

*Damian Walford Davies describes his research for which an important BARDA grant was awarded:*

“I was delighted to receive a 16-month British Academy Research Development Award (BARDA) to complete my 70,000-word half of the co-written fourth volume of *The Oxford Literary History of Wales: Welsh Writing in English, 1914–2009*. This is the most comprehensive and ambitious history of Welsh-language and anglophone literary production ever attempted, of which I am General Editor. The grant is also excellent news for the increasingly lively and mobile discipline of Welsh Writing in English; my colleague, Dr Sarah Prescott (also part of the *OLHW* team), was the recipient last year of a BARDA award for a project exploring the earlier contours of Wales’s anglophone writing.

In Volume 4, I aim to offer a culturally nuanced history of twentieth-century literary production, with a particular focus on the periods 1939–59 and 1980–2009. In tune with the wider project’s revisionary agenda, I acknowledge the existence of a Welsh ‘canon’ of English-language texts, but seek to defamiliarise that ‘tradition’ so that it emerges as the strange phenomenon it is. Drawing eclectically on a number of theoretical approaches, I offer reinflected readings of canonical texts and seminal figures and locate these writers in relation not only to constellations of less well-known and unfairly neglected authors but also dialectically in relation to Welsh-language ‘articulations of Wales’, and to debates within the field of Scottish and Irish literary studies. At stake are issues of literary and cultural identity, public profile, readership and publication history. I argue that the internationalism of Welsh writers helps define the very nature of their Welshness; thus I want to break out of the national boundaries within which literary studies have traditionally been envisioned and constructed.

I want the *OLHW* to be a dissenting study that challenges orthodoxies to offer a new post Devolution (and by the time of its publication, post-post-Devolution) map of twentieth- and twenty-first century literary production in Wales. How have the country’s two literatures positioned Wales and the Welsh subject in relation to a dominant neighbour and to Europe, America and the rest of the world?

The *OLHW* as a whole brings together a ‘dream team’ of scholars from the universities of Aberystwyth, Swansea, Glamorgan, Cardiff and Bangor, and represents a timely collaboration between academic institutions in Wales.”