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The date, origin, and authorship of 'The Mabinogion' in the light of *Ymborth yr enaid*

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IN this paper I propose to look anew at the long-standing, vexed, and seemingly insoluble questions of the date, authorship, and origin of the eight tales¹ – which have come to be known as 'The Mabinogion' – by applying to them a piece of evidence not previously noticed.² The piece of evidence in question is the remarkable and unique mystical prose tract *Ymborth yr enaid* ('The Soul's Food'),³ a work not yet as well known, appreciated, or understood as it should be but which, in my opinion, any student of the 'The Mabinogion' who is interested in these questions should treat with the closest attention.

Ymborth yr enaid was for long considered a problematic text when compared with other mediaeval Welsh religious prose texts. Divided into three parts, each describing progressive stages of the spiritual life, it displays an unusual degree of variety in both content and style. In order to appreciate this, one need only read Part I with its functional definitions of the seven deadly sins and their branches and then the highly rhetorical description (in Part III) of a blazing mystical vision of the boy Jesus when twelve years old. Or one may observe where prose gives way to substantial passages of highly skilled verse. Add to this the fact that, unlike other mediaeval Welsh religious prose texts generally, there is no known Latin or foreign vernacular original for *Ymborth yr enaid*. Consequently, the work has come to be regarded as either an adaptation of various sources or a translation of a lost

¹ Viz *Owain / Iarlles y ffynnon*, 'Owain' / 'The Lady of the Fountain', *Peredur fab Efrog*, 'Peredur son of Efrog', *Geraint fab Erbin*, 'Geraint son of Erbin' (*Y Tair Rhامant*, 'The Three Romances', as they are frequently called); *Pwyll pendefig Dyfed*, 'Pwyll prince of Dyfed', *Branwen ferch Llŷr*, 'Branwen daughter of Llŷr', *Manawydan fab Llŷr*, 'Manawydan son of Llŷr', and *Math fab Mathonwy*, 'Math son of Mathonwy' which together constitute *Pedair Cainc y Mabinogi*, 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi'; *Culhwch ac Olwen*, 'Culhwch and Olwen', *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*, 'The Dream of Maxen Wledig', *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, 'The Story of Lludd and Llefelys', and *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, 'The Dream of Rhonabwy'.

² This is a revised and expanded version of my article 'Ymborth yr enaid a'r chwedlau brodorol', *Llên Cymru* 23 (2000) 1–20. I wish to thank Professor Joseph F. Nagy for his kind and valuable comments on the English version.

³ *Ymborth yr enaid*, ed. R. Iestyn Daniel (Cardiff 1995). I hope one day to publish an English version of this edition. For an introduction, see R. Iestyn Daniel, *A Medieval Welsh Mystical Treatise* (Aberystwyth 1997).

exemplar or an original composition. But whichever view was held, the inconclusiveness of the case, combined with an already existing tendency to marginalise mediaeval Welsh religious prose, resulted in *Ymborth yr enaid* receiving little attention.

My research on *Ymborth yr enaid*, begun in 1973, led me in a few years to the conclusions that the work, when carefully read, possessed a strong internal unity and cohesion throughout; that comparison of Parts I and II and the final section of Part III with works by the twelfth-century theologian Hugh of Saint-Victor and his school suggested that the author had used these as a stimulus and supplement to his own ideas (rather than as a basis); that most of Part III, the most important and by far the longest part of the work, was the author's account of his own mystical experiences and that his vision of the boy Jesus, the very heart of the treatise, was, because of the essentially native character of the rhetoric employed, unlikely to be a translation. In other words, *Ymborth yr enaid* was a rare instance of an 'original' composition. (The closest parallel to it in this respect is the bardic grammar attributed to Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug.) I also reached the following conclusions concerning its authorship, date, and origin: (1) that it was composed around the middle of the thirteenth century; (2) that the author was a Dominican friar possibly identifiable with a man of that period known as Cnepyn Gwerthrynion, mentioned by the poet Gwilym Ddu o Arfon in the fourteenth century as a distinguished *gogynfardd* whose style was likened to Latin,⁴ and later by users of the bardic grammars as an authority on grammar; (3) that, having apparently been written primarily with a Welsh-speaking readership in mind, it is more likely than not to have been composed at one of the Dominican friaries of *pura Wallia*, namely Bangor or Rhuddlan friary, and that the former seemed the more attractive possibility.

However, it also became apparent to me that the significance of *Ymborth yr enaid* went far beyond itself and mediaeval Welsh religious prose, rather as the tip of an iceberg hints at the larger mass below the surface. For the section describing the vision of the twelve-year-old Jesus teaching in the temple, known as *Pryd y Mab* ('The Beauty of the Son'),⁵ showed striking similarities in places to passages in some of the so-called native tales. Moreover, the tales too showed certain specific similarities to each other which might not be attributable to accident or a common background. I therefore began to ask myself some very novel questions:

⁴ See *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur, Gwilym Ddu o Arfon, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr ac Iorwerth Beli*, edd. N.G. Costigan (Bosco) *et al.* (Aberystwyth 1995), p. 61 (8.26): *Oedd gerdd esgud, lud, Ladin gyfiawn*, '[his] poetry was swift, close-woven, measured like Latin'.

⁵ On the origin of the title *Pryd y mab*, see *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. xxxix.

could the tales be as late as the thirteenth century, could some of them have been composed in the Bangor-district, could there even be a link between their authorship and that of *Ymborth yr enaid*?

These questions may sound egregious, if not downright preposterous, to generations brought up (as I was myself) on a view of the tales as the products of different authors and different periods, all predating the twelfth century, and different places. It was nonetheless gratifying to notice subsequently a number of converging lines of thought, based on quite different premises, in the writings of other scholars, both past and present, on the subject.

What follows is the result of my attempts to work out the significance and implications of the observations above. I make no claim to finality, for more remains to be done, but nonetheless hope that the results will go some way towards the solution of a problem which might not be as insoluble as it seems.

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN *YMBORTH YR ENAID* AND THE NATIVE TALES

What made me realise the relevance of *Ymborth yr enaid* to the native tales initially was, as I have said, the resemblance between the *Pryd y Mab* section and some of the native tales; before proceeding further, I must now attempt to qualify this statement.

In *Pryd y Mab* there is employed the same descriptive technique as in parts of those tales – especially *Y Tair Rhamant* ('The Three Romances') and *Breuddwyd Maxen* ('The Dream of Maxen') – where leading personalities and luxurious material objects are described.⁶ The following passages may serve as examples.⁷

A llinnynn o eurllin o'r ysgwyd y gilyd idaw, a maen karbwnkulus ar bop ysgwyd yn kynnal deupenn y llynynn, a restyr o eur kyfulet a llaw yn gogylch yr ysgin yn gyfulawn o rudemneu a gwynnemnev yn rwymedigyon yn yr eur. Ac ymdanaw yr oed wregys o gywreineith wedy ry wehu o van adafed eur yn gyfulawn o werthuawrussyon emnev, a maen karbwnkulus llewylathyr yn waec arnaw; a gwaell o rudeur yn kayu arnei, a maen mererit disgleirwynn yn benn ar y gwregys.

'And there was a chord of golden flax from one shoulder to the other, and a carbuncle stone on each shoulder supporting both ends of the chord. And a border of gold as wide as a hand encircling the cloak and full of red gems and white gems inset in the gold. And around Him there was a skilfully wrought girdle woven from fine threads of gold and full of precious gems, and with a brilliantly shining carbuncle stone for a clasp; and a pin of reddish gold to fasten it, and a brilliantly white pearl stone at the end of the girdle.'

⁶ These have been exhaustively dealt with by Sioned Davies, *Crefft y Cyfarwydd* (Cardiff 1995), pp. 144–58.

⁷ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 21.149–57.

Compare this with the description in *Owein* of the two servants whom Cynon met by the fort at the beginning of his wanderings.⁸

... ac nachaf deu was pengrych melyn, a ractal eur am pen pob vn onadunt, a ffeis o bali melyn am bop vn onadunt, a dwy wintas o gordwal newyd am traet pob vn, a gwaegau eur ar vynygleu eu traet yn eu kau; a bwa o ascwrn eliffant yn llaw pob vn onadunt, a llinyneu o ieu hyd arnadunt, a saetheu ac eu peleidyf o askwrn morwil gwedy eu haskellu ac adaned paun, a ffenheu eur ar y peleidyf; a chylllell a llafneu eureit udunt ac eu carneu o askwrn moruil ym pob vn o'r deu not, ac hwynteu yn saethu eu kyllyll.

'And lo, two curly-yellow-headed youths, with a frontlet of gold about the head of each of them, and a tunic of yellow brocaded silk on each of them, and two buskins of new cordwain on the feet of each, and buckles of gold on their insteps fastening them; and a bow of ivory in the hand of each of them, and strings of deer sinews thereto, and arrows with their shafts of walrus-ivory, winged with peacocks' feathers, and heads of gold on the shafts; and gold-bladed knives, and their hilts with walrus-ivory in each of the two bosses, and they shooting at their knives.'

Or take the description of Elen in *Breuddwyd Maxen*.⁹

A morôyn a welei yn eisted rac y vronn, y myôyn kadeir o rudeur. Mwy noc yd oed haôd disgwyl ar yr heul pan vei teckaf, nyt oed haôd disgôyl arnei hi rac y thecket. Crysseu o sidan gôynn a oed am y uorôyn, a chaeu o rudeur rac y bronn, a sôrcot o pali eureit ym danei, a ractal o rudeur am y phenn, a rudem a gem yn y ractal, a mein mererit pob eilwers, ac amherodron vein; a gwregis o rudeur ym danei, ac yn teckaf golôc o dyn o edrych arnei.

'And he saw a maiden sitting before him in a chair of red gold. No more than it would be easy to look on the sun when it is brightest, no easier would it be than that to look on her by reason of her excelling beauty. Vests of white silk were on the maiden, with clasps of red gold at the breast; and a surcoat of gold brocaded silk on her, and a mantle like to it, and a brooch of red gold holding it about her; and a frontlet of red gold on her head, with rubies and gems on the frontlet, and pearls alternately, and imperial stones; and a girdle of red gold around her; and the fairest sight to see of mortal kind.'

The vocabulary used is also very similar. Note the following correspondences between *Ymborth yr enaid* (in the above or in the rest of the description) and the excerpts above. Corresponding with the passage from *Owein* there is: *a gwallt penngrychlathyr pefyrlowyf eureit velynlliw arnau*,¹⁰ *ysgin o bali*,¹¹ *Ac esgittyeu o'r kordwan purdu ... A gwaegau o eur yn cayu ar y mynygleu*,¹² *kadeir ... askwrn eliffant*,¹³ *llinnynn o*

⁸ *Owein or Chwedyl Iarles y Ffynnaun*, ed. R.L. Thomson (Dublin 1968), p. 2.41–3.50; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Gwyn Jones & T. Jones (3rd edn, London 1975), p. 156.

⁹ *Breuddwyd Maxen*, ed. Ifor Williams (2nd edn, Bangor 1920), pp. 3.23–4.5; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 81.

¹⁰ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 17.3–4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.113.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 20.107–9.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.165–6.

eurllin,¹⁴ *llafynnev o eur*.¹⁵ And corresponding with the passage from *Breuddwyd Maxen* there are: *heul hafdyd pann vei egluraf*,¹⁶ *A chrys ... o'r bisswn meinwyrn amdanaw*,¹⁷ *gwaell o rudeur*,¹⁸ *ysgin o bali*,¹⁹ *rudemneu a gwynnemmeu*,²⁰ *maen mererit*,²¹ *amerodryon mein*,²² *oed wregys o gywreiniweith*.²³

Nor is this the only kind of correspondence to occur between *Pryd y Mab* and the tales, for extensive use was made in the passage of that cumulative kind of rhetoric, full of compound words, known as *araith*. Here is a list of the examples.²⁴

Mab melynnywynn adueindwf; Penn gogyngrwnn gwedeid; gwallt penngrychlathyr pefyrlowyf eureit velynlliw; ardyrchafat kroket wedeidlwyf; yn bennlyfynlwyf gribedilowyf; gwynndal gwastatlyfyn changlathyr mereridliw; dwy burloywduon hirueinon aeleu; (o) vein sidan gloywdu; arllwybyr pefyrganneit disgleirder; maen mererit llathreit; deu rudellyon lygeit pwmpaied dremwalcheid; man dagreu karueidserch; a'e gwbyl annwylserch garyat; byrgrwnn desdluslwyf enev a thrwyn kyfladdrum vnyawnllun; deu glaerwynnyon gannheibryt wyneb kyngrynnyon; heul ysplennyd nefawl; deu berffeithloyw gochyon rudyu troelleid ffuonliw; safwyrddan sychyon yskyryon pedryholl ffynnidwyd; byrgrwnn desdluslwyf eneu; manwynnyon danned ymbellyon; tafawt arafber huolder ymadrawd; byrgrwnn eneu gwedeid; elgeth gronn gaboleit wastatlyfyn; mynwyl kylchawcwyn hirlwyf; hirwynnyon wedeidlun vreisgyon vreichu vrth kyngrynnyon ysgwydeu arwreidweith; dwylaw hirwynnyon kanneitlathyr; byrryon ewined ballassar kwrteisson ar hirveinon vyssed anueidrawl disgleirloyw lewydcher; ardyrchafat dwyvronn vilwryeid a chorff lleweid arderchawc, ac am y arch yn aduein vonedigeidlun; braswynnyon vordwydyd kadyrweith; hirwynnyon vnyawnllun esgeireu kyfuladdlun; tyneryon hirwynnyon traet a chyngrynnyon vyssed arnunt gwynndesdlusson; yr holl yspydawl gnawt desdluslathyr, kymeredic o'r Yspryd Glan a gwynnydic anedic o Veir Wry; (o) dragwydawl garyat annwylserch; ystinos teneu clærwynn; maen gwerthuawr clærwynn; maen karbwinkulus llewydchylathyr; maen mererit disgleirwynn; amerodryon mein gwerthuawrusyon; askwrn eliffant disgleirlathyr gannheitrwyd; (o) wiwyon lafynnev rudgoetheur; amherodryon mein gwerthuawr; maen carbwinkulus llewydchloyw; arafber barabyl digrifwch; gorwagyon betheu trangedigyon.

This device is employed here and there in the tales, mainly in *Peredur* and *Geraint*, and in the latter in particular. Here is a slightly abbreviated reproduction of Melville Richards's list, given in his edition of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* ('The Dream of

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21.149.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.110.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18.46.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.105–6.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.156.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 20.113.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 21.152.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.21.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 21.164.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.153–4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 17–22.

Rhonabwy'), of the examples of *araith* in *Geraint*. The vocabulary is different because of the nature of the objects described, but the technique is basically the same.²⁵

ebawluarch helyclei athrugar; mackwy gwyneu ieuanc esgeirnoeth teyrneid, uchelualch drybelitffraeth gyssonuyr; march ucheldew ffroenuoll maswehyn kdarndrut; march canwelw teledi; pedestric wastatualch; catuarch mawr tomlyt; arueu trwm gloyw; arueu trwm rytlyt dilew estronawl; dyrnawt tostlym creulawndrut; marchawc mawr gochrwm penn issel goathrist; arueu briwedic amdawl; cymhellyat cadarndut gwrawl milwryeid; kennadeu doethprud dyscediclawm ymadrawdlym; arueu trwm estronawl gloyw; marchawc pendwm goathrist ... llibin; rwyddir arucheldec gwastatwys erdrym; marchawc awyddrut kadarnffyrif y ar gatueirch cadarndew eskyrnbraf maswehynn ffroenuolldrut; marchawc llibindrwm goathrist; glaschwerthin digius engiriawlchwerw; cwmp agheuawlchwerw clwyfedicdost briwedicffyrif; march mawr uchel ymdeithwastat hywedualch; kalettir erdrym aruchel dremhynuawr; catuarch kdarndew kerdetrut llydangarn bronehang; dyrnodeu kyflymdic tostdrut kadarnchwerw; llidiawcdrut gyflymwyhychy greulawnffyrif; dyrnawt agheuawldost gwenwyniclym engiriawlchwerw; cerdet agkyghorus truan; dyrnawt tostlym athrugar angerdawldrut; diaspat athrugar aruchel didaweldost; diaspat uawr arucheldost; catuarch ffroenuolldrut awyduawr esgyrnbraff; dyrnodeu caletchwerw kyflymdrut.

These points are sufficient, I think, to show that there is a distinct resemblance between the language and style of *Pryd y Mab* and that of parts of the tales, however one chooses to explain it. It is this which is the ultimate basis and justification for what follows.

THE DATE OF THE TALES

Beginning with the question of the date of the tales, could it be that, like *Ymborth yr enaid*, they are no earlier than the thirteenth century?²⁶ It may very reasonably be replied that the similarity in style is due either to a type of diction common to generations of Welsh story-tellers and admitting of little change, or to deliberate imitation of the tales on the part of the author of *Ymborth yr enaid*. The possibility that the tales could belong to a period later than the end of the twelfth century nonetheless led me to ask whether there might be any indications elsewhere which would lend support to it.²⁷

It is striking that the dates posited for the tales are usually *earlier* than the

²⁵ *Brendwyt Ronabwy*, ed. Melville Richards (Cardiff 1948), p. xxii.

²⁶ It should be remembered that *Pryd y mab* cannot be divorced from the rest of the treatise, as some scholars have tried to do, as though it belonged to an earlier period: see I. Daniel, 'Ymborth yr enaid – clytwaith, cyfieithiad neu waith gwreiddiol?', *Llên Cymru* 17 (1992/3) 19–25; *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, pp. xl–xli.

²⁷ I take it that the tales, in the form in which we have them, were composed in writing, and I shall not be concerned with any hypothetical earlier forms, oral or otherwise.

thirteenth century. The oldest extant manuscript of some of them, namely Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS. Peniarth 6, part iii, is no older than the second half of the thirteenth century;²⁸ and although there is no necessary identity between the age of a manuscript and of its content, yet the language and style of a majority of the tales are similar to those of the translations, made no earlier than that century, of foreign tales.²⁹ Nonetheless, there has been a tendency to exaggerate the difference between the two kinds of tales and to give far less attention to the translations; and although it is generally recognised that the native tales are works composed in writing, there has also been a tendency to doubt the texts or to tinker with them, or even to take refuge in a supposed pre-written, oral background, if they show any signs of influences later than the twelfth century. Attempts to date the tales in the thirteenth century have not, as a rule, proved popular.

In spite of all the learned variety of opinion concerning the dates of the tales, it is possible, I think, to establish a *terminus post quem* for their composition in the form known to us by appealing to some points which have not so far received the attention which they deserve.

To begin with, it should be noted that traces of the principal work of Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae*, which appeared in 1136 × 1138, can be seen in every one of them (including *Culhwch ac Olwen*, generally considered to be the earliest).³⁰ This is a fact, and yet there has been a tendency to ignore or minimise it on the supposition that it is attributable chiefly to native sources common to both Geoffrey and the tales.

Next it should be noted that one of the tales is, in fact, of thirteenth century date. I refer to *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* ('The Story of Lludd and Llefelys'). This tale first occurs in the earliest Welsh translation of Geoffrey's *Historia*, made sometime during the first half of the thirteenth century, in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS. Llanstephan 1 (written in the mid-thirteenth century),³¹ and is an adaptation by the translator of an oral tale for incorporation in his translation.³² One might have expected the implications of this for the dating of the other tales

²⁸ Daniel Huws, *Mediaeval Welsh Manuscripts* (Cardiff 2000), p. 58.

²⁹ See, for example, *Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn*, ed. Morgan Watkin (Cardiff 1958), p. xcix: 'The translation [of *Ystorya Bown*] is characterised by the same elegance of style as the *Mabinogion* and the *Romances* and one frequently senses in it the same thrilling delight in verbal artistry...'. Strikingly similar too, in my opinion, are the short, swift sentences which occur frequently in the *Dingestow Brut* and those in 'The Four Branches'.

³⁰ See *Culhwch ac Olwen*, edd. Rachel Bromwich & D. S. Evans (Cardiff 1997), pp. lxxx–lxxxi.

³¹ Huws, *Mediaeval Welsh Manuscripts*, p. 58.

³² *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, ed. Brynley F. Roberts (Dublin 1975), pp. xxvii–xxviii.

to have been seized on long ago. However, there has been a universal tendency to regard *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* as a second-rate composition when compared with the other tales, with the result that it has not been awarded equal importance for chronological purposes. Brynley Roberts says of the author:³³

But he himself, we can assume, was not one of the *cyfarwyddiaid* (more probably he was an ecclesiastic with a learned Latin background), and however familiar he may have been with the oral style of the story-tellers, he was writing in what may be termed normal 'translator's' style. ... *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* does not have the descriptive quality or the attention to detail which heightens the effect of wonder or the natural realism which is a feature of other native tales. It is written in a flat, neutral style where the direct yet suggestive conciseness of the other tales has given way to baldness and factual expression. There is here an almost complete lack of dialogue, no attention to character, and no attempt to involve the reader in the action or to dwell upon the wonder of the three *gormesoedd*.

The reason, however, for the difference between *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* and the other tales is that the author deliberately tailored it to suit the general style of his translation of the *Brut*; I suggest that, far from being an amateur story-teller of middling competence, he was, rather, a highly skilled one with an acute sense of stylistic difference, his main concern being to create a seamless garment rather than a purple patch. If that is correct, *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* deserves to be treated on the same footing as the other tales as regards date, rather than to be passed by in silence, and we are justified in appealing to it when asking whether some of the other tales might not equally belong to the same period.

Another feature (again more often than not disregarded) which seems to point towards the thirteenth century is that we find in the tales some phrases which occur far more frequently in translations from Latin and French, not one of which is earlier than the thirteenth century. Consider first the phrase *dywawt val hyn* ('he/she spoke as follows'). According to Sioned Davies, there are two instances of it in *Pwyll*, one in *Owain*, one in *Peredur*, two in the version of *Breuddwyd Maxen* in MS. Peniarth 16, and one in *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, but it occurs far more frequently in the translations.³⁴ Secondly, the phrase *a ddywedassom (ni) uchod* ('whom we mentioned above'). There are three instances of this known to me, one in *Branwen*,³⁵ one in *Manawydan*,³⁶ and one in *Geraint*,³⁷ but it occurs

³³ *Ibid.*, p. xxviii.

³⁴ Davies, *Creff*, p. 227.

³⁵ *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi allan o Lyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, ed. Ifor Williams (2nd edn, Cardiff 1951), p. 31.20–1, '...Efnysen y gwr anagneuedus a dywedassam uchot'; cf. also p. 39.8, 'Bendigeiduran, a'r yniuer a dywedysam ni ...'.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.1, 'Guedy daruot y'r seithwyr a dywedysam ni uchot ...'.

³⁷ *Ystoria Gereint uab Erbin*, ed. Robert L. Thomson (Dublin 1997), p. 1.17–18, 'Ac ny anei [Gwalchmai] yn yr un o'r eglwyseu mwy noc a dywedassam ni uchod.'

frequently, in the preterite impersonal forms of the verb, in the religious and secular translations or in works, such as the bardic grammars, which were deeply influenced by ecclesiastical learning. As Saunders Lewis observes, 'In order to understand *uchot* we must convert it to its Latin original, hence Caesar's phrase *uti supra demonstravimus*'.³⁸ Finally, consider the opening sentence of *Branwen: Bendigeiduran uab Llŷr, a oed urenbin coronawc ar yr ynys hon, ac ardyrchawc o goron Lundein*³⁹ ('Bendigeidfran son of Llŷr was [the] crowned king over this island'). This is the only example of the phrase *ardderchawc o* in an original work, but it occurs frequently in the translations of Geoffrey's *Historia* (known as *Brut y brenhinedd*), *Delw y byd* in 'The Red Book of Hergest', *Chwedlau Odo*, and *Rhamant Otuel*. In the works based on Latin originals it translates past participles passive such as *decoratus*, *ornatus*, *insignitus*, *inchytus* and the meaning is 'invested with', 'famed for', 'adorned with'. As John Rhŷs stated over a century ago, when observing the unusualness of the phrase, it had been translated from 'some such a phrase as *insignitus diademat*, common enough, for example, in Geoffrey's *Latinity*...'.⁴⁰ The importance of phrases such as these, few as they are, is that they are less likely to have found their way from the tales into translations than from translations into the tales. To quote Rhŷs again, 'In fact we suspect that the Mabinogion had not assumed the form in which we have them till Geoffrey's time',⁴¹ except that he did not realise that it was not until after Geoffrey's time that the *Historia* was translated. It is a sign of obvious bias also to attribute 'unusual' phrases of this kind to the interference of a scribe, as though they were not an organic part of the content. Such phrases also soon lost their unusualness.⁴²

All in all, there is, I think, sufficient justification for at least suggesting a date no earlier than 1200 as a *terminus post quem* for the time of composition of most of the native tales. The only exception is *Culhwch ac Olwen* which does not, as far as I am aware, show any signs of the influence of the thirteenth-century translations. This could mean that it is either earlier than 1200 or, like the other tales, later but, for some reason, unaffected by the translations. There are also problems concerning authorship and origin of *Culhwch ac Olwen* which, as will be seen later, make it more intractable for the present purpose than the other tales.

If the argument that most or all of the tales might be no earlier than the

³⁸ S. Lewis, 'Manawydan fab Llŷr', *Y Traethodydd* 124 (1969), 137–42, at p. 137.

³⁹ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 29.1–3.

⁴⁰ John Rhŷs & D. Brynmor-Jones, *The Welsh People* (London 1900; 4th edn, 1923), p. 39, n. 1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² J. E. C. Williams, 'Rhyddiaith grefyddol Cymraeg Canol (1)', in *Y Traddodiad Rhyddiaith*, ed. Geraint Bowen (Llandysul 1974), pp. 312–60, at p. 357.

thirteenth century is correct,⁴³ then it is possible to expand a little on this. I have argued elsewhere that the translations of religious and secular texts which occur in the manuscripts of the thirteenth century are mainly the work of the Black Friars (or Dominicans) and that they began their work sometime in the second quarter of that century.⁴⁴ Now if there is, as I think, a link between the translations and the tales, then *ca* 1225 may be suggested as a *terminus post quem* for the composition of most or all of the tales.

What of the *terminus ante quem*? The earliest text of *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* occurs in MS. Llanstephan 1, datable to the middle of the thirteenth century.⁴⁵ A fragment of *Geraint* and two fragments of 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi' occur in MS. Peniarth 6, part iii, datable to the second half of the thirteenth century,⁴⁶ and an incomplete version of *Breuddwyd Maxen* occurs in MS. Peniarth 16, part iii, datable to the same period.⁴⁷ It would probably not be very far off the mark, therefore, to posit a date around 1275 as a *terminus ante quem* for the majority of the tales.

The only exception, I think, is *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* ('The Dream of Rhonabwy') and that chiefly because at one level (if not the chief level) it looks like a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* of the other tales in question. This can be seen in echoes of them which are found in it⁴⁸ and in the way in which the narrative element was paralysed by pushing the descriptive element to extremes. Such could also be the burden of that puzzling comment subjoined to the tale.⁴⁹

⁴³ In my previous article, 'Ymborth yr enaid a'r chwedlau brodorol', p. 5, I also appealed to the following point. In *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, ed. Rachel Bromwich (2nd edn, Cardiff 1978), p. lxxx, and 'Traddodiad llafar y chwedlau', in *Traddodiad Rhyddiaith*, ed. Bowen, pp. 46–64, at p. 55, Bromwich has argued that Welsh poets did not begin to refer to Geoffrey's work until the beginning of the thirteenth century, when it was first translated. It could therefore be argued that the authors of the tales likewise made no use of the *Historia* until it was translated at that time. However, Dr Bromwich, after re-examining the personal names and place-names in the work of these poets – of which an exhaustive list has been provided by A. Parry Owen, 'Mynegai i enwau priod ym marddoniaeth beirdd y tywysogion', *Llên Cymru* 20 (1997) 25–45 – has suggested to me that they made no use whatever of Geoffrey's work, preferring instead the time-sanctioned *Historia Brittonum* as a source.

⁴⁴ I. Daniel, 'Golwg newydd ar ryddiaith grefyddol Cymraeg canol', *Llên Cymru* 15 (1984–8) 211–37; *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, pp. xix–xxxiv.

⁴⁵ See above, p. 123.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, p. 58.

⁴⁸ A case in point is the list of Arthur's counsellors (*Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, ed. Richards, pp. 19.10–20.5) which is strongly reminiscent of the long list of members of Arthur's court in *Culhwch ac Olwen*, ed. Bromwich & Evans, pp. 7.175–13.373. Compare also *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, ed. Richards, p. 4.15–19, and *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 9.21–3; *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, ed. Richards, p. 7.3–8, and *Owein*, ed. Thomson, p. 12.300–02; *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, ed. Richards, p. 11.15–19, and *Breuddwyd Maxen*, ed. Williams, p. 4.6–9.

⁴⁹ *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, ed. Richards, p. 21.10–14; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 152.

A llyma yr achaws na wyr neb y Breidwyt, na bard na chyfarwyd, heb lyuyr, o achaws y geniuer lliw a oed ar y meirch, a hynny o amruael liw odidawc ac ar yr aruev ac eu kyweirdebeu, ac ar y llenneu gwerthuawr a'r mein rinwedawl.

'And here is the reason why no one, neither bard nor story-teller, knows the Dream without a book – by reason of the number of colours on the horses, and all that variety of rare colours both on the arms and their trappings, and on the precious mantles, and the magic stones.'

If these are the words of a scribe, as some scholars have supposed, then they refer to *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* alone. On the other hand, it is possible that they are the words of the author and that he was not only referring to his own work but also saying, subtly, that the reason why he composed it was to parody the art of the other (written) tales with their elaborate descriptions. If this view of the nature and purpose of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* is correct, then it is natural to suppose that it is later than the other tales, but it is difficult to know how much later, and the only thing which can definitely be said at present is that it cannot be later than the earliest manuscript containing it, 'The Red Book of Hergest'.⁵⁰

It was interesting to learn, after I had reached these conclusions about the date of the tales, that other scholars had already expressed some views similar to my own, albeit for different reasons. The historian J. E. Lloyd thought that the tales belonged closely to the reign of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth.⁵¹

The *Mabinogion*, too, the famous romantic tales of the Welsh, though there is little to fix the date of their composition, cannot be moved far from the age of Llywelyn [*sc.* ab Iorwerth], in whose lifetime the earliest known manuscript of 'The Four Branches' was penned. It was the luxuriant and free flowering springtime of the Welsh genius, when fancy and patriotic fervour and wistful love of the past took a hundred different shapes – the ode, the stanza, the triad, the romance, the legend of saintly life, the mystic prophecy.

Morgan Watkin, on the basis of Norman-French literary influences, was of the opinion that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, 'The Four Branches', *Breuddwyd Maxen*, and *Culhwch ac Olwen* were no earlier than the thirteenth century.⁵² And Simon Evans,

⁵⁰ I should nonetheless like to add that the most convincing argument which I have seen is that of M. Giffin, 'The date of The Dream of Rhonabwy', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1958) 33–40, who dated the tale 1293×1309.

⁵¹ J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest* (3rd edn, 2 vols, London 1939), II.692. Thus did Lloyd speak in the two previous editions as well. By 'the earliest known manuscript of 'The Four Branches' Lloyd meant Peniarth 6 and Gwenogvryn Evans's dating of it, viz about 1235 – J. G. Evans, *Reports on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language* (2 vols, London 1898–1910), I.316. Nonetheless, I do not think that the fact that this date comes within the years of the reign of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth was Lloyd's main reason for dating the tales in the thirteenth century; and he would also, of course, have been aware that there is no necessary link between the age of a manuscript and its content.

⁵² Morgan Watkin, *La civilisation française dans les Mabinogion* (Paris 1962), pp. 100, 294, 426. He

observing that literary prose works in Wales were composed in Latin in the twelfth century but in Welsh in the following century, inclined, albeit more cautiously, towards a thirteenth-century date for the tales.⁵³ It was equally interesting later to observe yet more scholars (again for different reasons) moving in the same general direction. A. H. Diverres, thinking that the author of *Owain* was, among other things, arguing indirectly for women's right to own land, a right which was not enacted in Wales until the Statute of Rhuddlan of 1284, proposed to date the romance to 1250 × 1284 and suggested that the other two romances, *Peredur* and *Geraint* were also thirteenth-century products.⁵⁴ Brynley Roberts and Peter Wynn Thomas have argued that the texts of *Breuddwyd Maxen* and *Peredur* come from the court of the princes of Gwynedd during the reign of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth (1202–40) or of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (1245–82).⁵⁵ And on a more recent note, according to the researches of Meinir Harris there can be discerned in the second branch of the *Mabinogi*, *Branwen*, the influence of the Welsh law of *sarhaed* as exemplified in 'The Book of Iorwerth', which belongs to the first half of the thirteenth century.⁵⁶ If several different minds, independently and along quite different lines of thought, can arrive at similar conclusions concerning the date of one or more of these tales, then it is more likely than not that there is something in their conclusions.

I might add that it has always seemed to me particularly conspicuous that Morgan Watkin has received so little credit for his views. His book *La civilisation française dans les Mabinogion* (Paris 1962) was the work of a scholar of wide learning versed in both mediaeval Welsh and mediaeval French literature. If he tended to overstate his case and at times to misinterpret his data, that need not mean that his case was fundamentally incorrect. Watkins's novel views and arguments clearly offended the 'nativist' camp, best exemplified by Ifor Williams whose celebrated dating of 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi' to about 1060 just escaped the arrival of the Normans on these shores. Small wonder, perhaps, if Watkin felt compelled to look beyond Wales for a more sympathetic readership by writing his

offered no date for *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* (*ibid.*, pp. 349–52), and 'The Three Romances' he did not discuss.

⁵³ D. S. Evans, 'Rhyddiaith anchwedlonol yr Oesoedd Canol', *Llên Cymru* 11 (1970/1) 131–9, at p. 139.

⁵⁴ A. H. Diverres, 'Iarlles y ffynnaun and Le Chevalier au lion: adaptation or common source?', *Studia Celtica* 16/17 (1981/2) 144–62.

⁵⁵ P. W. Thomas, 'Haenau Breuddwyd Maxen: ymarferiad mewn archaeoleg destunol', *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* 23 (1997) 73–99, at p. 97; B. F. Roberts, 'Where were The Four Branches of the Mabinogi written?', *CSANA Yearbook* 1 (2001) 61–73, at p. 70.

⁵⁶ See also M. E. Harris, 'Dychwelyd at gyfeiriadau, termau a chysyniadau cyfreithiol yn y Mabinogi', *Y Traethodydd* 158 (2003) 17–39, *passim*.

book in French. Here, at any rate, is a scholar whose strengths outweighed his weaknesses and who deserves to be rehabilitated rather than consigned to eternal oblivion.

THE ORIGIN OF THE TALES

So far, I have used the similarities in style between *Ymborth yr enaid* and some of the tales as a basis for asking whether the two might belong to roughly the same period; my conclusion has been that the treatise and most of the tales do, but that the dates of *Culhwch ac Olwen* and *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* are more difficult to establish. I now wish to turn to the question of the origin of *Ymborth yr enaid*, tentatively suggested to be the Dominican friary of Bangor,⁵⁷ and ask whether any of the tales might have originated in the same place.

It was interesting, after reaching this conclusion about the origin of *Ymborth yr enaid*, to discover what T. P. Ellis and J. E. Lloyd, in their translation of 'The Mabinogion', had already said about 'The Four Branches': 'There is ... a probability that the original terrestrial locale of 'The Four Branches' was in North Wales'.⁵⁸ In their introductory note to 'The Fourth Branch' they state:⁵⁹

The scene is set, save for the expedition to Rhuddlan Teifi, entirely in Caernarfon and Merioneth. The use of certain North-Welsh terms, especially that of "mab ailr", and the close acquaintanceship with the geography of the North, leave little room for doubt that the story assumed its final form in North Wales, and was, in all probability, redacted by a North-Welsh monk.

It was equally interesting later to discover converging lines of thought from other scholars. Brynley Roberts and Peter Wynn Thomas have argued that the texts of *Breuddwyd Maxen* and *Peredur* came from the court of the princes of Gwynedd during the reign of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth or Llywelyn ap Gruffudd. This accords well with what Rachel Bromwich describes as the 'the strong sense ... of regional attachment to the district of Eryri [Snowdonia], Caer Saint [Caernarfon] and the river Menai [Menai Straits], and the pride expressed in its excellence and beauty'⁶⁰ in *Breuddwyd Maxen*; and similar signs, though not so pronounced, are to be seen in *Branwen* as well.⁶¹ More recently, Brynley Roberts has argued for a Venedotian origin for 'The Four Branches', possibly at Clynnog

⁵⁷ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, pp. lix–lx; Daniel, *A Medieval Welsh Mystical Treatise*, pp. 12–13.

⁵⁸ *The Mabinogion*, transll. T. P. Ellis & J. Lloyd (2 vols, Oxford 1929), I.3

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, I.99.

⁶⁰ Bromwich, 'Dwy Chwedl a Thair Rhamant', in *Traddodiad Rhyddiaith*, ed. Bowen, pp. 143–75, at p. 150.

⁶¹ Bromwich, 'Dwy Chwedl', pp. 149–50.

Fawr,⁶² and Patrick Sims-Williams has argued that Clynnog was 'the centre at which much of the materials behind The Four Branches, *Englynion y Beddau*, and *Buchedd Beuno* were redacted'.⁶³ I have also already referred to the researches of Meinir Harris who has argued that there are in *Branwen* traces of the Welsh law of *sarbaed* as exemplified in the 'The Book of Iorwerth', the classical Venedotian version of the Law of Hywel.

There is, therefore, considerable room to consider Gwynedd, and more especially western Gwynedd, as the 'terrestrial locale' of 'The Four Branches', *Breuddwyd Maxen*, and *Peredur*, and that several scholars have, for different reasons, located them in this region adds strength to their conclusion. Could it be, *pace* Sims-Williams's location of the redaction of 'much of the materials behind The Four Branches' at Clynnog Fawr, that the Dominican friary at Bangor, where *Ymborth yr enaid* was probably composed, was the place of origin in western Gwynedd of *Breuddwyd Maxen*, *Peredur*, and 'The Four Branches'? This house, peopled by members of the most intellectually brilliant and learned religious order of the day, would be an eminently fitting place. More will be said, when discussing the authorship of the tales below,⁶⁴ about the origin of *Owain*, *Geraint*, *Culhwch ac Olwen*, and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*. About *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*, however, it can be said now, in view of its setting in Powys during the reign of Madog ap Maredudd, that it was probably the product of someone from Powys who composed it somewhere in that region.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 1: OWEIN, &C.

I wish, finally, to consider the authorship of *Ymborth yr enaid* and the tales. Could there be a link here? The following points made above should first be recalled.⁶⁵ On the one hand, *Ymborth yr enaid* was composed around the middle of the thirteenth century at the Dominican friary of Bangor in the west of Gwynedd. On the other hand, six or seven of the tales were composed during the second and third quarters of the thirteenth century and *Breuddwyd Maxen*, *Peredur*, and 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi' emanate from western Gwynedd, perhaps even from the same place as *Ymborth yr enaid*. Here, therefore, are four works written within a period of about fifty years – i.e. comfortably within the life-span

⁶² Roberts, 'Where were The Four Branches of the Mabinogi written?', p. 71.

⁶³ P. Sims-Williams, 'Clas Beuno and The Four Branches of the Mabinogi', in *150 Jahre "Mabinogion": Deutsch-walisische Kulturbeziehungen*, edd. Stefan Zimmer & B. Maier (Tübingen 2001), pp. 111–27, at 124–5.

⁶⁴ See pp. 130–47.

⁶⁵ See pp. 118, 126–7, and 129–30.

of one person – and within the same general area or even at the same specific location. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to propose the author of *Ymborth yr enaid* as a possible candidate for the authorship of one – if not more – of these tales, whether *Owein* or *Breuddwyd Maxen*, whose similarities in parts to *Ymborth yr enaid* I mentioned above.⁶⁶

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 2: SIMILARITIES BETWEEN *PWYLL* AND *GERAINT*

However, before concluding this discussion of the authorship of the tales, I wish to spend some time on a further point which has not previously been studied as a subject in its own right and whose full significance has not yet been realised. I refer to similarities between the tales.

The best example of what I have in mind can be seen in *Pwyll* and *Geraint*. Years ago, Saunders Lewis argued that 'the whole story of *Pwyll Pen Annwfn* evidently leans heavily [*yn pwyso'n eglur drum*] on the first chapter of the romance of *Geraint son of Erbin* and has been modelled [*wedi ei llunio*] on it'.⁶⁷ If so, here is a substantial correspondence; but, since Saunders Lewis did not succeed in persuading everyone, I have decided to compare the two stories myself in the light of his thesis. The reader will, I hope, forgive me for devoting considerable space to this point.

What strikes one most in comparing these two stories is that both follow the same basic series and sequence of events. Their common elements may be summarised as follows.

1. A ruler decides one day to go out to hunt on the next day with his followers.
2. During the course of the hunt an unpleasant encounter takes place between a protagonist and a stranger, in which one of them wrongs one or more people.
3. In order to right the injustice done, the protagonist first travels to a place far removed from the scene of the incident where he spends time at a royal court being attended to and engaging in conversation.
4. The protagonist then sets things to rights by engaging in a fight on horseback with an opponent, in which he emerges as victor and concludes his rightdoing by resolving a dispute between two rulers and restoring to the legitimate one his lost territories and possessions.

Within these basic similarities there are also, admittedly, certain differences, in particular the following:

⁶⁶ See pp. 119–21.

⁶⁷ S. Lewis, 'Pwyll Pen Annwfn', *Llên Cymru* 9 (1966/7) 230–3, at p. 233. For the passages, see *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 1–8.28; *Geraint*, ed. Thomson, pp. 1.27–14.404.

1. In *Geraint* Arthur soon fades into the background while Geraint emerges as the main protagonist of the story, whereas in *Pwyll Pen Annwfn* Pwyll is the protagonist throughout.
2. In *Geraint*, the protagonist Geraint is the victim of a wrong, whereas in *Pwyll* the protagonist Pwyll is the cause of it. Also, in the former the wrong affects two people – Geraint and Gwenhwyfar's maidservant – while in the latter it affects only one, Arawn.
3. In *Geraint* Geraint rights two wrongs, that wrong suffered by him and Gwenhwyfar's maidservant at the hands of the dwarf and that suffered by Earl Ynywl when he was dispossessed by his nephew, whereas in *Pwyll* Pwyll rights only one wrong – the offence which he gave Arawn.
4. In *Geraint*, Geraint comes to two courts (that of Earl Ynywl and that of his nephew), whereas in *Pwyll* he comes to only one (Arawn's).
5. In *Geraint* the hunt, like Arthur, disappears into the background and is concluded after Geraint has restored justice, whereas in *Pwyll* the hunt begins and ends early in the narrative.

These differences, however, do not at any point, either individually or collectively, undermine the basic narrative similarity between the two tales. Moreover, the nature of the differences suggests either that the story of Pwyll Pen Annwfn is a simplification or curtailment of the corresponding story in *Geraint* or that the story in *Geraint* is an expansion or elaboration of the corresponding story of Pwyll Pen Annwfn, in either case the common material having undergone changes and some different story material having been used alongside (as one would expect in the composition of what is, of course, for all the similarities, another tale). Of the two possibilities, the former seems to me the more likely. More importantly, if the latter were the case, then in view of the essential similarity between the content of *Geraint* and Chrétien's *Erec*,⁶⁸ it would be necessary to make the less probable deduction that the Frenchman got quite a substantial portion of the corresponding part of his story from some source common to *Geraint* and *Pwyll* (not from *Pwyll* itself, if the date suggested above for the tales is correct).⁶⁹

If the story in *Pwyll* is based on the story in *Geraint*, then most of the differences noted within the main narrative points which are common to both are an interesting indication of how the author of *Pwyll* utilised the story in *Geraint*: instead of two protagonists, Arthur and Geraint, the one with only a very minor part and the other with a major one, he chose one, Pwyll, to play the whole part;

instead of a dwarf who injures two important people, including the protagonist, Geraint, he made the protagonist, Pwyll, offend one important person, Arawn; instead of the protagonist, Geraint, righting two wrongs, he made the corresponding protagonist, Pwyll, right one; instead of Geraint visiting two courts in close proximity to each other, he made his counterpart, Pwyll, visit one; and instead of splitting Arthur's hunt into two parts so as to intrude between them the adventures of Geraint, rather – in keeping with his decision to employ one protagonist throughout the story – he treated his description of Pwyll's hunt as a single event concluded at an early stage. In relation to all these instances, one could say that the author of *Pwyll* follows a method of 'halving' the material which he chose from the story in *Geraint*.

Resemblances between the story in *Geraint* and *Pwyll* can also be seen when one focuses on the finer points. There are two, in particular, which should be mentioned. The most telling one, I think, is the exchange of words and ideas when the stranger appears during the course of the hunt. Here is what happens in *Geraint* when Gwenhwyfar's maidservant encounters the dwarf.⁷⁰

'Pwy y marchawc?' heb hi. 'Nys dywedaf i ti,' heb ef. 'Canys kyndrwc dy vybot,' heb hi, 'ac nas dywedy y mi, mi a'e gouynaf ydaw e hun.' 'Na ouynny, myn uyg kret,' heb ynteu. 'Paham?' heb yr hi. 'Am nad vyt yn ynrydet dyn a wedo vrthaw ymdidan a'm arglwyd i.'

"Who is the knight?" said she [viz, Gwenhwyfar's maid]. "I will not tell thee," said he [viz, the dwarf]. "Since thy manners are so bad," said she, "that thou wilt not tell me that, I will ask him in person." "Thou wilt not, by my faith," replied he. "Why?" said she. "Because thine is not the dignity of a person for whom it is fitting to speak with my lord."

And Geraint's experience is much the same.⁷¹

'Pwy y marchawc?' 'Nys dywedaf i ti,' heb y corr. 'Mi a'y gouynnaf y'r marchawc e hun,' heb ynteu. 'Na ouynhy, myn uyg kred,' heb y corr; 'nid vyt un anrydet di ac y dylyhych ymdidan a'm arglwyd i.'

"Who is the knight?" "I will not tell thee," said the dwarf. "I will ask it of the knight person," he answered. "Thou wilt not, by my faith," replied the dwarf. "Thou art not of dignity enough to have a right to speak with my lord."

The point made by the dwarf is that Gwenhwyfar's maidservant and Geraint are not of sufficient social status to speak to the knight, and the term which he uses for this social status is *anrhydedd* (in modern Welsh orthography). Compare this now with the exchange in *Pwyll* between Pwyll and Arawn.⁷²

'A unben,' heb ef, 'mi a wnn pwy wytti, ac ny chyuarchaf i well it.' 'Ie,' heb ef, 'ac atuyd y mae arnat o anryded ual nas dyliei.' 'Dioer,' heb ef, 'nyt teilygdawt uy anryded a'm etteil am

⁶⁸ See *Geraint*, ed. Thomson, pp. xxvi–xxxii.

⁶⁹ See pp. 125–7.

⁷⁰ *Geraint*, ed. Thomson, p. 5.130–5; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, pp. 232–3.

⁷¹ *Geraint*, ed. Thomson, p. 5.143–6; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 233.

⁷² *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 2.7–13; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 4.

hynny.' 'A unben,' heb ynteu, 'beth amgen?' 'Y rof i a Duw,' hep ynteu, 'dy *anwybot* dy hun a'th ansyberwyt.'

"Chieftain", said he [viz, Arawn], "I know who thou art, but I will not greet thee." "Why," said he [viz, Pwyll], "perhaps thy dignity is such that it should not do so." "Faith," said he, "it is not the degree of my dignity that keeps me therefrom." "Chieftain," he replied, "what else then?" "Between me and God," said he, "thine own ignorance and discourtesy."

Like the dwarf, Pwyll too appeals to social distinction, using the same term. It is probably no coincidence that both Gwenhwyfar's handmaiden and Arawn reproach their interlocutor with bad manners or ignorance, using similar language, the words of the former being *Canys kyndrwc dy rybot* and those of the latter *dy anwybot dy hun a'th ansyberwyt*.⁷³

Another significant detail occurs later when Geraint, at the feast in Earl Ynywl's hall and after the young earl has promised to restore everything to Ynywl, tells all those present who should be vassals to Ynywl to pay homage to him.⁷⁴

'Ie,' heb y Gereint, 'a uo yma o'r a dylyo uod yn vr y Ynywl, gwrhaed itaw o'r lle.' A hynny a oruc y gwyr oll, ac ar y dygneued honno y trigwyd.

"Aye," said Gereint, "let all those that are here who should be vassals of Ynywl do him homage here and now." And all the men did so, and that settlement was agreed on.

Compare this with what Pwyll tells his men after he has defeated Hafgan.⁷⁵

'Vy ngwyrda innheu,' heb y gwr a oed yn lle Arawn, 'kymerwch ych kyuarwyd, a gwybydwch pwy a dylyo bot yn wyr ymi.' 'Arglwyd,' heb y gwyrda, 'pawb a'y dyly, canyt oes urenhin ar holl Annwuy namin ti.'

"Gentles mine," said the man who was in Arawn's stead, "take guidance, and discover who ought to be my vassals." "Lord," said the gentles, "all men should be, for there is no king over the whole of Annwn save thee."

In both, the same feudal terms are used – [*g*]wr, *gwrhaed*, *gwyr* in the former, and [*g*]wyr in the latter – and so is the same verb, *dylyu* (*dylyo*, and *dylyo*, *dyly*), denoting obligation; and in both there is universal agreement among the vassals that the victor is their rightful lord.

On the basis of the analysis above, in view of the strong basic narrative resemblance between the adventures of Geraint and Pwyll, the way in which some differences within the points common to them seem to suggest that the author of *Pwyll* shortened the story in *Geraint* as part of the process of composing another story, and some distinct verbal similarities, I have no difficulty in concurring with Saunders Lewis's view that the latter story is indeed modelled on the former, even if this means taking the unpopular step of dating 'The Four Branches of the

⁷³ *anwybot* is the opposite of *gyrbot* and *ansyberwyt* a synonym of the former.

⁷⁴ *Gereint*, ed. Thomson, p. 13.385–7; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 240.

⁷⁵ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 6.5–7; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 7.

Mabinogi' later than *Geraint*. If so, then here is an instance of the text of one tale directly influencing the text of another.

It might be as well here to point out that instances of this phenomenon are already known (though probably not as well as they should be). Noteworthy instances occur in Llywelyn Offeiriad's version of the internationally popular tale 'The Seven Sages of Rome', known in Welsh as *Chwedlau Saith Doethion Rhufain*. An examination of the Welsh text alongside other known versions of the story led Henry Lewis to the conclusion that it was 'simply an original work by some Welshman, Llywelyn Offeiriad in all probability, who took his material from popular oral tales to make his own literary creation',⁷⁶ and it may, therefore, be considered a kind of native tale in its own right, the closest parallel being *Y Tair Rhamant*, which are a thoroughly independent and very Welsh retelling of the corresponding stories by Chrétien de Troyes. Long ago Joseph Loth drew attention to the very close similarity – in phrasing, content, and sequence – between the account of the discovery of the king's son by his stepmother in the *Chwedlau* and the similar story in *Culhwch ac Olwen*; he concluded that the former derived from the latter.⁷⁷ The passages are worth quoting for their length and sheer similarity.

*Culhwch ac Olwen*⁷⁸

Dytgweith yd aeth y wreicda allan y orymdeith. Y deuth y dy hen wrach a oed yn y dref heb dant yn y fenn. Amkawd y urenhines, 'Ha wrach, a dywedy di imi y peth a ouynnaf it, yr Dyw? Kwt ynt plant y gwr a'm rydyallas yg gordwy?' Amkawd y wrach, 'Nyd oes plant itaw.' Amkawd y urenhines, 'Gwae uinheu uyn dyuot ar anuab.' Dywawt y wrach, 'Nyt reit iti hynny. Darogan yw itaw kaffel ettuet; ohonot ti yt gaffo ef kanys ry gaffo o arall. Na wna tristit heuyt; un mab yssyd itaw.'

Mynet a oruc y wreicda yn llawen atreff, ac amkawd hi vrth y chymmar, 'Pwy ystyr yw gennyt ti kelu dy blant ragof i?' Amkawd y brenhin, 'A mineu nys kelaf.'

'Upon a day as the good lady [viz, King Doged's wife] went walking abroad, she came to the house of an old crone who was in the town, without a tooth in her head. Quoth the queen: "Crone, wilt thou for God's sake tell me what I ask of thee? Where are the children of the man who has carried me off by force?" Quoth the crone: "He has no children." Quoth the queen: "Woe is me that I should have come to a childless man!" Said the crone: "Thou needst not say that. It is prophesied that he shall have offspring. 'Tis by thee he shall have it, since he has not had it by another. Besides, be not unhappy, he has one son."

⁷⁶ *Chwedlau Saith Doethion Rhufain*, ed. Henry Lewis (Wrexham 1925), p. 26.

⁷⁷ J. Loth, 'La version galloise des *Sept Sages de Rome*', *Revue celtique* 23 (1902) 349–52. It should be noted, however, that he used the text of the *Chwedlau* in *Selections from the Hengwrt MSS*, edd. Robert Williams & G. Hartwell Jones (2 vols, London 1876/92), II.302.4–16. He followed the 'Red Book of Hergest' text of *Culhwch ac Olwen*.

⁷⁸ *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 2.34–45; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 96.

"The good lady returned home joyfully, and quoth she to her husband, "What reason hast thou to hide thy child from me?" Quoth the king, "I will hide him no longer."

*Saith Doethion Rbutfain*⁷⁹

A diwarnawt y deuth hi y ty wrach heb un dant yn y phenn, a dywedut wrth y wrach: 'Yr Duw, mae plant yr amherawdyr?' 'Nyt oes idaw vn mab,' heb y wrach. 'Gwae vinneu,' heb hi, 'y uot ef yn anuab.' Yna y dywawt y wrach, 'Nyt reit itti hynny; darogan yw idaw gaffel plant. Ac atuyd ys ohonat y keiff, kyn nys kaffo o arall. Ac na uyd drist, vn mab yssyd idaw ar uaeth gan doethon Rufein.' Ac yna y doeth hi y'r llys yn llawen orawenus, a dywedut wrth yr amherawdyr: 'Pa ystyr y kely di dy blant ragof i?' heb hi. 'Nys kelaf ynneu bellach,' heb ef...

'Upon a day she [viz, the emperor's wife] came to the house of a crone without a single tooth in her head and said to her: "Where, for God's sake, are the emperor's children?" "He has no children," said the crone. "Woe is me," she said, "that he is childless." Then the crone said, "You need not say that; it is prophesied that he shall have children. And maybe it is by you he shall have them, since he has not had them by another. And do not be unhappy, he has one son in fosterage with the sages of Rome." And then she came to the court ecstatically happy, and said to the emperor: "What is the reason that you hide your children from me?" He replied, "I shall hide them no longer ..."

Later, Henry Lewis noted two shorter passages in *Chwedlau* which closely resemble passages in *Owain* and *Breuddwyd Maxen*.⁸⁰ Rachel Bromwich has also cited instances of the textual influence of *Culhwch ac Olwen* on *Geraint* in particular.⁸¹

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 3: OTHER CORRESPONDENCES BETWEEN
'THE FOUR BRANCHES OF THE MABINOGI' AND 'THE THREE ROMANCES'

The influence of the text of *Geraint* on that of *Pwyll* is by far the most extensive instance of the kind of correspondence between one native tale and another under notice, but there are, I believe, other instances too of the same phenomenon. Consider the following between 'The Four Branches' and 'The Three Romances'.

(a) *Branwen* and *Geraint*

Branwen's classic lament:⁸²

⁷⁹ *Seith Doethion*, ed. Lewis, pp. 44.42–45.57; my own rendering (with some imitation of the style and vocabulary of Jones & Jones's translation of the corresponding passage in *Culhwch ac Olwen*).

⁸⁰ *Seith Doethion*, ed. Lewis, pp. 24–6. On p. 25 he also drew attention to the examples of *araitb* (see above, pp. 121–2) in the text.

⁸¹ Bromwich, 'Dwy Chwedl', p. 155; *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. cii. See also below, p. 145.

⁸² *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 45.16–19; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 38. Cf. also Bfnysien's groan, *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 44.15–16, "Oy a Duw," heb ef, "gwae ui uy mot yn achaws y'r wydwc honn o wyr Ynys y Kedyrn; a meuy l ymi," heb ef, "ony cheissaf i waret rac hynn."

'Oy a uab Duw,' heb hi, 'gwae ui o'm ganedigaeth. Da a dwy ynys a diffeithwyt o'm achaws i.' A dodi ucheneit uawr, a thorri y chalon ar hynny.

"Alas, Son of God," said she, "woe is me that ever I was born: two good islands have been laid waste because of me!" And she heaved a great sign, and with that broke her heart.'

Compare this with Enid's lament over Geraint's soft life.⁸³

'Gway ui,' heb hi, 'os o'm achaws i y mae y breicheu hyn a'r dwyuron yn colli clot a milwryaeth kymeint ac a oed eidunt!' A chann hynny ellwg y dagreu yn hidleit yny dygwydassant ar y dwyuron ef.

"Woe is me," said she, "if it is through me that these arms and this breast are losing fame and prowess as great as was theirs." And thereupon her tears flowed freely, so that they fell on to his breast.'

In both passages, a female protagonist utters a sigh of profound regret at an evil which she associates with her own doings, and there follows an emotional breakdown (in Branwen's case attended by death). The correspondence in content and sequence is striking.

(b) *Manawydan* and *Owain*

R. M. Jones has drawn attention to a striking point.⁸⁴ In *Manawydan* the following is related of Manawydan, Pryderi, Rhiannon, and Cigfa when they go to sit on Gorsedd Arberth ('the Hillock of Arberth').⁸⁵

Ac ual y bydant yn eisted yuelly, llyma dwrwr, a chan ueint y twrwr, llyma gawat o nywl yn dyuot hyt na chanoed yr un ohonynt wy y gilyd. Ac yn ol y nywl, llyma yn goleuhau pob lle. A phan edrychysant y ford y guelyn y preideu, a'r anreithu, a'r kyuanhed kyn no hynny, ny welynt neb ryw dim...

'And as they were sitting thus, lo, a peal of thunder, and with the magnitude of the peal, lo, a fall of mist coming, so that no one of them could see the other. And after the mist, lo, every place filled with light. And when they looked the way they were wont before that to see the flocks and the herds and the dwellings, no manner of thing could they see ...'

Compare what happens to Owain in *Owain* when he reaches the green tree (*pren glas*) and pours a bowlful of water onto the slate.⁸⁶

Ac ar hynny nachaf y twryf, ac yn ol y twryf y gawat. Mwy o lawer noc y dywedassei Gynon oedynt. A gwedy y gawat goleuhau a oruc yr awyr, a phan edrychawd Owain ar y prenn nyt oed vn dalen arnaw.

⁸³ *Geraint*, ed. Thomson, p. 25.712–15; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 251.

⁸⁴ R. M. Jones, 'Y rhamantau Cymraeg a'u cysylltiad â'r rhamantau Ffrangeg', *Llên Cymru* 4 (1956/7) 208–27, at p. 225, n. 127.

⁸⁵ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 51.22–7; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 43. Cf. also *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 57.11, '... llyma dwryf arnunt, a chawat o nywl ...'.

⁸⁶ *Owein*, ed. Thomson, p. 11.264–8; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 163. Cf. also *Owein*, ed. Thomson, pp. 7.151–5, 8.169–71 and 178–80.

'And thereupon, lo, the peal of thunder, and after the peal the shower. Greater by far were these than Cynon had said. And after the shower the sky lightened; and when Owain looked on the tree there was not one leaf upon it.'

In both there occurs a noise (*turnw*) followed by a fall (*caww*) causing darkness. The sky then lightens (*goleuhau*) with the result that certain objects have disappeared from sight, in *Manawydan* the flocks, herds, and dwellings, and in *Owain* the leaves on the tree. Here there is close correspondence in content, sequence, and phrasing.

(c) *Manawydan* and *Owain*

When Pryderi goes to the enchanted fort,⁸⁷

Ef a welei, ual am gymherued llawr y gaer, fynnawn a gueith o uae marmor yn y chylch. Ac ar lann y fynnawn, cawg eur en rwymedic urth bedeir cadwyn, a hynny uchbenn llech o uae marmor, a'r cadwyneu yn kyrchu yr awyr...

'As it were in the middle of the caer [a fortified building] floor, he could see a fountain with marble work around it, and on the edge of the fountain a golden bowl fastened to four chains, and that upon a marble slab, and the chains ascending into the air ...'

This well is similar to the well beneath the green tree to which Owain came.⁸⁸

...a'r ffynhyawn a welwn dan y pren, a'r llech varmor yn y emhyl, a'r kawc aryant wrth y gadwyn.

'... and I could see the fountain beneath the tree, and the marble slab beside it, and the silver bowl fastened to the chain.'

Note the elements of the well which are common to the two passages – the precious bowl, the chain or chains binding it, and the slate. The correspondence here is close.

In view of these correspondences between 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi' and *Owain* and *Geraint*, one wonders whether the following ones between 'The Four Branches' and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* belong to the same class of correspondences. We may begin with what is said of Ffaraon Dandde in the triad (in the following Welsh quotations, I have used bold print for the correspondences).⁸⁹

⁸⁷ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 56.9–13; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 46.

⁸⁸ *Owein*, ed. Thomson, p. 8.167–8; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 160. Cf. also *Owein*, ed. Thomson, pp. 7.147–50, 11.262–3.

⁸⁹ *Cyfranc Lludd*, ed. Roberts, p. 5.136–7; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 93. S. Lewis, 'Branwen', *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* 5 (1970) 30–43, at p. 31.

Trydyd cynweissat uu hwnnw a torres y gallon o anniuiged.

'He [viz. Ffaraon Dandde] was one of the Three Noble Youths who broke their hearts with consternation.'

Compare the words of Branwen about Caradog son of Brân.⁹⁰

Y seith hynny a drigwys yn seith kynueissat y synyaw ar yr ynys honn, a Chradawc uab Bran yn benhaf kynweisyat arnunt ... (**A hwnnw uu y trydyd dyn a torres y gallon o aniuiget.**)

'Those seven stayed behind as seven stewards to take charge of this Island, and Cradawg son of Brân chief steward over them ... (And he was one of the Three Men who broke their hearts with consternation.)'

We can then add what is said about the Coraniaid:⁹¹

...a chymeint oed eu gwybot ac nat oed **ymadrawd dros wyneb yr ynys**, yr isset y dywettit, **o'r kyuarffei y gwynt ac ef**, nys **gwyppyt** ...

'And so great was their [viz. the Coranieid] knowledge that there was no discourse over the face of the Island, however low it might be spoken, that they did not know about if the wind met it.'

Compare that with the description of the special characteristic (*cynneddf*) of Math son of Mathonwy in the final branch of the *Mabinogi*.⁹²

...ba hustyng bynnac, yr y uychanet, o'r a uo y rwng dynnyon, o ry kyuarfo y guynt ac ef, ef a'y guybyd.

'... whatever whispering, however low, there be between men, once the wind has met it he [viz. Math] will know of it.'

Note also what is said about Lludd when he defeats the enchanter (*gŵr lledrithiog*):⁹³

A gwedy **goruot** arnaw o **rym ac angerd** ...

'And when he had been overcome by might and by main ...'

Compare that with the comment in the same branch on the battle between Pryderi and Gwydion:⁹⁴

Ac o nerth **grym ac angerd** ... Guydyon a **oruu** ...

'And by dint of strength and valour ... Gwydion conquered ...'

In all these there occur similarities in substance and wording which should not be overlooked.

⁹⁰ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 39.5–7, 46.8–9; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, pp. 33, 38–9.

⁹¹ *Cyfranc Lludd*, ed. Roberts, p. 2.32–5; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 90. It should, however, be noted that the phrase *yr isset y dywettit* does not occur in the textually earlier *Brut*-version of the tale (see *Cyfranc Lludd*, ed. Roberts, p. xxxi), and so I have not compared it here with *yr y uychanet* in *Math*.

⁹² *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 68.5–7; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 55.

⁹³ *Cyfranc Lludd*, ed. Roberts, p. 6.160–1; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 94.

⁹⁴ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, p. 73.14–15; *The Mabinogion*, transll. Jones & Jones, p. 60.

None of the correspondences noted above can be attributed to formulae embedded in the oral stories on which the tales might be based – and I have deliberately avoided instances which might be construed as such. That such formulae occur is well known – although they are by no means rigid – and they have been comprehensively and systematically discussed by Sioned Davies in her admirable book.⁹⁵ But they certainly cannot account for the lengthy correspondence between *Geraint* and the story of Pwyll Pen Annwfn; and neither do they, in my opinion, figure in any of the correspondences between ‘The Four Branches’ and other passages compared with them. The last comparison (between *Math* and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*) could be construed as a common expression without much significance,⁹⁶ although in view of the other correspondences between ‘The Four Branches’ and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, that seem less likely in this case.

One could show a multitude of other correspondences among the native tales, following the example of Glenys Goetinck in the case of *Peredur*,⁹⁷ but, as a rule, it is very difficult to determine whether they are attributable to a common tradition of diction or to direct textual influence.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 4: THE POSSIBILITY OF COMMON AUTHORSHIP

If the correspondences considered here may be correctly regarded as signs of direct textual influence between one tale and another, then it is now time to ask what the upshot of all this is. On the usual presupposition that each tale is the product of a different author, undoubtedly the first answer which will come to mind is that the author of each tale which shows the influence of another tale was familiar with a text of that tale or *vice versa*. Therefore, on the basis of the comparison above, it could be said that the author of ‘The Four Branches of the Mabinogi’ was familiar with *Geraint*, that he was familiar with *Owain*, or that the author of *Owain* was familiar with ‘The Four Branches’ (*Manawydan* and *Branwen*), and that the author of ‘The Four Branches’ was familiar with *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* or that the author of *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* was familiar with ‘The Four Branches’ (*Math*). There is, however, another possibility which merits serious consideration. If the four tales compared so far – ‘The Four Branches of the Mabinogi’, *Geraint*, *Owain*, and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* – were composed in the

⁹⁵ Davies, *Crefft*, chapter 3.

⁹⁶ Cf. *Historia Peredur vab Efrog*, ed. Glenys Witchard Goetinck (Cardiff 1976), p. 12.8–11, ‘... ac yn tebic ganthunt na wnaei neb kyfryw gyflauan a honno, namyn o vot arnaw *mihwryaeth ac angerd neu but a lletriib* ...’ (my italics).

⁹⁷ *Peredur*, ed. Goetinck, pp. xix–xx.

second and third quarters of the thirteenth century (that is, within a human life-span), is it not possible that the significance of the correspondences noted between them is that they are all the work of the same author?⁹⁸ Or, to put it another way, if a mediaeval author were minded to write more than one story (a more than feasible possibility – one need only think of Chrétien de Troyes), would it be at all surprising to find in the different products some specific similarities?

Before considering the implications of this suggestion – and without, I hope, overtaxing the reader’s patience – I would like to add that there is room to argue that *Breuddwyd Maxen* could also be the work of one and the same author. There is also a remarkable correspondence, albeit of a different kind, between *Breuddwyd Maxen* and *Branwen* to which Rachel Bromwich has drawn attention:⁹⁹ when Bendigeidfran and the seven warriors go to Ireland to save Branwen, Bendigeidfran leaves the Island of the Mighty (Britain) in the care of his son Caradog; but, when he returns, he finds that Caswallon son of Beli has usurped the kingdom.¹⁰⁰ Now in *Breuddwyd Maxen* the emperor Maxen defeats Beli and his sons and, after marrying Elen, restores the government of Britain to her father, Eudaf, the son of Caradog, son of Bendigeidfran, as part of Elen’s maiden-fee (*agbedi*).¹⁰¹ In other words, the unusual fact that a specific sequence of events is begun in one tale and continued and completed in another could be due to both tales having been composed by the same man.

The case for single authorship for these tales would also be facilitated if ‘The Three Romances’ were considered the product of one rather than several authors. Proinsias Mac Cana’s words are a fair summary of the present situation.¹⁰²

Unlike their French counterparts their authorship is unknown: it was formerly commonly supposed, on account of their mutual similarity and their correspondence to Chrétien’s trilogy, that they were the work of a single author, but in recent years attention has been drawn to certain disparities in their matter and style and in the orthography in which they are recorded, and this has led to a fairly general rejection of the notion of common authorship: at least it seems clear that *Geraint Son of Erbin* was composed and transmitted separately.

It may nonetheless be the case that the authorship of ‘The Three Romances’ is one of those topics, like so many other *Mabinogion*-topics, on which agreement will never be reached. Nor does it necessarily follow that certain obvious

⁹⁸ What follows is a development of an idea which I first expressed in ‘Golwg newydd’, pp. 243–4.

⁹⁹ Bromwich, ‘Dwy Chwedl’, pp. 149–50.

¹⁰⁰ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 45.24–46.10.

¹⁰¹ *Breuddwyd Maxen*, ed. Williams, pp. 8.11–9.3.

¹⁰² Proinsias Mac Cana, *The Mabinogi* (Cardiff 1992), p. 96.

differences between the three tales are a sign of different authorship¹⁰³ – as though an author had to follow a set pattern in everything which (s)he composed – and more attention could be given to the ability and freedom of an author to draw on particular styles and registers which had already evolved within the prose tradition – and which were, so to speak, common property – according to his own taste and literary purpose, even within the same work, as in *Ymborth yr enaid*. What has always struck me most about these three tales is their similarity to one another; to quote Mac Cana again, 'None the less, when one reads these tales against the general background of Middle Welsh narrative, it is their mutual similarities that strike one most and set them apart from the other tales of *The Mabinogi*'.¹⁰⁴

If these six tales were the work of a single author, then perhaps this is the reason why three of them – *Peredur*, 'The Four Branches', and *Breuddwyd Maxen* – seem to come from the same place, which was suggested above as the Dominican priory at Bangor. It would then follow that *Owain*, *Geraint*, and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, being works by the same author, could also be located there, although the author could, conceivably, have composed one or more or all of them elsewhere.¹⁰⁵

The theory that most of the native tales are the work of one and the same author is one which no one, so far as I know, has propounded before.¹⁰⁶ One can legitimately ask on what grounds it has been tacitly and confidently supposed for

¹⁰³ For instance, the looser structure of the tale *Peredur*. Mac Cana suggested (*The Mabinogi*, p. 109) that this is related to the complexity of the sources utilised by the author, and the main thematic characteristics are the same as those of the other two tales. See also John Rhŷs, *Studies in the Arthurian Legend* (Oxford 1891), pp. 85–109, for his noteworthy comparison of *Owein* and *Peredur*. On the other hand, S. Davies, 'Cynnydd *Peredur* vab Efraiw', in *Canhwyl Marchogyon: Cyd-destunoli Peredur*, edd. Sioned Davies & P. W. Thomas (Cardiff 2000), pp. 65–90, at 67–8, attributed the looseness of the tale to what she has seen as its episodic nature, typical of mediaeval romance and reflecting the structure of oral tales.

¹⁰⁴ Mac Cana, *The Mabinogi*, p. 96.

¹⁰⁵ It should also be noted that Brynley F. Roberts, *Brut Tysilio* (Swansea 1980), p. 19, has argued that MS. Llanstephan 1, which contains the earliest text of *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*, could have been written in the Cistercian monastery of Valle Crucis in north-east Wales. This does not necessarily mean, of course, that that was where the tale was originally composed. The manuscript is datable to the middle of the thirteenth century: Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, p. 58.

¹⁰⁶ 'The Three Romances' have, of course, from time to time been considered the work of a single author (and cf. Diverres, 'Iarles', p. 162), although that is not the current trend. It should also be noted that S. Lewis, 'Branwen', p. 31, thought, on the basis of a resemblance which he saw between the beginning of *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* and the start of the story of Branwen in the second branch of the *Mabinogi*, that both works could be the product of the same author. The beginning of *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* to which he referred, however, is in fact, as Brynley Roberts has pointed out (*Cyfranc Lludd*, p. xvi), an introduction to the tale taken from *Brut y Brenhinedd* and does not therefore form part of the tale itself.

so long that each must be the work of a different author.¹⁰⁷

As regards their total quantity, there is no difficulty in accepting that one author could have composed the six tales in question. They do not fill more than a moderate-size 'Penguin Classic'. The author could, indeed, have composed far more. As regards content and variety, I see no reason why these tales could not be considered the work of one author – an extremely gifted and learned author who liked to re-create the wealth of materials available to him in new, bold, and masterly ways, a tireless experimenter and innovator.

I should like at this point to suggest that this wealth of variety can be paralleled in miniature in *Ymborth yr enaid*. In the first part of this treatise, where the seven deadly sins and the corresponding virtues are set out, the sentences are unadorned and brief and similar in style to the Welsh laws. In the second part, they are more measured and scholastic, very like the style of the Grammar attributed to Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug. In the third part, they become even longer and more complicated until they reach the *richesse baroque* of *Pryd y Mab* with its frequent use of the *araith*. In this part there occurs too not only a change in style but a change of approach from the intellectual to the emotional. No less striking is the originality which the author displays in adapting the Welsh language to discuss theological topics which were normally only addressed in Latin, the language of scholasticism – and that perhaps for the first time ever in Welsh. This can be seen in the latinized constructions which he used occasionally¹⁰⁸ but particularly in the terms which he coined, some of them without parallel even in Latin.¹⁰⁹ In addition, in two places he also changed from prose to verse¹¹⁰ (compare *Culhwch ac Olwen*¹¹¹ and 'The Four Branches of the Mabinogi'¹¹²). Between the covers of this short treatise, therefore, there is an astonishing variety and resourcefulness of language.

As regards style and language, there is agreement that the language of 'The Three Romances' and 'The Four Branches' is similar,¹¹³ and one could add to them at least *Breuddwyd Maxen*.

If these tales are all the work of the same author, then the received picture of

¹⁰⁷ Davies, *Crefft*, p. 232.

¹⁰⁸ See *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 51, nn. 2.4, 2.5, and p. 91, n. 12.135–6.

¹⁰⁹ Daniel, *A Medieval Welsh Mystical Treatise*, p. 21.

¹¹⁰ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, pp. 20, 23, 26. Note too the stanzas which precede and follow the work: *ibid.*, pp. 1, 30.

¹¹¹ *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 35.978–80.

¹¹² *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 43, 89–90.

¹¹³ See Thomas Parry, *A History of Welsh Literature* (Oxford 1955), p. 88 ('...they too show the same constant surrender to the story-teller's art and the same lively style as the *Mabinogi*'); Bromwich, 'Dwy Chwedl', pp. 153–4.

them as works composed by different authors in different periods in different places – and representing, few as they are, in some degree the storytelling tradition of the Welsh over the ages – changes radically. It would be necessary to treat this notion as an optical illusion and suppose that the tales are the untypical product of the writing pen of one author composing in his cell. Such a state of affairs would reduce the number of authors in the period drastically but increase his kudos enormously.

I suggest too, *pace* Sioned Davies in her ground-breaking work to which I am much indebted, that a hypothetical common authorship for most of the tales could, no less than the impact of commonplace oral formulae on the written text, account for many of the similarities between them which she has examined, especially in the descriptions of physical appearance.¹¹⁴

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 5:

CULHWCH AC OLWEN AND BREUDDWYD RHONABWY

If it is correct to maintain that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the other tales, then it is easier to think that this tale is the work of a different author. *Culhwch ac Olwen* is something of a conundrum. On the one hand, there are certain obvious differences between it and the other tales. It is generally agreed to be closer in style to the forms of oral narration, and its language to be archaic and more difficult and its vocabulary at times strongly reminiscent of the earliest Welsh poetry and the work of the early *Gogynfeirdd* (mainly twelfth-century). On the other hand, however, it also shows a number of similarities to the other tales, a case in point being 'The Four Branches'. One of the most obvious similarities between the two works is the great architectonic skill and power shown in welding together so many disparate stories and traditions into 'two spacious, multi-chambered temples'.¹¹⁵ Such a feat of synthesis and analysis, it seems to me, is one of which few would have been capable. In *Culhwch*, the references to Ireland – and in particular the location there of the first stages of the hunting of Twrch Trwyth – are paralleled in *Branwen* by the struggle of Bendigeidfran and his followers against King Matholwch in the same country. In both tales there are instances of prose giving way to short passages of verse.¹¹⁶ Twelve of the characters mentioned in the long list of (about three hundred) inmates of Arthur's court in *Culhwch* appear in 'The Four Branches'.¹¹⁷ The Birds of

¹¹⁴ See Davies, *Crefft*, pp. 144–58.

¹¹⁵ Saunders Lewis, *Braslun o Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg* (Cardiff 1932), p. 37.

¹¹⁶ *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 35; *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 43, 89–90.

¹¹⁷ See *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. lxxxiii.

Rhiannon with their enchanting song, which in *Culhwch* occur in the context of one of the tasks set by Ysbaddaden Benicawr,¹¹⁸ appear in *Branwen* to entrance the followers of Bendigeidfran during their stay in Harlech.¹¹⁹ The story of Osla Gyllellfawr's knife which could bridge waters¹²⁰ is reminiscent of the story of Bendigeidfran offering his body as a bridge over a river for his soldiers.¹²¹ Or take another tale, *Geraint*, which in Rachel Bromwich's view is more closely related to *Culhwch* than to any of the other tales.¹²² In both, for instance, there occur both the humorous made-up names *Drem fab Drembidydd* and *Clust fab Clusfeinydd* and the mistake of giving the name *Cafall* to Arthur's dog instead of his horse, points which, Bromwich has suggested, are due to the influence of a written text of *Culhwch ac Olwen* on *Geraint*.¹²³ Examples such as these are merely a small selection.¹²⁴ Are such similarities due purely to common tradition and/or textual influences, as the received view would have it, or could they be seen as tell-tale fingerprints hinting at a possible common authorship? The former view, in our present state of knowledge, is undoubtedly the easier to uphold, and yet I find myself unable to accept it with complete peace of mind. The answer to the whole problem presented by *Culhwch and Olwen*, it seems to me, hinges on the question of the author's precise literary aims, and in particular to what extent he was using, on the one hand, a style more nearly his own and, on the other hand, pre-existing styles which had already evolved as part of the wider prose tradition. However, since this topic is not yet, I think, sufficiently well understood,¹²⁵ I must leave the matter there for the time being.

AUTHORSHIP OF THE TALES, 6: IS THE AUTHOR OF YMBORTH YR ENAID

A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE?

I have given considerable space to discussing the interrelationship of the six tales – 'The Three Romances', *Pedair cainc y Mabinogi*, *Breuddwyd Maxen*, and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*. If the argument is correct that they could all be the work of the

¹¹⁸ *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 24.632–3.

¹¹⁹ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 45.3–4, 46.13–18, 48.17. With the description of the birds and the feast, p. 46.13–18, compare also *Owein*, ed. Thomson, pp. 7.155–7, 8.180–3, 11.268–9, 20.554–6.

¹²⁰ *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 10.278–83.

¹²¹ *Pedeir Keinc*, ed. Williams, pp. 40.24–41.1.

¹²² *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, p. 83.

¹²³ Bromwich, 'Dwy Chwedl', p. 155; *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, pp. ci–cii.

¹²⁴ Further examples are specified among the textual notes in *Culhwch*, edd. Bromwich & Evans, pp. 43–179.

¹²⁵ Important steps forward have nonetheless been made by J. N. Radner, 'Interpreting irony in medieval Celtic narrative: the case of *Culhwch and Olwen*', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 16 (1988) 41–59.

same author, then it follows, in view of the suggestion already made that the author of *Ymborth yr enaid* could be the author of *Owain* and/or *Breuddwyd Maxen*, that he would also be the author of the four other tales.

He would certainly be a very suitable candidate for such a distinction. Apart from being a latinist, learned theologian, and mystic, he was a master of the prose and poetic craft of his day, and there is room to think that he was a professional poet before joining the Dominican order. I have argued elsewhere that he was the original author of the bardic grammar ascribed to Einion Offeiriad and Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug,¹²⁶ and that, in accordance with the divine command which he received to call the poets to worship Christ instead of the vanities of the world,¹²⁷ he initiated a literary programme which included, among other things, 'sober, truthful written stories' (*ystoryaeu didruff digelwyd ysgriuennedic*)¹²⁸ so as to purify their standards. As a member of one of the mendicant orders he would certainly have wandered a lot, and not only within one country but also to other countries, acquainting himself with their cultures and languages, their traditions and tales. I find it difficult not to think that that cleric (*ysgolheic*) in the third branch of the *Mabinogi*, who appeared to Manawydan when he was about to hang the mouse, was not a member of one of these orders.¹²⁹ The author of *Ymborth yr enaid* is perhaps to be identified with Cnepyn Gwerthrynion.¹³⁰ His real name could even be Llywelyn Offeiriad,¹³¹ author of *Chwedlau Saith Doethion Rhufain* to whom I referred above,¹³² since this tale is similar in style, vocabulary, and syntax to the other tales and exhibits some close verbal correspondences with them.¹³³

The evidence submitted here is, admittedly, insufficient to do anything more than tentatively to suggest the author of *Ymborth yr enaid* as the author of the six

¹²⁶ I. Daniel, 'Awduriaeth y gramadeg a briodolir i Einion Offeiriad a Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug', *Ysgrifau Beirniadol* 13 (1985) 178–208; Daniel, *A Medieval Welsh Mystical Treatise*, pp. 25–7.

¹²⁷ See *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 22.203–7.

¹²⁸ *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid*, edd. G. J. Williams & E. J. Jones (Cardiff 1934), p. 57.12.

¹²⁹ See further Daniel, 'Golwg newydd', pp. 240–1; Daniel, *A Medieval Welsh Mystical Treatise*, pp. 29–30.

¹³⁰ See above, p. 118.

¹³¹ Cnepyn Gwerthrynion is a nickname meaning literally 'the small lump of Gwerthrynion', a reference to small physical stature. The same idea exactly is expressed in the nickname *Sypyn Cyfeiliog* for the poet Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd.

¹³² See above, p. 135. The only example of a man called Llywelyn Offeiriad given by P. C. Bartrum, *Welsh Genealogies, AD 300–1400* (8 vols, Cardiff 1974), is Llywelyn Offeiriad ap Gruffudd ab Owain of the lineage of Bleddyn ap Cynfyn (Powys), and of the ninth generation, born (according to Bartrum, *ibid.*, I.47) about 1300. He is said there to have sold his land to the earl of Lincoln. Llywelyn was, of course, a common name and there could have been many priests of that name.

¹³³ See above, pp. 135–6. The earliest text of the *Chwedlau* occurs in 'The Red Book of Hergest', written about 1400, but the tale could have been composed in the thirteenth century.

tales, and some points are open to more than one interpretation. Nonetheless, there is no need, I think, to be so shy of suggesting him as the possible author of at least one of them (for example, *Owain* and/or *Breuddwyd Maxen*).

CONCLUSION

I hope that I have succeeded here in showing that it is possible to use *Ymborth yr enaid* to throw some new rays of light on the *Mabinogion*frage. It may seem strange that such an important piece of evidence was not applied earlier to this difficult question; I have suggested some reasons for this, notably the problem of the origins of *Ymborth yr enaid* and received attitudes towards mediaeval Welsh religious prose generally.

To sum up, certain similarities in style and vocabulary between the *Pryd y Mab* section of *Ymborth yr enaid* and some of the tales justify one in asking whether there might be a link between the date, origin, and authorship of the former and those of the latter. As a result, I have tentatively concluded that some, perhaps most, of the native tales – namely 'The Four Branches', 'The Three Romances', *Breuddwyd Maxen*, and *Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys* – could have been composed by the author of *Ymborth yr enaid*, a man possibly identifiable with the little-known thirteenth-century poet and grammarian Cnepyn Gwerthrynion, who in turn is possibly identifiable with Llywelyn Offeiriad, author of *Chwedlau Saith Doethion Rhufain*, in the Dominican friary at Bangor, Gwynedd, sometime during the second and third quarters of the thirteenth century. Whether *Culhwch ac Olwen* belongs to the same period and is of the same authorship and origin it is difficult at present to tell. *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* may be considered the later product of a native of Powys. These ideas, taken *en bloc*, may seem outlandish; but, separated into their main strands, they have a lot in common with – although they are in origin wholly independent of – views which were expressed by others¹³⁴ before I first arrived at my conclusions and subsequently. This is particularly true of the dates and locations which I have suggested, for the present trend is undoubtedly towards a thirteenth-century date and a Venedotian origin for some at least of the tales. The novel, and most debatable, part of this paper is undoubtedly the theory advanced that most of the tales could be the work of one and the same man. Whether this idea will be consigned to oblivion remains to be seen, but further research into the 'family-resemblance' of the tales could, I think, lend further support to it. Even if such research did not support the case, it would still be a valuable contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the tales. But for

¹³⁴ See above, pp. 127–30.

my own part – and I have no axe to grind – whenever I read these tales, I am still unable, rightly or wrongly, despite the passage of over a quarter of a century, to shake off the stubbornly recurring impression that they are, quite simply (apart from *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*), the product of the same mind, a mind of great originality, variety, and inventiveness, the mind of a literary genius who to this day has remained shrouded in anonymity (which was probably what he wanted). Had the dates of the tales not been distributed over the centuries, their mutual similarities might have received at least as much attention as their mutual differences. The possibility remains, of course, that the similarities between *Ymborth yr enaid* and the tales signify not that the composer of the treatise was the author of the tales but only that he was influenced by them, in which case, there would not necessarily be any authorial, chronological or geographical connection between the former and the latter. In view, however, of the increasing signs of geographical and chronological convergence between *Ymborth yr enaid* and the tales – not to mention that *Ymborth yr enaid* is the sole text in the whole corpus of mediaeval Welsh religious prose which bears some similarities to the tales – I think this to be the less likely possibility. Finally, by way of an afternote, the question of the date of the tales could also, I think, be placed on a still sounder footing by a systematic and comprehensive study, not hitherto undertaken, of the manifest influence on the tales of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia regum Britanniae* and the thirteenth-century Welsh translations of it.

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Appendix

Ymborth yr enaid and the *Areithiau Pros*: Fleeting glimpses of a forgotten figure

I have argued above that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* echoes the other native tales and is a *reductio ad absurdum* of them.¹³⁵ The same appears to be true, albeit at a far lower literary level, of those enigmatic, anonymous, minor prose compositions of a narrative or rhetorical nature which D. Gwenallt Jones chose to call *Yr Areithiau Pros*. As Saunders Lewis observed, 'After *The Dream of Rhonabwy* there occur only fragile parodies and imitations,'¹³⁶ and it was no doubt these works which he had in mind. Even so, no one seems to have noticed that they too contain echoes of *Ymborth yr enaid*.

This can be seen most clearly in *Breuddwyd Gruffydd ap Adda ap Dafydd* ('The Dream of Gruffydd ap Adda ap Dafydd').¹³⁷ Here are related the experiences of a lover who has a dream in which he sees himself walking in the countryside until he reaches a valley with a fort in it and a splendid and beautiful lady in its highest tower. She tells him to look behind him rather than on her, and he sees a bloody battle between forces from the north and the south. The lover then asks her in verse whether there is any hope for whoever loves her, and she, in like fashion, replies that there has been, is, and will be none. The story begins as follows.¹³⁸

Breuddwyd y Mab ... afv yn dioddef poenedigaethnwyf gariad o Nossywyl ondras yn y gaiaf hyd nossywyl ddwynnwen ynyr haf ...

'The dream of the Son ... who suffered painful and passionate love from the eve of St Andrew in the winter till the eve of Dwynnwen in the summer ...'

The word *breuddwyd* is reminiscent of the use of the same word in *Ymborth yr enaid* for the spiritual ecstasy which the author experienced, and *mab* is the word used there for Jesus when twelve years old. Then *hyd nossywyl ddwynnwen ynyr haf* brings to mind (*A gwedy llithraw tabym o amser wedy hynny*) *hyt yny doeth Gwyl y Drindawt yn yr haf*...,¹³⁹ '(and after an amount of time subsequently had passed) until there came the Feast of the Trinity in summer ...'.

After the lover has gone to bed,¹⁴⁰

¹³⁵ See above, pp. 126–7.

¹³⁶ Lewis, *Braslun*, p. 43.

¹³⁷ *Yr Areithiau Pros*, ed. D. Gwenallt Jones (Cardiff 1934), pp. 18–23.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.1–4.

¹³⁹ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 15.39–40.

¹⁴⁰ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 19.4–6.

Ac yna ydoeth organ engylaidd yni glustie, ac ar broffwydoliaeth y Kyntvn kyntaf a gysgodd ef y vo ai gwelai ...

'And then there came [the sound of] an angelic organ to his ears, and on the prophecy of the first sleep he could see ...'

Compare *Ac yna, o chlynn y ryw gannveu digrifon per, araflef, gwybyd y mae y engyhyonn ef a'e kanant*,¹⁴¹ 'and then, if you hear some delightful, sweet, gentle-sounding songs, know that it is His angels who are singing them'; ... (*ac ymparatoi ... yn dy wely wedy phygein ...*) *yn ol yr hun gynntaf ...*,¹⁴² '...(and prepare yourself ... in your bed after daybreak ...) after the first sleep...'; ...*ef a welei (... vot y byt ... ar ben brynn ...)*,¹⁴³ '... he could see (... that the world ... was on the top of a hill ...)'.¹⁴⁴

But above all, consider the description of the lady.¹⁴⁴

... vn bens ... yn eise mewn kadair o asgwrn oliffant gwyn, a chywsie o sidan dros iffen, arraktal o aur yr asia; pedwar maen ar hvgain aoedd ar yrraktal o vain gwyrtvawr, kystal y llewychai y distala ohonv ar haul ddilwybrddydd [sic: read diwybrddydd]; dan yrra/tal [sic] yr oedd dal gwyn gwastad, a thir veinion [sic: read hir veinion] aele, * [sic] drem walchaid olwc, Affion liw rvddée [sic], a thrwyn addvein dlws, agene gweddusslan, ac aelgeth ddisgleirloyw, amwnwogl gwyn grwn, dwvron ddwywesaid, achorff addvain krediclvn, a dwylo hir wynion, abysedd hirveinion, ac ywinedd kryinion.

'... a lady ... sitting in a chair of white ivory, with a silk coif over her head, and a frontlet of Asian gold. Twenty-four stones were there on the frontlet of precious stones, [and] as brightly did the least of them shine as the sun on a cloudless day. Beneath the frontlet was a white, even forehead and long and slender eyebrows, a noble-looking appearance and rose-coloured cheeks and a shapely, pretty nose, and a fine and beautiful mouth, and a brilliantly shining chin, and a white, curved neck, a bosom like a goddess, and a shapely body of lovely form, and long and white hands, and long and slender fingers, and rounded nails.'

This is an obvious parody of the description of Jesus in *Ymborth yr enaid*. Compare *A'r karueiduab a oed yn kyfeisted kadeir adwyndec o askwrnn eliffant disgleirlathyr gannbeitrwyd*,¹⁴⁵ 'And the lovely son was sitting on a splendid and beautiful chair of shining and gleaming brilliance'; *dwy veinbleth o vein sidan*,¹⁴⁶ 'two slender plaits of slender silk'; *deudeg mein o amerodryon mein gwerthuawrussyon*,¹⁴⁷ 'twelve stones of precious imperial stones'; *yn disgleiraw megys ... heul vrth vcher*,¹⁴⁸ 'shining like ... the sun in the evening'; *gwynndal gwastatlyfyn*,¹⁴⁹ 'a white forehead even and smooth';

¹⁴¹ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 25.87–8.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 23.11–12.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.44–5.

¹⁴⁴ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, pp. 20.11–21.2.

¹⁴⁵ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 21.165–6.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.18–19.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.164.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 18.49–50.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.13.

hirueinon aeleu,¹⁵⁰ 'long and slender eyebrows'; (*pumpaeid*) *dremwalcheid*,¹⁵¹ '(majestic) [and] noble-looking'; *rudyen ... ffuonliw*,¹⁵² 'rose-coloured ... cheeks'; *a thrwyn kyfladdrum vnyawnllun*,¹⁵³ 'and a nose of proportionate outline and symmetrical shape'; (*byrgrwnn*) *eneu gwedeid*,¹⁵⁴ 'a (small and round) seemly mouth'; *elgeth gronn gaboleit wastatlefy*,¹⁵⁵ 'a round and refined, even and smooth chin'; *mynwgyl kylchawcwyn hirlwys*,¹⁵⁶ 'a round and white, long and beautiful neck'; *dwyrwnn vilwryeid*,¹⁵⁷ 'a war-like breast'; *a chorff (lleweid arderchawc, ac am y arch yn) aduein vonedigeidlun*,¹⁵⁸ 'and a (leonine and excellent body, and) slender and of noble form (around his waist)'; *duylaw hirwynnyon*,¹⁵⁹ 'long and white hands'; *hirveinon vyssed*,¹⁶⁰ 'long and slender fingers'; *byrryon ewined ballassar*,¹⁶¹ 'short and pink nails'.

There is little, indeed, in the description in this *Araith* which does not come from *Ymborth yr enaid*.

As for the rest, the words which the lady speaks to the lover, *Iownach yt edrych ar ynifver sydd or tv hwnt yt noc edrych arnaf i yn dungwaith* [sic: ?read un dyddgwaith],¹⁶² 'It is righter for you to look at the host yonder than to look at me (?one time)' is reminiscent of the words of Jesus to the friar, *A manac y'r prydydyon y rodeis i vdunt gyfurann o yspryt vy nigrifwuch i y mae yawnach oed vdunt ymchwelut y'r yspryt hwnnw y'm dinyll i noc y ganmol ynywtserch gorrwagyon bethu tranghedigyon yn amsserawl*,¹⁶³ 'And tell the poets, to whom I have given a share of the spirit of my delightfulness, that it were righter for them to return to that spirit to adore me than to praise the foolish love of the empty, perishable things of time'. Compare too *Nid ir boksach yn yngradd*,¹⁶⁴ 'Not because I boasted of my status', and *Ac nyt reit y mynegi y neb ... na bocsachu amdanei*,¹⁶⁵ 'And it need not be expressed to anyone ... or be boasted about'.

In *Araith o Gowreinwaith*¹⁶⁶ ('*Araith* of Fine Art'), which is also about a lover

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.16.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 17.25.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 18.48–9.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 18.33–4.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.77.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19.78.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.79.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.84.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 19.84–5.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.81–2.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 19.83.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 19.82.

¹⁶² *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 21.4–6.

¹⁶³ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 22.203–7.

¹⁶⁴ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 23.7–8.

¹⁶⁵ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 26.106–8.

¹⁶⁶ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, pp. 27–9.

who experiences great difficulty in winning the heart of a girl of gentle upbringing, the first word *Cariadfab*¹⁶⁷ ('lover') is reminiscent of the use of the same words in *Ymborth yr enaid* for Jesus¹⁶⁸ and (*cyfarfyddai yr wylôfus fab ag ymddiriedol brofedig gydymaith*,¹⁶⁹ '(the tearful son met) a trusted and proven companion' is a distinct echo of (*nyt reit y mynegi y neb, onnyt y gyfrinachus getymdeith o grefydwr*,¹⁷⁰ '(you need not express it to anyone except to) a fellow religious who has been confided in'.

Finally, in *Araith Wgon*¹⁷¹ ('The *Araith* of *Gwgon*') the words *henwrach ... a ssaith o brif gampau arni*,¹⁷² 'an old hag possessing seven virtues', brings to mind the seven spiritual virtues which are expounded in the first part of *Ymborth yr enaid*, and *Ymwasc a hi, ymgar*,¹⁷³ 'Press her, love her', is similar to *yn ymwascu ac yn ymgaru ac ef*,¹⁷⁴ 'pressing and loving Him'.

That some of the *Areithiau Pros* parody *Ymborth yr enaid* as well as the native tales suggests some kind of link between the treatise and the tales, and this in turn is of relevance to the possibility expressed above that the author of *Ymborth yr enaid* is the author of most of the tales as well.¹⁷⁵

Another most interesting point about the *Areithiau* is the statement in *Breuddwyd Gruffudd ap Adda ap Dafydd* that the *Mab* comes from *gywaeth Arwystl hir*,¹⁷⁶ 'the country of *Arwystl Hir*', and that he had a dream *ar y llofft newydd ymangor*,¹⁷⁷ 'in the new upstairs room in *Bangor*'. I have suggested that *Cnepyn Gwerthrynion* could be the author of *Ymborth yr enaid*,¹⁷⁸ and the commote of *Gwerthrynion* touched the southern borders of the cantref of *Arwystli*. I have argued too that some of the tales may have been composed in the Dominican friary at *Bangor*.¹⁷⁹ Is *y llofft newydd ymangor* a reference to the building of the Dominican house at *Bangor*, and can it really be that by *y Mab o gywaeth Arwystl hir* is meant *Cnepyn Gwerthrynion*?

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 27.1.

¹⁶⁸ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 24.63.

¹⁶⁹ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 28.6-7.

¹⁷⁰ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 26.106-7.

¹⁷¹ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, pp. 3-11.

¹⁷² *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 8.22-3.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.4.

¹⁷⁴ *Ymborth*, ed. Daniel, p. 23.18.

¹⁷⁵ See p. 142.

¹⁷⁶ *Areithiau*, ed. Jones, p. 18.1.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 18.4. On the location in *Bangor*, compare also what is said of the lover in *Araith o Gowreinwaith*, perhaps the same man, namely that he used to wait for the girl whom he desired in a spot in *Gwynedd Uwch Conwy*: *ibid.*, p. 28.26.

¹⁷⁸ See above, p. 118.

¹⁷⁹ See above, p. 130.