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Title of extract: **The Early Welsh Arthurian Poems**

Name of Author: **Sims-Williams, P.**

Title/Author of book/edition (if applicable): **The Arthur of the Welsh. Bromwich, R., Jarman, A.O.H. and Roberts, B.F. (editors)**

Name of Visual Creator or other acknowledgement (if applicable):

Journal details –title/Vol/Year (if applicable):

Publisher: **University of Wales Press**

Pages scanned: **33 - 71**

Course of Study (Module name and number): **Celtic Otherworlds – from the Druids to the Monastic Voyage Tale CYCS7019**

Name of Designated Person

authorising scanning: *E.L. Harris*

Date authorised: 03.04.17.

Moodle/Powerpoint

THE EARLY WELSH ARTHURIAN POEMS

Patrick Sims-Williams

THIS chapter covers the same ground as Kenneth Jackson's 'Arthur in Early Welsh Verse' (1959), which has been one of the most useful and compact treatments of its subject.¹ No new poems have come to light in the intervening thirty years, but there are several good reasons for re-examining the poems which Jackson discussed. Many have now been edited, and advances in Welsh lexicography and literary prosopography have clarified the meaning and allusions of others. Our understanding of the stylistic demands of metre and genre in Welsh poetry has been sharpened,² and there is now more appreciation of the distinction between mere obscurity and allusiveness as a positive quality. Finally, studies in manuscripts and manuscript survival have enhanced our knowledge of how poems were, or were not, transmitted, and of the manuscript context in which they were enjoyed by later medieval readers and listeners.

On the other hand, the general 'character of early Welsh literature', with which Jackson began, now looks less clear than it did in 1959 — not that Jackson's account has been decisively superseded or disproved. Many scholars would now be more agnostic about the degree to which the extant poems are 'popular' oral compositions 'handed on mainly orally by professional entertainers called *cyfarwyddiaid* . . . of comparatively low standing in the literary hierarchy', who 'doubtless. . . could not read Latin' and whose 'training in their own vernacular tradition was such that Latin influences stood little chance of penetrating it'. Against these views, it can be argued that exclusively 'popular' compositions, in the sense of non-aristocratic or non-learned ones, would have stood little chance of being written down by churchmen, whether for themselves or for aristocratic patrons, and that, in any case, the literary interests of early medieval Welsh audiences may have been more homogeneous than the popular/non-popular dichotomy supposes. Types of literature which scholars once apportioned among different classes of *literati* (or *illiterati*) and different audiences have been reinterpreted in terms of different genres which coexisted and interacted, satisfying the universal preference for variety in literature.³ It is not at all clear from the sources that terms such as *penceirddiaid* ('chief poets') and *cyfarwyddiaid*

referred to distinct literary men, rather than different roles which one and the same poet might adopt on different occasions. There is less evidence from Wales than there is from Ireland for elaborate hierarchies of learned men; and, in any case, the point of such schemes was not that the classes of poet were mutually exclusive, but that an aspiring poet could work his way up the hierarchy until he had embraced all possible functions.⁴

It would be wrong to be misled by the way in which the medieval Welsh and, still more, Irish, writers themselves liked to contrast native with foreign (biblical and classical) learning. Such schematization was probably a way of reducing a more or less common body of knowledge into order, of constructing a workable epistemology; it is not an indication that in practice there were mutually exclusive classes of knowledge.⁵ The similarity in tone between the early Welsh poems based on biblical or classical themes and those on native subjects suggests that any distinction between Latin and vernacular culture was a matter of language, genre and literary convention and did not preclude fruitful influence at the level of content. Moreover, even at the level of poetic language and convention, the gulf between Latin and vernacular practice may have been exaggerated by scholars who failed to consider the full range of Latin literature available in the early Middle Ages and the degree to which it may have been appreciated by non-classical norms. The poems in the Book of Taliesin which assert the archetypal bard Taliesin's superiority both over bookish clerics and over poets of lower rank reflect the sort of religious/secular tensions and professional jealousies that exist in all societies. They do not reflect a genuine conflict between Christian-Latin knowledge and surviving types of esoteric native knowledge; those conflicts must have been settled long before the period of the extant Welsh poems. Indeed, a considerable amount of the esoteric learning ascribed to Taliesin derives from medieval Latin encyclopaedic knowledge.⁶

By the period with which we shall be concerned — roughly the ninth to twelfth centuries — there was probably one indivisible body of knowledge in Wales, although presumably different people were expert in different parts of it and no one (unlike the exemplary Taliesin of legend) could hope to become expert in all of it. The word for 'experts' was *cyfarwyddiaid*. At its first occurrence in Old Welsh, this word refers to local people who know what rents are due on an estate — the sort of people that are called *periti* in Anglo-Saxon charters — but in other contexts other sorts of experts and expertise might be involved. The specialization of the word in the sense 'story-tellers' (these were not necessarily discrete from 'bards') reflects the high status of traditional narrative — both history and story — as an embodiment of knowledge. Such knowledge might (to use modern terms) include historical or mythic truth, or an uncertain mixture of both, as was the case with Arthur himself. We cannot and

should not distinguish between a 'historical' Latin tradition represented by Gildas's *De Excidio Britanniae*, the *Historia Brittonum* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* on the one hand and a 'mythic' or 'fictitious' vernacular tradition on the other. The Latin and Welsh texts share too many basic assumptions, such as the idea of the Island of Britain as a former and potential unity: from a functional point of view it mattered little whether this unity had been attacked by Anglo-Saxons or monsters, whether it had been defended by Aurelius Ambrosius or Arthur, or whether it would be restored by contemporary Britons and Dubliners or by heroes returning from the past. The world-picture is the same in either case.⁷

The difficulty of dating the Arthurian poems is still as severe as Jackson described it in 1959. There are several reasons why this is so. Twelve *englynion* in the margins of the Cambridge Juvencus are direct proof that secular and religious poems in Welsh were being written down at least as early as the first half of the tenth century, but the earliest extant poetic codex, the Black Book of Carmarthen, is no older than the thirteenth century. For some reason such as poor storage conditions, early codices, whether Latin or vernacular, survived badly in Wales, Ireland and Scotland, and most of the famous early Celtic manuscripts are extant because at an early stage they were taken to the Continent or, as in the case of the Juvencus and other surviving manuscripts from Wales, to England. Such manuscripts were preserved abroad for the sake of their Latin contents, rather than for any incidental vernacular glosses and marginalia; and completely vernacular manuscripts would not have warranted preservation. As a result, contemporary manuscript evidence for early Irish and Welsh texts consists almost exclusively of glosses and short prose notes; poems like the Juvencus *englynion* are rare.⁸ Consequently early Welsh poems preserved in later poetic codices have to be dated partly by linguistic comparison with the Old Welsh glosses — a perilous exercise in view of the difference in genre and transmission — and partly on the basis of internal evidence of content and authorship.

The internal approach to dating is less fruitful in Wales than in Ireland. From the ninth- to early-twelfth-century period, the only securely datable poems in later manuscripts are: the prophetic *Armes Prydein*, which belongs in a tenth-century political context; an anonymous poem in praise of Hywel ap Goronwy, who flourished c. 1100; and two poems by Meilyr Brydydd c. 1137. The continuous stream of praise-poems by named poets only begins with Meilyr. Scholars have often taken c. 1150 as a linguistic watershed for the dating of Arthurian poems, as Jackson mentions.⁹ This terminus has some validity — c. 1150 is also the approximate date for the demise of certain Old Welsh spelling conventions and Insular letter forms which appear to have been present in the exemplars of some poems, to judge by

transcription errors — but insofar as it is based on comparison with the praise-poems, it may be misleading since the Arthurian poems may have followed different stylistic and metrical conventions, both in preserving certain archaisms (e.g. 'Irish' and *trwm ac ysgafn* rhymes) and in allowing innovations which the *penceirddiaid* eschewed, at least when composing praise-poetry.¹⁰ One consequence of this uncertainty is that it is rarely possible to know whether an Arthurian poem, in its extant form, is earlier or later than Geoffrey of Monmouth (c. 1138). It is frustrating that 'pre-1150' leaves this important question unanswered. Such a dating should not, however, be misinterpreted as meaning 'shortly before 1150'; indeed, it is possible that many 'pre-1150' poems may be as old as the Juvencus *englynion* or even earlier. In this connection it must be stressed that already in the *Historia Brittonum* of 829/30 there is clear evidence for the existence of a vernacular poetic tradition and of a body of Arthurian stories — the two necessary preconditions for the Arthurian poems.¹¹

Another uncertainty is the degree to which the extant poems were orally composed and transmitted.¹² Presumably they are 'oral' poems in the sense that they were composed aloud (rather than silently, pen in hand) and were intended for oral communication, either through recitation from memory or from reading out a manuscript; but were they written down at the time of composition and then transmitted primarily by manuscripts? We do not have the evidence to answer these questions, but at least some possible misunderstandings can be cleared away. First of all, the present lack of early manuscripts in no way indicates illiteracy; to give a *reductio ad absurdum*, on such negative evidence one could argue that the Latin liturgy of the early Welsh Church existed only orally, for no early liturgical manuscripts survive! Secondly, as we have seen, there are no grounds for supposing that there was a complete divide in early Wales between an oral, secular, vernacular culture and a literate, clerical, Latin culture: indeed, the secular Juvencus *englynion* are tangible proof that this was not the case. Thirdly, when the texts of poems found in more than one manuscript vary 'in a way natural to the oral tradition of the *cyfarwyddiaid*',¹³ this can be taken as proof only of oral transmission (or, more narrowly, of writing down from memory), not of oral composition; one need only compare the extreme textual variation in certain Middle English romances which must originally have been composed by scribes translating French exemplars, and only subsequently came to be orally transmitted.¹⁴ Fourthly, it is possible that the literary culture of Wales was indeed largely oral, but that what has survived in manuscript is untypical of what once existed orally: to put an extreme case, it is not impossible that poems now extant in single medieval manuscripts, such as the Juvencus *englynion* or *Preiddeu Annwn*, were never widely disseminated, either orally or in writing.

A final point on which there is now less scholarly agreement than in 1959 is the

existence in early Wales of the 'prose-verse sagas' posited by Joseph Loth and Ifor Williams on the analogy of certain Irish tales. Although Jackson speaks of early Welsh verse 'having quite often taken the form of embellishments in a narrative which was chiefly in prose', there is no *direct* evidence for this form before the late medieval *chante-fable* of Trystan and Esyllt; the handful of *englynion* scattered through *Culhwch ac Olwen* and the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi* are not really comparable. While it is possible that some extant Welsh poems were originally recited with a prose framework which was later lost, or was never written down, recent critics, such as Jenny Rowland, have been sceptical and have tended to treat each case on its merits.¹⁵ Obviously the modern reader is at a disadvantage in knowing less about traditional characters, places and incidents than medieval audiences did; but to appreciate most of the poems only a limited amount of such general knowledge is necessary, not a detailed prose narrative. In many cases, the *essential* narrative context emerges obliquely while the poem is recited, as happens, for instance, with modern ballads and *Lieder*. Even if some important narrative element is apparently omitted, the resulting allusiveness or disjuncture can add an appropriate air of mystery or wonder; that this atmosphere was acceptable or desirable even in prose narrative is shown by the story of the mysterious claw in the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, where the audience is left to guess at the existence and actions of supernatural beings.¹⁶ The Arthurian poems undoubtedly rely on some pre-existing knowledge about the identity of Arthur and his band, and some of them are related to narratives which were also told in prose form (e.g. the poems 'Pa gur?' and *Preiddeu Annwn* have analogues in *Culhwch ac Olwen*), but few of them demand the reconstruction of an elaborate prose framework. To a considerable extent the poets seem to have succeeded in creating free-standing evocations of an Arthurian world. The Norse Eddaic poems and the Old English 'elegies' may provide better comparisons than most Irish prose-verse tales or the *Four Branches*, where the poetry is only a minor adjunct to the prose.

The most important manuscript sources for early Welsh Arthurian poems are the Black Book of Carmarthen (mid-thirteenth century) and the Book of Taliesin (early fourteenth century); I shall discuss these in turn. Two other codices need be mentioned only in passing. The Book of Aneirin (late thirteenth century) contains only one Arthurian allusion, of uncertain antiquity, in the text of the *Gododdin*:¹⁷ Gwawrddur, a warrior in the warband gathered by the sixth-century ruler of Edinburgh,¹⁸ is praised highly 'although he was not Arthür'.¹⁹ Arthur, then, was without peer according to the author of this line; but, alas, no one can say for certain when it was composed.²⁰ Another important compilation, the Red Book of Hergest (c. 1400), contains several allusions to Arthur, but all except one are in late court

poetry and are only of secondary interest here.²¹ The exception is the early poem in *englyn* metre on Geraint fab Erbin (discussed below), and this is known independently from the Black Book of Carmarthen and from a fragment in the White Book of Rhydderch (c. 1350). Arthur's absence from the other early 'saga *englynion*' in the White and Red Books²² is striking; apparently he did not dominate the early narrative tradition in the way he dominates *Culhwch ac Olwen*, the *Three Romances* and the *Triads* (see below, chs.3, 6, 7, 8).

The Black Book of Carmarthen is the earliest extant volume containing Welsh Arthurian poems. It was compiled c. 1250 by a southern Welsh cleric, possibly at Carmarthen itself. The extant quires include about forty items, of which only the *Triads of the Horses* are in prose. The compiler seems to have been a man of moderately conservative tastes, favouring poems composed a few generations earlier, and admitting nothing recognizably contemporary. The datable praise-poems stretch from 1100 to 1160, and the identifiable allusions in the prophetic poems relate to the period 1151-1212.²³ The fourteen items relating to Welsh narrative tradition cannot be dated so precisely. Pre-1100 dates have been claimed for some of them, but while these are quite credible, the linguistic and metrical criteria by which they might be confirmed have still to be found. There is no *obvious* influence from Geoffrey of Monmouth and the French romances. On the other hand, since there may be one case where material deriving from Geoffrey (via the *Brut*) has been transmuted almost beyond recognition,²⁴ one suspects that there could be other *unobvious* borrowings.

The most substantial Arthurian poem in the Black Book is the dialogue beginning 'Pa gur yv y porthaur?' (no. 31: 'What man is the gatekeeper?').²⁵ While this dialogue is not necessarily a remnant of a saga, it echoes many stories. Most of these stories are now forgotten, yet the poem remains effective, because, far from providing a dry catalogue, the poet includes details which conjure up the heroes and localities he names. Just as a free-standing poem like the Old English *Widsith* conjures up the sombre world of Germanic legend, so 'Pa gur?' evokes, and indeed creates, the wonderful, irresponsible atmosphere of an Arthurian past. Like the lists in *Culhwch*, its recitation would remind an audience of half-forgotten stories and whet their appetites for new ones. For the most part, the tone is light (despite the heroic clichés), and the poet revels in his non-stop metre (a sort of Skeltonics), his word-play, and his obsessive numerology. On the other hand, the repeated use of the imperfect tense gives an elegiac colour to Arthur's boasting (note in particular lines 62-3); perhaps we should imagine an Arthur down on his luck, accompanied by Cai and only three other warriors ('the vultures of Eléi'), and living in the past. The poem seems to reflect the tension inherent in the Arthurian fable: while Arthur's time was a glorious high point, it doomed subsequent ages to mediocrity.²⁶

In the extant portion of the poem, Bedwyr and Cai are Arthur's main henchmen. We may recall their similar role in *Culhwch* and in the *Triads*, and, more usefully for dating purposes, in the *Vita Sancti Cadoci*, composed by Lifris of Llancarfan c. 1100.²⁷ A similar date and south-eastern provenance would suit 'Pa gur?' very well: in particular, such a localization would make sense of the reference to Eléi, the River Ely near Llandaf.²⁸ This unusual topographical reference in line 11 is more valuable for localizing the poem than the more conventional references to Edinburgh and Anglesey further on.

The relationship between 'Pa gur?' and *Culhwch* is problematic. Besides Arthur, Cai, and Bedwyr, a number of characters reappear in *Culhwch*, such as Glewlwyd the gatekeeper, Mabon son of Modron and Mabon son of Melit (perhaps the same person with matronymic and patronymic?),²⁹ Manawyd(an) son of Llŷr, and God himself (in a pious reference in line 74 that has parallels in *Culhwch*). Moreover, in line 33 there is a reference to *celli* ('grove'), which may be Arthur's court at Celli Wig in Cornwall, as *passim* in *Culhwch*.³⁰ On the other hand, a degree of overlap is not very surprising considering the length of *Culhwch* and its catalogues, and it is perhaps more striking that many persons and places in 'Pa gur?' are *not* gathered into *Culhwch*: Uthr Pendragon; Cys[t]aint fab Banon;³¹ Afarnach (unless the same name as Wrnach); Pen Palach; Garwlwyd; Llachau; Palug; and, among the places: Eléi; Tryfrwyd; Eidin (except in the epithet of Clydno Eidin); Disethach; *Ystawingun*; and even Môn (Anglesey). Besides, there are various contradictions (or apparent contradictions) between the texts. In *Culhwch* Glewlwyd is Arthur's porter, although there is some hesitation;³² in 'Pa gur?', however, he seems independent of Arthur (compare the late medieval *Araith Iolo Goch* where he is Taran's porter).³³ Again, in 'Pa gur?' Mabon is described as a servant of Uthr Pendragon (Arthur's father), whereas in *Culhwch* he has been incarcerated almost since the dawn of time!

It is unlikely, then, that the compilers of *Culhwch* drew on a written text of the poem as a main source (or vice versa). Nevertheless, three passages in *Culhwch* suggest that the compiler(s) of its catalogues may have had a vague memory of parts of 'Pa gur?'. First, the names 'Glewlwyd Gauaeluawr, a Lloch Llawwynnyawc, ac Anwas Edeinawc' in lines 192-3 of *Culhwch* seem to recall lines 2 and 25-6 of the poem. Llŵch and Anwas may, however, have been linked in some lost story (about their defence of Edinburgh?) to which both texts refer independently. (Llŵch's sons are mentioned in *Culhwch* line 291, and a Twrch son of Anwas in line 201.) Secondly, in lines 288-92, *Culhwch* invokes 'Gwynn Gotyuron', Arthur's four maternal uncles (all named Gwair!), and 'the sons of Llŵch Llawwynnyawc from beyond Môr Terwyn'.³⁴ The otherwise unknown 'Gwynn Gotyuron' is clearly the same as *Guin Godybrion* in 'Pa gur?'; the -b- in the latter (like the -gu- in *Anguas*,

line 25) is a trace of an exemplar in Old Welsh orthography. The epithet, which is perhaps a place-name, looks as if it contains OW *dubr* 'water' (cf. Old Irish *fodoborda(e)* 'underwater, aquatic?'). Thirdly, a few sentences further on in *Culhwch*, 'Kelli and Cuel' (variants *Keli* and *Cueli*) are named (297-8); these odd names are surely due to a faulty memory of lines 33-4 of 'Pa gur?', where *kelli* is a place-name (i.e. Celli Wig) and *cuelli* is a rare common-noun meaning 'fury'.³⁵

'Pa gur?' begins as a dialogue between Arthur (one presumes) and the porter:

- 1 'What man is the gatekeeper?'
- 2 — 'Glewlwyd Great Grasp;
- 3 what man asks it?'
- 4 — 'Arthur and [or with] Cai the fair.'
- 5 — 'What [band] goes with you?'
- 6 — 'The best men in the world.'
- 7 — 'Into my house you will not come
- 8 unless you vouch for them.'
- 9 — 'I shall vouch for them,
- 10 and you will see them,
- 11 the vultures of Ely,
- 12 and all three of them wizards:
- 13 Mabon son of Mydron,
- 14 Uthr Pendragon's servant;
- 15 Cys[t]aint son of Banon;
- 16 and Gwyn Goddyfrion.

Such exchanges with recalcitrant porters were commonplace in medieval literature, and in real life, too, no doubt. Within Welsh literature one thinks immediately of *Culhwch*'s dialogue with Glewlwyd at the gate of Arthur's court, and, further on in *Culhwch*, the dialogue with another porter at the gate of 'Wrnach's hall' (line 773, *neuad Vrnach/Wrnach*; cf. *neuad Awarnach* in line 39 of 'Pa gur?' ?). Because it is extremely effective, the porter-scene may well have been a stock narrative formula: there is already an example in the early-ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, c.32 (cf. c.47), which probably echoes vernacular story-telling here.³⁶

At line 17 Arthur goes off into the imperfect tense (as noted above), praising his warriors:

- 17 Stout were my servants
- 18 defending their rights.
- 19 Manawydan son of Llŷr,
- 20 whose counsel was weighty;
- 21 Manawydd brought
- 22 shattered spears (or shields) back from Tryfrwyd.
- 23 And Mabon son of Melit,
- 24 he used to stain grass with blood.
- 25 And Anwas the Winged
- 26 and Llŷch Windy(?) Hand:
- 27 they were accustomed to defend
- 28 at Edinburgh on the border.
- 29 A lord would give them refuge,

30 where he would avenge them. [or my nephew would avenge.]

It is unclear whether these people are present in Arthur's company; indeed they may all be dead. *Manawydd* is an attested variant of *Manawydan*, who is best known from the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*, where his wise counsel is repeatedly stressed. His patronymic suggests that he had been equated with the Irish and Manx sea-god, Manannán *mac Lir*, but as he has nothing to do with the sea in Welsh sources the view that the equation was secondary is attractive.³⁷ Line 22, *eis tull o trywruidd*, is ambiguous. *Eis* are 'ribs', metaphorically 'timbers' and hence arms of some kind; the point is that Manawydd or his weapons, being *tull* ('pierced'), bore the marks of brave fighting in the thick of the fray. *O trywruidd* could be a misspelling of another adjective qualifying *eis*, that is *gotrywruidd* 'speckled, bespattered [with blood]', which describes a shield elsewhere in the Black Book. On the other hand the verb in line 21 seems to require a place-name, and its tense (preterite) suggests that Arthur is referring to a particular incident rather than to Manawydd's habitual bravery. For these reasons *o trywruidd* is best taken as an allusion to the 'battle on the bank of a river which is called *Tribruit*', the tenth in the list of Arthur's battles in the *Historia Brittonum*, c.56.³⁸ *Traeth Tryfrwyd* (the name means 'very speckled shore') is unfortunately unidentified.³⁹ It is mentioned again in line 48.

The following lines mark the start of a long sequence about Cai:

- 31 Cai would entreat them,
- 32 while he struck three at a time.
- 33 When Celli was lost,
- 34 there was fury.
- 35 Cai would entreat them
- 36 as he cut them down.

If these lines refer to Arthur's court at Celli Wig in Cornwall, they must relate to a period of adversity for Arthur.⁴⁰ Who are Cai's opponents here? If Arthur's afore-mentioned servants are meant, we have to imagine that for a period Cai turned against his own side; this would be why he pleads with them even as he strikes them. Indeed there is a dark hint in *Culhwch* that Cai did indeed turn against Arthur in his hour of need, when his men were being slain.⁴¹

The account of Cai is interrupted by some lines about Arthur himself:

- 37 Though Arthur laughed [or ?played],
- 38 he caused the/her blood to flow
- 39 in Afarnach's hall,
- 40 fighting with a witch.
- 41 He pierced Cudgel(?) Head
- 42 in the dwellings of Disethach.
- 43 On the mountain of Edinburgh
- 44 he fought with dogheads.
- 45 By the hundred they fell;

46 they fell by the hundred
 47 before Bedwyr the Perfect [or Perfect-Sinew].
 48 On the shores of Tryfrwyd,
 49 fighting with Rough Grey,
 50 furious was his nature
 51 with sword and shield.

It is odd that Arthur should speak of himself in the third person. It has been suggested that these lines are spoken by Cai,⁴² or that we should emend *Arthur* to *aruth(u)r* 'terrible', therefore translating: 'Terribly he (i.e. Cai) laughed. . .'.⁴³ If Cai is meant, one might compare his murderous visit to the 'hall of Wrnach' in *Culhwch*; on the other hand, in *Culhwch* it is Arthur himself who attempts to fight with a witch (*gwidon*) 'in the uplands of Hell' in the 'North' with the object of obtaining her blood.⁴⁴

Nothing else is known about Pen Palach ('Cudgel Head'?) and Disethach, but the termination *-ach* evokes their unpleasantness.⁴⁵ The term *cinbin* (i.e. *cynbyn* 'dogheads') is clearly a calque on the classical *Cynocephali*, mythical inhabitants of India. According to St Augustine's discussion of 'monstrous births', their 'dogs' heads and even barking show them to be beasts rather than men,⁴⁶ but other early medieval scholars regarded them as humans with souls;⁴⁷ they appear, for example, among the more exotic members of the human race in the twelfth-century tympanum at Vézelay. In Irish texts, dogheads (*conchinn*) appear both as saints and as monsters, in the latter aspect alongside catheads and goatheads.⁴⁸ Clearly the *cinbin* which Arthur (or Cai) fights are monsters. But what are they doing on the 'mountain of Edinburgh', seeing that Pliny (*Natural History*, VII.ii.23) placed them in the mountains of India? We should perhaps compare the way in which Old Irish scholars numbered *Conchind* among the prehistoric conquerors of Ireland. On the other hand, we might see here an instance of the tendency to transfer marvels from one periphery of the medieval world to another.⁴⁹

Bedwyr seems to be named as an assistant in line 47, but seems to be the main focus by lines 48-51. Here we learn that the enemy at the battle of *traethev trywruid* was *garvluid* 'rough grey', presumably an ellipsis for Gwrgi Garwlwyd ('Gwrgi Rough Grey'), who is mentioned in the *Triads*. *Gwrgi* was a normal personal-name in Wales, but the train of thought in the poem becomes clear when we note that the transparent etymology of *Gwr-gi* is 'man-dog'. Quite likely, then, 'Rough Grey' in line 49 was imagined to be one of the dogheads of line 44. *Triad* 32 states that the killing of Gwrgi Garwlwyd by Diffydell son of Dysgyfawd was one of the Three Fortunate Assassinations. Then, with curious deference to early medieval Sabbatarianism, the *Triad* adds: 'That Gwrgi used to make a corpse of one of the Cymry every day, and two on Saturday so as not to slay on a Sunday!'⁵⁰ Since

another triad (no. 10) names the poet-sons of Disgyfawd as the Three Chieftains of Deira and Bernicia,⁵¹ we should presumably place Gwrgi somewhere in the vicinity of Northumbria, and this suits the poem's reference to the 'mountain of Edinburgh' nicely.

Bedwyr's epithet *pedrydant* slightly resembles his patronymic in the *Triads* and *Geraint*, where he is the son of *Bedrawc* or *Pedrawt*,⁵² but it is not necessary to suppose any corruption. There is more about Bedwyr in the following lines of 'Pa gur?', where an otherwise unknown *Bridlav* appears to be named along with him:

52 Vain was a host
 53 compared with Cai in battle.
 54 He was a sword in battle;
 55 from [or into] his hand pledges were given.
 56 He was a constant chief
 57 over a host [or a defence] for the sake of a land.
 58 Bedwyr and [or with] Bridlav:
 59 nine hundred listening,
 60 [and] six hundred scattering,
 61 was the worth (effect) of his incitement.

As Bridlav seems out of place here, we could perhaps emend *Beduir. a Bridlav.* to *Beduir ab Bridlav*, or, better, *Beduir ab Ritlav* ('Bedwyr son of Rhyddlaw [i.e. 'Generous-Hand']'); either emendation would conflict, however, with the patronymic quoted above. The numerical exaggeration, using multiples of three, can be paralleled in more serious heroic poetry, and also in the statement in *Historia Brittonum*, c.56, which may be based on a vernacular poem, that Arthur slew 960 men in a single onrush at the Battle of Badon.⁵³

In the following lines of the poem, Arthur is undoubtedly recalling the past (with what effect on the waiting porter we shall never know):

62 I used to have servants;
 63 it was better when they were alive.
 64 Before the lord [or lords] of Emrys [i.e. Gwynedd]
 65 I saw Cai hastening.
 66 Prince of plunder,
 67 he was a warrior long (= unrelenting) as an enemy.
 68 Heavy was his vengeance,
 69 painful was his fury.
 70 When he would drink from a horn
 71 he would drink enough for four.
 72 When he came into battle,
 73 he would slay enough for a hundred.
 74 Unless it were God who accomplished it,
 75 Cai's death were unattainable.
 76 Cai the fair and Llachau,
 77 they performed battles
 78 before the pain of blue spears (ended the conflict).

Emrys/Emreis is the Welsh derivative of *Ambrosius*. The reference may be to the

historical Ambrosius Aurelianus, whose victories against the Saxons were mentioned by Gildas, or to the wonder-child Ambrosius of the *Historia Brittonum*. As the latter was associated with Snowdonia, the Welsh praise-poets often use *Emrys* as a periphrasis for Gwynedd,⁵⁴ and this gives the best sense in the above text. The formula *gweleis* ('I saw. . .') is common in praise-poems listing battles and exploits, and we can assume that Cai was hastening into conflict at the head of (rather than against) the lords of Gwynedd: thus Meilyr, lamenting Gruffudd ap Cynan of Gwynedd (d. 1137), remembers him *rac bytin Emreis* 'before/at the head of the host of Emreis'.⁵⁵ The literal meaning of line 67 is 'he was a warrior long/tall as an enemy', but there is probably a pun on Cai's epithet *hir* 'the tall', which appears in later medieval poetry.⁵⁶ The comment in lines 74-5 suggests that, in addition to Cai's other 'peculiarities' listed in *Culhwch*, he could only be killed in special circumstances; compare Lleu in the *Four Branches*, who says that 'Unless God kills me, it is not easy to kill me'.⁵⁷

Llachau is presumably Arthur's son Llachau.⁵⁸ The text is usually assumed (especially as Arthur is speaking) to refer to Llachau battling on the same side as Cai, but the two could be opponents, fighting to the death.⁵⁹ That there may have been some such story is suggested by the fact that the Welsh translator of *Perlesvaus*, translating the story of Cai's treacherous murder of Arthur's son Loholt, replaced the name *Loholt* with *Llacheu*.⁶⁰ There are two earlier, but unfortunately vague, allusions to Llachau's death. The first is in the Black Book itself, where a speaker (Gwyddneu Garanhir?), using the formula *Mi a wum* ('I have been'), evokes the heroic past by cataloguing the 'warriors of Britain' at whose deaths he has been present:

. . . I have been where Llachau was killed, son of Arthur, marvellous in songs,
when the ravens croaked(?) over blood. . . I have been where the warriors of
Britain were slain, from the east to the north; I am alive, they in the grave! . . .⁶¹

This gives no clue as to how and where Llachau was slain, but Bleddyn Fardd, in an elegy on Dafydd ap Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, who was brutally executed at Shrewsbury in 1283 — having been betrayed, significantly, by his own kinsmen⁶² — recalls how 'Llachau was slain below Llech Ysgar'. While the latter place is unidentified, it is known to have been the site of one of the courts of Madog ap Maredudd (d. 1160) of Powys.⁶³ There may have been a local legend there comparable to that already found further south in Ergyng when the *Historia Brittonum* was composed in the ninth century; that reported (c.73) the wonderful grave of Arthur's son Amr, whom Arthur himself slew and buried.⁶⁴

The remaining lines of the poem recount further exploits by Cai:

79 On the top/upland of *Ystawingun*
80 Cai pierced nine witches.

81 Cai the fair went to Anglesey
82 to destroy lions [? wild-cats].
83 His shield was polished
84 against Palug's Cat.
85 When [or Why do?] people ask
86 'Who pierced Palug's Cat?':
87 (the story is that) nine score warriors [or greyheads]
88 used to fall as [or into] its food;
89 nine score champions
90 used to . . .

The nine witches here recall the Nine Witches of Gloucester in *Peredur*.⁶⁵ Nine is also the number of the maidens in *Preiddeu Annwn* and elsewhere, and was evidently a conventional figure (three threes) for supernatural females.⁶⁶ In particular, however, we can compare the nine witches in the seventh-century(?) Breton-Latin *Life of St Samson*, I.26-7. (A version of this *Vita* was available in Wales in the early-twelfth-century Book of Llandaf.) The episode shows close similarities with the *Peredur* episode, including the geographical area (south-east Wales or the border).⁶⁷ Can *Ystawingun* be localized in the same general area? So far it has defied identification,⁶⁸ but in view of the reference to Anglesey in line 81, it may be connected with Porth Ysgewin (Portskewett), in the extreme south-east of Wales, which is often contrasted with Anglesey in the extreme north-west.⁶⁹ An Old Welsh spelling of *Ysgewin* such as **Yscauguin* might easily be corrupted to *Ystawingun*.

Like Cai, St Samson was also said to have vanquished a lion (*Vita*, I.57), presumably another conventional heroic exploit transferred to the saint. The distinction between lions and wild-cats may have been vague, so Cath Palug ('Palug's Cat', but originally 'the clawing cat?') may well have been one of the 'lions' of Anglesey of line 82. Certainly Cath Palug is associated with that island in *Triad* 26: the magic sow Henwen, after travelling across Wales from Aber Tarogi (near Porth Ysgewin) to Arfon, gave birth to a kitten, which Coll son of Collfrewy threw into the Menai, 'and she was afterwards Palug's Cat'. Later versions add that she was also 'one of the Three Oppressions of Anglesey', having been fostered by 'the sons of Palug . . . to their own harm'. She may be the same cat that is already referred to as 'the speckled cat' in a prophecy in the Book of Taliesin, dated 942-50(?) by Ifor Williams.⁷⁰ If this is the case, the monster cat had a long literary career, for she lived on in French romance as the *C(h)apalu* which fought, and according to some vanquished, Arthur himself. Fordun, too, reported an oral tradition about how Arthur's soldier Caius sought out and slew a gigantic cat (*cattus*).⁷¹ A particularly close analogue, which explains the description of Cai's shield as *mynud* 'polished, smooth' (line 83), is preserved by a fifteenth-century English writer: Arthur destroyed some wild-cats, either in Cornwall or at Glastonbury, by using a glass shield, which

tricked them into attacking their own reflections.⁷²

Even in its incomplete state, 'Pa gur?' is by far the most substantial Arthurian poem in the Black Book. Otherwise, there are only brief allusions to Arthur in this manuscript. He is named as the father of Llachau in the poem quoted above. Cynddelw, in *englynion* to the warband of the above-mentioned Madog ap Maredudd (d. 1160), compares their shout to 'the shout of the host of Arthur's warband'.⁷³ Finally, he is mentioned in passing in *Gereint fil[ius] Erbin* and in the 'Stanzas of the Graves' (*Englynion y Beddau*).⁷⁴ These two poems deserve detailed treatment.

Geraint son of Erbin, as he appears in Welsh tales and genealogies, may be a composite figure, based on more than one person of the name: the British general Gerontius who rebelled against Constantine in the early fifth century; a sixth-century Geraint in the *Gododdin* (see below); a still later Geruntius, King of Domnonia (> English *Devon*, Welsh *Dyfnaint*), who corresponded with Aldhelm and fought against the West Saxons in 710; the Cornish saint Gerent (patron saint of Gerrans), who seems to have been regarded as a king by the eleventh century; and a Gerennius, King of Cornwall, in the Book of Llandaf's *Life of St Teilo*.⁷⁵ There is also the hero of *Gereint*, but this romance is clearly later than the poem, although the latter cannot be dated more precisely than to the early twelfth century or before.

It might be argued on the basis of their genealogical tracts that the Welsh became interested in Geraint on various counts: as an alleged grandson of Custennin of Cornwall (arguably the tyrant Constantine of *Damnonia* castigated by Gildas in the sixth century); as the alleged ancestor of Cornish saints known or culted in Wales; and as the ancestor of the south-eastern Welsh dynasty of Morgan ab Owain (d. 980). On the other hand, the relevant genealogical materials are late and they may have been inspired by Geraint's literary fame rather than the reverse. The earliest extant manuscript is BL Cotton Vespasian A.xiv (Monmouth, c. 1200), according to which St Cybi (the patron of Llangybi, Monmouthshire) was born in Cornwall to a *princeps miliciae* named Salomon, 'Erbin filius, filius Gereint, filius Lud'.⁷⁶ Geraint and his father have probably been inadvertently swapped here, but the absence of Custennin makes one suspect that in later genealogical manuscripts he may have been inserted in order to make Geraint and Arthur first cousins, both grandsons of Constantine (Arthur's grandfather in Geoffrey of Monmouth), as in the romance of *Gereint*.⁷⁷

The structure of the Black Book poem is simple, and relies heavily on the stylistic and mnemonic device of 'incremental repetition',⁷⁸ which is varied three times in the course of the poem to give a triptych evoking three dynamic aspects of the hero. First come three *englynion* in the following form (the italicized words are the ones varied in the next two *englynion*):

In front of Geraint, foe's affliction,
I saw horses white and red-fetlocked(?),
and, after the shout, a rough grave.

The shout of battle is an heroic commonplace (like the 'I saw' and 'after' formulas), but it may be no coincidence that a reference to a warrior Geraint in the *Gododdin* (line 1042) runs: *Gereint rac deheu gawr a dodet*, 'Geraint: in front of the (men of the) South a shout was raised'. Whether or not this line is authentic, and whether or not it refers to Geraint son of Erbin, it may have influenced the Black Book poem (or the influence may be vice versa, if line 1042 is an interpolation in the *Gododdin*).

In the second sequence the 'I saw' formula continues for five out of the six *englynion*, and a new initial element is introduced:

In Llongborth [or In a sea-port] I saw vultures [or rage],
and biers beyond measure,
and men red in front of Geraint's onrush.

Llongborth may be a Cambricization of Langport, Somerset (OE *lang-port* 'long market-place'). This is a credible site for a real or legendary battle against the West Saxons; moreover, Sherborne Abbey nearby claimed to have been granted land on the Tamar by Gerontius himself.⁷⁹ Alternatively, 'Llongborth' may be the rare common-noun *llongborth* 'sea-port' (< *longa* (*navis*) + *portus*), which also occurs in an early-twelfth-century poem in the Black Book. If the latter is the case, note that *Triad* no. 14 includes Geraint son of Erbin among the Three Seafarers of Britain, that Gerrans, St Gerent's parish in southern Cornwall, lay on the coast, and that the *Vita* of St Teilo includes a story about King Gerennius dying (of natural causes) in a *portus* called *Din Gerein*, presumably Gerrans itself.⁸⁰ Could this be the *llongborth* of the poem?

The fifth and sixth *englynion* of the 'En llogborth. . .' sequence introduce Arthur — and a difficult textual problem. Literally translated, the Black Book text runs:

In Llongborth [or In a sea-port] I saw to (y) Arthur
brave men — (they) used to slay with steel —
the emperor, the leader (in the) toil (of battle).

In Llongborth [or In a sea-port] were slain to (y) Geraint
brave men from the region of Dyfnaint;
and though they might be slain, they slew.

Syntactically, the preposition *y* is tortuous, especially in the former stanza, and it has been doubted whether Jackson was right to translate 'belonging to Arthur'; instead, *y* could be deleted, making *Arthur* the direct object.⁸¹ This emendation has some support from the Red Book of Hergest text which, although it does have *y* in the Arthur stanza, lacks it in the Geraint stanza ('. . . Geraint was slain'). In consequence it then reads 'man' in the next line (in apposition to Geraint) rather than 'men'; but as

this spoils the repetition of *men* and leaves the 'they' unspecified in the third line, it casts doubt on the omission of the *y*. To complicate matters further, the verb 'was/were slain' occurs in *both* stanzas in the Red Book; this seems plausible, however, since the two *englynion* then form a pair (i.e. a further short sequence), whereas in the Black Book the change of verb in the Geraint stanza is isolated. On balance, then, I would read 'were slain' in both stanzas,⁸² but otherwise accept the Black Book text, understanding 'to Arthur/Geraint men. . .' as poetic inversion for 'men to (i.e. vassals of) Arthur/Geraint', an idiom which occurs a little earlier in the Red Book version of the poem (see below).⁸³ The implication is that while many of Arthur's and Geraint's men were slain (indeed the passage verbally echoes the defeat of the Gododdin), the leaders themselves survived. Arthur was presumably on the same side as Geraint, but this is not necessarily the case, and Jackson rightly points out that the (unemended) texts do not actually state that Arthur was present. In any case, the mention of Arthur in the same context as Geraint and the men of Dyfnaint is further evidence for his association with the Dumnonian peninsula, which is undoubtedly older than Geoffrey of Monmouth.⁸⁴ The description of him as 'emperor' (*ameraudur/amherawdur* < Latin *imperator*) could reflect Geoffrey's Arthur, but not necessarily so.

The next sequence begins with the following pattern:

Swiftly there used to run(?) under Geraint's thigh
long-shanked (horses), (fed on) grains of *wheat*,
roans (with the) onrush of *speckled* eagles.

With slight variants on this pattern, the sequence runs through eight *englynion* and as many groups of horses. Perhaps the association between Geraint and horses here was one factor that led the Welsh author of *Gereint* to pick Geraint's name, in place of the unfamiliar *Erec/Guerec*, for this chivalric hero, who assembled an impressive collection of horses in the course of his travels with his wife.⁸⁵

The poem ends with a final extravagant stanza in praise of Geraint ('When Geraint was born, heaven's gates were open. . .'). This *englyn* stands first in the later version of the poem in the White Book (a fragment) and the Red Book. The two versions also differ on the order of stanzas within the sequences, and each includes stanzas lacking in the other. The variations between the texts strongly suggest oral transmission. Nevertheless, there is no reason to suspect that anything crucial has been lost; in either version the poem would probably have made sense to an audience that knew the bare gist of the story of the battle 'en llogporth'. There is only one *englyn* (missing in the Black Book text) that might suggest that the poem is a speech-poem from a saga, and here the imperative can equally well be understood as an intervention by the impersonal witness-narrator, momentarily caught up in the

action of the past (as often in *chansons de geste*):

In Llongborth [or In a sea-port] I saw confusion,
men in battle and blood around feet;
whosoever is vassal to Geraint, let him make haste!⁸⁶

The 'Stanzas of the Graves' (*Englynion y Beddau*) record, often with unexpected poetic power, the sites of the graves of once-famous heroes, testifying to the close association between heroes and places in early Welsh literature. This characteristic is already reflected by the inclusion of topographical lore in the *Historia Brittonum*, such as the wonderful grave of Arthur's son Amr in Ergyng (Herefordshire), which changed size by magic.⁸⁷ The Black Book of Carmarthen is the earliest of the manuscripts, but there can be no doubt that some of the *englynion* are much older than the thirteenth century, although some, such as the *englyn* on Myrddin, are probably late medieval.⁸⁸ On the whole, however, the general obscurity of the heroes suggests that the bulk of *Englynion y Beddau* are early. There are few allusions, for example, to the well-known Arthurian characters of *Culhwch* and the other tales. Out of seventy-three stanzas in the Black Book series, only three (sts. 8, 12 and 44) fall into this category.⁸⁹ The most important of these is the *englyn* naming Arthur himself (st. 44):

[There is] a grave for March, a grave for Gwythur,
a grave for Gwgawn Red-sword;
the world's wonder (*anoeth*) [is] a grave for Arthur.

Since all these characters are well-known from the *Triads* and elsewhere, it might be suspected that this *englyn* is relatively late, although this is not at all certain. The word *anoeth* is, admittedly, archaic and rare, occurring in prose only in *Culhwch*, where it refers to the difficult or impossible tasks which Arthur's warriors undertake; however, the word may allude to the story of *Culhwch* itself.⁹⁰ March is, of course, drawn from the Trystan stories, Gwythur figures alongside Arthur in *Culhwch*, and Gwgawn Red-sword (possibly the king of Ceredigion drowned c. 871) appears as messenger to Arthur in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*.⁹¹ The poet's implication is that the graves of these Arthurian heroes are all known, whereas that of Arthur himself cannot be found. This idea could be compared with the statement in the *Historia Brittonum*, c.55, that St Patrick is like Moses because 'no one knows his grave, but he was buried in secret, no one knowing'.⁹² A more usual interpretation, however, is that Arthur's grave was unknown because he was never buried, but was still alive somewhere, biding his time to return and deliver the Britons.⁹³ The first positive testimony to such a belief in Arthur's survival, among the Cornish and Bretons, is in the account of the journey of the canons of Laon to Bodmin in 1113.⁹⁴ It is corroborated c. 1125 by William of Malmesbury; discussing the alleged discovery in

Wales of the grave of Arthur's nephew Walwen, in William the Conqueror's reign, William adds that 'Arthur's grave is nowhere to be seen, with the result that old songs say that he will come again'.⁹⁵ There may be some connection between William's statement and the grave-stanza, or both may reflect a common background of interest in this Arthurian problem. This possibility is slightly supported by the fact that the *Englynion y Beddau* (st. 8) also refer to the grave of Gwalchmai (the name which in Welsh texts corresponds to Walwen/Gauvain/Gawain, etc.):

The grave of Gwalchmai is in Peryddon (*periton*)
as a reproach to men;
at Llanbadarn is the grave of Cynon.⁹⁶

The second line here could allude to the more disgraceful of the two stories of Walwen's death, reported by William, that 'he was killed by his fellow-citizens at a public banquet' (the alternative version being that he was shipwrecked). Peryddon appears elsewhere as an alternative name for the River Dee (Welsh *Dyfrdwy*), or part of it.⁹⁷ If the Dee is meant in the *englyn* it conflicts with William's assertion that Walwen's grave, 'fourteen feet in length', was found on the sea-shore in the province of Rhos (presumably the Rhos in Pembrokeshire, Dyfed). But there may well have been more than one River Peryddon. The tenth-century prophecy *Armes Prydein*, which reflects the southern Welsh interests of the churches dedicated to St David, alludes to English tax-collectors from Cirencester (*Caer Geri*) coming to *Aber Perydon*, presumably therefore somewhere in south Wales. This allusion can be reconciled with William and *Englynion y Beddau* by supposing that this southern Peryddon was in Rhos, and that the tax-collectors would be on their way to St David's itself.⁹⁸ *Peryddon* could perhaps be the old Welsh name for the Sandyhaven Pill in Rhos, which runs down to the sea from the significantly named Walwyn's Castle/Castell Gwalchmai.⁹⁹ If Peryddon is a river-name, the statement that Gwalchmai's grave is 'in' it could mean that the grave was actually in its flood plain,¹⁰⁰ and this would agree neatly with what William says about Walwen's grave being on the sea-shore.

St. 12 of the Black Book *Englynion y Beddau* has two points of Arthurian interest. Thomas Jones translated as follows (although line b could also be taken with line c):

The grave of Osfran's son is at Camlan,
after many a slaughter;
the grave of Bedwyr is on Tryfan hill.

Bedwyr's death is not recorded in 'Pa gur?' or elsewhere. There may have been a native story about it to judge by Llywelyn ap y Moel's allusion c. 1425 to Cai breaking his heart after Bedwyr's death, but this could be a half-remembrance of

Geoffrey of Monmouth's pathetic account of Bedevere and Kay's last stand against the Romans in Burgundy.¹⁰¹ *Allt Tryfan*, 'the slope of Tryfan', probably refers to Tryfan in Snowdonia (grid ref. SH/6659).¹⁰² Interestingly, this peak is close to Pen y Gwryd and Nant y Gwryd, which take their names from a medieval place-name *gwryt Kei* 'Cai's fathom' (already attested c. 1200); this would have been a pass across which the gigantic Cai could stretch his arms.¹⁰³

Camlan is no doubt the site of Arthur's last defeat, his most famous battle in Welsh literature, mentioned already in *Annales Cambriae*, s.a. 537.¹⁰⁴ Modern scholarly tradition has favoured *Camboglanna* on Hadrian's Wall as the site, but the collocation with Tryfan in the *englyn* suggests that it was identified, rightly or wrongly, with the Camlan near Mallwyd, Merioneth (SH/8512). 'Osfran's son' has not been identified, but, significantly, a twelfth-century poet, praising St Cadfan and his church at Tywyn, Merioneth, about eighteen miles from Camlan, alludes (vaguely but favourably) to Osfran. The first element of this name looks like the Anglo-Saxon *Ōs-* (e.g. *Oswulf*, *Oswald*, etc.), but the second (*brân*) is clearly Welsh. One wonders whether *Osfran* was supposed to be related to a certain *Morfran* son of Tegid; *Morfran* is often mentioned as one who escaped at the Battle of Camlan and is associated with Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake), only a dozen miles north of Camlan.¹⁰⁵

The so-called Book of Taliesin is an early-fourteenth-century southern or eastern manuscript, of which 38 folios survive.¹⁰⁶ The name of Arthur appears in only five poems in the Book, all of them probably spoken in the persona of the legendary bard Taliesin. The most significant is *Preiddeu Annwn*. In the others Arthur is mentioned only incidentally. This is rather surprising considering his central role in texts such as *Culhwch ac Olwen* and considering that Taliesin was closely associated with many other legendary figures of various periods. It can hardly be the case that the Taliesin poems date from a period before Arthur became important, for Arthur is already prominent in the *Historia Brittonum*. Possibly the explanation is a matter of genre: that Arthur and Taliesin (like, say, Arthur and Charlemagne) were too important to share the same platform? Or is there a regional distinction: was Arthur chiefly a hero of south Wales and Cornwall, whereas the legendary Taliesin belonged in Gwynedd with the characters of the Fourth Branch of the *Mabinogi*?

The poems other than *Preiddeu Annwn* warrant only a brief mention.¹⁰⁷ In a boastful passage near the end of *Kat Godeu*, 'Taliesin' addresses certain druids of a 'wise one' (i.e. Arthur or Taliesin himself?):

Derwydon doethur
Darogenwch y Arthur.¹⁰⁸

This is ambiguous. Taliesin's command to these 'druids of the wise one' may be:

'prophesy (impv.) [the coming of/return of] Arthur', implying that Arthur is absent, or alternatively 'prophesy to Arthur', implying that he is present and waiting to hear the druids (compare Arthur listening to the bards at the end of the *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*). The latter possibility seems more likely, because the following lines refer to the Flood, Crucifixion and Doomsday, which could be the subjects of the (Christianized) druids' prophecies.¹⁰⁹ Unfortunately Arthur is not mentioned by name elsewhere in *Kat Godeu*, but it has been suggested that he may be the 'lord of Britain' (*Prydein wledic*) referred to in an earlier section of the poem. This describes a battle in which 'Taliesin' spurs on various magically animated trees and shrubs into battle:

Keint yg kat godeu bric
Rac Prydein wledic.

(*I sang in the van of the tree-battalion (or in the battle
of the branchy trees) before the lord of Britain.*)

As another poem in the Book of Taliesin places *Godeu* in the north of Britain, and as the triad of the Three Futile Battles groups 'the Battle of Goddeu' (*kat Godeu*) together with the Battles of Camlan (where Arthur fell) and Arfderydd (where Myrddin/Merlin went mad), Arthur may easily have come to be associated with *kat Godeu* too. Nevertheless, the poem's *Prydein wledic*, Taliesin's patron, may originally have been someone else, or indeed no particular ruler at all.¹¹⁰

Another boasting poem, *Kadeir Teyrnnon* ('The chair of Teyrnnon/of a prince') is even more obscure, but it seems to be uttered by Taliesin before releasing his patron Elffin from imprisonment. Taliesin begins by praising a certain *Teyrnnon*; this is either the proper name Teyrnnon or the common-noun *teyrnon* 'a prince' (perhaps Elffin or Arthur himself?). Then:

Treded dofyn doethur
Y vendigaw Arthur.
Arthur vendigat [MS *vendigan*]
Ar gerd gyfaena(n)t. [*punctum delens under n*]
Arwyneb yg kat,
Ar naw bystylat.

If the feminine forms of the adjectives are taken at face value, some word such as *cân* (f.) 'song' has to be understood:

The third profound [song] of the sage [is] to bless Arthur, Arthur the blest,
with harmonious art: the defender in battle, the trampler on nine [enemies].¹¹¹

Such a triadic expression would fit in with what follows, where triads of the Three *cynweisiaid* ('guardians'), Three *cyfarwyddiaid*, and Three *caerau* ('fortresses') are mentioned; as a whole, however, the poem remains unintelligible.

The untitled, probably composite, poem generally called *Kanu y Meirch* ('Poem of the Horses') includes a long list of the horses of traditional heroes, including Arthur's horse which 'fearless[ly] used to cause hurt':

A march Gwythur,
A march Gwardur,
A march Arthur,
ehofyn rodi cur.¹¹²

This grouping of the heroes was obviously dictated by rhyme, but we may recall that a Gwythur and Gwawrddur (*sic*) occur alongside Arthur in *Englynion y Beddau* and the *Gododdin* respectively. Arthur's mare is named in *Culhwch* and elsewhere as Llamrei, and she is also mentioned (without owner's name) later in *Kanu y Meirch*.¹¹³

The manuscript title of the poem *Marwnat vthyr pen[dragon]* ('Uthr Pen[dragon]'s Elegy') may be a mistake — Arthur's father does not appear in the poem — but it can be accepted if we suppose that Uthr, rather than Taliesin, is the speaker, who refers to 'my elegy' towards the end. Admittedly, he sounds very like 'Taliesin'; however, judging by the *Triads* and Geoffrey of Monmouth, Uthr himself was a Taliesin-like figure, a magician and shape-changer.¹¹⁴ In the *Marwnat* the speaker (Uthr?) mentions Arthur in the course of boasting about his own prowess in battle and poetry:

Neu vi arannwys vy echlessur
Nauetran yg gwrhyt Arthur.

This seems to mean 'I have shared my refuge, a ninth share in Arthur's valour',¹¹⁵ but the import is unclear. Perhaps, if the speaker is Uthr, he means that he has passed on his kingdom or qualities to his famous son; further on he boasts *Nyt oed vyt ny bei vy eissillyd*, 'The world [or 'battle'] would not exist if it were not for my progeny'.¹¹⁶ In the line preceding the couplet quoted above, the speaker refers to his attack on the 'sons of Cawrnur'; this recalls *Kadeir Teyrnnon*, where someone is praised for rustling the horses of Cawrnur.¹¹⁷ Presumably the fact that *Cawrnur* and *Arthur* rhyme partly explains their collocation, but both poems may allude to some lost Arthurian story. The name *Cawrnur* is perhaps that of a giant (Welsh *cawr*).

We have another reference to Uthr in a pair of apparently unrelated elegies on his son Madog and on the biblical Herod. These are entitled *mad. drut ac erof* ('Mad[awg] the fierce and Herod') in the marginal heading, which is by the main scribe.¹¹⁸ The former poem is of seven lines only, and is probably an acephalous fragment since the first line does not rhyme:

Madawc mur menwyt.
Madawc kyn bu bed,
Bu dinas edryssed

o gamp a chymwed.
Mab vthyr kyn lleas
Oe law dywystlas.¹¹⁹

(*Madog, the rampart of rejoicing. Madog, before he was in the grave, he was a fortress of generosity [consisting] of feat(s) and play. The son of Uthr, before death [or 'before he was slain (llas)'], he handed over pledges.*)

Mab vthyr could mean 'terrible son/lad', but 'son of Uthr' is more likely, since Arthur's nephew is called the 'son of Madog son of Uthr' (*mab madawc uab uthyr*) in the *Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle* (discussed below). Evidently there was some story about Arthur's brother Madog. He is mentioned ironically in a list of former worthies in a religious poem variously attributed to Prydydd y Moch (fl. 1173-1220) and to Cynddelw (fl. 1155-1200):

Rybu gamwetawc madawc modur faw;
Rybut wu itaw dylaw dolur.¹²⁰

(*Madog, famous leader, was false; he had great profit: wretched sorrow!*)

The epithet *camwetawc* 'false' here looks like a half-remembrance of the sound of *camp a chymwed* in the elegy.

The fifth Book of Taliesin poem which mentions Arthur is *Preiddeu Annwn* ('The Spoils of Annwn'). The title is a fourteenth-century addition in another hand, but it is appropriate since *Annwn* (the Otherworld) and *preideu* (Mod.W. *preiddiau*) occur in the poem itself. The partial edition and translation by Loomis has been superseded by the version of all sixty lines in Marged Haycock's "*Preiddeu Annwn*" and the Figure of Taliesin'.¹²¹ As her title indicates, she argues that the unifying personality in the poem is not Arthur, but the unnamed but distinctive voice of the speaker Taliesin. Taliesin begins with sonorous, evocative lines boasting of his role in Arthur's voyage to Annwn. He ends more acerbically by asserting his superiority over monks and bookmen who neither know such native lore (e.g. 'about the Brindled Ox, stout his collar') nor understand the nature of the cosmos properly (e.g. 'when the darkness and the light divide, or the wind, what is its course, what is its onrush'). By contrast, it is implied, Taliesin 'knows all this because he has been there'.¹²² Through the persona of Taliesin, then, the poet strikes a playful blow for the secular poets or *cyfarwyddiaid* against the vain pretensions of the Welsh clerical orders, with their noses in the scientific works of Macrobius, Isidore and Bede. The date of composition cannot easily be narrowed further than c. 850-1150.

We are not in a position to know how far the details of Taliesin's account of Annwn and Arthur's expedition were drawn from authentic Welsh tradition. The poet may have invented some of them to enhance Taliesin's reputation for esoteric knowledge. Some details, like the many alternative names for Annwn, may have

been deliberately obscure from the first; others, like the description of the magic cauldron of the Head of Annwn, 'indigo and pearls round its rim', may have been novel but readily intelligible; and others would be motifs well known from other stories, for example the attempt to rescue a prisoner, or the seven survivors of an ill-fated expedition.¹²³

There are three close analogues to Arthur's expedition which enable us, as they may have enabled some of its original audience, to understand *Preiddeu Annwn*'s allusive narrative.¹²⁴ The only one in which Arthur is also the protagonist is the story of his quest for Diwrnach the Irishman's cauldron in *Culhwch ac Olwen*.¹²⁵ One minor character in this episode in *Culhwch*, Llenlleog the Irishman, may owe his existence to a misunderstanding of a passage in *Preiddeu Annwn* itself.¹²⁶ Another link is established by the statement in the *Thirteen Treasures of the Island of Britain* (though not in *Culhwch* itself) that Dyrnwch the Giant's cauldron boiled for the brave, but not for cowards; *Preiddeu Annwn* claims the same for the cauldron of the Head of Annwn (line 17).¹²⁷

The second analogue is the story in *Branwen*, the Second Branch of *Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi* (PKM), about Brân's expedition to Ireland to rescue his sister Branwen, who is effectively held prisoner there by her husband, the King of Ireland. The magic cauldron here plays a different role, helping the slain Irish warriors to revive and fight again. In *Branwen Pryderi* (also mentioned in *Preiddeu Annwn*) and Taliesin are named among the seven survivors. Taliesin's role in this expedition is confirmed in a boasting poem in the Book of Taliesin: 'I was with Brân in Ireland;/ I saw when *Morddwyd Tyllion* was struck.'¹²⁸

The third and earliest analogue is in the early-ninth-century *Historia Brittonum*, c.13. This tells how the three sons of a Spanish soldier (*miles*, i.e. the character M1 of the Irish *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*) settled in Ireland, with their thirty ships and thirty wives in each ship. After a year:

They saw a glass tower in the middle of the sea, and they could see men on the tower, and they sought to speak with them. They never replied, and in that same year they hastened to attack the tower with all their ships and with all their women, except for one ship which was damaged by shipwreck, in which were thirty men and the same number of women. And the other ships voyaged to attack the tower, and, while they all disembarked on the shore around the tower, the sea engulfed them, and they were drowned and not one of them escaped. And from the household of that ship which was left behind because of damage, all Ireland was filled up to the present day. And afterwards they came over gradually from the parts of Spain and held many regions.

This episode probably came from an Irish text, presumably in Latin, about the legendary origins of the peoples of Ireland.¹²⁹ It is close to *Preiddeu Annwn*, lines 29-34:

I do not deserve ?readers concerned with the literature of the Lord
 Who had not seen Arthur's valour beyond the Glass Fort.
 Six thousand men were standing on its wall;
 It was difficult [i.e. impossible] to converse with their watchman.
 Three full loads of Prydwen [Arthur's ship] went with Arthur;
 Apart from seven, none came back from the Fort of Impediment.

These lines echo the *Historia Brittonum* itself or some closely related source or analogue. The silence of the inhabitants, like the muteness of those revived by the cauldron of regeneration in *Branwen*, probably indicates that they are really dead.¹³⁰ The preposition 'beyond' (*tra*) in line 30 suggests that Annwn was not identical with the Glass Fort but lay on the far side of it.

The four analogues differ, with varying protagonists, objectives and outcomes, but their structural similarity is clear:

Departure from: Spain via Ireland (*HB*); Britain (*PA*, *CO*, *PKM*).
Protagonists: the three sons of the *miles*, their wives, (and followers?) in ships (*HB*); Arthur and three shiploads of *Prydwen* (*PA*); Arthur and small host in *Prydwen* (*CO*); Brân (wading) and his host in ships (*PKM*).
Destination: Glass tower in sea (*HB*); Annwn via(?) glass fort (*PA*); Ireland (*CO*, *PKM*).
Objective: ?territory or national security (*HB*); rescue of Gwair, capture/destruction of cauldron, and ?capture of Brindled Ox (*PA*); capture of cauldron (*CO*); rescue of Branwen, which depends upon destruction of cauldron (*PKM*).
Result: all drowned by ?supernatural tide (*HB*); battle involving magic cauldron and sword of ?Lleog (*PA*); fight in hall involving sword of Llenlleog and defeat of Irish host (*CO*); fight in hall involving magic cauldron and the death of whole Irish host (*PKM*).
Escapers: one shipload, shipwrecked earlier, which re-peoples Ireland (*HB*); seven survivors including Taliesin (*PA*); triumphant return with cauldron for Culhwch and Olwen's wedding (*CO*); seven survivors including Taliesin return to Britain, while five pregnant Irishwomen re-people Ireland (*PKM*).

While it is likely enough that the four versions influenced each other, it is more convincing to think of them as reworkings of a common story-pattern for different purposes than as texts to be related by a stemma. The main differences between the four versions are the result of the intersection of two dichotomies:

1. In *PA* and *CO* the genre is that of the heroic wonder tale; in *HB* and *PKM*, on the other hand, the genre is that of (or is close to that of) the origin legend.¹³¹
2. In *PA* and *HB* the destination is a magical Otherworld; in *CO* and *PKM* it is Ireland, perhaps as a result of euhemerization (although it is noteworthy that in many cultures the 'Otherworld' or land of the dead has an actual physical location).¹³²

These dichotomies are not absolute. In particular, the ever-rich *Four Branches* does manage to include the Otherworld as well, immediately after the return from Ireland,

when the survivors celebrate Otherworldly feasts with Brân's severed head, first in Harlech and then on the island of Gwales.¹³³

There are many parallels to the themes of *Preiddeu Annwn* and its analogues in early Irish literature. These are best regarded as further analogues rather than sources. One of them, however, was certainly known in early Wales, since it is mentioned in the *Elegy on Cú Roí mac Dáiri* (*Marwnat Corroi m[ab] Dayry*) in the Book of Taliesin. This alludes to the Old Irish story about Cú Roí's expedition with Cú Chulainn to the land of the mysterious Fir Phálgae (sometimes identified with the Isle of Man) to carry off a woman, magic cauldron and other spoils.¹³⁴ Another Old Irish parallel is provided by the stories of Bran mac Febail's encounter with the Otherworld, which is situated either under a spring or, in the *Voyage of Bran*, across the sea.¹³⁵ The similarities are rather vague, however, and Glyn E. Jones has argued convincingly against any close relationship between the *Voyage of Bran* and *Branwen*.¹³⁶ The only striking similarity is between the Welsh name *Brân* ('raven') and the (very common) name of the Irish hero *Bran* (and that of his saintly counterpart, St *Brendanus* or *Brandanus* — note here Brân's epithet *bendigeid* 'blessed'). Whether this should be explained by common origins or medieval contamination is unclear.¹³⁷ The only detail in *Preiddeu Annwn* that is clearly of Irish origin is *kaer sidi*, one of the names given to Annwn; this derives from the Irish name for fairy-mounds and their inhabitants, *sídhe*.¹³⁸

Two dialogues in *englyn* metre, only extant in fourteenth-century or later manuscripts, remain to be considered: the *Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle* and the *Dialogue of Melwas and Gwenhwyfar*. These poems cannot be dated exactly, but may both be as early as the twelfth century. The second shows clear signs of oral transmission, and no doubt both were originally written (or orally composed) for oral performance. This could have been by pairs of performers as was done with the Early Modern Welsh Interludes, or by a single performer, impersonating the two characters in the dialogue, as was done (according to Walter Scott) with the Gaelic dialogues between St Patrick and Oisín.¹³⁹

In the *Dialogue of Arthur and the Eagle*, Arthur represents a typical member of the secular aristocracy, as in the Welsh saints' Lives (see ch.3 below), and is the vehicle for some basic Christian instruction.¹⁴⁰ Like Oisín in some of the Irish dialogues with St Patrick, Arthur is a religiously uneducated, but sympathetic, pagan seeking enlightenment. This is provided by the eagle, whom Arthur sees in the very first *englyn*:

I am amazed, since I am a poet,
 why, at the top of the fair-branched oak,
 the eagle stares, and why it laughs.

The choice of a bird can be paralleled in the *Englynion y Clywaid*, where thrush, raven, jay, and so on, appear alongside the Welsh saints to offer moral precepts.¹⁴¹ One may recall, too, Geoffrey of Monmouth's tantalizing allusions to a book of the prophecies uttered by an eagle while Shaftesbury was being built.¹⁴² In the *Dialogue* there is an added complication, however, in that the eagle reveals itself to be Arthur's deceased nephew, Eliwlod son of Madawg son of Uthr (on whom see above). This of course gives added authority to its religious instruction. The same motif of a dialogue with a revenant seems to occur in the *englynion* in the Red Book of Hergest between the hermits Llywelyn and Gwrnerth and in those in the Black Book of Carmarthen between the deceased sinner Ysgolan and someone who (to judge by Modern Breton versions) is probably his mother.¹⁴³ Perhaps the closest parallel, however, occurs in the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi, where Gwydion addresses *englynion* to his nephew Lleu, who has been transformed into the form of an eagle after receiving a mortal wound, and, like Eliwlod, is espied at the top of an oak tree.¹⁴⁴

The *Dialogue* is worked out with some psychological subtlety, but from an 'Arthurian' point of view the most interesting aspect of the poem is its incidental characterization of Arthur. We may be sure that the poet is not trying to represent a novel Arthur, but to recall a well-known figure. Arthur is not described as a king but as 'bear of the host' (*arth llw*), 'most strong in valour' (*gwryt gadarnaf*), and so on.¹⁴⁵ He is *penn kadoed Kernyw*, 'head of the battalions of Cornwall', and, as *cad* meant both 'battalion' and 'battle', the title recalls the *Historia Brittonum's dux bellorum*, which may be a calque on just such a vernacular title for Arthur.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, the dialogue seems to occur on the coast of Cornwall, for Arthur speaks 'beside the seas' (*o tu myr*) and addresses the eagle as one who 'roams the valley-woods of Cornwall' (*a dreigla glyngoet Kernyw*). The place-name element *glynn* is rare in Cornwall, so if a real place is intended, the large, wooded Glynn valley near Bodmin in central Cornwall may be meant.¹⁴⁷ Be this as it may, the Cornish setting is reminiscent of Arthur's association with 'Celli wig in Cornwall' in *Culhwch* and elsewhere. Another similarity is that Arthur describes himself as a poet (*bard*). We may recall the episode in *Culhwch* where Arthur utters a satirical *englyn milwr* about Cai's cowardly attack on the giant Dillus.¹⁴⁸

The *Dialogue of Melwas and Gwenhwyfar* is extant principally in two manuscripts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (A and B).¹⁴⁹ Both texts are defective and show signs of redaction from faulty memory, with some weak lines invented simply to keep the rhyme-scheme going. In the eighteenth century Lewis Morris gave B the queried title *Ymddiddan rhwng Arthur a Gwenhwyfar* ('Dialogue between A. and G.').¹⁵⁰ but the dialogue is more likely to be between Arthur's queen

and her would-be lover, Melwas. Cai may speak too, towards the end. In A the dialogue seems to begin at a feast, where Gwenhwyfar is waiting on the guests, among them Melwas ('honey-youth', rather than 'prince-youth'):

'Who is the man who sits in the common part of the feast,
without for him either its beginning or its end,
sitting down there below the dais?'

'The Melwas from Ynys Wydrin (Isle of Glass);
you, with the golden, gilded vessels,
I have drunk none of your wine.'

'Wait a little . . .
I do not pour out my wine
for a man who cannot hold out and would not stand in battle
[and] would not stand up to Cai in his wine.'

In the succeeding *englynion* (in A and B) Gwenhwyfar continues to taunt Melwas, while he praises his warhorse (in B) and asserts his own valour, especially as compared to Cai:

'Gwenhwyfar of the deer's glance,
Do not despise me although I am young;
I would stand up to Cai alone.'

Melwas then asks Gwenhwyfar 'Where have you seen me before this?'. Her reply in A is corrupt:

'In a court of great privilege,
drinking wine from Geraint [or from companions],
a place . . . on the land of Devon.'

B's version of this is:

'I saw a man of moderate size
on a long table . . . Devon,
dispensing wine to his companions (*iw geraint*).'

B ends with Melwas agreeing that it was he. A, however, ends with two (linguistically late) stanzas contrasting an old coward (Cai?) and a garrulous coward (Melwas?), and implies that a combat between them is to ensue.

The story behind these *englynion* is clearly similar to Chrétien de Troyes's *Chevalier de la Charette*, where Meleagant abducts Guenièvre from Arthur's court (which has recently moved from Caerleon to Camelot), wounding Keu in the process, and takes her to his otherworldly kingdom of Go(i)rre (cf. OFr. *voirre* 'glass', Welsh *gwydr* 'glass'). The Welsh names, however, are closer to those in Chrétien's earlier *Erec*, where the guests at Arthur's court include Maheloas, a great baron, lord of the Isle of Glass (*Voirre*), an island where thunder is not heard, no lightning strikes or tempest blows, no toads or snakes stay, and it is never too hot or too cold.¹⁵¹

Behind Chrétien there probably lies a Welsh story about the rescue of Gwenhwyfar from an Otherworld Island of Glass, similar to *Preiddeu Annwn* and its analogues. The Welsh original does not survive, unless the *englynion* are remnants of it, but an adaptation appears already in the Latin *Life of St Gildas* which Caradog of Llancarfan wrote for the monks of Glastonbury in the 1120s or 1130s.¹⁵² Caradog euhemerizes the idyllic Isle of Glass as Glastonbury, the Old English names of which really mean 'island, or fortress, of the Glastings'. This equation was made possible by Latinizing its name as *insula/urbs vitrea*, taking the first element to be OE *glæs* 'glass' or Old Celtic **glasto-* (Gaulish *glastum*) 'woad' (cf. Latin *vitrum* 'glass, woad'), and by deriving the name of Somerset from the English word *summer*. Probably both these etymologies were already current in Wales before Caradog wrote.¹⁵³ He was thus able to introduce the abbot of Glastonbury as peace-maker and (of course) as beneficiary:

Gildas . . . embarked in a little boat and entered Glastonbury, . . . while King Melvas was reigning in the Summer Region. . . . Glastonbury, that is, the Glass City . . . was besieged by the tyrant Arthur with an innumerable multitude on account of his wife Guennuvar, who had been violated and carried off by the aforesaid iniquitous king, and had been brought there on account of the refuge of its inviolate position, which was due to the defences of its reeds, river and protecting marsh. The warring king had sought the queen for a year, and at last heard that she dwelt there. He moved there the armies of all Cornwall and Devon (*Dibnenia*); battle was made ready between the enemies. Seeing this, the abbot of Glastonbury, accompanied by his clergy and Gildas the Wise, went between the lines of battle, and peacefully advised his king Melvas that he should return the abducted woman. She who was to be returned was therefore returned in peace and goodwill. This done, the two kings granted the abbot many lands . . .¹⁵⁴

It is interesting to note that Arthur is principally associated with the south-west here; one may compare the reference to *Dyfneint* in the *englynion* (and possibly the latter's reference to Geraint, though this probably represents the common-noun *ceraint* rather than the Dumnonian hero). Despite the ecclesiastical element, Caradog's version of the story is doubtless more primitive than Chrétien's in assigning a principal role in the quest to Arthur himself, rather than to his knights, but the Otherworld aspect is absent, owing to the localization at Glastonbury.

The *englynion* are too fragmentary to reveal whether or not Melwas was portrayed as an Otherworld character in them,¹⁵⁵ but some allusions by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century poets imply that he used both stealth and magic, and went to the 'end of the world' (*i eitha' byd*). Dafydd ap Gwilym speaks of Melwas, 'because of great love', getting through a window at Caerlleon 'near the house of Ogfran the Giant's daughter' (that is, Gwenhwyfar) — compare the reference to Caerleon in Chrétien, and the latter's subsequent episode in which Lancelot climbs through

Guenièvre's window (lines 4586ff.). Dafydd ab Edmwnd longs for 'the art of Melwas, the thief that by magic and enchantment took a girl to the end of the world: to the green wood the deceiver went, to walls of branches of tree-tops'. In another poem Dafydd ab Edmwnd complains, 'even if it were Melwas who were to seek you, he would be hated'; this seems to imply that Melwas's attentions, by contrast, were welcomed by Gwenhwyfar. These poets may well have known the full story behind the fragmentary *englynion*. Unfortunately, they may well have changed the emphasis for their own purposes, so reliance cannot be placed on details.¹⁵⁶

Many Welsh Arthurian poems must have been lost. The few that survive display remarkable variety and vitality. They all happen to be anonymous, but we are not required to treat them as the work of pure tradition-bearers rather than as creations by individual court poets or clerics. They can be read as works of imaginative literature in their own right as well as reflections of possible 'sources' for Arthurian romance. None of them seems to owe much to Geoffrey of Monmouth's realism; indeed, many of them may have been composed before the *Historia Regum Britanniae* appeared. Their affinities are more with the native *Historia Brittonum*, the Welsh-Latin saints' Lives, and above all with the early heroic poetry. Yet whereas much of that early poetry displays a sombre, didactic view of the world, dominated by ideas of past defeat, present oppression, and prophesied revenge,¹⁵⁷ the Arthurian poems are literature of entertainment, closer in mood to the early prose tales. In them we find the poets and their audiences at play, escaping into a never-never land of idealized conflicts and magical quests. They help us understand how the Celtic peripheries became the focus for marvels and adventures in twelfth-century European literature.¹⁵⁸

NOTES:

1. ALMA 12-19. Subsequent surveys include Thomas Jones, 'The Early Evolution of the Legend of Arthur', *NMS*, 8 (1964), 3-21; A. O. H. Jarman, 'The Delineation of Arthur in Early Welsh Verse', in *An Arthurian Tapestry: Essays in Memory of Lewis Thorpe*, edited by Kenneth Varty (Glasgow, 1981), 1-21; idem, 'The Arthurian Allusions in the Black Book of Carmarthen', in *LAMA* 99-112 and 240-2; and John K. Bollard, 'Arthur in the Early Welsh Tradition', in *The Romance of Arthur*, [I], edited by James J. Wilhelm and Laila Samuelis Gross (New York, 1984), 13-25. Still useful for Rhys's pioneering translations is E. K. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, repr. with supplementary bibliography by B. F. Roberts (Cambridge, 1964).
2. Marged Haycock, 'Metrical Models for the Poems in the Book of Taliesin', in *Early Welsh Poetry: Studies in the Book of Aneirin*, edited by Brynley F. Roberts (Aberystwyth, 1988), 155-77; Jenny Rowland, 'Genres', *ibid.*, 179-208.
3. Rowland, 'Genres'.
4. Cf. Proinsias Mac Cana, *The Learned Tales of Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1980), 132-41; *Uraicecht na Ríar: The Poetic Grades in Early Irish Law*, edited by Liam Breatnach (Dublin, 1987); Dafydd Jenkins, 'Pencerdd a Bardd Teilu [sic]', *YB*, 14 (1988), 19-46.
5. Cf. Proinsias Mac Cana, 'The Three Languages and the Three Laws', *SC*, 5 (1970), 62-78; Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Irish Origin Legends and Genealogy: Recurrent Aetiologies', in *History and Heroic Tale*, edited by Tore Nyberg and others (Odense, 1983), 51-96; Kim McCone, 'Zur Frage der Register im frühen Irischen', in *Early Irish Literature — Media and Communication: Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit in der frühen irischen Literatur*, edited by Stephen N. Tranter and Hildegard L. C. Tristram, *ScriptOralia*, 10 (Tübingen, 1989), 57-97; John Carey, 'The Two Laws in Dubthach's Judgment', *CMCS*, 19 (1990), 1-18.
6. Marged Haycock, '"Preiddeu Annwn" and the Figure of Taliesin', *SC*, 18/19 (1983-4), 52-78; '"Some Talk of Alexander and Some of Hercules": Three Early Welsh Poems from the Book of Taliesin', *CMCS*, 13 (1987), 7-38; 'Taliesin's Lesser Song of the World', *Celtica* (forthcoming).
7. For the above see my 'Some Functions of Origin Stories in Early Medieval Wales', in *History and Heroic Tale*, edited by Nyberg and others, 97-131.
8. For more detailed discussion of transmission and preservation see my 'The Evidence for Vernacular Irish Literary Influence on Early Mediaeval Welsh Literature', in *Ireland in Early Mediaeval Europe: Studies in Memory of Kathleen Hughes*, edited by Dorothy Whitelock and others (Cambridge, 1982), 235-57; for Scotland, see my review of K. Hughes, *Celtic Britain in the Early Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1980) in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36 (1985), 306-7, and Ronald Black, 'The Gaelic Manuscripts of Scotland', in *Gaelic and Scotland: Alba agus a' Ghàidhlig*, edited by William Gillies (Edinburgh, 1989), 160-5.
9. ALMA 13. This suits the nature of the evidence better than 'c. 1100', a date sometimes given.
10. These points are well-known, but there is no convenient survey.
11. On the *Historia Brittonum* see T. M. Charles-Edwards above, ch.1, and Brynley F. Roberts below, pp.88-92.
12. Cf. Brynley F. Roberts, 'Oral Tradition and Welsh Literature: A Description and Survey', *Oral Tradition*, 3 (1988), 61-87.

13. Jackson, ALMA 13.

14. Albert C. Baugh, 'The Middle English Romance: Some Questions of Creation, Presentation, and Preservation', *Speculum*, 42 (1967), 1-31.

15. Jackson, ALMA 12. Cf. Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 132, n.2; 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin', edited by Brynley F. Roberts, in *Ast. H.* 281-325; Jenny Rowland, 'The Prose Setting of the Early Welsh *Englynion Chwedlonol*', *Ériu*, 36 (1985), 29-43 (cf. n.22 below); Proinsias Mac Cana, 'Notes on the Combination of Prose and Verse in Early Irish Narrative', in *Early Irish Literature*, edited by Tranter and Tristram, 125-47; N. Jacobs, *ÉC*, 26 (1989), 95-142.

16. *Mab.* 18-21. Cf. J. K. Bollard, 'The Role of Myth and Tradition in the *Four Branches of the Mabinogi*', *CMCS*, 6 (1983), 74-5; Andrew Welsh, 'Traditional Tales and the Harmonizing of Story in *Pwyll Pendewic Dyuer*', *CMCS*, 17 (1989), 36-9.

17. *CA*; *Aneirin, Y Gododdin*, edited and trans. by A. O. H. Jarman (Llandysul, 1988).

18. Cf. stanza XXXI (A-text).

19. Stanza CII (B-text).

20. Cf. Jarman, 'Delineation', 3-4, *SC*, 24/5 (1989-90), 15-25.

21. See G s.n. *Arthur*; *TYP* 277.

22. See Jenny Rowland's *Early Welsh Saga Poetry* (Cambridge, 1990). This appeared after this chapter was written. It also includes discussion of all the *englynion* covered here and an edition of the poem on Geraint (pp. 240-3, 273, 457-61, 504-7 and 636-9).

23. *LIDC*; A. O. H. Jarman, '*Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin*: The Black Book of Carmarthen', *PBA*, 71 (1985), 333-56.

24. *Enweu Meibon Llywarch Hen* [recte *Kynwarch*], *LIDC* no. 40. See Rachel Bromwich, 'CLIH. viii.3 (= BBC. 107, 10-12)', *B*, 17 (1956-8), 180-1; Brynley F. Roberts, 'The Treatment of Personal Names in the Early Welsh Versions of *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *B*, 25 (1972-4), 283-4. But P. C. Bartrum, 'Bonedd yr Arwyr', *B*, 18 (1958-60), 243, suggested that the tradition of Cynfarch's three sons might be 'anterior to the time of Geoffrey'.

25. Edited by Roberts, 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan', no. II. Earlier translations include Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, 64-6; Gwyn Thomas, *Y Traddodiad Barddol* (Cardiff, 1976), 69-70; Rachel Bromwich, 'Celtic Elements in Arthurian Romance: A General Survey', in *LAMA* 41-55 and 230-3 (at pp. 45-6 and 231); Bollard, 'Arthur', 19-21. The metre is Class 1 of Haycock, 'Metrical Models'.

26. On this theme see Edgar M. Slotkin, 'The Fabula, Story, and Text of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*', *CMCS*, 18 (1989), 89-111.

27. *TYP* no. 21; *VSB* 26-9 and 68-73.

28. Cf. R. J. Thomas, *Enwau Afonydd a Nentydd Cymru* (Cardiff, 1938), 141-2; there is no need to hypothesize unattested personal names in the poem. *Vythneint* 'vultures' (line 11) is an emendation of the meaningless *vythneint* 'eight streams', a scribal error perhaps influenced by awareness that *Elēi* was the name of a stream, or by confusion with the word *gwyth*, pl. *gwytheint*, 'stream'.

29. Jarman, 'Allusions', 108.

30. Cf. O. J. Padel, below, pp.234-8. For references see indices of proper names in *CO*. Dr

Bromwich will argue in her forthcoming commentary on *Culhwch* with D. Simon Evans that 'Pa gur?' and *Culhwch* are closely related.

31. MS *Cysceint*, usually emended because *Cysteint* is an attested derivative of *Constantinus*; however, as Dr Bromwich points out to me, one might (with G 266) compare *Yscawin/Iscawin mab Panon* in *CO*(1) 225 and 1118. If the latter is the correct name, the character could be the eponym of Porth Ysgewin in Gwent, on which see below, comments on line 79.

32. He is only his porter on New Year's Day (*CO* 84); cf. *Geraint (Mab. 229)*, also *Owain*, where Glewlwyd has the rank of porter although Arthur has no porter (*Mab. 155*).

33. *Yr Areithiau Pros*, edited by D. Gwenallt Jones (Cardiff, 1934), 14.

34. Despite the semicolon in the printed text, the uncles may be the sons of Llwh, so that the latter is Arthur's maternal grandfather. On Llwh and Môr Terwyn, cf. John T. Koch, 'Mor Terwyn', *B*, 30 (1983), 296-303; and Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Irish Geography of *Culhwch and Olwen*', in *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney*, edited by Donnchadh Ó Corráin and others (Maynooth, 1989), 418-20.

35. *Kelli* could be the common noun 'grove', and in his edition (p. 305) Roberts cites Thomas Jones's suggestion, **kelli* 'wisdom' from *call* 'wise'.

36. Cf. Ifor Williams, 'Hen Chwedlau', *THSC*, 1946-7, 55, on *usque ad caput anni, in medio urbis meae* (c.32) as Cambricisms, i.e. *hyd ben y flwyddyn, i mewn i'm dinas i*. For a similar phenomenon in Hiberno-Latin see McCone, 'Zur Frage der Register', 73-4.

37. Cf. John T. Koch, 'A Welsh Window on the Iron Age: Manawydan, Mandubracios', *CMCS*, 14 (1987), 17-52.

38. '... which we call *Traht Treuroit*' in the Vatican Recension, c.27, edited by David N. Dumville, *The Historia Brittonum*, iii, *The 'Vatican' Recension* (Cambridge, 1985), 104.

39. Ifor Williams, 'Vocabularium Cornicum II', *B*, 11 (1941-4), 95; Kenneth Jackson, 'The Arthur of History', *ALMA* 4 n.1, 6, and 8. *Trywruid/Tribruit/Treuroit* are merely spelling variants.

40. Possibly at the hands of Medrawd/Modred (on whom see *TYP* 454-5 and 558), perhaps 'my nephew' in line 30. But for emendations of *mynei* see Gwyn Thomas, *Traddodiad Barddol*, 69, and Bromwich, *LAMA*, 231, n.36.

41. *CO*(1) 981-4.

42. Thomas, *Traddodiad Barddol*, 69; Bollard, 'Arthur', 19.

43. J. Lloyd-Jones, 'Welsh *palach*, etc.', *Ériu*, 16 (1952), 123-31; cf. G 43 for another scribe writing *Arthur* in error. On *Wrnach* and *Awarnach* see *CO*(1) xli and lxii.

44. The redactor seems to try to minimize this unseemly role for Arthur in lines 1219-21 (but note that he fights with the Witches of Gloucester in *Peredur*). The parallel with *Culhwch* supports the view that the verb *gouerei* is transitive, rather than the intransitive 'the/his blood flowed'. In medieval thought the Devil was associated with the North: see *The Poems of John Milton*, edited by John Carey and Alistair Fowler (London, 1968), 718-19.

45. Lloyd-Jones, 'Welsh *palach*'; Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Significance of the Irish Personal Names in *Culhwch ac Olwen*', *B*, 29 (1980-2), 615-16.

46. *De Civitate Dei*, XVI.8. Similarly Isidore, *Etymologiae*, XI.iii.15 and XII.ii.32. Gerald of Wales

found this type of material current in Welsh folklore, e.g. ape-dogs in *Itinerarium Cambriae*, II.11. See in general *Métamorphose et bestiaire fantastique au moyen âge*, edited by Laurence Harf-Lancner (Paris, 1985).

47. *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, iv, edited by E. Duemmler and E. Perels, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae*, 6 (Berlin, 1925), 155-7. On the other hand, they were a sort of Ethiopian monkey according to Solinus: *C. Iulii Solini Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium*, edited by T. Mommsen (Berlin, repr. 1958), 128 (c.27.58).

48. Myles Dillon, 'Notes on Irish Words', *Language*, 17 (1941), 249-51; *Serglige Con Culainn*, edited by Myles Dillon (Dublin, 1953), 38; Kathleen Hughes, 'On an Irish Litany of Pilgrim Saints', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 77 (1959), 328-31; W. B. Stanford, 'Monsters and Odyssean Echoes in the Early Hiberno-Latin and Irish Hymns', in *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400-900: Festschrift presented to Ludwig Bieler*, edited by John J. O'Meara and Bernd Naumann (Leiden, 1976), 114-16; Donald E. Meek, 'The Banners of the Fian in Gaelic Ballad Tradition', *CMCS*, 11 (1986), 29-69.

49. See respectively Dillon, 'Notes', 250, and P. Sims-Williams, 'The Visionary Celt: The Construction of an Ethnic Preconception', *CMCS*, 11 (1986), 87-91.

50. In *TYP* 391 it is suggested that Gwrgi is the prototype of Urgan in Gottfried's *Tristan* — and we may add (*pace* Maurice Delbouille, 'Le témoignage de Wace sur la légende arthurienne', *Romania*, 74 (1953), 181-3) of Wace's Guergint of Hereford.

51. *TYP* 17 and 531.

52. *TYP* 279.

53. Cf. Jones, 'Early Evolution', 10-11; Rachel Bromwich, 'Concepts of Arthur', *SC*, 10/11 (1975-6), 170.

54. G 475.

55. *Hend.* 2; cf. *rac llw gwyhryt*, p. 5. For *gweleis* see I. Ll. Foster, 'Rhai Sylwadau ar yr Hengerdd', *YB*, 5 (1970), 21-3.

56. *TYP* 306.

57. *PKM* 86; *Mab.* 70.

58. *TYP* 416 and 555.

59. Cf. the case of Cocholyn and Corroi in *Marwnat Corroi*: 'many their conflicts on either side of their borders' (edited by Sims-Williams, 'Evidence', 249-50).

60. *TYP* 219 and 417-18; Keith Busby, 'The Enigma of Loholt', in *Arthurian Tapestry*, edited by Varty, 28-36.

61. *LIDC* no. 34; 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan', edited by Roberts, no. IV; Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 243-7, 299, 461-3, 506-7 and 639-40. Jarman, 'Delineation', 18, n.26, argues that 'marvellous in songs' refers to Llachau, not Arthur. The speaker is probably not a subsequent tourist, in view of the references to the carrion birds. For the *Mi a wum* formula, cf. Sims-Williams, 'Significance', 601-2.

62. *Nepotes* according to *Annales Cambriae*.

63. *Hend.* 25, 70, and 152; *TYP* 416; 'Poèmes de Bleddyn Vardd', edited and trans. by J. Vendryes,

RC, 49 (1932), 194, 231, and 234-5.

64. Cf. Jackson, 'Arthur of History', ALMA 1; Jones, 'Early Evolution', 12; and below p.91.

65. *Historia Peredur vab Efrafc*, edited by Glenys Witchard Goetinck (Cardiff, 1976), 29-30 and 70; *Mab*. 198 and 227.

66. Cf. Jarman, 'Delineation', 14; P. Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', in *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp*, edited by A.T.E. Matonis and Daniel F. Melia (Van Nuys, 1990), p. 57-81.

67. *La Vie de saint Samson*, edited by Robert Fawtier (Paris, 1912), 124-6; LL 13-14. Strangely, this version was not noted by John Rhys, 'The Nine Witches of Gloucester', in *Anthropological Essays Presented to Edward Burnett Tylor* (Oxford, 1907), 285-93, but cf. CO(1) lxxiv.

68. G 624 notes that *yng ngwarthaf* is generally followed by a place-name. He suggests emending to *-eu*, but *proest* with *-on* is quite acceptable.

69. TYP 236-7. See also above, n.31. The reference might be to the barrow above Portskeuett, or its hinterland in general.

70. BT 73; PT xxvi-xxviii; TYP 237 and 485. Unfortunately, however, the date and import of the line (which is hypermetrical) remain very uncertain.

71. EAR i, 41, n.2; TYP 486-7; *John of Fordun's Chronicle of the Scottish Nation*, ed. W.F. Skene, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1871-2), i, 166, and ii, 157-8 (Book IV.23) — I owe this reference to Dr Bromwich.

72. Lister M. Matheson, 'The Arthurian Stories of Lambeth Palace Library MS 84', *Arthurian Literature*, 5 (1985), 70-91. There is no need, then, to postulate **mynud* 'hacked small' < Latin *minutus*.

73. LIDC no. 37; cf. Jarman, 'Allusions', 102.

74. LIDC nos. 21 and 18. The former is edited by Roberts, 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan', no. I, and trans. in Gwyn Williams, *To Look for a Word: Collected Translations of Welsh Poetry* (Llandysul, 1976), 20-2, in *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English*, edited by Gwyn Jones (Oxford, 1977), 14-16, and in Bollard, 'Arthur', 17-18. See also n.22 above. The latter is edited and trans. by Thomas Jones, 'The Black Book of Carmarthen "Stanzas of the Graves"', *PBA*, 53 (1967), 97-137.

75. See references in TYP 25-6, 355-60 and 551; G. H. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, edited by D. Simon Evans (Cardiff, 1971), 185, n.60; B. Lynette Olsen and O. J. Padel, 'A Tenth-Century List of Cornish Parochial Saints', *CMCS*, 12 (1986), 45 and 48. Identification with the general was argued by N. Lukman, 'The British General Gerontius (†410) in Medieval Epics', *Classica et Mediaevalia*, 12 (1951), 215-35. His argument was highly speculative (cf. A. O. H. Jarman, 'Geraint: Gerontius', *LIC*, 2 (1952), 129), but it is conceivable that medieval Welsh scholarship was attracted by the collocation of the names Gerontius, Constans son of Constantinus, and Maximus in the accounts of him by Orosius, *Historiae Adversum Paganos*, VII.42.4, edited by C. Zangemeister (Leipzig, 1889), 297, and by Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*, II.9.

76. VSB 234 (cf. pp. xii and n.1 and 321, n.2, and EWGT 27 and 132). For *princeps militiae* see Claude Sterckx, 'Principes Militiae' dans l'*Historia Regum Britanniae* de Geoffrey de Monmouth', *AB*, 76 (1969), 725-30.

77. *Mab*. 246. Note that in the Black Book version Erbin is only named as the father in the title of the poem *Gereint fil[ius] Erbin*.

78. Kenneth Jackson, 'Incremental Repetition in the Early Welsh *Englyn*', *Speculum*, 16 (1941), 304-21; Roberts, 'Oral Tradition', 64-5. Jackson gives parallels from other cultures for varying the colour of animals; this also occurs in the Melwas dialogue discussed below.

79. *Charters of Sherborne*, edited by M. A. O'Donovan (London, 1988), xli, xlviii-xlix, and 81.

80. LL 114; cf. Doble, *Lives of the Welsh Saints*, 183 and 185.

81. ALMA 13; cf. Roberts, 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan', 294-5.

82. The Black Book's 'y gueleis e. y arthur' may be due to simple haplography (at the stop), for it skips over several 'gueleis' *englynion*, to judge by the evidence of the Red Book.

83. For *gwr y* 'vassal to' see T. M. Charles-Edwards, 'The Date of the Four Branches of the Mabinogi', *THSC*, 1970, 274-5.

84. O. J. Padel, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and Cornwall', *CMCS*, 8 (1984), 1-28; CO(1) lxxix-lxxxi.

85. The prominence of horses in *Erec/Gereint* and the *englynion* was pointed out by O. J. Padel in an unpublished lecture.

86. Edited by Roberts, stanza 12.

87. See above, n.64. Compare the collocation of the name *Amhir* and a grave which is both 'narrow' and 'long' in *englyn* 19 (edited by Jones, p. 120); but this cannot refer to Amhir's own grave without emendation.

88. See on the latter my note, 'Anfab², "Illegitimate Child": A Ghost-Word', *B*, 28 (1978-80), 90-3. In general see Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 294-8.

89. I leave out persons like Owain ab Urien (st.13), who were probably brought into Arthur's orbit at a late stage.

90. On *anoeth*, cf. Proinsias Mac Cana, 'C. anoeth: Gw. deccair', *B*, 23 (1968-70), 28-29; CO(1) xxi-xxii. Another possible sign of age is the rhyme of *-ur* and *-ut* (t = [ð]), but such rhymes do occur even in post-medieval informal verse.

91. *Mab*. 107, 128-9, and 150; TYP 389-90 and 403-4.

92. This derives from Irish sources; see Richard Sharpe, 'St Patrick and the See of Armagh', *CMCS*, 4 (1982), 42.

93. Jones, 'Stanzas of the Graves', 108-9 and 'Early Evolution', 17-18; Bromwich, 'Concepts', 164; Jarman, 'Arthurian Allusions', 111-12 and 242, n.65. J. E. Lloyd, 'The Death of Arthur', *B*, 11 (1941-4), 158-60, argued that Geoffrey was deliberately ambiguous, balancing a Breton/Cornish belief in Arthur's survival with a Welsh belief that he was slain at Camlan.

94. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, 18 and 249. See J. E. C. Williams, ch.12 below, p.262.

95. *Willelmi Malmesbiriensis De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, edited by W. Stubbs, 2 vols., Rolls Ser. (London, 1887), ii, 342 (cf. p. lxxxix, n.1); Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, 17-18 and 249-50.

96. It may be relevant that Gwalchmai and Cynon are both Arthur's courtiers in *Owain*. On the other hand, the latter was originally a non-Arthurian hero. See ch.13, n.27; TYP 323-4 and Rachel Bromwich, 'Cynon fab Clydno', *Ast*. H. 151-64.

97. Dafydd Huw Evans, 'An Incident on the Dee during the Glyn Dŵr Rebellion?', *Trans. Denbighshire Historical Soc.*, 1988, 19 and n.62; J. E. C. Williams, 'kyfedwynt y gynrein kywyn don CT ii. 20', *B*, 21 (1964-6), 229-30.

98. For a different but equally speculative view, equating *Perydon* with a south-eastern *Periron*, see *AP* xxxiv-xl and lines 18 and 71.

99. This has often been identified as the grave site (see indices to *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, s.n. 'Walwyn's Castle'), which is impossible if William is correct in placing it on the 'sea-shore'. According to B. G. Charles, *Non-Celtic Place-Names in Wales* (London, 1938), 87-8, the name *Castle Galwan/Gaweyn*, etc., is first attested from the 1290s, but may reflect an earlier *Castell Gwalchmai*. On the other hand, the latter name may be a 'translation' of the English (or French or Flemish) name. See also G 609; *TYP* 371-2.

100. Like Penda's in st.10; see P. Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600-800* (Cambridge, 1990), 28, n.57.

101. *Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill*, edited by Henry Lewis and others, second edn. (Cardiff, 1937), 160, no. LIV.16; *TYP* 280; *HRB* c.171 (X.9); *BD* 178.

102. Cf. BWP 188 (there is another Tryfan near Llansannan, SH/9766). It is curious that, while Bedwyr is linked with Tryfrwyd and Tryfan in 'Pa gur?' and the above *englyn* respectively, *otryuruyd* and *otryuan* are linked in a quite different context in *LIDC* no. 1 (*YMT*h), line 4.

103. C. A. Gresham, 'The Aberconwy Charter', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 94 (1939), 152, and 'The Aberconwy Charter; Further Consideration', *B*, 30 (1982-3), 334; I. Williams, 'gwryd, gwrhyd', *B*, 8 (1935-7), 236; Melville Richards, 'Arthurian Onomastics', *THSC*, 1969, 262-3 (with other instances). Cai was also associated with Caer Gai near Bala: R. B. White, 'Caer Gai and the Giants of Penllyn', *Jnl Merioneth Hist. and Rec. Soc.*, 10 (1985-6), 31-5.

104. *TYP* 160-2.

105. For Osfran (a unique allusion) and Morfran see respectively *Hend.* 43 and *TYP* 161 and 463-5. On the problematic element *Os(s)*- see *CA* 103 and cf. *LL* 218 (*Osulf* = OE *Oswulf*).

106. Marged Haycock, 'Llyfr Taliesin', *National Library of Wales Journal*, 25 (1988), 357-86.

107. Cf. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, 61.

108. *BT* 27; cf. Marged Haycock, 'The Significance of the "Cad Goddau" Tree-List in the Book of Taliesin', in *Celtic Linguistics: Readings in the Brythonic Languages for T. Arwyn Watkins*, edited by Martin J. Ball and others (Amsterdam, 1990), 310, n.10.

109. Cf. Wace's statement that Taliesin prophesied the birth of Christ, a passage misinterpreted by Delbouille, 'Témoignage de Wace', 180-1.

110. Cf. Haycock, 'Significance of the Tree List'.

111. *BT* 34; Marged Haycock, 'Llyfr Taliesin: Astudiaethau ar Rai Agweddau', unpubl. Ph.D. diss. (University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1983), 205.

112. *BT* 48; *TYP* xcvi-cvii.

113. *TYP* ci-cii; *CO*(1) 1016 and 1225. *Cafall* (< *caballus*) is the name of his dog (*CO*(1) 1015 etc.), as in the *Historia Brittonum*, c.73. This has been supposed, on etymological grounds, to have been the name of Arthur's horse (e.g. Jones, 'Early Evolution', 11-12; *CO*(1) lxiv-lxvi and ciii), but

the point may be that Arthur's dog was of horse-like proportions; compare, too, Leo and Tiger as modern cats' names. This is not to deny that *Carn cabal*, the name etymologized in the *Historia*, probably meant 'horse's hoof/cairn' originally. See R. J. Thomas, 'Cysylltiad Arthur â Gogledd Ceredigion', *B*, 8 (1935-7), 124-5; *The Description of Penbrokeshire by George Owen of Henllys*, edited by Henry Owen, 4 parts (London, 1892-1906), ii, 344, and iv, 530, 680, and 707-8. See below pp.90-1.

114. On Uthr see *TYP* 56 (no. 28) and 520-3; Jackson, *ALMA* 14, n.2; A. O. H. Jarman, 'Emrys Wledig; Amlawdd Wledig; Uthr Bendragon', *LIC*, 2 (1952), 127-8.

115. *BT* 71; *TYP* 521.

116. *BT* 71; cf. Haycock, 'Astudiaethau', 270.

117. *BT* 34.

118. Information from M. Haycock.

119. *BT* 66; A. O. H. Jarman, 'Erof Greulawn', *LIC*, 7 (1962), 106-7.

120. *Hend.* 254 = *RBP* col. 1171; cf. *TYP* 521; Haycock, "Some Talk of Alexander", 22, n.81.

121. *WAL* 131-78; Haycock, "Preiddeu Annwn" (n.6 above). The metre is basically Class 2 of Haycock, 'Metrical Models' (see p. 172).

122. Haycock, "Preiddeu Annwn", 74.

123. *Ibid.*, 65 and 68; *TYP* 141 and 161.

124. For references to earlier discussions see Haycock, "Preiddeu Annwn", and Jarman, 'Delineation', 11-14.

125. *CO*(1), lines 635-6, 1036-56.

126. Cf. Haycock, "Preiddeu Annwn", 70; Sims-Williams, 'Irish Geography', 418-20. Loomis implausibly saw forms of Lug and Lancelot here.

127. Cf. Sims-Williams, 'Significance', 604, and *CO*(1) lxii-lxiii on the names Diwrnach, Dyrnwch etc. For the *Thirteen Treasures*, see below pp.85-8.

128. *BT* 33; Haycock, "Preiddeu Annwn", 54 and n.27; *Mab.* xiii and 37.

129. Sims-Williams, 'Evidence', 246-7; cf. R. Mark Scowcroft, 'Leabhar Gabhála: Part II, The Growth of the Tradition', *Ériu*, 39 (1988), 53-7.

130. Kenneth Jackson, 'Some Popular Motifs in Early Welsh Tradition', *ÉC*, 11 (1964-5), 95-9.

131. Cf. Sims-Williams, 'Origin Stories'; this aspect is developed in *PKM* in an earlier passage linking Llasar, the cauldron, and the Irish settlements in Wales, and in a later passage about Llasar and the invention of *calch lassar*.

132. E.g. the Dilmun of the Sumerians, the Polynesians' island of Tuma, and the belief, recorded by Procopius, that Britain itself was an island of the dead; I hope to discuss these elsewhere.

133. Glyn E. Jones, 'Y Wledd yn Harlech ac yng Ngwales ym Mabinogi *Branwen*', *B*, 25 (1972-4), 380-6.

134. Sims-Williams, 'Evidence', pp. 248-55.

135. J. Carney, 'The Earliest Irish Brân Material', in *Latin Script and Letters*, edited by O'Meara and Naumann (see n.48 above), 174-93.

136. 'Astudiaeth ar Rai Agweddau ar Fabinogi *Branwen*', unpubl. MA Diss. (University of Wales, Cardiff, 1970), 300-12.

137. Common origins or Irish dependence on Britain would seem to follow from the argument of John T. Koch, 'Brân, Brennos', *CMCS*, 20 (1990), 1-20. The Irish names *Bran* and *Brénainn* (> *Brendanus*), etc., are listed as 'borrowed names' by M. A. O'Brien, 'Old Irish Personal Names', *Celtica*, 10 (1973), 231, but this seems unlikely in the case of *Bran* ('raven'); cf. Donnchadh O Corráin and Fidelma Maguire, *Gaelic Personal Names* (Dublin, 1981), 33-4.

138. Sims-Williams, 'Evidence', 243-8, and 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms'.

139. A. Watkin-Jones, 'The Interludes of Wales in the Eighteenth Century', *B*, 4 (1927-9), 104; *Duanairé Finn*, iii, edited by Gerard Murphy, Irish Texts Soc. 43 (Dublin, 1953), 132. Cf. John MacInnes, 'Twentieth-Century Recordings of Scottish Gaelic Ballads', in *The Heroic Process*, edited by Bo Almqvist *et al.* (Dublin, 1987), 126.

140. 'Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr', edited by Ifor Williams, *B*, 2 (1923-5), 269-86; also edited with trans. by Marged Haycock, *Blodeugerdd o Gerddi Crefyddol Cynnar* (forthcoming). Cf. Janem Mary Williams, 'Y Darlun o Arthur ym Mucheddau'r Saint ac yn Englynion Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr', unpubl. MA Diss. (Univ. of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1967); Rowland, 'Genres', 198-9; Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 285-6.

141. 'Englynion y Clyweit', edited by Ifor Williams and T. H. Parry-Williams, *B*, 3 (1926-7), 4-21; *Blodeugerdd*, edited and trans. by Haycock. Cf. Watkin-Jones, 'Interludes', 104, on a 'Dialogue between a Young Man and the Wren' and similar Interludes.

142. *HRB* cc.29 and 206 (II.9 and XII.18); cf. J. S. P. Tatlock, *Leg. Hist.*, 44-5, who wrongly describes our *Dialogue* as 'evidently late'. For post-Galfridian attempts to supply the eagle's prophecy see Henry Lewis, 'Proffwydoliaeth yr Eryr', *B*, 9 (1937-9), 112-15.

143. 'The Colloquy of Llywelyn and Gwrneth', edited by K. Jackson, *ZCP*, 21 (1940), 24-32; *LIDC* no. 25; Donatien Laurent, 'La gwerz de Skolan et la légende de Merlin', *Éthnologie française*, 1 (1971), 19-54; Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 201-2 and 284-5.

144. *Mab*. 71-3. Cf. Williams, 'Ymddiddan', 286; Jackson, 'Popular Motifs', 89-91.

145. Cf. 'Y Gwr Cadarn' in the Interludes: Watkin-Jones, 'Interludes', 104, n.5.

146. Jones, 'Early Evolution', 10; Jarman, 'Delineation', 15.

147. Information from O. J. Padel; see his *Cornish Place-Name Elements* (Nottingham, 1985), 104-5.

148. *CO* 35; *Mab*. 128. For later instances of Arthur as a bard uttering *englynion* see *TYP* 21-2, 31-2, and 532; Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 250-1, 254-6 and cf. 258-60.

149. Both printed and trans. by Mary Williams, 'An Early Ritual Poem in Welsh', *Speculum*, 13 (1938), 38-43; cf. *ATC* 197, n.9; Jackson, *ALMA* 18-19; *TYP* 383-4; Rowland, *Saga Poetry*, 256-8. Cf. below p.83.

150. Evan D. Jones, 'Melwas, Gwenhwyfar, a Chai', *B*, 8 (1935-7), 204.

151. *Erec*, lines 1946-51; trans. D. D. R. Owen, *Chrétien de Troyes: Arthurian Romances* (London, 1987), 26.

152. So dated by C. N. L. Brooke, *The Church and the Welsh Border in the Central Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 1986), 42. Caradog has other vernacular material, about Huail and Arthur; cf. Elissa R. Henken, *Traditions of the Welsh Saints* (Cambridge, 1987), 136-7; *CO*(1) xcix-ci; Proinsias Mac Cana, 'Fianaigecht in the Pre-Norman Period', in *Heroic Process*, edited by Almqvist *et al.*, 96, n.45.

153. *Ineswitrin* appears already in William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. Stubbs, i, 28-9 (cf. *The Early History of Glastonbury*, edited by John Scott (Woodbridge, 1981), 188, nn.24-5). See also Thomas, *Enwau Afonydd*, 180 and 198; H. P. R. Finberg, *Lucerna* (London, 1964), 83-94. For Welsh *Gwlat yr Haf* (Summer Country) see *CO* 1059; G 689.

154. *Chronica Minora*, iii, edited by T. Mommsen, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi*, 13 (Berlin, 1898), 109; cf. Chambers, *Arthur of Britain*, 84-5, 116-17, 121-3, and 263; *ATC* 214-15 and 219; *ALMA* 67; *TYP* 381-2 and 553. Some of the enormous literature on Glastonbury, Avalon, etc. is cited in *Llyfryddiaeth Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg*, edited by Thomas Parry and Merfyn Morgan (Cardiff, 1976), 52-3.

155. The motif of colour variation is simply a stylistic device; see n.78 above.

156. As Loomis does, *ATC* 215-18, in stressing the seasonal theme. Note also that the 'end(s) of the world' (*eiithafoedd byd*) is a commonplace in *Owain* and elsewhere (G 465). For the above poems see *TYP* 382-3.

157. Sims-Williams, 'Functions of Origin Stories' (n.7 above).

158. See further Sims-Williams, 'The Visionary Celt' (n.49 above), 87-93. I am grateful to Drs Marged Haycock and Rachel Bromwich for comments on this chapter.