

Owning and Belonging: A Semiotic Investigation of the Affective Categories of a Bourgeois Society

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INTRODUCTION: SENTIMENTAL AND INTERESTED BELONGING

Categories of 'belonging' and 'owning' have reflexes in both linguistic and broader social spheres, in which the same cover terms lead a curious double life in both linguistic and social scientific terminology. For example, the opposition between 'inalienable' and 'alienable' possession exists both as a linguistic category and a category relevant for exchange (gifts versus commodities), and has generated immense parallel and unrelated literatures in both linguistics (e.g. Chappell and Mcgregor 1996, and references there) and anthropology (e.g., Carrier 1995 and references there). This paper explores the changing pragmatics of a single Welsh linguistic form which indexes 'belonging,' to understand which, I argue, one needs to understand broader changes in the way that social and political-economic categories of belonging and ownership are differentially infused with affect from the nineteenth to twentieth centuries.

In Welsh it is possible to refer to an absent (not currently visible) referent using the deictic particle *acw* ('(over) there,' normally used only with specifically visible referents (Manning 1995; 2001a)) if the speaker or the addressee have a special relation with that referent, which I will call "belonging." A few examples will give some idea of the range of specific social relations that are or have been affectively engaging relationships of 'belonging' in Welsh usage since the end of the nineteenth century¹:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| (1) <i>y ty acw</i> | 'the house there' (i.e. where I live or was raised) |
| (1') <i>y dref acw</i> | 'the town there' (where I live or am from) |
| (2) <i>y capal acw</i> | 'the chapel there' (i.e. where I am a member) |

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¹ Usages (1–2) and (4) I have attested extensively both during fieldwork in Wales (1987–1988; 1991; 1999) as well as in literary sources from the modern period (Manning 1995). Usages (1–3) for the nineteenth century I have attested from novels from the late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries.

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- (2') *y Sentars acw* 'The Dissenters over there' (i.e. of which I am a member)
 (3) *y ffyrm acw* 'the firm there' (i.e. which I own [nineteenth century])
 (4) *y ffyrm acw* 'the firm there' (i.e. where I work [twentieth century])

But what is 'belonging'? The polysemy of the English term 'belonging' captures the crucial duality which these data show (Edwards and Strathern 2000:149–53), in that localities and persons can relate in a manner termed 'belonging' in crucially and interestingly opposed ways, ranging from various species of moral belonging (1–2) to economic notions of ownership (3), to senses of moral belonging within the world of the economy (4). Edwards and Strathern in particular draw attention to the relation of moral senses of belonging to notions of property, which are often cast in a similar idiom: "English-speakers know that what is claimed as one's own may encompass as much a claim to identity, as it does to rights of possession. . . . There is a moral propriety to the indigenous English concept of 'ownership' which suggests that it is natural to (want to) possess things, as part of one's own self-definition, as it is to be part of a community or to belong to a family" (ibid.: 149).

While Edwards and Strathern seem content to rest with the soundness of English common sense displayed in the polysemy of terms like 'belonging' to argue that political economic relations of ownership can be directly assimilated to broader vernacular moral understandings of 'belonging,' this too quickly assimilates the affective regime of political economy (property) to that of kinship-like morality (propriety).² What is neglected here is any sense of historicity, that this vagueness and polysemy in the English notion of belonging, which moves from kinship to property just as surely as the Welsh one does, might have some historical antecedents. Perhaps there is more than a 'just so story' lurking in this observation.

In the Welsh data, even as sketched here, we see that, for example, in the nineteenth century when someone says *y ffyrm acw*, they are likely stating that they have an interest in the firm, that they are the owner of the firm. But in the late twentieth century it is extremely common for the same collocation or variations on it to be used to indicate the place of work, without making any claims to 'ownership,' but merely to indicate some kind of attenuated moral belonging. This pragmatic transition of the affective sphere of political economy from a paradigm of property ownership to something like a professional paradigm of job identification as the indexical source of 'belonging' is, therefore, historically dynamic.³ We seem to be witnessing a transition from the hegemony of

² See Veblen (1898–1999) for a very interesting alternative account of the two senses of 'belonging' (what he calls "pervasion"—an indexical relations of extension of one's personality into objects associated with that person, a mixture of subjects and objects—versus purely conventional 'ownership') that sees them as having very distinct origins.

³ Indexical relations are sign-object relations constituted by actual objective existential contiguity between the sign and its object (for example, causal relations as a bullet [object] to a bullet-hole [sign] are indexical relations, the relationship in question existing independently of any sign-

the entrepreneurial ideal of nineteenth-century liberal capitalism (suggested by the usage in 3) to the hegemony of the professional ideal of twentieth-century capitalism (suggested by the usage in 4) (Perkin 1989). In this data the well-known transition from 'old' property-based entrepreneurial middle classes to 'new' service-based professional and managerial middle classes seems to be writ large. However, this is not, I will argue, simply an inscrutable sea change from one incommensurable logic of belonging to another; rather, expressivist notions of 'productivity' latent in the bourgeois category of property (Rabinach 1990), which lent moral propriety to property, in turn recursively were applied to valorize labor's claims to a moral sense of 'belonging' in this sphere of alienated interests (Ryan 1984).⁴

This paper addresses the ways that differential relations of asymmetric 'belonging' (Edwards and Strathern 2000), establishing privileged and asymmetric relations between persons and localities, to the exclusion of other persons, are differentially encoded in deixis (so-called "shiffters" [Jakobson 1971]), terms like English *this, that, here, there*, whose reference 'shifts' with reference to changing indexical parameters of the speech situation) in Welsh. Deictics have long been a staple topic in linguistic pragmatics and anthropological linguistics, in that they are a privileged locus of the grammaticalized interpenetration of language and contexts of its use (Manning 2001a). Space considerations preclude me from developing here a full description of the Welsh deictic system (see Manning 1995) or a fully adequate account of the pragmatics of deixis in general (on which see Hanks 1990; 1992). My focus will instead be on the peculiar behavior of a single Welsh deictic, *acw*, which I will gloss as an invariant 'there,' but whose specific pragmatic values can vary in quite complex ways. For our purposes it is sufficient here to note that, unlike most uses of deictics in Welsh, this deictic is specifically only used when the referent is not perceptually available to both participants in the current speech situation, a feature it shares in common with another Welsh deictic, *yno* (also glossable as 'there' [not currently visible]).⁵ However, unlike *yno*, which merely indexes that the referent is known from the verbal, but not perceptual, context to both participants, this deictic also indexes in its more typical uses that for one of the participants the referent is an affectively engaging locus of 'belonging,' and this indexical relationship is a perduring social relationship that transcends any re-

using mind that knows it as a sign). They contrast in Peircean semiotics both with relations of resemblance (iconic relations) and purely stipulative, conventional sign-object relations (symbolic relations).

⁴ Expressivism underlies both modern consumerism and nineteenth-century productivism. The underlying social semiotic logic privileging self-expression ('expressivism,' as discussed by Taylor 1989) does not change, whether this is to be expressed in production or consumption.

⁵ *Acw* can also be used in a very distinct usage (clearly separated by informants) to index the interlocutor's asymmetric perceptual access to the referent in the visual field, glossable as something like 'over there' (with an ostensive gesture), in which case it alternates with *yna* ('there' [visible to both interlocutors]).

relationship likely to be revised in the current speech situation. The participant to whom the person or place indexed ‘belongs’ shifts from the speaker to the addressee, for example in questions. Thus, I, as an American, would be frequently asked in Wales a question like in (5):

(5) How are things in America *there* (*acw*)?

It is a peculiarity of this deictic that, unlike normal ‘situational’ forms of deixis, which index relationships emergent within speech situations, not only does it denote perduring social relationships (‘social’ rather than ‘situational’ deixis (Manning 2001a)), but that it denotes two rather different kinds of such relationships. In its first aspect, it denotes relationships of sentimental belonging, relations mediated by kinship and co-residence, but also extensions of these, particularly affective categories of religion such as chapel and denomination membership. At the same time, this deictic enters into the sphere of civil society and political economy, moving from sentimental relations of belonging to interested relations of ownership. In short, the pragmatic categories relevant for the understanding of this deictic seem to be the affective categories of nineteenth-century Welsh civil society, namely, family and chapel (‘belonging’) and property (‘ownership’), the spheres of *affection* and *interest*, respectively.

The deictic in question denotes a special set of perduring relations to some perceptually absent referent mediated by some place (whether the house where one lives or was raised, the chapel where one is a member, the place of work); the relations indexed, then, are socio-spatial in the first instance (Manning 2001a). Moreover, typically, only one of the interlocutors has this special relationship. Affect, however, is a crucial component underlying all the usages of this deictic: it denotes a perduring, affectively engaging relationship. In the case of *gemeinschaft*-like locales such as the home or the chapel, affective ‘belonging’ would appear to be integral to the way such places are imagined in nineteenth-century common sense and social theory alike. For Victorian sentimentalism, these are the proper loci for passions and sentimental attachment. This is the Hegelian sphere of “love,” whose dominant institution is the purely personal one of the family and whose dominant relation is ‘belonging.’ Opposed to this sphere, whose dominant spatial expression is the home, are those ‘*gesellschaft*-like’ locales prototypically embodied in the capitalist firm, the basic unit of the Hegelian “system of needs” of nineteenth-century civil society. According to the polarization of the nineteenth century between the paradigmatic poles of home and firm, sentiment and interest, this sphere of *civitas* is dominated by relations of interest embodied in the institution of property, as opposed to the “purely personal” relations of *societas* (Morgan 1877:6). The private sphere of the family was the proper domain of disinterested (and unruly) personal sentiment, opposed to the rational “calm passion,” the “alienated motivations” (Heller 1976:60) of interests and needs generated by relations of property in civil society, whose science was the science of political economy.

Not merely opposed, but also temporalized, for Morgan as for many others (Pocock 1985:155ff), the sphere of interest based on property (*civitas*) stood as civilization itself with respect to the purely residual realm of the personal (*societas*), the sentimentalized sphere of *passions* (Hirschmann 1977): “[Property’s] dominance as a passion over all the other passions marks the commencement of civilization” (Morgan 1877:6). The progress from *societas* to *civitas*, the progress of civilization itself, was driven forward by commercial society, by a curious alchemy by which a category intermediate between private passion and public reason—interests—could produce the latter from the former (Pocock 1985): “Commerce was meant to restrain the passions, elicit the interests, and evoke manners and sociability. . . . While the passions were potentially destructive, they could be controlled and modified by the expansion of commerce and exchange which multiplied the individual’s social interactions with others and thereby refined those passions into manners and interests” (Jaffe 2000:55). To understand the use of this deictic in both of these ideologically opposed spheres of nineteenth century Victorian social life, we must understand how the *affect* it indexes was understood to move from purely subjective passion deriving from personalistic relations characteristic of private life to quasi-objective, fetishized interests imputable to subjects on the basis of objective relations of property, the dominant institution of nineteenth-century understandings of civil society.

SPHERES OF AFFECT: PASSIONS, INTERESTS, AND REASON

Mid- to late Victorian nineteenth-century self-understandings, both philosophical and commonsensical, in Wales as in many other places, bear in common a progressive differentiation of the social universe into spheres, characteristic of liberal capitalist and other modernities, with opposed but mutually constituting and complementary functions and properties, to which correspond, for lack of a better phrase, *regimes of affect*. For example, the well-known divisions between the private or intimate sphere of the family and the public sphere of civil society and the state were, among other things, based on a notion of the former as a natural feminine sphere of passions, feeling, Hegelian “love,” or Victorian sentiment, while the latter sphere was a domain identified with masculine reason and concomitant absence of considerations based on affect. There are a whole series of accounts (scientific and lay, prose and poetic, early and contemporary) of the affective regimes of modernity as a binary system opposing a sentimental private sphere to an affect-free public sphere (see for example Silver 1990).⁶

However, the sphere of political economy, civil society (in Hegel’s sense as

⁶ In anthropological discussions (what Carrier [1995:19] calls the “Maussian” tradition), these ‘spheres of affect’ tend to be assimilated to spheres of exchange emblemized by the opposition ‘gift/commodity.’

a “system of needs,” that is, a political economy, a realm defined by property and social labor) straddled the boundary between a private sphere characterized by passions and sentiments and a public sphere characterized by the public use of reason (Hegel 1991:xviii). In the nineteenth-century liberal imaginary, however, civil society was not entirely devoid of either affect or reason, but rather constituted a third affective regime between the two traditional categories of motivation, a domain of ‘economic sentiments’ that shared properties of both (Hirschman 1977; Silver 1990; Rothschild 2001). This was the sphere of interests and needs, private subjective properties that have taken on a quasi-abstract, objective, alienated form, as opposed to purely subjective passions. Interests, a form of “self-limiting” passion (Pocock 1985:114), standing at the crossroads of reason and sentiment, public and private, were rational, calculable, stable, calm states of affect therefore opposed to unruly passions: “‘Wants’ were arbitrary and capricious, and their sway provided no basis for social harmony. ‘Interests,’ properly understood, were altogether more rational” (Jones 2000:7). Indeed, a great deal of the predictability and constancy that ideally characterized the ideal of civil society could be seen to arise from the potential for intersubjectivity and reciprocity of perspectives lent by these rationalized categories of affect (Hirschmann 1977).

The opposition between a sphere of *passions* and a sphere of *interests* is a broad antinomy that at the same time regimented other social relations in Victorian Wales. The diglossic relation of Welsh to English, like so many other reflexes of the opposition of tradition and modernity, was considered to be exhaustively characterizable in terms of this opposition. The Reports of the Commissioners, the so-called Blue Books of 1847, pithily summed up the diglossic opposition between Welsh and English in precisely these terms: “If interest pleads for English, affection leans to Welsh” (1848, cited in Manning 2003), and the opposed terms of this telegraphic characterization were replicated in every subsequent account (see Manning 2001b; 2002; N.d. and references there).

Interests are “alienated motivations” (Heller 1974:60), because they are subjective motivations imputable and calculable from objective circumstances (particularly those of property), independently of the caprice of “unruly passions,” therefore able to confront the one that experiences them as an objective, alien power. Interests, therefore, have a fetishistic character in a Marxian sense because they emanate from objective relations to things, property relations, that take on an autonomous subjective life of their own (*ibid.*). They can be ‘imputed’ to others on the basis of rational calculation, hence giving civil society an admixture of calm reasoned passion lacking from both of the other spheres: on the one hand the private sphere proper, the residual ‘natural’ domain of the family as locus of unruly passions, love, and feelings, and on the other, the public sphere proper, as the sphere of the general interest, characterized by the public use of reason putatively devoid of affect. In bourgeois society certain mem-

bers (male property owners and heads of households) straddled all three regimes of affect, bearing passions and feelings as human beings, bearing interests as *bourgeois* owners of property, and capable of reasoned debates in the general interest as citizens (see for example Heller 1974:60; Habermas 1989). The sphere of civil society, as an affective regime, then, at the intersection of the two other opposed affective regimes—the unruly passions of the family (private sphere) and enlightened reason of the state (public sphere)—shows an affective category foundational for liberal capitalism, the hybrid category of *interest*. To varying degrees in the nineteenth century, this intermediary affective category, a subjective property derivative from an objective one (property), is characteristic of civil society (in the sense of political economy), somehow lying between the poles of ‘cold calculation’ and ‘warm sentiment,’ whose prototypical locus (for early formulators of this ideology like Adam Smith) is the figure of the entrepreneur, the hero of the age: “[E]conomic life is itself . . . a place of warm and discursive emotions. . . . Like moral judgements, commercial judgements are the combination of reasons and sentiments. . . . The projectors, or entrepreneurs of new ventures, are men of ‘imagination’ and ‘passion’ more than of ‘sober reason and experience,’ entranced by the ‘golden dreams’ of mining, empire and capital investment” (Rothschild 2001:27).

To return to our deictic examples above, it can be seen that the deictic *acw* is found in both of the affective regimes of ‘sentiment’ and ‘interests.’ The affective regime of the home and family, and all relations assimilated to the familial relation, is foundational for this deictic’s usage (examples 1–1’). Here the relationship denoted is affectively engaging *belonging* felt to be appropriate to the domestic and private sphere, as well as those public places and persons related to confessional identity as chapel and denomination membership (examples 2–2’). Partially opposed to this is the sphere of civil society in which the dominant institution is property, which gives rise not to immediately affective feelings of belonging, but rather to states of affect mediated by reason called *interests* based on relations of *ownership* of property (example 3).

While we cannot ‘read off’ the categories of nineteenth-century Welsh civil society directly from the distribution of this deictic, its pragmatics, as I will show, are nevertheless suffused with the hegemony of the affective categories of nineteenth-century political economy, and at the same time show us challenges to that hegemony. In particular, the notion of productivity underlying the opposition between ‘active’ property of the entrepreneurial bourgeoisie as opposed to the ‘passive’ property of the aristocratic landlord class could be recursively applied to valorize productive labor against unproductive capital. By a series of such steps, the category of entrepreneurial ‘interest,’ being the exclusive affective and motivational category of political economic relations, comes to be replaced in turn by broader senses of experience and labor as being such an affective category, to a notion that the workplace is itself as affec-

tively prominent for workers as it is for owners in the twentieth century (example 4).⁷

The usage in question is laden with conventionalized affect and can carry connotations of intimacy and/or disrespect, frequently being likened in its pragmatic effects to other linguistic forms indexing intimacy, disrespect, or solidarity such as nicknames (Manning 1995).⁸ Moreover, the prototypical distributions of the deictic (1–2, described elsewhere in detail [Manning 1995; 2001a]) index the prototypical *loci* of such affective engagement in the home, or home town. These are places which, when one is absent from them, the emotion of *hiraeth* ('longing') is typically experienced. In fact, a good first approximation of the distribution of *acw* in indigenous terms might be that it includes all the persons and places for which one normatively experiences *hiraeth* (see below). This is also true of broader extensions of the coding of 'gemeinschaft-like' relations using this deictic, such as the usage to index chapel and denominational membership so salient for Victorian Welsh identity (Manning 1995). In either case, there is little question that there is a close kinship between these two kinds of belonging (home and chapel), in which spaces define reciprocal and transitive relations of affectively engaging symmetric belonging, especially since chapel membership is a relation that maps co-resident families into local communities (Manning 1995). I collect these, therefore, as *gemeinschaft* deixis, in comparison to relations which are founded on a radically different basis of property relations, *gesellschaft* deixis, which, for Victorians, are specifically asymmetric relations between haves and have-nots, but have a moment of affect in the 'interests' generated from having. There is an important *formal* difference between these usages. In *gemeinschaft* deixis, the referent of *acw* cannot be shared between the interlocutors (that is, *acw* is what I call my home when speaking to people I do not live with), whereas, in *gesellschaft*

⁷ Partially this is because the 'transcendental materialism' (Rabinach 1990) of productivism makes the commodity a doppelganger of property as a whole. That is, Lockean and Hegelian notions of property as arising from mixtures of properties of subjects and objects (respectively 'labor' and 'will' versus [actual material] 'things' [Maurer 1999]) directly mirrors the notion of commodities in the political economy of Adam Smith as being mixtures of immaterial labor and raw materials. Moreover, the commonsense cosmology of capitalism (as opposed to its more recondite elaborations) has been as committed to seeing both property and wealth (commodities) as being *intrinsically* composed of durable materials, 'things.' The almost theological difficulties of applying concepts like 'property' to intangibles in commonsense logic is the same as the difficulty of a thinker like Smith bringing under the rubric of "commodity" what Jean-Baptiste Say (1836) awkwardly called "immaterial commodities" (i.e. 'services') (Moore 2003:332–34). Veblen noted this long ago (1898–1999:363): "the attempt to classify services as wealth is meaningless to laymen, and even the adept economists hold a divided opinion as to the intelligibility of such a classification. In the common-sense apprehension the idea of property is not currently attached to any but tangible, vendible goods of some durability."

⁸ In Daniel Owen's novel *Rhys Lewis*, for example, the character Wil is upbraided for using forms involving *acw* to refer to his parents just as he is upbraided for using other disrespectful terms such as "gaffer" (Owen 1993[1885]: 98).

deixis, it apparently can be shared (that is, I can use *acw* to refer to a mine that I own, regardless of whether I am in colloquy with non-owners or owners). The solidary deixis of the symmetric relations of co-residence and kin of the home and chapel worship is never deployed in solidary linguistic contexts, whereas the non-solidary deixis of asymmetries of haves and have-nots, ironically, can be used in solidary linguistic contexts.

PRODUCTIVISM AND PROPERTY: A SEMIOTICS OF POLITICAL ECONOMIC 'BELONGING'

Before we can understand the distribution of deixis in the relational world of political economy we must take a look at the semiotics of its founding juridical relation, property, which gives rise to, and is often identified with, the rationalized form of affect known as 'interest.' Property relations tend to be conceived of, of course, as an indexical (that is, purely natural existential) relationship between some person and some thing, though it is at the same time also a social relationship between persons. The first relationship is often regarded to be almost unproblematically physical in nature, as if property, by originating in some indexical moment of appropriation (by force, Lockean mixture of labor, Hegelian placement of will in a thing [Hegel *PR* §44]), remained so by virtue of some equally tangible form of possession. First and foremost, the indexical relationship involved in 'property' between the person and the thing is a mediated one, distinct from the indexical immediacy of mere momentary possession (Macpherson 1978:3). And the relationship, even if founded on some 'pure' indexical relationship of appropriation, must be conventionalized and justified as a perduring, typified relationship in order to become property (*ibid.*: 11–12). Nevertheless, the two moments, perduring possession (conventional) and immediate appropriation (indexical), tend to be grounded in one another. Indeed, many theories of property from Locke onwards (and virtually all 'natural rights' theories) have seen fit to ground the conventional aspect of property in a semiotically more basic ('naturalizing') claim involving indexical relations at the moment of appropriation (Ryan 1984). That is, while it is possible to emphasize the ultimate 'conventionality' of property (Bentham, for example, for whom property is an entirely conventional, future-oriented 'basis for expectation' of revenues [Ryan 1984:98]), most 'natural rights' critiques and justifications of property are alike in their emphasis on the indexical moments of the relationship, either the nature of the originary appropriation by which it became property or the nature of the ongoing appropriation in use, and in particular in the activity of productive labor (Veblen 1898–1899; Ryan 1984). In fact, is it precisely this which provides the naturalizing semiotic basis for the differentiation of property into two separate types, 'active' industrial capital of the bourgeois class, which results in profits, and the 'passive' property of the class of aristocratic landlords, resulting in rent. If liberal ownership with respect to objects can be treated as a portmanteau category (a 'bundle' of

rights [Hunt 1998; Hann et al. 1997]), which can be reduced, as does Christman (1994:29), into two basic moments of rights to ‘use’ or ‘control’ (that is, direct indexical relations of manifold variety) and future oriented rights to ‘revenue’ (the sort of thing that is foremost in Bentham), then aristocratic property in land is simply ‘revenue’ without ‘use.’⁹ That is, precisely by emphasizing an ill-defined indexical relationship of an active engagement with or use of one’s property, productivity as a metasemiotically applied logic allows the productive, ongoing, improving stance that characterized bourgeois capital to be distinguished from the landed properties of aristocratic rentier landlords that generated passive income from the ‘original and indestructible powers’ of the land in the form of rent (Ricardo 1951:69).¹⁰

Such ‘productivism,’ ‘a critique of nonproductive social groupings from the standpoint of productiveness’ (Postone 1996:50), which made labor the natural source of social wealth and the standard measure of social worth, characterized both bourgeois critiques of the existing aristocratic order, and in turn served as the semiotic basis for the claims of labor to stand as the productive class in society to speak for the social whole (Postone 1993:65). Productivism was a totalizing framework, a metasemiotically applied logic, in which both social and natural relations could be expressed uniformly: “The Promethean power of industry (cosmic, technical, and human) could be encompassed in a single productivist metaphor in which the concept of energy, united with matter, was the basis of all reality and the source of all productive power—a materialist idealism, or as I prefer to call it, *transcendental materialism*. The language of labor power was more than a new way of representing work: it was a totalizing framework that subordinated all social activity to production, raising the human project of labor to a universal attribute of nature” (Rabinach 1990:4).

Productivism in all its varieties makes labor, productive human activity, an *ongoing* justification for the property relation, an ongoing indexical grounding that constantly re-grounds the conventional relation of property (and especially revenue) in the ongoing facts of use (Veblen 1898–1899; Ryan 1984). The result is a recursive reapplication of the indexical moment of appropriation to the conventional category of property, producing distinctions between ‘passive’ and ‘active’ property (paralleling recursive applications of the category of pro-

⁹ Obviously, the much discussed opposition (Berle and Means 1932) between “ownership and control” as constitutive of the distinction between the “old” and “new” middle classes is ultimately based on such a basic productivist divide within the theory of ownership.

¹⁰ Part of the ambiguous ontological position of land within a productivist political economy is not only that it represents the productive power of nature as such, but that this natural productive power cannot itself be produced (‘original’) nor consumed (‘indestructible’), quite unlike capital and labor, which *must* be consumed to produce. The principle of productivity does not apply “to a commodity which ‘no man has made’” (Cairnes 1873b[1870]: 190–91). This is because *wealth* as a category of the ‘transcendental materialist’ (Rabinach 1990) productivism of political economy (as opposed to the Physiocrats) consists not of matter, but of matter, as it were, informed with the transcendental productive principle of *labor* (Cairnes 1873b[1870]: 191; Say 1836:119–26; Smith 1976:351ff).

ductivity to other terms of political economy, productive and unproductive labor, productive and unproductive consumption, etc.). This productivist opposition is typical both of critiques of aristocratic landlords from the perspective of bourgeois capital, as well as critiques of bourgeois property from the perspective of industry and labor (Manning 2002).

We might expect the distribution of *acw*, which indexes perduring affectively engaging relations, to tell us something about how property is conceived: what indexical warrants allow a deictic used for *Gemeinschaft*-like relations of belonging to be extended into the problematic indexical relations on which property relations are founded? My argument is historical, because, just as with the domestic universe in the nineteenth century all relations must be read in terms of a kinship-like residential belonging (the home),¹¹ so the criterion for the use of *acw* always lies with the concept of ‘property’ (the firm) in that period. For Victorian capitalism, the potential for a division between ownership and control (Berle and Means 1932) was, as it were, invisible, for the relation of property was the linchpin for industrial organization, with the role of management relatively untheorized (Littler 1982:64). Hence Victorians tended to prefer wage contract systems (such as internal contract systems) that minimized managerial intervention and maximized the ‘natural’ operation of the profit motive or ‘interest’ which derives from the relationship of property: “The late Victorians could not clearly understand how an industrial organization which was not permeated by the profit motive could function” (Littler 1982:81). It is here, then, in the affective moment of individual self-interest deriving from indigenous notions of property, that we seek the cultural basis for the extension of the use of *acw* from affectively loaded domains of sentimental attachment of the home and chapel into the world of unrighteous Mammon, the world of industry.

At the same time, as the entrepreneurial functions of ownership and control became divorced in larger firms into the figures of the ‘active’ manager as delegated function of capital and ‘passive’, socialized capital of the joint stock owners (a dispersion which was *always* characteristic of most British mining ventures), the opposition between active and passive property no longer clearly delineated a single ‘productive’ figure whose interests clearly dominated the relational field of the firm. Also, at the same time, depending on how their own notions of work were integral parts of a meaningful narrative (what Sabel [1982] calls “careers at work”) that made work less instrumental and more in-

¹¹ Domestic servants (both male and female) in bourgeois households, lodgers, landladies, as well as male farm servants who reside with the family, all use *acw* to refer to their residence, implying a relation of co-residence rather than kinship. However, in Victorian ideology, the relationship of co-residence, defining a household, itself has been assimilated to the norms of co-residential *kin*, defining a family. There was even a ban on marriages between co-residents, which helped to iron out some of the mismatches between the ideal of household = family (for useful discussions see Harris 1982; Davidoff et al. 1999).

tegrally related to giving a meaningful sense of identity and self-development, workers could use their own 'active' position with respect to property to make equivalent claims that gave them a sense of moral propriety, if not political economic property (Ryan 1984:11; see Ryan on instrumental versus self-developmental [expressivist] notions of the relation of work to property). In what follows I focus on this general sense in which the affective logic of productivism, the way that active engagement in production tends to be valorized, is reflected in the spread of this deictic.

In the next sections I will discuss a number of cases where we have linguistic evidence for the distribution of *acw* in the world of political economy. In the first example, drawn from a popular nineteenth-century novel, we will see as close an analogy as we are likely to find to a use of *acw* by a mining entrepreneur in relation to his various ventures, to the exclusion, for example, of his workers. In the second, drawn from the same novel, we will see examples of parallel usages of *acw* by workers engaged in 'poor men's ventures' in the same sort of mining, in which the workers themselves contribute both capital and labor. These accounts are drawn from the generally hegemonic liberal milieu of a popular novel written by the noted nineteenth-century Welsh novelist Daniel Owen. This novel deals specifically with mining communities, and the parallelisms of usage noted here could be as easily the product of the author's liberal conception of property as of actual usage among owners and workers. In the third example, we will see a counter-hegemonic (clearly Laborist) usage of the same deictic by workers in Welsh slate quarries in which a kind of notion of moral propriety, based on a similar productivist logic, generates the affective warrant for the use of this deictic. This example is drawn from a retrospective account of quarry life by Lloyd (1926) that is semi- autobiographical and semi-fictional, but his observations about usage are partially confirmed by period observations.

LIBERAL MODELS OF PROPERTY IN ACCOUNTS OF WELSH LEAD MINING

The plot of Daniel Owen's nineteenth-century novel *Profedigaethau Enoc Huws* (1891) revolves around the fortunes and schemes of a certain Captain Trefor, "Captain" (manager) of a local lead mine somewhere in North East Wales. This character stands in an 'entrepreneurial' relationship to two local lead mines—one actual, one projected—which form the economic base of the local community. It is this broadly, but problematically, 'entrepreneurial' relationship to these mines that gives a warrant for his use of *acw* with respect to them. Some aspect of this entrepreneurial relation Captain Trefor shares with a certain Mr. Denman, a local businessman and "in adventurer" (local adventurer) who holds shares in the ailing lead mine *Pwll y Gwynt*. Both Mr. Denman (6) and Captain Trefor (7) use *acw* to refer to this mine when talking together:

(6) ‘Do you have any news about Pwll y Gwynt? What kind of ‘look’ is **there** (*acw*) now?’

(7) ‘There is a better ‘look’ **there** (*acw*) now than I’ve seen for some time’ (Owen 1995[1891]:50).

However, there is a difference: Captain Trefor *always* uses *acw* to refer to the mines of which he is Captain, while Mr. Denman, when speaking to other people about the mine does not use *acw*, but the deictic *yno*, which does not presuppose a special affective relation but merely that invisibility of the object to both interlocutors at the moment of speaking. It is difficult to tell, then, whether his usage of *acw* is oriented to Captain Trefor’s affective engagement with the mine, or his own. In the novel, shareholders in other mines run by small partnerships with shares being divided in *ounces* also use *yno* to refer to these places. One character, a certain Tomos Bartley, was once an adventurer in just such a small partnership: “Didn’t I have a quarter ounce of the Top works, and didn’t I spend 25 pounds **there** (*yno*) that I never saw the face of a harp of them, aside from what I spent on drink! Didn’t we have a meeting in the *Brown Cow* every first Monday of the month to look over things and to pay the money, and up to the last evening the miners were swearing up and down that there was **there** (*yno*) a better ‘look’ on the Works than there had ever been before” (ibid.: 139–40).

Captain Trefor, however, when speaking to Sem Llwyd, his co-conspirator, employee, and *lieutenant* of both the mines, always uses *acw*, implying that he has a special relationship to the mine (8):

(8) ‘I will come down **there** (*acw*) tomorrow morning, if I am alive and well’ (ibid.: 236).

Sem Llwyd, however, in his dealings with Captain Trefor and others, only refers to the mine using *yno*, again implying no special relationship to the place, merely that he cannot see it (9):

(9) ‘Well Sir,’ said Sem, ‘the men have, and I also have, faith that we will get lead **there** (*yno*) someday’ (ibid.: 236).

Nor does Sem Llwyd use *acw* when speaking of Pwll y Gwynt to complete outsiders, such as the aforementioned Tomos Bartley (ibid.: 135), where again he uses *yno*, just as Tomos Bartley does with respect to the works in which he is an adventurer (ibid.: 139): “Had the Captain had his own way—and my own way also, for that matter—Pwll y Gwynt would be paying fine, because there is **there** (*yno*) a land of lead, were they to get at it in the right way” (ibid.: 135).

It appears that the ‘special’ privilege of referring to these mines as *acw* lies particularly with Captain Trefor, and certainly not the miners (like Sem Llwyd), and the usage of other adventurers is either ambiguous (Mr. Denman) or implies no affective involvement (Tomos Bartley). Each character who has some perduring existential connection to these locales nevertheless has a relationship differentially construed in terms of political economic categories, particularly

those of property and interest. In order to explain this, we need to have some grasp on three concrete political economic categories of relationship that lie behind these modes of access: adventurers, captains, and miners.

ADVENTURERS

The ‘entrepreneurial ideal’ of the nineteenth century was the stereotypical conflation of two potentially distinct relations—owner and manager, or, in the language of the mines, adventurer and captain. But such prototypical entrepreneurs were never particularly common in hard-rock mining ventures in the nineteenth century, where managers (‘captains’) and owners (‘adventurers’) were almost always distinct persons. In addition, the category of ‘adventurer’ was usually itself multiple, and divided spatially between local shareholders (‘in adventurers’) and non-local adventurers (Burt 1984:75). However, within this complex relational field generated by the socialized capital of mining ventures, Daniel Owen seeks to locate Captain Trefor as the character who most closely resembles a prototypical nineteenth-century entrepreneur.

Mr. Denman, besides Captain Trefor, is the only other ‘in adventurer’ in Pwll y Gwynt. The remaining adventurers are distant Englishmen. The second venture, Coed Madog, undertaken alongside the failing Pwll y Gwynt, is a smaller-scale adventure that includes only ‘in adventurers,’ explicitly contrasted with the external control by distant adventurers, who Captain Trefor blames for the failure of Pwll y Gwynt. Both mines are begun the same way, by taking a “takenote” (a temporary, one-year lease) in preparation for a full lease, but the scale and manner of recruitment of capital differs, as Captain Trefor explains to Mr. Denman. Trefor explicitly uses the language of ownership, and, more importantly, control: “I want it to be my Works, along with a few friends, and London people will not get to meddle with it. It is a Works that will be on a small scale, without much cost, and to start paying soon. But I will need to have a couple of friends around home to take shares. *One* of those friends will be Mr. Denman. Between you and me, I have taken the takenote already” (Owen 1995[1891]:53).

In spite of the intimacy of this private partnership, none of the ‘in adventurers’ drawn into the latter scheme are any more familiar with the operation of the mine (and hence, of the nature of Captain Trevor’s swindle) than were the other adventurers and board of directors of Pwll y Gwynt. In fact, it is the *passive* nature of their role in their adventure that allows Captain Trefor to fleece his investors. The adventurers of Pwll y Gwynt and Coed Madog, although part-owners of the mine, are passive owners, their rent-like passive profit differing little from the passive rent of the landlord in the vision of the age. The entrepreneurial relation, ‘active property’ (represented by Captain Trefor, an owner-manager), as opposed to mere activity without the interest generated by property (the workers) or ‘passive property’ (the shareholders), is particularly the relation that generates an affective warrant for the use of *acw*.

CAPTAINS

The role of Captain Trefor in his various concerns is first and foremost mediated by his status as ‘captain’ of the mine. In historical, as opposed to novelistic terms, the ‘captain’ is an intermediary managerial position in larger lead mines standing between the adventurers and the workers (Burt. 1984:108–9). However, Captain Trefor is no ordinary mine captain. While in most cases the captain was appointed by the adventurers, in Captain Trevor’s case, he has *made himself* the captain of Pwll y Gwynt on the basis of his discovery of the lead lode (Owen 1995[1891]:30). Thereupon, in alliance with an outside partner, he recruited capital from adventurers near and far, transferred ownership to a company which then took a long-term lease, and he ‘demoted’ himself from adventurer of a poor men’s venture to captain of a major enterprise. Thus, Captain Trefor is both the original adventurer of the mine, and, having transformed himself from a common miner to a mine captain, is, in the spirit of the age, a self-made man. In this way, Captain Trevor is more like the active ‘adventurer’ (owner) of the entrepreneurial ideal than are many of the actual adventurers he fleeces. He explains that there is a difference between owning the mine (“in a manner of speaking”) and passively owning shares to his mark, Mr. Denman: “You and I, in a way of speaking, own the Coed Madog Works—we are on the same footing. Neither one of us has money to throw away. It is necessary to spend somewhat. Therefore we need to get someone or someones to take *shares*” (ibid.: 55).

Here Captain Trefor separates out the passive relation of ‘share-holder’ from the active sense of ownership that he conspiratorially extends to Mr. Denman; they will stand as ‘in adventurers,’ the true owners, to the passive ‘out adventurer’ share-holders who will actually pay for the working of the mine. The category of ‘entrepreneurial’ ownership, then, is not so much formally uniquely identifiable as it is based on a general, shifting sense of relative active involvement at the center of notions of productivity, so that Captain Trefor (formally a mere manager) can position himself as productive entrepreneur to his share-holders, and can offer the same relatively privileged position to Mr. Denman, as ‘in adventurer’ with respect to the remaining passive share-holders. Productivity, like so many categories that are recursive (Gal and Irvine 1995), behaves as a shifter, a term whose referent ‘shifts’ based on contextual factors; recursively applied to the categories of political economy (property, consumption, labor), these categories, too, become shifters.

MINERS

Nineteenth-century Wales was characterized by the coexistence of ‘plurality of modes of production’ (G. Williams 1980:23). This was especially clear among mineral workers, some of whom “were employed in mammoth capitalist enterprises . . . others, such as . . . the lead miners of Derbyshire and North Wales,

worked in ‘poor men’s ventures’ in which production was in the hands of self-governing workers’ companionships” (Samuel 1977:xi). Within strictly capitalist enterprises, other differences—in the concrete methods of payment and concomitant differing degrees of control over the labor process, length of shifts, skill divisions between workers, and simultaneous involvement of workers in other modes of production—created differing concrete relations of workers to their place of work (Samuel 1977). Thus, lead mining, unlike slate quarrying, for example, was seen as a quintessentially ‘part-time’ occupation, supplementing or supplemented by small-holdings or ‘poor men’s ventures’: “[Lead miners] usually worked only a six hour shift (while coal miners worked for twelve hours), for mining was only a part time occupation. The miners’ remaining time was spent on their gardens or small holdings, or working a small mine on their own account” (C. J. Williams 1980:88).

Therefore, the indifference of the lead-workers working as wage-laborers for large mines (expressed by the absence of usage of *acw*) could result both from their lack of ownership and their essentially part-time and marginal participation in wage-labor. Thus, these lead miners had a very different affective stance to their work deriving from their purely instrumental attitude towards work, in which work was firmly subordinated as part of a subsistence-oriented teleology which involved investing all gains from wage labor into petty agricultural production. A very different sense of a “career at work” (Sabel 1982) is in operation here (an essentially “peasant worker” attitude as discussed by Sabel) than for, say, Welsh slate quarriers, who came to see their work as being intrinsically meaningful, expressive of skills, and therefore exclusive of any other productive activity. Lead miners’ primary demands as workers were to retain their short shifts (partially so as to be able to engage in their other subsistence-oriented activities). The following poem in circulation amongst the lead miners (cited by Daniel Owen 1995[1891]:124) gives perhaps a fair indigenous evaluation of their affective indifference to their work-place:

<i>Y mae chwech o oriau 'n ddigon</i>	Six hours are enough
<i>i bob un o'r miners mwynion</i>	for each of the mild miners
<i>i fod rhwng y dyrus greigiau</i>	to be between the difficult rockfaces
<i>mewn lle myglyd yn llawn maglau.</i>	in a stifling place full of snares.

POOR MEN'S VENTURES

The complex relational universe generated by socialized capital in large concerns like Coed Madog and Pwll y Gwynt existed in nineteenth-century Wales alongside smaller operations run by “more or less democratic co-partneries” of working miners (Dodd 1931:312). Such operations, called “poor men’s ventures” (Samuel 1977:22) involved partnerships of miners working small veins in their spare time, leasing the ground of the mine on a year-to-year basis by using a “takenote” (hence “takenote bargains” [Dodd 1931:173]). Here we find a conflation of ‘owner’ (mediated by takenote lease), ‘manager,’ and worker

shared across all members: as with other ‘bargains,’ the relation is a “democratic” solidary and symmetric one of “partnership.” “[S]mall groups of miners could work their own [lead] mines on short stretches of veins, especially where they were shallow and close together, and therefore unsuitable for working in a bigger way. These small workings were let out by yearly renewable grants called takenotes, and were frequently worked on their own time by miners employed in other mines by a company” (C. J. Williams 1980:88).

Lead workers, always part-time workers, kept resorting to these ventures to supplement their wages throughout the period, especially during downturns at the larger works. The ‘interest’ of the workers in these concerns is assimilated to the same form as adventurers in larger concerns, expressed as ‘adventurers’ having ‘shares’ (‘ounces’) in a collective concern: however, in such a venture, shares represent labor rather than capital (Samuel 1977:22).

We find one example of such a ‘poor men’s venture’ described in Owen’s novel *Enoc Huws* (Owen 1995[1891]:278). A story is related of three miners (*partnars* ‘partners’) prospecting on their own behalves in what appears to be a ‘takenote bargain,’ taking turns working “stems” (six-hour shifts). One of the miners (Elis), despairing of finding lead in the mine, is thinking of giving it up, so the other partners have arranged to ‘salt the mine,’ that is, hide some lead in the place where Elis will begin working his next shift. The conversation they have, as one worker is returning from working his stem, and Elis is on his way to work his, is as follows. The one worker refers to the place using *acw* (example 10), implying a proprietary interest identical to that of Captain Trefor (examples 7–8) and Mr. Denman (example 6) (conversations which are meant to recall one another).

(10) ‘Do you know what, there is **there** (*acw*) a better ‘look’ than I have ever seen, Elis’ (ibid.: 278).

Like Sem Llwyd (example 9), Elis and his partners are miners working stems, but this is not the mode of access that provides a warrant for use of *acw* in either case. Rather, like Captain Trefor (examples 7–8), they are conceived of as ‘adventurers’ (mining entrepreneurs) working not for ‘wages’ but for ‘profits’: it is this role that gives them a privileged mode of access based on ‘interest,’ and it is this role they broadly share with Captain Trefor. However much their concrete experience differs from that of Captain Trefor’s, it is aggregated into the same typified relationship, which revolves around a central notion of ‘interest’ deriving from ‘active property.’

LABORIST CRITIQUES OF LIBERAL MODELS OF PROPERTY IN WELSH SLATE QUARRIES

The preceding examples of the use of *acw* derive from a single source (Owen 1995[1891]) and the distribution of *acw* in that work seems to delineate a sense of ownership that is consonant with the general liberal presuppositions that oth-

erwise characterize the works of this novelist and his age. By contrast, accounts of North West Welsh slate quarries show a usage of *acw* by workers that seems to contest the hegemony of ‘interests’ rooted in property. At the same time, this ‘Laborist’ pragmatics shows that notions of productivity underlying the naturalizing basis of liberal notions of property can be used to critique the category of property itself (see Jones 1982; 1992).

In quasi-autobiographical depictions of quarry life (taken from Lloyd 1926), we find evidence that quarriers use *acw* to refer to their ‘bargains’ (places in slate quarries allotted to groups of workers on a monthly basis by a genre of contractual affiliation also called a ‘bargain,’ on which see below) much as Captain Trefor would refer to his entrepreneurial ventures using *acw*. Thus, in the first example (from Lloyd 1926:33–34) two quarriers, who are on their way to the quarry in the morning, are talking. One of them (Gruffydd Dafis) is a ‘bargain-man,’ that is, one who has a place (bargain) allotted to him in the quarry which he works under contract, while the other (Wil) is a ‘rubbler,’ a category of worker who lacks a bargain, and who therefore forages around in the ‘rubble’ looking for workable rocks to make slate with, or begs them off bargain takers. Therefore, the former’s use of *acw* must be in reference to Gruffydd’s own bargain—he is saying to Wil, “come to my bargain” (11).

(11) “Have you finished your slates, Wil Bach?” said Gruffydd Dafis.

“Not by a long shot”, said Wil.

“What do you mostly have left?”

“I’ve got a lot of pieces, especially thick slates.”

“Well, come by **there** (*acw*) [i.e. his bargain] pretty soon, so that we can finish them for you.”

As the conversation continues, they turn to talking about another ‘rubbler,’ Sion William. Since they are outside the quarry, in this case the only possible referent for *acw* is the quarry itself. Here the reference is relatively symmetric, the quarry ‘belongs’ to both of them:

(12) “Where is Sion William, tell?” Asked Gruffydd Dafis, “I haven’t seen him around **there** (*acw*) this week” (Lloyd 1926:34).

Hence, for the quarriers, both their individual “bargains,” as well as the quarry where they both have bargains as a whole, can be *acw*.

‘Bargain’ systems as a whole, as opposed to the ‘takenote bargain’ or the ‘poor men’s venture,’ retained ‘ownership’ (typically, but not always, by lease) in the hands of the entrepreneur but ceded control of the labor process to the bargain-takers (Samuel 1977:xiii). Bargain crews held their ‘bargain’ in successive ‘settings’ of one month in slate quarries at the end of the century, though usually the same bargain was ‘let’ to the same crew over successive months (Samuel 1977; Jones 1977; 1982).

The bargain, then, from the standpoint of the owners, was a wage contract relationship of a set duration by which the owners ceded the control of their

property to a group of workers who were left in most circumstances to work the bargain as they wished, with the proviso that at the end of the month they would ‘sell’ the finished products at their assessed ‘making price’ plus bonuses such as poundage back to the owner, and the process would begin afresh. According to the slate quarriers, however, the ‘bargain,’ which has a spatial correlate in the quarry, was in general felt to be the moral property of its habitual ‘crew,’ and would normally be returned to that crew upon successive monthly settings: “So strong was this feeling that it was generally considered that a bargain—the actual place in the quarry and not the settlement—was in a sense the property of those who worked it, not just for the month of any agreement’s life, but for good. Morgan Richards, a small quarry owner sympathetic to the quarrymen, advised managers that, ‘the customary or prescriptive right of a crew to their bargain is so sacred and well established that no wise manager wishing to be at peace with his men, will venture to interfere with it’” (Jones 1977:108).

Some quarriers treated the term “bargain” itself as denoting (at least originally) a kind of lease-hold similar to that held by tenant-farmers, so that the bargain itself was taken as being a kind of property. They also observed that within living memory or tradition the mountains in which these bargains were located, like the land leased by the tenant farmers, had belonged to the people. Such a limited critique of property within the quarries both contained a germ of traditional moral rights of the ‘commons’ along with an admixture of the language of land reform of nineteenth-century Welsh liberalism (see Jones 1982; 1992; Manning 2002).

Such a critique of passive landed property remains within the hegemonic language of Welsh liberalism, but the quarriers added to this a broadly Laborist critique of property (Jones 1982; 1992; Manning 2002) in which they challenged not the relation of ownership per se, but the control of the quarries, which were theirs by virtue of their long experience as well as by the ‘improvements’ they had made therein by their own productive labor. Such a ‘Laborist’ (or even hybrid “Lib-Lab”) critique took the language of productivism further than the ‘liberal’ distinction between “active property” and “passive property” (Manning 2002). Rather than a liberal critique of passive rentier property (and shareholder property) from the perspective of active capitalist (entrepreneurial) property, this critique critiques the liberal category of property itself from the more productive perspective of labor. It is precisely this active engagement in production (the indexical moment of ‘use,’ active property) that produces a sense of moral propriety that outweighs, indeed, *usurps*, the claims of distant shareholders (the conventional moment of ‘revenue,’ passive property). An observer noted this with surprise in one quarry: “The number of men employed [at Holland’s Quarry, Ffestiniog] is about 500. Among them I noticed many old men, the majority no doubt, having spent the spring of their lives in Mr. Holland’s service. These veterans speak with as much pride and authority

about ‘our quarry,’ *as if they were extensive shareholders in the concern*” (my emphasis).¹²

In later novelistic accounts, the relationship of quarrier to the quarry is often represented as an affectively laden one, not merely in terms of the unique camaraderie of the social life of the quarry, but also the sense of worth deriving from the work (expressive of skills) itself. Chapter nine of T. Rowland Hughes’ novel *O Law i Law* (‘From Hand to Hand,’ 1943) is devoted to the longing (*hiraeth* p. 199) experienced by a retired quarrier for both the social milieu of the workplace as well as the work itself, and the sense of loss experienced by his health-imposed exile from the quarry. *Hiraeth* ‘longing’ is usually associated with absence from such affectively-engaging places like the home and home town, also the prototypical loci for the use of *acw*. The old quarrier expresses a desire to return to the quarry rather than follow the doctor’s ordered pills and rest: “One day in the quarry will do me more good than a whole trolley-full of his darn pills. Once I get my hands on the trimming knife or on the mallet again, I won’t be the same man” (p. 200). His return to the quarry for a day fills him with joy: “My father grinned casting his gaze across [the quarry] and the ‘pit’ and the sheer cliffs across from it. His steps quickened . . .” (p. 201); when he begins working, using “[his] old [acquired] skill brought some sort of new energy to his arm and hands, and a happy grin came to his face” (p. 203). Contrasted with the poem cited above of the lead miners, it is clear that the lead miners specifically lack *hiraeth* for their place of work, and it is clear that many quarriers felt such *hiraeth* for the quarry and quarrying when absent, just as they might when absent from their homes.

CONCLUSIONS: FROM LIBERAL TO MODERN CAPITALISM

The detailed shift in usage from ‘liberal’ uses of *acw* (examples 6–8, 10) that are based on the Liberal institution of property to ‘laborist’ uses (examples 11–12) that make the workplace a moral property of the worker that we have just seen are comparable to a larger across-the-board shift in usage from the normative (but contested) nineteenth-century exclusive ‘entrepreneurial’ usage (example 3) to contemporary inclusive usage where the workplace is generally *acw* for all and sundry (example 4). If the recursive properties of productivism as a *semiotic ideology* (what Keane 2003 defines as “basic assumptions about what signs are and how they function in the world”), which informs and organizes various semiotic domains from the categories of political economy to affect to deixis, underlie the changes in usage characteristic of the transition from liberalism to laborism discussed above, then perhaps it would partially explain the second as well.

¹² Special Correspondent, *The Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald*, 1 Mar. 1873, p. 6; *The Slate Quarries of North Wales Ffestiniog*, 26 Feb. 1873.

However, the transition in usage between nineteenth-century liberal capitalism and post-liberal modern capitalism has been attended by several epochal shifts of semiotic ideologies in the world of political economy which, it is often suggested, have moved us beyond a single recursive semiotic logic of productivism that characterized nineteenth-century liberal capitalism. For example, this larger shift in usage (between examples 3 and 4) can also be seen in part as a shift from the entrepreneurial ideal of nineteenth-century liberal capitalism to the professional ideal of twentieth century capitalism (Perkin 1989). It could also be seen as an index of a broader hegemony of the ‘human relations’ ideologies of the workplace characteristic of the shift to ‘welfare capitalism’ (Burawoy 1979; Melling 1980; Littler 1982:55), and in varied forms still very much with us, which have sought to add moral content to the wage contract by emphasizing the ‘human element’ (Melling 1980:198). ‘Human relations’ approaches seek to transfer the sentimental ‘moral’ characteristics of *gemeinschaftlike* ‘belonging’ to the alienated ‘material’ *gesellschaft* of the workplace (Burawoy 1979; Melling 1980), in which fundamentally conflict-oriented discourses of disparate and opposed ‘interests’ of capital and labor were reformulated in terms of a fundamentally cohesion-oriented model in which strikes and unrest were “the product of misunderstanding and the failure of different sides of industry to treat one another as human beings” (Burawoy 1979:234). In essence, then, a complex historical and ideological process which led to a transference of usages typical of the home, family, and chapel (examples 1–2) to the universe of work (example 4). The normative as well as explanatory model characteristic of the ‘human relations’ approach (and the Durkheimian sociology underlying it) is to populate the ‘material’ universe of the workplace with ‘moral’ elements, reworking work on the basis of the sentimental universe of the home, ‘socializing’ the sphere of political economy with a moral economy, a triumph of the passions over the interests.

For all its superficial similarity to such a moral critique of the material, the ‘laborist’ moral critique of political economic ownership made, for example, by Welsh slate quarriers (see above, Manning 2001b; 2002; N.d.) was grounded in the very same “transcendental materialism” (Rabinach 1990) of productivism which informed liberal political economy. After all, Victorians really *were* materialists: the Victorians on the whole saw the universe of political economy as being driven not by the sentimental morality of the home, but by a different kind of affect generated by perceivedly ‘material’ relations of property—the interests. For the Victorians (representatives of capital and labor alike), who lacked any systematic theory of management or industrial organization (Littler 1982), ‘human relations’ or otherwise, industrial problems were to be solved in terms of the affective and motivational categories of political economy proper to industry, that is, ‘interests’ (Littler 1982:81). In fact, as Jaffe points out, workers’ own invocation of ‘interests’ and the display of manners, respectability, and politeness (as opposed to the languages of political radicalism)

were not simply responses to bourgeois hegemony. They were rather a very early part of a conscious rhetoric of certain groups of workers to cast their claims in a persuasive manner and assimilate themselves as equal partners in industry to owners of capital (Jaffe 2000:62; also Manning 2002). Moreover, inasmuch as they saw in the categories of 'interests' emergent from the 'transactional universe' of political economy a civilizing principle leading to the taming of the passions and all manner of other positive moral effects (Jaffe 2000:60), Victorians of several sundry classes were more likely to try to explain or improve the *moral* universe of the worker in *material* terms than vice versa. In the era before 'human relations' and explicit theories of management, therefore, the reforming intentions of political economists often focused on schemes of directly modifying the wage contract itself to elicit 'interests' in the workers or align their interests partially with those of capital by blurring the boundaries between the two. At issue was how to diffuse the civilizing properties of capital and elicit 'interests' without actually modifying the distribution of the ownership of capital itself. Certain 'cooperative' wage contract systems, notably the 'tribute' system of Cornish miners and the 'bargain system' of the slate quarriers, were the topic of numerous quasi-folkloric and political economic studies, drawing the attention of eminent political economists like Charles Babbage, Adam Smith, and John Cairnes (see Rule 1987; on the bargain system see Manning 2002). The Cornish system, for example, commended itself over management-intensive systems such as those employed on the Continent, in that the latter "wants the vivifying principle of self-interest . . . in stimulating the labor of the workmen . . .," while the Cornish system, "identifies for a time the interests of the workman and his employer" (Taylor 1969[1837]:37–40). Other studies not only praised such systems for giving the wage contract an element of joint-interest, but also for blurring the boundaries between capital and labor by increasing their resemblance to capitalists without them actually becoming such, partially by "eliminating the employer" (Price 1969[1891]:155–58) or by allowing the contractor to act in a "double capacity . . . at once employer and employed" (Cairnes 1873a: 186). Aside from these systems allegedly eliminating the "propensity to strike" (both analysts spoke too soon), a whole host of positive social and moral effects were felt to flow *solely* from the way this wage contract diffused the "vivifying principle of interest" in the absence of actual ownership of capital (Price 1969[1871]). Cairnes, seeking to explain "the greater vigor of the moral" in the face of the "defect with respect to material conditions" (including the "slow growth of capital") among North Wales' quarriers, after dismissing the effects of religion and education as possible explanatory principles, turns to the bargain system of the quarriers itself, which explains everything from "habits of thrift and wise foresight" and "literary aspirations" of the populace, to the charming and comfortable architecture of the quarrying villages and the extreme "cleanliness, tidiness and order" of their denizens! (Cairnes 1873a[1865]:177–83).

Quarriers, like political economists, rooted their moral universe in the ‘material’ world of work rather than *vice versa*, particularly in the ideal autonomy and control over the labor process conferred by the bargain system. However, while they did not contest the rights of property of the quarry owners, they did formulate a limited critique that both included a moral discourse consonant with the broader political movement for land reform, and in part a sense of autonomy and control over the bargain which they improved with their productive labor and skill. In this sense, their critique of property was based on notions of productivity (Manning 2002), and in making it they, like the political economists, sought to diffuse and appropriate the hegemonic idiom of property, interests, and, most especially, capital. Rather than merely seeking to ‘colonize’ the material world of political economy with a moral economy of human sentiments and ‘belonging,’ a kind of ‘human relations’ approach *avant la lettre*, they instead routinely formulated their ideologies in terms of a theory of ‘human capital’ (Manning 2002), by which they assimilated labor to the hegemonic language of capital, or rather, via a productivist theory of property grounded in labor, assimilated capital to labor. In so doing, they rendered their relation to the ‘bargain’ and the quarry coeval to that of the owner, on the basis of an underlying claim based on productivity. By this claim, bourgeois capital is ‘active’ (productive) with respect to passive aristocratic rentier property, but so too labor is ‘active’ (productive) with respect to passive property of absentee shareholders: *productivity*, and thence all the categories of classical political economy derived recursively from this first principle, is *itself* a Jakobsonian ‘shifter’ (Jakobson 1971), a term whose denotation varies contextually based on recursive nested opposition. The shifting sensibility of affective engagement arising from ‘productivity,’ then, would seem to underlie both hegemonic discourses locating ‘interest’ in political economic relations of property as well as counter-hegemonic claims of moral propriety based on labor.

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