in Merthyr, Glan Clwyd in Bodelwyddan, Whitchurch Radiotherapy Hospital and ‘numerous similar commissions’ (Thomas, 1963:50). Thomas was even appointed as one of the adjudicators of the designs for the large teaching University Hospital of Wales in Cardiff (Thomas, 1963:51). Therefore hospital commissions in Wales formed a large and important part of the practice’s work.

The ‘very great volume of industrial and other work coming into the practice immediately after the War’ (PTP promotional brochures of the 1960s) necessitated expansion. Colonel Norman Percy Thomas joined the practice, which then became Sir Percy Thomas and Son, to run the Swansea office opened to cope with the SCW work. Another office was opened in Shrewsbury, to cope with the work at Aberystwyth and Bangor universities. William Marsden and Wallace Sweet were later made partners.

A Conservative government presided over the recovering economy in the 1950s and maintained much of the policy approach of the preceding Labour government, initiating schemes like the huge oil port at Milford Haven. However, in spite of this central control of development there was tacit acknowledgement of the territorial unity of Wales, through the creation of the office of Minister for Welsh Affairs by Churchill’s government and Cardiff’s recognition as the capital of Wales in 1955.

When a recession hit in the late 1950s Wales again became the recipient of state intervention and massive investment through the 1960 Local Employment Act. The car industry was established in Cardiff and Llanelli but more impressive was the development of the vast, three mile long RTB/Spencer Steelworks at Llanwern. In 1962 Thomas’s practice was commissioned to give the largest elements of the Spencer Steelworks at Llanwern architectural coherence. The authors of the ‘Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion’ gazetteer note that Trostre, Felindre, Port Talbot and Llanwern are ‘among the best large industrial buildings of their time’ (Lloyd et al, 2006:87). There was also investment in

the RTB plant at Ebbw Vale and at the Summers' works in Shotton. The Mid Wales Industrial Development Association was also established at this time.

The transport network was in need of improvement to facilitate economic expansion and increasing vehicle ownership. Thomas was appointed consultant architect on numerous post-war Ministry of Transport schemes in Wales (Thomas, 1963:53), notably the Conwy bypass bridge, Neath and Newport bypasses and the Severn Bridge, which when it was finally completed had the longest span in England and Wales at the time and was built using innovative design concepts: 'this is the first bridge in the world to use the revolutionary concept of the streamlined deck and inclined hangars' (English Heritage List Description). Thomas designed the towers, piers and anchorages. Crucially for Wales this bridge facilitated greatly improved access to commercial markets, London and European ports and became a potent symbol of the 'New Wales'. Disastrously for rural areas struggling with depopulation etc., these 'improvements' included the loss of 274 miles of railway lines (Jones, 2005:278).

Thomas retired as Chairman of the practice in 1961; the South Wales Evening Post proclaimed that he was the 'Chief creator of modern Wales' (14/7/1961). A year later the same newspaper reported the celebrations for the fiftieth anniversary of 'the firm founded by the man who, more than any other, has left his mark on modern Wales', headlining the article with 'Architect of modern Wales' (14/11/1962). Thomas continued as consultant for a further two years.

#### ***4.6 The growth of the service sector and tertiary education.***

The practice continued to prosper and expand under the leadership of Thomas's son, Colonel Norman Percy Thomas.

In 1964, 'following substantial expansion of the work of the practice in all fields' (PTP promotional brochure of the 1960s), it was extended to include Dale Owen, Stephen James, Fred Jennett and Peter Newton as Partners, all of whom had previously been Associates of the practice. Peter Hughes was made a partner in 1968. This expansion 'led

to the practice being reorganised on the Group System enabling it to offer specialised service to clients’.

The practice expanded into five regional offices in Britain including those noted above and Bristol and Manchester. It offered clients a highly specialised service for hospitals, universities and schools, factories and planning and housing projects. Developing sectoral expertise in this way ensured the further growth of the firm. The financial organisation of the practice remained in the head office at Cardiff and included all contract preparation, certification and fee accounts. Norman led the development of specialist design groups that were experts in all types of building activity in categories as diverse as residential, educational and scientific, ecclesiastical, entertainment and recreational, health and welfare, administrative and commercial, transport and industrial (PTP promotional brochures of the 1970s). The practice eventually offered special services in the following fields of activity: development planning, regional and town planning, landscape design, research and development and interior design and furnishing. For the purpose of this thesis, this section will only examine key projects in Wales that responded to the pressure to modernise Wales.

During the 1960s it became more apparent that the traditional industries were in rapid decline; the coal industry became a major casualty of the supply of cheap oil starting to arrive from the Middle East from the 1960s and 1970s, mostly at Milford Haven (Davies, 1994:626). There were also difficulties of extraction adding to the overall demise of the industry as demand for Welsh coal contracted. This pattern was later repeated in parts of the steel industry, which was re-nationalised in 1967 in the face of threats from increasing overseas competition; both industries were facing long term decline (Jones, 2005:277). The dominant view, in Wales and England, about what were the weaknesses of the Welsh economy and society and how these weaknesses needed to be addressed was essentially, that Wales had become over reliant on declining economic sectors and needed to modernise, redistribute and diversify the industries and the workforce. This was not always a straightforward process (Rees and Lambert, 1981).

In the late 1960s almost all of the industrial districts of Wales were given Development Area status by the Labour government which had won power in 1964 (Davies, 1994:627). Aware that support for Plaid Cymru was increasing after the flooding of the beautiful Tryweryn valley to supply Liverpool with water, immediately after gaining power Labour established the Welsh Office and the Secretaryship of State for Wales. This allowed for all Wales planning, stronger representation and the possibility of institutional growth. These aims were confirmed in the government White Paper of 1967 'Wales: The Way Ahead'. This was countered by Plaid Cymru's 'An Economic Plan for Wales' of 1970 which further highlighted the growth of territorial consciousness and nationalist sentiment (Day, 2002:51).

There was pressure to increase the number of university places throughout the 1950s and 1960s; as a result of this and the recommendations of the Robbins Committee there was great expansion of the universities at Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff and Swansea. This expansion was a rich seam of commissions for the practice. Pre war master plans by Thomas for Aberystwyth and Bangor universities and Thomas's 1944 master plan for Swansea University were amended to take account of the educational ideals of the post war period, the need for provision of halls of residence and the new architectural approach to design and planning.

Development of each university continued for many decades as demand for places increased and the scope of disciplines widened requiring specially designed buildings that also offered greater convenience. Amongst these buildings were several on Cathays Park in Cardiff. The Welsh College of Advanced Technology of 1960-1961, now known as the Redwood Building, was the fourth Thomas building to be erected in a row along King Edward VII Avenue. Thomas claimed that the four buildings illustrate his developing ideas towards a more modern handling of elevations (Thomas, 1963:52). The 1958 scheme by the practice was revised and superseded in 1960 by a master plan for the north east of Cathays Park that took account of the need for greater density of occupation which meant that convenience controlled the layout of the component parts (Newman, 2001:236). The twelve storey university tower on this site was built in 1967 to house various faculties; designed by I.Dale Owen from the practice it 'broke' the agreed

cornice height line that had been established at the time of the development of the civic centre to ensure architectural coherence.

Owen was one of the practice's principal architect planners. His obituary records that he 'masterminded the first really big Modern buildings in Wales' in the 1960s and 1970s at Aberystwyth, Cardiff and Swansea universities. (AJ, 28/11/1997) The Physics and Mathematics building at Aberystwyth University was chosen by the G.P.O. (Royal Mail) for a series of postage stamps that illustrated post-war university buildings in Britain.

Owen had been appointed as Thomas's personal assistant and designer in 1958. Thomas, probably encouraged by his son, realised that there was a need for a new architectural approach in the practice, if it was to address the demand for buildings designed in a British form of the fashionable International Modern Style, which expressed post war optimism, progress and offered new design solutions for modernisation and regeneration (Weeks et al, obituary 1999:14, Short et al, 2003:6-9). Owen's experience of studying and working with Walter Gropius and the Architect's Collaborative in the U.S.A. could help achieve this vision through the introduction of Bauhaus derived principles. Owen was a graduate of the Welsh School of Architecture, as was Norman Percy Thomas, and post graduate of MIT and Harvard University. Norman had worked for Skidmore, Owings and Merrill in New York before joining his father's practice in 1946. Thomas persuaded Owen, who was a passionate Welshman, to remain in Wales even though the practice had expanded beyond Wales as 'there was much work to be done' (The Independent, 28/11/1997).

There were two key national institutional buildings designed by the practice in the 1960s, in a modernist idiom; the first of these was the purpose built headquarters of BBC Wales at Broadcasting House in Llandaff; '[i]nstitutions such as the BBC...became little oases of Welshness in a vast cosmopolitan territory' (Morgan K., 1982:324). The site provided studios, offices and other service departments for the BBC Wales television channel which began broadcasting from there in 1964, a development of the television programmes that had been made in Cardiff since the 1950s. Radio had been



broadcast from Cardiff, as the headquarters of the West Region, since 1923. The main music studio also acted as a recording studio and concert hall for the BBC Welsh Orchestra, now known as the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and based at the Hoddinott Hall of the Wales Millennium Centre.



See Figure 4.5. Broadcasting House.

The second key building was the Galleries and Administration Block of the Welsh Folk Museum on the St. Fagans Castle site which had been given to the National Museum in 1946. Cyril Fox, director of the National Museum, had declared in 1930 after a visit to Sweden that the ‘museum service in Wales is incomplete without illustration of the Welsh culture-complex such as can only be afforded by an open-air field museum’ (Lord, 1993:37). Components of Welsh rural cultural heritage and folk artefacts had been collected by Dr. Iorwerth Peate from the 1920s, in the context of the Scandinavian folk museum movement, as emblematic of the true spirit of the nation. This myth of the rural ‘gwerin’ as holders of the true spirit, the hegemonic ideology that informed the establishment of the Welsh Folk Museum was not challenged until much later in the twentieth century (Adamson, 1999:65).

A small exhibition block had been opened in 1954. Thomas had prepared a development plan in the late 1940s and designed a large, flat roofed scheme in 1955 in his characteristic ‘modern’ style but only a small red brick building was built. As will be discussed in great detail in chapter 6 in the exploration of the case study building, the Galleries block

was designed in a modernist Scandinavian idiom for several reasons; a key institutional building had to be seen to be part of the contemporary architectural discourse and fashion to convey the modernising agenda and, crucially Peate had been influenced by the philosophy of the Scandinavian romantic idealists since his student days. It was also a more fitting entry point to the collections of authentic traditional buildings that were planned for the site.



See Figure 4.6. Main Building. Welsh Folk Museum.

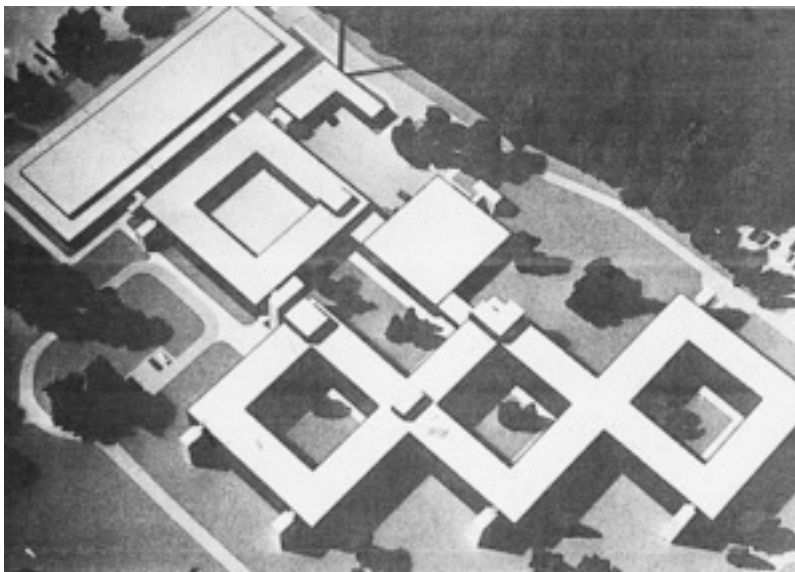
#### ***4.7 PTP's contribution to the advanced industries sector and a nation-defining project.***

Norman Percy Thomas retired as Chair in 1971 to become a consulting partner until 1976. Fred Jennett took over the chairmanship with ten partners in all, the name of the practice was changed to the Percy Thomas Partnership and an office was opened in London. The practice continued the tradition 'established by its founder of participating in major architectural competitions' (PTP promotional brochure). Birmingham office was opened in 1973.

By the late 1970s there were approximately 140 technical staff and 40 administrative staff in the practice with two of the major Groups based in Cardiff office, which still housed the Central Administration and Computer Aided Design Centre and nine partners including the Company Secretary.

Throughout the next two decades, the practice continued to expand undertaking work across the globe whilst still gaining important commissions that had great strategic significance for Wales.

The Development Area status for Wales and later Welsh Office initiatives continued to 'encourage' the relocation and development of advanced technological industries in Wales in the 1960s and 1970s as part of the restructuring and modernising of the industrial economy at a time when the traditional industries were struggling to survive (Jones, 2005:276-278). Equally important for the future of diversified employment, was the servicing of decentralised government departments such as the Royal Mint, Driver Vehicle Licensing Centre and the Business Statistics Office. The BSO building was designed by the practice (1970 -1973) for a sensitive parkland site that was part of the estate surrounding Tredegar House, Newport. It is now known as the Office for National Statistics and was relocated from Middlesex by the Board of Trade and Industry.



See Figure 4.7. Business Statistics Office.

The new industries and laboratories required highly skilled staff to operate in modern carefully designed environments, as at the Research Laboratories (1969 and 1975), at Trawscoed, Ceredigion for the National Agricultural Advisory service and the award winning Parke Davis Pharmaceutical Research Centre (1971-1973) at Pontymoile, both by the Percy Thomas Partnership, the name the practice adopted from 1971.

The latter project is a very good illustration of the growing awareness of the need to integrate industrial complexes into sensitive rural environments as more of these sites were developed, often in spectacular locations in Wales as with the award winning Amersham International Radiochemical Factory (1974-1981 & 1987) outside Cardiff designed by the practice. It was the most intensively designed factory of the era due to the highly sophisticated processes it housed and the aesthetic demands of the client wanting to reflect the company's international prestige through 'a design of international standing' (RIBA, August 1982).



See Figure 4.8. Amersham International Radiochemical Factory.

In spite of a recession in the late 1970s, the Welsh were 'richer...than ever before in history' (Jones, 2005:278) and growing a middle class. The car industry was expanding and the demand for telephones was increasing. The practice was commissioned to design a number of telephone exchanges in Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Newport, Pontypridd and Cardiff in the 1970s, including the multi-storey tower in the middle of Cardiff which they later modernised and refurbished. The Welsh Development Agency was founded in 1976 and has since been responsible for some sophisticated strategic initiatives which have transformed perceptions of Wales (Day, 2002:203) and led to south Wales becoming a 'motor region' and 'technopole' (Day, 2002:207). The Welsh Office also became more interventionist in the 1980s encouraging inward investment from Japan and Continental Europe (Jones, 2005:287).

The 'industrialisation' of countryside continued with the WDA's strategy for attracting highly skilled growth industries to specialist factories, custom built to accommodate advanced technology and scientific industries. As these WDA initiatives have become more sophisticated so have the designs and clients needs, as at British Airways Avionics Facility (1994-1996) in a lovely wooded valley near Llantrisant. BAAE demanded that the design team, led by PTP, produce the 'most efficient aircraft maintenance works in the world' (Building, 31/1/1994) with the lowest possible production costs in an innovative building form that could accommodate future changes and with easy access to the M4. This facility received the 1995 RIBA Regional Award for Architecture in Wales.



See Figure 4.9. British Airways Avionics Facility.

The practice continued to attract important commissions throughout the 1990s many of which were outside Wales but it was involved with two key projects of enormous significance for Wales: the first was the Second Severn crossing, a complex civil engineering project of enormous scale that won the British Construction Industry Supreme Award in 1996; the second was the landmark building, the Wales Millennium Centre. The practice were controversially appointed as architects in 1996 having formerly been chosen as associate architects by the Zaha Hadid team, which had twice won the international competition to design the Cardiff Bay Opera House in 1994 (Edwards, 1997).

Following the failure to implement the Opera House scheme a new brief was drawn up and a new business plan prepared for a multi-purpose national arts centre, 'a power-

house of Welsh performing arts' (Building Design, 26/11/2004). The architectural idiom, in the absence of a Welsh contemporary architectural idiom, drew inspiration from environmental, social and cultural themes to evoke images of the landscape, culture and working traditions and fulfil the brief for a building that was 'unmistakably Welsh and internationally outstanding' (WMC). The quest for an iconography for such a visible symbol of a newly devolved nation meant that the complex imagery would necessarily have multiple meanings; even the name of the building does not clearly indicate its purpose. Irrespective of the controversies and architectural judgements of this unprecedented building it has succeeded in showcasing the contemporary metropolitan culture of Wales.

(<http://www.cynnalcywru.com/sites/default/files/Wales%20Millennium%20Centre.pdf> – accessed 19/4/1913).



See Figure 4.10. Wales Millennium Centre.

Meanwhile the practice continued to win industrial projects. Techniums are the twenty first century WDA model for generating inward investment, by attracting innovative companies to strategically placed sites to drive a new knowledge rich economy. The Welsh Assembly (now Government) supports these 'world class' business incubation centres in very sophisticated premises where the quality of design is intended to reflect the concept. One such example is the OpTIC Technium at St. Asaph Business Park de-

signed by PTP that opened in 2002 and clearly demonstrates the modernising agenda being followed by the Welsh governance (Touchstone, Autumn 2002. Issue 11).

Two years later PTP was taken over by Capita, only hours after ‘the 94-year old practice...went into administration’ (Building Design, 18/6/2004) to become Capita Percy Thomas, after several years of successfully avoiding liquidation caused by delays and cancellations of pending PFI projects. The Director of Capita noted that ‘Architects have not addressed market changes as fast as other professions...[d]emand is for large multi- disciplinary companies to take on larger projects’ (Building Design, 18/6/2004). Upon his retirement Thomas had commented on his sadness at the greater commercialisation of the profession and ‘the emphasis...on organisation...rather than on purely architectural and aesthetic problems’ (Thomas, 1963:55). It is unlikely, given the current operating conditions for architectural firms, that Wales will ever have a practice like that of the Percy Thomas practice again.

A suitable postscript to this survey of key PTP buildings is the Hoddinott Hall within the WMC, commissioned while the mega-practice of Capita still expressed its loyalty to the origins of their architectural department and was still known as Capita Percy Thomas (The Times, 20/1/2009). It deserves inclusion for that fact but also for its relationship to Broadcasting House, which formerly housed the orchestra. It is the replacement recording studio and performance space for the BBC National Orchestra of Wales and adds another dimension to the unique multi media WMC.

#### ***4.8 Conclusion.***

From the above it can be seen that the practice developed a prominent role in fashioning the built environment in Wales. This was because of the reputation, scale and location of the practice which had been established by Thomas, who had exhibited good design, organisational and business skills from quite a young age. These skills coupled with his ambition, meant the practice grew relatively quickly. He used his entrepreneurial and design skills to establish a major architectural practice, based on the foundations of a series of important competition wins and commissions He was a ‘skilled technician and

entrepreneur' with a 'flair for administration' (Thomas, 1963:64) who became a leading architect with a reputation for expertise in the design and planning of public buildings. He also became an important public figure. As noted in *The Independent*, Thomas was 'a talented architectural impresario' (28/11/1997). This kind of public presence and preferment is itself an indication that Thomas was at the very least not challenging the politically dominant conception of the identity and future of Wales (that of an ancient nation now modernising, economically and institutionally, as it took its place in the world). Thomas was determined to keep the practice in Wales. His son, Colonel Norman Percy Thomas, seems to have inherited his father's entrepreneurial skill, as under his leadership the practice continued to grow, with the headquarters remaining in Cardiff. Maureen Kelly Owen noted that it was later, rather than at this time, that the sense of it being a Welsh practice was diluted (28/2/2011).

The practice set up by Percy Thomas was responsible for designing a large number of structures in Wales for a range of functions that are part of the essential and very visible infrastructure for a modern urban nation. This includes structures for heavy and light industry, power stations to fuel those industries, universities, schools, technical colleges, hospitals, hotels, housing, private housing, commercial units, civic buildings, development and town plans and transport structures including bridges to improve access.

Many of these structures helped shape the perception that Wales had modernised (particularly the one chosen for the case study), an aspiration held by all major political interests in Wales, from the 1930s depression to the recession of the late 1970s and beyond though there were dissenters, including those committed to a different conception of Welsh nationhood. PTP brought to its Welsh commissions the aura of being a major contemporary British firm (as distinct from a Welsh firm). For a country seeking to establish its credibility as a nation among nations this provided great security.

The work of the Thomas practice, more than any other, can be said to represent the way that built form contributed to a developing sense of a modern Wales throughout the twentieth century. The practice was attuned to the politically dominant conception of nation in Wales, not to the many divergent conceptions and lived experiences. It was the



idea that Wales was a modern industrial nation, albeit one with a long distinguished ethno-cultural history, which the partnership's designs for factories, bridges and civic buildings evolved.

Though this clear pattern emerges when the practice's work over decades is reviewed, the question remains as to whether the architects were conscious of the significance of many of their major commissions for the social construction of Welsh national identity, through the buildings function and sometimes form. Moreover, even if they were conscious of it, how much influence were they able to wield over design and constructed outcomes? These are questions which will be addressed by this research project.

## Chapter 5 Research Design and Method

### *5.1 Introduction.*

It is widely accepted that the work of the Percy Thomas Practice was significant in shaping the built environment of modern Wales, but the issue of whether and how their built work can be said to contribute to a developing sense of Welsh national identity has not been considered. Nor is it known how much the practice was conscious of the potential significance of its work in this respect. In fact the broader question of the role of the built environment in creating a Welsh identity through key institutional buildings and essential infrastructure has not been very well explored, as will be explained later. The question of national identity building and the Percy Thomas architectural practice is therefore the focus of this thesis, and the context of the research is nationalism and nation building.

As has been shown in chapters 2 and 3 nation-ness can be expressed directly through the use of ‘national’ iconography but it can also be indirectly expressed through formal elements, indigenous materials and settings. These elements then develop a metaphorical significance that helps convey the nation building purpose of the project. In this way the structures become iconic and nationally significant. There is a further layer of what is effectively nation building, in which the provision of the infrastructure that is essential for a nation to function can also reinforce ideas of nationhood by providing the buildings that accommodate national institutions and other essential activities. The purpose of the structure is itself an important element in nation building. This study will use a case study of a key project of the Percy Thomas practice to examine how its work may have contributed to the nation building political project in twentieth century Wales.

This chapter on research design will explain the case study approach to research and the details of the methodological approach and then justify choosing this strategy as the most appropriate one for refining and answering the research question. The significance of Percy Thomas Practice and specific institutions has been discussed in earlier chapters. This chapter will describe how and why the case study approach was chosen and pursued. The research strategy is described to show how the research and investiga-

tion was conceived, designed and conducted. In this way the aims will be highlighted. The advantages and disadvantages of the data and methods chosen will be considered throughout this chapter. The built form will be analysed in greater detail in the next chapter, taking account of the conclusions reached in sections 2.5 and 2.6 above about buildings and meanings. Before proceeding, the study will be situated within a research tradition.

### ***5.2 The study in its research tradition.***

The research sits broadly within the critical realist research tradition. As Sayer (1992, 2000) describes it this considers the research task to be one of examining and explaining a social world which is independent of the observer and where visible phenomena are explained by reference to causal mechanisms which may or may not be observable, operating in contingent circumstances. The preferred theorisation of nationalism presented in chapter 3 is an explanation of this kind-contemporary manifestations of nationalism are, of course, shaped by historical contingency, but a full explanation requires an understanding of how more enduring, structural features of real entities, nations, interact with these contingent features of the solid world. This approach is often associated with theorists in the materialist/political economy tradition, such as Harvey (1985); they tend to be especially sensitive to the significance of power –relations in social life (eg. Bentley, 1999; Flyvbjerg, 1998).

It is important to note, again following Sayer, that critical realism as understood in this way, is wholly consistent with an acceptance that some aspects of social life are, indeed, socially constructed. This phrase can have a two-fold significance. First, it may refer to social activities through which certain phenomena are shaped-for example, the way in which national traditions or symbols may be invented so as to create a sense of nationhood. Secondly, for the critical realist, it may refer to a distinction between phenomena which have causal powers, and hence have a significant explanatory role, and those which do not (socially constructed phenomena being the latter). A critical realist position in relation to nationalism can accept that at any given time various kinds of signifiers of nation are being invented, interpreted, that is, constructed, while the underlying

phenomenon of nation has a role to play in any full explanation of nationalist activity at a given time. It follows that a critical realist approach is also consistent with a qualitative methodology, as used in this research project (Maxwell, 2012).

### ***5.3 The case study method.***

It was decided quite early in the research process that the single case study approach would be the most suitable research strategy, given the nature of the research question. Yin notes that the case study approach is ‘an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident’ (2009:18). It is widely regarded as providing the most appropriate approach for researching social processes as it offers a ‘rigorous methodological path’ (Yin, 2009:3) that is planned and systematic due to the strategic decisions made, but also incorporates flexibility to be able to respond accordingly to changed circumstances (Clark and Causer, 2002:163). It is wholly compatible with the critical realism (Sayer, 1992). Denscombe warns that the case study approach can be seen as too ‘soft’ and merely descriptive so advises careful attention to detail to counter this criticism (2007:46).

Strategic decisions are made to ensure ‘the best outcome from the research’ (Denscombe, 2007:3) and therefore involve choices about which option to choose during the process of formulating objectives, design, methods and management in the first stage and data collection, analysis and presentation in the next stage to achieve the best outcome (Clark and Causer, 2002:163). Denscombe (2007:5) argues that certain key decisions regarding relevance, feasibility etc. of aspects of the research should be made at the outset. At each decisive stage the advantages and disadvantages of taking a certain course of action have to be considered and the assumptions involved in choosing the most appropriate approach have to be made explicit. In this way the choice of methodological path is explained. This sort of approach particularly suits the investigation of ‘complex social phenomena’ as it ‘allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events’ (Yin, 2009:4). It answers the ‘how and why’ questions and focuses on contemporary phenomenon that the investigat-

or has little control over (Yin, 2009:2). This is achieved by concentrating on the case as a whole, which includes the detailed workings of the social processes, relationships and outcomes.

Another strength is that the case study approach encourages ‘the researcher to use a variety of sources, a variety of types of data and a variety of research methods as part of the investigation (Denscombe, 2007:37). Yin notes that this is the case study’s ‘unique strength’ (2009:11). If the evidence is collected from a variety of sources some amount of triangulation and convergence of the evidence can occur during the process of analysis. As with all types of research method it is important that the data collected is seen to be reliable and valid. By focussing on special instances, ‘maximum variation’ can be considered and reveal the complexity, subtlety and even contradictions of the processes being researched (Denscombe, 2007:30).

The case study approach is useful when there are individuals alive who can offer further information, when there is extant material evidence available that can be observed and studied and when the relevant behaviours associated with the case cannot be manipulated by the researcher (Yin, 2009:11). This is the case in this study.

Case studies are a form of empirical social research, the design of which is meant to guide the researcher in the process of comprehensive data collection and data analysis in a specific way so that a logical process is followed that maintains a ‘chain of evidence’ (Yin, 2009:3). This chain of evidence or ‘logical model of proof’ links the research questions and propositions with the case to be analysed (Yin, 2009:26). The inherent flexibility of the case study approach is a great strength when seeking to answer ‘who,’ ‘what,’ ‘where,’ ‘why,’ and ‘how’ questions. All of these questions need to be answered in the case study that is the subject of this thesis and could not be answered solely by a history of the Thomas practice or a survey of projects completed by the practice in Wales.

The quality of the research design must fulfil the need for ‘trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability and data dependability’ (Yin, 2009:40) through the four tests of logic (Yin, 2009:41), which are; construct validity by ‘identifying correct operational meas-

ures', ensure internal validity by 'seeking to establish a causal relationship' through the data analysis, ensure external validity by 'defining the domain to which a study finding's can be generalized' and finally ensure reliability by using case study protocol and forming a case study database during the process of data collection, in this way the case becomes repeatable (Yin, 2009:45).

The issue of generalization is crucial in social research and to overcome criticism and scepticism of a single case study it is important to explicitly defend the case by arguing that it can be revelatory and 'represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building' (Yin, 2009:47). This again is a perspective that sits comfortably with realism (Sayer, 1992). It can also be 'in some respects unique, it is also a single example of a broader class of things' (Denscombe, 2007:43) and the findings 'can be generalized to other examples in the class depend[ing] on how far the case study example is similar to others of its type' (Denscombe, 2007:43) provided that there is enough detail to show relevance of the findings for other instances of the type.

The contextual conditions are interrogated to enable inferences to be drawn from them, which then inform the generalizing analysis and conclusions, provided that all available relevant evidence has been gathered and rival interpretations have been considered, whilst maintaining a neutral position. Thus it is possible to ask the same sorts of questions of other institutional and infrastructural projects, using the theoretical framework developed, that is, how the built environment relates to socio-political and cultural ideas of nation building and identity.

The contextual characteristics help define the domain of generalisability that is constructed from studying and analysing a specific case and its related propositions. The boundaries of the case study are defined, data is collected and analysed, observations are made, causal links are explained and conclusions drawn, due to having retained 'the holistic and meaningful characteristics' of the phenomenon and its complex social context. This explanation of causal relationships is another advantage of the case study approach that is not possible with other approaches. In this way the research question of whether and how the PTP architectural practice contributed to national building through

the scale, scope and type of its projects can be explored, described and explained by studying and analysing a key building designed by the practice and the conclusions generalised to the theoretical proposition.

Therefore, ultimately the case study is an explanatory one, but the descriptive element of the case study is also important as it enables the contextual conditions to be fully recorded. Equally the exploration of data undertaken for the purpose of collection and subsequent selection of reliable and valid data for analysis is an important part of the process. This is very much a qualitative process of research that uses different methods of collecting qualitative data to aid the triangulation and analysis of the data. The only quantitative component in the research is that of compiling a list of the number of projects completed by the practice. Miller makes the point that 'it is important to recognize that qualitative data-like other depictions of social reality-are social constructs' and qualitative studies 'focus on the distinctive values and perspectives of cultural...groups' (2002:26).

The disadvantages of the case study approach for this research is that there are few models to follow, as this research is effectively breaking new ground empirically in Wales. Access to some of the primary sources is problematic due to much of the documentation for the Percy Thomas practice projects having been lost in floods that affected the basement of the head office at 10 Cathedral Road, Cardiff where the archive was kept. Also further documents were destroyed during the take over of the practice by Capita, a multi-disciplinary consultancy, in 2004 (Adams, personal communication). Ideally another key building and its context of production, for example Broadcasting House, could have been researched and analysed to the same depth to help reinforce the study's conclusions, but the amount of documentary evidence available of the type needed for such an exercise is limited.

The building that was chosen as the subject of the case study was the Main Building of the Welsh Folk Museum, as it is a significant element in the project of helping define the nation (see earlier discussion of the National Museum), and should demonstrate the role of the built environment in this process. The justification for this choice is the ana-

lysis of the significance of the building given above. This demonstrates how the building is a 'typical instance' for the practice as it was one of many significant commissions completed by the practice in Wales which contributed to the broadly defined 'nation building' project.

It can therefore be justified as a suitable representative unit of this agenda (Yin, 2009:48). Another aspiration of the cross party political agenda for constructing Wales was to modernise it and this building addresses that aspect of the agenda. It is largely still extant in its original form, with documentation and drawings available and some of the relevant individuals associated with the project still alive so that an 'in-depth account of events, relationships... and processes' (Denscombe, 2007:35) can take place to discover valuable insights and wider implications.

#### ***5.4 Data Sources:***

##### ***Documentary sources in general.***

All documentation collected for the purposes of a case study can offer strengths and conversely can suffer from limitations. The strengths are, that the documentation can be reviewed repeatedly, it is unobtrusive, should contain exact details such as names, references and events and offers broad coverage. The limitations include scenarios where recovering information can be problematic if it is subsequently deliberately withheld or becomes difficult to find. There is also the issue of bias. This can be consciously generated on the part of the author of the document, or it can be expressed subconsciously. It can also be displayed through the selective choice of documents by the researcher; this can be deliberate if a document is excluded for fear of it contradicting the aims of the research (Yin, 2009:102). It is crucial to remember the specific audience of the document and its purpose (Yin, 2009:105). However, Yin concludes overall that 'documents are useful even though they are not always accurate' (Yin, 2009:103).

Scott (1990:1) argues that the specific features of documentary sources require particular attention through relevant handling techniques that are, effectively, scientific in approach. Therefore the assessment of the quality of the evidence is crucial and must be shown to be authentic, credible, representative and comprehensible (Scott, 1990:6). The



last criterion of quality control, that is ‘meaning’, is problematic and is the area of analysis open to the widest range of interpretation unless ‘it is validated by relating it to the intentions of the author’ and accounting for its reception by various potential audiences (Scott, 1990:35). However, how texts are interpreted by diverse audiences are subject to various determinants such as context (Scott, 1990:148). Also, during the process of textual analysis of documents, Scott argues that ‘the interpretative categories...are rarely made explicit, and the reader must take it on trust that the researcher is not simply displaying his or her arbitrary preferences’ (1990:155).

*See Table 5.1 for summary of these points.*

Atkinson and Coffey (2002:46) add that understanding ‘how documents are produced, circulated, read, stored and used for a wide variety of purposes’ is very important and as such ‘construct particular kinds of representations with their own conventions’ so it is important to systematically analyse the context of the document as well as the document itself and any related documentation to establish the documentary reality (2002:55). The analysis of the documentary reality, its language and form, derives from a semiotic perspective that examines signs, or textual conventions and modes of representation (Atkinson and Coffey, 2002:48). These can signify principles of sequence and hierarchy and indicate temporal dimensions that relate to other relevant texts, so that the origins, nature and structure of the ‘discursive themes by means of which the text has been produced’ are analysed (Prior, 2002:66). These issues will be explored further in the analysis section and below.

### ***The Folk Museum Development.***

Data sources: The Annual Reports from 1958-1971 kept in the library at St. Fagans, National History Museum, were studied for all references to the prolonged process of the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building development, from the first contribution made by the Treasury to the start of the second phase. The Museum Council Minutes, from October 1964-July 1973, kept in the library at the National Museum were also studied for all references to the development from the establishment of the Building Committee to completion of Phase Two.

The Annual Reports of the National Museum of Wales are a summary of the previous year's activities in all departments of the Museum and therefore are effectively year-books of internal operations. The information published includes everything from attendance numbers to finances and proposals. The main audience for this type of publication is the general public with an interest in the role and development of the National Museum. This raises two issues, firstly the text has to be summarised and simplified to be able to convey all of the relevant information and be understood by the majority of the audience, therefore an element of selection is involved in the production of the book. The other issue is that the report may emphasise the more positive aspects of the year's activities. Interpretation of this sort of material has been discussed above.

Concerns about authenticity, credibility and representativeness do not apply to the unpublished Council Minutes of the National Museum of Wales. In general meaning can be more problematic as minutes are a summary record of a discussion as interpreted by the author of the minutes and may only indicate the action and solutions that are required by the particular audience for the minutes.

A report on 'Possible Developments' prepared by Peate in June 1967 was studied, along with several histories of the development of The Welsh National Museum and architectural press reviews published at the time of its opening. Peate's Report was located with the Minutes of the WFM committee for 7th July 1967, at which it was resolved unanimously to request that the Museum Council give urgent consideration to WFM becoming an autonomous institution.

The 1959 Arts Council Report 'Housing the Arts in Wales' considers the difficulties of providing better 'homes' for the cultivation of the cultural life of Wales, noting that 'national institutions are the expression of a strong national feeling' (1959:105) and that 'the collection of folk-life material in St. Fagan's ... may well be compared to the great folk museums of north-western Europe (1959:107).

The development of the Scandinavian museum movement, and its associated folk museum movements, was studied for influences on the development of the idea of a Welsh Folk Museum. Peate acknowledges this important influence for the site as 'a cultural

centre of the nation' in the 1956 handbook. The 1935, 1956, 1959 and 1970 handbooks were also studied. These were the only guidebooks for the national folk collection available, from Cardiff University library. The text in the handbooks is only slightly revised between editions.

During the research process, Cadw undertook an evaluation of the Main Building for consideration for Listing and used some of the foregoing research to help establish the case for Listing. The evaluation helped clarify the actual phases of building work for the Main Building.

Drawings kept in a plan chest in the Main Building were studied. Most of the drawings were prepared by the Thomas practice. The earliest dated drawings of 1948 were used as a medium of illustration for the contractor, showing the work needed for the provision of basic facilities within St. Fagan's Castle for members of the public. These bear the title of 'Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation'. The grounds were opened on an experimental basis in the summer of 1947 and on a more permanent basis from 1st July 1948. Surveys of the Castle grounds were produced in 1950 and 1952. Drawings were produced, virtually every year throughout the 1950s, mostly for use by contractors, illustrating small scale developments and improvements to the facilities to aid the operation of the site as a visitor attraction. Drawings dated 1953 show a scheme for a 'Proposed Museum Block' incorporating a gallery, archive space, restaurant, lecture theatre and hall. These would have been produced to communicate ideas to the members of the Museum Council and institutional parties like the Treasury to try and expedite suitable facilities; this initiative is discussed in the next chapter. An architect's perspective drawing, effectively an artist's impression, of the proposal was also produced in 1955 for general distribution. Another site survey was commissioned in 1966.

There are many plans, elevations and sections of the building for the Welsh Folk Museum dated from the mid 1960s to the 1970s; these will be discussed in the next chapter. Drawings are variously titled Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, St. Fagans Folk Museum, Welsh Folk Museum, Welsh National Folk Museum and Amgueddfa Werin Cymru.

The plan chest also contained drawings of the Norrkopings Museum and the Tekniska Museet in Stockholm and drawings of examples of re-erected buildings, Jorgen Ebbeson's Modelhouse. These drawings indicate the influence of the Scandinavian museum movement ideas. See Appendix 4 for a list of key drawings kept at St. Fagans.

The drawings are meant to serve a variety of purposes from providing information for the building contractor and detailing services for sub-contractors to aiding quantity surveyors in the process of estimating the cost of a project. Some drawings will give an impression of the proposals, through a perspective drawing of the elevational view, for the client and other interested parties, who may not be familiar with reading plans, elevations and sections.

Architectural drawings are meant to be drawn as accurately as possible, but given that they are scaled down, measured versions of a proposed building, there will inevitably be some small increases and decreases between the built and drawn structures. The site is surveyed to take account of features in the landscape and the contours of the site. This is translated into a two dimensional image in plan form on a flat sheet of paper with additional information about the topography of the site. Two dimensional sections can be drawn at various intervals along the length of the site, from measurements extrapolated from the survey information. These will aid understanding of the shape of the site. Buildings are then designed to take account of these features. The changes in level necessary to build on a sloping site will be seen by the inclusion of ramps and steps, which also facilitate circulation throughout a building.

Drawings of elevations are often easier for the general public to understand than the plans of buildings, as they act as a view of the building but without the distortion that is involved in the actual act of viewing a whole building. Plans are more problematic as they are effectively horizontal sections of the building with walls indicated by parallel lines, door openings are indicated by gaps with notional sections either side for the door frames and sometimes with an arc, or line to reproduce the movement of the door, window openings are shown by narrower parallel lines for the window pane with sections either side for the window surrounds. Stairs are indicated by a series of parallel lines at

right angles to the wall lines and so on. Sections through a building can help orientate the viewer as well as provide information about the internal dimensions and elevations. Therefore plans, sections and elevations act as one of the main ways of interpreting and conveying the proposals, layout and ideas of the architect or engineer to the contractor, sub- contractor, specialists, client and others.

The researcher's background as a building surveyor, as well as many decades of voluntary activity for various heritage organisations, meant that she was confident in her ability to read plans and drawings.

### ***Interviews:***

A series of semi- structured, one to one interviews were undertaken to be used as supporting evidence and to inform the research question. A schedule of 'open' questions was carefully prepared for the interviewees in order to ensure that the interviews would elicit relevant information, without leading the answers in any way. The interviewees were chosen, as key informants, i.e. for their in depth knowledge and close association with the site as identified in documentary sources. There was an element of snowballing as some interviewees suggested that a further person would be worth interviewing. The recommendations for best practice on how to conduct an interview, having chosen the right type, as explained in Denscombe (2007) and Yin (2009) were followed. The responses will be used for cross referencing and to confirm statements from other interviewees.

The semi-structured case study interviews were 'open' in the sense that the researcher allowed the respondent's time to elaborate their answers to the list of structured questions that were written specifically for each interviewee. The interviews were focused on achieving Level 1 and Level 2 answers to the list of questions on the schedule. Level 1 questions refer to the verbal line of enquiry of specific interviewees and Level 2 refers to the questions to be asked of the case to ensure that the mental line of enquiry is adhered to (Yin, 2009:87). The interviews were recorded, with the permission of the interviewees, so that there was a complete record of everything discussed. The researcher was familiar to all of the interviewees but as the interviews were conducted in a profes-

sional manner with a schedule of questions to be answered, this did not present a problem and probably aided the process. See Appendix 5 for the list of interviewees and date interviewed.

Data from these sources form the key base for the narrative of the development of St. Fagans, in the analysis. Together these chapters address how the building has become a key structure in the process of ‘making Wales’ and a national icon, thus stressing the importance of the built environment, and particularly that designed by the Thomas practice, to the nation building programme in Wales.

### *Photographs and observations*

A further source of information to add to the case study data and be used as part of the analysis, is photographs. Printed photographs are self-contained visual documents that are easily handled, stored and retrievable in printed form. However with the advent of digital photography some of the advantages of storage and retrievability have become more problematic. There can also be a problem with the images being labelled incorrectly, or not labelled at all and if the photographs being researched form a collection, it may be that many have been filtered out, thus raising issues about representativeness.

The issue of authenticity has been of concern since the early days of photography due to accidental or deliberate changes during processing; ‘the photograph is a selective account of reality’ (Scott, 1990:190). This refers to the active role of the photographer in constructing meaning, which may be enhanced in the processing stage. The act of photography is not neutral and the image is affected by the frames of reference that relate to the photographer and whatever was meant to be conveyed. The image should be understood as a text which should be read with awareness of one’s own cultural and societal assumptions. The viewer enters into a sort of discourse with the photograph, which can, with careful reading, disclose quite a lot of valid information and in this instance evidence for the case study.

Digital photography raises greater concerns about authenticity due to the increased numbers of photographers able to manipulate images easily which can impact on the

credibility of digital photographs as reliable sources. However handled correctly, digital photographs can provide detailed images and a record of changes over time in a very portable format that can be organised to fulfil a variety of needs, including providing images to illustrate descriptions and analysis. These can then supplement the drawings and written texts.

Another action for gaining insight and understanding of a building is direct observation. The degree of observation can be on many levels, from simply perambulating through the building to gain an understanding of the circulation issues of the building to a careful examination of details such as the materials used. The researcher has visited this building numerous times over many years for a variety of reasons but since the research began she has visited several times with a searching critical eye to discover less familiar features and aspects of the building that relate to information revealed in the annual reports, Council Minutes and on the drawings. Certain areas of the building are difficult to observe due to their function, as with the kitchens and storage areas or because shop fitting and library type initiatives obscure the actual completed structure or there has been a change of use of the area, as with the café near the main entrance.

The researcher has taken photographs of the exterior elevations and made notes from the drawings and other sources, about the sequence of development and revisited several times to try and gain a full understanding of the building.

### ***5.5 Analysis.***

The analytic stage is crucial to the success of the investigation and thesis in order to provide properly considered answers to the research question that have interrogated and interpreted the case study evidence thoroughly. Each researcher has their 'own style of rigorous empirical thinking' (Yin, 2009:127). This rigour has to be applied to the evidence and during the course of analysis alternative interpretations should be considered to aid the process. There are a range of general strategies that should be adopted to fulfil the analytical requirements and are noted hereafter.

The original theoretical propositions should be revisited to inform the analytic strategy as they were based on the research question and the initial review of literature from which the hypothesis was constructed. In this instance the objectives were to study the concept of nationalism and all that it entails in order to understand and define the nature and role of nation building and how it is manifested. This understanding then informed the exploration of whether buildings are able to convey meanings such as nationalism.

There are two levels of meaning, the literal one and the deeper more complex level of meaning where the inner connections are 'objectivated' and cultural phenomena are understood as 'totalities' (Scott, 1990:30). Scott (1990:31) describes this process as 'comprehend[ing] a text by understanding the frame of reference from which it was produced, and appreciate that frame of reference by understanding the text' in a 'hermeneutic circle' of interpretation starting with the literal meaning and noting the significance of items.

Another approach to analysis is that of semiotics which is problematic and complex at a deep philosophical level, involving ideas about linguistics, semiotics and semantics (Scott, 1990:32). Some philosophers argue that all meaning at this level is relative. Prior (2002:66) argues that '[q]ualitative research in this context, then, is not so much a question of deciding what a given text ...might mean to a thinking subject as a matter of analysing the origins, nature and structure of the discursive themes by means of which the text has been produced'.

In order to move beyond the purely philosophical stance of the semioticians and use semiotic analysis productively, Scott (1990:34) recommends taking account of the intended content, the received content as well as the internal meaning of the text. Harvey's (1985) analysis of *Sacre Coeur* (chapter 2 above) is an illustration of this process, within a broadly critical realist tradition. Scott notes that this is a dynamic process involving the researcher's own frame of reference and one in which 'history must be constantly rewritten' (1990:58) to account for changing cultural values and conceptions. It is clear therefore that interpreting meaning is complex but crucial to the analysis of the data collected.



Various themes and relationships will become evident in the examination and analysis of the data, which can be categorised according to their significance to aid the analysis. These themes can be supplemented by analysis that aims to explain the causal links and tests the narrative against the original theoretical propositions and any rival explanations that can be interpreted from the evidence. This process can be repeated in an iterative way to logically refine the explanations (Yin, 2009:143). There may also be a need to revisit some of the data and in particular the building to aid this iterative process. Triangulation of these themes and relationships in the various forms of data collected should support the explanations for the social realities of nation building through the built environment.

Yin also recommends that the analysis demonstrates that all available evidence is attended to, including rival interpretations and any 'prior, expert knowledge' (2009:161). So the strategies should be, to revisit the original theoretical proposition and develop case descriptions using qualitative and the limited amount of quantitative data whilst attending to rival interpretations.

Therefore the narrative account of the case study will highlight certain key themes specific to the project and to the wider socio-political context that will aid the analysis of the building and its tortuous story of development both as a concept and as a construction site. It will also account for the range of factors shaping, delaying or progressing the project and how that project was perceived by the different interested parties. This will include what the project meant for these interested parties and what it was meant to convey to the wider public.

The use of case studies-and, in particular, the use of a single case study –in a research project prompts questions about how the research findings will be 'written up', or presented. Sayer (1992:258) makes the point that the 'writing up' of research results is a relatively neglected aspect of discussions of methodology. Yet case studies, especially a limited number of case studies, lend themselves to a particular mode of presentation, the narrative, which has aroused deep feelings among social scientists. Sayer (1992:260)

quotes Abrams (1982:162) on a particular example of narrative writing in social science:

‘My own impression is that the function of narrative in this enterprise is to carry-in a highly persuasive way not accessible to intellectual scrutiny-these bits of the argument the author does not choose to make available for direct critical examination on the part of his readers’.

This criticism highlights the central concern about the narrative approach, that it is not, in the end, contributing to explanation, and that it offers too many opportunities for fluency in writing to substitute for rigour in analysis. In particular, its very structure, typically involving a progression or stages, suggests an inevitability and a chain of causation which may not stand up to more rigorous scrutiny.

Sayer’s (1992:258-266) discussion of narrative points out that other forms of social scientific writing, if poorly executed, are subject to similar criticisms, although most would concede that the dangers are greater in constructing narratives. Smith (1988:21) makes the complementary point that all science (including social science) is a creative process, involving getting people to see things in certain ways. Perhaps narrative makes this element more conspicuous. The benefits of narrative can be great. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:211), admittedly referring to the case of ethnography, speak of ‘the fundamental significance of a narrative mode of understanding’. They go on to argue that ‘there is no single correct method for the construction of texts, different methods have different implications..’ (1983:212), a point of general applicability. So where might narrative be useful? First, where the passage of time can itself be of analytical importance. The study of processes often constitutes such a case. The temporal dimension of processes can be significant in shaping the form they take. Knowledge of the cycle of activity is an essential background for understanding the significance of decisions.

A characteristic of narrative (which it shares with other textual strategies) is naturalism, defined by Hammersley (1990:18) as writing ‘in such a way as to give the reader the impression that he or she is observing the scene described’. This characteristic has its limitations and strengths; its main limitation relates to the fears referred to above in re-

lation to causation, namely that the naturalism can be too persuasive and can convince the reader that the descriptions (and the categories being used in the description) are not problematic or contentious but are somehow natural. However, as Hammersley (1990:19, 20) points out, the naturalistic style, sensitively and reflectively used, can also provide ‘thick’, ‘theoretical’ or ‘analytical’ descriptions; in other words, accounts which are rich with the significance of what is being described. Such reflective ‘thick’ accounts can then provide the material with which non-narrative based explanations can be tested. Further, the reflective nature of the description has the advantage of making clear the basis of selection in what is, inevitably, a partial account.

Finally to reinforce the above, the narrative form strikes some very fundamental chords. Even Sayer (1992) seems to recognise that narrative is almost demanded by readers in some circumstances, as it is very difficult to avoid writing it in certain kinds of research.

### ***5.6 Ethics.***

The researcher was fully aware of the issues regarding ethics and trust and using the appropriate skills as described by Denscombe (2007:1990). The researcher applied for and received clearance for the research approaches from the School of Planning and Geography’s ethics committee.

The main issues of potential ethical significance were the researcher’s personal connection with the practice and that of being known within the various circles from which interviewees were drawn. These relationships can be considered to have both positive and negative aspects, in that the practice and some of the interviewees were very familiar so that getting access and achieving a level of trust was easier; but the propensity to be biased has to be acknowledged and overcome so that the collection of data and its analysis remain objective.

The semi structured interviews were conducted according to ethical principles and those of best practice, in a relaxed but semi –formal manner with a bond of trust between interviewee and interviewer, the latter engaging in active listening to aid the questioning

process. The researcher was also careful to avoid discussing material from the interviews with anyone other than her supervisor.

### ***5.7 Conclusion.***

The research study undertaken was well considered, systematic and appropriate for addressing the research question identified. Fieldwork was conducted with a sensitivity to relevant epistemological and ethical frameworks. The analytical approach was undertaken with rigour and open-ness, so as to provide an answer to the research question that was both illuminating and commended the confidence of all who read the results.

**Chapter 6**  
**Case study of a key institutional building designed by the**  
**Percy Thomas Practice.**  
**The development of the Welsh Folk Museum**  
**Main Building at St. Fagans**

*6.1 Introduction.*

The difficulties and delays encountered in developing the Welsh Folk Museum (WFM) as a home for the national folk collection are illustrative of the struggle to try to establish institutional and political structures for Wales that had been taking place since the middle of the nineteenth century. The consequent tortuous story of the development of the Main Building at St. Fagans underlines that there was nothing inevitable about the establishment of the museum building or its design, as it faced major set backs at many stages.

The National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, out of which the Welsh Folk Museum was formed, was also the subject of various complications and false starts, as noted in chapter 3. This pattern of delays was repeated in the development of the Welsh Folk Museum; it took many decades to fulfil Sir Cyril Fox's 1930 recommendation for the foundation of a Welsh Folk Museum. This was achieved in 1976, largely through the determination and perseverance of Peate who, as noted earlier, has been described as the 'guru founder of the Welsh Folk Museum' (Sprott, 2000:105).

For the Treasury and the government of the United Kingdom it was simply another capital project; for many involved with Wales it was more. John Hilling, architect in the Thomas practice and project architect for the Main Building, in answer to the question about why it was considered so important for some, said, it's 'the museum's own motto, to teach the world about Wales and Wales about itself, this was the most Welsh thing they could possibly have'.

Peate's determination was central to the process of keeping things going. Trefor Owen who succeeded him as Curator said that Peate saw it as 'his museum'. Gerallt Nash described him as 'the leading light' who was 'very powerful and commit-

ted in his thoughts' who 'saw the museum as being part of a pioneering movement' looking to the future as well as to the past. By the time the staff moved into the new building in October 1968, the highly symbolic Welsh Language Act had been in force for sixteen months. Legal status was restored to the language, after four centuries. There was a request from the WFM staff, within months of moving in, for their contribution to the Annual Report to be printed in Welsh as well as in English. Trefor Owen noted that when Peate moved to St Fagans only one person had been able to speak Welsh. Peate's vision for the WFM as the 'cultural heart of proper Wales' was gradually being realised, in spite of the many hurdles to overcome.

This case study will argue that the Welsh Folk Museum was developed in a European context of nationalist activity but more particularly with reference to a Scandinavian context which also influenced ideas about setting and architecture. Therefore the development of Scandinavian nationalism will be described, followed by an exploration of the related museum movement, which was seen as an expression of nationalistic consciousness. How these ideas were conveyed through the architecture and settings will be discussed at this stage and in greater depth in the analysis section, when parallel internationalist ideas about architecture will also be discussed. The significance of both architectural movements and how they influenced the design and development of the Main Building, in spite of being compromised by funding constraints, will be drawn out in the analysis.

The decades long struggle for the Welsh Folk Museum, the long slow process from this vision to detailed proposals and the political context will be recounted to highlight the fact that everybody involved in struggling for the museum in these early stages, except for Peate, were more focussed on the institution rather than the design. In time, this created a space in which the architects could exercise influence; the chapter will argue that in doing so they were acutely conscious of designing a building that was part of a nation –building project.

Thereafter the account of the slow process involved in realising the vision is narrated. This account is necessarily detailed and at times may seem to labour the point of the difficulties and delays encountered but it also reinforces the point that there was nothing inevitable about the establishment of the museum building or its design, and that it was a political project which had to be struggled for, to be achieved.

This is an evidence based narrative account which allows the sheer grind of getting the project through the development process, to be appreciated and also allows the simultaneity of processes to be appreciated. Due to the paucity of primary sources it has only been possible to construct the narrative of the development of the building from Museum Minutes and Annual Reports. It begins with a discussion of

### ***6.2 Scandinavian nationalism.***

For many parts of Europe the 1800s was a time of rapid social and economic change associated with industrialisation. Some of Europe's intelligentsia feared that distinctive rural cultures, languages and traditional community structures would be diluted or even lost altogether, as urbanisation and migration followed industrialisation and trade increased between countries due to unprecedented improvements in transport and communications. Also throughout the century, as a result of wars radical boundary changes occurred across Europe which stimulated 'intense new national feeling' (Lane, 2000:41). Added to these boundary changes were other geographical changes shaped by unification or independence movements inspired by the model of French nationalism. Most theorists of nationalism agree that the changes brought by industrial capitalism affected economic, social and political relations and created, or enhanced, the conditions in which the ideology of nationalism could develop (Thompson, 1999:241-244).

These changes have to be set alongside the wider context of the legacy of the seventeenth and eighteenth century antiquarian Romantic interest in history, myths, ancient cultures etc., which was further influenced by the philosophies of Jean Jacques Rousseau and Johann Gottfried von Herder, as described in chapter 2.

Their interest in histories was often fuelled by patriotic ideas on the importance of conserving 'national' antiquities and cultural practices and elevating the 'Volksgeist' at a time of rapid change. The eighteenth century philosophical interest was a product of a long period of intellectual enquiry into all matters of history, geography, science and anthropology that was revived during the period of the Renaissance (Hampson, 1987:10).

Herder's ethnic nationalism was taught in German speaking universities including ones outside what is today Germany, such as the university in Copenhagen. Karlsson (1980:81), as noted above, describes Herder's philosophical approach to the idea of nation as a spiritual connection. In that sense therefore for Herder, '[r]eal progress, for any nation, was bound to be directed by the standards set by its national spirit' (Karlsson, 1980:81). Herder's other dictum, that language determines thought and is therefore the expression of national identity, was very influential in shaping nationalist ideology in the Scandinavian countries. As already stated many European countries were motivated by these ideas, including all of the Scandinavian countries that then aimed for autonomy; though it was towards the mid twentieth century before Finland (Klinge, 1980:75) and Iceland (Karlsson, 1980:83) finally succeeded in achieving independence.

Bishop Nikolai F.S. Grundtvig, a poet and educational leader, is considered a second significant figure in the development of national consciousness in the Scandinavian countries. His writings on Old Norse tales and customs were highly influential, as was the establishment of his model for the Folk High School system in Denmark which was copied in Norway, Sweden and Finland (Thyssen, 1980:43).

The philosophical discourses on nationalist ideology informed nation building activities, which took many forms in the various countries of Europe: from establishing linguistic unity and 'national' rituals to, discovering lost myths, histories and literatures and gathering artefacts that were considered distinctive and representative of the heritage of the 'nation'. These cultural nationalisms provided the



context for the establishment of ethnographic collections of artefacts (Lane, 2000:40 and <http://www.skansen.se/pages/?ID=1064> accessed 8/3/2010).

As already noted in chapter 3 the national cultural researches of Scandinavian intellectuals and Enlightenment philosophy provided the context for the activities of Dr. Artur Hazelius who established what was to become the Nordic Museum from an ethnographic collection of artefacts, in Stockholm in 1873. This collection was part of his vision to ‘document the entire range of Nordic life’ (Lane, 2000:40) before it was lost to history with the rapid onset of industrialised society. Hazelius also arranged tableaux of folk items to exhibit to an international audience in the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1878. The tableaux inspired others to form their own national ethnographic collections and were awarded a gold medal. These ‘[r]epresentations of the past’ were ‘a crucial component of any attempt to build a unifying [nationalist] ideology’ (Adamson, 1999:60).

At first it was intended that the various Scandinavian ethnographic collections would be housed in grand new museum buildings in the national capitals. These museum buildings, as the intended repositories of the regional material heritage, were sometimes designed to embody or express nationalist values through the use of traditional building materials or, through references to local, historical architectural styles. I.G.Clason’s design for the Nordic Museum in Stockholm proved very influential as it drew on a Netherlandish Renaissance style of architecture from the early seventeenth century and from designs of the royal castles. Lane notes that ‘it was the most obviously referential to historical styles’ due to Clason’s use of the rounded towers of the Vasa castles of the Swedish monarchs to express Swedish national identity (Lane, 2000:207). The main hall is dominated by a large sculpture of King Gustav Vasa who is widely regarded as the founder of Sweden.



See Figure: 6.1. Nordic Museum in Stockholm.

Sometimes this nationalist imagery was supported by more overt references, in the form of sculpture that portrayed ‘national’ heroes or frescoes that illustrated ‘national’ heroic myths that were considered important for helping to shape national identity, as was the case with the Gallen-Kallela frescoes in the National Museum in Helsinki (Lane, 2000:212). This approach was repeated in other key institutional buildings; Stockholm’s Town Hall was understood as both a civic and national monument, as noted in chapter 2, because of its function and use of gilded mosaics within the Great Hall that illustrated historical narratives and myths (Donnelly, 1992:288) and ‘allusions to Swedish vernacular traditions’ (Curtis, 2002:135). This symbolic use of imagery and iconographies compares with Cardiff’s City Hall in the Civic Centre at Cathays Park, as discussed in chapters 3 and 4, with its marble pantheon of national heroes (and one heroine) and roaring Welsh dragon crowning the dome.

The Stockholm Town Hall is a fine example of a style of architecture that was being developed at this time by quite a few European architects who were articulating the architectural language of National Romanticism (Donnelly, 1992:288). National Romantic architectural ideals had emerged in several parts of Europe in the late nineteenth century but were only active in most regions until the 1920s except in

Scandinavia, where elements of it continued to be influential (Curtis, 2002: 132). The distinctive Scandinavian style that emerged blended modernist ideas on architecture with traditional ideas on architecture that accounted for local vernacular continuities and climate (Curtis, 2002:132). Watkin claims that this style displayed elements of a revived Romantic Classicism in '[t]he search for a national style with a purity of line' (2000:616).



See Figure: 6.2. Stockholm Town Hall.

Beaux-Arts planning and classical facades, in the manner of Cardiff City Hall and Law Courts, were 'widely imitated in public buildings up to the First World War' (Watkin, 2000:643). Curtis (2002:149) notes that Beaux Arts classicism was extending its influence in England, France and America by 1914 with evidence of a rich plurality of ideas in some areas based on revivals, some modernising and regionalist tendencies. Nevertheless it is evident that architectural form, whether it was in the grand style of classical Beaux Arts solutions or in a style that fulfilled the hope for 'a new kind of building to house the ethnographic and artistic heritage of the burgeoning nation' (Lane, 2000:210) was important for the image and identity conveyed by these museums.

Nation building ideas and the transfer of the ideology of nationalism to the wider public continued in Scandinavian countries in the second half of the 1800s largely through the activities of intellectuals like Hazelius, whose process of institutional-

ising the national memory had become ever more ambitious as the decades passed. In order ‘to display the realities of Nordic life in a three dimensional way’ (Lane, 2000:40) Hazelius had begun collecting buildings and objects in order to display complete environments. This plan of a ‘parklike setting for public visits to buildings brought there’ (Donnelly, 1992:212) was fully realised with the purchase of a site at Skansen near Stockholm in 1891. The museum opened later that year with just one building but others were soon added, along with more land so that Hazelius’s dream ‘of founding a museum which was unlike any existing museum, namely, an open-air museum devoted to folklore and the history of civilisation’ (<http://www.skansen.se/en/artikel/creation-skansen-0> accessed 15/6/12) could be fulfilled. The arrangement of the site was partly modelled on the collection of mediaeval churches and farm buildings that had been transferred to the summer estate of King Oscar II of Sweden and Norway at Bygdoy in the 1880s. This latter collection was opened to the public as the Norwegian Folk Museum in 1894 (Lane, 2000:40 and <http://www.norskfolkemuseum.no/> accessed 8/3/10).

Once Skansen was established, a programme of ‘Nordic’ events celebrating important historical festivals was organised (Lane, 2000:40). This method of ‘inventing’ traditions (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983 and 2002) became a key component of nation building activity throughout Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Adamson, 1999:61) as it aided the process of ‘imagining’ the nation. The museum guides were dressed in national or ‘folk’ costume to reinforce the experience of an environment unique to Sweden.

Skansen proved so successful that the model was copied in other Scandinavian countries: the Anders Sandvig Collection of vernacular buildings at Maihaugen, Lillehammer was opened to the public in 1904 in Norway and a smaller collection of buildings was established at Aarhus, Denmark in 1909. Finnish nationalists agitated for a national museum, the open air component of which was opened in 1909 on the island of Seurasaari, Helsinki (Lane, 2000:40, 207). There were calls for a German national folk museum in Berlin but it was never realised due to the grand

Museum Island project of museum buildings (Lane, 2000:212). Ironically it had been the German process of cataloguing and preserving buildings after the Napoleonic Wars that had influenced Scandinavian ideas about preservation (Lane, 2000:40).

The 1878 Swedish farmhouse interiors that Hazelius had arranged for the Paris exhibition inspired the Danish amateur historian Bernhard Olsen to establish a museum of peasant life on the outskirts of Copenhagen in 1885. This became the Danish Folk Museum, which was removed to a larger site and eventually grew into a large open air museum (Lane, 2000:40).

The parkland setting of the open air museums was crucial to the ethos of the folk museum movement and was to be significant in St. Fagans. 'Reconstituted model museum villages, such as that of Skansen, in Stockholm, became hallowed goals of pilgrimage for families..' for the 'positive folk values' they espoused (Kent, 2000:210). The countryside was believed to have a pantheistic nature in the Scandinavian countries (2000:210). In fact pantheistic attitudes were also expressed in Scandinavian literature and art (Kent, 2000:211). This aspect was part of a wider, romantic, idealistic philosophy that had its roots in the eighteenth century with the 'discovery' of the Picturesque and sublime qualities of the countryside, in which Wales featured, see chapter 3 above. The philosophy was developed further in the early industrial revolution as urban centres began to grow rapidly and were seen as corrupting centres of vice in contrast to the perceived purer values to be found amongst the inhabitants of the unspoilt rural countryside (Strong, 2000:567, 568). This romantic idealism underpinned the philosophies of social reformers like William Morris and John Ruskin (Watkin, 2000:471) who venerated the work of the traditional craftsmen who they believed were in touch with their materials on a spiritual level, especially mediaeval craftsmen, as noted in chapter 2. Crucially, therefore, the open-air museums were set in parks to emulate the original pre-industrial settings of the exhibited buildings.

In Adamson's discussion of Ehrentaut's analysis of these museums of 'vernacular architecture', as noted previously, the use of a 'contrived landscape to create impressions of timeless rurality' was essential (1999:62). Also, that the whole process acted as 'an integral element of the nation building activities of the national bourgeoisies' which grew out of the nationalist discourses of the 'organic intellectuals' of the nineteenth century.

It can be seen therefore that the setting in an unspoilt, peaceful, pre-industrial landscape was fundamental for the folk museums and contributed to their success. This approach aligned with anti-mechanistic, romantic socialist Arts and Crafts ideals and the nation building activities in which 'native sources were to be transformed to respond to a new cultural atmosphere in which urbanised societies looked back at national history and the rural base through a haze of political romanticism' (Curtis, 2002:131).

This Janus faced attitude is characteristic of modernising societies that contemporaneously embrace the benefits of industrialisation whilst mourning the loss of traditional societies and structures. The wealth created is often employed for the establishment of institutions that are seen as fundamental for the development of modern urban societies, particularly nation building projects such as museums that institutionalise the memory of the lost pre-industrial society. Both types of museum in the Scandinavian countries, that is the grand city museum and the sub-urban 'folk' museum, were seen as expressions of nationalistic consciousness and effort (Lane, 2000:207).

### ***6.3 The origins of the Welsh Folk Museum.***

The conditions which supported the Scandinavian Folk Museum movement were also pertinent to Wales, at a later date. Various intellectuals and politicians in Wales, and expatriate Welshmen in England, were influenced by the burgeoning nationalist ideologies of European countries as described above. We know that some, such as Peate, were definitely influenced by Scandinavian ideas on folk museums, with regard to collecting and display policies and how the folk museums

were situated within the natural landscape, as discussed in 3.6 above. Consequently there are striking parallels between Wales's and Scandinavian folk museums, as will be demonstrated.

The first Director of the National Museum, Dr. W. Evans Hoyle, served on a committee in 1912 that was commissioned to assess the possibilities of developing a British Folk Museum in London on the Crystal Palace site (Stevens, 1986:63). This initiative came to nothing but Hoyle was inspired by the idea and became 'a pioneer in the field of Welsh Folk Studies' (Stevens, 1986:63). With the help of two key knowledgeable figures, T. C Evans and T. H. Thomas, Hoyle gathered enough material, to hold an exhibition of 'Welsh Bygones' in 1913 in Cardiff City Hall, which served as temporary accommodation for the National Museum. It aimed to illustrate 'the life which is slowly and silently passing away' with the greater spread of industrialism (Peate, 1929:viii). The objects from the 1913 exhibition were then stored away, until the temporary Bygones Gallery at the National Museum was opened in 1926.

Sir William Goscombe John R.A. submitted a motion to the Museum Council in the same year urging the institution to concentrate on purchasing works of art 'by artists connected with Wales, so that our Art Gallery may have a character that will be unique amongst Art Galleries' adding that they should '[c]ollect...as rapidly as possible the smaller objects of the arts and handicrafts, especially those connected with the Peasant arts and crafts-including when genuine, the characteristic furniture of the farm and cottage..' (Pearson, 1979:16).

Goscombe John was an influential figure, who had been commissioned to design the regalia and medals for the Investiture of Edward as Prince of Wales, at Caernarfon in 1911. The investiture had been master-minded by Lloyd George, who was not only the Liberal member for the area and a key figure in the Welsh cultural renaissance but was placed to encourage the participation of the Royal family, as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Morgan notes that '[i]n terms of the real Wales of 1911 the Caernarfon Investiture was a grand irrelevance. For all that, it un-

doubtedly focussed national and international attention upon Wales and its people' (Morgan K., 1982:124). Therefore it was an effective event in terms of raising the profile of the nation building project.

Goscombe John was also commissioned to design the Trowel, Mallet and Spirit Level used for laying the foundation stone of the Museum by King George V in 1912 and later the Seal of the National Museum of Wales used at the opening in 1927. The tools all used dragons for the symbolic imagery of Wales (Pearson, 1979:47). Goscombe John was an original member of the Museum Council and remained 'proud of his Welsh nationality' throughout his life (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography-online version accessed 11/07/12) in spite of settling in London. It is assumed therefore that his advice was acted upon, even though many of the exhibits that had been gathered were put in storage whilst the Museum was being constructed.

As noted in the introduction, Peate's determination was central in keeping things going but, he had also been an early advocate of the need to protect the products of rural craftsmen. He joined the Department of Archaeology in the National Museum, as an assistant in 1927. His interest in anthropology had been inspired by one of Britain's leading human geographers, Professor H.J.Fleure, whilst a student at University College of Wales, Aberystwyth. Fleure, influenced by the Romantic tradition, believed that Welsh rural society was the repository of spiritual values that were needed to combat 'the materialism of unbridled laissez faire' (Gruffudd, 1999a:157) and as noted in chapter 3 Peate was also inspired in his post graduate years by news of the folk museum developments in Scandinavia. The relationship between Peate and the Norwegian scholar of Celtic, Alf Sommerfelt continued when Peate visited the museums of Norway in 1946 and 1957 (Stevens, 1986:14).

Peate came to be '[o]ne of the key definers of the gwerin's contribution to Welshness in the inter-war years' (Gruffudd, 1999a:160). His idea of Welshness aligned with the version 'that Plaid Cymru sought to defend and to re-establish... traditional, organic, Welsh-speaking and rural' (Gruffudd, 1999a:159). This characterisation



of rural folk as the possessors of the true spirit of the nation and therefore as a metaphor for the nation aligns with the philosophy that underpinned the establishment of the folk museums in the Scandinavian countries, as discussed previously. Gruffudd claims that '[t]hroughout Europe nationalist movements –of both left and right- studied, idealised and sought to protect and ultimately enlist their rural nationals' (1999a:158).

Intellectuals from other disciplines also believed in the value of the spiritual core of rural folk for the development of national consciousness. Baber writes that Dr. D.J.Davies, the economist, believed that 'it was...imperative that the traditions and cultural heritage of the Welsh people should be safe guarded to serve as a spiritual anchorage'(cited in Baber, 1980:114,115). Davies is credited with largely reinforcing the nationalist ideology of Plaid Cymru in the late 1930s through his economic analysis and ideas. His contribution to a coherent economic plan for Wales strengthened nationalist sentiment and informed the philosophy of Plaid Cymru (Baber, 1980:113).

Davies, Fleure and key members of Plaid Cymru were also influenced by the Danish co-operative movements (Gruffudd, 1999a:162). Davies was particularly impressed by the economic model that was based on 'agricultural and industrial co-operation' as advocated by Grundtvig and 'saw it as the perfect model' for Wales's development out of the inter war years depression (Baber, 1980:113,114) and to lead it to political independence (Gruffudd, 1999a:163). Peate argued 'that the national character had emerged in part... from the co-operative patterns of rural industries ...combined with agriculture' (Gruffudd, 1999a:164) as in the Danish model.

Lord adds that Peate's approach to the study of folk culture stressed 'the mental, spiritual and material struggle of the whole community' and, as such, the folk were not to be equated with members of the lower classes (1993:38). Lord also claims that the Scandinavian nationalist intellectuals sought to elevate the products of their indigenous folk culture by establishing an alternative value system of aesthet-

ics through the open-air museum movement (1993:37). He argues that this model was adopted for the Welsh Folk Collection in the 1930s, at which time in his view ‘[t]he national role of the National Museum was effectively being devolved onto one Department’ (1993:38).

Peate later described his frustration, at the time of joining the museum, with the prevailing ideas on the ‘Welsh Bygones’ collection, which was dismissed by other archaeologists as ‘appendages to the study of archaeology’ (Peate, 1972:17). Peate argued that ‘Archaeology does not end in one year and folk life begin in the next’ (Peate, 1972:17). He quickly realised that the collection of artefacts was a testament to a vanishing way of life and were effectively ‘a truly Welsh collection...of artefacts illustrating Welsh folk life’ (Stevens, 1986:15) and set about labelling and cataloguing the items in Welsh and English. This action, of labelling in Welsh, was unprecedented at the time and he proceeded without having gained permission from the museum authorities; his haste was probably due to his sensitivity to the fragility of the traditional language and awareness of the disappearing dialects.

Bassett, a later Director of the Museum wrote that it was ‘the first Department of its kind in Britain and the Empire’ (1993:12) and that the activities regarding the bygones collection formed ‘[a] new discipline’. The National Museum ‘was the first national institution in the country to create a scientifically ordered collection illustrating Folk Culture and related Industries’ (Bassett, 1993:11).

Peate’s *Guide to the Collection of Welsh Bygones* was published in 1929; it described and illustrated the traditional ways of life that were being extinguished by industrialism. As Cyril Fox, the Director from 1926-1948, pointed out in the introduction they were at a time that was ‘a turning point in our history’ (Peate, 1929: xiv).

Interest amongst museum professionals in the phenomenon of open-air folk museums was increasing at this time. Bassett noted that the museum professionals ‘were aware of the pioneering work of the Scandinavians’ and that the movement

was spreading around the northern hemisphere (1993:11). Fox's enthusiasm for the display of folk life increased after a visit to Sweden, with two other members of the Museum Council, in 1930 (Stevens, 1986:64). Upon his return he declared that 'the museum service in Wales is incomplete without illustration of the Welsh culture-complex such as can only be afforded by an open-air field museum' (Lord, 1993:37). Fox, and two other members of the Museum Council, 'advised the Council to recommend, in principle, the foundation of a Welsh folk museum' (Stevens, 1986:64). This would have been understood as a serious recommendation as the process of founding home institutions was well under way and Lloyd George was advocating a series of public works programmes to deal with the effects of the Depression. Also the legacy of the influential Liberal Non-conformists who had campaigned for the establishment of universities and museums in Wales was still quite powerful at this time, with many of the contemporary intellectuals drawn from the 'gwerin'. These 'folk' were characterised as temperate, conscientious, educated, classless but most important rural and it was self knowledge by and for this group that the influential intellectuals were directing their efforts (Adamson, 1999:58). Adamson notes Prys Morgan's analysis of the use of the term 'gwerin' as a form of 'propaganda from the 1890s onwards' concluding that it was 'an intellectual construct evident in all spheres of intellectual activity in Wales, reproduced as the image of the nation and itself reproducing that image (Adamson, 1999:67).

A sub department of Folk Culture and Industries was formed within the Department of Archaeology in 1932 and accommodation was provided in the newly opened Eastern Wing (in the Basement Gallery). Peate's faith in the importance of the collection was rewarded when it was elevated to the National Folk Collection of Wales in 1932 (Stevens, 1986:16). It was to 'provide the people of Wales with a source hitherto untapped of national self-knowledge' (Lord, 1993:37). Lord (1993:37) argues that the Museum was, 'adopting a folk-culture critique for the particular elevation of the indigenous culture'.

This collection and the sub department were visited in 1934 by three of Europe's leading folk-life scholars who impressed upon Fox the need to promote folk life studies (Stevens, 1986:64). During 1936 the Museum Council decided to upgrade the sub department to full department status, with Peate as its first Keeper. A year later a Welsh-American Appeal was launched to fund the construction of the West Wing of the Museum in central Cardiff, which would provide appropriate accommodation for the Department of Folk Culture, but with the onset of World War II the fund was closed (Bassett, 1993:12).

Meanwhile the continuing discourses that shaped the establishment of the Welsh Folk Museum echoed those of the European nationalists and were influenced by the romantic socialists claiming moral and spiritual strength for the 'gwerin' at a time when the world order and industrial civilisation was, yet again, under threat. In 1943 whilst Britain was still at war, the Museum submitted a Memorandum to the recently formed Advisory Council on Welsh Reconstruction Problems with regard to its aspirations for future development (Bassett, 1993:13). Most of the recommendations were not considered but the Advisory Council proposed that 'an open-air museum was an essential auxiliary to the National Museum of Wales' (Stevens, 1986:64).

Peate meanwhile, worked tirelessly promoting the idea of founding a Welsh Folk Museum. At this stage, Peate envisaged it 'as a source of national inspiration leading eventually to a national renaissance' (Stevens, 1986:56). His vision was to boost 'Welsh national pride through a cultural revival, especially as expressed in a Welsh Folk Museum' (Stevens, 1986:55). As a pacifist he also hoped it would be a source of spiritual rejuvenation but later this hope matured into Peate promoting traditional values as a civilising force.

Finally in February 1946 there was an opportunity of realisation when the third Earl of Plymouth and his mother, the Countess of Plymouth, offered St. Fagans Castle and approximately eighteen acres of gardens and Castle grounds to Sir Cyril Fox for development as an open-air museum. (The family had enjoyed a long asso-

ciation with the development of the National Museum: the second Earl had acted as Treasurer from 1929-1933 and President from 1933-1937 and would have been familiar with Peate's calls for an open-air folk museum). This exceptional gift was enhanced by a second opportunity that quickly followed; the ability to purchase a further eighty acres of parkland at beneficial rates, for 'a nominal sum' (Bassett, 1993:14). The St. Fagans Castle site was similarly situated relative to Cardiff, as the famous Scandinavian museums at Skansen, Bygdoy and Seurasaari Island are relative to their cities, Stockholm, Oslo and Helsinki. The park-land setting of almost a hundred acres was of fundamental importance to the nature of the Welsh Folk Museum as it was meant to be interpreted as a rural pre-industrial landscape as in the case of the Scandinavian open-air museums; 'it would make it possible to create an institution which, according to the principles exemplified in the Scandinavian museums, would reflect Welsh life and culture (Bassett, 1993:14). Thus the Welsh Folk Museum came into existence on paper in 1946.

Gruffudd argues that the interpretation of the landscape is important for the process of 'national socialisation' which he explains by using Daniel's and Schama's claims that landscapes, or certain features in the landscape, can become emblematic of the nation because of their importance in the history or the geography of the nation and help to 'picture' or imagine the nation. Gruffudd adds that often 'rural landscapes are imagined as the 'real', 'authentic' essence of the nation and that this idealisation is extended to the 'folk' that lived in the communities (1999a:150). This interpretation aligns with Adamson's analysis of the use of a contrived landscape to reinforce the sense of a pastoral scene for the setting of the vernacular buildings at St. Fagans, adding that even the more recent additions from the industrial 'valleys' do not 'challenge the illusion of ruralia' (Adamson, 1999:62-63).

Peate wrote about this approach to the representation of Wales in a booklet published in 1946 in which he described his aspiration to, 'create a Wales in miniature where the visitor can wander in the confined area of a hundred acres through time and space...and see not only the old Welsh way of life but the variations in and the continuity of our culture' (Stevens, 1986: 66).

Peate was invited by the Swedish Government to visit Skansen at Djurgarden in Sweden later in 1946 and he also visited Bygdoy in Norway. Upon his return, he prepared a report on his findings for the Museum Council. He was deeply moved by the experience and was so impressed by the Scandinavian folk museums that in the 1956 Handbook for the Welsh Folk Museum he wrote of the achievement of the Scandinavian countries; '[a] folk museum represents the life and culture of a nation, illustrating the arts and crafts ...of the complete community' and added '[t]his is no imaginary picture: it has been fully achieved on several sites in the Scandinavian countries, where the influence of the folk museum in improving the standard of taste and maintaining the pride of the people in the best traditions of their past has been remarkable. Such a museum, indeed, comes to be a cultural centre of the nation which it serves'.

Therefore it can be seen that the Welsh Folk Museum was established in the context of nation building projects and within a context of the national cultural significance of the Scandinavian folk museum movement. Also the philosophical context and political conditions in Wales had many parallels with those of the Scandinavian countries.

Adamson (1999:65) notes that the hegemonic ideology, based on the myth of the 'gwerin' that informed the establishment of the Welsh Folk Museum was not challenged until much later in the twentieth century. It was only upon the compilation of a substantial alternative Welsh historiography that accounted for the industrial peoples of Wales, that the accepted ideas of Welshness were challenged, which then impacted on the development of the next generation of museums (Adamson, 1999:67) which is beyond the scope of this study.

#### ***6.4 The struggle for the Main Building at St Fagans.***

The unexpected and generous gift of St. Fagans Castle and grounds suddenly helped elevate the project to something realisable that could fulfil the long held dream nurtured by Peate. However the process of gaining government support and finance to establish the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building was equally fraught

with delays and difficulties. This long saga will be related along with the consequently slow and laboured development, in stages, of the building. The prolonged process illustrates the political, economic and other difficulties involved in achieving the requisite institutions for an aspiring, progressive and distinctive nation. The analysis of the building will further support the piecemeal, uncertain and laboured nature of the development and the significance of the Percy Thomas Practice in its design.

Between 1946 and 1948 much work was undertaken by Sir Cyril Fox to guide the Council in deciding how best to develop the Folk Museum. Peate noted in 1967 regarding this period that ‘one fundamental fact emerged from my tour of the Scandinavian museums, namely, that all national folk museums were administratively independent’ (Minutes for 7/7/1967 from the Secretary’s Office p.77f). Fox, too, recommended that the new institution and the National Museum should ‘become separate constituents of one Institution’ with administrative autonomy, following the precedent of the British Museum and the Natural History section of the British Museum (1967:77g). This recommendation was accepted by a Special Committee of the Museum Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1948 but was overturned at the Council meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1948 and approved by the Court in October 1948 with the result that the Welsh Folk Museum became a departmental extension to the National Museum in October 1948 (1967:77g). This anomaly of being a ‘half-way house’ (1967:77g) became a key issue in later years and led to difficulties in obtaining financial support from the Treasury and, later the Welsh Office, as the Welsh Folk Museum was considered to be only an ‘extension of Cardiff’. Peate claimed in 1967 ‘I am fully satisfied that if Sir Cyril Fox’s scheme had been put into operation in 1948, the Welsh Folk Museum building would have been erected years ago’ (1967:77i).

This perception or possibly post-war budgetary restraints or even a combination of both considerations meant that the Treasury would only provide money for some of the maintenance of the site and not for capital development of ‘A Folk Museum for the Welsh Nation’. (It should be noted that at this time there was not even a Minis-

ter for Welsh Affairs). Thus, the Welsh Folk Museum Appeal was launched in 1948 two months after the gardens were opened to the public on a permanent basis.

Sir Percy Thomas and Son were appointed that year to design the provision of basic facilities within the Castle for the visiting public and staff. The drawings, still kept at the Welsh Folk Museum, are titled 'Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, St. Fagan's Castle'. Small scale developments continued for some years, gradually providing essential facilities and necessary improvements.

The Fourth Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries, published in 1954, placed the Museum Block for the Folk Museum as third in a list of four essential developments at the National Museum and Library. The committee recorded the urgency of all the works and noted 'that a clear case had been made for Treasury aid ... on a far more generous scale than had been accorded in the past'. The 'enthusiastic support of the Welsh people' for the Welsh National Institutions had particularly impressed them. The Treasury had replied to their Committee Report in September 1951 that due to the continuing 'general financial difficulties' they could not make capital grants to the Welsh Institutions (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1959: 120).

In 1953, plans and elevations of a Proposed Museum Block that included space for a gallery, restaurant, archives, lecture theatre and hall were prepared by the Thomas practice. A 1955 perspective drawing shows a large, ambitious building in Thomas's diluted form of modernism, with Art Deco references, set in the grounds of St. Fagans Castle. This was not built, but the massing of this scheme (that is the general scale, height and positioning of the main blocks) is not too dissimilar to that which was proposed in 1965 and subsequently built. A small red brick building was erected however, for storage and for use as a temporary exhibition gallery designed by Thomas. This was titled Stage I and was built between 1954 and 1955.





See Figure 6.3. 1955 perspective drawing of proposals for the Main Building at St. Fagans by the Percy Thomas practice.

Small improvements continued around the site and some traditional buildings were transferred there but no money was forthcoming for the extension to the Stage 1 building.

Peate wrote in the 1958/9 Annual Report that there was an ‘urgent need for an addition to the Museum Block, for there is no further room for either storage or exhibition...collecting must go on’ and facilities needed to be improved ‘to deal with the constantly increasing number of visitors’ (1958/9:13). Further, that ‘[a]ll these aspects of the work of the Folk Museum, together with the exhibition of the rich collection of folk material (now most inadequately stored) depend on a substantial addition to the Museum block’ (1958/9:38). It was reported that the Council resolved to ask the Treasury for money for a substantial addition to the Museum Block at St. Fagans ‘in the knowledge that large sums have been and are being made available for capital purposes for museums and galleries in England and Scotland’ (1958/9:14).

The storage and accommodation problems at St. Fagans caused by the lack of available development funding were acknowledged and stressed in the Fifth Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1959) but it is clear from this report that other projects in Britain were be-

ing prioritised, as already noted in the 1958/9 Annual Report of the National Museum of Wales. The Arts Council of Great Britain report 'Housing the Arts in Great Britain 1959' required each region to consider its existing provision for 'housing' the arts and formulate future needs, however ambitious and forward-looking, 'for the fullest encouragement of the arts' (1959:99). The Welsh committee noted that 'in spite of their smallness Welsh towns form a sturdy framework for a strong national life that receives full expression in the national institutions' (1959:103). This statement demonstrates the aspiration to enhance the existing limited national framework through civic institutions.

The report on the embryonic Welsh Folk Museum noted that 'the collection of folk-life material in St. Fagans is unrivalled in the British Isles and the museum may well be compared to the great folk museums of north-western Europe....' also that: 'A scheme for building a modern museum block at the Folk Museum involving an expenditure of £300,000 is in being. The first stage, a storage block, has been completed and the first floor of this is being used temporarily as an exhibition gallery. The second stage includes an exhibition and storage block which will make possible the exhibition for the first time of the national Welsh Folk Collection. In the third stage, administrative offices and a large restaurant are included while the last contract makes provision for a theatre building where plays, concerts and lectures can be held (1959:107).

In the Conclusions and Recommendations the committee refer to the generous response of the public to past appeals and to the failure of the Treasury to 'finance the most urgent needs of the National Museum of Wales...in spite of the economic recovery which has taken place in Britain' and recommend that the Museum Block at the Folk Museum and extension to the Cardiff Museum commence urgently (1959:121).

This recommendation seems to have been effective as the following year, 1959/60, the National Museum received its first ever contribution from the Treasury towards the capital development of the Welsh Folk Museum. It amounted to £10 000, to

help with the cost of constructing a new car park and ticket office and for widening the approach road to the new entrance. It was also reported that the Council had again applied to the Treasury for funds for the Museum block at St. Fagans. This time their request was followed by a visit from Sir Edward Boyle, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. At this stage it was estimated that a building comprising an exhibition and storage block, the administrative block and the restaurant would cost £275,000 (Annual Report, 1959/60:13).

A small group of Welsh Folk Museum staff began the National Survey of Oral Traditions late in 1957 which involved them recording threatened word forms and intonations. The compilation of this archive added to the urgency for development. Peate drew comparisons between the situation at St. Fagans and the conditions at the 'great folk museums of Scandinavia, engaged in similar work,' adding that they understood the need to 'employ large staffs of research workers for this purpose' (Annual Report, 1959/60:38). Even if the staff numbers could have been increased there was too little room to accommodate them.

Pressure for money from the Treasury for capital development continued annually for several years until in 1962 it was reported that 'the Architects for the Welsh Folk Museum (Messrs. Percy Thomas and Son Ltd.) prepared a revised schedule of requirements which, excluding the lecture theatre block, provided for approximately 42,000 sq. ft. of exhibition, storage and workshop space. The estimated cost was £248,000 plus nine per cent for professional fees'. These details were sent to the Treasury with the annual appeal for financial help which was by then very urgent, as was the need for increased purpose built accommodation which was considered 'acute' and of 'the highest priority' (Annual Report, 1961/2:13).

In the absence of government aid, a fourth Museum Building-Fund Appeal for £150,000 was launched in September 1962 to cover work at Cardiff and the Welsh Folk Museum.

The Chair of the Cultural Panel of the Council for Wales wrote to the Minister for Welsh Affairs in December 1961 about the 'building needs' after meeting with the

Director of the National Museum and Curator of the Welsh Folk Museum in December 1961; the territorial unity of Wales had been tacitly recognised by the creation of the office of Minister for Welsh Affairs in the late 1950s under Churchill's government. The Chair referred to the Sixth Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries and sought 'to engage the Minister's personal interest in the problems of additions to the Museum Block at the Welsh Folk Museum' (Annual Report, 1961/2:14). As Peate also noted in the same Annual Report 'the Welsh Folk Museum in the fifteenth year of its existence, is seriously hampered in carrying out its duties as the pioneer national Folk Museum in the British Isles' (1961/2:40).

The plight of the Welsh national institutions, namely the National Museum of Wales, the Welsh Folk Museum and the National Library, was discussed in the House of Commons on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1963. The Economic Secretary to the Treasury reported that the Government believed that what was needed was an agreed building programme extending over a period of years covering the essential needs of the three institutions and that some building for the WFM would come high on the list. He also reported that some preliminary discussions with the Welsh authorities had taken place (Annual Report, 1962/3:15). No further details with regard to financial support or timing, were given. Peate noted woefully 'It is probably the only national folk museum in Europe which has no means of exhibiting its collections or of storing them adequately... the value of re-erected buildings as exhibits is being diminished because the Folk museum, in the 16<sup>th</sup> year of its existence is still without a Museum block' (Annual Report, 1962/3:41).

The public appeal proved more fruitful and within a year more had been promised than the target figure, although in fact only half of the target figure had been received (Annual Report, 1964/5:14). However, this and the promise of £35,000 per annum from the Treasury, led to some discussion between the Library and the National Museum as to levels of urgency. It was agreed by all that the new block at St. Fagans was the most pressing but, if this was to be completed at the proposed rate of £35,000 per annum, it would delay the work on the book-stacks at the Library

by six years and work at the National Museum by a further six years or more. So it was concluded that the Treasury grant needed to be doubled to ensure that the Welsh Folk Museum block could be completed economically within three years (Annual Report, 1963/4:14). Meanwhile Thomas's practice estimated that the building could be completed within two years once the working drawings had been prepared. Peate added that the situation was 'becoming steadily more desperate' (Annual Report, 1963/4:41).

Finally, quite suddenly, in 1964 the discussions between the Treasury, the Standing Commission and the National Museum and Library 'culminated in an agreed programme under which the £700,000 would be allocated within the twelve years as follows';

1965-1967	Welsh Folk Museum	£185,000
1969-1970	National Library of Wales	£150,000
1970-1972	Welsh Folk Museum	£170,000
1973-1974	National Library of Wales	£25,000
1975-1977	National Museum Wales (Cardiff)	£170,000

(Annual Report, 1964/5:14)

This meant that the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building would have to be completed in stages but nevertheless work could proceed at last, thanks to the determination and vision of Peate and others on the Museum Council whose long struggle to see this important institution developed would be rewarded. The next section, 6.5, will describe the crucially important political context that ultimately was the deciding factor for the development of the Main Building. This will leave the reader with a clear idea of the value of the political dimension for nation building projects and in this case, the need for a different political understanding and approach to afford the project the status afforded it by Peate and others in order to be able to realise it.

The Council asked the Treasury if it would service a loan, raised by the National Museum, so that the building could be completed in one contract over a period of three years instead of spread over eight years but the Treasury was not willing, neither was the new Secretary of State for Wales prepared to adjust the twelve year programme for the various works. Once again this underlines the struggle for the project and that nothing about it was inevitable. The Seventh Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries for 1961-1964, stressed that the twelve year programme should be reviewed early to expedite the second phase of the building work at the Welsh Folk Museum. Thomas's practice was authorised to proceed with the preparation of the working drawings (Annual Report, 1964/5:15).

### ***6.5 The political context for developing the Main Building at St. Fagans.***

It is recorded in the National Museum's Annual Report for 1964/5 (page 14) that 'The discussions between the Treasury, the Standing Commission and the two Welsh institutions (namely the National Museum of Wales and the National Library of Wales)...culminated in an agreed programme under which the £700,000 would be allocated within the twelve years'. At the first meeting of the Building Committee held at Cardiff in the National Museum on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1964 under item 27, Financial Provision, it is recorded that 'The Treasury in a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 1964 stated that they were 'prepared to ask Parliament' to make provision in due course for capital grants to the two Welsh Institutions over a twelve year period on the basis of a 90% Exchequer contribution towards the...expenditure' (Minutes of 11/12/1964, Secretary's Office, Minutes Oct. 1964-Oct. 1965:145).

Stage 1, the small red brick building used for storage and as a temporary exhibition Gallery was built in 1954, as part of a programme of work that provided essential facilities. There had been an ambitious scheme of proposals for a 'Museum Block' prepared by Sir Percy Thomas and Son in the previous year, in spite of a Treasury warning in 1951 that it could not make capital grants to Welsh institutions. These proposals relate to Peate's ideas for a suitable building to display his collection. He

notes in an Appeal for Funds in the 1956 Handbook for the Welsh Folk Museum that ‘a sum of £250,000 is required for the erection of the Museum block’ and again in the 1959 Handbook he writes, ‘when funds are available to build the Exhibition Block it is hoped that all significant aspects of Welsh folk life can be illustrated in the new galleries. The present exhibition is housed in what will be ultimately a storage room’. Thereafter the Reports note Peate’s annual dismay at the lack of progress, until receipt of the Treasury letter in November 1964 and the first meeting of the Building Committee in December.

The date has a wider significance, in that Labour won the 1964 general election on October 15<sup>th</sup> then created the post of Secretary of State for Wales on October 17<sup>th</sup> thus fulfilling a pledge made in their 1959 Election Manifesto; ‘[t]he time has now come for the special identity of Wales to be recognised by the appointment of a Secretary of State’. This was reiterated in the 1964 Labour Manifesto ‘New Britain’, Plan for the Regions and in the policy statement ‘Signposts to the New Wales’ (Labour Party, 1964).

Jim Griffiths, MP for Llanelli was the first to hold the Office of Secretary of State for Wales. The 1966 Manifesto repeats the 1959 idea that ‘Labour respects the differences of culture and tradition of Scotland and Wales...For the first time there is a Secretary of State for Wales in the Cabinet. The Welsh Office is already making an impact’ (<http://www.labour-party.org.uk/manifestos/1966/1966-labour-manifesto.shtml> - accessed 12/10/12).

The Welsh Office was established in April 1965 and immediately became the ‘sponsoring department’ of the Main Building project. As the Welsh Arts Council was not established until 1967, the funding for the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building was handled by the Welsh Office from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1965.

The 1964 Labour Party Manifesto had promised to ‘give much more generous support to the Arts Council, the theatre, orchestras, concert halls, museums and art galleries’. The 1966 Labour Party Manifesto recorded that the 1965 White Paper, A Policy for the Arts, was transforming the cultural situation by providing ‘access for

all' through substantially increased financial support for the Arts Council of Great Britain and museums. This initiative was understood as 'the hallmark of a civilised country' with its political and philosophical foundations laid in the 1950s through the high minded ideals of Socialists like Aneurin Bevan and Roy Jenkins (Black, 2006:324 <http://nknu.pbworks.com/f/Making+Britain+a+Gayer+and+More+cultivated+country.pdf> - accessed 21/10/2012).

Jennie Lee was made Britain's first Minister for the Arts in 1964 under the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works. This role was moved to the Department for Education and Science in 1965. At the same time, responsibility for the Arts Council of Great Britain was moved from the Treasury to the Department for Education and Science. Baroness Lee's White Paper, 'A Policy for the Arts - First Steps' issued in 1965 advocated significant funding increases to the arts and museums. This was a time of growing activity in the cultural world, as the regenerative and civilising powers of cultural and arts developments were being recognised.

Lee had been married to Aneurin Bevan who had died in 1960. Black (2006:328) argues that 'Lee envisaged her work extending Bevan's'. This relates to Bevan's amendment to the 1948 Local Government Act, in the form of section 132, which allowed local authorities to spend up to 6d. in the pound for the provision of entertainment and places of entertainment through music and the arts for the workers. Unfortunately very few local authorities had taken advantage of this opportunity. However in a time of enormous social change and with a Labour Party that 'regarded traditional culture as civilising, uplifting and a barrier to commercial mass culture' (Black, 2006:335) and who were committed to supporting the regions, art, museums and a growth in education opportunities, Bevan's aspirations were finally realised through central government initiatives.

There was undoubtedly a great deal of negotiation, financial analysis and financial planning already in place with regard to the proposals for the Welsh Folk Museum before the change of government, but the dates suggest that the incoming Labour Party expedited the project in line with their Manifesto aims to help recognise the



‘special identity of Wales’ and their support for museums. It was agreed at the first meeting of the Museum Building Committee to proceed with the designs ‘as fast as money would permit’.

Minute number 396, recorded from a meeting of the Welsh Folk Museum committee held on 9/7/1965 refers to the response to requests to reorganise the phased funding to enable the building to be completed in one contract. This minute also suggests that the Welsh Folk Museum Main Building was part of a wider programme of investment and improvement for the regions as initiated by the Labour Party and the Minister for the Arts; ‘the phasing of the twelve year programme for the Welsh institutions could not be amended: it involved a total of £700,000, was confirmed in the recent White Paper (A Policy for Arts) and as the Welsh share of the total programme is already a favourable one (the figures for comparison being £5 million for England and Scotland) the Secretary of State felt he could not reasonably press for an increase since such an increase could be achieved only by reductions in the English and Scottish programmes’.

This is clear evidence that a sympathetic political regime with an understanding of the need for such a project but more importantly, with the financial programmes and timetables in place for development, is essential for a project like St. Fagans to be realised. Having pledged recognition for the special identity of Wales through the appointment of the Secretary of State and stated that ‘Labour respects the differences of culture and tradition of Scotland and Wales’ this support could be interpreted as a populist move at a time of growing Welsh nationalist activity and wider social and political unrest that was challenging traditional collective identities. For some in the Labour Party it may have been to achieve parity for Wales, for others it may have been about retaining support or about defusing the challenge. Adamson (1991:129) clarifies this by arguing that it is ‘a transformation in state ideology in terms of its partial recognition and acceptance of the nationalist definition of Wales as a separate cultural and social entity, distinct in many ways from England’. The long process of realising the project will now be narrated, based on primary sources. It will demonstrate the way in which the architects found a space within

which they could influence the design of the building, and fashioned a visual identity they believed appropriate for a small European nation.

### ***6.6 Making the Main Building a reality.***

A Building Committee was formed and its first meeting was held at the National Museum on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 1964. The Treasury letter, discussed above, had been received in November. The figures were the same as those recommended previously and included more information on the order of work and layout of Phase I of the Folk Museum building, which was to include Technical and Administrative accommodation, Gallery No.1 and a reserve gallery (the north exhibition wing), Storage and part of the Entrance Hall, an external covered exhibition space and garages. Phase II was to include Gallery No. 2 and its reserve gallery (the south exhibition wing), the remainder of the Entrance Hall, the Restaurant and Terrace. This financial arrangement was continued by the Welsh Office who became the ‘sponsoring department’ from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1965 when the Welsh Office was established.

At the Building Committee meeting it was agreed that the building should be designed as a whole and ‘should proceed as fast as money would permit’. It was also resolved that the architects ‘proceed forthwith with the preparation of drawings and schedules for the complete building’. I. Dale Owen and W. Sweet were representing the Thomas practice (11/12/1964:13 item 28).

Owen had been persuaded by Thomas to remain in Wales and was appointed as Thomas’s personal assistant and designer in 1958. As noted in chapter 4, Thomas had realised that there was a need for a more modernist architectural approach in the practice and Owen would help achieve this. Owen had worked with Walter Gropius and the Architect’s Collaborative in the U.S.A. after studying for a Post-graduate Degree at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Degree in Planning. He returned to Britain to work with Sir William Holford on the post-war planning of London and then to Wales to work on the new town at Cwmbran. The 1965 drawing shows a marked difference in stylistic approach to the 1955 design

(Figure 6.3) even though the general massing of the constituent building blocks was somewhat similar.



See Figure 6.4. 1965 perspective drawing of proposals for the Main Building at St. Fagans by the Percy Thomas Practice.

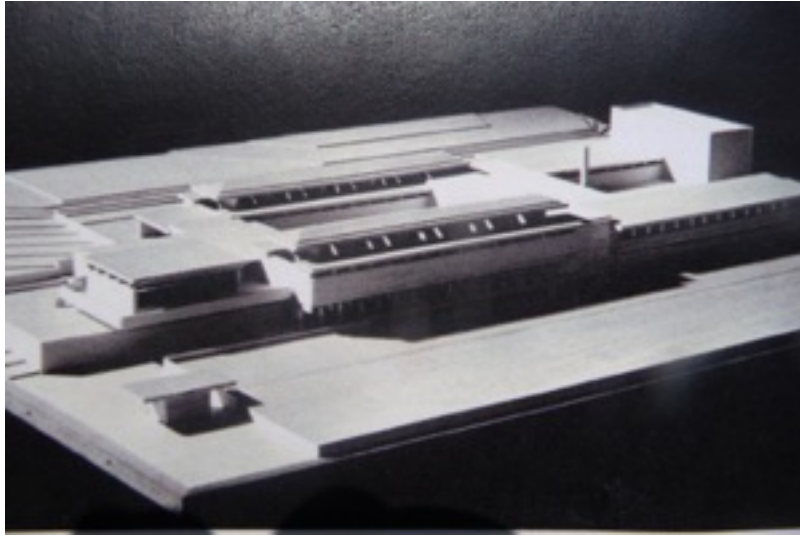
At the April 1965 Building Committee meeting, the Architect's Preliminary Design Report was presented, approved and adopted. It was also resolved that Owen, as partner in charge, and the project architect Hilling visit several of the Scandinavian museums to research design solutions for the Welsh Folk Museum building. Peate and others on his staff had long associations with curators and keepers at these establishments; coincidentally the Keeper of Material Culture visited Oslo, Lillehammer and Stockholm in June to study modern methods of museum display and was therefore able to meet up with Owen and Hilling in Norway (9/4/1965:57). The first contribution of £36,000 towards the cost of building the museum block had been allocated, as Grant-in-Aid from the Welsh Office (9/4/1965:57). Within a month, basic preparations such as site investigation, fee structures etc. were organised. It was anticipated that the whole building and contents would cost £355,000 excluding the cost of finishing.

Owen and Hilling visited several Scandinavian museums for their research and recommended three quite major modifications to the design as a result of this trip; regarding the size and location of the shop and restaurant and, greater flexibility of

the layout of the exhibition space ‘to allow for the possibility of additional galleries’ (18/06/1965:85).

About this time, Peate was invited to take part in a BBC television programme on European Folk Museums (18/06/1965 item 338). This is evidence that his ideas about folk museums and their role as the cultural centre of the nation were being circulated to the general public. He asked for permission to show a plan of the proposals, which was granted. We can only speculate on the enormous satisfaction that approval for this display would have given Peate after decades of fighting to achieve a space for the exhibition of the National Welsh Folk Collection.

The Architect’s Progress Report on the Final Design Proposals was presented to the Building Committee in August. For practical purposes, a model was used to help illustrate the scheme and enhance the drawings, which showed a building of similar massing to the earlier scheme as noted before but in a more deliberately modernist style, heavily influenced by Scandinavian design ideas on modern architecture. This would not only avoid the error of pastiche for a building that was to be the first major architectural feature to greet the visitor before exploration of parkland containing authentic, traditional buildings. It was also in order to harmonise with the ‘essential’ setting of the parkland and contrast with the traditional buildings by using this modern idiom which would express an image of a modern national, cultural institution (design decisions will be discussed and analysed in the next chapter).



See Figure 6.5. Model of John Hilling's design for the Museum Building.

The sloping site was formerly a tennis court and was chosen for its good village and castle access and the slight elevation from the car park added to the impact of the long, relatively low building in neutral colours and traditional materials, set against a background of woods that are in their turn slightly elevated. The layout of the interior exhibition space was designed to encourage perambulation around the display galleries (as above, design decisions will be discussed later in this chapter). The design philosophy of Scandinavian museums was meant to convey and encourage an interaction of art, architecture and landscape, that was unpretentious, homelike and in a human scale that reflected democratic, social ideas (Lane, 2000:121, Cherry, 2006:31, 63). The Welsh museum building was a thoroughly contemporary design solution free of direct historical references that could detract from the traditional buildings beyond and the artefacts to be displayed within.

The plans showed some alterations from the preliminary ones; to include an increase in the size of the shop and public areas and a balcony beside the restaurant area. These amendments led to an increase in costs of £12,000. The Architects proposed offsetting some of this increase by reducing costs for the administrative area; by building the partition walls of brick, saving £3,500, and eliminating the humidity control system from the reserve textile collection area, saving £2,000. The Mechanical and Electrical Contractors, Messrs. Parsons, Brown and Partners were appointed. There were also discussions on the timing of the project, and concern

generated by news of the ‘recent Government restrictions on building’ (26/8/1965:119).

At the October meeting of the Building Committee, the positioning of the dining terrace was discussed. As it would have cost £2,700 to align it with the level of the restaurant, it was decided to build it as originally planned. The cost of levelling and draining the lawn in front of the proposed museum block was estimated at £4,000. It was therefore decided that the museum staff would do this work, to save money. These decisions highlight the financial constraints that the Museum was operating under and the determination of the Museum staff to overcome them, to finally achieve the construction of the National Folk Museum.

A parallel meeting of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee was held on October 8<sup>th</sup> at which it was reported that the Chancellor had issued a statement noting that the starting dates for capital projects were to be postponed for six months, thus realising the fears expressed by the Building Committee in August. An architect’s perspective drawing of the proposed Museum Block at the Welsh Folk Museum, that was subsequently printed in the 1964/5 Annual Report (opposite p.43), was shown to the committee at this meeting (8/10/1965:134). See Figure 6.4.

The six month delay to the commencement date was reported to the next Building Committee in November 1965. The Architects suggested that the contract start date be set in October 1966, just over half way between the previously proposed start date of June and the delayed date of December, adding that if the date had to be delayed to December, the extra three months could be used gainfully to test the suitability of the design, lighting and other design features such as the eventual layout of the galleries and other areas (24/11/1965:11).

The Welsh Folk Museum Committee commented on the possible delay in their meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1966. It was also recorded that the Welsh Office contribution for Phase I would be limited to 90% of the total cost of £185, 000.

The main contract for building work, Stage I, was sent out to tender in June 1966. A number of south Wales contractors were invited to tender (23/6/1966:83). Seven contractors, from this list of contractors, submitted tenders by the next Building Committee in September. The tenders came in at a range from £175,000 to £193,000, a difference of over 10% from the lowest to the highest figure. The Quantity Surveyor reported that only approximately £167,000 was available for Stage I, exclusive of professional fees, and admitted that he was expecting a tender of approximately £175,000. He suggested that by reducing the reserves included in the Bill of Quantities and the tenders for the Mechanical and Electrical Services, the necessary savings could be made. Also, if the Welsh Office would agree to underwrite the cost of Selective Employment Tax, the tender, submitted by Messrs. Rees and Kirby Ltd. of Swansea, of £175,418 with an extra £2,800 for the Tax, could be reduced to the amount available for the work. This was accepted and the commencement date was set for 24<sup>th</sup> October 1966. Planning permission had been received from Glamorgan County Council and Building Regulation permission from Cardiff Rural District Council. Other items discussed at this meeting were the selection of brick samples and a model of the boiler-house stack, as there were concerns that the height may need reducing. The architects were asked to design moveable screens and discuss furnishings as an ex-contract item (26/9/1966:125/6).

The height of the boiler-house stack was again discussed at the October Building Committee meeting, where it was decided that the proposed height of 55-60 feet was unacceptable, in spite of advice given by Messrs. Parsons, Brown and Partners, the Mechanical and Electrical Contractors, who advocated oil as a cheap means of heating, and argued that oil prices would need to increase 50% and gas prices decrease 50% to justify choosing gas (21/10/1966). Gas was chosen as the means of heating in order to contain the height of the stack to 30 feet maximum. This decision proved prescient as the supply of cheap oil imports to Britain that had begun in the 1960s, was later curtailed. It also suggests that the Building Committee were aiming to achieve an aesthetically pleasing design for the new

museum building that would be sympathetic to the parkland setting and traditional rural buildings displaced within the park.

It was noted in the 1966/67 Annual Report that '[t]he construction of the Severn bridge has added greatly to the number of visitors to the Folk Museum, and parties from the south and south-west of England now come with increasing regularity' (1966/67:38). Improved transport links between south Wales and England had been recommended in the 1930s by Professor Marquand to help stimulate recovery from the Depression but the improvements only occurred after the traditional industries had been nationalised, new industries had been set up in south Wales and government departments were beginning to be decentralised. The extension of the M4 across south Wales was via the long awaited Severn Bridge, for which Thomas was consultant architect. It became a potent symbol of the 'New Wales' (Day, 2002:50).

The increased accessibility and popularity of the museum, '[v]isitors from overseas now constitute a considerable part of the Folk Museum's public' (Annual Report, 1966/67:44) would have added to the urgency to resolve the split contract, which was discussed at the next meeting of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1967. The problems associated with this issue, of a building contract phased in two stages with an interval of three years between the two stages, were becoming more evident as work progressed. The Committee were particularly concerned about the considerable extra expense involved and the reality of renewed disturbance when the second contract began. It had also become apparent, as the first contract progressed, that there would be technical complications. It was resolved to try and amend this difficult situation by bringing forward the second contract to progress immediately after completion of the first. The Director, Dr. D. Dilwyn John, reminded the Committee of the recommendation of the Seventh Report of the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries for 1961-1964 which had made an urgent recommendation for an early review of the twelve year programme and to that end it was resolved to invite the Secretary of State for an ur-



gent visit and Peate was asked to prepare a Memorandum on the possible anticipated developments for the next ten years.

It was reported at the meeting of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1967, that Professor Idris Foster had visited the museum, as a representative of the Welsh Office on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June to investigate the situation. Unfortunately, the response received from the Welsh Office shortly after only reiterated that department's previous stance on the issue;

'[the] Secretary of State, while appreciating the fact that this division of the work creates certain difficulties, finds that it is still not possible to deviate from the basic conclusion which I (the writer of the letter) conveyed to you on his behalf in my letter of 15/07/1965 (Council Minutes 23/7/1965 item 438)'.

The Committee resolved 'that the Council be recommended to pursue all possible means of bringing forward the second contract to continue immediately after the completion of the first'.

Peate's Memorandum was also discussed in this meeting. As described before, Sir Cyril Fox's original desire was to 'create two constituents, with separate administrative control, of the same Institution' in 1948 (1967:77g). This principle was initially accepted and, the President of the National Museum even went as far as inviting Peate to accept the post of Director of the Welsh Folk Museum. However the post was never formally offered and he was made Keeper-in-charge. (The reason for the sudden change of heart may lie in the 1948 Minutes of the Council and the Court, held at the National Museum but it is beyond the scope of this thesis to pursue the answer to what is essentially a question of organisational politics).

Peate's report continues with an explanation of the impact of the practical difficulties and defects resulting from their failure to implement separate autonomy for the Welsh Folk Museum from the beginning, noting that amendments to the administrative structure in 1953 and 1962 had addressed some of the difficulties but overall it was still an 'unsatisfactory half-way house' (1967:77h). Peate added that,

as Curator (his title was changed in 1953) he had only been invited to visit the Treasury on one occasion to discuss building grants and it was on this visit that the Treasury official described the Welsh Folk Museum as an ‘extension of Cardiff’ (1967:77i). He blamed the current financial and phasing difficulties on this legacy and the failure of the Treasury to engage with the idea of the Welsh Folk Museum as something much more than an extension to the National Museum;

‘[i]n the civil service mind the Welsh Folk Museum does not exist as an entity apart from Cardiff (although it is five miles distant); it is just an extension like the N.M.W. west wing and therefore even a contract of no more than £355,000 has to be phased’ (1967:77i).

As a result of this Memorandum it was resolved unanimously to urge the Museum Council to address this anomaly. Slight progress on the move towards an autonomous Welsh Folk Museum had occurred by the October meeting of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee, no doubt helped by the urgent need to resolve this issue and press the case for an autonomous institution which would be better served by seamlessly continuing with Phase II of the building. The administrative changes necessary were explained in a pre-circulated Memorandum written by Peate. These would have to be approved by the Museum Council and Court before gaining approval from the Welsh Office which would probably have had to consult the Treasury prior to its agreement. A Special Statute was needed to amend the Charter or alternatively for the creation of two new Charters, to be voted upon twice by the Museum Court at meetings set at least a year apart according to the appropriate legal advice on the process (6/10/1967).

Phase I continued to progress without incident, the December Building Committee meeting noted all the technical details and approvals only (5/12/1967).

A Council meeting in January 1968 approved in principle the need for constitutional amendments, dependent upon consistency with the terms of the Charter and Statutes, good management as a whole and the ‘the legal input of Mr. Roderic

Bowen QC, MA, LLB'. A separate committee was appointed to consider the Constitution (26/1/1968).

Oddly, given the financial restrictions that were disrupting development at the Welsh Folk Museum, the Council meeting of April 1968 recorded that the Standing Commission on Museums and Galleries had reported that 'the need for a Regional Museum of North Wales seems to us clear'. In September of the previous year there had been an exploratory meeting on the proposed establishment of an Open Air Industrial Archaeology Museum. The Annual Report of 1967/68 recorded that '[t]he Ancient Monuments Board for Wales has asked the Museum to give urgent attention to the setting up of an open air industrial archaeology museum' (1967/68:15). It would seem that the national institutions of Wales were ambitious to develop sites which were representative of all aspects of society in Wales and continue enlarging the museum in spite of financial constraints.

The June 1968 Building Committee meeting noted the transfer of the construction of the toilet block from Phase II to Phase I, as agreed in the 5/12/1967 Building Committee meeting and that the work would be paid for out of the Welsh Office Museum Private Fund. The authorised grant for Phase I construction was increased to £196,060 (Annual Report, 1967/68:51). The other significant item was that the main contract completion date was delayed due to the take-over of the mechanical sub-contractors (19/6/1968).

As a result the members of staff were finally able to move into the new administrative offices on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1968, some six months later than originally anticipated. Work began some months after this on the preparation of the Gallery ready for opening to the public in 1970. A photograph of the new museum building was printed opposite page 10 in the Annual Report, 1968/9.



See Figure 6.6. Gallery One from the north-west in 1968/1969.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1968 the new administrative arrangement giving a fuller degree of autonomy to the Welsh Folk Museum, within, the National Museum framework, was implemented (Annual Report, 1968/9:43).

Several issues of note were recorded in the April 1969 meetings:

- a). 'Mr J. B. Hilling ARIBA former member of the staff of Sir Percy Thomas and Son, the museum's architects, had prepared a specially drawn map of the museum area and its exhibited buildings: this he had presented to the Folk Museum in appreciation of the cordial relations which had existed between the museum staff and himself. The map would be used in a new edition of the handbook' (WFM committee meeting 11/4/1969 item 220).
- b). The staff of the Welsh Folk Museum requested that their contribution to the Annual Report was printed in Welsh as well as in English (WFM committee meeting 11/4/1969 item 221).
- c). Four very distinguished American Architects; Wallace Harrison, John McLean Johansen, Philip Johnson and Edward Durrell Stone offered to present a bust of Frank Lloyd Wright to the Museum to mark his centenary year (and presumably in recognition of his Welsh ancestry). It was sculpted by a student of Frank Lloyd Wright (Council meeting 25/4/1969 item 263).

These are all examples of small but collectively significant actions. Hilling's map was effectively a celebration of the realisation of the long held dream of Peate to found an institution, to record the vanishing way of life of his beloved 'gwerin' and treasure the associated structures and artefacts, which he interpreted as a nation building project. This had proven so successful that the staff, some of whom would have been collecting dialects and oral traditions, had become confident enough to request a bilingual Annual Report with the result that the main body of the Annual Report for 1969/70 was published in both Welsh and English for the first time (1969/70:14). The donation of the sculpture by the American architects was tacit acknowledgement of the important role of the National Museum, as keeper of Wales's wider historical connections as well as its primary role of encapsulating Wales in miniature.

A further report on the proposed establishment of an Open Air Industrial Archaeology Museum was presented to the Council on 25/4/1969. This report clarifies the position as an aspirational one that had 'a great deal of support in principle' and was in fact a response to pressure from organisations who had 'earmarked' machines for an industrial museum. Articles and correspondence in the press kept the issue live but the lack of progress was admitted. An article written by D.Morgan Rees of the National Museum for their magazine, *Amgueddfa* highlights the frustrations of many in the world of industrial archaeology, and the continuing significance for Welsh identity of the Scandinavian examples: '...a recent tour of a number of metalliferous mines, old industrial sites, modern iron and steel works and museums in Sweden and Norway revealed an awareness of the need to record and preserve sites of old works and associated items of plant and machinery related to periods of industrial development. It was surprising to find...how much has already been done...Similar achievements in Wales would see us now with say, a blast furnace at Dowlais, an old tinplate rolling mill on view to the public in Llanelli, an engine house at a lead mine ...' (25/4/1969:86)

The awareness of the importance of preserving and/or recording the more recent industrial past was a new phenomenon. As noted above, these ideas fed into the

revision of Welsh historiography which later opened up concepts of Welshness, as discussed by Adamson.

The Welsh Folk Museum Committee met on 3<sup>rd</sup> October later that year, 1969, to discuss Phase II of the new museum buildings which would include the southern galleries, the remainder of the entrance hall, the shop and restaurant. A letter had been received from the Welsh Office stating that construction could begin in the second half of the financial year 1970-1971 and consequently that the Architects should be asked to prepare drawings.

The official opening of the New Gallery for the display of Material Culture was held on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 1970 although the general public had been allowed in since 26<sup>th</sup> March.

The Welsh Folk Museum Building Committee met on 21<sup>st</sup> August 1970 to discuss the Main Contract for the Second Building Phase. The Architects reported that the estimated cost inclusive of professional fees, the clerk of works salary and furniture would be £201,000. Peate disagreed with the Architect's plans for the central courtyard which he hoped would accommodate a display area for farm wagons etc. only and not be part of a covered access route. Owen explained that the area had been designed to accommodate both purposes. It should also be noted that Peate may well have mis-read the plans, as the changes in levels from south to north across the courtyard would have made it difficult to use as a display area but it is evidence of Peate acting as a client with a clear idea of the future uses of spaces. The Chairman of the Building Committee recommended that in future there was need for closer consultation on details.

The Architects also reported that the new administrative block could be built in one or two stages. If it was built in one stage of 3,000 sq. ft. the total cost would be £18,750 but it was also possible to leave the ground floor to be 'filled in' at a later date saving £8,250. As these costs were not included in the total estimate for Phase II and could form a variation of the main contract, it was agreed to aim to construct

the two storey building in one stage and meanwhile discuss the financial implications with the Welsh Office.

However, the overall budget still had to be largely adhered to. In reply to the Architects suggestion that the light grey facing brick used on the Phase I building could be applied to the north and south faces of the original red brick storage block, presumably to offer architectural coherence with this earlier building, the Curator recommended investigating whether it was feasible to use Museum labour for this work to save the expense of using the contractor.

The Architects and Curator agreed on the need for carefully sited trees and areas of cobbled paving around the car park to limit the impact of large areas of tarmac-adam. The popularity and success of the Welsh Folk Museum was partly contingent upon being relatively easily accessible for the general public and school parties therefore provision for car and coach parking had to account for the most popular days which thus necessitated such a large area of tarmac. The visual effect of this was to be hopefully softened by careful planting and varying the textures of the area (21/8/1970).

The Building Committee met again within a month and invited the two departmental Keepers to attend to ensure continuity after the retirement in February 1971 of Curator Peate as the contract for the second Phase was scheduled to start on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1971.

The details of the layout of Phase II were discussed, particularly the issue of greater storage space that was to be accessible by museum staff only. To that end Owen reported that by lowering the terrace level and raising the shop floor level to that of the Entrance podium level, 1,100 sq. ft. of Reserve Store area could be realised. Also as a result of this reorganisation, the shop area would increase by 65%, the cloakroom area by 11% resulting in a total increase of 2,400 sq. ft. at an additional cost of £3,500 overall and a net cost of £2,000. As this would mean that the contract figure would increase to £203,000 it was conditional upon extra finance being organised. A further £2,000 would also need to be made available to cover the cost

of glass walling to the open exhibition gallery below Gallery number two, to protect the exhibits from the elements and the area from use as a thoroughfare. Various preparatory staging dates needed to be approved and the recommendation of Messrs. Victor Slowikowski, James Blackshaw and Partners as structural engineering consultants.

The financial arrangements for the Phase II contract costs were to be:

1971/72 £85,000

1972/73 £97,000

1973/74 Contingencies beyond period of £8,000

A maximum of £40,000 had already 'been authorised for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 1971' but only £10,000 would be needed by that date. It was important that the Welsh Office was informed of this under-spend. (25/9/1970:120).

These amendments and re-thinking of some details are to be anticipated in any major building project. Though there is occasional evidence of differences of opinion, the general picture is one of designers and client in tune in relation to overall objectives and underlying principles.

The Welsh Folk Museum Committee meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> October paid tribute to Peate for his dynamic qualities and devoted service over forty four years before his retirement at the end of February 1971. The Keepers reported that it was his 'vision and immense industry' that had established the National Folk Collection and Welsh Folk Museum: 'From early days he became aware of what the Scandinavian countries had achieved by their exhibiting of folk collections in open-air museums. He worked tirelessly to achieve the same ends in Wales. He saw his vision realised with a gift in 1946 of St. Fagan's Castle by Lord Plymouth to be established as a National Folk Museum for Wales...it has developed rapidly to become one of the foremost folk museums in Europe' (2/10/1970:131).



As noted in the introduction, two of the key themes that have emerged from the research are Peate's central role for the realisation of the project and that it was influenced by Scandinavian ideas. This is confirmed by Dr. Gerallt Nash, the current Senior Curator of Historic Buildings, in an answer to a question about Peate's influence on the development of the Museum who said that 'in a sense he was central to...the whole way of thinking about what this museum should be, he was certainly the leading light, he was very powerful and committed in his thoughts and from the outset he saw it as a place where traditional crafts and traditional buildings could be presented to the public...to show how people lived in the past' (date of interview 14/2/2011). Nash also confirmed the extent of the influence of the Scandinavian museum movement on Peate suggesting that 'he certainly drew a lot of inspiration from the Scandinavians. The whole concept of the modern day open-air museum started in Scandinavia...this is where he came from. He wanted to display the Welsh past in its entirety, including the buildings'.

It was also reported that the new administration wing could be financed by classifying it as 'minor building works' and funded from the 1971/72 general grant-in-aid, if possible, but in the November meeting of the Building Committee it was reported that the application for funds had been refused by the Welsh Office (13/11/1970). The amendments resulting from the reorganisation of space were however incorporated along with some other minor additions. The Quantity Surveyor sounded a note of warning about the 'disturbing and exceptional increases in building prices' over the last year due to 'recent high percentage wage awards and material price increases' and the committee gave its authority to the Chair and members of the Welsh Folk Museum Committee to 'decide the list of contractors which the Architects would submit to the Curator for approval early in December' (13/11/1970).

The first meeting of the Building Committee for 1971 was held on 19<sup>th</sup> February. Owen and James Carter are minuted as representing the Architects, the Percy Thomas Partnership. Norman Percy Thomas retired in 1971 and handed over the chairmanship to Fred Jennett. The change of name reflected this new arrangement.

There were several items of amendment to the drawings for Phase II to report. These had occurred as a result of detailed discussions with the Curator and Museum staff and involved alterations to the Covered Exhibition Area, Agriculture Gallery and Textile Gallery.

The contract cost had risen to approximately £242,000 to account for the glazed screen and additional storage plus £4,000 for the security system, £1,200 for the headroom increase to the Agriculture Gallery, £1,100 for lining to the Textile and Agricultural Galleries, £500 for extra large doors to the Exhibition Area. The remaining £30,000 was to account for a 15% overall increase in costs up to and during the contract period.

Eight contractors were invited to tender out of a list of eleven, on a fixed price basis. The tenders were sent out on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February. The Treasurer of the Building Committee was authorised to open the tenders and decide on the winning tender on 8<sup>th</sup> April with reference to the Museum Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> April, if a clear decision was not apparent. However there was the thorny issue of financing the substantial increase of £41,000 over the figure agreed by the Welsh Office for Stage II. It was agreed that 'other sources of finance should be explored to bridge the difference in amount' otherwise parts of the contract would have to be abandoned even though 'it had already been reduced to the minimum'. A meeting between the Architects, Museum Officials and Welsh Office representatives was to take place between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> April so that the Council could be 'informed of the out- come before making their final decision' (19/2/1971:26).

It was reported at the Council meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> April that six out of the eight contractors had tendered, with a lowest tender of £233,769 from F.G.Minter (South Wales) Ltd. The cost of loose furniture, the Architects and Consultants fees and the Clerk of Works salary had to be added to this figure making a total sum of £269,000.

The sum of £170,000 had been authorised in 1964 for the second stage of building works. This amount had subsequently been increased to £200,000 but at a meeting

on 20<sup>th</sup> April a Welsh Office official indicated that it might be possible to increase to £215,000. The Museum representatives and the Architects commented that this amounted to less than a 25% increase on the original figure whilst figures obtained from the Department of the Environment and others, indicated that building costs had increased from 40-46% since that time. The Quantity Surveyor followed this meeting by confirming these figures to the Welsh Office and asking for urgent discussion 'as the contractors could claim the right to adjust their tender after 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1971 (23/4/1971:54).

Finally in July the Treasurer was able to report to the Welsh Folk Museum Committee that the Welsh Office contribution would be £230,000 and 'owing to certain omissions of non vital items which could be made from the original contract sum the total price had been reduced from £269,000 to £248,000'. The Welsh Office had also assured the Museum that the £18,000 shortfall would be met, which meant that Messrs. F.G.Minter could begin on site as soon as practicable. In fact construction had begun on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1971 with the clearing away of top soil (Annual Report, 1970/71:33).

Meanwhile, undeterred by the current difficulties in obtaining finances, the Director of the National Museum was preparing a memorandum listing a further programme of long term developments for the National Museum and the Welsh Folk Museum, to be submitted at the next meeting of the Council as part of forward planning for beyond the twelve year building programme of the National Museum. This initiative could seem premature given that the agreed twelve year building programme was scheduled to end in 1977, but as has been seen by the delays and difficulties encountered during the building work at the St. Fagans site due to obtaining government finances, forward planning was necessary. The list of items required for the Welsh Folk Museum included extra office and storage accommodation, more gallery space for temporary and permanent exhibitions, a craft centre, a lecture theatre and accommodation for educational services. 'No plans have yet been prepared, nor has financial provision been made' (23/7/1971).

In May 1971 a government White Paper on 'Future Policy for Museums and Galleries' anticipated 'an expanded programme of new building and improvements for the National Institutions'. However, it was reported in the Council meeting, that 'Wales had been dismissed in one sentence' although 'the Welsh Office had assured the Director that the needs of Wales had been fully represented and that there was every expectation that the additional grants for the National Museum of Wales would be at least on a level comparable with those of the English and Scottish institutions' (23/7/1971). These grants would have been considered essential by the Director, not only as a display of parity, but to address his complaint that with regard to the subjects represented, particularly 'the major intellectual revolutions of the century' ... 'British Museums are behind American... and the National Museum of Wales is backward... The Museum has a special and unusual responsibility as the national museum of a bilingual nation' (Council meeting, 23/7/1971 Agendum 5).

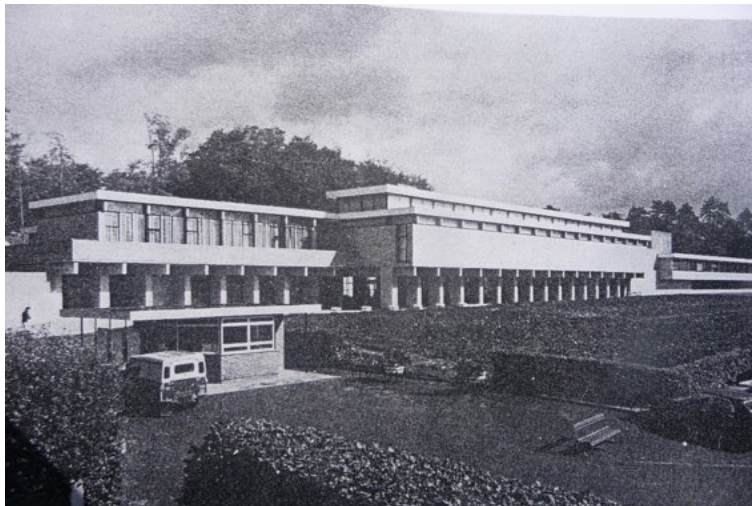
The only significant items with regard to the building of Phase II was that a refrigeration plant was installed in the Spring of 1972, it was originally omitted from the 1966 schedule to save money, and the Architect's reported that they anticipated completion by the end of October 1972, eighteen months before the contract completion date (Welsh Folk Museum Committee, 7/4/1972). It was in fact formally completed and officially handed over by the Contractors, Messrs. F.G.Minter (South Wales) Ltd. on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1973 (Welsh Folk Museum, 6/4/1973).

The Curator wrote in the 1972/73 Annual Report of the 'attractive modern restaurant which will accommodate up to 120 persons'. Priority had been given to the completion of the refreshment facilities over the Galleries and administration areas, as the museum had become such a popular visitor destination. Also, the revenue from admission charges were taken into account when setting the Welsh Office grant (Annual Report, 1971/72:12).

A Building Committee meeting was held on 19<sup>th</sup> July 1973 at which the minutes of the previous meeting of the Building Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1971 were

approved. There were items of minor remedial work that needed completing and the Architects 'reported that the courtyard was intended as an amenity area which could also be used for exhibition purposes if required'. The issue of funding the extension to the Administration Wing was still proving problematic due to the huge increase in costs. It was suggested to fund it over three years under the Minor Building Works allocation but this would have to be discussed with the Welsh Office.

A photograph of the new extension appeared in the 1973/74 Annual Report, opposite page 33, and it was reported that '[p]robably the most important single development in the Welsh Folk Museum during the current year was the completion of the new Agricultural Gallery' which was officially opened 5<sup>th</sup> April 1974 (1973/74:35).



See Figure 6.7. The new extension 1973/1974.

The slow process of full development of the Welsh Folk Museum continued, especially the 'much needed extension to the administrative wing', which the Contractor Geoff Stark began in autumn 1974 (Annual Report, 1974/75:14). It was built as a minor works project with the £60,000 funding spread over three years.

The Agricultural Vehicles Gallery (below the Agricultural Gallery) was opened to the public on April 1975 and the shop was opened a few months later, in July. Fi-

nally, the new administrative wing was handed over on 9<sup>th</sup> February 1976 effectively completing the museum building (Annual Report, 1975/76:37).

### ***6.7 The design of the building.***

It had been a long, complicated process, taking several decades, to fulfil the requirement for a building that was considered an ‘essential auxiliary to the National Museum of Wales’ in 1943. Through patient determination on the part of certain key figures, the central building for the Welsh Folk Museum was finally completed. The story of this struggle is illustrative of the gradual and sometimes difficult process of nation building that has occurred in Wales for well over a century, from the time of the revival of cultural nationalism when demands for separate institutions were first made by a cultural elite, through the growing political consciousness of Wales, to shaping a shared collective identity. It is also an illustration of how the built environment can never be a straightforward representation of an idea and in this case due to the compromises that had to be made to accommodate the funding issues. There were also differing conceptions of nationhood evolving to compete with Peate’s singular vision after 1964 as noted in chapter 3. The limitations of Peate’s creation at St. Fagans later led to initiatives that partially accounted for the reality of a plural Welsh society. This issue is currently being addressed by further developments at the site.

Peate’s idea of Welshness and focus was the ‘agricultural rural past’. Nash (interview 14/2/2011) records that ‘he conveniently overlooked the fact that the vast majority of Welsh speakers lived in the industrial south and south east...although if you read some of his early writings he did say that we should be looking at other parts of Wales as well’. Peate felt the urgency of the ‘one minute to midnight’ challenge for the traditional buildings that were described in his book, *The Welsh House* (1940), that were victims of industrialisation and mechanisation. He gathered examples of ‘endangered species’ for re-erection and display in the Castle grounds and was collecting building types from across Wales. Nash (interview) notes that the museum was only being offered traditional rural buildings, such as

cottages, barns, mills that had become redundant or were inefficient, from its inception in the late 1940s until the 1980s when the legislation regarding the removal of historic buildings was improved. In the 1980s buildings from industrial areas were offered, as they were still able to be removed. The establishment of Cadw and English Heritage in 1984 after the National Heritage Act of 1983 meant that there was a small window of opportunity to address the limited typology of buildings displayed, before rare and nationally important buildings were listed and so not able to be demolished and moved.

Peate's vision of a National Folk Museum for Wales as the cultural centre of the nation was inspired by the Scandinavian folk museums and was very much conceived as part of a project for developing and expressing national identity. However, whilst the exhibits were originally drawn from a traditional rural past the museum building, designed by the Thomas practice, expressed contemporary architectural ideas. This approach to the design fitted in with, ideas of not detracting from the built exhibits and the modernist agenda that all the major Welsh political parties had aspired to since the 1930s, when it was initially recognised that the infrastructure of Wales needed diversifying and modernising. It was also natural perhaps, that an aspirant, small, young nation would look to successful examples of other young nations, as with the Scandinavian countries, for inspiration and guidance on forming the cultural and institutional buildings that are a key part of the 'complex web of institutional and cultural practices' (Thompson, 1999:248) for shaping national identity. At this time there were no precedents for buildings of this type and function in Wales, and any illustrations had to come from other countries.

This section will use analysis and testament to support in detail the proposition that the Main Building at St. Fagans, as finally designed and built, is an expression of how the Welsh Folk Museum was meant to be understood, as a national project. So far this chapter has described the context for the conception of this institution, that is, the nationalist activities in Europe and particularly those of Scandinavia where these activities took the form of establishing open-air folk museums in parkland settings. It has also examined the long drawn out process involved in the develop-

ment of the Main Building including the various delays and set-backs. Scandinavian museum buildings and galleries that were developed in parkland settings were also influential for the design of the Main Building, as will be shown.

Peate hoped that his institution would be understood as the display of Wales in miniature and become the cultural centre of the nation. The difficulty with this aspiration and the whole approach to the site was that the particular conception of the nation to be displayed, memorialised and celebrated was a very narrow one. The struggle and complications involved in trying to achieve his vision illustrate the tensions inherent in such a singular view, as do the compromises over design. These became more pronounced as the project progressed and Peate's romantic vision of displaying Welshness was challenged by the practicalities of achieving it and by competing conceptions of Welshness.

The programme of financing was agreed in 1964 and the Building Committee met for the first time in December of that year. Once the project had begun on site there were further struggles for grants and funding to enable the building to be developed as envisaged. There was also a degree of urgency given the years of delay and the constant threat of interruptions due to the programme of financing.

This section will analyse the building, its setting and the processes involved in building it through examination of documentation, commentary, transcripts of interviews, visits, photographs and drawings. Dale Owen's overall vision for the Main Building is described by his architect wife, in a reply to a question about the trip to Scandinavia in June 1965 and whether that trip affected the design philosophy: 'he saw it very much as a series of horizontal white slabs, which were grey brick in fact, low lying with a deep fascia, seen through the trees' (Maureen Kelly Owen 28/2/2011). As will be noted later the design concept was rooted in the architects' existing knowledge of similar schemes. The horizontal emphasis was a response to the parkland setting and the natural gradient of the chosen site.

The design conception was ultimately fully realised and largely remains intact but for the rural parkland setting which was later compromised by forming a new en-



trance in the early 1990s and opening up the site to the south and to the large car park that was needed to accommodate the increased number and scale of vehicles visiting the site. The setting, as it was meant to be understood, how it was realised and the extent of the changes that have happened will be explored and analysed after the building has been analysed.

Peate wrote about his vision for St. Fagans in a booklet published in 1948, in which he describes the development of the Scandinavian museums, 'They are the results of the national renaissance ...[e]ach is the fountainhead of new cultural energy' (Peate 1948:33).

Nash agrees that Peate hoped the museum would become the 'cultural centre' of Wales as did everybody else in St. Fagans: 'they all signed up to his vision' ... 'he saw the museum as being part of a pioneering movement not just looking to the past but also to the future and certainly when you think of Scandinavia and the Scandinavian countries which have become Finland and Sweden they have become synonymous with good modern design often drawing inspiration from the past so you don't end up with pastiche. I think he saw the folk museum as being one way of taking the past and developing and thrusting it into a brave new future...when he went for the design for the museum he looked to the Scandinavian example and commissioned a firm to produce a contemporary design which was, at that time, a brave move' (Nash interview 14/2/2011).

Trefor Owen, who was made Curator after Peate, noted in an interview that Peate was guided by Scandinavian museums such as the one at Lillehammer and also that Peate was 'reliant on people like Dale Owen' (T. Owen interview 18/2/2011). Nash (interview) wondered 'whether [Peate] was rather slavish in his Scandinavian ideals...it must be good if its Scandinavian design. He was very head-strong'. This strong minded, opinionated attitude is evident in Peate's comments on Welsh architecture. In the Introduction to *The Welsh House*, Peate claims that 'the only national architecture is the non-professional architecture' as any other architecture such as 'the mansions of the country squires and the buildings of anglicized towns are

almost without exception English in inspiration...by Welsh-or English-born architects working in a supra-national tradition' (Peate, 2004:3). He also claims that '[a] nation bereft of its sovereignty cannot promote the growth of the fine arts except by indirect and innocuous means' (Peate, 2004:3). This observation can be added to a long history of calls for national institutions that had occurred since the mid-nineteenth century, including the National Institutions (Wales) Bill of 1891. Thomas E. Ellis, leader of Cymru Fydd, made a plea for a Welsh School of Architecture in an address at University College, Bangor on January 30<sup>th</sup> 1896, so that it could 'encourage and develop a national and characteristic Welsh style' (Ellis, 1912:80). This comment highlights the problem for the architects of the Main Building at St. Fagans, in that there were no indigenous precedents for institutional buildings of the museum type. There were very few indigenous types of buildings after the advent of the Industrial Revolution as the steam train had carried ideas and patterns of working and building with it from across the Welsh border.

Peate saw his museum as a pioneering venture and the collection of artefacts were unrivalled in Britain in the 1950s; the National Museum of Wales was the first national institution in Britain to create 'a scientifically ordered collection illustrating Folk Culture and related Industries' (Bassett, 1993:11). Peate also had a clear idea of the range of functions and activities needed in the building and hoped that there would be lecture rooms and a theatre space. Peate wrote that the 'modern block of buildings for the scientific exhibition of the materials of our life and culture...will be in more than one sense the heart of the new museum, to be built indeed at the centre of the site'. 'This building will become a storehouse and a national centre for all information relating to Welsh life' (Peate, 1948:47-51). This evangelical function marks out the project's role in identity-construction. In practical terms it meant not only creating facilities for teaching, but also creating a destination which would be attractive for people to visit-hence, a concern from the outset about facilities such as a restaurant and car parking, as well as the expected toilets.

So it is clear that the conception of the Main Building was inspired by the Scandinavian folk museum movement. Also the overall impression of the form of the

building was to be the antithesis of the reconstructed traditional rural buildings placed about the park.

As built and situated the Main Building is the first major architectural feature to confront the visitor. It presents as a horizontal series of low lying white blocks and bands, as envisaged, relieved by some darker bands of fenestration or shadow and vertical details that punctuate the horizontal bands at regular intervals, apart from the flue that services the heating system, which is built in brick and set back from the main façade as is the existing red brick block to the east.

Designed in what would have been seen as a striking Modernist idiom in 1960s Wales-Hilling (1979:153) writes that at the time there were a ‘few promising developments in modern architecture, they were mostly by outside architects and unfortunately remained as isolated examples’ - the building is in complete contrast to the re-erected traditional buildings beyond. It sits low with a background of trees beyond.

The design conception owed a lot to Modernist ideas and in particular Scandinavian Modernism, as will be shown. Peate’s admiration for and emulation of the Scandinavian museum movement, including its built expression, has already been noted, as has his ambition for the Welsh Folk Museum to act as an inspiration for the future and not just a record of the past. Yet, this outcome was achieved only after some effort by Percy Thomas’s architectural firm.

Sir Percy Thomas and Son were appointed to design basic facilities at St. Fagans Castle (part of the overall site) in 1948. This would have been partly because they were a local practice with a very good reputation across Britain, acquired from the large portfolio of work completed for various institutions. Thomas had also, only two years previously, been awarded his knighthood and had been invested with the Kings’ Royal Gold Medal for Architecture for services to the Institute (RIBA) and architecture in 1939 ‘as a designer of important British buildings’ and was regarded as ‘a recognised authority on planning and designing public buildings’ (Welsh Biography online, accessed 7/3/2009). John Hilling added that having been twice Pres-

ident of the RIBA, he was thought of as a ‘good chap’ and crucially ‘they were a Welsh practice, that was essential, and had a good record’ (interviewed 21/2/2011, emphasis added). Maureen Kelly Owen described the practice as ‘solid...so many standard established companies came to the practice as a safe pair of hands’ (28/2/2011).

It is written that after the war Thomas ‘enjoyed the role of doyen, acting as consultant to a number of public bodies...including the Ministry of Transport’ (ODNB accessed 7/3/2009). The practice was involved in the redevelopment of Wales through many heavy and light industrial projects, power stations, enlargement of university facilities, improved roadways and access including the Severn Bridge. Re-building was essential and fundamental for the future growth of Wales. Hilling (21/2/2011) describes the sense of a ‘brave new world’ in the office at the end of the 1950s through journals displaying the building of the massive Margam/Abbey Steelworks and the equally massive and innovative Llanwern works. Trostre, Felindre, Port Talbot and Llanwern, all structures designed by the practice in the 1950s are considered ‘among the best large industrial buildings of their time’ (Lloyd et al, 2006:87). In spite of the scale and number of industrial projects, the practice was also involved in designing schools, colleges, university buildings and the fourth building in a row along King Edward VII Avenue, Cathays Park, what is now called the Redwood Building but was formerly the Welsh College of Advanced Technology. This building demonstrates the need for a new architectural approach by the practice, as do the early design options for the Main Building at St. Fagans. Even by Britain’s conservative standards they were seen as old fashioned.

Between 1953 and 1955, plans elevations and perspective drawings were prepared for a modern museum block to be built in three stages. The 1955 perspective drawing (see Figure 6.3) shows the respect for the semi-rural park setting that is carried through to the built scheme and a long low series of blocks arranged along the contour as with the realised scheme but there the similarities end, as ‘the building was trying to be Modernist but failed’ (MKO 28/2/2011). Weeks wrote that ‘Sir Percy

‘is celebrated for his classicism ...[a]fter the Second World War he moved tentatively towards Modernism, which was embraced with enthusiasm by his son, Norman Thomas’ (Weeks et al, obituary 1999:14).

Norman Thomas had worked in Skidmore Owings and Merrill’s office in New York before returning to Wales to join the family practice and open the Swansea office and would have understood the drive for the spread of modern international architectural ideas at a time of reconstruction, after the Second World War.

Dale Owen joined the practice in 1958, having returned to Wales with health problems after working with Sir William Holford on the post-war planning of London and having studied in the United States at MIT and Harvard as a Fulbright scholar. Whilst in America, Owen worked for Walter Gropius’s practice, the Architect’s Collaborative, one of the most avant-garde practices in the world. In Owen’s own words ‘Gropius presented the modern movement not as a style but as a completely new approach to architecture which took full account of technical, economic and social conditions of life’ (1990:72).

Thomas ‘recognised that it was a new age’ and was ‘aware of his limitations’ and that Owen ‘could make that leap’ ‘as a good designer and that was what was needed at that time’ (MKO 28/2/2011). ‘Thomas persuaded his bright young associate to stay in the Principality, where there was much work to be done’ (Powell, Independent obituary 28/11/1997). Owen was soon appointed as Thomas’s personal assistant and designer, ‘Sir Percy had understood that by then a new architectural approach was essential and Dale was his choice to lead it’ (Weeks et al, 1999:14,15) Owen is credited with ‘bringing to [the practice] an international vision of modern design. The Percy Thomas style was transformed and became uncompromisingly contemporary’ (Powell, obituary 28/11/1997). Maureen Kelly Owen records that as a young architect she was aware that Dale Owen had made a ‘tremendous difference to the sort of work’ the practice produced... ‘their whole image had changed for the better’. Also, that this new approach ‘would bring in a new wave of contemporary work’ (28/2/2011).

Hilling joined the practice in 1959, returning to Wales from Scotland so that his children could be educated in a Welsh school. He had undertaken a planning course in London after graduating from the Welsh School of Architecture, some years after Owen. He commented on the reluctance of most British architects and designers to adopt European Modernism, either before the Second World War or after it. 'I always felt that, in Britain, modern architecture had to be bullied into place, it didn't come naturally' (21/2/2011). As a result, there was only a handful of Modernist buildings constructed in Wales at that time in the so called 'International Style' (see Chapter 2.6) of which Sully Hospital and No. 5 Cliff Parade, Penarth are the some of the best remaining examples.



See Figure 6.8. 5 Cliff Parade, Penarth.

Refugees from the Nazi regime, like Lubetkin, had helped introduce the style into Britain in the 1930s. During the decade and more after the War, the Hoover factory near Abercanaid was built in 1948 in a diluted form of this style and Thomas's more classical interpretation of modernism for the individual units at the Treforest Trading Estate were continued (see Figure 4.2). The Brynmawr Rubber Factory near Ebbw Vale, Ysgol Syr Thomas Jones near Amlwch and the Empire Pool in Cardiff were also interesting buildings from that period that aimed to convey modernist ideas about form and function made with new materials and techniques to express new beginnings and a brave new world (Cherry, 2005:20).

Peate was a conscientious objector and was dismissed from the Museum for eight months during the 1939-1945 War. He believed that the antidote to the barbarity witnessed was redress to traditional cultural values that could 'form a rampart

against the erosion of civilisation' (Stevens, 1986:57). Also as the author of 'The Welsh House', which is effectively a survey of traditional building types he would have understood, more than anybody else in Wales, that there was no building type precedent for the Main Building at St. Fagans. These two aspects may help account for his 'brave move' (Nash interview 14/2/2011) in advocating a contemporary design, along with his understanding and knowledge of the Scandinavian museums. Peate wanted the architects to see what had happened 'at the root of it all' so a trip to Scandinavia was organised as mentioned above.

Owen and Hilling, the two architects involved with the project from the early period of design also had a deep respect and understanding of Scandinavian Modernism. Hilling (21/2/2011) noted that Owen 'put up' the new building at Humlebaek for the Louisiana Museum of Modern art, 'as the ideal museum' to the building committee. He'd learnt about it at Harvard and had visited it. Hilling had a long interest in Norway and subscribed to a Norwegian architectural magazine for years after he had visited the folk museum at Bygdoy near Oslo when he was working on his architectural thesis, which involved the design of a folk museum for Caernarfon, north Wales. He had also visited the new museum building at Maihaugen, Lillehammer in Norway and had drawings of it and visited the Munch Museum in Oslo. So when the Main Building was given the go ahead in December 1964 Hilling asked to work on the project. He also notes that he was 'surprised it came in when it did because in a sense everything at that time was difficult to get money for' (21/1/2011), a judgement borne out by the exhaustive analysis of the National Museum reports and minutes above.

In answer to the question about why the project was considered so important for some, Hilling says it's 'the museum's own motto, to teach the world about Wales and Wales about itself, this was the most Welsh thing they could possibly have'. As a nationalist Hilling says he was aware of all the things needing doing on the political side and that the 'comings and goings' were all part of what was happening or not, and 'yes the firm was part of this'.

Hilling's grounding, through his student project and research in Scandinavia, acted as a starting point. In addition to this was Hilling and Owen's knowledge about contemporary museum buildings. Hilling described Thomas's first building, the tall two storeyed red brick building, 'as standing out like a sore thumb in an environment of trees and vernacular buildings. Our main concern was to keep it as low as possible especially from the side of the vernacular buildings; that was the approach right from the start, so it was supposed to be single storey on that side, so keep it low'.

Hilling noted also that 'they (the Scandinavians) wanted to be up to date but not overpowering, so in that sense human scale was very important, always has been in Scandinavian architecture...keep it simple, so theoretically it should remain human'... 'The first time I ever saw it, it was remarkable, they also had a brick building painted white so that it still had texture, I'd never seen that before'. This idea is reinforced by Cherry's claim, that the regionalised modernism adopted in Scandinavia had taken the basic concepts of the International style and 'humanised them through the use of native materials... in order to create buildings that embodied a deeper sense of regional identity'. This movement reached its height in the 1950s (Cherry, 2006:31; Risebero, 2011:281; Curtis, 2002:454).

As it had been agreed in the December 1964 Building Committee meeting that the building should be designed as a whole, in spite of having to be built in several phases according to the timetable for funding, the team prepared drawings and schedules for the complete building. Hilling remembers that he had lots of meetings with Peate, 'right from the beginning, sometimes with Owen, sometimes just myself, we were able to discuss options...and say why this was the best option... this is why it's the only building that I felt deeply involved with'. Hilling had the background working knowledge of contemporary museum buildings, which added to Owen's planning skills and his knowledge of museum buildings and modern architecture helped progress the design quite quickly. Hilling felt that the team was fortunate to have a good innovative structural engineer, who was helpful in over-



coming the difficulties encountered with such a modern design, especially with the long beams, both in calculating them and positioning them.

The building was designed to have a public part and a private part. The perambulatory nature of the plan through three galleries (ultimately) around a central courtyard dictated the form of the public part.



See Figure 6.9. Central Courtyard of St Fagans showing the arrangement of galleries 1, 2 and 3 around it.

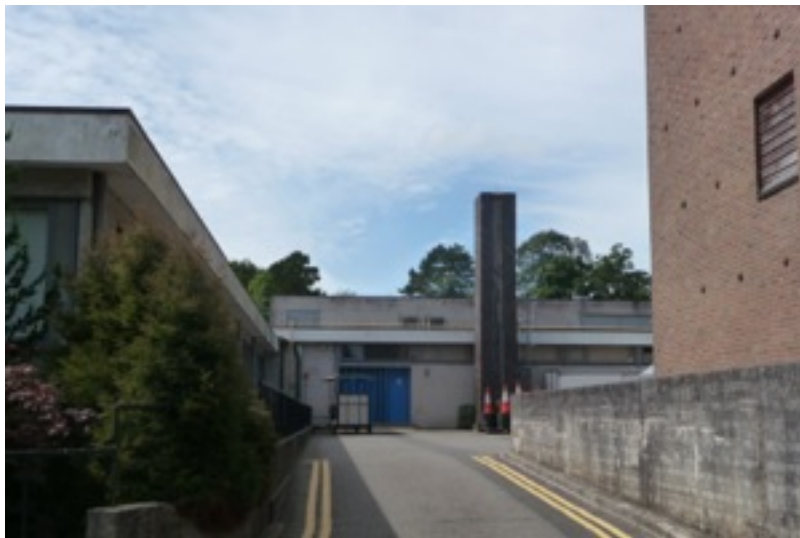
The restaurant and facilities were to be in a block to the west with the entrance hall connecting both of these parts of the building. This communication space was stepped down in three steps at roof level and stepped up at floor level to accommodate access to the north gallery and so that the north elevation was on a human domestic scale to relate to the buildings exhibited beyond, as noted before. The ability to limit the height of the northern elevation was aided by the sloping nature of the site.

The linear massing of the south elevation was continued to the east to provide for the private part of the building, which accommodated a two story administrative block on this south facing elevation. This part of the building is at a lower level even though it is also two stories high, as the internal room heights are lower.



See Figure 6.10. South Elevation of St. Fagans.

A series of technical workshops in a single storey extension to the north elevation of the gallery space repeats the linear massing and forms a service courtyard between the workshops and the administration block. The fuel stack and original storage, temporary exhibition building are the main vertical elements.



See Figure 6.11. Service courtyard showing the rear of the administrative block, fuel stack, workshops and south wall of the 1954 Stage 1 building.

The design would have been seen as uncompromisingly modern from the south and in complete contrast to the traditional rural buildings in the park beyond even though the scale of the north elevation was more domestic.



See Figure 6.12. South Elevation from the south west.

The Preliminary Design Report was presented, approved and adopted in April 1965, as noted above.

Owen and Hilling visited several Scandinavian museums, including Maihaugen at Lillehammer, in June 1965, where they met with Ffrancis Payne, the Keeper of Material Culture. Hilling remembers that the older museums looked old and tired but the new block at Lillehammer showed that ‘it didn’t have to be this way’. What they saw was inspirational but they didn’t ‘come away thinking we’ve got to copy this or that, each problem is entirely different’. ‘It made us think about the relationship of a modern block to the vernacular buildings and how the museum is organised’. Hilling added that the Keepers ‘I think, all wanted something contemporary...I think the feeling was, we’ve chosen you as a good important architectural practice doing modern stuff, you know how to do it, so get on with it. Obviously I had to go through things and discuss it’. Also ‘all being nationalists there, they felt they wanted Wales to have as good an architecture as anywhere else, there wasn’t any objections’ and ‘Pastiche wouldn’t have worked’. This judgement is consistent with the staff calling for reports to be published in Welsh in 1969.

The visit proved fruitful as Owen and Hilling returned from their visit to Scandinavia to recommend three modifications to the design, regarding the location and size of the shop and restaurant and designing for the possibility of additional gal-

lery space. Phases I, II and III were designed at this stage, and a model was presented to the Building Committee, with the Progress Report on the Final design Proposals, within two months of the visit illustrating what was effectively the fixed and final design of a ‘large but disciplined building complex in a striking modernist idiom based on a harmonious composition of simple geometric forms’ (Cadw List Description).

At some point in the design finalisation process a decision was taken to change the roofing solution over the clerestory ‘lantern’ type arrangement that was to light the galleries from above. It was originally meant to be a long low pitched slate roof over both the north and south galleries in the manner of Frank Lloyd Wright, an architect who as noted above embodied the connection between modernism and Welsh identity. But Hilling noted in interview that these were considered too expensive and were changed to flat roofs to save money. By October 1965 a perspective drawing was submitted to the Welsh Folk Museum Committee showing a view taken from the south west corner of the proposed building. This was printed in the 1964/5 Annual Report: it shows the flat roof arrangement over the clerestory roof to the south gallery (see Figure 6.4). Interestingly a photograph of the building as completed by 1973/4 shown in the Annual Report for that year is largely as shown depicted in the artist’s perspective, except for the artist’s exaggeration of the projecting elements, due partly to the more dramatic lower and closer viewpoint (see Figure 6.7).

The evidence gathered through interviews shows that the three main figures affecting the design - Peate, Owen and Hilling - were all deeply knowledgeable and very familiar with Scandinavian modernism and museums, sympathetic to their design philosophy, and related this directly to the nation-building dimension of the Welsh Folk Museum.

The Main Building and car park are situated on the site of the Plymouth Estate’s kitchen garden and tennis courts amongst fields created by felling much of the woodland that was laid out in 1908 by the Earl of Plymouth as ‘an unusual experi-

mental woodland laid out with axial rides' which was to be used for his family's recreation, observation of the experimental tree planting and as a bird sanctuary (Cadw Parks and Gardens Registry Entry).

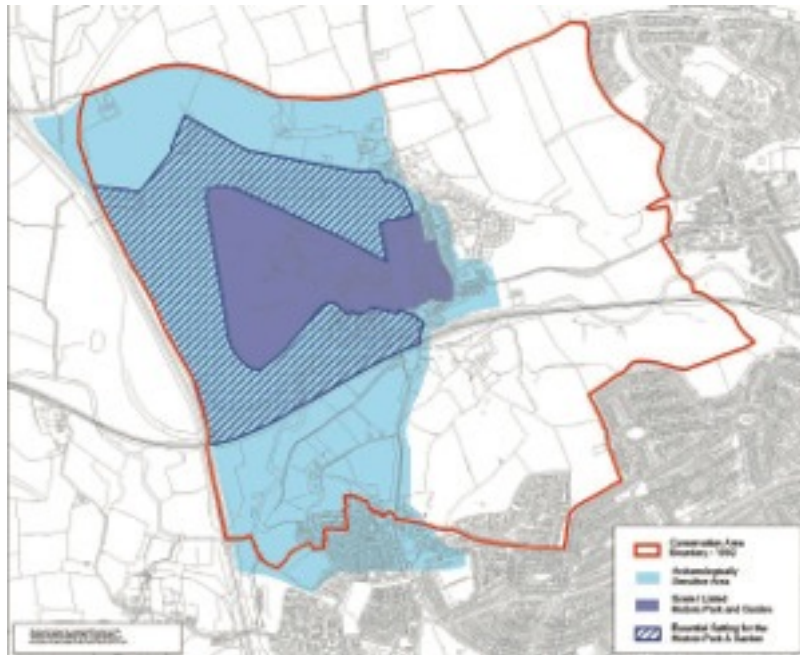


See Figure 6.13. Map of the site showing the location of the Main Building.

The Museum is set within the St. Fagans Conservation Area which was designated in 1971 due to the special architectural and historic interest of the area, centred as it is on the Grade I Elizabethan manor house, known as St. Fagans Castle. The castle takes its name from the Norman motte and bailey castle that was built nearby to control the crossing of the river Ely. The site also includes the recently listed Grade II Main Building and the Grade I registered Historic Park and Gardens of almost one hundred acres, which includes the original gift of eighteen acres and buildings and the eighty acres bought at a beneficial rate from the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Earl of Plymouth and his mother, the Countess of Plymouth.

St.Fagans village and the museum site are at the heart of the Conservation Area which extends a significant distance across fields, woods and working farmland surrounding this core. There are natural environmental designations for parts of the Conservation Area and half of the Area is archaeologically sensitive and within this

half is an area that surrounds the museum site and is designated as the essential setting for the historic park and garden.



See Figure 6.14. St Fagans Conservation Area.

The boundary to the north of the Conservation Area has fields beyond. The boundary to the south delineates the densely developed estate further south from the area of open fields, Plymouth woods and the Ely River corridor within the conservation area. The western side is bounded by the A4232 access road for the M4 which has visitor access for the museum on the south bound carriageway. The eastern boundary delineates densely developed housing estates beyond the conservation area and are evidence of the encroachment of the city limits on this once rural site.

The rural setting parallels those of the Scandinavian folk museums. The importance of these settings for the ethos of the folk museum movement and ethnographic collections was discussed above. As noted before, there are also parallels with the way modern Scandinavian galleries and museums set in parklands sit within a rural setting. Therefore the immaterial sense of place is a key element for the design, as is the way in which the low lying horizontal white slabs sit in the park in response to the surrounding landscape and the contours of the site. This is confirmed by Owen, who wrote that 'Its light grey brick wall and horizontal emphasis

help the building fit restfully within the woodland park background' (1990:79). The original concept was that the building would rise out of a green swathe (Hilling 21/2/2011) but this idea has been diluted by later additions to the building and car parking area.

Finally the museum is approximately five miles from the centre of Cardiff. Peate wrote 'St. Fagans is ideally placed. As Skansen is to Stockholm, Bygdoy to Oslo, and Seurasaari to Helsinki, so St. Fagans is merely a short bus ride from the centre of Cardiff...[i]ndeed it is not an exaggeration to say that the site of the Welsh Folk museum is for its particular purpose among the best in Europe' (Peate, 1948:47). Therefore the location of the Scandinavian institutions relative to their capital cities is paralleled in Wales, although Cardiff had not been made the capital of Wales at the time of the acquisition of the site, but Nash thinks that Peate 'would have been pleased that his museum had ended up next to the Capital'. This proximity also aided communications between the two institutions.



See Figure 6.15. Map showing location of St Fagans relative to Cardiff.

As with Broadcasting House for the BBC, designed by Owen at about the same time as this building (Powell, obituary 28/11/1997) the component blocks of the building complex express the different functions to be undertaken within.

The concept for the design of the south elevation is largely intact, even though there have been a number of additions and some changes, which will be described.

The wall panelling is the most prominent feature overall and is constructed from a pale grey calcium silicate brick. This elevation seems to have been designed as the main approach elevation as a ticket office is shown on the photograph from the 1973/4 Annual Report (see Figure 6.7) between the Building and the car park. Also the perspective drawing from the 1964/5 Annual Report (see Figure 6.4) is from this southerly viewpoint. This part of the Building was constructed in Phase II and any confusion up to that point, as to which was the most important elevation was from then on dispelled, as this clearly became the most important elevation once Phase II was complete.

On the gallery block the walling is surmounted by a relatively slim band of horizontal fenestration, which is punctuated regularly by projecting pre-cast concrete beams, which support the roof structure. Above this is the deep white fascia board closing the structure of the flat roof over. Set back on the flat roof is the long low narrow 'lantern' arrangement to provide further top lighting to the gallery, in a sort of clerestory form. The main glazing bars on this structure repeat the intervals of the projecting beams below but with a thinner secondary glazing bar in between. This long continuous band of ribbon windows is very much a contemporary Modernist feature. The long continuous deep fascia to the roof of the 'lantern' completes this part of the Building (see Figure 6.12)

The gallery is supported on very deep projecting pre-cast concrete beams which are carried on brick pillars set back so that the gallery is 'jettied' out to form an arcade. The beam ends and piers set the rhythm for the structure which is expressed in the elevational treatment and reflect the grid layout of the plan. The piers set on a strict grid of three metres reflect the idea of pilotis, which were a Le Corbusier device to open up ground floors and gain a sense of transparency whilst freeing the structure and elevation from its traditional form as a mostly impermeable mass. The arcade created by the overhang of the gallery was glazed in 1970 but it was intended to be an external covered exhibition area, an open - air gallery containing Agricultural Vehicles through which access to the building could be gained via the central courtyard behind, but it was found that the exhibits needed protecting from the



elements. The Agricultural Vehicles Gallery is now smaller than intended, as a café has been created in the west part of it. The Agricultural Gallery above was officially opened to the public in April 1974 (see Figure 6.10).

The service block to the west of the central gallery block contains the entrance hall and shop with the restaurant above. The upper floor, terrace and shop were also constructed as part of Phase II. This block is set well back from the front building line and almost aligns with the north face of the southern ‘lantern’ storey, this effect would have been lessened by the projecting cantilevered concrete beams that were intended to be repeated on the first floor, beside the restaurant and over the terrace, but these were later reduced in length, and therefore projection. The shop and entrance area has been subsequently increased and its extended roof forms a canopy to the area immediately outside these areas. Originally the rhythm of the brick piers carrying the projecting concrete beams was repeated prominently along this end of the south elevation but the extension has obscured these features. The adherence to the grid format of the plan layout is still noticeable in the supporting piers behind the glazed screens and repeated in the restaurant fenestration above.



See Figure 6.16. Detail showing the conjunction of the restaurant block with the Agricultural Gallery and ‘lantern’ storey over.



See Figure: 6.17. The current arrangement showing the toilet block obscuring the west end of the Main Building.

The toilets beside the restaurant were to be constructed as part of Phase II but provision for some facilities were needed for Phase I so a pair of toilets was brought forward to Phase I. This small block was built to the west of the site of the restaurant/shop block, but was found to be inadequate and was subsequently replaced with a larger toilet block designed in the same idiom to the south. This toilet block affects the original design conception as it obscures part of the restaurant /shop/entrance block (see Figure 6.17).

The administrative wing, to the east of the Agricultural Gallery and the full height two storey brick return wall of the Costumes /Textiles Gallery that connects the north and south galleries, was built as part of Phase I and occupied by staff by the end of 1968. The connecting wall is set back from the plane of the cantilevered Agricultural Gallery but set slightly forward of its ground floor line. This plane is continued for the ground floor of the administrative wing. Banded fenestration provides lighting to the ground floor offices. The first floor is 'jettied' out to form a deep cantilever which aligns with the Agricultural Gallery. It throws deep shadows on the pale brickwork. This floor also has a continuous band of fenestration relieved by a regular rhythm of glazing bars and supporting columns, topped off by a slightly projecting and prominent fascia closing the flat roof structure above. A 'much needed extension' (Annual Report, 1974/5 p.14) to this wing, built in 1974-

6, projects southwards. The design principles are continued on this extension and the window arrangement is repeated to the west and east elevations of this extension. The south elevation presents largely as a plain brick wall to the car park but has a slightly cantilevered full height square bay at first floor level and set on the right side of the wall with a large rectangular window almost filling the projection. This element is repeated on the west wall, at first floor level, at the extended part of the restaurant, above the schools room that were added in the early 1990s.



See Figure 6.18. The 1974-6 extension to the administration block.

The horizontality of the blocks is accentuated by the exposed line of the concrete that forms the first floor and supports the brick walling and other features above. It sometimes forms as a soffit to the ground floor below, when it is cantilevered. It threads intermittently around the main elevations of the Building and stresses the horizontality and austerity of the clean modern design aesthetic. This effect is reinforced by the articulation of the main elevation and the deep horizontal dark shadows sometimes created against the light brickwork.

The transparency and permeability of the public part of the Building in the original design concept has been compromised by later alterations but as originally designed and built this would have been understood as a new approach in institutional design connecting the outside with the inside of the building and drawing in visitors, as occurs in the retail sector; it was a significant statement of the open-ness of

this museum to the world, and especially to the Welsh public that it was seeking to imbue with a sense of Welsh identity. This effect is now severely compromised but the open display of the Agricultural vehicles beneath the Agricultural Gallery was intended to draw visitors in to a grassed, terraced courtyard, which could be seen from the outside, to gain access to the building via glazed doors to the entrance hall and passing a reflecting pool with a bridge (Hilling). These latter features would have considerably ‘softened’ the effect of the courtyard from the way it is experienced now, due to the hard surfaces of the walls to the three galleries and the paved areas, steps and slopes accommodating the change in levels from south to north. The pool was relocated to the north side but has since been drained for safety reasons (see Figure 6.9).

The tall slim windows to Galleries One and Two were designed to give a view out from the galleries and provide natural lighting to the interiors, as with the ribbon fenestration between the concrete beams to supplement the hidden artificial lighting. These openings have been completely covered over or covered with Venetian blinds; this is evidence of a clash between curators needs for the preservation of museum artefacts and control of lighting levels and architects ideas about the visitor experience. The Costumes/Textiles Gallery was designed to be artificially lit only and so it presents as blank walls to the courtyard and to the south. The fenestration to the other three sides of the courtyard adds interest and transparency to this area, although the aluminium glazing units to the entrance axis were meant to be in wood.



See Figure: 6.19. Entrance/Egress axis.

The striking modernism of this building with its light palette, long low horizontal massing emphasised by the darker bands of horizontal fenestration relieved by slim vertical features and set against the wooded background has to a certain extent been diluted by almost half a century of familiarity and alterations but there is enough left to appreciate this radically modern solution that owes something to Gropius and Scandinavian modernism and yet still aimed to be a good neighbour to the vernacular buildings beyond.

The original interiors, where they still exist, display a sense of honesty to materials that is sensitive to the exhibited buildings in the park, although some of the materials are non traditional: exposed brickwork and white painted walls, earth coloured ceramic floor tiles, plaster ceilings, exposed concrete columns that contain rainwater down pipes and exposed concrete beams that project beyond the internal spaces. The internal grid of exposed concrete beams is particularly noticeable in the Agricultural Gallery where the ceiling area is largely as it was meant to be and the clerestory windows can be seen.



See Figure 6.20. Interior of the Agricultural Gallery.

The perambulation through the public part of the Building, gradually rising through the entrance area into the Material Culture Gallery, along a low inclined ramp into the Costumes/Textiles Gallery to ascend another long low inclined ramp to the Agricultural Gallery clearly defines the circulatory nature of the design for the visitor and accounts for the change in levels in an easily executed manner. There is a long ramp with a plastered half height wall to one side descending from the level of the Agricultural Gallery returning to the area of the entrance axial space, near the access to the first gallery and egress to the park. Alternatively there is level access to the restaurant area and toilets. A disabled lift and ramp has been provided in the entrance space in the last decade and has resulted in this space feeling constricted.



See Figure 6.21. Ramp from the Restaurant and Agricultural Gallery to the Entrance axis.

Owen wrote of the design approach in 1990 ‘it is planned for easy and relaxed movement of visitors through the galleries which provide a neutral architectural setting for the exhibits themselves as the focus of attention’ (1990:79). Refurbishments and modernisation of Galleries one and three, the shop and restaurant have affected the original design aesthetic.

The materials used in the private part of the building, that is, in the administrative area, are still largely original, particularly in the circulation area of the spinal corridor and staircase area and in the service rooms. The walls and ceilings are white painted plaster, the floor is covered in carpet with the original floor finish beneath and the doors to the offices are original, in a dark wood finish. The handrails are also in a dark wood finish supported on white painted tubular metal railings. The library, conference room and some of the offices contain original fittings and furniture, which are made of a light wood. The storage rooms and workshops are as originally designed, in a utilitarian serviceable manner.

### ***6.8 Conclusion.***

This chapter has sought to provide a full picture of the philosophy and context for the realisation of the Main Building. It has drawn upon analysis of the design conception, the factors affecting the design, the process of refining and fulfilling the design, the detailed consideration of the political context at the time of the commission for the building along with accounts from key figures related to the project and an examination of documentary evidence. The interviews are a valuable primary source, as is the building itself, in spite of the changes that have occurred both to it and the setting since completion of Phase II. The data gathered is from a range of sources and consequently rich in contextual and material detail. This data has been carefully considered and evaluated to test and prove the proposition that the Main Building at St Fagans is an example of a key nation building project by Wales’s most significant architectural practice, that of the Percy Thomas practice.

As noted in Chapter 4, Thomas's practice had the aura of being a major contemporary British firm in spite of the 'strong feeling that they were a Welsh practice' who were 'really involved in the redevelopment of Wales' (MKO 28/2/2011). The architects tasked with the design for the Main Building, as noted above, were very experienced contemporary designers with a wealth of knowledge and personal experience of Scandinavian modernism and museum design and as such would have guided the design process having agreed with Peate on a contemporary approach that was 'up with the rest' (Hilling 23/1/2011) whilst remaining sympathetic to his nationalist ideals. Trefor Owen (18/2/2011) noted that Peate was 'reliant on people like Dale' (Owen) to fulfil his wish for a 'modern block' the function of which was meant to be highly symbolic, as a focus for evolving ideas on Welsh identity.

The trust that developed between Peate and these two architects with self confessed nationalistic sympathies is notable. The potential of this relationship was realised, because of the conditions which had been created, in particular the sheer length of the project that allowed for significant architectural freedom because on the client side there was no single figure of authority –other than Peate-who had a continuous involvement with it during its tortuous evolution. Peate was the only person in the Museum that maintained a level of interest in the details of the project; this was illustrated by Trefor Owen's comment that it was 'his (Peate's) museum' (18/2/2011) and Nash's answer (14/2/2011) 'yes, they all signed up to his vision, in St. Fagans'.

Finally in reply to a question about IDO's level of involvement in the design decisions, MKO answered 'it was entirely his concept, no doubt about that' (28/2/2011). The account of the administrative and financial complexities of promoting and realising the development underline the degree to which this building was never some kind of automatic outcome of broader political or professional trends. The project was fought for by individuals and institutions for whom it had great national significance. It is striking that those struggles were largely about finance for and timing of development; there is no significant evidence that any non-



architectural participant other than Peate was the least concerned about design matters. This opened up a space for the architects to influence design outcomes.

The architects, Owen and Hilling, saw their design as significant and evolutionary. The architectural press at the time questioned the design solution: ‘surely a building of award winning standard ought to reflect and express its location and purpose’ (AJ, 16/07/78). How this could be achieved in a country where the traditional architecture was mostly domestic and rural, and where there were no precedents for buildings of this type, with a function that was also unprecedented is not explained.

Hilling noted that they were ‘designing something in the style of our own time’ (email exchange 23/1/2011) so it was designed in a contemporary idiom and with an awareness of current architectural discourse. Owen and Hilling were advocates of modernist Scandinavian architecture with a working knowledge of Scandinavian folk museum developments. They were also favourably disposed to the idea of a distinctive Welsh identity and so were able to empathise with Peate’s philosophy and help him realise his radical vision of a cultural centre for the ordinary folk with a radically modern building at the heart of the site for the scientific display of artefacts but also having a popular educational role. Peate saw it as his duty to create and maintain the Welsh Folk Museum and encouraged all Welshmen to participate (Peate, 1948:59). The importance of the Main Building is its function and meaning; Wales was being recreated and needed national institutions to aid that emerging modern Welsh identity.

Peate was alert to contemporary developments in architecture; ‘[i]t is not to be wondered at that the Swedish nation found in its Folk Museum inspiration which caused its architecture and art, its craftsmanship and industry to flower anew in twentieth century Sweden and so make her one of the most civilised nations of the world’ (Peate 1948:25). This illustrates Hilling’s observation that ‘Peate was certainly aware of what was going on elsewhere and I think he as a nationalist accepted a modernist style as being appropriate to a nation that he wished to prove was up with the rest’ (23/1/2011). The Main Building was awarded the National

Eisteddfod gold medal in 1978. This may well be evidence of its symbolic importance as much as a statement about the design.

Owen later wrote that it ‘was designed to avoid any stylistic conflict with the many other different buildings of the adjoining folk park’ but added that ‘unlike most buildings, museums have to be designed for continuing growth and the master plan, prepared for St. Fagans in the 1960s, is still the basis for its current, eighth, development stage’ (1990:79). An obituary for Owen written some years after this concurs with this view, the ‘forthright rectangle of the entrance front with its exposed concrete frame, confounds all the associations which the name of the museum arouses’ but reinforces the design logic from an architectural perspective; ‘yet inside, in the ebbing and flowing spaces around the central courtyard the spare astringent structure, acts like a prism enhancing the exhibits and clarifying the visitors’ perceptions, ready for the world of reconstructed Welsh culture and buildings beyond (Weeks et al obituary 1999:14). Another obituary notes that ‘[Owen]...rigorously eschewed the folksy look when designing a new gallery block for the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans’ (Powell Independent obituary 28/11/1997).

It was serendipitous that Percy Thomas was looking to modernise the practice and recruited Owen and Hilling in time for the commission for the Main Building. Powell (28/11/1997) refers to Thomas as ‘a talented architectural impresario’. It was his ability to understand the needs of the buildings, and therefore of the clients, that had helped the practice grow to the extent that it had by the 1960s. A 1950 article describes him as possessing: ‘common-sensical logicity that amounts to genius, a feeling for dignified simplicity and an organising ability, a flair for administration, that has doubtless won him the respect of the busy and the business-like just as much as have his meticulously thought-out and scrupulously appropriate planning’ (Thomas, 1963:64).

This approach was continued by Norman Percy Thomas who upon taking over the chairmanship of the practice in the early 1960s ‘embarked on a regional expansion

of the firm to meet the post-war needs of the country' (Jennett RIBA J obituary, January 1990).

Percy Thomas had understood the need to move with the times and recruited the appropriate architects to continue the success of the practice. In this instance, it was Owen and Hilling who were both passionately nationalist Welshmen, as well as being aware of international developments in their profession. Thomas was aware that 'there was much work to be done' in Wales which was why he 'persuaded his bright young associate [Owen] to stay in the Principality' (Powell 28/11/1997). His own pride in being a Welshman is evident in his Memoirs (1963:36). In the case of St Fagans it appears clear that the practice was taking on a role of architect on a Welsh national project.

## Chapter 7 Conclusion

### *7.1 Introduction.*

The aim of this thesis is to show that the Percy Thomas practice has made one of the most significant contributions to the built environment of modern, twentieth century urban Wales and that some of this work has significantly contributed to particular interpretations of the project of nation building, through the scale and scope of its projects, especially given the number of these that contributed to the fashioning of key institutions of the state or civic life. These structures have contributed to the developing awareness of Wales emerging as a separate nation, through their function or form. On at least some occasions, the practice was self-consciously undertaking this task. Iconic buildings in particular are one of the ways that identity is revealed and as such are an, are an important part of the process of shaping the dominant idea of national identity. This role is often complex and contested and its importance often overlooked and under-estimated. This is particularly the case in Wales.

Framing the research has been an understanding of nationalism, a phenomenon that earlier chapters have explored both historically and conceptually. It has been argued that national identity is contested, plural and socially constructed and nationality has been, for the last two centuries, part of the political agenda of nation-states (a contention compatible with a realist conception of the nation). The signifiers of this nationalist agenda range from the highly symbolic and visible to the barely noticed. How, if at all, does the built environment contribute to (contestable) nation-building activities? Addressing this has required exploring how buildings are able to communicate meanings, sometimes plural meanings, by establishing how the built environment relates to socio-political and cultural ideas of nation building and identity formation through symbolism and/or function and then how the built environment contributes to these processes, given that it is often the product of complex power-infused possibly fractious, social relations.

As the purpose of this thesis and research is to establish the Percy Thomas Practice's contribution to the built form of modern urban Wales and a nation building project it has also been necessary to research the development of nationalism in Wales and its nation building activities. In Wales, establishing national identity as an overt political project occurred later than many nations across Europe. It should be reiterated that peoples experience and awareness of identity is plural and multi-faceted and often situational and not all constructions and experiences will be openly represented in the political arena. In Wales, a limited number of conceptions were influential in public life. Dominant was the notion of Wales as an European nation with ancient roots, and slowly developing the economic and institutional trappings and infrastructure of nationhood. The idea of Wales as a nation born in rurality, and of the rural 'Welsh speaking gwerin', or folk, as the inheritors, protectors and nurturers of the core essential values of Welshness was also aired publicly, and had a vocal and sophisticated adherent in Iorwerth Peate, curator of the Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans. This was a conception that relatively few people lived, but which still had cultural-political influence.

The Thomas practice spanned the period from the late stages of the 'first age of devolution' to beyond the 'second age of devolution' and its role within that nation building and modernising agenda has yet to be evaluated, prior to this research project. The thesis has begun to address this deficiency in our knowledge of the Percy Thomas practice, and thereby contributed to our knowledge of the role of built form in creating national identity in Wales, which itself is part of a wider European phenomenon. This chapter will rehearse the justification for the research strategy adopted, review the research findings and highlight themes which constitute a significant contribution to knowledge.

### ***7.2 The research strategy, methodology and case study approach.***

As has been described above, the approach to the research has necessarily involved forming a historical narrative account. This approach was explained in Chapter 1 and Chapter 5 justified this approach to the research as one that sits within the crit-

ical realist research tradition for examining and explaining socially constructed phenomena, such as nations and nationalism, and the causal relationships involved in these. While the narrative draws on secondary sources, these are interpreted and inflected so as to highlight the significance of buildings, signifiers and nationalist activities and justify the research strategy as the most appropriate. Narrative also allowed a very deep analysis of a single representative case.

The Main Building at St. Fagans was identified as a high profile project for the practice but also as an iconic structure in the nation building agenda of providing institutions for Wales and therefore as a ‘typical instance’ and suitable representative project for a case study examining this particular conception of Welsh identity. It was especially interesting as it also embodied, potentially, a competing conception of Welshness, one which lauded the role of the ‘gwerin’. Museums are recognised for their role in ‘mak[ing] the nation visible and tangible’ (Bouquet, 2012:9) and as ‘one of the key institutions of modernity’ (Bouquet, 2012:12). The case study research and findings from primary and secondary sources also formed an historical narrative account. This has been supplemented by lists of supporting evidence.

The approach to the case study was systematic, detailed and relevant, drawing from a variety of sources in order to fulfil the requirements of best practice described in chapter 5. A further strength of this approach is that it draws on a variety of methods, sources and types of data for collection and analysis with the sources being evaluated for their strengths, limitations and suitability. The range and diversity of sources, data and methods used, enabled triangulation and convergence of findings during the analysis stage. The approach throughout was rigorous and managed strategically so that the best outcomes of each stage were ensured and could reliably inform the analysis.

### ***7.3 Research findings, analysis and themes.***

The research findings and data collection revealed the complexity of the development project, which was investigated in great depth and within its real life context,

as recommended by Yin (2009:18). This depth of detail also provided a reflective ‘thick’ account of the project, that justified the narrative account (Hammersley, 1990:19,20).

The exploration of the symbolism of built form in section 2.5 revealed that crucial to the analysis of any structure is the need for attention to the rich contextual conditions of its production. Harvey concluded that layers of meaning attach to a site: this can be combined with an adaptation of the Wittgensteinian approach that concluded that ‘meaning is use’ so that use produces a site’s unique *genius loci*. Consensus for the meanings can be hard to achieve and is dependant on a shared understanding of the various elements involved and the ‘language’ used for these elements. Meanings change over time according to the use of the structure and its context and can therefore offer diverse readings of the cues encoded in the structure. This means that buildings – in their design and uses-can form parts of conflicting, contested projects of identity formation and consolidation. The inherent problems of how buildings communicate meanings were analysed through various theoretical approaches and it was concluded that to fully understand the meanings, detailed information about the original context of the structure, the wider socio-economic, political and cultural context and the intentions of the architects or builders and patrons, were essential to inform the interpretation. The Main Building at St Fagans was therefore analysed as a product of the discursive themes which constituted its context.

Further, the identification of the site, or place, and its settings can only be understood by attention to the details of its form and the context of its production, remembering that there may be a number of ‘levels’ or modes of meaning, such as various metaphorical levels of meaning. In this way meanings, both intended and acquired, can be discovered if all the methodological tools of form, function, structure, dimensions, text, context, hierarchy of spaces, signifiers, signified are used.

Chapter 2.6 demonstrated that complex meanings, such as conveying national consciousness, were displayed by a number of buildings, having a range of functions

and from a variety of countries. It was concluded that significant buildings are often problematical in a way that benefits a nation building agenda because of the players involved in the production of these buildings. For example, the original proposals for the Finnish National Museum were in a neoclassical style until a group of younger architects argued that ‘simplified forms’ and ‘natural materials’ should ‘shape the program for the museum’ (Lane, 2000:210). The public supported the idea of using the ‘opportunity to create a new kind of building to house the ethnographic and artistic heritage of the burgeoning nation’ (Lane, 2000:210). It was designed in the National Romantic style, reflecting the forms and materials of indigenous churches and castles. It opened in 1916. The extensive interior scheme was only partially realised in the 1920s when the Gallen-Kallela ceiling frescoes about the Kalevala national epic were painted and added to the nationally distinct form of the building.

It was shown in Chapter 3 that the reawakening of Wales to its ancient and distinctive heritage and the consequent political activity occurred later than in many nations across Europe and has faltered on several occasions with the result that a lot of the nation building activity has taken place in the twentieth century. Much of the activity has been directed at gaining parity for Wales through establishing institutions. Crucial for Wales was the development of the National Museum which gave institutional credibility to the country and its culture and helped the population ‘imagine’ and identify with the nation. It was only one of many important institutions that were established from the 1850s to aid in the modernising and nation building project, as demonstrated in Appendix 7. The Welsh Liberal nonconformists, responsible for much of this activity, saw themselves as acting on behalf of what they regarded as the true Welsh ‘folk’, that is, the ‘gwerin’ of Wales. However, as time went on, inevitable tensions arose, and remain, between a conception of Welshness which emphasised modernity and modernising- and resonated with a largely English speaking, Labour-voting, industrial population and the notion of the Welsh-speaking ‘gwerin’ as guardians of the Welsh essence. Yet this latter idea was very powerful for a long time and underpinned the development of another key



project, that of the Welsh Folk Museum. The Main Building for the WFM was chosen as the case study, as explained above, because of its role in the politically dominant (though not universally accepted) nation building agenda and because it was a high profile project for the Thomas practice. It was also shown that Wales can draw on the 'deep resources' of 'persistent cultural components' that Smith and Llobera argue are essential for the future success of nation building activities, as discussed in section 2.3.

The next stage of research was to examine, demonstrate and justify the claim that the contribution of the Thomas practice to the built environment of modern Wales has been greater than any other architectural practice in Wales and that the practice has made a significant contribution to a particular conception of nation building through some of its projects. This is a key contention of the thesis. It is not claimed that the practice's work captured the plurality of national identity in Wales, but only that it resonated with a particular conception that was politically dominant during much of the twentieth century. Through a detailed examination of the context in which the practice was operating, progressing and expanding and by compiling a list of projects that is as comprehensive as possible (Appendix 2).

Chapter 4 demonstrated the significance of the practice (under various names) to the design of significant twentieth century Welsh buildings. The practice gained commissions from all sectors of Welsh life that were modernising and also from the government for new types of buildings to fulfil institutional functions. The contracts undertaken were for a variety of projects that ranged from purely utilitarian, industrial buildings to prestigious government buildings. Many of these buildings house key institutions that were part of a nation building agenda. Some of these form part of the 'banal nationalism', the everyday lived experience, of those who live in Wales, and sometimes contribute more than that. An important outcome of that chapter is the issue of how self conscious the practice were about this and how much influence they had over the designs and form of the structures. This issue was addressed in the case study.

The case study set the development of the Welsh Folk Museum (WFM) in context, which was, as noted above, that of the development of relevant institutions in Wales. Scandinavian nationalist activity and its related museum movement were also examined to draw parallels with this activity in Wales and subsequent influences on the WFM. It was found that these influences even extended to ideas about design and contrived settings, as well as ideas on how the culture should be protected, displayed and communicated and the nationalist discourses at the heart of these initiatives. In turn, these connections illustrate that the Welsh experience, including new buildings, contributed to and consolidated broader European ideas about the significance of folk museums in projects of creating national identities that is, of the particular dominant idea of identity. In Scandinavia, no less than in Wales, dominant nation building projects excluded the voices of some minority ethnic groups, for example.

The account of the lengthy process of the development of the idea of an ‘open-air field museum’ to house the ‘Welsh culture complex’ illustrated the difficulties and resistance to the provision of such an institution, with the plight of the Welsh national institutions being raised in the House of Commons in 1963. The gift of land in 1946 helped move the project on, but it was almost another two decades before it could begin to be built. It was discovered that the role of the government was crucial to the realisation of the project, and more notably, it was Labour’s success in the 1964 election (having committed itself to recognising the special identity of Wales in 1959) that finally saw the necessary programme of funding commitments being organised and work could begin on Peate’s much needed ‘Museum block’.

Meanwhile the Thomas practice had been commissioned to design basic facilities at the Castle and around the site, a Stage 1 block for storage and temporary exhibition space and they were also preparing proposals for the Main Building, in preparation for the time when work could start. They were chosen for this prestigious scheme because, as Hilling noted in his interview, they were a well respected large practice who were local, with a good record and more importantly were a Welsh practice, ‘that was essential’.

The account of constructing the Main Building necessarily drew heavily on the National Museum of Wales records, and to an extent its perspective: because of their availability of an accurate and reliable factual record in the National Museum archive. These records contained decisions and events throughout the whole project, including the negotiations and preparations from before the start of the project. This provided a framework of operational and organisational processes, including the many delays and difficulties, involved in the realisation of this state funded project. These delays reinforce the sense of struggle involved and that nothing about the project was inevitable. They were triangulated as far as possible with other documentary evidence and data gathered from interviews.

Three professionals who were passionate about Wales and who were all interested in Scandinavian developments came together to work on this project and, before progressing on the design, visited Scandinavia. Peate wanted a modern building for his 'national centre' and did not want a pastiche of the exhibited buildings in the park. Owen and Hilling were both very interested in Scandinavian modernism and had worked on other modernist projects. Their selection to work on this project by the practice may have required the agreement of both Norman Percy Thomas, who took over the chairmanship after his father's retirement in 1961 and Percy Thomas who continued to act as a consultant to the practice for several years after this. There were no precedents in Wales for a building of this type. Hilling's comment that Peate wanted his museum to be seen to be as good as others of its type, illustrates the importance of considering how the project would be perceived by Peate's peers and the wider audience.

The Main Building has become an iconic building and plays a very prominent role as part of the Welsh Folk Museum, the 'cultural centre of the nation', as anticipated by Peate, which is now a contemporary museum of international standing. This Museum is a people's museum that reflects the ideals of those that campaigned for Welsh institutions in the nineteenth century and it helps shape people's sense of identity. Yet, in terms of its content and presentation it has had to shift quite considerably from Peate's conception of an all sacrosanct 'gwerin' as the heart of the

nation to a more plural conception in which considerations of class, ethnicity and gender all inflect what it may be to be Welsh. This was not the conception politically dominant in the 1960s, however, and this thesis's contention relates to the role of the Percy Thomas Practice in relation to a narrower, more contestable, perhaps more crude, but very powerful conception of Wales as simply a modernising industrial nation.

The incident about the organisational arrangements of the National Museum and WFM suggests that not all on the Museum Council and Court were persuaded of the value of establishing an autonomous museum for Peate's Welsh Folk Collection originally but agreed to this in 1968. Several incidents, that collectively are significant, occurred about this time and demonstrate changing ideas about Wales and Welshness for some connected with the museum. This wasn't always the case with the government and definitely not for social historians keen to redress the balance and describe the experiences of industrial Wales.

The analysis revealed information about the meaning of the project that would not have been evident through a survey of the portfolio of the Percy Thomas practice or through a history of the practice or through the minutes and annual reports of the National Museum of Wales. This case study has therefore thoroughly tested the original hypothesis is persuasive in contending that the Main Building of the Welsh Folk Museum was understood as part of a particular kind of nation building agenda that was inspired to a great extent by Scandinavian nation building activities both in the meaning of the function of the building and in its design.

It has been shown that the built environment facilitates the operation of a modern urbanised nation and can also be understood as part of a nation building agenda which is related to the need for emerging nations to gain international credibility and recognition through modernisation. Parallel with this drive is the internally focussed need to achieve domestic solidarity through identification with cultural institutions and national symbols, such as the Welsh Folk Museum.

Museums have been used since the late eighteenth century to help create and memorialise the national memory of Anderson's 'imagined communities' (1983). 'Museums constituted a key space for the imagined community of the nation state... by displaying material evidence of its deep historical origins' (Bouquet, 2012:46). The significance of the function of the Main Building of the Welsh Folk Museum is expressed by its contemporary architectural design in an aspirational, international modern style that was influenced by Scandinavian modernism by a major Welsh architectural practice and 'one of the most commercially successful British practices of the twentieth century' (ODNB).

It has recently been listed by Cadw as 'one of the foremost essays in pure modernism in Wales employing simple geometric forms and contrasting solid and glazed planes in a clear articulation of space and function. The building is the work of one of Wales's leading c20 architectural practices, The Percy Thomas Partnership . The building uses its striking Scandinavian influenced modernist style as a powerful symbol of modern nationhood and is of special historic interest as a major commission which reflects the importance accorded to Welsh traditional culture in the modern Welsh nation'. (Cadw's assessment is, however, based on information provided by the writer).

Given Cadw's justification for Listing the Main Building and acknowledging the importance of the built environment for nation building activities, it would seem that the Main Building is now part of the story of the development of an institutional framework specific to Wales and has become an exhibit in its own right.

The thesis has established the significance of built form as one way in which identity can be revealed, through projects of particular form and function, as influenced by the dominant, if contested, agenda. It has been argued that in Wales one practice, the Percy Thomas Practice, was especially important in designing buildings that addressed the modernising conception of the nation building agenda. On at least some occasions - including those in the case study of the Main Building at St. Fagans - that practice played a decisive role in shaping the built form which even-

tually emerged. The circumstances that allowed this are of interest to those seeking to understand the myriad influences over the built environment as actually produced in relation to a nation building agenda.

It is acknowledged that national identity is plural but in the Welsh case one construction of national identity, namely that which privileges Wales as a modern industrialising nation was politically dominant from the early years of the twentieth century (see sections 3.4 and 3.5). It is within this conception that PTP's work was especially significant. The WFM conceived and managed by Peate was based on a different conception, one that privileged the 'gwerin'. The skill of the architects was in devising a building form which resonated with both conceptions, that is, the one alluding to Scandinavian modernism and all that encompassed, and the other with twentieth century modernism (see sections 6.2 and 6.6). Other conceptions of national identity for example, more contemporary ones that emphasise multi-ethnicity, were absent from these discourses; 'recognition of the fact of multiculturalism and any systematic response to it has been patchy and contradictory' (Williams et al 2003:2).

In the case of St Fagans it is striking that the complex bureaucratic and political jostling and haggling that marked the development of the museum as a whole, and the Main Building in particular, barely touched upon issues of design. This created a space in which the architects (and Peate as de facto client) could exercise considerable control. How this might have worked out had they disagreed about anything fundamental is a matter of speculation in this case, and perhaps for further research about the broader principles involved. However, disagreement was unlikely because all three were nationalists and impressed by the Scandinavian approach to developing and consolidating national identity in small, urbanising nations. The Scandinavian modernist idiom was understandably influential, therefore. That it could signify 'national' as well as 'modern and international' to different audiences made it extremely useful for a project which was part of a rather narrowly 'folk' – based version of nationalism at that time in a country (Wales) where economic and social modernisation had greater political salience, even among the majority of

those sympathetic to the idea of forming a distinctive and particular Welsh identity, which as noted is an evolving process, having multiple, plural and complex realities, often creating tensions and conflicts.

The insulating of design from the tangled history of St. Fagans can be understood largely as a by-product of the symbolic significance of the Folk Museum itself. Throughout Europe, National museums have long been part of the infrastructure of nation-building, as discussed in earlier chapters; folk museums remained a more contested expression of nationality, because they privileged a particular dimension and group, in national life and history. This underlay the difficulties associated with establishing St. Fagans, and also Peate's doggedness in pursuing its establishment and development. Ultimately, his particular vision of who or what constituted the 'Folk' was to be rejected-hence the evolution of the museum's name from 'Welsh Folk Museum' to the 'Museum of Welsh Life' and today's 'National History Museum'. But in the 1960s the struggle over what kind of museum, and what status and independence it might have, dwarfed any concerns over designs of buildings, though the latter would actually have important implications for the former.

Therefore the research focus can be justified through the contribution to knowledge that it provides. The findings can be generalised to other examples of buildings of this class so long as the intentions, themes, relationships and causal links are examined as deeply as in this case. Modern structures have all helped define the kind of Wales that all major political interests in Wales aspired to and shape our conception of twentieth century Wales. The practice that has designed more of these structures than any other practice is the Percy Thomas Partnership, which has made one of the most significant contributions to the built environment of modern, twentieth century urban Wales and that this work has also made a significant contribution to nation building through the scale and scope of their projects.

#### ***7.4 Future research.***

This thesis is a pioneering piece of work in relation to Wales. It demonstrates what is possible and in so doing reveals how much remains unanalysed.

More research needs to be undertaken on the work of the Percy Thomas practice and other architects and designers who have made a significant contribution to the built environment of Wales. Also, there needs to be more research on the scale of awareness of architectural practices as to the ability of key buildings being able to draw attention to separate identities when they function as significant institutional components. With regard to PTP more needs to be understood about how conscious they were of contributing to the experience of the sense of a nation being recreated. Different kinds of buildings need to be analysed to evaluate their significance in a nation building agenda and the extent to which different kinds of clients affect design decisions for a range of types of buildings, e.g. how much influence did PTP and others have over the design of iconic industrial buildings.

Another area for research are the links and networks involving architects and architectural ideas in Wales with other parts of Europe, especially with other small nations, and how much reciprocal influence these links may have.

In addition, the perceptions and experiences of voices often marginal in discussions of Welsh identity until relatively recently- notably women and racialised minorities- have yet to be explored and explained in relation to the built environment.

People are not passive ‘consumers’ of the built environment- they interact with it and attempt to impose on it meanings and uses that conform with their perceptions of the world as it is and as it should be. Those who have been historically marginal in discussions of Welsh identity will nevertheless have interacted with, and helped shape, the built environment of Wales. To what extent these interactions both reflected and helped shape distinctive senses of Welsh identity is an important research agenda for the future.



## Appendices

*Table 5.1 Summary of strengths and limitations of documentary sources.*

### **Strengths**

documentation can be reviewed repeatedly

is unobtrusive

can contain exact details such as names, references and events and offers broad coverage

effectively scientific in approach, if handling techniques are properly enacted.

evidence can be shown to be authentic, credible, representative and comprehensible

### **Weaknesses**

recovering information can be problematic

there can be an issue of bias, both consciously and subconsciously

the researcher may be too selective

the assessment of the quality of the evidence may not be objective and thorough

the meaning and purpose of the document may not have been established. This has to be achieved by reference to the author's intentions.

A large amount of trust is required.

Source: Scott, J. (1990). *A Matter of Record. Documentary Sources in Social Research*. Cambridge: Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell

Yin R. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. California and London: Sage Publications.

***Table 5.2 List of Obituaries and Biographies. for Sir Percy Thomas, Norman Percy Thomas, I. Dale Owen, I.C.Peate and Sir William Goscombe John***

**Sir Percy Thomas.**

The Times, 18th. August 1969

The Daily Telegraph, 18th August 1969.

Architects Journal (AJ), p. 487. 27th August 1969

Welsh Biography Online, (accessed 7/3/2009) Author: Norman Percy Thomas.

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, (accessed 7/3/2009) Author: Simon Unwin.

**Norman Percy Thomas.**

RIBA Journal, p.114 January 1990. Author: Frederick S. Jennett.

**I. Dale Owen.**

Touchstone, Volume 5. April 1999. Author: Ronald Weeks with contributions from John Vergette, Keith Mainstone and John Newman, pp.14-15.

The Independent, 28th. November 1997. Author: Kenneth Powell.

Architects Journal (AJ), 28th November 1997.

**Iorwerth C. Peate.**

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, (accessed 4/2/2012). Author: Meic Stephens.

**Sir William Goscombe John.**

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, (accessed 11/07/12). Author: Fiona Pearson.

## *Appendix 1 The history of early Wales*

The western regions of Britain were the refuge of the Ancient Britons, a Brythonic Celtic tribe of the Iron Age, driven there by successive waves of invaders from before the time of the withdrawal of the Romans from Britain. The western peninsula that became Wales is bounded on three sides by the sea with the fourth side forming a 'fluid' contested boundary with England; the shifting geography of eastern Wales attests to the processes of invasion, annexation and colonisation. Parts of this boundary were delineated by a massive linear earthwork attributed to King Offa of Mercia in the c8th. which added to the sense of separateness of the mountainous land within and its people, the Weallae, as they were called by the Saxons. The word means 'foreigner' and is the origin of the word 'Welsh': 'this few and fragile people took the whole inheritance of Britain on their shoulders' (Williams, 1991:45).

The Brythonic tribes in Wales kept their Romano-Celtic Christian faith, their language and maintained their Roman ways long after the Anglo-Saxons had settled England. Maund notes that mediaeval historians and kings later cited the establishment of ancient kingdoms after the Roman withdrawal, to legitimise their claims (2005:54). This was through the manipulation of origin myths, foundation legends and pedigrees as evidenced by the Pillar of Elise near Llangollen. These were later enshrined through the recital of praise poems by court poets to the various warring kings and princes that ruled parts of Wales throughout the mediaeval period.

Hywel Dda is said to have codified the Laws of Wales, which is considered by some to be the first act of nation hood, whilst accepting the role of junior partner to the Saxon English in the tenth century, particularly the powerful Athelstan king of Wessex. The kings of Wessex had successfully resisted Viking invasions which had wiped out other Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and by the time of Edward the Elder, Maund notes that they were regarded as 'senior amongst all kings within Britain' (2005:77).

For a brief period, just before the Norman invasion of Britain, Gruffudd ap Llywelyn held all of Wales and parts of the border land, until he was killed in c.1062/3 in a campaign sent by Edward the Confessor. Maund describes Gruffudd ap Llywelyn as the 'greatest leader' of a country of kingdoms that 'possessed a strong sense of their own ethnicity, identity, culture and above all, independence' (2005:87).

It was over two hundred years after the victory of William the Conqueror in England before Wales fully succumbed to the Norman English when Gwynedd was annexed after the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, prince of Wales, in Edward I's second campaign of 1282-83. The Edwardian 'iron ring' of stone castles was built to consolidate this victory and display superior English power and wealth; it was 'the most ambitious exercise in colonial domination ever undertaken anywhere in mediaeval Europe' (Schama, 2000:194).

However opposition to English rule continued for another two centuries, notably by Llywelyn Bren and more lastingly by Owain Glyn Dwr, who even in this period realised the importance of a national, educational system for social and material progress and envisioned universities in the north and south of an independent principality (Williams, 1991:112). Griffiths notes that Glyn Dwr's plans for Wales show an informed awareness of European political realities, 'Owain was consciously acting in the style of a European prince' (2005:149).

In spite of the insurrections, an uneven integration occurred led by the administrative structures; the Norman English feudal, manorial system of shires spread out across Wales and the practice of primogeniture eventually replaced the tradition of gavelkind, thus setting up the conditions for the landed estates. Border earldoms had been established by William the Conqueror in the area known as the March, which added to the fluidity of the boundary over the centuries as border disputes and warring continued between the Welsh princes and the Marcher lords. The Church in Wales was integrated into Latin Christendom in the twelfth century, dioceses and parishes were formed and monasteries were established. Wales became more culturally and ethnically diverse and more integrated with England but remained culturally distinct through the 'tenacity of mentalities and practices' and an attachment to 'a British past and potential future' based on the former glories of the Britons and a deliverer in the figure of King Arthur (Pryce, 2005:124, 3).

See Figures



A.1.1 Humphrey Llwyd's map of 1568 (pub. 1573)



A.1.2: Saxton's map of 1580 (more accurate)

These show the persistence of the idea of Wales over hundreds of years.

Henry VII's ascension to the English throne in the c15th. and the subsequent establishment of the Tudor dynasty was seen by some as the fulfilment of Merlin's prophecies for the heirs of the Brythonics and Cadwaleadr, the last ancient British king from the seventh century (Williams, 1991:117). Henry's victory over Richard III, for the House of Lancaster on Bosworth Field in 1485, followed decades of civil strife against the Plantagenet House of York, much of it played out in Wales.

Opportunities for advancement in England had already increased in the second half of the fifteenth century but many intellectuals and nobles left Wales for the Tudor Court in London, including the powerful Seisyllts (anglicised to Cecil) (Williams, 1991:121) leaving Wales with a diverse gentry and yeomanry to act as local leaders. Further patronage of the Welsh landed gentry, by the Tudors, reinforced the manorial system, especially after the Dissolution of the Monasteries, thereby strengthening the often, absent landlord class and weakening the lower classes whilst adding to the process of Anglicisation (Griffiths, 2005:165) (Davies, 1994:225-229).

The continuation of much of the administrative arrangements initiated by Edward I meant that Wales, as represented by its influential elite, was peacefully and willingly assimilated into England and its burgeoning mercantile Empire by the 'Acts

of Union' (the Laws in Wales Acts) of 1536 to 1543 (Griffiths, 2005 :165). Bobi Jones argued in 1974 that even though the Acts strengthened the position of the emerging gentry in Wales, it 'produced a subjective sense of inferiority in the Welshman regarding his own identity and character' that lasted for centuries (Day and Suggett, 1985:94). This was due to the need to be bilingual to be able to hold office in Wales (Jenkins, 2005:204). Griffiths notes that Henry VIII 'was praised for his measure'(2005:165) until the c19th., the time of the cultural and political revival.

Elizabeth I fearing Welsh resistance to the Reformation and needing support for a war against Spain authorised a Welsh translation of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer in 1563. William Morgan's version of 1588 thus, ironically, secured the future of the language that had been outlawed by Henry VIII in his drive for political unity and at the same time conjoined Protestantism with Welsh. This 'was to prove the seed and root from which Welsh nationalism grew' (Mayo, 1974: 65).

Wales's distinctiveness may have been diminished by some of the c16th. losses but the old culture was kept alive in fireside tales by rhymesters and remembrancers. At this stage the common folk thought in terms of counties rather than Wales as a geographical entity (Jenkins, 2005:168).

A committed group of humanists tried to introduce the ideas of the Renaissance whilst also aiming to modernise and enhance the language and literature in the sixteenth century but largely failed due to the absence of intellectual institutions and patronage. Old Welsh manuscripts were copied and collected to try and 'salvage and sustain the nation's memory; Robert Vaughan's library of rare manuscripts later became the corner stone of the manuscript collection of the National Library of Wales (Jenkins, 2005:205).

## *Appendix 2 Portfolio of the Percy Thomas Practice in Wales*

This appendix contains a list of all the major projects undertaken in Wales by the practice over a period of ninety three years. It is arranged chronologically and where appropriate, geographically and according to building type. Awards and Cadw listings have been included. There is a list of buildings at the end of this appendix for which it has proven impossible to find dates.

This is the first time such a comprehensive list has been compiled.

‘Leading firm in Wales from 1920s’ (from Orbach’s notes for the Carmarthen and Ceredigion Pevsner), formerly known as:

1912 Percy Thomas and Ivor Jones

1937 Percy Thomas

1946 Sir Percy Thomas & Son

1964 Sir Percy Thomas & Partners

1971 Percy Thomas Partnership

2004 Capita Percy Thomas-c2007 Capita

1935-37 President of Royal Institute of British Architects.

1939 R.I.B.A. Royal Gold Medal for Architecture.

1943-46 President of Royal Institute of British Architects.

1946 Knighthood for services to architecture.

1936-70 Appointed Honorary Architect to the Wales and Monmouthshire Industrial Estate.

1946-1955 Chair of the Welsh Board of Industry.

1950s appointed Consultant Architect to University College of South Wales and Mon. and University of Swansea.

Consultant architect to the Steel Company of Wales, Ministry of Transport, Cardiff Hospitals, University of Wales, British Electric Authority in Wales, S.A Brains and Lloyds Bank and to the county of Flintshire.

### **Domestic/Residential:**

1919 Lodge, Plas Isa, Gordon Road, Porthcawl.

1920-24 St-y-Nyll, St.Brides-s-Ely Grade II ‘special architectural interest as a fine neo-Georgian country house which has retained its character’.

1921 Edward Nicholl Home ‘for Waifs and Strays’, Penylan.

1921 The Quarry House & cottage/garage, St. Fagan’s Rise, Fairwater. Grade II ‘included as a scarce example of a house in this style by an eminent C20 Welsh architect’.

1922-27 Fairwood, (formerly Fairy Wood) Llantrisant Rd., Grade II.

1920s Lon Twyn, Twyncyn –large Arts and Crafts house built for Sir Joseph Davies (Sec. of State for DLG who reputedly spent many week-ends there) Grade II ‘the early work of a notable Welsh architect and with interesting historical associations’.

1928 Whitehall, (formerly Greenway) Drysgol Rd., Radyr Grade II.

1936 Two houses in The Rise Estate at Llanishen.

1936 The Dingle, Mill Rd., Lisvane Grade II ‘carefully designed suburban house which has retained the character of its composition designed by the most important Welsh architect of the period’.

1938 West Drive, Porthcawl.

1938 House for A. Meggitt, Lisvane.

1939-40 Cherry Orchard, Cherry Orchard Rd, Lisvane, Cardiff.

1939-40 Cwrt-yr-Ala, Michaelston-le-Pit, Glam. Grade II ‘small country house set in an important parkland landscape designed by Percy Thomas, the distinguished Welsh architect’.

1939-40 Llanewydd, St. Nicholas, Glamorgan.

+ various small housing estates around Cardiff.

1947 Manager’s Houses, Bridgend.

1967-69 Housing Development, Billybanks, Penarth for Penarth UDC.

1971 Staff houses west of Clyne Castle, Swansea.

1971 Staff houses, Dyffryn House, St. Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan.

1971 Glyn Garth Court of 10 storey design, on the Menai Strait.

1970-73 Albert Edward, Prince of Wales Court, Penylan Ave., Porthcawl. Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution home for the elderly. National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal.



1975 Roxburgh Garden Court, Penarth. 3 storey housing around a quadrangle.

1983 Portland Close, Penarth.

Penarth Esplanade maisonettes.

Dimlands, private house in Llantwit Major.

Housing Development, Rhayader.

Housing Development, Riverside, Haverfordwest

Industrial Estate Management Corporation for Wales, Managerial houses.

Housing Estate in Monmouthshire for Coal Industry Housing Association.

**Public institutional/administrative buildings:**

1912 Triumphal Arch for King George V and Queen Mary's visit to lay the foundation stone of the National Museum of Wales.

1930-32 large extension to Vincent Harris's Grade I Mid Glamorgan County Hall ('the building and its setting express Cardiff's claims to be a city of international importance at the peak of its economic power').

1930-34 Swansea New Guildhall. Grade I 'the most important building in Wales of its period, with a particularly fine and virtually unaltered sequence of public spaces, and as an outstanding example of the work of an architect of particular significance to Wales'. RIBA Bronze Medal. (NB. 1964-65, 1974-76 extensions).

1934-38 The Temple of Peace and Health. Grade II 'listed as a striking building by South Wales leading architect of C20, a rare example of this style in Wales. Group value with other listed buildings in Cathays Park'. RIBA Bronze Medal.

1936-56 County Hall, Carmarthen. Grade II 'included as one of the most notable mid C20 public buildings in Wales, by a leading Welsh architect, the dominant building of the town. A striking and unusual design, perhaps acknowledging the historical origins of its site'.

1948 Basic visitor facilities for the 'Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, St. Fagans Castle'.

1953 plan for Welsh Folk Museum Main Building, St Fagans, Cardiff.

1954 Stage 1. Temporary Exhibition Gallery at St. Fagans, Cardiff.

1963-67 Broadcasting House, Llandaff, Cardiff.

1964-76 Welsh Folk Museum at St. Fagans. Galleries and Administrative block, Stages 2, 3 and 4.

1970-73 Central Statistical Office (Business Statistics Office), Duffryn, Newport.

1971 -74 Dyffryn County Hall, Cwmbran.

1975 Study for New Welsh Assembly.

Territorial Army Centres in Swansea and Carmarthen.

Pontypool Police Headquarters and Magistrates' Court.

2002-04 Wales Millennium Centre. RIBA Wales Award. National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal for Architecture.

2005-09 Hoddinott Hall commissioned from Capita PTP.

### **Ecclesiastical:**

1954 All Saint's, Victoria Square, Penarth (rebuilding after the Blitz).

1954 Birchgrove Methodist Church, Cardiff.

1954-59 St. Mary central Swansea (interesting revival of a bombed out church) Civic Trust Award.

1956 Rumney Methodist Church, Wentloog Road, Rumney.

1958-60 Gwent Crematorium at Croesyceiliog near Panteg, Monmouthshire.

1965 Our Lady Help of Christians (R.C.) Machynlleth, Powys.

And other churches across south Wales, Swansea and Cardiff.

### **Educational and Scientific:**

1911 YMCA building at Merthyr Tydfil-competition.

1950s appointed Consultant Architect to University College of South Wales and Mon. and University of Swansea.

**Cardiff University** (formerly the University College of South Wales & Monmouthshire).

1911-27 competition. Bute Building. Built as the Technical Institute. E.N.& S. wings 1913-16. West wing 1927. IJ & PT. Grade II 'listed as an imposing building by an important architect on a key site in the civic centre. Group value'.

1958 Master plan for University buildings on Cathays Park. Only the north end of Sir PT's first scheme was built.

1958-62 Law Department building (formerly the Faculty of Arts).

1958-61 Redwood Building (Uni. of Wales formerly Welsh College of Advanced Technology).

1960 New master plan, designed to a higher density with some car parking beneath.

1960-67 12 storey Psychology and Admin. tower completed (formerly Faculty of Economics, Social Studies, Dept. of Maths). 1<sup>st</sup>. building of the 1960 master plan and first to break the agreed 'cornice height line' of Cathays Park.

1964 School of Engineering + Physics, extension to left of E.M.Bruce Vaughan Tower, Newport Rd. 'listed... as integral to Grade II Gothic Revival Tower'.

1967-71 Development Plan and new Halls of Residence, Birchwood Grange, Penylan

1967-71 Ty Gwyn Court, Ty Gwyn Road, Cardiff. University Hall of Residence. One 10 storey tower and lower buildings inc. a dining hall.

1968-70 the Pre-Clinical Depts. of School of Medicine + 4 storey Biochemistry block + 7 storey Physiology block + 4 storey Anatomy Block. Civic Trust Award.

1971 Llandaff House Halls of Residence, Penarth.

1976-77 Research Laboratories and Animal House (for Cardiff Uni. Institute of Science and Technology).

### **Aberystwyth, University College of Wales.**

Penglais site:

1935 PT's formal master plan for the University.

1937 The Institute of Rural Science.

1939 Swimming Pool.

1948-60 Pantycelyn Halls of Residence to a 1939 design. Grade II.

'a fine essay in the Neo-Georgian style, a prominent and important land-mark in Aberystwyth which has group value with the National Library. A key building by one of Wales' leading architects of the C20 etc.'

1951 Plas Penglais. Late Georgian, remodelled and extended to become Vice-Chancellor's residence. Grade II.

1955 Biology Building & 1967 Extension.

1955-60 two science buildings-Physics/Mathematics and Geography/Geology (The Llandinam building) Commendation, Civic Trust Award.

1963 Biochemistry Building.

1964 Physics and Mathematics Building ('Th[is] building was chosen by the G.P.O. for their series of postage stamps issued to illustrate post-war university buildings in Britain').

1965 Development Plan, Stage 1. Site re-planned by PTP and revised in 1974.

1965 Sport's Hall, adjoining PT's swimming pool.

1966 Dept. of Rural Sciences Building and 1973 Extension.

1966 Department of Geology/Geography/Social Sciences Llandinam Building.

1967-70 Neuadd Cwrt Mawr Halls of Residence. Commendation, Civic Trust award.

1967-70 The main piazza/concourse, Great Hall and Bell Tower. RIBA Regional Award 1972 & Civic Trust Award & National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal.

1971-73 Student's Union Building RIBA Award and Eisteddfod Gold Medal.

1972-75 Development Plan Stage 2.

1972-76 Hugh Owen Building for the Library and

1973-74 Brynamlwg Farmstead, conversion of farm buildings to staff sports and social club. Civic Trust Heritage Award.

1974-76 Arts Building.

1975 Three Halls of Residence.

1975 Swimming Pool & Sports Hall/Recreation Centre.

1978-80 Science Park Cefnllan on the edge of the Campus.

1992-94 student village.

### **Bangor, University College of North Wales**

Development Plan.

1939 Sports Pavilion and Playing Fields at Treborth.

1942 Men's Halls of Residence.

1955-59 extension to the University Hall for women students.

1956 Forestry Department.

1956-58 Botany Dept., Arts Library Extension.

1963 Refectory and Students Union buildings.

1964 Library for Arts Faculty.

1964-65 Extension to Oceanography Building, Menai Bridge.

1965 Department of Chemistry/Animal Nutrition.

1966 Halls of Residence, Neuadd Emrys Evans, Plas Gwyn, Bangor.

1969 Students Refectory for Halls of Residence, Plas Gwyn.

1969-71 Brambell Building, Zoology Department.

1970 Development Plan for College Expansion.

1970-74 Arts Building.

1970-74 New University Theatre.

1970 Student's Union Building.

1971 Marine Science Laboratories, Nuffield Fish Research Laboratories, Menai Bridge, Anglesey.

1972 Halls of Residence and Refectory building at Ffriddoedd Site.

1973 Sports Hall, Ffriddoedd Playing Fields.

### **Swansea, University College of Swansea**

1944 & 47 PT's Development Plans supplemented by 1957-66 Swansea University College Campus plans by IDO for Singleton Park and the Hendrefoelan site.

1944 Swimming Bath.

1953-56 Natural Sciences Building/ Wallace Building Grade II 'employing the stylistic hallmarks of this major Welsh architectural firm's 1950s work'.

1958-62 Fulton House (formerly College House). Grade II 'exemplifying modernist architectural ideas designed by the leading mid C20 architectural practice in Wales, illustrating planning and educational ideals characteristic of the post-war period'.

1960-68 Halls of Residence x 3 thirteen storeyed set 'en echelon'.

1961-62 School of Social Studies. RIBA Bronze Medal & Civic Trust Award.

1963-64 Library & 1974 Extension.

1964 Arts Building.

1967 Chemistry Dept. Stages 1 and 2.

1967 Applied Sciences Department.

1967 Natural Sciences Dept. Stages 1 and 2.

1967-73 Engineering Dept. to the east of the main drive in 2/4/8 storeys.

1968-70 Physics and Mathematics Buildings. Civic Trust Award & National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal.

1970 Arts Building. Stage 2.

1971 Development Plan, Hendrefoelan Site.

1973 Stage 3 Natural Sciences Building.

1975 Animal House.

1976 Sports Complex.

1977 Student Village Amenity Centre, Hendrefoelan.

### **Rhondda**

1954-55, 1958-9 Rhondda College of Further Education, Llwynypia.

1968-69 Upper Rhondda County Secondary School, Treorchy.

### **Cardiff**

1955 Howardian High School.

### **Newport**

1956-58 Newport Technical College, Allt-yr-yn Ave. Commendation Civic Trust Award.

1968 extensions to above.

1969-74 St. Julians High School.

### **Vale of Glamorgan**

1960-62 Atlantic College, St. Donat's –remodelling castle, new school buildings and swimming pool.

1969-70 Dyffryn Education Centre.

1973-77 Bryncethin Comprehensive School, Bridgend.

Penley/ Llannerch Banna, Flintshire.

1966-67 Extensions to Grade II Madras Voluntary Aided School.

## **Barry**

1969-73 Brynhafren Comprehensive School for Girls, Merthyr Dyfan Rd.

## **Trawscoed**

1969 Research Laboratories at Trawscoed, Cardiganshire for the National Agricultural Advisory Service beside Crosswood Mansion.

1975 New Laboratory Building and conversion of Crosswood Mansion, Trawscoed, Dyfed.

Coleg Ceredigion, formerly Cardiganshire College of Further Education. Llanbadarn Fawr Campus, Cardigan.

1969-71 The College of Librarianship and the Welsh College of Agriculture.

1968-75 (stages 1 & 2) and Halls of Residence.

## **Llandovery**

1971 Llandovery College Development Plan.

1971 Music Block and Classroom Block.

## **Lampeter, St.David's University College.**

1970's 5 x Halls of Residence.

1984 Library remodelled and extended.

## **Health and Welfare:**

### **Cardiff.**

1948 Welsh National School of Medicine. Institute of Pathology scheme of alterations.

1950-55 Maternity Unit, Glossop Terrace, Cardiff Royal Infirmary.

Velindre Hospital and Radiotherapy Unit, Whitchurch.

PT, Adjudicator for UHW, Cardiff, Wales Teaching Hospital.

### **Glangwili, Carmarthenshire.**

1958-59 West Wales General Hospital.

## **Llandough**

1965-76 Additions to the south of Willmott and Smith's Llandough Hospital.

### **Merthyr Tydfil**

1965-75 Prince Charles Hospital.

### **Abergavenny**

1965-70 & 1971-74 Nevill Hall Hospital Brecon Rd.

### **Glan Clwyd, Flintshire**

1972-80 Hospital at Bodelwyddan.

### **Llanelli**

District General Hospital.

### **Rhyl**

District General, Bodelwyddan.

### **Entertainment and Recreation:**

1955 Lever Hall, concert hall and theatre, Ebbw Vale.

1958 Sir PT & Son, Engineers to Wales Empire Pool.

1966-67 Park Hall Cinerama Theatre, Cardiff.

1972-73 Sports Centre, Henllys Way, Cwmbran.

1990-91 Plantasia, Ocean Park, North Dock, Swansea.

1992 Ebbw Vale Garden Festival-masterplan.

### **Commercial:**

1913 Imperial Building, Mount Stuart Square, Cardiff.

1919 Architect to S.A.Brain & Co. Alterations to the Brewery, 1920s.

1920 Old Rummer Tavern, (Louis Café and Hallinan's Restaurant) Duke St., Cardiff.



1922 Marments, Queen St., Cardiff.

1924 Extensions to David Morgan's.

1926 Empire House, 54-57 Mount Stuart Square Grade II\* 'best South Wales example of inter-war, Neo-Georgian architecture' (offices of Elder Dempster Shipping Co.).

1928-30 south corner of Howell's drapery store. Grade II\* 'a department store building of more than special interest. The S. block an unusually finely detailed and well-preserved example of inter-war Classicism by South Wales' most distinguished C20 architect etc.' RIBA Bronze Medal.

1931-32 The Birchgrove Public House and at Culverhouse Cross, Ely.

1932 The Westgate Public House, Cardiff. Grade II 'rare and complete example of a large city centre public house of fine design'.

1936-37 The Electricity Showrooms [built in 1901 as the fish market neo-Georgian, refaced in stone and converted to offices]. Grade II group value.

1949 Whitbread Brewers Offices, Cardiff & refurbishment in 1989.

1950's Appointed Consultant Architect for Wales, British Electricity Authority.

1950 Godfrey Motor Showrooms, North Rd., Cardiff.

1952 Office building for the Prudential Association, Kingsway, Cardiff.

1959 Market, Swansea.

Three Arches Hotel, Cardiff.

The Spinning Wheel, Swansea.

Tennis Court Hotel, Cardiff.

Dolphin Hotel, Swansea.

Tenby Golf Club clubhouse.

1968 Cwmbran Development Corporation Town Plan.

1970-73 Portcullis House, Cardiff.

1973 Automatic Telephone Exchange Tower Block, Cardiff and later refurbishment of 1997-8.

1973 Telephone Exchange & Engineering Centre, Cardiff (now the Atrium).

Telephone Exchanges at Newport, Pontypridd, Bangor and Barry.

1974 Rhayader Central Area Redevelopment.

1975 Lloyds Bank at Swansea (and others).

1979-81 Regional Head Office for Wales Gas, Cardiff.

1981 Market Hall, Carmarthen.

1992 Tourist Information Centre Chepstow.

Brecon town expansion plan.

Wales Tourist Board, London.

Offices for:

The Steel Company of Wales Ltd., Margam.

Guest Keen Iron and Steel Works, Cardiff.

Powel Duffryn Engineering Co. Ltd., Cardiff.

Central Electricity Authority, S. Wales Division Head, Office Gabalfa, Cardiff.

The South Wales Electricity Board, Porth, Carmarthen, Barry etc.

B.P. Tanker Terminal, Swansea.

### **Transport and Industrial:**

1936-70 Appointed Honorary Architect to the Wales and Monmouthshire Industrial Estate.

1936- 60s Treforest Industrial Estate, the first such estate in Wales. 60-70 factory units added later of similar design.

1936 Estate Office and Restaurant.

1938. Treforest Textile Printers, Main Avenue. Grade II. + front added in the early 1950s.

1945 PT, Consultant Architect to the Ministry of Transport for the Severn and Wye crossings, service area and toll booths, the Conway Bridge and Neath and Newport By-passes.

1945 Conway Bridge.

1946 Severn Bridge proposals.

1945-48 British Nylon Spinners /Dupont Factory at Llanfihangel, Pontymoile. Grade II\* 'this major factory...illustrates with exceptional clarity key elements of early post-war industrial building design. It is a pioneering example of industrial architecture applied to a pioneering industry, by a leading Welsh architect of the C20. Its modernist idiom clearly expressed not only the organisation of production

on the site, but also the aspirations for a clean modern industry to take its place in a well-planned development. It is therefore listed at grade II\* as a landmark in the development of an architecture of industry, and of industrial culture in post-war Wales'.

1947 Factory, Ty Glas Road, Llanishen, Cardiff for British Electrical & Associated Industries Ltd.

1940s Appointed Consultant Architect for Wales, British Electricity Authority.

1947-52 Carmarthen Bay Power Station and at Burry Port and

Aberthaw, Glamorgan. and Rogerstone, Monmouthshire.

1947 Appointed Consultant Architect to the Steel Company of Wales.

1948-52 the new Abbey Steelworks at Port Talbot were laid out to designs by Sir PT & Son as was the reconstruction of the Margam Works.

1948 Factory, Caerphilly Road, Cardiff for Hopkinson's Motors & Electric Co. Ltd.

1950's Treforest Industrial Estate, Main Avenue. Honeywell Power Tools Testing Division. Grade II.

1952-56 Felindre Tinplate works, Llangyfelach.

1952-56 Trostre Steelworks, tinplate rolling mill, Trostre near Llanelli.

1953 Sports Pavilion at the Abbey Works.

1958-62 Spencer Steelworks at Llanwern.

1961-66 The Wye Bridge Viaduct, Grade II forms part of a group with the Grade I Severn Bridge and Aust viaduct. PT designed the architecture of the towers, piers, anchorages, toll booths and service areas.

1967 Fram Filters, Talbot Green, Llantrisant.

1968 Perkin Elmer, Talbot Green, Llantrisant.

1968-69 Broad's Foundry Factory and Offices, Risca.

1969 Hispeed Plastic Factory, Bangor.

1969 GKN Floform Factory, Welshpool.

1970 Laura Ashley Textile Printing Factory at Newtown, Powys.

1971-73 Parke Davis Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturing Centre. Llanfihangel, Pontymoile, Mon. RIBA Award & National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal & Civic Trust Award.

1972-73 Welsh Plant Breeding Station, Gogerddon, Dyfed.

1972-76 + 1983 Hoover Factory, Abercannaid.

1973 Alfa –Laval , Ty Coch Way, Cwmbran.

1973 Riverside Development, Haverfordwest.

1974 Expansion of Rhayader for Mid Wales Industrial Development Association.

1974 – 1981+ 1987 Amersham International Radiochemical Factory, Whitchurch.

National Eisteddfod of Wales Gold Medal for Architecture.

1992-96 The Second Severn Crossing. British Construction Industry Supreme Award.

1994-96 British Airways Avionics Facility, Llantrisant RIBA Regional Award

1996 selected to reduce former Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station and reclad smaller building.

2001-04 OpTIC Technium, St. Asaph Business Park.

Rhymney Breweries, Machynlleth.

Other factories for Industrial Estates Management Corporation for Wales including;

Brocklehurst Yarns, Cardiff.

Gnome Photographic Products, Ltd.

Enfield Clocks, Ystradgynlais.

Development Plan for new Estate at Talbot Green.

Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co. Factory –Gorseinon.

Brymbo Steelworks, Wrexham.

Esso Petroleum Company Ltd. Offices , Milford Haven.

British Road Services Depot., Bridgend.

St Mellon’s Business Park.

Swansea Harbour Village.

### ***Appendix 3 Sources of data for the portfolio list of buildings in Wales designed by the Percy Thomas Practice***

This appendix contains a list of data gathered from a variety of archive sources, published material and various online search facilities. It was compiled on the basis of researching all projects associated with the practice including the effectively 'invisible' projects of less newsworthy industrial and infrastructure projects. This is the first time that such a comprehensive list of buildings by the Thomas practice has been compiled and is the most complete and reliable list of PTP work so far.

#### **Visits:**

##### **Capita Symonds Office for:**

Promotional brochures (partly photocopied) for Sir Percy Thomas & Son and Percy Thomas Partnership Photograph albums and albums of slides.

**British Architectural Library.** RIBA 66 Portland Place London to see and photocopy the biographical file on Thomas which included a number of copies of articles from newspapers and architectural/building journals and RIBA correspondence.

##### **Cardiff Library. Local Studies section.**

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See Table 5.2.

#### *Appendix 4 Selection of Drawings kept at St Fagans*

Detail of Refreshment Room in the n.w.corner of the Castle, Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, St Fagans Castle.18/3/1948 by Sir Percy Thomas and Son. Architects, Cardiff and Swansea.

Extension to the Exhibition Hall with kitchen and preparation room off (exg.),

Staff Rest Room, Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation, by Sir Percy Thomas and Son. Architects, Cardiff and Swansea.

Folk Life Museum for the Welsh Nation.

Alternative seating layouts for the Refreshment Room by Sir Percy Thomas and Son, Cardiff and Swansea.

St. Fagans Folk Museum. Grounds adjacent to the Castle. Surveyed June 1950.

St. Fagans Castle Grounds. Tracing taken from the Plane Table Survey. 15/8/1951.

There were lots of drawings for 1951,1952,1953,1954 all small scale developments, refinements, facilities and improvements.

Boiler House and Gardeners Stores etc. as existing 27/11/1951. Welsh Folk Museum, St. Fagans, Cardiff by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Proposed Layout: St Fagans Folk Museum by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Agricultural Type Cottages. 3 pairs. Sir Percy Thomas and Son 11/1/1952, 22/3/1952

Flower box design and steps to the rose garden. 8/9/1953 by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Rose Garden. Toilet. New Female lavatory. Museum Park-temporary public convenience.

St Fagans Folk Museum. Proposed Museum Block. Preliminary Gallery, Archives, Restaurant, Lecture Theatre and Hall 3/3/1953 and 8/6/1953 by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Elevations 8/6/1953. St Fagans Folk Museum by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Perspective drawing 1953.

New Museum Building. St Fagans Folk Museum.Red brick storage block. Stage I. February 1954.

All by Sir Percy Thomas and Son:

1959 New ticket office, car park and road widening programme (Earl of Plymouth Estates).

1960 Entrance gates etc. and car park layout.

1965 All of the plans for the Welsh National Folk Museum by Sir Percy Thomas and Son, including furniture, fittings, windows, doors, benches etc.

1966 Site survey-Welsh Folk Museum.

1966 Car park extension.

1966+ Site Plan –administration block, workshops, gallery 1.

1966 Reserve collection and workshop block.

1967 Drawings for Specimen Treatment Room, Studio Suite, Laboratory and Technician's Room x2, Committee Room. Existing storage block and new building.

Drawings by consultants and sub contractors for Electrical, Heating, cold water services.

1966 -1968 Gallery 1 Preliminary Layout, Upper Entrance Hall and Furniture, External Works, Workshops, Technical Workshops.

Photograph of artist's drawing. 5/10/1965 by R. Frank Buckley of Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

1970 Site Plan Stage 2 by Sir Percy Thomas and Son.

Gallery 1 and 2, Storage, Administration Block.

Stage 2 Drawings –elevation, sectional elevations, North, South, West and East

1970 Stage 2. Courtyard.

Welsh Folk Museum, site plan by John Hilling.

1970 and 1972 Stage 2 Shop, Service Yard, Lower Entrance Hall, Dining Terrace, Reserve Collection, Public Courtyard.

Welsh Folk Museum. Amgueddfa Werin Cymru. Stage III.

New Administrative Wing, including office for Keeper of re-erected buildings and research assistant. Keepers, Assistant Keepers, Clerical staff and PA's. PTP Architects and Planning Consultants.

Elevations and plans August and November 1973. Percy Thomas Partnership.

Welsh Folk Museum. Ysgubor Fawr. Alterations. Set of drawings.

May 1974. Percy Thomas Partnership.

Interim Development Plans and site location plan. 1977. Wyn Thomas.



Refurbishment of the Castle. 1979. Percy Thomas Partnership.

Amgueddfa Werin Cymru. Welsh Folk Museum. Plans. July 1989 and July 1990.  
PTP

Norrkopings Museum

Tekniska Museet, Stockholm

Example of re-erected buildings Sortebro Kro I

Jorgen Ebbesen's Modelhaus    Sortebro Kro II

Davinge Vandmolle I

II

III

## *Appendix 5 Schedule of interviews undertaken*

### **Relevant Percy Thomas Partnership staff and related others:**

John Hilling- project architect.

A semi-structured formal interview was conducted, on 21st. February 2011. This interview was taped. A scoping interview had been conducted on 23<sup>rd</sup>. October 2009.

Maureen Kelly Owen – architect widow of I.D.Owen partner in charge of the institutional sector of PTP and lead architect on the project was interviewed on 28<sup>th</sup>. February 2011. This interview was taped.

Keith Mainstone-partner in charge of commercial sector at the time of the development of the Welsh Folk Museum but it has proved very difficult to arrange this due to his failing health.

### **Relevant National Museum of Wales staff including WFM staff:**

Dr. Gerallt Nash, Senior Curator at the WFM was interviewed on 14th. February 2011. This interview was taped.

Dr. Eurwyn Williams, Curator Keeper and Director of WFM and NMW recommended contacting his predecessor, Trefor Owen on 12th. February 2011.

Trefor Owen, Senior Curator at the WFM succeeded Dr. Peate in 1971 until 1987, was interviewed by telephone on 18th. February 2011 (due to advanced age and distance). Notes were taken as we spoke over the course of an hour.

Donald Moore. Education Officer at NMW, for the Museum Schools Service, in the 1960s and 1970s, until a separate officer was appointed for WFM. We exchanged letters but Donald, even though he was very knowledgeable about planning and architecture, could add nothing about the project.

### **Family members:**

Aileen Thomas, widow of Norman Percy Thomas was interviewed on 16th. April 2010. The interview yielded personal recollections, a photograph of the Royal Gold Medal and the loan of Thomas's personal scrapbook.

These were semi-structured case study interviews, that could be described as 'open' regarding the ability of the respondent to elaborate answers to a list of structured questions.

Level 1 answers respond to the question directly.

Level 2 answers can add to the line of enquiry about the case study.

## *Appendix 6 Timeline of key events in the history of St. Fagans*

- 1891 Skansen established-the world's first national folk museum
- 1907 National Museum of Wales granted Royal Charter of Incorporation.
- 1913 'Welsh Bygones' exhibition held in Cardiff City Hall.
- 1927 Dr. Iorwerth Peate joins the Department of Archaeology.
- 1932/3 Sub-department of Folk Culture and Industries formed
- 1936 Up-graded to a Department (1<sup>st</sup> of its kind in Britain and the Empire).
- 1943 The Welsh Reconstruction Advisory Council propose an open air museum as an essential auxiliary.
- 1946 The Earl of Plymouth and the Countess of Plymouth offer St. Fagans Castle and 18 acres to the Museum. An extra 80 acres of parkland negotiated.
- Peate writes about creating a Wales in miniature and visits Sweden and Norway.
- 1947 Grounds opened on an experimental basis for a short period in the summer.
- 1948 April. Origin of anomaly of WFM becoming a departmental extension to NMW that later led to financing difficulties of the Main Building.
- 1948 1<sup>st</sup> July grounds opened permanently.
- 1948 25<sup>th</sup> September. Public appeal launched.
- 1948 Sir Percy Thomas and Son appointed to design basic facilities at the Castle for its opening in July 1948. Origin of anomaly of WFM becoming a departmental extension to NMW has implications for financing issues.
- 1951 The Festival of St. Fagans, as part of the Festival of Britain celebrations, included Welsh music, dancing crafts and drama and two re-erected buildings.
- 1953-55 Plans, elevations, perspective drawings prepared for a new Museum Block; these illustrate the proposed £300 000 modern museum block (in 3 stages).
- 1954-55 Stage 1-small exhibition gallery and storage building constructed, designed by Sir PT & Son. Collections moved from National Museum.
- 1954 8<sup>th</sup> July Commemorative plaque unveiled by HRH The Princess Margaret celebrating the gift of St Fagans Castle and Grounds as a Folk Museum for Wales by the Right. Hon. –other Robert Ivor Windsor –Clive. 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Plymouth (in 1947).

- 1957 First exhibition in Stage 1 Building to celebrate National Museum's Jubilee.
- 1959 Arts Council report-scheme in existence-to be completed in 3 stages.
- 1962 PT's prepare a revised schedule of requirements (42 000 sq. ft. exc. the theatre block). 4<sup>th</sup> appeal launched.
- 1963 30<sup>th</sup> May; questions about the plight of Wales's national institutions raised in the House of Commons.
- 1964 Agreed programme of financing £700,000 over 12 years for the WFM, NLW, NMW inc. £185,000 1965-1967 and £170,000 1970-1972 for WFM. The new Secretary of State for Wales was not willing to adjust the 12 year programme suggests it was after the Labour government had taken over on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Sir PT & Son become Sir Percy Thomas and Partners

- 1964 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Building Committee 11/12/64 following a letter from the Treasury in November. It was agreed to proceed to design the building as a whole and prepare drawings and schedules.
- 1965 April meeting. Architect's Preliminary Design Report adopted and visit to Scandinavian museum organised for June-the designs were modified as a result of this trip. August –model presented, design influenced by Scandinavian modernism with various practical alterations from the preliminary scheme .

JH and IDO saw their design as 'significant and evolutionary' architectural Concept.

October- the Chancellor has issued a statement noting that the starting dates for capital projects were to be postponed for 6 months.

- 1966 June –Tender Stage 1

Planning permission had been received by October from Glam. C.C.

Date of commencement on site, 24<sup>th</sup> October.

- 1966/7 Positive effect of Severn Bridge on visitor numbers noted.

July –Prof. Idris Foster was invited to visit, on behalf of WO, to try to resolve the split contract issue–unsuccessfully. Peate blames it on lack of full autonomy for WFM but this required a Statute to change the Charter.

- 1967/8 exploring schemes and sites for an open air industrial museum (apparently as a result of requests from various organisations-Scandinavian initiatives were cited)

- 1968 1<sup>st</sup> October –administrative offices occupied.

1<sup>st</sup> December- greater autonomy achieved.

1969/70 First ever bilingual Annual Report.

1970 10<sup>th</sup> July –official opening of Gallery 1 (material culture) but open since 26/3

21<sup>st</sup> August meeting to discuss Phase II.

December –contractor to be chosen.

1971 Dr. Peate retired.

NPT retired, Sir PT & Partners become the Percy Thomas Partnership.

8<sup>th</sup> March contract date delayed until June 1971 (financing issues again)

May-Tory government pledges to support museum and galleries but it's not clear if this means in Wales.

Tenders opened 8/4 and reported to Council 23/4.

14<sup>th</sup> June construction began.

1973 26<sup>th</sup>. March –official handover by F.G. Minter (South Wales) ltd.

1974 5<sup>th</sup> April –Agricultural Gallery officially opened.

Autumn –the 'much needed extension to the admin. wing' started by Geoff Stark-built as a minor building works project and handed over 9/2/76.

1975 April -Agricultural Vehicles Gallery opened

July- shop opened

1976 9<sup>th</sup> February - extension to the administrative wing.

***Appendix 7 List of key events and institutional developments since 1850 in the politics of establishing a Welsh national identity***

- 1858 Bangor Normal College opened.
- 1868 Henry Richard becomes the first Liberal Nonconformist MP in 1868.
- 1872 Aberystwyth University College opens.
- 1877 Chair of Celtic established at Oxford University.
- 1882 The Royal Cambrian Academy was established.
- 1883 University College Cardiff.
- 1884 University College Bangor.
- 1885 Society for Utilising the Welsh Language, Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg re-  
vived.
- 1886 Cymru Fydd formed in London (failed in 1896).
- 1888 Gorsedd of Bards re-formed.
- 1889 Welsh Intermediate Education Act for provision of county schools.
- 1892 The National Institutions (Wales) Bill-failed in its proposals for an assembly.
- 1893 The Charter forming the University of Wales granted.
- 1896 Central Welsh Board established to oversee examinations.
- 1904 The Welsh Revolt in Parliament over the operation of Balfour's new Education Act of 1902.
- 1907 Welsh Department of the Board of Education established.
- 1907 The National Museum of Wales opened in temporary accommodation in Cardiff. Ist. stage eventually completed 1927.
- 1907 The National Library of Wales opened in temporary accommodation in Aberystwyth, completed 1937.
- 1908 The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) was established.
- 1911 Investiture at Caernarfon Castle.
- 1912 Welsh Health Service Insurance Commission established.
- 1913 Union of Welsh Societies.
- 1914 The Welsh Church Bill receives royal assent.

1914 Government of Wales Bill-failed.

1920 Church disestablishment.

1922 Welsh branch of the League of Nations Union formed.

1923 BBC begins broadcasting in Wales; at Cardiff.

1924 BBC broadcasting from Swansea.

1925 Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru formed.

1926 General Strike.

1927 The Welsh Department of the Board of Education encouraged teaching of the Welsh language at all ages.

1934 BBC broadcasting in Bangor.

1935 BBC Welsh Orchestra established, becoming the National Orchestra of Wales in 1993.

1937 BBC broadcasts in Welsh.

1943 The Welsh National Opera established.

1947 The National Coal Board formed.

1947 The Steel Company of Wales formed.

1948 The Council for Wales and Monmouthshire established.

1951 Minister of State for Welsh Affairs appointed.

1955 Farmer's Union of Wales formed.

1955 Cardiff made Capital City of Wales.

1957 All 36 Welsh MP's vote against the Tryweryn Bill

1958 The Empire Games held in Cardiff.

1962 Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg reformed after Lewis's radio lecture (Tynged yr Iaith/The Fate of the Language).

1964 Secretaryship of State for Wales established.

1964 Broadcasting House opened in Llandaff, Cardiff.

1965 The Welsh Office established, April 1<sup>st</sup>.

1966 The Welsh Economic Council replaces the Council for Wales

- 1966 Gwynfor Evans (Plaid Cymru) elected as MP.
- 1966 M4 extended to Cardiff and Severn Bridge opened.
- 1967 The Welsh Language Act.
- 1967 The Welsh Arts Council established.
- 1973 Kilbrandon Report for the Royal Commission on the Constitution.
- 1976 Welsh Development Agency formed.
- 1978 The Wales Act-part of the Devolution proposals.
- 1979 'No' vote wins the Referendum.
- 1982 S4C established.
- 1993 Welsh Language Act.
- 1993 Welsh Language Board established.
- 1997 'Yes' vote (of 50.3%) wins the Referendum.
- 1998 Government of Wales Act.
- 1999 1<sup>st</sup> elections for the National Assembly for Wales.



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