



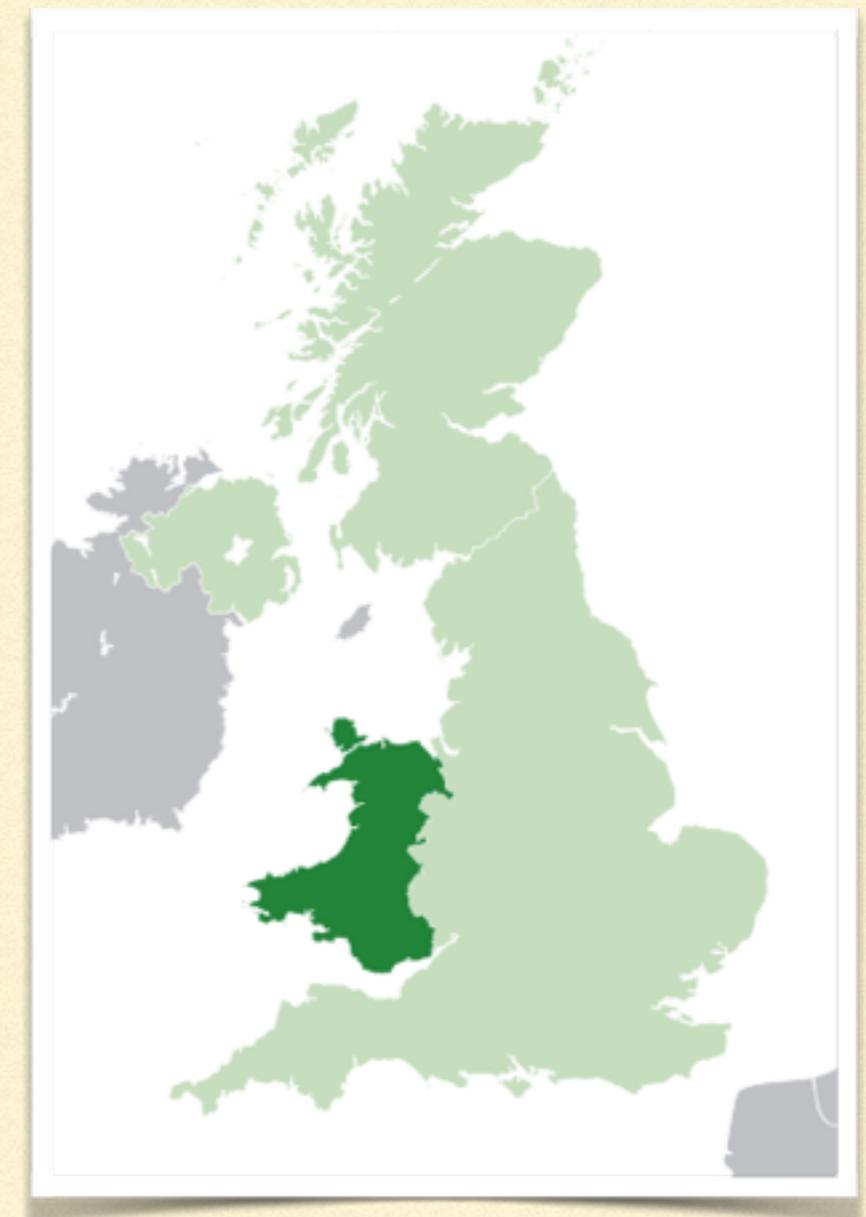
CODE-SWITCHING & CHORD CHANGES

MUSIC, LANGUAGE, & IDENTITY IN WELSH ROCK

Morgan Sleeper
11.16.2016

WELSH

- Celtic (Brythonic)
- Verb-initial
- Initial consonant mutations
- /ɸ/, /m̥, n̥, ŋ̥/
- ~560,000 speakers (2011 census)



WELSH



- Endangered but vital
- Welsh-language education
- Eisteddfod
- Yr Urdd
- Media
- History of civil disobedience

WELSH IN PATAGONIA

- Since 1865
- ‘Y Wladfa’ - Chubut province
- Largely Welsh-speaking until WWII
- 1965 centenary
- Eisteddfodau
- Welsh-language schools



WELSH IN PATAGONIA



- At least ‘several thousand’ speakers
 - More with L2
- Patagonian contact features:
 - Shorter VOT for /p t k/ (Sleeper 2015)
 - Hybrid idioms (Aguzzino 2006)

CODE-SWITCHING & IDENTITY

- The use of two or more languages in a sentence, conversation, or interaction
 - “Sometimes I start a sentence in English y termino en Español” (Poplack 1988)
 - Different types:
 - Topic-conditioned: shift in discourse
 - Style-shifts: stylistic choice
 - Single-word switches: ‘the right word’, cultural terms
 - Code-switching integral to creation of bilingual identities (Gumperz 1982; Zentella 1981; 1997)
-

MUSIC & IDENTITY

- Musicking powerful way to create identities (Stokes 1994; Firth 1996)
 - National (Daughtry 1994; Firth 1996)
 - Ethnic (Laušević 2007; Cooley 2005, 2014)
 - Personal (Waterman 1982)
-

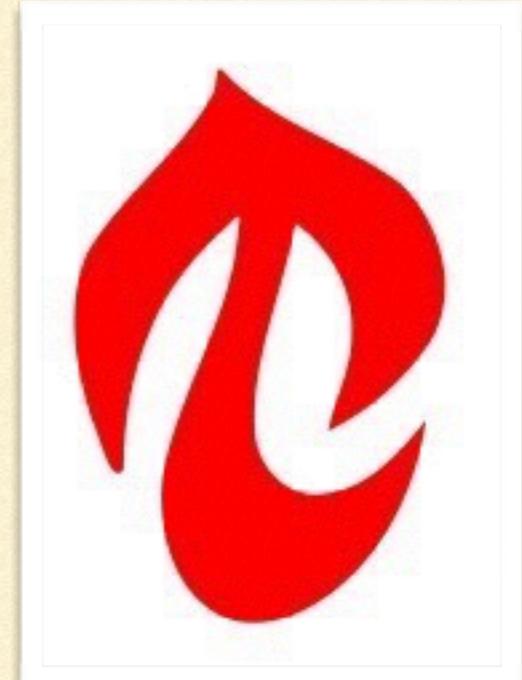
SEMIOTIC BUNDLES

- Music & language can function in concert in semiotic bundles (Turino 1999, 2004; Eckert 2003; Bucholtz 2010) to create social meaning and enact identity
 - How does this happen in Welsh rock music?
-

WELSH ROCK

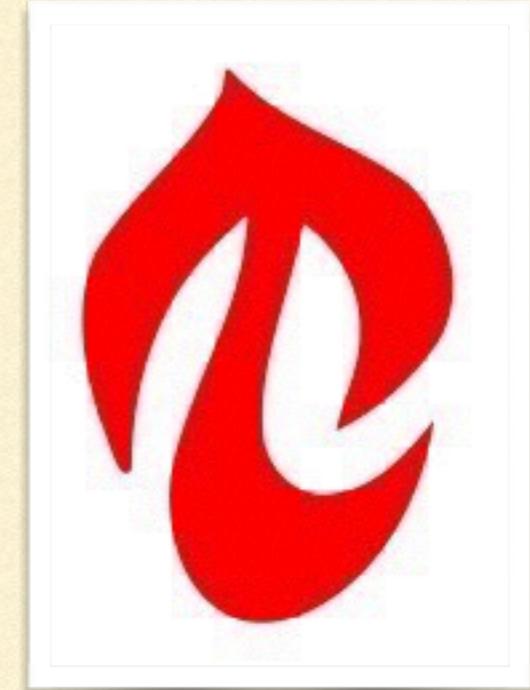
- Since 1960's
- Folk roots
- Always:
 - Language
 - Politics

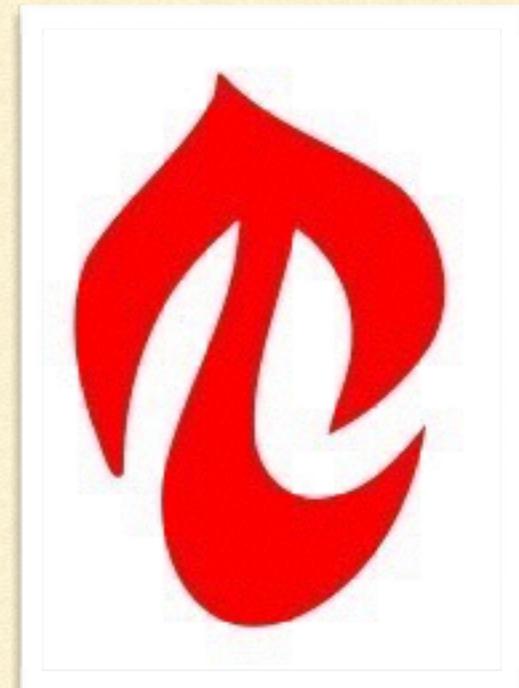


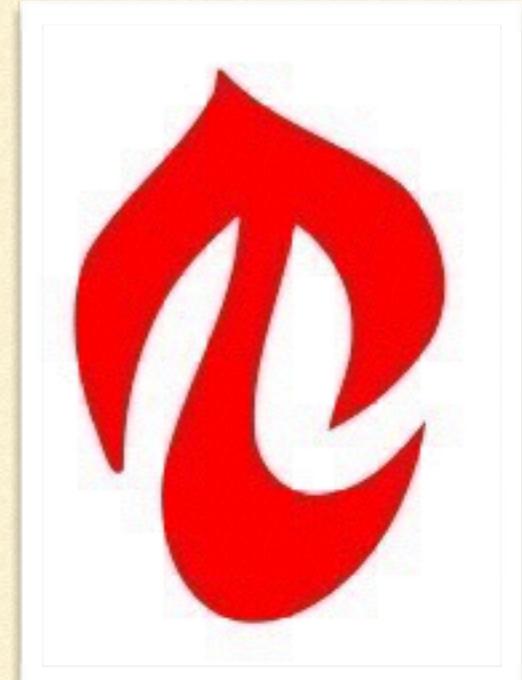






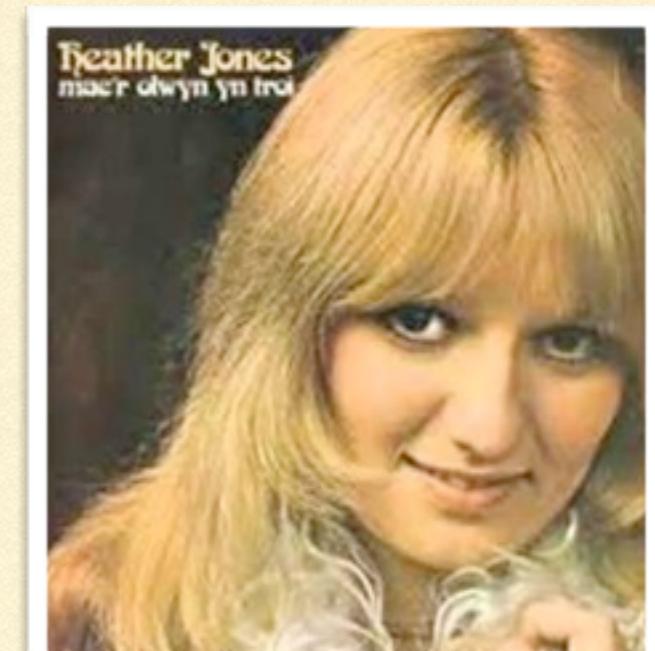
















IDENTITY IN WELSH ROCK

- How do code-switching and musical shifts work together to create identity?
 - Three groups:
 - Super Furry Animals
 - Gorky's Zygotic Mynci
 - MC Mabon
-



SUPER FURRY ANIMALS

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS



- Welsh-language origins:
 - Ffa Coffi Pawb
- Early recordings as SFA all Welsh language ('94-'95)
- Mainstream UK pop chart success in English ('96)

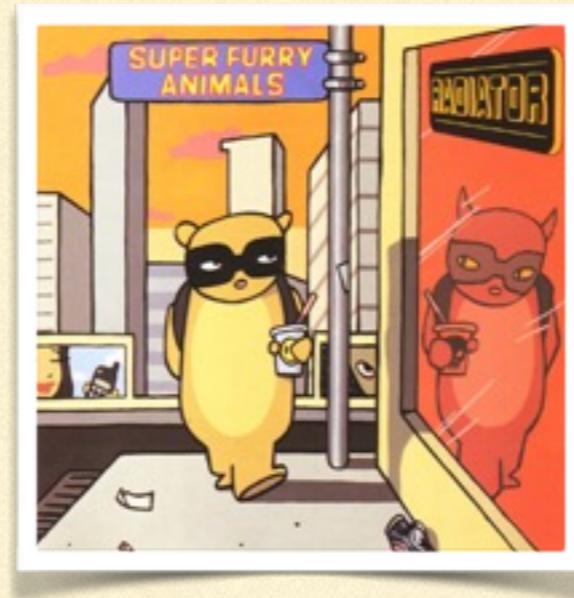
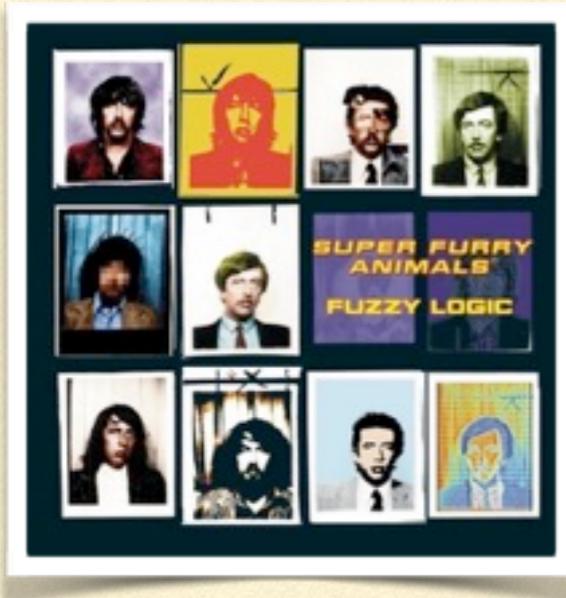
SUPER FURRY ANIMALS



- SFA code-switch within and across albums to negotiate an identity that changes over time:
 - Welsh speakers successful in English-language mainstream music

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS

- Albums as cohesive acts of musicking
 - Recording/Listening
- Albums as interaction, site of code-switching
- How SFA code-switch changes with music, over three albums:



SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS



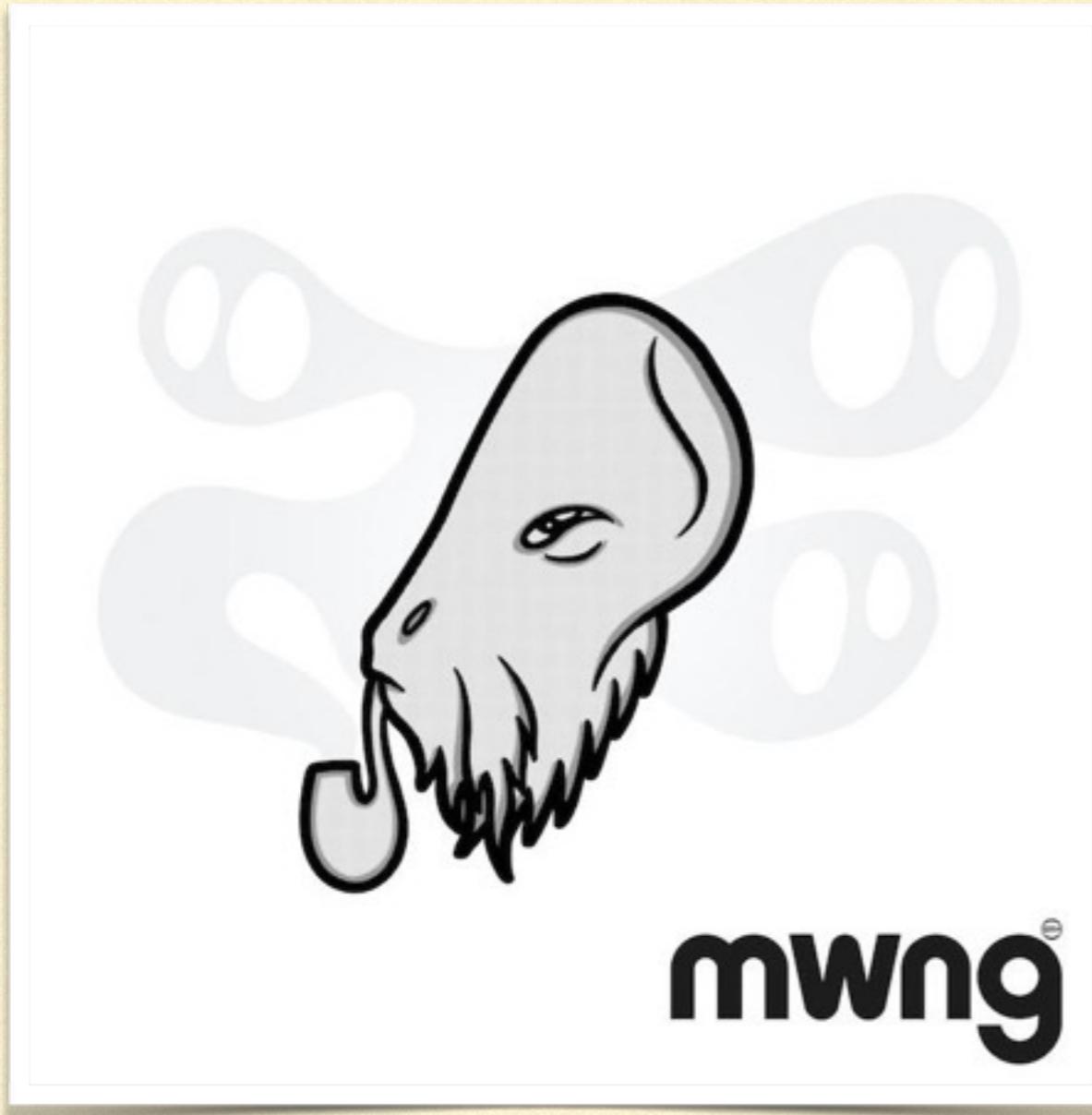
- Fuzzy Logic (1996)
 - All English
 - Psychedelic Britpop
 - Driving 4/4 piano
 - Fuzzy guitars

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS



- Radiator (1997)
 - Mostly English, one Welsh song
 - Slightly more experimental
 - Instrumental songs
 - Techno influences
 - Welsh song 'Torra Fy Ngwallt Yn Hir' radio-friendly

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS



- **Mwng (2000)**
 - All Welsh
 - Much more experimental
 - Strings & acoustic instrumentation
 - Peaked at #11 in UK charts
 - First Welsh-language record to reach Top 20
 - Mentioned in parliament (Lloyd 2000)

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS

- “As a band we speak a language that is virtually an invisible language... because there are fewer than a million people who speak it. Therefore it doesn't exist in the corporate world... The last thing on their mind is to make concessions to a local language. That's happening on a global scale to all small cultures. So, when we record a Welsh language album, it is a stand against globalisation, even if indirectly.” (Select eds. 2000)

SUPER FURRY ANIMALS: CS IN ALBUMS

- Shifts in musical style and code-switching within and across albums
- Creates identity which changes over time
 - Welsh-speaking musicians navigating mainstream success in English-speaking music industry

BBC RADIO MERSEYSIDE

2.



GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI



principles. "It's a natural development." Do they foresee any problems with contract? "Oh yes, there'll have to be a contract giving us the right to sing in whatever language we want, we'll make sure we have full artistic control." When asked to describe their ideal summer day, Euros Howlands replied tactfully "Watching Jonathan Richman while drinking a bottle of wine."

- Active 1991-2006
- Formed in Carmarthen
- Welsh and English lyrics
- 8 UK Top 75 singles

GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI



- Intra-song code-switching
- Semiotic bundles of music, language choice, lyrical content, video content evoke two different identities:
 - Welsh: psychedelic, playful, modern
 - English: britpop, innocence, nostalgia
- English-speaking identity 'borrowed' ironically

GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI: MERCHED YN NEUD GWALLT



GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI: PATIO SONG



GORKY'S ZYGOTIC MYNCI

- GZM use music and language to create bilingual, bistylistic identity
 - Welsh-language: psychedelic, playful, realistic, modern
 - English-language: britpop, (ironic) nostalgia and innocence
 - Ironic frame (through video, lyrical content)
 - ‘play with’ English identity to emphasize Welshness
-

3.



MC MABON



- One-man band from Wales
- Formerly of Welsh-language hip-hop group Tystion
- 2007 album *Jonez Williamz* recorded in Gaiman, Patagonia
- Collaboration with local musicians and producers

MC MABON



- Uses Welsh/Spanish code-switching and shifting musical signification on Jonez Williamz to craft identity as ‘global Welsh speaker’
- Two songs:
 - Perros Locos
 - Lawr i Comodoro

MC MABON: PERROS LOCOS

- Linguistic signifiers:
 - ‘perros locos’ (‘crazy dogs’)
 - locally salient, expressed in Spanish
- Musical signifiers:
 - Charango



MC MABON: LAWRI COMODORO



- Linguistic signifiers:
 - Spanish phonology placename
 - *Lawr i Gomodoro

MC MABON: LAWR I COMODORO

- Welsh soft mutation

/p/	→	/b/
/t/	→	/d/
/k/	→	/g/
...	→	...

- Triggered by *i* 'to'

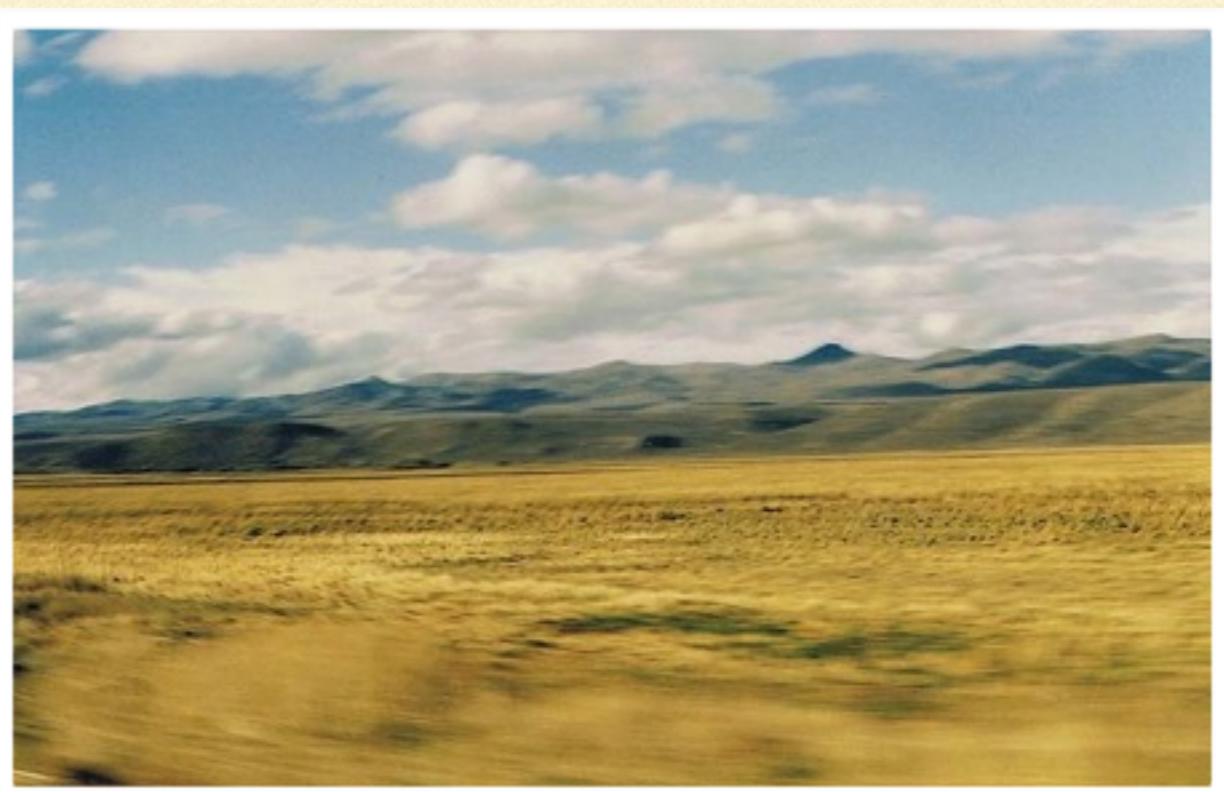
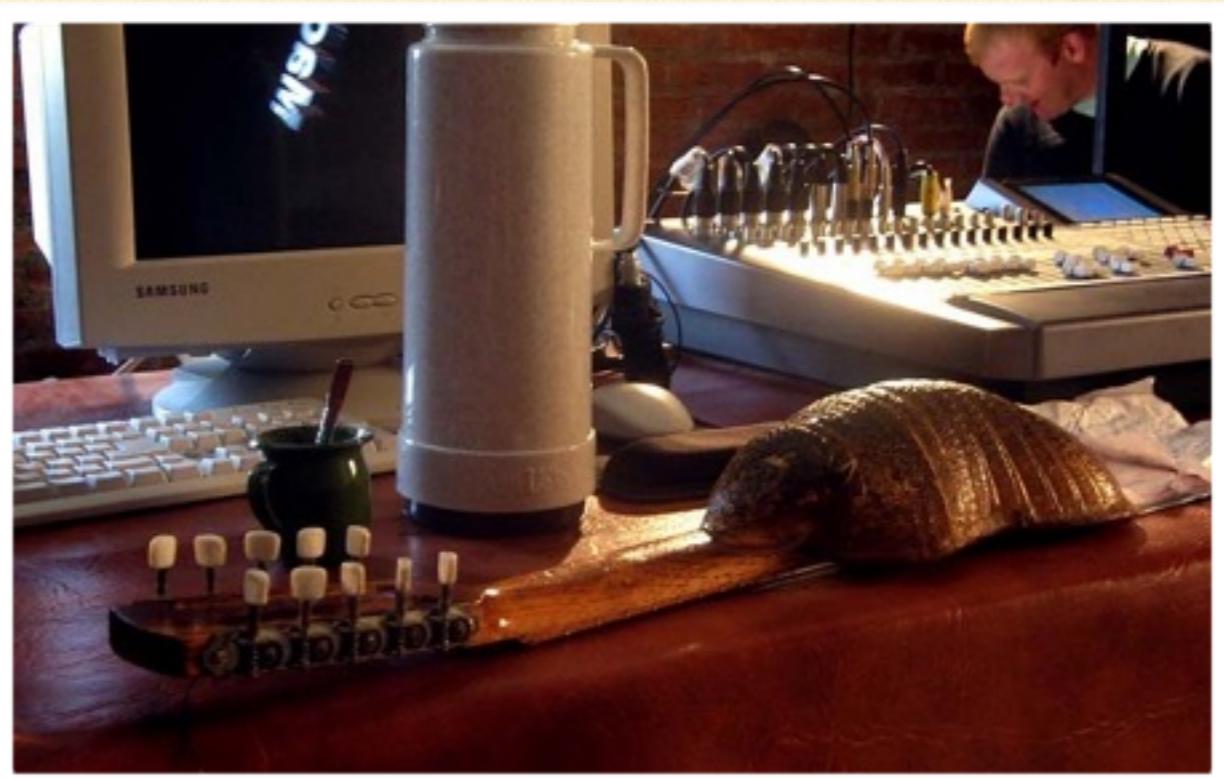
- Dw i'n hoffi Camarthen.
- Dw i'n mynd i Gamarthen



MC MABON: LAWRI COMODORO



- Linguistic signifiers:
 - Spanish phonology placename
 - *Lawr i Gomodoro
- Musical signifiers:
 - Charango
 - Andean pan-pipes



MC MABON

- Welsh-Spanish code-switching & shifts to Patagonian musical signifiers index association with Welsh Patagonia
- English in liner notes adds globalizing element:
 - ‘global Welsh citizen’ at home in Wales, Patagonia, beyond





CODA

- For Super Furry Animals, Gorky's Zygotic Mynci, MC Mabon:
 - Music and language work together in semiotic bundles
 - Not reducible to music or language alone
- Musicolinguistic signs
 - Especially important for identity work
 - Shifts between these bundles create social meaning, different identities

CODA

- Beyond isolated bundles: shifting signifiers
 - Integrating ethnomusicological and linguistic methodologies
-

REFERENCES

- Buckholtz, Mary. 2010. White Kids.
- Cooley, Timothy J. 2005. "Making History." In *Making Music in the Polish Tatras: Tourists, Ethnographers and Mountain Musicians*. Pp. 58-82. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Cooley, Timothy J. 2014. "Playing Together and Solitary Play: Why Surfers Need Music." In *Surfing about Music*. Pp. 163-174. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Daughtry, J. Martin. 2003. "Russia's New Anthem and the Negotiation of National Identity." *Ethnomusicology* 47(1):42–67.
- Eckert, Penelope. 2003. *The Meaning of Style*.
- Frith, Simon. 1996. "Music and Identity." In *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, 108-27. London: Sage Publications.
- Gumperz, John J. 1982. Conversational code switching. In John J. Gumperz (ed.), *Discourse Strategies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 59-99.
- Hall, Stuart. 1996. "Introduction: Who Needs Identity?" In *Questions of Cultural Identity*, edited by Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay, 1-17. London: Sage Publications.
- Laušević, Mirjana. 2007. "The 'Balkanites'." In *Balkan Fascination: Creating an Alternative Music Culture in America*. Pp. 17-50. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Llwyd, Elfyn. 2000. "Early Day Motion 800." United Kingdom Parliament Session 703. House of Commons, London. 06 June 2000. United Kingdom Parliament. 06 June 2000. United Kingdom Parliament. 8 Dec. 2008 <<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=18173&SESSION=703>>.
- Select eds. 2000. "Revolution rock: Gruff Rhys". *Select(EMAP)* April 2000: 72–73.
- Stokes, Martin. 1994. "Ethnicity, identity and music." In *Ethnicity, Identity and Music: Musical Construction of Place*. Oxford: Berg Publishers. 1-28.
- Turino, Thomas. 1999. "Signs of Imagination, Identity, and Experience: A Peircean Semiotic Theory for Music." *Ethnomusicology* 43(2):221–55.
- Turino, Thomas. 2004. "Introduction: Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities." In *Identity and the Arts in Diaspora Communities*. Edited by Thomas Turino and James Lea (Warren, Michigan: Harmonie Park Press), 3-19.
- Waterman, Christopher A. 1982. "'I'm a Leader, not a Boss': Social Identity and Popular Music in Ibadan, Nigeria." *Ethnomusicology* 26(1):59–71.
- Zentella, Ana C. 1981. *Hablamos los dos. We speak both: Growing up bilingual in el Barrio*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania doctoral dissertation.
- Zentella, Ana C. 1997. *Growing Up Bilingual: Puerto Rican Children in New York*. Oxford: Blackwell.



Diolch!
Thank you!