

RONALD PAUL

**“A Prophet out of Gwalia:”
The Poetry of Idris Davies and Postcolonial Wales**

Abstract: In recent years there has been an ongoing debate about whether or not modern Wales can be defined as a postcolonial society in the same way as the other Celtic nations of Britain – Scotland and Ireland. This essay seeks to cast new critical light on this discussion by approaching it through the writing of Idris Davies, one of Wales’s most distinctive modern poets. It is claimed that Davies’s own background as a Welsh-speaking, working-class writer living both in Wales and England allowed him to develop a unique poetic voice that has much to say about some of the key issues in a Welsh postcolonial experience: the conflict of languages, the impact of history, the relationship between class and nation, margin and centre, and not least the existential condition of exile.