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A Welsh Window on the Iron Age: Manawydan, Mandubracios

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I. INTRODUCTION

ONE crucial piece of evidence puts it beyond all doubt that Welsh tradition has remembered something of the pre-Roman Iron Age independently of Latin history.¹ This is the sequence 'Caratauc map Cinbelin map Teuhant' in the Old Welsh genealogies in London, British Library, MS Harley 3859, corresponding to the Caratācos son of Cunobelinos (d. c. A.D. 41) son of Tasciovanos (d. c. A.D. 5) of history.² The son and grandson are known to the Roman historians, but Tasciovanos is confirmed only by Iron Age coinage. In a forthcoming article,³ I have proposed that this Iron Age tradition has also survived in the *Gododdin*, where the 'Kynvelyn map Tecvann' of the *Gwarchan Kynvelyn* is again Cunobelinos son of Tasciovanos and the abstruse word *assed* reflects the British word for a war-chariot which Caesar Latinized as *essedum*. The present article turns to the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*,⁴ whose setting—to the extent it can be synchronized with a real epoch—is in the later pre-Roman Iron Age.

The scholarship devoted to the *Mabinogi* can be broadly categorized as following either the synchronic or the diachronic approach.⁵

¹This paper is dedicated to the memory of Professor Léon Fleuriot. Early versions were read at the Center for Literary Studies, Harvard University, in November 1986, and the Eighth International Congress of Celtic Studies, Swansea, in July 1987. I am indebted to John Carey, Eric Hamp, Paul Jefferiss, Lionel Joseph, Patrick Sims-Williams, and Calvert Watkins for many useful and thoughtful suggestions. ²See *Early Welsh Genealogical Tracts*, edited by P. C. Bartrum (Cardiff, 1966), p. 127. ³*llawr en asseð* (CA 932) "the Laureate Hero in the War-chariot": Some Recollections of the Iron Age in the *Gododdin*, *Études celtiques*. ⁴Reference here is made to Sir Ifor Williams's edition, *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi* (Cardiff, 1930); references to M cite this edition. ⁵cf. the recent remarks on 'horizontal' and 'vertical structure' by R. M. Jones, 'Narrative Structure in Medieval Welsh Prose Tales', in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Celtic Congress, Oxford, 1983*, edited by D. Ellis Evans and others (Oxford, 1986), pp. 171–98. A thorough and balanced overview of the state of secondary literature on the Four Branches as of about ten years ago is presented in Proinsias Mac Cana, *The Mabinogi*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff, 1977).

The present effort is of the latter sort, concerning itself with the sources of the *stories'* traditional subject matter rather than the artistry and outlook of the medieval redactor(s) of the extant *texts*. As we will here be largely concerned with ancient British history, we will be breaking away from the established ground of diachronic studies: that is, mythology, folklore, and international popular tale.

Thus far, the only surely historical character identified in the whole of the *Four Branches* is the Caswallawn son of Beli appearing in *Branwen* and *Manawydan*, corresponding to the historical Cassivellaunos, who led the allied British forces against Caesar in 54 B.C.⁶ The theory to be expounded here is that the Third Branch recollects in some detail the struggle between the chieftains known to Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* (BG) as Cassivellaunus and Mandubracius son of 'Imanuentius'. It is the latter of whom Manawydan himself is a reflection.

A problem which will necessarily concern us, but for which a definitive solution is perhaps impossible, is that of the mechanism of the correspondences between BG and the *Mabinogi* (M): whether we have to do with the culmination of a vernacular saga as a true independent witness to the events of 54 B.C. or, rather, a response in medieval Welsh wonder-tale to latinized history. In the latter case, would the specific histories involved be those already known to have been current in Dark Age and medieval Britain, such as Orosius and Bede, or must BG have been consulted more directly? Though a pure version of the nativist scenario lies beyond proof, nonetheless the supposition of a continuous native tradition will be seen at several points to furnish the least unlikely explanation, however many times that tradition may have cross-fertilized itself with Latin history prior to the redaction of the extant *Four Branches*. Reasons will be set out for thinking that the particular form of that native oral material had started as a Catuvellaunian saga, glorifying the dynasty of Cuno-belinos and legitimizing his conquest of the Trinovantes c. A.D. 7.

II. MANAWYDAN

As will become clear in subsequent sections, it is primarily a comparison of the episodes in BG with those in M that supports the equation of Mandubracios and Manawydan. Nonetheless, it will already have been noticed that the names bear some similarity to one another, the resemblance becoming stronger when we bring in the patronym *Imanuentius*, as found in many nineteenth-century

⁶On Caswallawn = Cassivellaunos, see Williams, *Pedeir Keinc*, p. 217; W. J. Gruffydd, *Rhiannon* (Cardiff, 1953), p. 76; Proinsias Mac Cana, *Branwen Daughter of Llŷr* (Cardiff, 1958), pp. 112–16; Rachel Bromwich, *Triodd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads*, second edition (Cardiff, 1978), pp. 300–1; Brynley F. Roberts, *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* (Dublin, 1975), p. xiii.

editions of BG. Recent editors have sided with those manuscripts which omit the father's name. In *Gaulish Personal Names*, D. Ellis Evans has argued convincingly against this policy, and maintains that we do have a genuine Celtic name here, however corrupted the extant forms.⁷ Variant spellings include *Inianuuetitius*, *Inianuuetutus*, and *Imannuetitius*.

In the present connection, we will want to know whether *Mandubracius Inianuuetitii filius* can correspond to Welsh *Manawydan*. This is really two questions: (i) assuming the independent existence of a Welsh character named Manawydan, could any of the possible manuscript readings plausibly have suggested the identification to a literate Welshman looking for traditional analogues to historical characters?; (ii) does the name *Manawydan* in fact arise from the Celtic name underlying the variants? Question (i) can be answered affirmatively without hesitation. This is well inside the range of such Latin–Welsh equations as Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Loth*, King of Norway, which turned into *Llew vap Kynvarch* in *Brut y Brenhinedd*.⁸ Furthermore, the variants of the father's name allow that a Welsh man of letters might have laid eyes on a form like **Imanuvetius*, looking very much like a Latinization of *Manawyd* (of which *Manawydan* is the diminutive).

Whether it was the father's name or the son's which inspired identification with *Manawyd(an)*, the textual source would necessarily have been BG itself rather than any of the derivatives known to have been circulating in Britain. Bede's account of Caesar's invasions (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, II) is almost word for word that of Orosius (*Historiae Adversum Paganos*, VI.9.8), which is very much shorter than BG's account. *Historia Brittonum* (HB), §§ 19–20, is also based on Orosius, but in a highly idiosyncratic and innovative way which incorporates independent material, and will be dealt with below. Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (HRB) used both Bede and HB (or an older text incorporated into HB), adding many creative flourishes and some fresh input from Welsh tradition. HRB was then the basis of *Brut y Brenhinedd*, which also made extensive use of Welsh tradition. The key point is that none of these sources gives a name corresponding to BG's 'Imanuentius', and they give the son's name in such distorted forms that it could not possibly have suggested *Manawyd(an)*. Orosius has *Andragius*, Bede *Androgius*, Geoffrey *Androgeus*, and the *Brutiau* (oddly enough) *Avarwy*. HB lacks the Mandubracios character altogether.

⁷(Oxford, 1967), pp. 452–54. ⁸For the present purpose it has not been worth while to undertake an extensive examination of the numerous editions of *Brut y Brenhinedd*. Good and early versions of the episode in question occur in the excerpts of the Llanstephan MS 1 text edited by Brynley F. Roberts (*Brut y Brenhinedd* (Dublin, 1975)) and in the *Brut Dingestow*, edited by Henry Lewis (Cardiff, 1942). These editions are referred to here.

Question (ii) is considerably tougher, requiring an attempt to approximate the correct form of the father's name. Comparing the variants, *-et-* is favoured over *-ent-*. The sequence *-titi-*, *-tutu-* may involve dittography, an assumption yielding a better-paralleled Gaulish name suffix *-etios* as in *Tasgetios*, for example. We may also consider the common British practice of repeating name elements within a family: for instance, *Maglus Conomagli filius* in the *Life* of St Winwaloe, or *BARRIVENDI FILIVS VENDVBARI* in the inscriptions. The form with *-mannu-* may then show that we have the same well-attested *Mandu-* > *Mannu-* element as in the son's name (compare *Cartimandua*), rather than the inscrutable *Inianuu-*. The name might then correctly be *Mannuetios*, exactly parallel to Gaulish *Tasgetios*. Again we have come close to a possible pre-form of *Manawyd*, especially if the old suffix had a long *ē* (*Manawyd* rhymes with *Tryfrwyd* in the Black Book of Carmarthen) and we allow that **Manduētios* would give *Man(n)awyd* much as Welsh *cystrawen* < Latin *construenda*.⁹

If we try to work at the derivation from the opposite direction (that is, back from *Manawyd(an)*), the picture is complicated by a number of associations known to have been at work in Welsh tradition. Thus, *Manawyd*an fab Llŷr has been assimilated to the Irish sea god *Manannán mac Lir* and would therefore have something to do with the Isle of Man, Welsh *Manaw*. Also his role as a shoemaker in the Third Branch and Welsh Triads would connect the name with Welsh *mynawyd*, *manawyd* 'awl'; compare Old Irish *fer menath* 'man of awls, i.e. shoemaker, craftsman'. So we are not assured that the powerful engine of popular etymology has not derailed the regular course of sound-laws at one point or another, and may duly consider the possible historicity of the variants *Mannydan*, *Manwydan*, *Manawdyan*, *Manawydyan*, and *Mynwedan*.¹⁰

Thus it appears at this point that *Manawyd*an could have been connected with the name of the Trinovantian prince in one of two ways: a concerted attempt to syncretize BG with a Welsh tradition of *Manawyd*an, or a continuous oral tradition from ancient times. But both explanations share two imprecisions: (i) it is the name of the father that looks more like *Manawyd*an (though the *acta* of *Mandubracios* and not his father recall those of *Manawyd*an); (ii) the proposed *Imannuetius* < **Mannuetios* corresponds more closely to *Manawyd* than to the diminutive *Manawyd*an. Both

⁹*Manauid*: *Trywruidd* in *Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin*, edited by A. O. H. Jarman (Cardiff, 1982), no. 31, line 21. *Cystrawen* in Kenneth Jackson, *Language and History in Early Britain* (Edinburgh, 1953), p. 366. That no example of this sound-change is found in native vocabulary need not be taken as proof that it could occur only in 'British Latin'. ¹⁰See *Trioedd*, edited by Bromwich, nos 8 and 67.

problems can be solved in one swoop, and this by asking another question: how did one say 'Mandubracios son of Mannuetios' in British? Welsh and Gaelic suggest that this would be **M. mapos Mannuētjī*, but the direct evidence of the Old Celtic of Gaul shows the neo-Celtic locution to be innovatory. Gaulish generally resorted to *-cno-* suffixes attached to the father's name: for example, *Tertion-icna* 'daughter of Tertios' from Larzac. (The plural of this suffix survives in Welsh *-ing* as in *Coeling*, *Cadelling*, *Cynferching* 'descendants of Coel, Cadell, Cynfarch'.) The neo-Brittonic diminutive suffix *-an* continues Celtic **-agnos*, which (as a form of the root **gen-*) originally meant 'born from', rather than 'little'.¹¹ Therefore I believe that in the British period **Mannuēt(i)agnos* meant primarily 'Son of **Mannuēt(i)os*', not 'Little **Mannuēt(i)os*'. *Manawyd*an could then be a more or less exact reflection of **(Mandubracios) Mannuētagnos* 'Mandubracius Imannuetii filius'. If this is the correct explanation, then we would necessarily be dealing with an ancient oral tradition, as no medieval or Dark Age Welshman would have understood *Manawyd*an as 'Imannuetii filius'; the suffix had lost its original sense.

III. DOROBELLUM

Before turning to episodes in the histories which have analogues in the *Mabinogi*, it is informative to consider a detail not present in M which nonetheless illustrates the special position of the Welsh sources (HB, HRB, and the *Brutiau*) and their possible independent value. Whereas Orosius and Bede have 'Cassobellaunus dux' first appear in action to oppose Caesar at the Thames, HRB and the *Brutiau* correctly (that is, as in BG, v.11) have Cassibellanus/Kasswallavn assemble a large British force earlier in Kent. The place of the great mustering and war council is called *oppidum Dorobellum* in HRB and *Kastell Dorabel* in the *Brutiau*.

Caesar (BG, v.9–11) tells us that upon advancing into the interior of Kent, he found a stronghold with natural and man-made fortifications near a river. He engaged the Britons there and took the position but was forced back to his beach-head by severe storm damage to his fleet. He later returned to the same place in the interior, to find that greater forces of the Britons had assembled from all directions and had elected Cassivellaunus as their war-leader. Orosius and Bede tell us nothing of the stronghold, the council of war, or the election of the general.

Most probably, Geoffrey or one of his sources must have had direct access to BG (though that the same events might have been

¹¹cf. *Ifan bach* = 'John, jr' in colloquial Welsh usage. On the phonology of *-agno-* to Welsh *-an*, see Jackson, *Language and History*, p. 461, though alternative explanations are possible.

recalled in a native saga is not *a priori* impossible). The anomaly is that Caesar does not name the stronghold, yet Geoffrey seems to have the name right. *Dorobellum* has been recognized as a corruption of *Durovernon*, the ancient name of Canterbury.¹² Modern scholars agree that the river near the stronghold was the Stour¹³ (which flows through Canterbury). According to Frere,

No settlement yet existed [on the present site of Canterbury], but a hill-fort lay on the heights above at Bigbury, 1½ miles beyond the ford. This must be the place in the woods with strong natural and artificial fortifications previously prepared for inter-tribal war, which Caesar describes. . . .¹⁴

It was Bigbury, then, to which the name *Durovernon* 'Stronghold of Alder' originally applied,¹⁵ and a recent re-evaluation of the archaeology of the site confirms that it was the Kentish stronghold Caesar captured.¹⁶

The earliest extant version giving us this place-name is that of HB, §19:

Tunc Julius Caesar . . . pugnabat apud Dorobellum, qui erat proconsul regi Brittanico, qui et ipse Bellinus vocabatur, et filius erat Minocanni.

Then Julius Caesar . . . fought at Dorobellum, (the man) who was proconsul to the British king, who was called Bellinus and was son of Minocannus.

The obvious defect here is that Cassivellaunos' name is missing, which led both certain copiers of HB and modern translators to try to make *apud* mean *contra*, thus giving birth to a *Dolobellus* or *Dorobellus proconsul*.¹⁷ But HRB and the *Brutiau* clearly have it

¹²See E. Faral, *La Légende arthurienne*, 1 (Paris, 1929), pp. 89–90; Homer Nearing, 'The Legend of Julius Caesar's British Conquest', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 64 (1949), 896–97; Claude Sterckx, '“Principes militiae” dans l'*Historia Regum Britanniae* de Geoffrey de Monmouth', *Annales de Bretagne*, 76 (1969), 728. The better spelling *Dorobellum* (versus *Dolobellum*) occurs in the manuscript designated Q in Theodor Mommsen's edition, *Chronica Minora*, III, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi, 13 (Berlin, 1898). ¹³See S. S. Frere, *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain*, revised edition (London, 1978), p. 50; Peter Salway, *Roman Britain* (Oxford, 1984), p. 33. ¹⁴*Britannia*, p. 49; see also Barry Cunliffe, *Iron Age Communities in Britain*, second edition (London, 1978), p. 74; Salway, *Roman Britain*, p. 33. ¹⁵That Bigbury was probably called *Durovernon*, see Ordnance Survey, *Map of Southern Britain in the Iron Age* (Chessington, 1962); A. L. F. Rivet and Colin Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London, 1979), p. 354. On the meaning of *duro-*, *ibid.*, pp. 346–47. ¹⁶F. H. Thompson, 'Excavations at Bigberry, near Canterbury, 1978–80', *Antiquaries Journal*, 63 (1983), 237–78. ¹⁷See, for example, the translation of John Morris, *Nennius* (Chichester, 1980), p. 20; also F. Lot, *Nennius et l'Historia Brittonum* (Paris, 1934), p. 163, n. 6.

right and we must restore 'Caesar fought at Dorobellum against Cassibellaunus who was proconsul . . .'.¹⁸ As is generally recognized, Bellinus and Minocannus arise through a scribal comedy of errors beginning with a mishandling by Orosius of Suetonius (*Gaius*, 44) wrote concerning the flight in A.D. 41 of 'Adminius son of Cunobelinus, king of the Britons', *Adminio Cynobellini Britannorum regis filio*, which Orosius (v.5.5) turned into *Minocynobelinum Britannorum regis filium*.¹⁹ However, the fresh cleaving in two of the name in HB was hardly capricious. *Belenos*, *Belinos* was a Gallo-Brittonic deity.²⁰ *Belyn* is known in the *Gododdin* and other early Welsh sources. The Hely of HRB (*recte* Bely in the *Brutiau*) is the Beli Mawr of the early Welsh genealogies, ancestor of legendary prehistoric high kings, perhaps cognate with the divine *Belinos* (on the loss of -n, compare Romano-British *Corinium* 'Ciren-cester' > Welsh *Caer Geri*). *Minocannus* has been compared to the Old Breton personal name *Monōcan*, Welsh *Manogan* (borne by an individual who would have lived in the sixth century), Middle Welsh *mynawc* 'courteous', and the ogam *MINNACCANNI*.²¹ The point is that legendary history has not been generated out of scribal blunders, which is to say out of nothing, but out of Welsh tradition asserting itself upon scribal blunders.

So scant are the details of Orosius' account that it would have been a very lucky guess for a British reader to have deduced a battle at Canterbury. Caesar's account, on the other hand, with its mention

¹⁸Interestingly, the eccentric and early Chartres manuscript of HB repeats the Caesar episode in the early genealogies and there gives the commander's name correctly as *Cas(s)abellaunus* and anticipates HRB in crediting him with two victories over Caesar and making him *Rex Britannicus*: 'Casabellaunus rex Britannicus, et ipse fuit in obviam Gaii Iulii Caesaris regis Rome, qui missus ab imperatore Latino ad expugnandam Britanniae insulam. Et fregit bellum ante Cassabellaunum duobus uicibus super Gaium Cesarem et tercio bello occisus est a Cesare misso ab imperatore'. On the idiom *fregit bellum ante . . . super . . .* (< Old Irish *maidid in cath re n- . . . for . . .*), see D. N. Dumville, 'An Irish Idiom Latinised', *Éigse*, 16 (1975–76), 183–86; Bengt Löfstedt, 'Fregit Bellum ante Cassabellaunum', *ibid.*, 18 (1980–81), 181. Dumville believes that the Chartres text has here conflated HB, §§ 19–20, with Orosius. As Cassabellaunus is explicitly not *rex Britannicus* in either of these supposed sources, it seems likely that some further tradition was also present. Though the Chartres manuscript contains between its two versions of Caesar's campaign mention of both Cassabellaunus and Dolobellum, it shows a serious confusion (lacking in HRB) in that both Cassabellaunus and Bellinus are styled *Rex Britannicus* at the time of the campaign. ¹⁹See Faral, *Légende arthurienne*, I, 89; Sterckx, '“Principes militiae”', pp. 725–26. ²⁰On Beli, Belinos, etc., see Anne Ross, *Pagan Celtic Britain* (London, 1967), pp. 57 and 376; Roberts, *Lludd a Llefelys*, pp. xii–xiii. That Beli as a royal ancestor had an existence independent of the resegmentation of *Minocynobelinus* is also suggested by the Old Breton pedigree of St Gurthiern, where Beli occurs with a different patronym, namely *Outham Senis*, corresponding to the legendary Welsh character *Eudaf Hen*; see L. Fleuriot, 'Old Breton Genealogies and Early British Traditions', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 26 (1974–76), 1–6. ²¹cf. Bromwich, *Trioedd*, p. 282.

of the river and stronghold, may well have been sufficient for anyone knowing the geography of the south-east, but again we cannot rule out a continuous independent native tradition. One way in which Orosius may have played a role is that he mentions several men named *Dolabella*. We may imagine that first a British writer interpolated the name *Dorobernum* into an edition of BG, and that a subsequent writer, making use of that edition and Orosius while working from memory, then misremembered the name as the *Dorobellum*, *Dolobellum*, which found its way into HB.

IV. CASSIVELLAUNOS, LEADER OF THE BRITONS

(i) **BG, v.11:** After seeing to problems at his naval station, Caesar returned to the area of the stronghold near the river in central Kent and then found the Britons mustered against him:

Eo cum venisset, maiores iam undique in eum locum copiae Britannorum convenerant summa imperi bellicae administrandi communi consilio permissa Cassivellauno. . . . Huic superiore tempore cum reliquis civitatibus continentia bella intercesserant; sed nostro adventu permoti Britanni hunc toti bello imperioque praefecerant.

When [Caesar] had come thither, still greater forces of Britons had already assembled from all parts and had by common consent given supreme command and conduct of the war to Cassivellaunus. . . . Formerly, there had been continuous fighting between him and the other tribes, but our arrival stirred the Britons to elect him commander for the whole war.

(ii) **M, p. 45:** When the seven survivors of Bendigeiduran's expedition to Ireland (Manawydan is one of them) return to Britain they are told of

. . . goresgyn o Gaswallawn uab Beli Ynys y Kedyrn, a'y uot yn urenhin coronawc yn Llundain.

. . . the conquest by Caswallawn son of Beli of the Island of the Mighty [i.e. Britain], and that he is crowned king in London.

He continues in this office in the action of *Manawydan*, where we find Pryderi, lord of Dyfed (successor to his father Pwyll), tendering 'homage' (*gwrogaeth*) to Caswallawn at Rytychen (Oxford).

(iii) **Cassius Dio's Roman History (CD), XL:** Kaswellanos was foremost of chiefs in the island and led the fight against Caesar.

(iv) **Orosius and Bede:** *Cassobellaunus dux* leads the Britons opposing Caesar's crossing of the Thames (*Tamensis*). Caesar subsequently takes his *oppidum*.

(v) **HRB and the Brutiau:** Cassibellanus/Kasswallavn is king of

Britain. His coronation (HRB, III.20) immediately precedes the Caesar episode.

(vi) **HB:** Caesar's opponent is the unnamed *proconsul* of the *rex Britannicus*, Bellinus son of Minocannus [that is, the Beli Mawr son of Mynogan of the vernacular tradition; Beli usually figures as Caswallawn's father, as in M]. On two occasions, three years apart, he defeated Caesar at *ostium Tamesis* [= *aber Temys* in the *Brutiau*].

(vii) In the Chartres manuscript doublet of the episode, Caesar is opposed by *Cas(s)abellaunus Rex Britannicus*.

It is in the Brittonic sources (M, HRB, the *Brutiau*, and the Chartres HB) that Cassivellaunos is represented as king of Britain. It is BG, M, HRB, and the *Brutiau* that describe his accession, occurring in each at or near the first introduction of the character.

V. CASSIVELLAUNOS IN KENT

(i) **BG, v.11-17:** In central Kent, a force of Britons had been assembled from all directions under Cassivellaunus, who then led them in battle there.

(ii) **M:** Caswallawn first appears as crowned king in London (p. 45), then is said to be in Kent (p. 51), then receives Pryderi's *gwrogaeth* in Oxford (p. 51).

(iii) **Orosius and Bede:** Cassobellaunus is not mentioned in Kent, first appearing at the Thames front.

(iv) **HRB and the Brutiau:** Cassibellanus/Kasswallavn assembles British forces opposed to Caesar at *oppidum Dorobellum/Kastell Dorabel* (< *Durovernon* = Bigbury/Canterbury). [In the phrase *apud Dorobellum*, HB preserves a version of this.]

VI. CASSIVELLAUNOS, THE UNSEEN FOE

(i) **BG:** (a) v.18—At the battle of the Thames Cassivellaunus had set sharpened stakes at the fordable spot on the bank and concealed (*tegebantur*) them in the river bed under the water's surface.

(b) v.19—When Caesar overcame the Britons' resistance and successfully crossed the Thames,

Cassivellaunus . . . omni deposita spe contentionis dimissis amplioribus copiis milibus circiter quattuor essedariorum relictis itinera nostra servabat paulumque ex via excedebat locisque impeditis ac silvestribus sese occultabat, cum equitatus noster liberius praedandi vastandique causa se in agros eiecerat, omnibus viis semitisque essedarios ex silvis emittebat et magno cum periculo nostrorum equitum cum eis confligebat atque hoc metu latius vagari prohibebat.

Cassivellaunus . . . having given up all hope of an open fight and having dismissed the bulk of his hosts and retaining about four thousand war-charioteers (*essedarii*), was observing our march and retreated a little from

our course and hid himself in obstructed positions in the woods. . . . When our cavalry rushed out into the fields to raid and lay waste more freely [i.e. detached from the main column], he despatched his war-charioteers by every way and path and fought our cavalry, putting them in great danger. And he would prevent them from ranging wider owing to this fear.

(ii) **M, p. 46:** In the Second Branch, Caswallawn's military prowess is exercised through magic in overthrowing the seven governors (*kynweissyeit*) of Britain who had been appointed to act during the absence of the high king Bendigeiduran (Brân the Blessed).

Dyuot Caswallawn am eu penn, a llad y chwegwyr, a thorri ohonaw ynteu Gradawc y galon o aniuget, am welet y cledyf yn llad y wyr, ac na wydat pwy a'e lladei. Caswallawn a daroed idaw wiscaw llen hut amdanaw, ac ny welei neb ef yn llad y gwyr, namyn y cledyf.

Caswallawn came on them and killed the six men, and Cradawc's heart was broken by him, from sorrow (or oppression?, *aniuget*), because he saw the sword killing his men and he did not know who was killing them. Caswallawn had dressed in a magic cloak, and no one could see him killing the men, only the sword.

(iii) **Orosius, Bede, HRB, and the Brutiau:** The staking of the river is mentioned, though that the stakes were concealed is only implied; there is no word corresponding to Caesar's *tegebantur*.

Whereas Caesar says that *Cassivellaunus* hid himself in the woods (*Cassivellaunus . . . silvestris sese occultabat*), Bede and Orosius tell us that the *barbarians* hid themselves in the woods (*barbari legionum impetum non ferentes, silvis sese obdidere*).²²

(iv) **HRB and the Brutiau:** It is Cassibellanus/Kasswallawn's enemy and Caesar's ally, Androgeus/Avarwy [< Mandubracios], who hides in the woods and ambushes Cassibellanus/Kasswallawn.

(v) **HB, §20:** At the battle at *ostium Tamesis*, the unnamed *pro-consul* of King Bellinus set iron stakes and '*semen bellicosum*, i.e. *cet-hilou*' [Old Welsh *cat* 'battle' + *hilou* 'seeds', cf. Irish *gráin chatha*]. The Romans were defeated by this '*ars invisibilis*'.

VII. DISAPPEARANCE OF THE FLOCKS AND PEOPLE

(i) **BG, v.19:** . . . *atque eis regionibus quibus nos iter facturos cognoverat pecora atque homines ex agris in silvas compellebat*. . . .

²²The treatment in Orosius and Bede may derive from Caesar's statement about the Britons hiding during the earlier action in Kent, rather than Cassivellaunus' guerrilla tactics north of the Thames (BG, v.9: '*Repulsi ab equitatu se in silvas abdidierunt* . . .').

In whatever districts he learned we intended to march, he [i.e. Cassivellaunus] drove both cattle and people from the fields to the woods.

The area so affected was a wide swathe between the lower Thames (or perhaps the Stour) and Verulamion (near St Albans). The depopulation was near enough total to deny Caesar knowledge of the whereabouts of Cassivellaunus' *oppidum* until some of the British allied tribes defected.

(ii) In comparing the 'enchantment of Dyfed' (*hut ar Dyuet*, *Trioedd* no. 67) of the Third Branch, it is significant that it follows immediately upon the formal submission of Pryderi (as lord of Dyfed) to Caswallawn. (A close paraphrase of M, pp. 51–52, follows.)

Pryderi returned to Dyfed from Oxford (*Rytychen*) and a feast was prepared at the court of Arberth. Pryderi, his wife Kicua, Manawydan, and his wife Riannon were present. After eating, those four went out walking, leaving the servants behind to eat in the hall. They then sat upon the mound called Gorssed Arberth [established in the First Branch as a magical location]. Accompanying a loud noise, a mist fell which was so thick that the four could not see one another. After the fog, there was light everywhere. As they looked to where they previously saw their herds, flocks, and habitations, none of them could see any of these, neither house, (domestic) animal, smoke, fire, person, nor dwelling, except the buildings of their court which were deserted and desolate. . . .

Parallel to the *pecora atque homines* in BG, we have *y preideu*, *a'r anreitheu*, *a'r kyuanhed* and *na thy*, *na aniuail*, *na mwc*, *na than*, *na dyn*, *na chyuand* in M. As we learn later in the tale, the people and herds of Dyfed have not been destroyed but magically concealed, so the effects are exactly comparable.

It is my proposal that the *hut ar Dyuet* episode recollects the devastating strategic warfare waged upon the Britons' home ground shortly after Cassivellaunus' election as generalissimo by the tribal kings (compare Pryderi's *gwrogaeth*). As often in the *Mabinogi*, overt causality between the former and latter event is lacking, but the structure of the narrative has a symmetry which conveys an underlying causality, in the same way as, for instance, the rape of the king's virgin leads to the birth of a wonder child in *Math*. We may recall that towards the close of the closely linked Second Branch, Caswallawn was established as a magician causing an appalling disappearance. Gruffydd proposed that it was Caswallawn who had enchanted Dyfed in the 'primitive' story and that the name of the magician given, *Llwyd uab Kil Coet*, is an intrusion of the Irish

character *Liath mac Celtchair*.²³ Also consistent with identifying Llwyd and Caswallawn is the detail that the former, in his first guise as a cleric, says he has come from Lloygyr. Prior to that, Caswallawn has been connected with three locations in Lloygyr, and Manawydan has on a further occasion abstained from violence in Lloygyr for fear that 'Caswallawn would hear' (PKM, p. 54).

(iii) *Orosius*, *Bede*, *HRB*, the *Brutiau*, and *HB* have no corresponding episode.

VIII. THE LOSS OF THE CORN

(i) In *BG*, v.19, immediately following the description of Cassivellaunus' guerrilla tactics, Caesar details his military response:

Relinquebatur ut neque longius ab agmine legionum discedi Caesar pateretur, et tantum in agris vastandis incendiisque faciendis hostibus noceretur. . . .

The course left available to Caesar was not to allow far ranging from the main line of march, and to do as much harm to the foe as possible through devastating the fields and raising fires. . . .

The destruction of the Britons' corn supply is the unmistakable aim of this policy. A further loss of British corn as tribute is described in the context of the subsequent events found in *BG*, v.20. (A paraphrase follows.)

Mandubracius was a young fugitive prince of the Trinovantes [in present-day Essex]. He had fled to Caesar's protection in Gaul at some earlier stage when his father 'Imannuetius' (the Trinovantian king) was killed by Cassivellaunus. (After Caesar had carried the campaign across the Thames) the Trinovantes appealed to Caesar, offering submission and asking that Mandubracius be installed as their king and protected from hurt by Cassivellaunus. [It seems that the Trinovantes had previously been pressed into Cassivellaunus' confederacy, but now, with Caesar's waxing fortunes and advance beyond the Thames, saw their chance to reassert their independence.] Caesar sent Mandubracius back to the Trinovantes, who then quickly sent the forty hostages and the *supply of corn* for the Roman army demanded by Caesar.

(ii) *Orosius*, *Bede*, *HRB*, the *Brutiau*, and *HB* make no mention of either the laying waste of the fields or the tribute of corn. The first four do, however, tell of the hostages sent to Caesar by the

²³*Rhiannon*, pp. 76 and 111. See also John Rhŷs, *Celtic Folklore, Welsh and Manx*, 2 vols (Oxford, 1901), II, 546. The name occurs elsewhere in Welsh literature; see Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Significance of the Irish Personal Names in *Culhwch ac Olwen*', *BBCS*, 29 (1980-82), 615 and n. 8.

Trinovantes, whereas *HB* lacks the Mandubracios episode altogether.

(iii) *M*: Manawydan—after wandering in Lloygyr as a peripatetic craftsman and losing his friend and benefactor Pryderi and then his wife Riannon (Pryderi's mother) in a supernatural stronghold (*caer*)—returns to Dyfed to plant three 'crofts' (*teir grofd*) of wheat (*gwenith*). These ripen well, but on the eve of the reaping of the first and then the second, the grain mysteriously disappears. The night before the reaping of the third, Manawydan keeps a vigil, discovering a vast host of mice (*eliwlu y byt o lygot*) laying waste the croft, but he is unable to stop them carrying off the ears (*tywys*).

IX. THE CAPTIVE

(i) *BG*, v.21-22: After the capitulation of the Trinovantes and other tribes, Caesar learned the location of Cassivellaunus' *oppidum* and attacked it. According to *BG* this action was wholly successful. [We may doubt this, though, because Cassivellaunus was not captured and the resistance did not cease forthwith.] Tribes in Kent still loyal to Cassivellaunus attacked the Roman beach-head. They were repelled and one British notable captured, *nobilis dux Lugotorix*. In the following sentence, Caesar tells that upon hearing the news Cassivellaunus promptly sued for peace. The terms imposed by Caesar were to hand over hostages and a yearly tribute. The final condition (Caesar's last recorded act in Britain) was that Cassivellaunus do no harm to Mandubracius or the Trinovantes (. . . *interdicit atque imperat Cassivellauno, ne Mandubracio neu Trinobantibus noceat*).

(ii) *M*, pp. 60-65: Manawydan can capture only one mouse (*llygoden*) of the host ravaging the third croft. He intends to hang the mouse as a thief (*lleidyr*). Kicua (Pryderi's wife [the only other person in Dyfed at this point]) urges Manawydan not to hang the mouse, explaining that it is 'unbecoming to see a man of such rank and such nobility as yourself hanging vermin of that sort' (*anwym yw gueleit gwr kyuard, kymoned, a thidi, yn crogi y ryw bryf hwnnw*). When Manawydan refuses to release the mouse, she adds that her only motive was to prevent dishonour (*goglyt ansyberwyt*) to him.

The following day, Manawydan sets off with the mouse and fixes a gallows atop Gorssed Arberth. [This must be taken as directed at whatever magical power was residing in the mound and had caused the *hut ar Dyuet* and devastation of the crofts.] He then sees a poor cleric (*yscolheic*) coming his way (the first person to appear in Dyfed, apart from the four who had been on the Gorssed when the enchantment began seven years before). The *yscolheic* says that he has come from singing (*canu*) in Lloygyr and then attempts to ransom the mouse, saying that handling it is unsuitable for a man of

Manawydan's rank (*gwr kyuurd a thidi*). Manawydan refuses, and the *yscolheic* walks off. As Manawydan continues to prepare the gallows, a priest (*offeirat*) rides up, offers Manawydan a higher ransom, is refused, then rides off. Next a bishop with entourage appears and offers a still higher ransom for the mouse. Manawydan refuses. The bishop offers more money. Manawydan refuses again. The bishop then offers his seven baggage horses and their packs and is again refused. He then asks Manawydan what it is that he does demand. Through a protracted interchange, Manawydan demands the release of Riannon and Pryderi, deliverance from the enchantment (*hut a lledrith*) on Dyfed, knowledge of the mouse's identity, that enchantment (*hut*) never be put on Dyfed again, and finally that revenge for these concessions never be taken on Pryderi, Riannon, or Manawydan himself. Pryderi and Riannon appear, Manawydan releases the mouse (actually the transformed pregnant wife of the magician disguised as a bishop), and Dyfed's inhabitants, dwellings, and herds are restored. [But there is no mention of return of the wheat.]

(iii) CD, Orosius, Bede, HRB, the *Brutiau*, and HB have no corresponding episode.

The key comparison between M and BG is that the capture of Lugotorix and the *llygodyn* immediately precedes and directly precipitates the capitulation of the individual who caused the disappearance of the people and flocks and the exile of Mandubracius/Manawydan. In both accounts, the restored realm is presented to Mandubracius/Manawydan and the final condition imposed upon the enemy is that Mandubracius/Manawydan and his people be left in peace by the man who harmed them.

Lugotorix may or may not mean 'Mouse-King'. If it does, a better spelling would be *Lucotorix*, which is, in fact, the way Holder listed the name.²⁴ Ellis Evans, on the other hand, connects it with Welsh *lleu* 'light' < **lugu-* and the divine Gaulish name *Lugus*, Welsh *Lleu*, Irish *Lug*.²⁵ We may compare Gaulish Λουκοτικνός ('Son of Mouse'), *Lucotios*, as against *Lugudunolus*, ogam *LUGUDEC*, *LUGU-DECAS*.²⁶ We should remember that whereas the Celtic word for 'mouse' has an inherent dental suffix *-ot-*, **lugu-* does not and should have *u* after the *g*, not *o*. Here, the important point is that *Lugotorix*—in either written or spoken form—would have seemed enough as though it contained the word for 'mouse' to inspire a pun or onomastic tale. John Carey has drawn my attention to another Celtic tale which apparently involves a pun on a name in *Lugu-* serving as the basis for a mouse episode: in the Old Irish *Cath Maige Mucrama*,

²⁴*Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz*, II (Leipzig, 1904), p. 303, line 45. The emendation was evidently his own editorial preference and not founded on the manuscripts. ²⁵*Gaulish Personal Names*, p. 99. ²⁶For *lucot-* 'mouse-' and *lugu-* 'light' names in Old Celtic, see *ibid.*, pp. 218–21.

the exiled king Lugaid Mac Con is forced to reveal his name when he and his company are compelled to eat mice by their host, the king of Alba.²⁷ As will be shown below, this tale, and the closely related *Scéla Mošauluim*, share a number of features with the British Mandubracios tradition.

In the context of the story that survives in the Third Branch, it is a particularly curious omission that Manawydan fails to compel the magician to return the wheat as part of the lengthy and seemingly exhaustive list of demands. The devastation of the crofts is, after all, the most recent of the protagonist's misfortunes and the immediate spark of the whole mouse-hanging episode and, therefore, most vividly retained in the mind of both audience and storyteller. The historical background thus holds special explanatory power; for—whereas Mandubracios was restored to his kingdom, Cassivellaunos restrained from further molestation, and the *pecora atque homines* presumably re-emerged from the woods—the Romans did not repair the devastated fields nor return the corn handed over by the Trinovantes.

X. MANDUBRACIOS' LOSS OF SOVEREIGNTY

The relevant details of BG, v.20 were summarized in section VIII and include Mandubracius being denied his royal patrimony and driven abroad by Cassivellaunos. In Orosius, Bede, HRB, and the *Brutiau*, no mention is made of Andragius/Androgeus/Avarwy losing his kingdom or fleeing to exile. Conversely, Manawydan's loss of sovereignty is a pervasive theme of M, as detailed below.

(i) Towards the close of *Branwen*, Caswallawn usurps the high kingship from the children of Llŷr by killing Brân's seven *kynweisyet*, including (albeit unintentionally) Manawydan's kinsman Cradawc [as the historical Cassivellaunos denied Mandubracios sovereignty by killing his father].

(ii) At the beginning of *Manawydan*, the seven survivors of the expedition to Ireland (Manawydan being one) bury Brân's head in London. Manawydan then laments that he alone of them is without a place to go that night. Pryderi answers:

'Arglwyd, na uit kyn drymhet genhyt a hynny. Dy geuynderw yssyd urenhin yn ynys y Kedyrn; a chyn gwneł gameu it, ny buost hawlwr tir a dayar eiryoet. Trydyd lledyf unben wyt.'

'Lord, it is not so bad as that for you. It is your cousin [i.e. Caswallawn, usually counted as paternal uncle to the children of Llŷr/Lludd] who is king in the Island of the Mighty [i.e. Britain]; and though he has done

²⁷See *Cath Maige Mucrama*, edited and translated by Máirín O Daly, Irish Texts Society, 50 (London, 1975), p. 47.

wrongs to you, you never petitioned for territory. You are one of the three *lledyf* ('yielding, abject, passive, beaten, spineless, supine, vanquished')²⁸ chieftains.'

Manawydan replies:

'Ie, kyt boet keuynderw y mi y gwr hwnnw, goathrist yw genhyf i gueleit neb yn lle Bendigeiduran uy mrawt, ac ny allaf uot yn llawen yn un ty ac ef.'

'Yes, but though that man is cousin to me, I am excessively sad to see anyone in the place of Bendigeiduran my brother, and I cannot be happy in the same house with him [i.e. with Caswallawn].'

Pryderi then offers and Manawydan accepts the governance of the seven cantrefs of Dyfed, together with Riannon (Pryderi's widowed mother) as wife. They return to Dyfed. A feast is prepared there. Before the end of it Manawydan and Riannon sleep together.

(iii) It was thoroughly recognized by Gruffydd in *Rhiannon* that the *hut ar Dyuet* and devastation of the crofts are aspects of the 'Wasteland' theme. As will be discussed at greater length below, this theme must be understood as the negative reflection of the Celtic notion that Right Kingship ensures for the tribe the land's fecundity, the flocks' health, and human well-being.

(iv) On two occasions Manawydan wanders as a craftsman in Lloygyr (M, pp. 52–55 and 58) [thus adopting the role of a landless man of less than noble rank. Like Caesar's Mandubracius, he takes flight to foreign parts]. He practises a total of three trades in four towns. At each town, he so excels in his craft that his competitors plot to kill him. Each of the four times, Manawydan's companion (first Pryderi, later Kicua) urges him to resist 'the churls' (*tayogeu*), but he refuses. The second time, while working as shield-maker, Manawydan justifies his pacifism: *Casswallawn a glywei hynny, a'e wyr, a rew'n uydern* 'Caswallawn would hear of it, and his men, and we would be ruined' [M, p. 54].

In the third and fourth towns, Manawydan made shoes with golden buckles (*gwaegau*). He is named therefore in *Trioedd*, no. 67, as one of the Three Golden Shoemakers (*Tri Eurgyd*). The triad is alluded

²⁸On the sense of this word, see Gruffydd, *Rhiannon*, pp. 82 and 84; especially Bromwich, *Trioedd*, no. 8, drawing attention to *Canu Aneirin*, lines 264 and 273: *ef gwneei gwyr llydw a gwagedd gwydw kyn n o'e agheu* 'he was wont to make men prostrate and women widowed before his death'; also the Royal Irish Academy's *Dictionary of the Irish Language* (Dublin, 1913–76) for the Irish cognate and the family of words derived from it: *ledb* 'a strip of skin or leather', 'weal'; *ledbach* 'shabby'; *ledbad* 'thrashing'; *ledbóg* 'a piece, a fragment, a tatter, an untidy woman'. Cf. further Patrick S. Dinneen, *Irish-English Dictionary* (Dublin, 1927), s.v. *leadbach* '... worthless, mean in conduct'.

to in the tale [M, p. 58]. The other two *eur grydion* were Lleu Llawgyffes—the relevant story occurs in the Fourth Branch (M, pp. 79–81)—and, interestingly enough, Caswallawn (whose story does not survive). W. J. Gruffydd²⁹ and Rachel Bromwich³⁰ diminished the significance of the gold in these shoemaking stories, believing that the explicit references to gold in *Manawydan* and *Math* could have arisen through a misunderstanding of the triad. More recently, however, Calvert Watkins³¹ (drawing on the earlier work of M. A. O'Brien)³² has shown that golden shoes were, in various manifestations of Celtic tradition, 'clearly a symbolic attribute of kingship, and the ceremonial act of putting the shoe . . . on someone was "part of the ritual of king-making"'.³³ Watkins compellingly draws attention to the golden shoes found on the prince interred in the spectacular, recently unearthed Hallstatt royal burial at Eberding-Hochdorf, near Stuttgart. In the surviving Welsh stories, Manawydan and Lleu are both sovereigns who have been denied their birthright. The craft they practise while thus dispossessed serves as a badge of their thwarted kingly natures: they make the sort of shoes proper to kings.

In the second shoemaking episode in *Manawydan*, Kicua cautions that shoemaking is not suitable for a man of Manawydan's rank and refinement, as it is not 'clean work' (*glanweith*). 'Clean' is neither strong enough nor sufficiently wide in its range of meaning to convey the culturally charged force of *glân*; compare, for example, *yr Ysbryd Glân* 'the Holy Ghost'. It hardly needs saying that work that was not *glân* was not appropriate to a king. If we think in terms of the sacral kingship of the ancient Celts, we come near to its exact antithesis.

(v) Manawydan and Pryderi hunt a supernatural white boar. The boar escapes into a mysterious *caer*, which appears on a previously vacant site. Pryderi pursues the boar, but Manawydan holds back. Pryderi does not re-emerge, being stuck fast to a golden bowl in the middle of the *caer*.

On his return to court, Riannon rebukes Manawydan for being a bad companion to a good friend and herself goes to the *caer*, where she is then trapped in the same manner as her son.

To understand the original import of this episode, it is essential to recognize Riannon as a manifestation of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess. Though Gruffydd emphasized the affinities of Riannon (< British **Rigantonā* 'the Divine Queen') and the Gallo-Brittonic deities Mātronā 'the Divine Mother' and Eponā 'the Horse Goddess',

²⁹*Rhiannon*, p. 85. ³⁰*Trioedd*, pp. 177–78. ³¹'Language, Culture, or History?', in *Papers from the Parasession on Language and Behavior*, Chicago Linguistic Society (Chicago, 1981), pp. 243–46. ³²'Fear an énaís', *Celtica*, 2 (1952–54), 351–53. ³³A. Martin Freeman, *Annála Connacht* (Dublin, 1970), p. 504, n. 2.

Catherine A. McKenna has since convincingly demonstrated that Riannon's role in the First Branch is consistently that of personified sovereignty of the type well known in early Irish literature.³⁴ Leaning on Mac Cana's analysis of the Irish material,³⁵ McKenna identifies the following elements of the Riannon character which belong to the Sovereignty Goddess complex: (a) the etymology of her name, (b) her equine associations, (c) her supernatural power, (d) her independence of mind in choosing Pwyll as husband (after he has proved his valour), (e) her superior wisdom, (f) her offering a feast to her chosen spouse, (g) her role as mother of the succeeding king Pryderi, and (h) her taking on an impaired form when removed from her spouse (during the episode of her penance). To these may be added two points: (i) Riannon is wife of two successive rulers of Dyfed (Manawydan counting at least as a would-be ruler), and (ii) her longevity. Point (ii) was emphasized by T. F. O'Rahilly in connection with the Irish sovereignty goddesses Étaín and Medb Lethderg.³⁶ If anybody is counting, Riannon survives in the *Pedeir Keinc* not merely until her son Pryderi's manhood but subsequently through the seven years which Pryderi, Manawydan, and the other five survivors spent in Hardlech, and then their eighty years in Gwales. It is afterwards that she marries Manawydan.

Further emphasis is to be given to point (a); for **Rīgantonā*, rather than being built on one of the many Celtic words meaning roughly 'queen', is built specifically on the root of *rīx*, the primary and most basic word for the king of the tribe (**toutā*), to which Binchy has authoritatively attributed the notions of sacral kingship.³⁷ **Rīgantonā* is specifically the divine consort of the *rīx*. When Manawydan loses Riannon, he loses his divine right. It should also be pointed out that there can be no question but that Riannon is a native divinity, a survival of the pagan British religion, rather than a relatively late loan from Ireland, since divine names in *-onā*, *-onos* are peculiar to Gallo-Brittonic. She therefore provides clear evidence of the Common Celtic status of the sovereignty legend.³⁸

In *Manawydan*, elements of the theme of Hero and the Sovereignty Goddess are stood on their heads. As a prelude to encountering and lying with the goddess, the hero destined to be king often

³⁴The Theme of Sovereignty in *Pwyll*, *BBCS*, 29 (1980–82), 35–52. ³⁵Aspects of the Theme of King and Goddess in Irish Literature', *ÉC*, 7 (1955–56), 76–114 and 356–413; 8 (1958), 59–65. ³⁶On the Origin of the Names *Érainn* and *Ériu*, *Ériu*, 14 (1943–46), 16. ³⁷*Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 3–9. ³⁸In this connection, we should perhaps not totally ignore a possible original equivalence of Gwawl (Riannon's suitor and Pwyll's opponent in the First Branch, who resurfaces at the close of the Third) with the Stone of Fál which screamed under the rightful king of Ireland. This would add another important detail to the sovereignty theme in the *Mabinogi* and further evidence for the cognate rather than Irish-derived background of the Welsh version.

proves his valour in the chase for a magical white animal in the wilderness. This is an integral part of the theme, and the animal is a manifestation of the goddess. Manawydan holds back, again proving his *lleddfdra*, as a prelude to forfeiting the personified sovereignty. The paralysing golden bowl, by which Pryderi and Riannon are spirited off from Manawydan, can be seen as a reversal of the golden cup with which the personified Sovereignty of Ireland offers liquor to the successive kings in *Baile in Scáil*.³⁹ O'Rahilly demonstrated this libation to be integral to the theme, proposing that the etymology of *Medb* 'She who intoxicates' stemmed from this aspect and pointing to the episode in *Fled Bricrenn* in which Medb and Ailill give Cú Chulainn a red-gold cup (*cúach dergóir*) full of wine to signify his pre-eminence.⁴⁰

XI. MANDUBRACIOS, UN-KING

Earlier studies have emphasized Manawydan's synchronic role as a sage man of counsel,⁴¹ an aspect established elsewhere in early Welsh literature in the reference in the Black Book of Carmarthen to 'Manawidan ab Llyr, oet duys y cusil' ('... whose counsel was profound').⁴² Gruffydd regarded Manawydan as a paragon of Christian virtue.⁴³ Most recently, Mac Cana argued eloquently and convincingly that it is Manawydan who embodies the ethic of the clerical redactor of the *Pedeir Keinc*:

[The redactor's] prevailing trait is a kind of *gravitas* compounded of good sense, moderation, and a feeling for the proprieties, whether of style or behaviour. It is one he shares with Manawydan, and as one reads the Four Branches one can hardly avoid the conclusion that the author has created in Manawydan a reflection of his own personality and a vehicle for his own philosophy of life. . . . Vengeance and feud were part of the pattern of medieval life, but Manawydan shows how they may be rejected or circumvented by the exercise of fortitude and prudence. . . . Where Pryderi and Rhiannon react to their situation with 'heroic' or instinctive action . . . , Manawydan chooses the role of 'Cunctator', stolid and slow-moving to the imperceptive and impatient, but subtle and quick-witted to those observers . . . who follow the events to their final outcome. . . . Above all he is cast as protagonist of reason and enlightenment in the fight against crudities and excesses that were so much a part of the mythopoeic tradition.⁴⁴

³⁹See Mac Cana, 'Aspects' (*ÉC*, 7), pp. 77–78; O'Rahilly, 'Érainn and Ériu', pp. 14–15. ⁴⁰*ibid.*, p. 15; *Fled Bricrenn*, edited and translated by George Henderson, ITS, 2 (London 1899), §62. ⁴¹See Proinsias Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*, revised edition (London, 1983), p. 80. ⁴²*Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin*, edited by Jarman, no. 31, lines 19–20 (part of the early Arthurian poem 'Pa Gur'). ⁴³See *Rhiannon*, pp. 78–79. ⁴⁴*The Mabinogi*, pp. 48–50.

Thus far had Welsh literature progressed by this stage, from the unquestioned heroic ideal of the sixth-century *Gododdin* poems leading to inevitable doom and eternal fame, through the questioning ambivalence of the ninth-century englynion of *Canu Llywarch Hen*, to the final formulation of a complete post-heroic ideal in *Manawydan*. So incompatible are the values of this tale with those of earlier Welsh tradition that two possibilities are available to diachronic analysts: (a) that the redactor (and his clerical predecessors in the transmission, if any) have modified the traditional heroic *acta* of Manawydan to conform to more sophisticated values, or (b) that the *acta* have remained largely the same, but preliterate tradition had regarded Manawydan as an exemplum of bad character of some sort. It is the latter possibility that the present theory requires.

The redactor has in fact handled his traditional material with great conservatism. Though clearly siding with Manawydan, he has preserved every episode so that the protagonist has remained in every wise the exact antithesis of the rightful king of the older value system. Every speaking character calls Manawydan's actions into question, sometimes stinging. The redactor has not felt free to modify the basic content of the traditional dialogue so as openly to praise his hero. In places, visible seams of the older version remain, presumably because the redactor felt bound to include details of the traditional story, even when they ran against his moral. At the end, for example, the redactor would wish us to feel that Manawydan had been vindicated in full for his Job-like patience; however, he is reinstated only as second fiddle to the Lord of Dyfed when he in fact started with a claim to the kingship of Britain, and (as noted above) the corn is not returned. These are not oversights, but constraints imposed by the traditional story and ultimately by its historical background. That Manawydan is left alive with his regional realm essentially intact at the end of the story is not necessarily imposed by the primitive theme or medieval moral, but rather by the historical fact that Mandubracios was left secure on the throne so long as the threat of Roman intervention was felt, certainly at least for the ten years that Caesar lived. It is not as a paragon of Christian patience that Manawydan failed to claim his legacy, stood by as his wife was captured and tormented in the *caer*, and sought to hang a mouse, but rather as the complete Un-King who had been the pivotal theme of the original story.

What is meant here by 'Celtic kingship' is the archaic variety (so compellingly invoked in D. A. Binchy's *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*),⁴⁵ retaining an overt sacral aspect and permitting insights

⁴⁵*Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*, pp. 3-7.

into the Indo-European situation. Though vestiges of this sacral kingship are found in Welsh tradition, it is nowhere directly accessible through Welsh literature. We are thus obliged to turn to the Irish material, particularly the Laws, myths of hero and sovereignty goddess, and 'wisdom literature', such as *Audacht Morainn*.

Binchy states unequivocally:

... the king retains unimpaired his traditional function of leader in battle. This is emphasized over and over again in laws, annals, and sagas alike. . . . Valour in battle was the supreme test of rightful kingship. A law-tract compiled about A.D. 700 lays down that if a king is wounded in the back of the head while fleeing from the battlefield, he sinks to the level of a 'churl', unless of course—the compiler hastens to add—he has burst through the enemy ranks and is then wounded from behind!⁴⁶

If this is 'the supreme test', Manawydan is the unambiguous failure, shirking conflict with Caswallawn, the four bands of competitors in Lloygyr, and the unseen forces of the *caer*. It is significant that he reaps precisely the same consequences as the cowardly king of Binchy's tract. Further elaboration of strictures in the same section of the same text (*Crith Gablach*, §40) is also of direct bearing:

Ataat cethair tóraic do-berat díre n-aithig do rí. Cataeat? A thóraic for teora[ib] lorggaib a[i]thich—lorgg fôrcha, lorgg samthaige, lorgg râm<m>ai . . .

There are four discoveries which put a churl's honour price on a king. What sort are they? Finding him holding one of the three handles of a churl—the handle of a maul, the handle of an axe, the handle of a spade. . . .

Manawydan belongs to a family of royal blood. Failing to oppose Caswallawn, he first sinks to the status of a sort of chief officer for Pryderi, then a peripatetic craftsman, then a crofter, and finally a trapper of vermin (perhaps the work of an outcast). Manawydan unflinchingly accepts progressive degradation of his rank.

The significance of Manawydan's holding back from the white boar (thereby losing Pryderi and Riannon) has already been discussed. Manawydan's relationship with the sovereignty goddess is, in fact, un-kingly throughout. Let us contrast the union of Riannon and Pwyll with that of Riannon and Manawydan. Riannon chooses Pwyll

⁴⁶*ibid.*, pp. 17-18; *Crith Gablach*, edited by D. A. Binchy (Dublin, 1941), §40. Certainly this same notion of un-kingly behaviour was shared by the Welsh. One may recall the unseemly flight of Catgabail rex *Guenedotae* from the action of Atbret Iudeu in North Britain in the mid-seventh century, for which he is remembered in HB, §65, with the satirical epithet *Catguommed* 'Spurn-battle'.

for her mate after he proves his valour in Annwryn, but she is bestowed on Manawydan (after he displays *lleddfdra*) by a powerful man. (This accords with historical situation in which Mandubracios was made king by Caesar, not, that is, in the traditional Celtic manner.) Riannon provides Pwyll with a feast, but Pryderi provides Manawydan with a feast. Riannon aids Pwyll in overcoming the suitor Gwawl, but Riannon rejects no other suitor, and overcomes no obstruction, to join Manawydan. Pwyll and Riannon conceive the king-to-be Pryderi. Riannon and Manawydan have no children.

As noted above, the Celtic Wasteland theme, of which the *hut ar Dyuet* is an example, springs from the notion that both human well-being and the entire fecundity of nature depend on the rightfulness of the king. The notion is fully illustrated by the following extracts from *Audacht Morainn*, a text of the seventh century, or perhaps c. 600:

- §14 Is tre *fír flathemon* fo- síd sámi sube soad sádili -sláini.
 §15 Is tre *fír flathemon* (mór)cathu fri crícha comnámát -cuirethar.
 . . .
 §17 Is tre *fír flathemon* ad- manna mármeso márfedo -mlasetar.
 §18 Is tre *fír flathemon* ad- mlechti márbóis -moínigter.
 §19 Is tre *fír flathemon* ro-bbí(?) cech etho ardósil imbeth.
 §20 Is tre *fír flathemon* to- aidble (uisce) éisc i sruthaib -snáither.
 §21 Is tre *fír flathemon* clanda caini cain-tussimter.
 . . .
 §27 Is tre *fír flathemon* comrara comge cethre caich torith críchat.
 . . .
 §14 It is through the justice of the ruler that he secures peace, tranquillity, joy, ease, [and] comfort.
 §15 It is through the justice of the ruler that he dispatches (great) battalions to the borders of hostile neighbours.
 . . .
 §17 It is through the justice of the ruler that abundances of great tree-fruit of the great wood are tasted.
 §18 It is through the justice of the ruler that milk-yields of great cattle are maintained (?).
 §19 It is through the justice of the ruler that there is (?) abundance of every high, tall corn.
 §20 It is through the justice of the ruler that abundance of fish swim in streams.
 §21 It is through the justice of the ruler that fair children are well begotten.
 . . .
 §27 It is through the justice of the ruler that enclosures of protection of cattle [and] of every produce extend (?).⁴⁷

If this is an accurate picture of Right Kingship as conceived of by

⁴⁷*Audacht Morainn*, edited by Fergus Kelly (Dublin, 1976), pp. 6–9.

the early Celts, what must we make of a story of a ruler whose herds, subjects (with their habitations), and corn disappear? The Third Branch could hardly be more clearcut, indeed heavy-handed, in this regard: Manawydan lacks the *fír flathemon*. As a ruler whose nature disqualifies him, he presides over a land ridden by blight and oppressions, *gormesoedd* in Welsh.⁴⁸

The Celtic king as revealed through Irish sources was also the subject of certain tabus or *gessa*. In two episodes, constituting a total of five occasions, Manawydan is told that he is defiling himself and jeopardizing his rank, first when undertaking shoemaking (deemed not to be *glanweith*) and then when handling the mouse. It is likely that both of these preserve old notions of the sacral purity of the king.

When we compare the literary reflexes of Mandubracios with the Old Irish tales about Lugaid Mac Con,⁴⁹ the shared motifs suggest that we may have to do with a Common Celtic theme of the Unrightful King, comprising the following:

(1) Mac Con shirks battle with his rival Éogan (*Cath Maige Mucrama* [= CMM], §11) as Manawydan/Mandubracios shirked battle with Caswallawn/Cassivellaunos.

(2) Mac Con then flees in exile (CMM, §15; *Scéla Mošauluim* [= SM], §9), as did Manawydan/Mandubracios.

(3) Mac Con is received in friendship by a powerful ruler, the king of Alba (CMM, §16). Mandubracios was received by Caesar, Manawydan by Pryderi, lord of Dyfed.

(4) The exiled Mac Con eats a mouse and is thereby forced to reveal his identity (CMM, §§ 24–31). The exiled Manawydan handles a mouse and thereby reveals the identity of the magician.

(5) Mac Con returns to Ireland and attains kingship by force, backed by a powerful foreign (British) army (CMM, §§ 32–59; SM, §10). Mandubracios returned to Britain and attained kingship through the force of the Roman army.

(6) Mac Con and his foreign allies used invisibility (CMM, §48; SM, §10) and 'battle seed' (*gráin chatha*; SM, §10) against the Irish.

⁴⁸There is one other source in which a reflex of the historical Mandubracios is of clearly bad character, namely *Trioedd*, no. 51, concerning the *Trywyr Gvarth*. There, Avarwy (< *Andragius* < *Mandubracius*) is listed along with Gvrtheyrn and Medrawt, the idea being that Avarwy was to blame for inviting Caesar and therefore parallel to Gvrtheyrn in his giving land to the English (*Saesson*). The whole Triad is closely tied to the *Brutiau* and may not embody any independent tradition. However, Avarwy in the *Brutiau* is not an ignoble character and his behaviour in the war of Caesar and Kasswallavn is not disgraceful, so it may not be pure coincidence that the Mandubracios character is blamed for the Roman invasion in *Trioedd*, no. 51, and has the full effects of the invasion visited upon him in *Manawydan*. ⁴⁹Cited from O Daly's edition (n. 27 above).

Cassivellaunos used invisibility and (in HB, §20) 'battle seed' (*cet-hilou*) against the Roman allies of Mandubracios.

(7) Like Manawydan's Dyfed, Mac Con's realm becomes a Wasteland (CMM, §66):

Blíadain dó iar sain i rrígu i Temraig 7 ní thánic fér tria thalmáin ná duil[l]e tre fídbuid ná gránni i n-arbur. Ro ndlomsat didiu fir Hérend assa rígu ar ropo anflaith.

After that [Mac Con's giving a false judgment], there was a year to him [Lugaid Mac Con] as king in Tara, and grass did not come through the earth, nor leaves on the trees, nor grain on the corn. So the men of Ireland put him out of his kingship because he was an un-sovereign (*anflaith*).

XII. MANAWYDAN'S PATRONYM

So little do the attributes of Manawydan fab Llŷr agree with those of the Irish sea god Manannán mac Lir that many scholars have come to conclusions like those expressed by Gruffydd:

From the paucity of references to Manawydan in Welsh legends, and from the complete misrepresentation of his traditional [i.e. as in Irish literature] character in what is practically the only account of him in Welsh, we may safely assume that this name has been lifted from Irish merely as a name and applied to a character developed exclusively in Welsh story and literature, having no correspondence to his clearly defined personality in Irish.⁵⁰

Following the discussion in section II above, Gruffydd's ideas must be modified: the Welsh reflex of Latin *Mandubracius Imannuetii filius* and/or British **Mandubracios Mannuētagnos* was identified with the Irish name *Manannán*. The assimilation was complete when *Sanas Cormaic* was compiled c. 900, in which Manannán is said to have been sea god of the *Scoti* and *Brittones*. As Cormac recognized, *mac Lir* (= *mab Llŷr*) was not actually a patronym but a sea god's epithet meaning *filius maris*. Manawydan is, however, no sea god in any respect. The assimilation and the epithet 'son of the sea' are wholly superficial, even though going back as far as Cormac's day and earlier.

Mandubracios' reflex in legendary history, Androgeus/Avarwy, is the son of Lud/Llvd. Manawydan is *uab Llud* in the Red Book version of the triad of the *Tri Eurgryd* (*Trioedd*, no. 67). Rachel Bromwich in fact concludes that '*Llŷr* and *Lludd* are interchangeable names' and that *Llŷr Lledyeith* ('Half-Language' or 'Half-Nation') and *Lludd Llaw Ereint* ('Silver Hand') may 'ultimately refer to the

⁵⁰*Rhiannon*, p. 80.

same mythological figure'.⁵¹ This correspondence provides further confirmation that Avarwy vap Llvd/Androgeus filius Lud and Manawydan fab Llŷr are ultimately the same character. It is *Llŷr* that is the interloper, arising through syncretism with the Irish *filius maris*.

Lludd clearly does not reflect Mandubracios' actual father, the Trinovantian 'Mannuētios', but rather the Celtic god Nōdons, whose sanctuary was at Lydney Park, Gloucestershire, and whose other Welsh reflex is Nudd. The forms with *Ll-/L-* have long been known to derive from alliterative assimilation induced by the epithet *Llaw Ereint* 'Hand of Silver' found in *Kulhwch ac Olwen*. On general linguistic grounds, one may suppose the cognate Irish epithet *Aircetlām* < **Argento-* or **Arganto-lāmos* to be the older formation. The reformation **Lq̄ Arzenīth* was sufficiently early to embody an inflected genitive as second element (compare Old Welsh *Cair Teim*, Middle Welsh *Caer Dyf*, 'Fortified Town of the Taf', Cardiff), and the change of *N-* to *L-* was early enough for the English to borrow the name of Nōdons's holy place as *Lidan-eg* ('Lud's Island') in the seventh century.⁵²

The form *Lludd*, older *Lud*, therefore recollects Nōdons as he was specifically tied to the epithet 'Hand of Silver'. It is the cognate Irish character Núadu who has the corresponding epithet *Aircetlām*, but the Irish tradition, unlike the Welsh, preserves the story which spawned it. Núadu was once king of the gods (Tuatha Dé), but was disqualified from the kingship after losing his arm in battle. The divine physician Dían Cécht fashioned him a functional silver arm. After Núadu's disqualification, the Tuatha Dé suffered the oppressive rule of the quintessentially bad king, the half-Fomorian Bres. The myth of **Nōdons Argantolāmos* is thus that of the divine king who undergoes maiming, disqualification from kingship, and oppression of his kingdom. This corresponds very closely to the role of Lludd in *Cyfranc Lludd a Lleuelys*, in which he is king of pre-Roman Britain and the realm is oppressed by three supernatural *gormesoedd*, including the failure of both the food supply and the fecundity of the women.⁵³ To call Manawydan/Androgeus (< Mandubracios) a 'son of Lludd/Llŷr (< **Nōdons Argantolāmos*)' was to identify him as the mortal counterpart of the victim god

⁵¹*Trioedd*, pp. 428–29. For an alternative view of Lludd = Llŷr, see John Carey, 'Nodons in Britain and Ireland', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 40 (1984), 1–22 (pp. 19–20). ⁵²On this Celtic god and his Irish and Welsh reflexes, see *ibid.* On some of the linguistic implications of the epithet, see John T. Koch, 'The Loss of Final Syllables and Loss of Declension in Brittonic', *BBCS*, 30 (1982–83), 231–33. ⁵³On Lludd and Lleuelys = Irish Núadu and Lug, see Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*, p. 66; Georges Dumézil, *Mythe et épopée*, 1 (Paris, 1968), pp. 613–23; Patrick K. Ford, *The Mabinogi* (California, 1977), pp. 111–12; Carey, 'Nodons'.

who ruled a *gormes*-ridden Wasteland and was, therefore, a further amplification of the theme of Mandubracios as Un-King.

XIII. THE UR-MANAWYDAN

We have seen that *Manawydan* can be understood as a prolonged exemplary tale of Unrightful Kingship. The existence of such a tale is neither surprising nor unparalleled. When sacral kingship was a living cultural concept, such tales helped to define that concept. In Irish literature, the Fomorian Bres in *Cath Maige Tuired* is but one further example of a well-delineated Unrightful King. In the Welsh *Gereint*, Earl Niwl's unjust acts led directly to the desolation of his realm and the decayed aspect of its personified Sovereignty (that is, Enid).⁵⁴ Once a character had become established as an exemplary unfit ruler in the context of a Wasteland theme, he might be sustained as such in the tradition indefinitely, long after the political motives for the particular choice had died out. (For a Breton parallel see Note below.) On the other hand, the original casting of a particular ruler in this role would necessarily have had a powerful political motive at the time. We ask then why our tale takes the specific form of an elaborate satire of Mandubracios of the Trinovantes.⁵⁵ To answer we must turn to the political situation of 54 B.C.–A.D. 43.

As already mentioned, Caesar enjoined Cassivellaunos of the Catuvellauni to do no further injury to Mandubracius and the Trinovantes.⁵⁶ Whether Cassivellaunos himself kept this pledge is not certain. His successors did not. From the numismatic evidence it can be seen that the Trinovantes remained independent of the Catuvellauni until about 20 B.C., at which time an Aethedomaros was ruling the former and Tasciovanos was commencing his rule of the latter. Soon thereafter, the issues of Aethedomaros ceased, and Tasciovanos was striking coins at both the Catuvellaunian *oppidum* of Verulamion and the old Trinovantian capital of Camulodūnon. Permanent conquest was not effected at this time, though. Tasciovanos lost control of Camulodūnon, holding on to his home base in Hertfordshire. A new Trinovantian king named Dumnovellaunos appears on

⁵⁴On *Enid* < Old Breton *Uuenet*, tribal goddess of the territory of the Armorican tribe, the Veneti, see Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd*, pp. 347–48; 'Enit, Enide', *BBCS*, 17 (1956–58), 181–82; and 'Celtic Dynastic Themes and the Breton Lays', *EC*, 9 (1960–61), 439–74. ⁵⁵That native tradition has remembered this character at all is sufficiently remarkable. The Trinovantian dynasty had been permanently eclipsed by roughly A.D. 7. Their *oppidum*, Camulodūnon (Colchester), was first expropriated by the Catuvellauni and then in the time of Claudius became the first Roman *colonia*, in which discharged legionaries were settled. Whatever remnants remained of the tribal aristocracy were cruelly reduced in the reprisals for the Boudican uprising of A.D. 60. ⁵⁶Though no ancient source so states directly, it is generally assumed from Caesar's statements on the whereabouts of his territory (BG, v.11) that Cassivellaunos must have been king of the Catuvellauni.

coins minted at Camulodūnon. In A.D. 7 an exiled British king of this name fled to the Romans, as Mandubracios had some sixty years before. It was more or less at this time that the extensive coin series of Cunobelinos son of Tasciovanos commenced at both Verulamion and Camulodūnon. The Trinovantes never recovered; Dumnovellaunos had been their last king. The sons of Cunobelinos ruled Essex when the Romans invaded in earnest in A.D. 43.⁵⁷

It was the Catuvellauni, then, who had a powerful political motive to cast Mandubracios and his successors as unrightful kings, stripped of power by the moral order of the universe rather than the might of tyrants. Rather than uncritically accepting such a starting date for the proto-story, I should also allow that so long as the relevant historical details were remembered and Cunobelinos was revered as a national hero and legendary high king, the casting of his vanquished foes as illegitimate remained well motivated.

NOTE ON A BRETON PARALLEL

An interesting case of a story surviving its political context is the Old Breton tale of the hero and king Uueroc and territorial goddess Uuenet reflected in the Welsh *Gereint* and the Old French *Erec et Enide* and mentioned in n. 54. As noted, it is the old earl Niwl who appears in *Gereint* as the unjust ruler of the Wasteland. Niwl describes his own misdeeds:

Nei uab prawt [sic] a oet im a chyuoeth hwnnw ar meu uy hun a gymereis attaf. A ffan doeth nerth yndaw holi y gyuoeth a oruc. Sef y kynhelleis inheu y gyuoeth racdaw ef. Sef a oruc ynteu ryuelu arnaf i a chynnydu cwbyl o'r a oed y'm llaw.⁵⁸

I had a nephew, my brother's son, and I took his dominion, putting it together with my own. And when he came of age, he demanded his dominion. I withheld his dominion from him. He then made war on me and took charge of all that was in my control.

It has not yet been recognized, so far as I know, that this account is a version of the historical iniquities of Uueroc's predecessor, the previous count of the Vannetais country, Macliav; they are described as follows by the contemporary historian Gregory of Tours in his *Historia Francorum*, v.16, under the events of 577–78:

⁵⁷A good summary of these events based upon recent analysis of the numismatic evidence may be found in Cunliffe, *Iron Age Communities in Britain*, pp. 75–84. According to a recent theory, Cunobelinos was not a Catuvellaunos at all but a Trinovans who conquered his neighbours to the west. The legend TASC. FIL. on some of his Verulamion issues would therefore be bogus propaganda. See W. J. Rodwell, 'Coinage, Oppida and the Rise of Belgic Power in South-Eastern Britain', in *Oppida in Barbarian Europe*, edited by Barry Cunliffe and Trevor Rowley (Oxford, 1976), pp. 181–367. This proposal has not won general acceptance and is hardly the most natural interpretation of the evidence. ⁵⁸*Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, edited by J. Gwenogvryn Evans, new edition (Cardiff, 1973), cols 394–95.

These events happened in Brittany. Macliav and Bodic, two Breton counts, made an oath to each other that whichever outlived the other would defend the dead man's son as his own. Then Bodic died leaving a son named Theoderic, whom Macliav (forgetting his oath) drove from his patrimony and seized his realm. . . . Theoderic, gathering men from Brittany, opposed Macliav and his son Jacob with force and took charge of the part of the territory that his father had held. Uueroc, Macliav's son, on the other hand, took control of the balance.

This is thus another striking example of very old historical details surviving in an essentially unhistorical tale, long after the original political interests had passed.

XIV. THE CORN-EAR STATERS OF CUNOBELINOS

The numismatic record also shows that the persistently anti-Roman Catuvellauni articulated Sacral Kingship in terms which specifically anticipated the themes of *Manawydan*. Cunobelinus issued a famous series of gold coins depicting an ear of corn, usually identified as barley, an unparalleled device in Celtic coinage (see Plate A). Over a hundred distinct types of stater and about thirty quarter-staters have been identified.⁵⁹ The motif is in origin a renaturalization of the laurel wreath of the issues of Tasciovanos, deriving ultimately from the laureate Apollo on the obverse of the staters of Philip of Macedon. The ear always occurs with the mintmark CAMVL, CAMV, or CAM, showing that the series was struck in the newly subjugated capital Camulodūnon, not at the old Catuvellaunian mint at Verulamion.

Writers have suggested that the image is an advertisement for British grain or, more fancifully, beer. In the light of early Celtic literature, we should rather (or, at any rate, also) recognize it as an emblem of Right Kingship as in *Audacht Morainn*, §19: 'It is through the justice of the ruler that there is (?) abundance of every high, tall corn'. The selection of this particular aspect of the manifold blessings of Right Kingship at this particular time and place (representing a total break from the traditional coin types) is hardly coincidental. The Catuvellaunian regime of Camulodūnon had recently come to power by force with, at best, a disputable claim to legitimacy (finally ignoring the last of Caesar's conditions, if these were still felt to be in force). A living counter-claimant, Dumnovellaunos, had survived, it seems, and had fled to powerful potential allies. So, in trying to consolidate his grip and with the threat of Roman intervention perhaps once more in mind, Cunobelinus massively disseminated the image of a Rightful King in the very manifestation in which the party of Mandubracios (and like-minded Romanophiles) were impeachable: they had collaborated with the foreign *gormes* that had laid waste the fields and borne off the corn. In the framework of *Audacht*

⁵⁹See D. F. Allen, 'Cunobelin's Gold', *Britannia*, 6 (1975), 1-19 and plates I-VII.

Morainn, §27, they were unfit for failing to protect the tribe's produce; like Mac Con, they were manifest *anflaithi*.

XV. TASCIO. RIGONI

W. J. Gruffydd recognized that Riannon and Teirnon of the *Mabinogi* reflected an original divine couple *Rīgantonā 'the Divine Queen' and *Tegernonos 'the Divine King'. A closely comparable pairing is represented by Mabon fab Modron of Welsh tradition < Gallo-Brittonic Maponos 'the Divine son' and Mātronā 'the Divine Mother'.⁶⁰ One important difference, not noted by Gruffydd, is that whereas the cult(s) of the latter are widely attested in epigraphic evidence from both Gaul and Britain, there is no contemporary evidence for the worship of *Rīgantonā and *Tegernonos in the pagan period. The *Rīgantonā/*Tegernonos cult must have been far more limited and localized and never enjoyed pan-Celtic, or even pan-Brittonic, currency. Therefore, if we could trace *Rīgantonā/*Tegernonos to some particular community of pagan Celts, we could localize an important stage in the genesis of the ur-*Mabinogi*, or **Maponakijī*, 'matter pertinent to Maponos', according to Hamp's persuasive etymology.⁶¹

It is possible to move back a further step by internal reconstruction. *Rīgantonā and *Tegernonos correspond exactly to one another semantically, but not etymologically. It is likely that *rigan(t)ī was the basic and original Celtic word for 'queen'. On the other hand, as noted above, *rīx*, not **tegernos*, was the primary Celtic (< Indo-European) word for 'king', in the specific sense of the rightful sovereign of the **toutā*. And it is *rīx*, not **tegernos*, which corresponds exactly to the feminine *rigan(t)ī, both based on the verb *regū* 'I stretch out, straighten, rule'.⁶² Though *rhi* has continued to the present as a rare poetic word in Welsh, *rīx* was pushed aside by **tegernos*, **brigantīnos*, and other terms, before the fragmentation of Welsh, Cornish, and Breton. If personal names are a reliable guide, *rīx* must still have been the primary word at the time of the Roman conquest. Therefore, if the cult goes back that far, we posit an earlier *Rīgantonā/Rigonos, whose names corresponded etymologically as well as semantically.

Rigonos is in fact attested, in only one place, on certain coins of Tasciovanos, Cunobelinus' father (see Plate B). It appears there in both the abbreviated form *RICON* and the genitive *RICONI* (with *C* to be read as *G*). The name *Tasciovanos* is never written in full

⁶⁰*Rhiannon*, pp. 98-100, where the etymology of *Riannon* is acknowledged as 'long recognised'. ⁶¹See Eric P. Hamp, 'Mabinogi', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1974-75, pp. 243-49. ⁶²See Binchy, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*, pp. 3-4. The basic Old Celtic verb *regu* is now attested in the Chamalières inscription.

on his own coins (though we do get full genitive patronyms on some of Cunobelinos' Verulamion issues, *TASCIOVANI*, *TASCIIOVANII*, *TASCIOVANTI*, *TASCIOVANTIS*).⁶³ Generally speaking though, kings' names are in the nominative when given in full on Celtic coins; therefore we should read *TASCIO RICONI* as *Tasciovanos Rigonī*, with the first form nominative and the second genitive, 'T. of the Divine King', or perhaps 'son of', 'devotee of', 'chosen of'. In any event, Rigonos implies *Rīgantonā, and a king claiming special affiliation with Rīgonos would be reckoned to be espoused to the sovereignty of his realm in the person Rīgantonā. The Celtic king was of course espoused to a mortal wife, or wives, as well as his divine wife, and it seems from the First Branch that a parallel dualism applied to the goddess. Thus, while Pwyll figured as Rianon's mortal consort, Teirnon < *Tegernonos < Rigonos may once have figured as her divine consort. The relationship of the Rigonos to the mortal *rīx* is not immediately obvious, but Teirnon's role in *Pwyll* suggests a guardian genius to the rightful lineage (perhaps originally the divine ancestor of the tribe), a deity whose invocation by Tasciovanos is understandable.

We see then that, so far as we know, it was the Catuvellauni and only the Catuvellauni who worshipped the god Rigonos, and by implication *Rīgantonā as divine consort of their tribal *rīges*. Of course, for most of the British tribes we have no idea what theonyms were in use for the corresponding figures. However, we are not completely in the dark and can point to at least one alternative usage, which in the end gained wide currency. Binchy has argued convincingly that in pagan times the male rulers of the Brigantes of north Britain had been regarded as consorts of the tribal goddess *Brigantī (= Romano-British Brigantia). These kings were therefore styled *Brigantīnos. Owing to the cultural pre-eminence of north Britain in early post-Roman times, this originally tribe-specific title was to give Welsh *brenhin*, the primary word for 'king'.⁶⁴ A recollection of *Brigantī as sovereignty goddess is perhaps also to be found in *Gofara Braint*, the title of a fragmentary *awdl* to Cadwallon ap

⁶³See R. P. Mack, *The Coinage of Ancient Britain* (London, 1953), pp. 61–68 and 74–78; D. F. Allen, *The Coins of the Ancient Celts*, edited by Daphne Nash (Edinburgh, 1980), pp. 122–23. ⁶⁴*Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*, pp. 12–13. Old Breton *brientin* is of course relevant here and, according to Léon Fleuriot, this has more the sense of 'personne de rang élevé, homme libre, privilégié': *Dictionnaire du vieux breton* (Paris, 1964), p. 89. It would thus relate directly to *brigantī as common noun 'privilege, exemption', rather than its divine personification. However, the antiquity of the more elevated sense has recently been confirmed in the light of BIRIKANTIN, apparently as a royal title, on Continental coin legends; see D. Ellis Evans, 'Continental Celtic and Linguistic Reconstruction', in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Celtic Studies, Galway, 1979*, edited by Gearóid Mac Eoin (Dublin, 1983), pp. 46–47.



Koch, *Plate A* Coin of Cunobelinos
(by permission of the Ashmolean Museum)



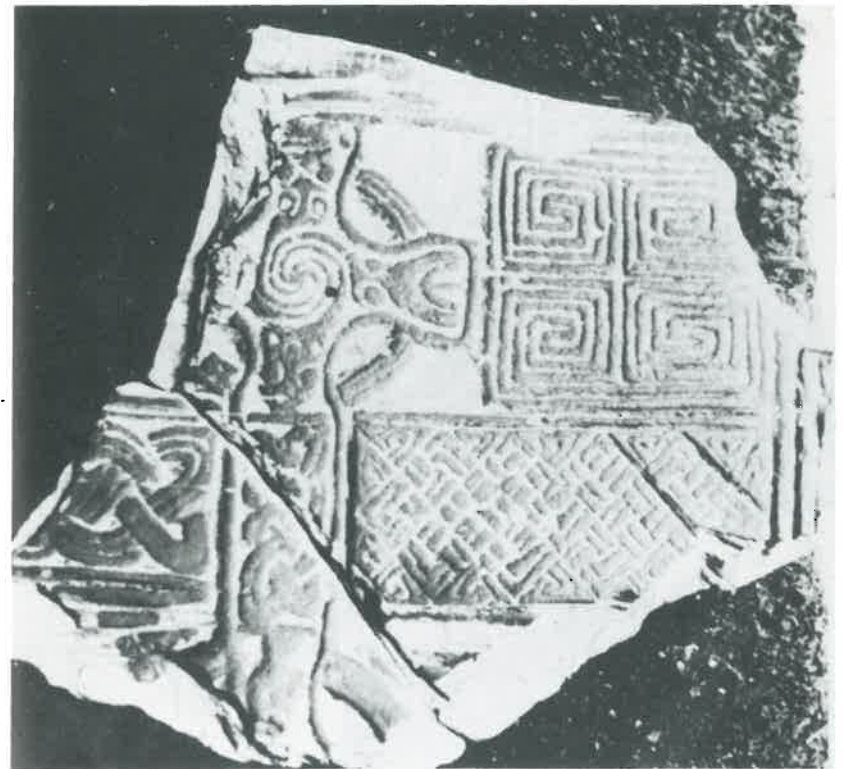
Koch, *Plate B* Coin of Tasciovanos
(by permission of the Ashmolean Museum)



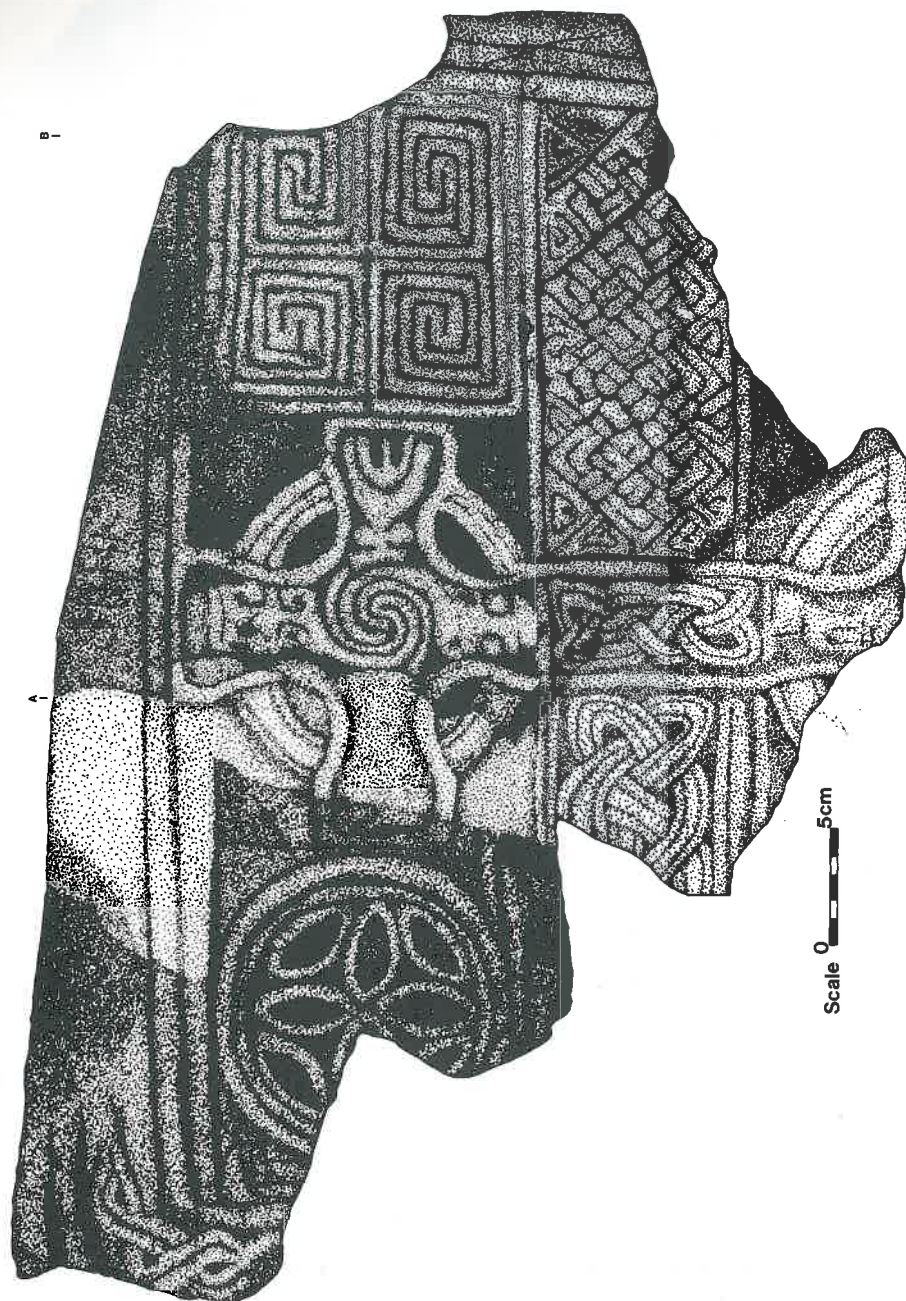
Brennan, *Plate I* Extant Piece of the Slab at Kildare Cathedral



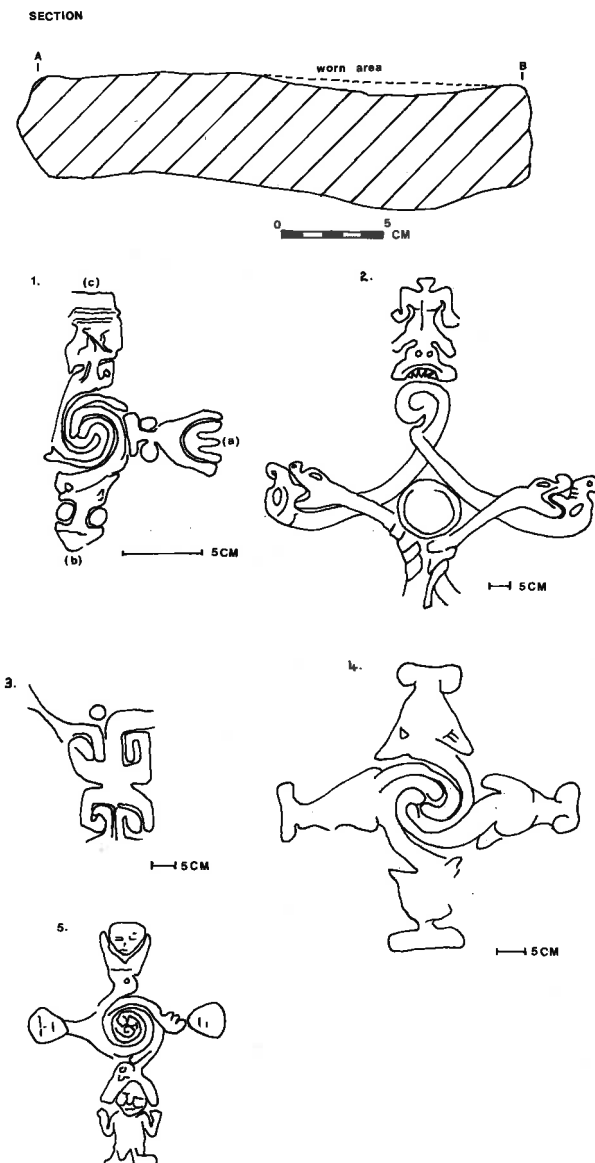
Brennan, *Plate II* Extant Pieces of the Slab at Kildare Cathedral



Brennan, *Plate III* S. P. Ó Ríordáin's Photograph of the Kildare Slab (from *PRIA*, by permission of the Royal Irish Academy)



Brennan, *Fig. 1* Partial Reconstruction of the Kildare Slab



Brennan, *Fig. 2* Section of Slab; Spirals and Dragon Motifs:

1. Kildare; 2. Killamery; 3. St Mullins (right lateral arm);
4. Moone; 5. Gallen (slab A109).



Zimmer, *Plate* The Three-Horned Bull of Auxy
(by permission of the Musée Rolin, Autun)

Cadfan (d. 635), which probably means 'Flooding of the river Brant' (< **Briganti*). The river is in Anglesey, heartland of Cadwallon's kingdom. One must suppose the poem to have been a *marwnad*, which is consistent with the surviving text. The divine consort, embodied by the river bearing her name, is thrown into chaos, grieving for her spouse.⁶⁵

XVI. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RYTYCHEN

Pryderi's tendering of *gwrogaeth* to Caswallawn at Oxford is an anachronism. So far as we know, there was no pre-Roman occupation on the site and the Welsh name is a calque on the English. Accordingly, Saunders Lewis⁶⁶ and T. M. Charles-Edwards⁶⁷ have considered how political circumstances in the day of the redactor(s) might have suggested Oxford as the setting for the episode. Lewis drew attention to Henry II's great council held at Oxford in 1177. Charles-Edwards argued strongly against this date, citing numerous earlier visitations of Anglo-Norman kings to Oxford and endorsing the view that 'the early eleventh century' had been 'Oxford's most glorious period'.⁶⁸

Though events at medieval Oxford might naturally have coloured a contemporary Welshman's thinking concerning the age of the legendary kings, in the present investigation the magical function of Rytychen in the twelfth-century wonder-tale *Lludd a Lleuelyn* is at least equally relevant. There, the king of Britain, Llod (< **Nūð Lōv Argeniti* < **Nōdons Argantolāmos*; see section XII above) suffers from three national *gormesoedd*:

Yr eil ormes oed diaspat a dodit pob nos Kalan Mei vch bob aelwyt yn
Ynys Prydein, a honno a aei trwy galloneu y dynyon ac a'e hofnockaei
yn gymeint ac y collei y gwyr eu lliw ac eu nerth, a'r gwraged eu beich-
ogyeu, a'r meibon a'r merchet a gollynt eu synhwyreu, a'r holl anieueit
a'r gwyd a'r dayar a'r dyfred a edewit yn diffwyth.⁶⁹

The second *gormes* was a scream which arose on each May Eve over every hearth in the Island of Britain and that [scream] used to go through the hearts of the people and it so terrified them that the men used to lose their colour and strength, and the wives miscarried, and the boys and girls lost their senses, and all the animals and the trees and the earth and the waters were left barren.

⁶⁵See R. Geraint Gruffydd, 'Canu Cadwallon ap Cadfan', in *Astudiaethau ar yr Hengerdd cyflwynedig i Syr Idris Foster*, edited by Rachel Bromwich and R. Brinley Jones (Cardiff, 1978), p. 42. ⁶⁶'Manawydan fab Llŷr', *Y Traethodydd*, 124 (1969), pp. 137-42, now also in Saunders Lewis, *Meistri'r Canrifoedd*, edited by R. Geraint Gruffydd (Cardiff, 1973), pp. 19-25. ⁶⁷'The Date of the Four Branches of the Mabinogi', *THSC*, 1970, pp. 269-73. ⁶⁸*ibid.*, p. 273, quoting H. E. Salter, *Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1936), p. 16. ⁶⁹*Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, edited by Roberts, p. 2, lines 35-41.

Llud's brother Lleuyls (*Lleu* < *Lugus*) revealed that the cause of the scream was the battle of the dragon of Britain against a foreign dragon seeking to conquer it. He prescribes a remedy as follows:

'... par uessuraw yr ynys o'e hyt a'e llet, ac yn lle y keffych dy y pw[y]nt perued yn iawn, par gladu y lle hwnnw. Ac o'dyna par doddi kerwyneit o'r med goreu a aller y wneuthur y mywn y clad hwnnw a llenn o pali ar wyneb y gerwyn, ac o'dyna y'th person dy hunan byd yn gwyllaw. Ac yna ti a wely y dreigeu yn ymlad yn rith aruthter anieileit, ac o'r diwed yd ant yn rith dreigeu yn yr awyr, ac yn diwethaf oll, gwedy darffo udunt o engiryawl a girat ymlad vlinaw, wynt a syrthant yn rith deu barchell hyt ar llenn ac a sudant gantunt y llenn ac a'e tynnant hyt yg gwaelawt y gerwyn ac a yvant y med yn gwbyl ac a gyscant gwedy hynny. Ac yna yn y lle plycca ditheu y llenn yn eu kylch wynteu ac yn y lle kadarnhaf a geffych y'th gyfoeth y mywn kist uafen clad wynt a chud y mywn y daear, a hyt tra vont hwy yn y lle kadarn hwnnw, ny daw gormes y Ynys Prydein o le arall'.⁷⁰

'... have the island [Britain] measured, length and width, and in the place you would find the centre point exactly, have that place excavated. And then have put into that hole a vat full of the best mead that can be made and have put a curtain of silk over the mouth of the vat, and then keep watch personally. And then you will see the dragons fighting each other in the form of monstrous creatures, and later they will go into the form of dragons in the air, and last of all, after they have become exhausted of dreadful and fierce fighting, they will fall in the form of two young pigs onto the curtain and will sink with the curtain and they will pull it down to the bottom of the vat, drink all the mead, and sleep afterwards. And then immediately fold the curtain, and in the most secure place you have in your kingdom, bury them in a stone cist and hide [them] in the earth, and so long as they may be in that secure place, no *gormes* will come to the Island of Britain from any other country.'

This story serves as the explanatory preliminary to the account of Vortigern and Ambrosius and the revelation of the dragons in HB, §§ 40–42. The important point for us is that the centre of Britain was found to be at Rytichen. Within the *Cyfranc* itself, then, the properties of this particular place allowed the king to overcome the *gormes* which was causing (among other things) the total failure of the fecundity of his realm. This of course has direct bearing on the Wasteland theme and the *hut ar Dyuet*. Furthermore, Alwyn Rees and Brinley Rees, studying the function of the geographical centre in both Celtic and Indo-European terms, have found the concept to be rich in cultural significance.⁷¹ Caesar (BG, vi.13) tells that the druids of Gaul assembled at a particular date once a year at a sacred location in the territory of the Carnutes (> *Chartres*), which was

⁷⁰ibid., p. 4, lines 94–110. ⁷¹*Celtic Heritage* (London, 1961), pp. 119–72.

reckoned to be the centre of Gaul. It was there that druids issued binding judgments.⁷² An analogous sacred inter-tribal meeting place was the Drunemeton of the Galatians. It is likely that the Cisalpine Mediolanon ('Middle of the Plain', modern Milan) also had this function. It is in Ireland, though, that the Celtic notion of the sacred central precinct survives in fullest detail. Within the scheme of the traditional provinces it is Meath or Mide (< Celtic *Medio*-) which figures as central and in which the national cult centres of the pre-Christian period, including Uisnech (reckoned as geographical mid-point) and Tara, were located. By the later seventh century, the ruling kindred of Tara, the Uí Néill, came to equate its kingship with that of Ireland, and Tara was already one of the leading overlordships in the time of Níall of the Nine Hostages, the early fifth century.⁷³ In pagan times, it had been the site of the *Feis Temro*, a fertility rite whereby a recently elected king was ritually inaugurated and wed to the country. It is now generally thought that the kingship of Tara had at first a largely honorific and religious prestige, but was then moulded into a pre-eminent political office by the Uí Néill.⁷⁴

Whatever actual ancient sanctuary may be recollected, the wonder-tale Rytichen of *Manawydan* and the *Cyfranc* approximates to a British Tara or Uisnech, the island's focal point, through whose supernatural properties the king ensured the fecundity of the realm. The inauguration of an over-king—reminiscent of that of the early Uí Néill—lies behind Pryderi's submission to Caswallawn. Here, we may also perhaps faintly recognize the ideological significance of the central land-locked location of the Catuvellauni, that the militantly nationalistic and most powerful tribe contained in their territory the ritual centre of Britain. It is by no means safe to assume that in pre-Roman times the Britons reckoned the sacred mid-point to lie at or near latter-day Oxford. But, for what it is worth, the distribution of the coins of Tasciovanos and Cunobelinus does show the Oxford area to have fallen inside the territory of the Catuvellauni or, at any rate, well within their sphere of influence. The only other possible tribal territory to which Oxford might be assigned would be that of Dobunni of the Cotswolds, one part of whom Cassius Dio (LX.20.1–2, calling them Βοδούννοι) says was ruled by the κατοικηλανοί (*sic*).

XVII. THOUGHTS ON THE UR-MABINOGI

In reaching conclusions it is necessary to distinguish degrees of certainty and likelihood. It is certain that a relationship exists

⁷²It is noteworthy that it is in this same passage that Caesar makes the statement that the Gauls believed that the druids' doctrine (*disciplina*) originated in Britain and that they travelled to Britain for advanced study. ⁷³See Binchy, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*, pp. 33–36. ⁷⁴See also Mac Cana, *Celtic Mythology*, p. 117.

between the story of Manawydan and that of Mandubracius and Cassivellaunos as revealed through the Latin histories. This relationship exists at a deep rather than a superficial level. In fact, on the level of form and genre *Manawydan* is quite unlike the histories, and it has been for this very reason that the relationship has gone unnoticed.

When we ask why this relationship exists, we soon progress to the realm of relatively more and less likely hypotheses. In the foregoing, we have weighed three distinct possibilities (subtle variations and combinations of each could be multiplied): (1) the Iron Age understructure of *Manawydan* is, like the Bedan account, ultimately derived wholly from Orosius; (2) direct, or substantial indirect, influence from BG upon the ur-*Mabinogi* has also taken place; (3) the ur-*Mabinogi* was a British cycle of gods and pre-Roman heroes to which the historical details examined above were integral.

The content of Orosius provides an inadequate basis for the historical correspondences of *Manawydan*. Orosius tells us nothing of Cassivellaunos in Kent, the disappearance of the flocks and people, the devastation of the corn, or the captive Lugotorix. And, Orosius' *Andragius* for the name of the Trinovantian prince could hardly have suggested an equation with *Manawydan*. We must go back to Caesar to find these episodes and the name *Mandubracius* son of 'Imannuetius'. I will leave it to experts on the medieval transmission of classical texts to decide how startling or how trivial a conclusion it would be to suppose pre-Norman Welsh *literati* to have had detailed knowledge of the contents of BG.

In other ways the hypothesis of access to BG also falls short. It would be astonishing for any such derivative to omit the Romans and Caesar altogether. On the other hand, if the tale issued from vernacular saga, then the generations-long competing claims of the native dynasts might naturally have seized the spotlight from the transient Roman general. This raises the broader issue of whether it is reasonable to suppose that a wonder-tale like *Manawydan* could arise from a history like Caesar's. It would be rash flatly to state no, but if it were so, then the mythopoeic transformation which has culminated in *Manawydan* would be of a wholly greater order of magnitude than that yielding *Brut y Brenhinedd*; for the latter is still recognizably history. On the other hand, the hypothetical vernacular saga would belong to a stage before the distinction of story and history had arisen in British tradition,⁷⁵ and *Manawydan* could, therefore, directly continue its source in both content and form. For BG to be the primary source would leave it as a striking coincidence

⁷⁵cf. the thoughts of Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Some Functions of Origin Stories in Early Medieval Wales', in *History and Heroic Tale*, edited by Tore Nyberg and others (Odense, 1985), pp. 97-131.

that gods (*Teirnon* < *Rīgonos*) and royal iconography (corn ears (*tywys*)) peculiar to the Catuvellaunian dynasts have been drawn into the story of the Catuvellaunian dynast Cassivellaunos. Caesar, of course, tells his readers nothing of Catuvellaunian deities or Cunobelinos' emblems. Native saga, on the other hand, would be expected to weave precisely such mythological and ideological details into the narrative. So it seems a somewhat stronger hypothesis that these elements had belonged to the fabric of an original story conceived in the south-east, than that they were fortuitously reunited in early medieval Wales. In a more general way, it may also be said that such details as the inauguration of the high king in the sacred centre of the island and the role of the sovereignty goddess are integral to primeval Celtic ideology, yet owe nothing to Caesar and would probably not have been understood well enough by the redactor to have been manipulated meaningfully by him. Here, I must confess a general sympathy with the old and not universally accepted notion that, in the age of the redaction, pagan Celtic myth and ideology were largely a shambles of poorly understood relics. Again, the presence of such features in a saga of the Catuvellaunian dynasts would be expected. As stated at the outset, the genealogies and the *Gododdin* independently prove that a tradition of this dynasty did exist and did survive in early Wales, so the availability of a Catuvellaunian source at the right time and place is less hypothetical than the availability of BG. The pre-eminence of this tribe in the late Iron Age would naturally have spread their dynastic lore beyond the tribal boundaries. The desperate struggle against the Romans which Caratācos son of Cunobelinos carried to Wales and the north is of course of paramount importance here.

It is possible, even likely, that Latin histories have reinforced the native tradition at one or more stages. The interplay of the two provides a workable explanation for how *Dorobellum* entered the Cambricized strain of histories. But, in my considered view, the essence of the *Mabinogi* is Celtic, in the deep structure of its origins as well as on the veneer.⁷⁶ The apparent resemblance to Caesar's *Commentaries* could, therefore, have no textual basis whatsoever,

⁷⁶Gruffydd (*Rhiannon*, pp. 72-75) thought that the Eustace legend, or 'The Man Tried by Fate', had played a decisive role in the formation of *Manawydan*'s story. The two most closely related 'versions of Eustace' are the twelfth-century Old French *Guillaume d'Angleterre* and the fourteenth-century Middle English *Sir Ysambrace*. Gruffydd took these as evidence for Anglo-Norman influence on *Manawydan*. However, the facts that these two are later than the *Mabinogi* and that many scholars attribute *Guillaume* to Chrétien de Troyes leave open the possibility that Gruffydd's argument could be stood on its head: that is, that these two could be counted as part of the Celtic-derived 'Matter of Britain'. The source of the name of the Job-like *Ysambrace* is also of relevance.

the common source being, rather, the very events of 54 B.C. The extent to which one finds such a conclusion worth consideration will perforce hinge upon the scope allowed to Celtic oral tradition.