Llyfr Coch Hergest: Studies in Text and Manuscript Context

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ABSTRACT

Measuring 34 x 21cm, comprising 362 surviving leaves in thirty-four quires and containing some fifty prose texts and around 370 poems the late-fourteenth century *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (Oxford, Jesus College MS 111) is the largest extant medieval Welsh manuscript. Incorporating examples of almost every kind of Welsh literature from the period – excluding only the early poetry, the religious texts, and the laws – this manuscript has long been characterised by its size and scope, and scholars have commented on its perceived lack of organisational principle, beyond that of sheer inclusivity. Modern scholarship has tended to extract the texts from the manuscript in order to study them under their modern academic categorisations: researchers are interested in the *Mabinogi*; or the poetry of the *Gogynfeirdd;* or the *Brutiau.* Yet, in removing texts from their manuscript context, we are deprived of the opportunity to consider any editorial decisions on the part of patron or scribe, and a further layer of understanding is stripped away by not considering the socio-political context, or the potential motivations, of those responsible for the creation of the manuscript. This PhD thesis seeks to return the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* to their manuscript context, through an examination of three case studies: the corpus of *canu dychan* (satirical poetry); two poems in the voice of *Myrddin*; and three translated popular European narrative prose texts, *Pererindod Siarlymaen, Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn,* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic.* In contemplating questions of textual organisation in the manuscript, it is hoped that some new light is shed on the interpretation of these texts through reading them in the order that patron and scribe intended.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is the result of my own work and that I have referenced sources in cases where ideas are not my own: any omission of an accurate reference is an oversight on my part and will be corrected. This thesis, or any part thereof, has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow, or any other institution.

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1 INTRODUCTION: CONTEXTUALISING LLYFR COCH HERGEST

1.1 MANUSCRIPT, PATRON, AND SCRIBE: LLYFR COCH HERGEST, HOPCYN AP TOMAS, AND HYWEL FYCHAN.

Llyfr Coch Hergest (Oxford, Jesus College MS 111) is the largest surviving medieval Welsh manuscript, in terms of both physical size and the number of texts that it contains. It measures 34 x 21cm, comprising 362 surviving leaves in thirty-four quires and containing some fifty prose texts and around 370 poems, as well as *Trioedd Ynys Prydain* (the Triads of the Island of Britain) and some *diarhebion* (prophecies).[1] It is widely accepted that work on *Llyfr Coch Hergest* began c.1382, given that this is the date of the last annal in the manuscript's copy of *Brut y Saeson*, and that it was completed in the latter part of its' patron's life. The first suggestion that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* had belonged to Hopcyn ap Tomas was made by Griffith John Williams, based on the fact that there are five poems addressed to Hopcyn (and one addressed to his son, Tomas ap Hopcyn) in the manuscript.[2] Gifford Charles-Edwards was the first to identify that there were three main scribes involved in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: 'Hand I', Hywel Fychan, and 'Pen 32' (identified as the same hand as the chief scribe of NLW MS Peniarth 32, known as 'Y Llyfr Teg' due to the consistently high quality of its writing).[3] These three main scribes are denoted A, B, and C by Daniel Huws,[4] and Pen 32/scribe C is subsequently renamed X91 in Huws' recent three volume magnum-opus *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes.*[5] It is possible that these three scribes were collaborating on the construction of the manuscript; however this is by no means certain and there are also another three contemporary hands who made additions to the manuscript.[6]

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[1] For an overview of the manuscript see Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol I Manuscripts* (Aberystwyth, 2022), 741-742; for detailed descriptions of the make-up of the manuscript see Daniel Huws 'Llyfr Coch Hergest' in R. Iestyn Daniel, Marged Haycock, Dafydd Johnston & Jenny Rowland (eds) *Cyfoeth y Testun: ysgrifau ar lenyddiaeth Gymraeg yr oesoedd canol* (Cardiff, 2003), 1-30.
[2] Griffith John Williams, Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg (Cardiff, 1948), 147. See also Daniel Huws *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol II Scribes Indexes* (Aberystwyth 2022), 52.
[3] Gifford Charles-Edwards, 'The Scribes of the Red Book of Hergest', *Cylchgrawn Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru* 21.3 (Summer 1980), 246-256.
[4] Daniel Huws 'Llyfr Coch Hergest', 4.
[5] Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol I*, 741. See *Vol II: Scribes Indexes* for entries on Hywel Fychan, 55, and X91, 215.
[6] Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol I*, 741-742.

The comprehensiveness of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is one of its most noted features: it contains examples of almost every kind of Welsh literature from the period, missing only the early poetry, religious texts and the laws (a complete list of the prose texts contained in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is supplied in Table 1). Christine James describes *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as an attempt to contain between two covers the very best of Welsh literature and culture,[7] and further to this as a manuscript which represents a period of literary culture that could have been thought of at the time of the manuscript's construction as in danger of being lost.[8] Daniel Huws has suggested that the purpose of the selection of texts for inclusion in the manuscript was 'to gather in one book the classics of Welsh literature,' with legal and religious material deliberately left out because the manuscript's patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas, already possessed these texts in other manuscripts.[9] Likewise, Helen Fulton perceives the purpose of the construction of the manuscript was 'to record what is known of Welsh literature, history and prophecy.'[10] James argues against Huws's description of Hywel Fychan as the 'architect' of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, stating that this suggests a greater plan to the texts of the manuscript than there is in reality and that while there is a rough order, it does not compare with the orderliness that we see in other manuscripts, such as the *Hendregadredd* manuscript and *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*.[11] Huws, despite the description of Hywel Fychan as 'architect', ascertains that the manuscript's chief scribe was more concerned with the content than with the appearance of the manuscript and that there is no clear hierarchy of texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.[12] James agrees, concluding that it is in the comprehensiveness of the texts contained within the pages of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* that the ambition of the work lies rather than in any logical or artistic presentation of the texts.[13] Likewise Dafydd Johnston notes that 'its organisational principle was surely inclusivity.'[14] Through an examination of three 'case studies' of sections of the manuscript, this thesis will argue that there are other possible organisational principles at play in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

[7] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau": Hopcyn ap Tomas a'r Traddodial Llenyddol Cymraeg' in Hywel Teifi Edwards (ed.) *Cyfres y Cymoedd: Cwm Tawe* (Llandysul, 1993), 4-44 at 32.
[8] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"' in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* 13 (2007), 31-57 at 53.
[9] Daniel Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Aberystwyth, 2000), 82.
[10] Helen Fulton, 'A geography of Welsh literary production in late medieval Glamorgan' in *Journal of Medieval History* 41.3 (2015), 325-340 at 333.
[11] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 53.
[12] Daniel Huws, 'Llyfr Coch Hergest', 21.
[13] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 53.
[14] Dafydd Johnston, 'Welsh Bardic Miscellanies' in Margaret Connolly & Raluca Radulescu (eds.) *Insular Books: Vernacular Manuscript Miscellanies in Late Medieval Britain* (Oxford, 2016), 193-208 at 194.

This Introductory chapter will provide an overview of the existing scholarship on the manuscript, its patron Hopcyn ap Tomas, and its chief scribe Hywel Fychan followed by a consideration of the classification of multi-text medieval manuscripts as either manuscript miscellanies or manuscript anthologies. This will be followed by a discussion of how others have approached the multi-text manuscript and the historical context of late-fourteenth-century Wales will be outlined. This first chapter situates the study being undertaken in this thesis within the current scholarship and closes with an overview of the aims of the thesis and an outline of the thesis structure.

Llyfr Coch Hergest is an impressively large manuscript in the modern day, however it seems likely that it was also thought an exceptional project to embark upon in its own time. Daniel Huws argues that this is apparent in the uncertain way that scribe A begins copying the manuscript – seen in the inconsistency of the quire lengths as well as the line lengths for each column – and also in the way that Hywel Fychan, a picture of consistency in other manuscripts (e.g. NLW MS Peniarth 11, NLW MS Llanstephan 27), does not demonstrate the same disciplined consistency in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.[15] Significantly, Daniel Huws has shown that there is remarkable continuity in terms of the structure of the manuscript and the order of the texts within it, from the time that the manuscript was bound to the present day; *Llyfr Coch Hergest* contains only one bifolium which is out of place from its original binding, and of forty-six missing pages, around thirty-six were blank.[16] This means that we can approach a study of the manuscript context of the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with a degree of confidence that they remain now in the same order as they were intended to be read by the patron and/or chief scribe.

Hopcyn ap Tomas is a well-known figure amongst historians of the 19th and early 20th centuries, due in part to the fruits of Iolo Morgannwg's imaginative fictional writings on Hopcyn; the details of these fictional writings and their effect on the early scholars are discussed in several places.[17] An early misconception stemming from Iolo Morgannwg's writing is that Hopcyn was from Ynysdawe, when in fact, as Prys Morgan has demonstrated,

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[15] Daniel Huws, 'Llyfr Coch Hergest', 13 and Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 48.
[16] Daniel Huws, 'Llyfr Coch Hergest', 10-11.
[17] c.f. Ceri W. Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the middle of the sixteenth century' in T.B. Pugh (ed.) *Glamorgan County History: Vol III: The Middle Ages* (Cardiff, 1971), 445-554 at 449-454 and 486; Prys Morgan, 'Glamorgan and the Red Book' in *Morgannwg* 22 (1978), 42-60 at 46; Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 6-8; Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 32.

he was from nearby Ynysforgan, Swansea.[18] For some time it was believed that Hopcyn ap Tomas had died by 1408, evidenced by a document which appears to show the handing over of Hopcyn's lands to his son upon Hopcyn's death; however R. Iestyn Daniel has since shown that this was not the case and as such Hopcyn could have died either before or after this date – although it is likely that he was in the latter part of his life at the time of the production of this document.[19] Daniel Huws suggests that he died c.1405;[20] while Christine James affirms that the only date that can be connected to Hopcyn ap Tomas with any certainty is 1403, when Hopcyn's name appears in a letter sent by the mayor and burgesses of Caerleon-on-Usk to their counterparts in Monmouth which described how Owain Glyndŵr had asked for Hopcyn ap Tomas, as a 'maister of brut', to inform him about what he saw in his future before venturing forward along the south from Carmarthen.[21] As such, despite there being a fairly firm date for the beginning of the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, the *terminus post quem* for the manuscript's construction is considerably more uncertain; though the generally accepted dates are 1382-c.1410.

The chief scribe of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, Hywel Fychan, is a well-known hand in the Welsh manuscripts, and there are at least eight surviving manuscripts which can be attributed entirely or partly to him. Charles-Edwards asserts that we can say with certainty that Hywel Fychan was a professionally trained lay scribe, whose hand is clearly distinct from monastically trained scribes, and that by looking at the changes in his writing in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* we are able to see his interest or lack of interest in the texts that he was copying.[22] Peter Wynn Thomas characterises Hywel Fychan as a 'low-noise, form-oriented scribe', meaning that he viewed the text of his exemplar as 'fixed' and as such did not interfere with its language or structure;[23] while Simon Rodway concludes that Hywel's treatment of the text of *Culhwch ac Olwen* demonstrates that the text was 'no exercise in antiquarianism…but a text designed to be understood and enjoyed by its Glamorganshire audience.'[24] We are able to name this scribe with certainty and assert that there was a working relationship between him and Hopcyn ap Tomas thanks to a few lines that he wrote in a colophon at the end of

[18] Prys Morgan, 'Glamorgan and the Red Book', 46-50.
[19] R. Iestyn Daniel (ed.) Gwaith Dafydd y Coed a Beirdd Eraill o Lyfr Coch Hergest: Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr (Aberystwyth, 2002), 63.
[20] Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol I*, 741
[21] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 9.
[22] Gifford Charles-Edwards, 'The Scribes of the Red Book of Hergest', 250-251.
[23] Peter Wynn Thomas, 'Middle Welsh Dialects: Problems and Perspectives' in *The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 40 (1993), 17-50.
[24] Simon Rodway, 'The Red Book Text of *Culhwch ac Olwen*: A modernising scribe at work' in *Studi Celtici* III (2014), 95-161 at 130.

the version of *Brut y Brenhinedd* contained in Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O:[25]

> y llyuyr hwnn a ysgriuennwys howel vychan uab howel goch o uuellt yn llwyr onys gwnaeth agkof adaw geir neu lythyren, o arch a gorchymun y vaster nyt amgen Hopkyn uab Thomas uab einawn.[26]
>
> This book was written by Hywel Fychan fab Hywel Goch from Buellt [Builth] wholly if he has not made omission from memory of a word or a letter, from the request and command of his master, namely, Hopcyn fab Tomas fab Einawn.

This colophon, in its entirety, provides a striking insight into the past, furnishing us with not only the names of the men who spearheaded the production of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* but also with some rare personal perceptions of patron and scribe which are critical for enabling the kind of study that is being undertaken in this thesis, and will be discussed further below.

Given the significant evidence demonstrating the collaboration between Hywel Fychan and Hopcyn ap Tomas for these two manuscripts, it is tempting to place all the manuscripts containing Hywel's hand in the library of Hopcyn in his court at Ynysforgan; Christine James, while asserting that we cannot make this assumption, argues that it is difficult not to believe that at least some of them are his *ex libris.*[27] Certainly, it is apparent that, as well as being a patron of poetry, Hopcyn ap Tomas did have a collection of manuscripts at his disposal. Evidence for this is found in the poem addressed to Hopcyn written by Dafydd y Coed (cols. 1376-1379) which notes some of the books or literary works that were in Hopcyn's possession at his court in Ynysforgan:

> *Mwnai law, mae yn y lys*
> *Eurddar, y Lucidarius*
> *A'r Greal ar Ynyales*
> *A grym pob kyfreith ae gras*[28]

[25] Ibid., 33-34. This colophon is discussed at length by Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynysdawy' in *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 22 (1966-1968), 223-228, quote at 224. For a thorough descriptuion of the manuscript see Ben Guy'A Welsh Manuscript in America: Library Company of Philadelphia, 8680.O', *National Library of Wales Journal* 36 (2014), 1–26.
[26] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynysdawy', 227.
[27] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau", 29.
[28] Llyfr Coch Hergest, Oxford Jesus College, MS.111, col.1376, lines 20-22; 'Wealth in his hand, there is in his court // golden mighty lord, the Lucidarius// and the Grail and the Annals // and the authority of every law and its favour.' The texts noted in this poem and the manuscripts to which they likely belonged is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 below.

As stated by Christine James, Dafydd y Coed here places Hopcyn ap Tomas in a wider European literary context one the one hand and highlights his interest in different aspects of the traditional lore of Wales on the other.[29] Drawing on Brynley F. Roberts's suggestions from his article 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynysdawy', James suggests possible surviving manuscripts which could be those alluded to by Dafydd y Coed. The 'Lucidarius' owned by Hopcyn was possibly in Llanstephan 27 (The Red Book of Talgarth), which is the work of Hywel Fychan and also contains the name of a man who is likely the brother of Hopcyn ap Tomas, Rhys ap Thomas.[30] Another possibility is NLW MS Peniarth 190, a manuscript within which is found the work of Scribe A of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.[31] The 'Greal' – best understood in Dafydd y Coed's poem to mean the group of Arthurian stories centring around the search by Arthur's knights for the Holy Grail – is possibly NLW MS Peniarth 11, which contains the oldest and most complete version of *Y Seint Greal* and is in the hand of Hywel Fychan.[32] 'Ynyales' is most likely a form of the Welsh *aniales* for the Latin *annãles,* a term which refers to the specific way of recording historical events one after the other by year. James argues that is possible that the 'Ynyales' named by Dafydd y Coed was a composite text which combined the history as told by Geoffrey of Monmouth with a chronicle similar to that of *Brut y Tywysogion* and this is why Dafydd y Coed used the generic term 'Ynyales' instead of naming a specific, well-known text.[33] The final work referenced in Dafydd y Coed's list can only pertain to a version of *Cyfraith Hywel* (the ninth-century Laws of Hywel Dda), and James suggests that this could be a reference to either Oxford, Jesus College MS 57, written in the hand of Hywel Fychan and containing one of the most important redactions of the *Blegywyrd* version of the laws, or to NLW MS Peniarth 32, written in the same hand as the one which copied Dafydd y Coed's poem into *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and containing one of the most beautiful copies of the *Iorwerth* version of the laws.[34]

Despite the fact that we will likely never be able to ascertain which manuscripts containing which texts were in Hopcyn's possession at Ynysforgan with complete certainty, James's work clearly demonstrates a large web of manuscripts and scribes that are connected to Hopcyn in one way or another. This in turn paints a picture of a man who was greatly involved in the activity of collecting and copying a variety of texts; a man who was

[29] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 20.
[30] Ibid., 30-31.
[31] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 49.
[32] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 29-30.
[33] Ibid., 20-23.
[34] Ibid., 35. c.f. Melville Richards, *Cyfreithiau Hywel Dda yn ôl Llawysgrif Coleg yr Iesu LVII, argraffiad diwygeidig* (Cardiff, 1990), p. xxiii).

concerned with Welsh literary tradition but also with the translation of other literature into Welsh; a man who valued and prioritised supporting poets through patronage; a man who it seems knew how to utilise his connections with lay scribes such as Hywel Fychan in order to be closely involved with the production and transmission of literature in late fourteenth-century Wales.[35] While it is important to note that Hopcyn was not unique in his position as a patron to the bards, and a commissioner of manuscripts, James states that it is fair to set Hopcyn in a class of his own – not only because of the variety of texts which are believed to be in his possession at his court in Ynysforgan, but also because of the number and variety of manuscripts that we can connect to him which have survived to the modern period.[36]

We are uniquely positioned to consider what the thought processes of Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan may have been behind the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* because of the aforementioned colophon in Philadelphia MS.8680.O, the second half of which provides an extraordinary and unusual insight into the motivations of Hopcyn and Hywel for their engagement with the production of Welsh-language manuscripts and perhaps also into their attitudes towards the political situation of Wales in the late-fourteenth century:

> Yr rei a odolygant y pawb gwediaw duw drostunt or a darlleho y llyuyr hwnn . am uadeueint oc eu pechodeu . a channattau gwir lewenyd didiffyc diorffen .y gyt ar tat ar mab ar yspryt glan amen . ac oe barn wynt anuolyannussaf or tywyssogyon uchot y llywyassant gwertheryn a medrawt . kanys oc eu brat wynt ae tywyll ac eu kyghor wynt y distrywyt y tywyssogyon arbennickaf . yr hynn a gwynawd eu hetivedyon gwedy wynt yr hynny hyt hediw . y rei yssyd yn godef poen ac achenoctit oc alltuded yn eu ganedic dayar.[37]
>
> Those who beseech everyone to pray to God for them if they read this book . for forgiveness of their sins . and permit [them] true flawless unending joyfulness . together with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit amen . and from their judgement the most unpraiseworthy of the princes above who ruled [are] Gwrtheryn and Medrawd . Since it is from their betrayal and deception and counsel that the foremost princes were destroyed . that which their heirs have lamented after them even so to this day . those who are suffering pain and need and exile in their native land.

This section of the colophon describes the joint response of Hywel and Hopcyn to the contents of *Brut y Brenhinedd* which has just been copied. This rare and personal response

[35] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 50.
[36] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 38-39.
[37] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynysdawy', 227.

draws on the themes of that text, which details the loss of Welsh sovereignty, and states that the injustices suffered because of this are still felt by the Welsh, who endure pain, need and exile in the land of their birth to the present day of the manuscript's construction. Roberts and James have argued that this colophon provides evidence for the feelings of Hopcyn and Hywel about their current political situation in Wales,[38] and certainly for the purposes of this thesis it creates a fairly solid basis for the interpretation of the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* against a backdrop of a sense of loss of Welsh nationhood on the part of both patron and scribe.

The five poems addressed to Hopcyn in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* provide a further glimpse of his character. The general agreement amongst scholars is that, poetic convention aside, we do not get anywhere else in the medieval Welsh literary tradition a picture of a man with such a depth of learning and such a multifaceted interest in culture as Hopcyn ap Tomas and that we have in these poems a greater expression of truth than the usual expected hyperbole.[39] Christine James furthers this by arguing that the numerous references to poetry and to poets being entertained at Hopcyn's court in Ynysforgan, although not unique in praise poetry of this kind, demonstrate that not only was Hopcyn more cultured than the average patron of poetry but he was also interested and informed in the details of the work of the poets and of their traditional lore, and was a man which the poets themselves considered to be a power of authority over their craft.[40] Ceri Lewis notes that it is striking that there appears nowhere in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* a single poem in the newer *cywydd* metre – despite the manuscript containing works in the *awdl* metre by poets who were equally skilled in both. Lewis concludes that this is evidence to support the theory that Hopcyn was traditionalist and conservative in his outlook on Welsh literary culture.[41] Lewis is mistaken in his observation that there is not a single *cywydd* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (there is, in fact, one such poem: that composed by Iolo Goch in cols.1407-1408); however despite this, his argument still stands – and has no doubt had a lasting influence on the perception of Hopcyn as a man with traditional and conservative tastes. Helen Fulton likewise perceives a 'deliberate antiquarianism' in the manuscript.[42] In the praise poems addressed to him, Hopcyn ap Tomas is not depicted merely as a learned man, rather he is the most learned man possible. Further

[38] The historical context of late-fourteenth-century Wales is discussed below, and more specific discussion of the political situation in the Welsh March is found in Chapter 4.
[39] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynys Dawy' 223; Ceri W. Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg', 487; Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau", 38-39.
[40] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 11-15; and 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 38.
[41] Ceri W. Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg', 489.
[42] Helen Fulton, 'A geography of Welsh literary production', 339.

to this, James argues that the depiction of Hopcyn these poems demonstrates that he was not only wealthy and generous to these five poets, but to poets who would come from far and wide to his court in Ynysforgan. She writes that the exceptional nature of Hopcyn ap Tomas' bardic patronage can be seen in this line from Dafydd y Coed's poem to Hopcyn: 'byrdwin y neuad bardonieid'[43] (col. 1377, line 15). James purports this to be the only instance of the adjective 'barddoniaidd' that is found in Middle Welsh literature and as such it is almost symbolic of the special prominence given to poets and poetry in Hopcyn ap Tomas' home.[44] It should, however, be noted that the Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru does give another example of 'barddoniaidd', also from the fourteenth century, in Dafydd y Coed's poem addressed to Hywel ap Goronwy, dean of Bangor.[45]

Another interest of Hopcyn's that is discernible from the surviving evidence is that of the translation into Welsh of texts which were popular in contemporary Europe. Brynley F. Roberts has demonstrated that there is evidence for Hopcyn and his wider family's involvement in this literary activity in NLW Llanstephan 2, where we find a colophon at the end of the texts of Ffordd y Brawd Odrig which names a possible brother of Hopcyn's that is strikingly similarly worded to the colophon written by Hywel Fychan, naming Hopcyn ap Tomas, in Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O.[46] Christine James adds to this the evidence of the translation of the French text *Bestiaire d'Amour* in NLW Llanstephan 4.[47] This kind of activity of translation was responsible for bringing a new wave of European influences to Welsh literature in its wake between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries and it is possible that Hopcyn was at the centre of this.[48] This activity of translation of popular texts gives the impression of a man who was very much up to date with current literary fashions and enjoyed being at the forefront of literary development which contradicts Lewis' characterisation of Hopcyn, mentioned above.

R. R. Davies paints a picture of Hopcyn ap Tomas as a man on a crossroads, standing in the uncomfortable present between the tradition that was preserved in the books and literary texts in his possession on the one hand, and the future that was anticipated in the prophetic poetry that he was considered an authority over on the other.[49] James postulates

[43] 'generous with wine in his hall, poetic'
[44] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 37.
[45] Thomas Parry (ed.) *Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym* (Cardiff, 1979), 42.
[46] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau', 224.
[47] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 30. Also, Graham C. Thomas (ed.), *A Welsh Bestiary of Love: being a translation into Welsh of Richart de Fornival's Bestiaire d'amour* (Dublin, 1988), xviii.
[48] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 30 and Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau', 224.
[49] Robert Rees Davies, *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford, 1997), 55.

that we could perhaps go a step further than this and suggest that Hopcyn's awareness of the present situation – the ethnic and political friction between the Welsh and the English – not only lies behind the nationalistic writing of Hywel Fychan, but was also the motive for creating *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.[50] While we must remain cautious not to place modern notions into the minds of the past, there is certainly plenty of evidence available for the interpretation of how Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan could have been engaging with *Llyfr Coch Hergest* – its conception and construction and the texts within it.

1.2 Manuscript Miscellany vs Manuscript Anthology

Before embarking on an exploration of ideas of organisational principles and possible editorial decisions in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* it is first necessary to situate ourselves within the wider discussion surrounding the classification of multi-text manuscripts as either manuscript miscellanies or manuscript anthologies. The question of whether texts are included in medieval manuscripts by design or by accident of exemplar availability is a central concern of the proposal that an examination of the texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* can reveal something about agency of patron and scribe in its construction. The terms 'manuscript miscellany' and 'manuscript anthology' are both used in scholarship concerning multi-text manuscripts, alongside other terms such as "'collection", "compilation", "composite", "commonplace book", "album", "household book.'"[51] Such a multiplicity of terms demonstrates that there has been little consensus among scholars about their definition.[52] This is clearly problematic and recent work has sought to delineate the terms more specifically. Generally, it appears that a manuscript anthology may be defined as different from a manuscript miscellany in that it demonstrates some kind of clear organizational principle, however this definition is not unproblematic, as is demonstrated by the scholarship.

One of the difficulties in attempting to identify an organisational principle in multi-text manuscripts is evident in the argument of Michael Johnston and Michael Van Dussen in their introduction to *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches* that 'Late

[50] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 30.
[51] Margaret Connolly & Raluca Radulescu, 'Introduction' in Margaret Connolly & Raluca Radulescu (eds), *Insular Books: Vernacular Manuscript Miscellanies in Late Medieval Britain* (Oxford, 2015), 1-30 at 4.
[52] Ibid., 1.

Medieval manuscript culture was inherently miscellaneous.'[53] The meaning of this is that manuscripts, by their very nature, are subject to the possibility of change – whether in the hands of the scribe during construction, or by a later owner, texts could be added or removed at any stage with little difficulty. A further argument, as presented by Ralph Hanna III in his article 'Miscellaneity and Vernacularity: Conditions of Literary Production in Late Medieval England', is that 'exemplar poverty'[54] restricted the texts which were available to be copied by scribes. Both of these facts are fuel for the argument which is put forward by Arthur Bahr in his article 'Miscellanaeity and Variance in the Medieval Book', that there is therefore little to be gleaned from attempting to seek out 'the conscious, recoverable intentions of [the manuscript] creator(s).'[55] However, Bahr also notes that this argument displays 'a degree of pre-emptive intellectual surrender,'[56] since it 'seems to excuse attempting the question of why any particular work, or genre, should be included in the manuscript.'[57] Further to this argument, as noted by Margaret Connolly and Raluca Radulescu in their introduction to *Insular Books: Vernacular Manuscripts in Late Medieval Britain,* to assume a lack of available exemplars in the creation of multi-text manuscripts is to 'strip away intentionality from the process of compiling,'[58] effectively closing off an entire line of scholarly enquiry.

Bahr argues that to label a manuscript as miscellaneous (which is in any case a modern construct) 'may misrepresent how most medieval readers perceived and engaged with their books.'[59] That is to say that, just because we as modern readers are unable to identify a recognisable organizational principle in any given manuscript, does not mean that there would not have been one apparent to the manuscripts' original audience. Further to this, the term itself could be an entirely unhelpful one since, as highlighted by Stephen G. Nichols and Siegfried Wenzel in *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany*, it 'does not even provide an accurate taxonomy for cataloguers, editors, and

[53] Michael Johnston & Michael Van Dussen (eds), *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches* (Cambridge, 2015), 4.
[54] Ralph Hanna III, 'Miscellanaeity and Vernacularity: Conditions of Literary Production in Late Medieval England', in Stephen G. Nichols & Siegfried Wenzel (eds), *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany* (Michigan, 1996), 37-51 at 47.
[55] Arthur Bahr, 'Miscellaneity and Variance in the Medieval Book', in Michael Johnston & Michael Van Dussen (eds), *The Medieval Manuscript Book: Cultural Approaches* (Cambridge, 2015), 181-198 at 188.
[56] Ibid., 182.
[57] Carter Revard, 'Gilote et Johane: an interlude in B.L. MS Harley 2253', *Studies in Philology,* 79 (1982), 122-146 at 127.
[58] Margaret Connolly & Raluca Radulescu (eds.), *Insular Books*, 22.
[59] Arthur Bahr, 'Miscellaneity and Variance in the Medieval Book', 182.

historians of book making, let alone literary scholars [and]…sheds little light on the relationship of the texts to their codicological context.'[60]

Bahr offers two closely related definitions of 'manuscript miscellany'; firstly that "'miscellany" offers a practical way of designating a multi-text manuscript book whose contents exhibit a substantial degree of variety (of languages, genres, authors, literary forms, etc.) and whose variety, in turn, creates some degree of unwieldiness for modern readers.'[61] Secondly, in recognition of the fact that this definition is necessarily subjective, he suggests that a 'manuscript miscellany' may be thought of as 'a complex assemblage of textual parts that does not obligingly present readers with a clear program or straightforward purpose, and which different readers are therefore likely to perceive in meaningfully different ways.'[62] Further to this, he argues that the term might more appropriately be applied to individual texts, or small groups of texts within otherwise coherent manuscripts.[63]

The definition of a 'manuscript anthology' as 'a collection of texts within which some organising principles can be observed,'[64] can be problematic in the same way that the definition of a 'manuscript miscellany' as a collection of seemingly unrelated texts is. Most strikingly we are faced with the same problems of subjectivity, for what may be deemed an organising principle in the eyes of one reader may not be in the eyes of another. Connolly and Radulescu argue that the anthology can be more specifically described as 'the manuscript in which coherence is expressed in either the ordering of items or similarity at the level of literary genre, or both.'[65] The danger of this is that modern concepts of the ordering of texts and of literary genre are not necessarily the same as the medieval concepts and therefore it could be argued that to define a manuscript as an anthology is to attempt 'to reveal the extent to which modern standards of scholarship are identifiable in the medieval manuscript.'[66] This approach could therefore do injustice to the medieval thought processes that took place during the construction of the manuscript, and as Connolly and Radulescu have observed 'the makers of medieval books seems to have tolerated – indeed maybe have relished – a greater degree of variety within a single codex.'[67]

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[60] Stephen G. Nichols & Siegfried Wenzel (eds), *The Whole Book: Cultural Perspectives on the Medieval Miscellany* (Michigan, 1996), 3.
[61] Arthur Bahr, 'Miscellaneity and Variance in the Medieval Book', 182.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid., 188.
[64] Margaret Connolly & Raluca Radulescu (eds), *Insular Books*, 4-5.
[65] Ibid., 21.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid., 7.

It is important to acknowledge that in seeking to apply modern definitions to multi-text manuscripts we are effectively distancing ourselves further from being able to understand them, as Ralph Hanna III observed, 'the medieval disinterest not simply in expressing but even in developing any critical terminology like our own estranges us and renders the objects of our studies opaque.'[68] In the study of both manuscript anthologies and manuscript miscellanies it appears that scholars must walk a fine line between acknowledging the circumstantial nature of the texts recorded and recognising intentional editorial decisions on the part of the scribe/compiler/patron (and perhaps even of later owners of the manuscript, who may have added or removed texts for their own specific set of reasons). The intrinsically subjective nature of literary texts and the distance between the compilation of such manuscripts and modern thoughts on organisation mean that it is very difficult to settle on a clear definition between the idea of a 'manuscript miscellany' and a 'manuscript anthology.'

I do not think it necessary to categorise *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as either miscellany or anthology here, and find myself in agreement with the observations of Bahr, Connolly and Radulescu that to deny medieval manuscript creators their agency is to deny ourselves of potentially interesting and fruitful branches of scholarship. To assume that there is no order or intelligent thought behind the presentation of texts in any given manuscript is something of a modern-day superiority complex – it is easier to accept that there is no organisational principle in a manuscript than it is to grapple with the idea that there is one that we do not understand. While we can never know exactly how people in the past thought or how they engaged with their texts and manuscripts (indeed, it is not possible to truly understand what another person is thinking, even if they are your contemporary), it is more worthwhile to continue to investigate the possibilities than to wilfully fall at the first hurdle. The observation of Hanna that in seeking to apply modern terms of categorisation to the contents of medieval manuscripts we risk further obfuscating the objects of our study require further thought here also. It seems to me that this need to categorise manuscripts as either 'miscellany' or 'anthology' is something of a modern preoccupation; a way to try and make sense of the relatively scarce surviving evidence from an earlier period of learned culture that is otherwise opaque to us. In engaging with ideas of medieval manuscript organisation it appears that we have to find a satisfactory balance between recognising that problems of exemplar availability may have affected manuscript contents alongside acknowledging the

[68] Ralph Hanna III, 'Miscellanaeity and Vernacularity', 37.

possibility that medieval manuscript creators were thinking about texts in ways that we will never be able to fully understand. If by seeking to fit medieval manuscripts and texts into modern scholarly categories we are further distancing ourselves from understanding them, then the obvious answer is that we should seek to inhibit a medieval mind-set when engaging with these texts. This may well be an impossible feat, however the first step towards getting anywhere near to this is surely to read the texts in their manuscript context, as the manuscript creators intended them to be read, and to see what emerges from there and whether from that position we are able to draw out some new understanding.

1.3 Cognate Studies – How have others approached the multi-text manuscript?

As illustrated in the introductory chapter of Dagmar Schlüter's *History or Fable? The Book of Leinster as a Document of Cultural Memory in Twelfth-Century Ireland*, the recent scholarly approaches to multi-text manuscripts have grown out of the shift in perception away from the notion that:

> those who transmitted, re-edited, re-wrote or merely copied the text were, to a greater or lesser degree, mindless conduits of a Great Tradition whose intelligence was, of course, much inferior both to that of their modern critics and to that of the founders of the tradition itself.[69]

Towards the idea that:

> attempting to discern the organising principle at work in a given codex can shed light on how a particular work was read by the manuscript's creator […] Their placing of particular narratives adjacent to one another on the manuscript page was an act of textual interpretation, designed to ensure that certain groups of narratives were read and assessed collectively.[70]

Building on Gearóid Mac Niocaill's suggestion that the Book of Leinster (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1339) is 'a monument to the twelfth-century Irish view of the country's

[69] Donnachadh Ó Corráin, 'Historical Need and Literary Narrative', in David Ellis Evans, John G. Griffith & Edward Martyn Jope (eds.) *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies* (Oxford, 1986), 141-158 at 141.
[70] Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The Literature of Medieval Ireland, 800-1200: From the Vikings to the Normans', in Margaret Kelleher & Phillip O'Leary (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature, Vol 1 to 1890* (Cambridge, 2006), 32-73 at 35.

past […] a document of remembrance,'[71] Schlüter argues that there is clear evidence of an organisational thought process in the Book of Leinster, that certain texts have been chosen over others for inclusion and that these texts have been written and then bound in a specific order. Furthermore, the crux of her argument is that 'since the past is constructed and re-constructed by highly skilled and educated transmitters of the past, the Book of Leinster is not only a document of remembrance, but also of cultural memory.'[72] Schlüter views the manuscript as 'an intentionally compiled narrative construction of the past,'[73] and employs the 'central presupposition of the theoretical framework of cultural memory […] that the past is not reconstructed for its own sake, but for the use of the present,'[74] in her examination of texts from the manuscript, arguing that the manuscript was carefully composed and that the scribes use what Schlüter terms '"transitional passages" that guide the user from one subject to another.'[75]

Schlüter's work on the Book of Leinster raises several points of enquiry for the study of patron and scribal agency in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. Firstly, Schlüter's emphasis on thinking about how the Book of Leinster might have been read during the period of its construction is relevant to the study of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, as a functional object – a manuscript which was intended to be read – it may be possible to draw out themes from the texts themselves when they are read in their manuscript order, which are not entirely apparent when considered separately. Secondly, the observation that 'the past is not reconstructed for its own sake, but for the use of the present' is a relevant notion to keep in mind when examining *Llyfr Coch Hergest* since, as has been noted by R. R. Davies and Helen Fulton, texts within the manuscript allude to past events concerning the loss of Britain to the Saxons in order to comment on the current situation in post-conquest Wales. Thirdly, Schlüter asserts that the scribes of the Book of Leinster 'worked as a team with a fixed plan in mind,'[76] and so we may consider how far this is true for *Llyfr Coch Hergest* also? What evidence is there for scribes working together in the manuscript? How does Hywel Fychan's status as 'chief scribe' fit in with the notion of scribal collaboration in the manuscript – i.e., is he not only the scribe whose hand appears most in the manuscript, but also in charge of the organisation

[71] Gearóid Mac Niocaill, 'The Irish Language Manuscripts', in Peter Fox (ed.) *Treasures of the Library – Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1986), 57-66 at 60.
[72] Dagmar Schlüter, *History or Fable? The Book of Leinster as a Document of Cultural Memory in Twelfth-Century Ireland* (Munster, 2010), 19. For more on the concept of cultural memory, see Jan Assmann, *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis* (Munich, 2000).
[73] Ibid., 20.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid., 23.
[76] Dagmar Schlüter, *History or Fable?,* 23

of texts? In the same respect, how should we think about Hopcyn ap Tomas's influence here – are the scribes working to his specifications of what ought to be in the manuscript? Fourthly, are any texts which could be deemed 'transitional passages' to be found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*? Is the organisation of the manuscript such that in the course of reading it we are being guided from one theme to another? And finally, can Schlüter's theory of cultural memory be applied to *Llyfr Coch Hergest?* Can it be argued that Hopcyn ap Tomas and/or Hywel Fychan were involved in the same kind of conscious literary re-construction of the past for their own purposes in the present day of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*'s construction?

Another study of a multi-text manuscript from the Irish context is John Carey's article entitled 'H and his world.' Here, Carey examines the texts added in to *Lebor na hUidre* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 E 25) by scribe H, using them to attempt to illustrate something of H's character and interests.[77] It is important to note that in the same volume Elizabeth Duncan argues that H can in fact be identified as six different hands, in which case we could argue that in H's interpolations we have a team of scribes working together to the same agenda, similar to that discussed by Schlüter. However, whether H is one or many scribes, the central notion at play here is that there is something to be learned about the interests and concerns of the scribe(s) through an examination of H's interpolations in the manuscript. Carey concludes that H's main interests were not religious in nature, but rather 'in lore concerning the Irish past […] he had a taste for antiquarian narratives knitted together from pre-existing materials, and enlivened by poetic interludes.'[78] Carey makes the important point that 'in attempting to characterise [H] it would be a mistake to lean harder in the evidence than it will bear.'[79] This will ring true of my own examination of what the texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* may tell us about Hywel Fychan and Hopcyn ap Tomas, and it must be acknowledged that we can never say for certain what the motives or intentions of patron or scribe were in creating the manuscript. Yet, although caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions about the personality, interests and motives of both patron and scribe, the method adopted by Carey in his article does bear relevance to the study of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. The idea that a scribe could betray his interests by his additions to a manuscript is one that argues against the notion of manuscript creators as 'mindless conduits of a Great Tradition' and, as noted above, Gifford Charles-Edwards observed some time ago, that it is perhaps possible to detect texts or passages which were of interest to Hywel Fychan through

[77] John Carey, 'H and his world', in Ruairí Ó hUiginn (ed.) *Lebor na hUidre: Codices Hibernenses Eximii I* (Dublin, 2015), 101-113.
[78] Ibid., 112-113.
[79] Ibid., 112.

the quality of his hand.[80] This, then, provides a solid basis for a more detailed study of any potential evidence for scribal agency in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

Catherine McKenna examines the same manuscript in her article 'Angels and Demons in the pages of Lebor na hUidre', only in this instance it is the manuscript context and sequencing of the texts which is utilised to gain further understanding about one text in particular, Serglige Con Culainn.[81] McKenna argues that when this text is viewed in the codicological context of its principle source, *Lebor na hUidre*, it is evident that it 'looks not so much like a furtive meditation on the pleasures of the síde as it is a part of a sustained exploration of Otherworlds both Christian and pagan, an exploration based in early medieval Christian epistemology of the Otherworld.'[82] McKenna notes that given the nature of medieval manuscript production and the availability of exemplars of any given text 'it may seem fanciful to imagine a scribe's writing program developing as his imagination led him from one text to another by certain themes and threads that were of particular interest to him,' however given the nature of H's interpolations into *Lebor na hUidre* we can 'suppose that he, at least, must have had reasons for placing things where he did.'[83] McKenna's study of the manuscript context of Serglige Con Culainn in *Lebor na hUidre* demonstrates that there is much to be gleaned from examining texts in their manuscript context and placing them back into the sequence that the scribe wrote them into the manuscript. McKenna's conclusion that it could be possible for a scribe's writing programme to develop as he went along, rather than there necessarily having been one in place from the outset provides room for us to consider whether this was the case with Hywel Fychan and *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Since, as noted above, Daniel Huws has demonstrated that there seemed to be an element of experimentation in the layout of the manuscript in the early phases of the production of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, might we also extend that to the structure of the contents also? Perhaps the reason that there has been no immediately obvious organising principle discovered in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is because the contents were organised by a subtler process which evolved from the engagement of the scribe with the material he was copying as he went along.

Although not a Celtic-language manuscript, the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates MS 19.2.1) provides an interesting near-

[80] Gifford Charles-Edwards, 'The Scribes of the Red Book of Hergest', 251.
[81] Catherine McKenna, 'Angels and Demons in the pages of Lebor na hUidre', in Joe F. Eska (ed.) *CSANA Yearbook 8-9: Narrative in Celtic Tradition: Essays in honour of Edgar M Slotkin* (New York, 2011), 157-180
[82] Ibid., 158.
[83] Ibid., 165.

contemporary manuscript anthology to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (the former produced around 40-50 years prior to the latter), since it is 'the earliest example of book production in England which was lay and commercial,' and may be 'described as the first example of a collection specifically designed for enthusiasts of literary and historical texts in the English language.'[84] *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (although not the first of its kind) could be described under similar terms for the Welsh context. Indeed, the Auchinleck manuscript and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* share several texts which are under discussion in this thesis; the Auchinleck manuscript containing Middle English versions of Amis and Amilloun, Beues of Hampton, the Seven Sages of Rome, and Otuel, as well as items about Arthur and Merlin. Arguments have been made that Scribe 1 of the Auchinleck manuscript served as the editor of the manuscript and that his role as such provides evidence for efficient networks of textual exchange at the time of the manuscript's construction.[85] It could be argued that Hywel Fychan played a similar role in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* and the sheer quantity and variety of texts in the manuscript provide evidence for developed textual networks in Wales also. One further congruity between the Auchinleck manuscript and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* may be found in the argument of Thorlac Turville-Petre that the Auchinleck manuscript was thematically designed to invoke and express patriotic sentiments.[86] Again, this is a position which could be argued to be the case for *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and this idea is explored in Chapters 3 and 4 of this thesis.

A later comparison may be drawn from the early-sixteenth-century Book of the Dean of Lismore (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates MS 72.1.37), which as demonstrated by Martin Macgregor in his comprehensive article 'The View from Fortingall: The worlds of the Book of the Dean of Lismore', is 'the primary, indeed almost the sole reservoir of classical Gaelic verse to exist on the Scottish side' and is a manuscript of 'exceptional diversity', containing a wide range of poetry as well as historical texts and texts on 'music, topography, physiology, astronomy, chronology, law, religion, morality and superstition.'[87] Martin MacGregor examines the texts in this manuscript through the window of the cultural milieu in which it was created, stating that it is clear that:

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[84] Alison Wiggins, 'The Auchinleck Manuscript' <http://auchinleck.nls.uk> (2003), accessed on 22/11/16.
[85] See e.g., Timothy A. Shonk, 'The Scribe as Editor: The Primary Scribe of the Auchinleck Manuscript', *Manuscripta*, 27 (1983) 19-20; Alison Wiggins, 'Guy of Warwick: Study and Transcription', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Sheffield, 2000).
[86] Thorlac Turville-Petre, 'Chapter 4 English in the Auchinleck Manuscript' in Thorlac Turville-Petre (ed.), *England the Nation: Language, Literature and National Identity, 1290-1340* (Oxford, 1996), 108-141.
[87] Martin MacGregor, 'The View from Fortingall: The worlds of the Book of the Dean of Lismore', in *Scottish Gaelic Studies* 22 (2000), 35-85 at 38-39.

> far from being an aberration, out of kilter with its political context, [the Book of the Dean of Lismore] fits that context like a glove. It was the cultural corollary of the MacGregors' status as favoured Campbell dependants…This is the best basis of understanding from which to commence a preliminary analysis of the contents of [the Book of the Dean of Lismore] in space and time.[88]

MacGregor places the Book of the Dean of Lismore very firmly and with great detail into its historical, social and political context. In my own study, it will be important to understand the contemporary political and social context that gave rise to the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in order to draw conclusions about what the texts contained in the manuscript may tell us about Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan, and MacGregor's work on the Book of the Dean of Lismore sets a good precedent for this. MacGregor also states that we should not view the Book of the Dean of Lismore 'as a sustained and deliberate exercise in pro-Campbell propaganda, but rather that, from a strictly political perspective, the caste of its poetry accurately mirrors the affiliations of its compilers and the ambitions of their patrons in the era of compilation.'[89] In this respect, we could ask how deliberate is a deliberate action? That is, in the case of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, can we consider the inclusion of Welsh tradition alongside other learned texts and valued traditions from other cultures an intentional act of 'propaganda' in post-conquest Wales, or just a natural result of the patron and/or scribe's views on the quality of Welsh literature and the importance of Welsh history/tradition?

A similar parallel to MacGregor's study on the Book of the Dean of Lismore, focused this time on a high-status family involved in the patronage of native literary traditions rather than on any single manuscript, has been done on the Geraldines of Ireland in the recent book edited by Peter Crooks and Seán Duffy, *The Geraldines and Medieval Ireland.* The two most relevant articles in this book are: Katherine Simms's 'The Geraldines and Gaelic Culture', which illustrates the complexities of ideas of nationhood and the idiosyncratic role that the Geraldines' patronage of the native Irish classes played in the construction of their nationality; and Aisling Byrne's 'The Geraldines and the Culture of the Wider World' which highlights how the imagined history of the family helped form their contemporary noble identity in order to allow them to view themselves in both an Irish and a wider European context, which then enabled them to maintain an interest in both the native literary traditions

[88] Ibid., 52.
[89] Ibid., 54.

of Ireland and the more fashionable literary culture of medieval Europe.[90] Although, the Geraldines are also from a slightly later period than Hopcyn ap Tomas and *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, their position as a high-status family involved in the patronage of literary patterns is one that reflects Hopcyn's own situation, and for this reason they may prove a useful model for examining the literary activities of Hopcyn ap Tomas (and his family).

Also of interest, but again of a later period, is Sebastiaan Verweij's study on *The Literary Culture of Early Modern Scotland: Manuscript Production and Transmission, 1550-1625*. This study seeks to answer many questions which lie outwith the remit of my research into *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, however, Verweij's grouping of the manuscripts discussed into place of production – '1) the royal court, 2) the city, town or burgh, and 3) the regional localities'[91] – is thought-provoking in terms of manuscript categorisation and the different social spheres where texts may be seen in different lights and perhaps also bears some relevance to the categorising of texts i.e. modern vs medieval categorisation and the problems that arise when modern day scholars attempt to fit medieval texts into their own recognisable categories. Verweij's grouping of manuscripts into different proximities of place has inspired the approach to the grouping of texts under consideration this thesis, as outlined in the section on Thesis Structure below.

1.4 HISTORICAL CONTEXT: LATE-FOURTEENTH-CENTURY WALES

R. R. Davies gives, in several places, a detailed insight into the situation in Wales in the fourteenth and very early fifteenth centuries.[92] The picture created is, naturally, a complex one, however it is necessary to attempt to discern the political, social and cultural milieu of our patron and scribe in the period leading up to the creation of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. Fourteenth-century Wales could be characterised by the fragmentation of power reflected in the split between numerous Marcher lordships (which accounted for about two thirds of the

[90] Katherine Simms, 'The Geraldines and Gaelic Culture' and Aisling Byrne, 'The Geraldines and the Culture of the Wider World' in Peter Crooks & Sean Duffy (eds) *The Geraldines and Medieval Ireland* (Cornwall, 2016), 264-277 and 278-291.
[91] Sebastiaan Verweij, *The Literary Culture of Early Modern Scotland: Manuscript Production and Transmission*, 1550-1625 (Oxford, 2016), 12.
[92] The following discussion will largely follow the thread of Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, 1987), however see also *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, 2000) 33-465. For detailed discussion of the relationship between English and Welsh in Marcher society see Robert Rees Davies *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales: 1282-1400* (Oxford, 1978) 297-391. For the economic structure of Marcher society see the same volume 392-423. For the situation immediately preceding the revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr see *The Revolt of Owain Glyn Dŵr* (Oxford, 1995), 1-65.

country and 'were virtually self-contained and self-governing units in administrative, jurisdictional, and financial terms') and the Principality of Wales, which was under the rule of the English crown.[93] This fragmented authority in Wales post the conquest of Edward I shaped the nature of political loyalty, patronage, worship and service, with the inhabitants of Wales naturally following their local rulers; the nationality of these rulers was far less important than the maintaining of good and stable lordships.[94] The period was, on the whole, one of unprecedented internal peace and the English settlers in Wales began to feel more secure as they fostered social, marital, cultural, ecclesiastical and commercial contacts between their lands in England and Wales.[95] The leaders of native Welsh society, the *uchelwyr,* learned to coexist with their new English contemporaries, although 'the highest posts in administration in Principality and Marcher alike were normally reserved for Englishmen.'[96] Despite this it appears that much of the local power in Wales resided with the native leaders – often referred to as 'squires' – many of whom had been in power under the Welsh princes before the Edwardian conquest and who had now transferred their service and loyalty to the new English rule.[97] These native Welsh leaders, dubbed the 'squirearchy' of Wales by R. R. Davies, although working under the crown were the upholders of Welsh literary culture; acting as patrons for the poets and for manuscript production, they played a crucial role in the Welsh literary revival of the fourteenth century.[98]

Despite this period of peace in Wales, during the course of the fourteenth century there certainly were growing tensions between the Welsh gentry, the Norman Marcher lords and the English crown; these were fed by an underlying festering feeling of disenchantment combined with social unease and economic hardship.[99] The emphasis on the distinction between 'conqueror and conquered, settler and native, English and Welsh' in the formal terminology of institution was greater than ever and this binary was also utilised by the poets in the vernacular tradition.[100] This explicit binary was largely artificial, since the reality of coexistence was much more complex than that and there had been a gradual process of

[93] Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change,* 391-392.
[94] Ibid., 394-408.
[95] Ibid., 412-414.
[96] Ibid., 415.
[97] Ibid., 415-416; see also Robert Rees Davies, 'Owain Glyn Dŵr and the Welsh squirearchy', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1968), 150-169.
[98] Ibid., 417-419.
[99] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 52.
[100] Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change,* 419-420; Helen Fulton, 'Poetry and Nationalism in the Reign of Edward I: Wales and Ireland' in Peter Crooks, David Green & W. Mark Ormrod (eds.) *the Plantagenet Empire, 1259-1453: Proceedings of the 2014 Harlaxton Symposium: Harlaxton Medieval Studies* xxvi (2016), 169-186 at 175-176.

accommodation and adaptation in all areas of life, which was accelerated by intermarriage between natives and settlers, especially among wealthy families.[101] However, the effect of this administrative binary was clearly felt by the inhabitants of Wales, and Davies notes that the adoption of English style surnames by the Welsh and vice versa, as well as the common use of aliases in both English and Welsh 'bespeaks an anxiety to find an identity which was acceptable in both communities.'[102] The growing discrepancies between the legal treatment of English and Welsh fuelled the rising tensions, as did the collapse of the familiar systems of authority and control and the perpetration of an 'ideology of disinheritance' in the vernacular literature – which drew on the deeper past, linking the recent loss of the independent princes of Wales with the loss of the sovereignty of Britain to the Saxons and revived an older form of nationalism.[103] These tensions – combined with the close links between history, prophecy and poetry in Welsh tradition and the fact that 'the experience of conquest had enabled the Welsh to aspire to a notion of political unity which had consistently eluded them in practice in the days of native rule' – culminated in the revolt of Owain Glyndŵr in 1400.[104]

Helen Fulton provides more specific historical context in her article 'The geography of Welsh literary production in late medieval Glamorgan.' In this article, she outlines the way in which 'Welsh literary culture was a strong element in Glamorgan marcher society and that an elite group of Welsh gentry were at the heart of a mobile network of scribes, poets and manuscripts'.[105] Hopcyn ap Tomas would have been one such member of elite Welsh gentry, the *uchelwyr*. Fulton argues that we should consider the geographical differences between rural and town together with the factors cited by R. R. Davies which undermine the simple binary between Welsh and English, as tensions between the two were more fraught in the towns than in the rural estates of Wales (where you could find English workers subservient to Welsh lords).[106] Fulton states that, in reality, both Welsh and English had shared 'economic priorities in a culturally diverse society.'[107] Fourteenth-century Wales was a multicultural place and Fulton notes that the production of Welsh language texts in this context is evidence not only of the status of local Welsh leaders but also of Welsh as a

[101] Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*, 422.
[102] Ibid., 424.
[103] Ibid., 429-435; Helen Fulton, 'Poetry and Nationalism', 177.
[104] Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*, 435-443.
[105] Helen Fulton, 'The geography of Welsh literary production in late medieval Glamorgan', 325.
[106] Ibid., 325-327.
[107] Ibid., 327.

prestige language; this continued prestige status was due to the fact that the language was attached to the politically significant institution of the *uchelwyr*.[108]

Fulton further explores the relationship between these *uchelwyr* and Welsh literary culture in another article, 'Poetry and Nationalism in the Reign of Edward I: Wales and Ireland'. Although the focus of this article is a little earlier than the period of Hopcyn ap Tomas there are still relevant points to be gleaned from it, particularly about the construction of nationality. Fulton discusses the *uchelwyr* as a 'transnational elite' – which was as true in the fourteenth-century as during the reign of Edward I in the thirteenth century – and suggests that 'modern research into cross-border social formations can be helpful in understanding the political order of medieval elites.'[109] Fulton furthers the argument that the binary between Welsh and English that appears in the legal documents and in the literature was an artificial construct by highlighting the performative nature of national identity stating that 'it can be plural, or singular, it can change over time, it can be assumed, discarded, and re-imagined, subject to the fluctuations in institutional power.'[110] Through this lens Fulton examines the 'nationalizing function' of the poetry of Wales during this period of colonisation, arguing that its focus on native nobilities and its use of the vernacular language constructs 'a sense of nationhood based on a shared culture and language and an identity of political interests.'[111] One of the techniques used by the poets was to draw on the deeper past and utilise the loss of Britain to the Saxons as a comparison to the conquest of Edward I, thus re-establishing the age old hostility between the two nations.[112] This poetry, Fulton argues, provided a space where the Welsh 'could recuperate a sense of identity, of difference from the English, however compounded the differences were by economics of power.'[113] Since some of the poetry from this period survives in the fourteenth-century *Llyfr Coch Hergest* we can address questions of whether it was performing the same nationalising function in this context. While Fulton is discussing the situation in the previous century, Christine James asserts that even at the end of the 14th century, while Wales did not have significant national organisations, the language and the literary tradition of Wales which went along with it acted as a unifying element for the Welsh nation; this vernacular literary tradition was a strong symbol of identity in the absence of political or constitutional

[108] Ibid.
[109] Helen Fulton, 'Poetry and Nationalism', 170 and in footnote 3.
[110] Ibid., 174.
[111] Ibid., 176.
[112] Ibid., 182.
[113] Ibid., 186.

procedure, however James also argues that it was under increasing threat.[114] James concludes that it is in the face of this threat and under the increasing political tensions which were growing towards the end of the century that Hopcyn ap Tomas defined, protected and developed the national identity of his people through his involvement in Welsh-language manuscript production.[115]

1.5 Overview of Thesis

This thesis will further examine the idea of organisational principles in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, arguing that the collection of texts in the manuscript are more a product of intentional editorial decisions by patron and scribe than has previously been supposed. The best approach to a study of organisational principles would be to read the entire contents of the manuscript cover-to-cover; however, given the staggering size of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* it is not possible to undertake such a comprehensive study during the course of a four-year PhD programme. The method that has been adopted, then, is to take a close look in at three sections of the manuscript and to study the texts in these sections in their manuscript context, creating three 'case studies' as a means of exploring the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* The value of studying manuscripts as whole texts has previously been highlighted by Dafydd Johnston who, re-iterating Fulton's call for editions of whole manuscripts, stated that multi-text manuscripts 'have been ransacked for texts by a particular poet with little regard for their manuscript context' and argued that 'cutting across periods and traditional academic boundaries between prose and poetry, could reveal a great deal about the interactions between itinerant poets, scribes, and patrons who produced the miscellanies.'[116] Due to the somewhat unusual situation of knowing who the manuscript patron was as well as knowing the named chief scribe and having evidence for both their lives and work elsewhere, the aim is to create a two-fold investigation which uses knowledge of Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan to further illuminate the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and to see whether an examination of the texts contained in the manuscript against its social and political context can tell us something further about Hopcyn and Hywel and their agencies as patron and scribe.

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[114] Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 55.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Dafydd Johnston, 'Welsh Bardic Miscellanies', 207. Cf. Helen Fulton, 'Awdurdod ac Awduriaeth: Golygu'r Cywyddwyr' in R. Iestyn Daniel, Marged Haycock, Dafydd Johnston & Jenny Rowland (eds) *Cyfoeth y Testun: ysgrifau ar lenyddiaeth Gymraeg yr oesoedd canol* (Cardiff, 2003), 50-76 at 72.

As we have seen in this introduction, Hopcyn ap Tomas is characterised in the scholarship as one of the *uchelwyr* of fourteenth-century Wales – a man of relatively high status, working under the English crown and simultaneously participating in the production and conservation of Welsh literary culture. These two occupations may seem at odds with one another, however it should be noted that R. R. Davies argues that:

> official duties for the English government were in no way incompatible with such native literary tastes…The native squirearchy had come to terms with the obligations and opportunities of English rule without in any way surrendering, as so many of their successors in the sixteenth century were to do, their delight in and responsibility towards their native literary tradition.[117]

This will be an important idea to consider moving forward, along with Helen Fulton's ideas about the construction of nationhood. Hopcyn is also generally thought of as traditionalist, conservative, and of compiling *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with a 'deliberate antiquarianism' – largely because of the (almost total) lack of poems in the *cywydd* metre in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. However, there are also a couple of points in the scholarship which would argue against this. Firstly, Simon Rodway's examination of the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* version of *Culhwch ac Olwen* demonstrates that this text was intended to be read and understood by its contemporary audience, and regardless of whether it was Hywel Fychan himself or the scribe of his exemplar which carried out the updating of the text there are several things which could be inferred about Hopcyn's outlook on Welsh literary culture (mainly, that it was to be preserved not as an antiquity, but as a living tradition). Secondly, the fact that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* contains several Welsh translations of popular European texts and that it appears that Hopcyn and his family may have had a larger involvement in the commissioning and production of such translations is evidence that rather than being antiquarian, Hopcyn was interested in current literary fashions in a wide European context and, indeed, that his activity in the literary sphere had an impact on the development of the Welsh literary style. These are things which could be examined in greater detail through close examination of the texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

It may also be possible to discern something of Hopcyn's view on his situation in fourteenth-century Wales through the anecdote which tells us of Owain Glyndŵr requesting Hopcyn's advice as 'maister of brut'. When discussing this, Christine James states that although we should treat this story with caution it does present an aspect of Hopcyn's

[117] Robert Rees Davies, *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*, 418.

character and personality that we are able to back up from other sources i.e. his interest in prophecy poetry and that he was a recognized authority on prophecy poems.[118] Given this, is it possible to cautiously infer some things about Hopcyn's political views from the anecdote also? The revolt of Owain Glyndŵr was the only major revolt against the foreign rule in Wales during Hopcyn's lifetime and it is interesting that Hopcyn was known to Owain. We may ask whether it is possible to infer from this anecdote, combined with the close study of the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, whether Hopcyn was a supporter of Owain's campaign? The colophon written by Hywel Fychan in Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O offers further insight into this matter and without it, it would be difficult to give any grounding to conclusions drawn about the feelings of either patron or scribe from the examination of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.

1.6 THESIS STRUCTURE

The thesis is structured around three case studies, chosen because they stand out at a first glance of the manuscript contents in order in one way or another. These are: 1 – *Canu Dychan*; 2 – Two poems in the voice of *Myrddin*; 3 – Popular European Narrative. The *canu dychan* stand out as a largely understudied group of poetry of a kind whose existence in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* goes against the long-held view of Hopcyn ap Tomas as a traditionalist and a man of conservative taste; the *Myrddin* poems stand out immediately from their manuscript context because they are the only two poems that occur amongst the prose texts (the manuscript otherwise being almost perfectly split into prose and then poetry); the popular European narrative texts are of interest in that they are two texts which are not originally Welsh that bookend the section of original Welsh narrative prose (*Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*), and one text which occurs outside of this clearly defined section of narrative prose (*Kedymdeithas Amlyn and Amic*). Initially, taking the closest approach to reading the manuscript contents in their original order, these were examined in the order case study 2, case study 1, case study 3. However, whilst studying these selections of texts they revealed themselves as representing a different layer of interest at a different level of proximity to Hopcyn ap Tomas and so, for the purposes of this thesis these have been rearranged in order to discuss Hopcyn's interest on a personal, national and then, international level.

[118] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 9.

Chapter 2 ‘Contemporary Poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: *Canu Dychan* and its Manuscript Context’ looks at the existence in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* of a collection of poetry most commonly referred to in English as satire, but perhaps being more closely related to the poetic tradition of lampooning (though, as we will see, the poets do not limit their subjects to being other poets only). This chapter introduces this often-overlooked type of Welsh poetry, seeking to place it in the wider context of the satirical genre, as well as to explore the possible social functions of this kind of defamatory verse. A selection of *canu dychan* from the manuscript are considered, looking at the range of addressees of this poetry, metrical forms, and at the poets to whom they are attributed. I will also reflect on the cognate Gaelic corpus of the Book of the Dean of Lismore to try and further our understanding of what the *canu dychan* might be doing in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* The consideration of this unusual corpus of poems in this chapter will serve to illuminate a layer of Hopcyn’s personal tastes which challenges the picture of him as conservative that has been built up in scholarship thus far. Chapter 2 also provides a range of visual guides in the form of tables and a map which will enable scholars to further understand the make up and contents of the manuscript. At the end of this chapter there is also a new catalogue of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*, which brings together for the first time in one place, where possible, a short biography about each of these poets along with suggestions for provenance and dates based on the content of the poet’s work.

Chapter 3 ‘Two Poems in the Voice of *Myrddin*: *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*’ looks at two prophetic poems in the voice of *Myrddin*, which, uniquely, sit amongst the prose texts near the beginning of the manuscript. The function of prophecy in the Welsh tradition is discussed, along with the relationship between prophecy and history, and how the Welsh tradition of prophecy fits in to the wider European context. In seeking to further understand their positioning in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, the two *Myrddin* poems are discussed in comparison with other prophetic poetry in the manuscript. Both the immediate manuscript context of the poems as occurring in a block of other prophetic material (*Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*) is discussed, as well as how they sit in the wider manuscript context. It will be argued that these two poems are being considered in a different manner by Hopcyn and/or Hywel from other poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and are performing a different function, sitting where they do in the manuscript. The discussion of these poems and their manuscript context provides an insight into Hopcyn’s interests at the national level.

Chapter 4 ‘Popular European Narrative and ‘Native’ Tales in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*’ looks at three Welsh versions of tales which were popular on the continent in the medieval period: *Pererindod Siarlymaen*, *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn,* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic.* This chapter will briefly consider the differences between modern and medieval notions of translation, highlighting the usefulness of the study of translated texts as a way into thinking about the interests of patron and scribe; and contemplating the positioning of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as a product of Welsh Marcher society. I will also briefly discuss the evidence for there being a family interest in the production of Welsh versions of popular texts in other languages. The relationship between the ‘translated’ texts and ‘native’ Welsh tales is considered along with the positioning of these texts in the manuscript in relation to the main corpus of Welsh narrative prose texts (most commonly referred to in the modern day as the *Mabinogion* texts). After each of the three texts and their manuscript context have been discussed in turn, this chapter discusses the entire section of clearly defined narrative prose and what the existence and positioning of the ‘translated’ texts alongside it can tell us in terms of patron and scribal agency, manuscript organisation, and how Hopcyn and Hywel may have viewed Wales’ position on the world stage. An English translation of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is also provided, as there is currently no published translation available.

Finally, the concluding chapter draws together the arguments set out in the preceding chapters and highlights some potential avenues for further research.

TABLE 1: LIST OF PROSE TEXTS IN LLYFR COCH HERGEST

The following table lists the prose texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, texts under examination in the three case studies of this thesis have been highlighted in bold. Sections of poetry in the manuscript are also noted in italics. See Table 3 for details of where the *canu dychan* occurs.

Folio	**Column**	**Line**	**Text**
1r	1	1	Ystorya Dared
8v	31	1	Brut y Brenhinedd
58r	230	20	Brut y Tywysogion
89v	376	10	Gildas Hen Broffwyd
90r	377	21	Cantrefi a Chymydau Cymru
91r	381	1	Ystoria Carolo Magno: Chronicl Turpin
98r	409	23	Ystoria Carolo Magno: Rhamant Otfel
111r	460	9	Ystoria Carolo Magno: Can Rolant
117r	484	22	Ystoria Carolo Magno: Chronicl Turpin
121v	502	19	Delw y Byd [translation from Henry Huntington's *Imago Mundi*]
125r	516	28	Cronicle
126r	520	1	Hwsmonaeth – Walter of Henley
127v	527	40	Saith Doethion Rhufain
134v	555	11	Breuddwyd Rhonabwy
139r	571a	1	Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Ddoeth
140v	577	7	***Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer***
143r	584	1	***Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd***
143r	585	24	Sant Awstin am dewder y ddaear
143r	585	32	Hyn a ddywedodd yr Enaid
143r	585	39	Yr Eryr yng Nghaer Septon
144r	588	27	Trioedd Ynys Prydain
144r	588	41	Pan aeth llu i Lychlyn
144r	589	26	Trioedd Ynys Prydain
147r	600	3	Cas Bethau
147r	600	16	Enwau ac Anrhyfeddodau Ynys Prydain
149r	605	1	**Ystoria Carolo Magno: Pererindod Siarlymaen**

154v	627	1	Owain
161v	655	10	Peredur
172r	697	39	Breuddwyd Macsen
174r	705	28	Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys
175r	710	15	Y gainc gyntaf
179v	726	42	Yr ail gainc
182v	739	34	Y drydedd gainc
185v	751	13	Y bedwaredd gainc
190r	769	7	Geraint
200v	810	1	Culhwch ac Olwen
210r	845	1	**Ystoria Bown de Hamtwn**
231r	928	11	Meddyginiaethau
233v	939	6	Y Misoedd
234r	940	1	Gollwng Gwaed
234r	940	32	Argoelion y Flwyddyn
234r	941	29	Meddyginiaethau
235r	945	27	Campau'r Cennin
235v	947	25	Ansoddau'r Trwnc
236v	950	21	Meddyginiaethau
236v	951	33	Latin medical text
238r	956	9	Llythyr Aristotlys at Alecsander: Rheolau Iechyd
239r	960	1	Diarhebion
242v	974	36	Mabiaith Hengyrys o Ial
242v	975	8	Delw y Byd
248v	998	40	O'r Ddaear hyd at y Lloer
248v	999	19	Brut y Saeson
254r	1020	1	O Oes Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau
255v	1026	1	*Hengerdd (anonymous poetry from the earlier period)*
264r	1057	1	Diarhebion
271r	1085	1	**Kedymdaith Amlyn ac Amic**
279r	1117	1	Gramadeg y Penceirddiaid
285v	1143	1	*Religious Poetry*
298r-362v	1194-1442	1-41	*Poetry* (until end of manuscript, totalling 248 cols., including ***canu dychan***)

2 CONTEMPORARY POETRY IN *LLYFR COCH HERGEST*: *CANU DYCHAN* AND ITS MANUSCRIPT CONTEXT[119]

As established in the Introduction, scholars have suggested that the primary impulse behind the creation of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* was the antiquarian collection of texts,[120] and one of the chief explanations cited to support this argument is the near complete lack of poems in the *cywydd* metre (there being only one of these, a love poem written by Iolo Goch). We have seen that this has contributed to the characterisation of Hopcyn ap Tomas as a traditionalist, whose primary concern in the creation of this manuscript was to preserve the best of Welsh history and literary culture.[121] However, alongside the historical texts, traditional narrative prose tales, and early poetry there are a substantial number of poems written by poets who were active after the Edwardian conquest of 1282; the poems of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*. These include the five poems in praise of Hopcyn's hospitality and patronage by poets who were his exact contemporaries, as well as other works by well-regarded high-status poets and, significantly, a collection of largely understudied poetry known as *canu dychan*.

The *canu dychan*, usually translated as 'satirical poetry', have not yet been the focus of much scholarly attention and, in fact, have only fairly recently been edited in the Welsh language series, *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*.[122] These poems represent a poetic development which goes against the traditional poetic conventions of panegyric, whereby 'the life of mortals [is] rendered meaningful and ennobled by its presentation in relation to an ideal expressed in universal qualities of perfection.'[123] Rather, in the *canu dychan* 'every device is employed to degrade, men and women are presented as foul beasts and vile creatures.

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[119] Some of this research was presented at the 38th Harvard Celtic Colloquium and subsequently published in the conference proceedings: Myra Booth-Cockcroft, 'Contemporary Poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: *Canu Dychan* and its Manuscript Context', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium 38* (2018), 75-84.
[120] Ceri W. Lewis, 'The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg', 489; Helen Fulton, 'A geography of Welsh literary production', 339.
[121] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau Llên a Llyfrau"', 32; Christine James, 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Ynysforgan"', 53; Helen Fulton, 'A geography of Welsh literary production', 333
[122] Relevant editions for the poets under discussion here are as follows: Nora G. Costigan (Bosco), R. Iestyn Daniel & Dafydd Johnston, eds., *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur, Gwilym Ddu o Arfon, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr ac Iorwerth Beli* (Aberystwyth, 1995); Ann Parry Owen & Dylan Foster Evans, eds., *Gwaith Llywelyn Brydydd Hoddnant, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Hillyn ac Eraill* (Aberystwyth, 1996); R. Iestyn Daniel, ed., *Gwaith Casnodyn* (Aberystwyth, 1999); Huw Meirion Edwards, *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan, Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion, Hywel Ystorm, a Cherddi Dychan Dienw o Lyfr Coch Hergest* (Aberystwyth, 2000); R. Iestyn Daniel, ed., *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed a Beirdd Eraill o Lyfr Coch Hergest* (Aberystwyth, 2002); Ann Parry Owen, *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd III – Canu Amrywiol* (Aberystwyth, 2006); Huw Meirion Edwards, ed., *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig* (Aberystwyth, 2007); Barry J. Lewis, ed., *Gwaith Madog Benfras ac Eraill o Feirdd y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Ddeg* (Aberystwyth, 2007).
[123] David Myrddin Lloyd, 'The Later Gogynfeirdd', in Alfred Owen Hughes Jarman & Gwilym Rees Hughes (eds) *A Guide to Welsh Literature 1282-c.1550: Vol II* (Revised by Dafydd Johnston, Cardiff, 1997 originally published 1979), 24-43 at 27.

Filth, physical and moral deformity and curmudgeonly behaviour (as opposed to hospitality) are dwelt on pitilessly and ad nauseum.'[124] This chapter will examine a selection of these poems, seeking to contextualise them within the genre of medieval satire as well as placing them in their specific manuscript context and considering how their existence in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* might further enlighten us as to the agency of patron and scribe in the construction of this important repository of medieval Welsh literature. It will be seen that the existence of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* challenges the notion of Hopcyn ap Tomas as a traditionalist, a man with conservative tastes, and demonstrates that he was not averse to poetic innovation. An examination of the presence of this poetic corpus within *Llyfr Coch Hergest* will further illuminate the organising principles that underlie the choice of texts in the manuscript and demonstrate that these often-overlooked poems are also a valuable part of the rich literary tapestry of medieval Wales. What is outlined in this chapter is only a preliminary examination of a rich body of material which requires further exploration before we may begin to understand its function. It should be highlighted at the outset that the content of these poems is not the focus of this chapter; but rather their existence as a 'genre' in a clearly defined, intentional, section in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* What exactly the *canu dychan* 'genre' is, is more difficult to define than one might initially expect, and this is an area where further consideration is needed. This is not close literary criticism of these poems but rather an examination of the possible links between the poets themselves and Hopcyn ap Tomas are to be considered in order to form a more well-rounded characterisation of Hopcyn's tastes and interests. There is much more work that needs to be done on the *canu dychan* poems themselves in terms of what they have to offer to the study of medieval Welsh literature more generally, but this is work that is well outwith the remit of this thesis.

2.1 BEIRDD YR UCHELWYR IN LLYFR COCH HERGEST

Before turning to the *canu dychan,* it is useful to first outline the collection of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* more fully. It is not possible to consider the significance of the *canu dychan* in the manuscript without identifying where the *canu dychan* poets sit within the milieu of their contemporaries, whose work they appear alongside. Are these poems written by anonymous poets, or do we find *canu dychan* from recognised poets who have other work in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*? Are we able to locate these poets within Wales and if so, is there any evidence of *canu dychan* as a regional genre of poetry? Does Hopcyn's

[124] Ibid., 27-28.

selection of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* betray a particular geographical preference, or evidence of localised networks of patronage? Can we build up a picture of poets who would likely have been visitors at Hopcyn's court in Ynysforgan, and if so, are the poets who composed *canu dychan* among them? As noted by D. Myrddin Lloyd, the relationship between the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* and their patrons is of a different, more personal, quality than that between the poets and patrons of the earlier period (or at least the evidence of the poems suggests that this is the case).[125] This is a key factor when considering the milieu of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, how the *canu dychan* fits into that, and what this could potentially tell us about the manuscript's patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas. It means that we can be more confident that the praises sung of patrons during Hopcyn's period have some foundation in fact, because they are the product of these more personal relationships, as opposed to fulfilling a contractual obligation between poet and patron. More importantly for our purposes in this chapter, these closer personal relationships appear to have allowed a two-way exchange of knowledge between the poets and their patrons:

> Part of this new intimacy is the increasing evidence of patrons sharing a technical understanding of the verse, and of their being readers and collectors of manuals of the art of poetry that begin to appear […] Far greater knowledge is shown by these poets of Arthurian romances, and of the *matières de Rome* and *de France*. The experiences of patrons who had served in the French wars were beginning to have effect, and are seen for examples in passing references to songs of that country.[126]

Therefore, in the fourteenth century more than any other previous time, it can be said that the socio-cultural environment of the poets and of their patrons is one and the same. There is less distance between the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*, their interests and values and those of their patrons. They are operating within the same circles and are sharing ideas and knowledge with one another – so by looking at the poetry it is possible to gain an insight into the lives of not just the poets, but their patrons too.

There are thirty named poets who were active in the fourteenth century whose work appears in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and I have organised these into four groups by time period to allow us to consider how or why their work is represented in the manuscript. These groups are: poets active at an unknown time during the fourteenth century; poets active in the first half of the fourteenth century (and who were therefore not likely to have been personally known by Hopcyn); poets active around the middle of the fourteenth century; and poets

[125] Ibid., 26.
[126] Ibid.

active in the second half of the fourteenth century (some of whom we can assume, and in some cases demonstrate, would have been personally known by Hopcyn). The distinction of whether or not it is possible that these poets were known by Hopcyn personally is important for considering the *canu dychan*, since if these poems were performed as entertainment at Hopcyn's court then that provides a specific context to which they belong and this may provide insight into why these poems were recorded in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. However, this is not straightforward for two reasons: the first being that Hopcyn and/or Hywel Fychan were evidently interested in collecting material of all kinds from all across Wales for inclusion into *Llyfr Coch Hergest*; the second being that the *canu dychan,* as we will see, also appear in some ways to be consciously literary works (in terms of them being specifically written works), which then raises questions about the performative aspect of these poems. That being said, it will be shown here that while somewhat speculative the analysis of this chapter is nonetheless evidence-based, allowing us to draw some important conclusions about the inclusion of this material in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

Of the thirty named *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* whose work appears in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, fifteen have *canu dychan* attributed to them in the manuscript, totalling thirty-three poems (there are also a further five poems written by anonymous poets, who we can assume would also have been contemporaneous with *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*, likely also active at some point in the fourteenth century, making thirty-eight *canu dychan* poems in total). As can be seen in Table 2 below, of those named poets who have *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, just two belong to the first half of the fourteenth century: Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr. Two belong to the middle of the fourteenth century: Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd and Yr Ustus Llwyd. Four were active in the second half of the fourteenth century: Dafydd y Coed, Iolo Goch, Y Mab Cryg and Madog Dwygraig. We are not able to date the remaining six *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* with *canu dychan* attributed to them in the manuscript more precisely than to sometime within the fourteenth century: Hywel Ystorm, Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard, Prydydd Breuan, Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion, Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr, and Tudur Ddall. It is possible to date two of the poets from the second half of the fourteenth century, Madog Dwygraig and Dafydd y Coed, as exact contemporaries of Hopcyn and Hywel due to the fact that amongst their other work in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* are two of the poems in praise of Hopcyn ap Tomas (Madog Dwygraig's poems are written in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1310-1311, and Dafydd y Coed's is in the hand of X91 between cols.1375-1377).[127] We can safely say, then, that these two poets at least were known by

[127] See below for a brief discussion on this scribe.

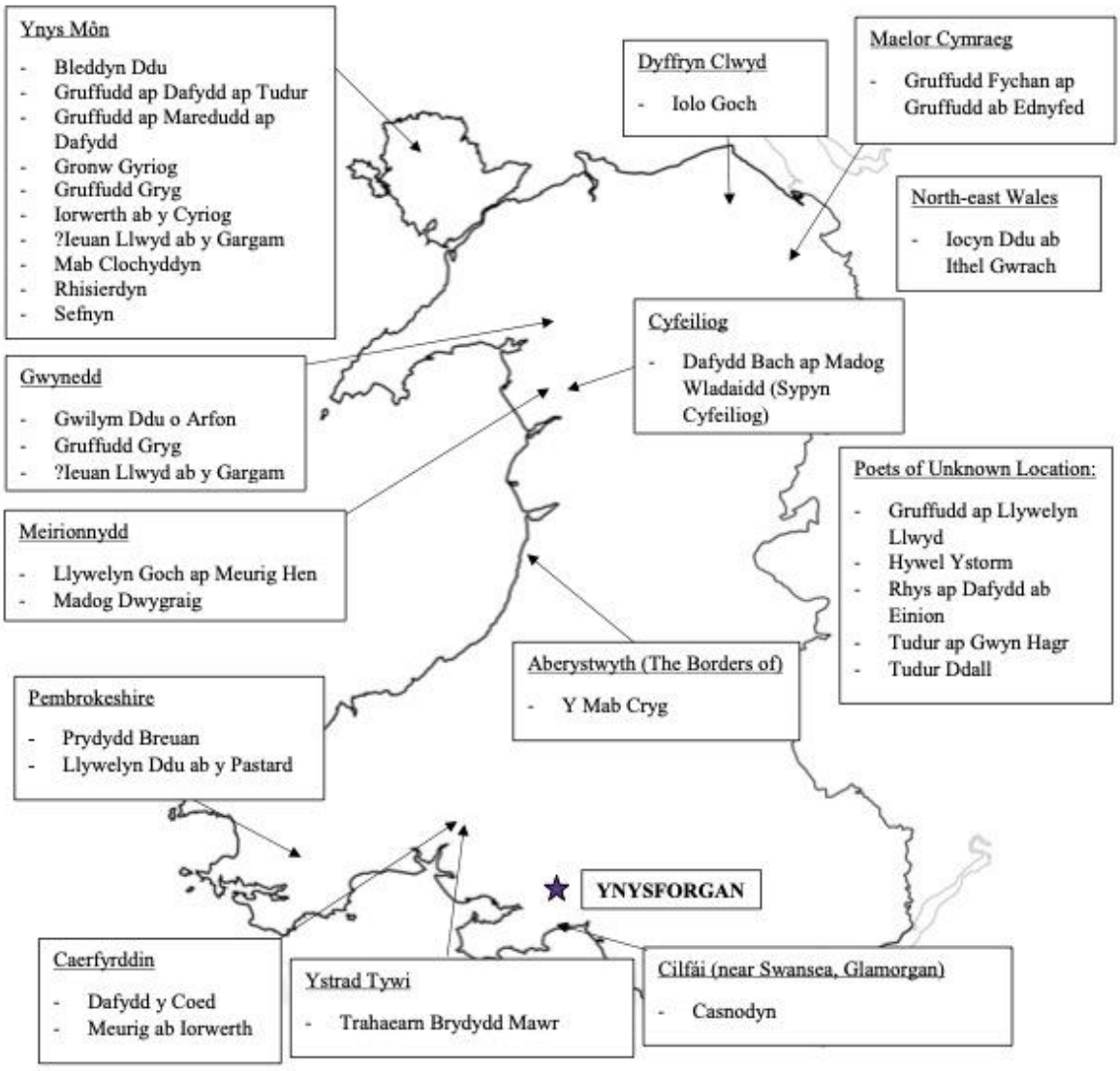
Hopcyn personally and would have attended his court either as guests or performers or both. It is possible, then, and perhaps even reasonable to assume that this was also the case for other poets whose *canu dychan* appear in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* However, in truth this is difficult to assert with any certainty and there are multiple other ways that their material might have found its way into the manuscript.

Table 2: Table of Beirdd yr Uchelwyr

(* denotes poets who also have *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*)

Unknown time during fourteenth century	First half of fourteenth century	Middle of fourteenth century	Second half of fourteenth century
Gruffudd ap Llywelyn Lwyd	Bleddyn Ddu	Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd*	Dafydd y Coed*
Hywel Ystorm*	Casnodyn*	Iorwerth ab y Cyriog	Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed
Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard*	Gronw Gyriog	Sypyn Cyfeiliog/Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd	Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam
Prydydd Breuan*	Gruffudd Gryg	Yr Ustus Llwyd*	Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach
Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion*	Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur		Llewelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen
Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr*	Gwilym Ddu o Arfon		Iolo Goch*
Tudur Ddall*	Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr*		Mab Clochyddyn
			Y Mab Cryg*
			Madog Dwygraig*
			Meurig ab Iorwerth
			Rhiserdyn
			Sefnyn

MAP: LOCATIONS OF BEIRDD YR UCHELWYR IN LLYFR COCH HERGEST (APPROXIMATE)



As illustrated by the above map, the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* come from all over Wales, with there being no clear preference for poets from any particular locale. That being said, there are a significant number of poets linked to Anglesey represented in the manuscript. It is most likely that this has more to do with the exemplars available to the manuscript's chief scribe, Hywel Fychan, than with a particular preference on the part of patron or scribe for poets from that area. Hopcyn does not seem to have favoured poets from his local area and there is good representation of poets from north, south, and mid-Wales in the manuscript. The poets who have *canu dychan* in the manuscript likewise are not tied to any one specific area of Wales, and the representation of *canu dychan* from all over the country suggests that this was a well-established genre in the fourteenth-century poetic tradition, as opposed to being a peripheral or uncommon practice. The fact that the earliest examples of *canu dychan* are attributed to Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, hailing respectively from Glamorgan and Ystrad Tywi might suggest that Hopcyn ap Tomas was aware of a local tradition of this poetry, and that could perhaps provide a motive for its inclusion in the manuscript; however, ultimately this material has been collected from poets who are linked to areas across the whole of Wales. The existence of *canu dychan* composed by some of the 'big names' of fourteenth-century poets suggests that the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* would have commonly been skilled in this type of poetry alongside what have long been considered the more traditional genres of the period. Indeed, Dafydd Johnston argues that the evidence of the poems themselves demonstrates that far from being peripheral and low-brow, the *canu dychan* clearly represent high quality skilled work which was a literary construct greatly appreciated by the poets' patrons.[128] Furthermore, Johnston ventures that there is room to believe that the *canu dychan* contributed to the technical development of the rhetorical device of *dyfalu* in the *cywydd* in the fourteenth century.[129] Certainly the *canu dychan* represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* demonstrate a display of knowledge and skill on the part of the poet and there is much more that could be done in this area through closer analysis and literary criticism of these works.

The catalogue at the end of this chapter contains short entries for each of the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* whose work is represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* along with a table identifying how many poems each poet has in the manuscript and which volume of the *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* series these works may be found in. The catalogue comprises of a short

[128] Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson', *Llên yr Uchelwyr: Hanes Beirniadol o Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg 1300-1525* (Cardiff, 2005), 375-400, at 376.
[129] Ibid.

biography about each of these poets along with suggestions for provenance and dates which are based on the content of the poems. This work has been informed by the invaluable *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* series but brings together this information in one place for the first time in English. It is hoped that this catalogue will prove a useful resource for further exploration of the *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* enabling future research into the networks of poets and scribes active in late fourteenth-century Wales.

2.2 CANU DYCHAN – MEDIEVAL WELSH 'SATIRE'

Although there has not yet been plentiful research published on the *canu dychan,* there are a handful of key works which lay the groundwork for a study of the genre, and in this next section I will draw on these to underpin my own consideration of the *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* An exploration of *canu dychan* is found in Dylan Foster Evans' 1996 research paper, '*"Goganwr am Gig Ynyd":* The Poet as Satirist in Medieval Wales'. In this paper Foster Evans notes that the emergence into visibility of this 'thriving and vibrant genre' corresponds with the related poetic developments of the fourteenth century, such as the innovation of the *cywydd* metre – 'the main poetic vehicle for the next few centuries' – and the compilation of the bardic grammars – 'a mixture of native and Latin learning that was also to have a long and valuable life'.[130] Also from 1996, Huw Meirion Edwards gives a useful survey of this poetry in 'Chapter 2: Satirical Verse' in *Dafydd ap Gwilym: Influences and Analogues*.[131] Meirion Edwards notes that the technical skill shown by the poets who composed these poems indicates that 'they are the work of trained poets, many, if not all, of whom were also adept at composing traditional eulogy in the *awdl* metres.'[132] Indeed, the *canu dychan* themselves are largely composed in the high-status *awdl* and *englyn* metres (and these are the metres used in the entire corpus of *canu dychan* from *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, though elsewhere the *cywydd* metre is used – particularly in lighter, more jovial, examples of the form).[133] That these seemingly unconventional (in terms of subject matter) poems are the work of poets who were also engaged in producing the more conventional and high-status poems of the period is one of the most intriguing things about them and their inclusion

[130] Dylan Foster Evans, 'Goganwr am Gig Ynyd': The Poet as Satirist in Medieval Wales (Aberystwyth, 1996), 1.
[131] Huw Meirion Edwards, 'Satirical Verse', in *Dafydd ap Gwilym: Influences and Analogues* (Oxford, 1996), 39-66.
[132] Ibid., 39. For further relevant work on *canu dychan,* see: Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson'; Catherine McKenna, 'Bygwth a Dychan mewn Barddoniaeth Llys Gymraeg', in Brynley F. Roberts and Morfydd E. Owen, *Beirdd a Thywysogion: Barddoniaeth Llys yng Nghymru, Iwerddon a'r Alban* (Aberystwyth, 1996), 109-121.
[133] Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson', 378.

in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. In another article, from 2008, Huw Meirion Edwards notes that the manuscript evidence seems to suggest that the *canu dychan* are a new genre of poem which blooms suddenly in the wake of the decline of the bardic system which had existed under the independent princes of Wales.[134] However, Edwards continues, the (metrically) conventional nature of the *canu dychan* strongly suggests that this poetry is the maturation of an older bardic tradition: the *canu dychan* have their own imagery, their own idiom, and their own condensed intense style which stacks insult on top of insult in colourful metaphor in the same vein as the *dyfalu* technique which characterises the *cywydd* poetry of the same period.[135] Although there is no manuscript evidence for any *canu dychan* having been composed prior to the fourteenth century, the evidence from the poems themselves demonstrate that the genre matured alongside the more conventional panegyric tradition.[136]

As noted above, the term *canu dychan* is usually translated as 'satirical poetry' in English, although it is worth noting that this does not fully encapsulate the meaning of the Welsh term. In fact, Dafydd Johnston asserts that it is best to forget the English definition of 'satire' as a modern literary practice when considering the *canu dychan,* as the savage personal attacks which characterise the medieval Welsh poems bear little resemblance to the cunning sarcasm that we expect from modern satire.[137] The term *canu dychan* itself is a modern one and a better idea of how medieval composers and audiences of this poetry would have regarded the poems can perhaps be found by looking at the definition of the terms for this material which the poets and their contemporaries would have been more familiar with: '*gogan, goganu*', defined in Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru as '*defamation, slander, reproach, dispraise; ignominy, disgrace, infamy; a scoffing or jeering, raillery, derision, satire, lampoon.*'[138] Further, despite the *canu dychan* being considered the Welsh contribution to the genre of medieval satire, we see that the relationship of *canu dychan* to that genre and also to the earlier satire of the Classical period is not straightforward.

Laura Kendrick states, in her overview of the genre, that medieval satire is mostly 'episodic and appears within works such as romances, fables, sermons, visions, songs, or other medieval genres.'[139] Kendrick notes further that medieval satire is usually

[134] Huw Meirion Edwards, 'Y Canu Dychan yng Nghymru yn yr Oesoedd Canol', in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *Cof Cenedl* 23 (Llandysul, 2008) 1-33, at 3.
[135] Ibid., 5.
[136] Ibid.
[137] Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson', 375.
[138] Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru Ar-Lein, <https://geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>
[139] Laura Kendrick, 'Medieval Satire' in Ruben Quintero (ed.), *A Companion to Satire* (Oxford, 2007), 52-69 at 52.

'impersonal, generalising, abstract, and often allegorical; it is addressed to an audience that may feel guilty of the behaviour being criticised; and its chief purpose is to correct vice, not merely to denounce it.'[140] Meanwhile, Classical satire, while also being chiefly concerned with the criticism of vice and immorality in the society within which it was produced, must also meet a number of technical criteria, 'such as performance context, metrical form, style, and subject matter.'[141] John Peter employs a Classical definition in his discussion of satire in early English literature, arguing that (as well as appropriate subject matter) satire must include named individuals who are separate from the speaker's audience and detailed descriptions of tangible real-life situations.[142] Even at a first glance, the *canu dychan* appear to share more characteristics with Classical satire than with medieval satire; the corpus of poetry which make up the surviving examples of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is composed of stand-alone poems, rather than appearing episodically within other literature, and it is notable that the majority of these poems appear with titles identifying the poet who composed them. More crucially, the *canu dychan* are individualised – directed towards a named subject (or sometimes a specific object or place), rather than dealing with generalised social vices. Further, despite its low-brow subject matter, Classical satire was composed in the most respected metre and I would argue that Catherine Keane's discussion of this can also be applied to the *canu dychan*:

> Satire's metrical form also contains an intriguing paradox: hexameter is the traditional meter of ancient epic, antiquity's most elevated genre which was used to treat mythological and historical subjects such as the destruction of Troy or the rise of Rome.[143]

It is in the *awdl* and *englyn* metres that we find *canu dychan*, and just as in the Classical context the hexameter is the meter of ancient epic, in the medieval Welsh context these are the metres of the *Hengerdd* and of the highest form of panegyric verse. Calling to mind metrically, as they do, the poetry of the *Cynfeirdd*, the content of the *canu dychan* appears to be at odds with the meters used. Dafydd Johnston theorises that 'obscenity in medieval Welsh poetry took a consciously literary form, drawing on and often deliberately subverting established poetic modes' and further, that it is essential to 'regard the remarkably elaborate obscenities of Welsh poetry as the product of a specific literary culture.'[144] Many of the *canu*

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[140] Ibid., 53.
[141] Catherine Keane, 'Defining the Art of Blame: Classical Satire' in Ruben Quintero (ed.) *A Companion to Satire* (Oxford, 2007), 31-51 at 31.
[142] John Peter, Complaint and Satire in Early English Literature (Oxford, 1956), 3-10.
[143] Catherine Keane, 'Defining the Art of Blame', 32.
[144] Dafydd Johnston, 'Erotica and Satire in Medieval Welsh Poetry' in, Jan Ziolkowski (ed.), *Obscenity: Social Control and Artistic Creation in the European Middle Ages* (Boston, 1998), 60-72 at 61.

dychan are obscene and there is more to consider here in terms of the space between the performance aspect of poetry in medieval Wales and this idea of obscenity as a consciously literary form. Notably, another parallel is here found in the context of Classical satire, which was 'from the beginning a written text – an intricate and allusive one, aimed at Rome's relatively small and elite reading culture, and created and disseminated through the support of private patrons.'[145] If we are to consider *canu dychan* as satire then, it appears that the form shares more with earlier Classical examples than with other contemporary medieval texts which modern scholars class as satire.

This paradoxical tension between metre and content in the *canu dychan* is mirrored by the attitudes of *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiad,* or, the Bardic Grammars.[146] These are a collection of medieval Welsh tracts, dating to between the last quarter of the thirteenth century and the first quarter of the fourteenth century, which set out rules for the creation of Welsh poetry, including: metrical rules; grammatical features of medieval Welsh; and rules for the correct way to praise various different people or things.[147] The Bardic Grammars, which may be regarded as 'a closely contemporary literary criticism of the earliest known satire,'[148] are also concerned with which kinds of poet were allowed to compose this kind of poetry, as is evidenced in this passage:

> Ni pherthyn ar brydyd ymyru ar glerwryaeth, er aruer ohoni, kanys gwrthwyneb yw y greffteu prydyd. Kanys ar glerwr y perthyn goganu, ac agloduori, a gwneuthur kewilid a gwaradwyd, ac ar prydyd y perthyn kanmawl, a chloduori, a gwenuthur clod, a llewenyd, a gogonyant.[149]
>
> It is not fitting for a prydydd to involve himself with the art of the clerwr, in order to practice it, for it is opposite to the crafts of the prydydd. For it is fitting for the clerwr to satirise, and disparage, and cause shame and dishonour, and it is fitting for the prydydd to praise, and honour, and produce praise, and happiness, and glory.[150]

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[145] Catherine Keane, 'Defining the Art of Blame', 40.
[146] For an overview of the Welsh Bardic Grammars, see: Ann Matonis, 'The Welsh Bardic Grammars and the Western Grammatical Tradition', *Modern Philology* 79 (1981). 121–45; 'Problems Relating to the Composition of the Early Bardic Grammars', in Ann Matonis and Daniel Melia (eds.) *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp*, (California, 1990) 273–91; 'A Case Study: Historical and Textual Aspects of the Welsh Bardic Grammar', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 41 (2001) 25–36.
[147] Michaela Jacques, 'Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid/Bardic Grammars' in Siân Echard & Robert Rouse (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain* (2017), accessed via <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb560> on 09/05/2019
[148] Dylan Foster Evans, 'Goganwr am Gig Ynyd', 6.
[149] Griffith John Williams & Evan J. Jones, *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid* (Cardiff, 1934), 35.
[150] Dylan Foster Evans, '*Goganwr am Gig Ynyd'*, 6.

Here the Bardic Grammars clearly set out that *canu dychan* are the domain of the *clêr* (the low status poets) and that it is not appropriate for a *prydydd* (a high-status poet) to practice this craft. However, as noted by Michaela Jacques, the bardic grammars 'often bear little resemblance to the actual content of Welsh bardic poetry,'[151] and as highlighted by Johnston:

> Mae'n bell o fod yn sicr bod agwedd foesol awduron eglwysig y gramadegau tuag at ddychan yn adlewyrchu syniadau'r beirdd eu hunain, ac mewn gwirionedd y mae cerddi dychan wrth enwau llawer o'r beirdd uchaf eu statws.[152]

It is important to note too that there are inconsistencies between the different manuscript versions of the bardic grammars, and in fact the above passage is missing from the version contained in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Another passage from the version of the grammars found in this manuscript appears to imply that satire is acceptable if directed towards worthy subjects:

> Or byd kerd a deu synnwyr neu dri ystyr arnei, vn da ac un drwc, os kerd brydyat vyd, barner herwyd yr ystyr da; os kerd dychan vyd, barner herwyd yr ystyr drwc, kanys ny phryta neb y'r drwc, ac ny dychana neb y'r da.[153]
>
> If there should be a poem which has two senses or three meanings, one good and one bad, if it be a *prydyad* poem, judge it according to the good meaning, if it be a satirical poem, judge it according to the bad meaning, for no one composes *prydydd* poetry to the bad and no one satirises the good.[154]

Further, the version of the *trioedd cerdd* from *Llyfr Coch Hergest* states that one of the three things that cause a poet to be hated is satire towards good men (*goganu dynion da*)[155] – the implication being that the satirising of bad men was allowed.[156] Although this is not the only manuscript version of the bardic grammars which employs a more lenient stance on satire, I would argue that given the volume of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* it is likely that Hopcyn ap Tomas intentionally included a version that reflected his own poetic taste. The poem 'Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi' provides a rare insight into how the poets themselves may have thought about the suitability of *canu dychan* to their status in the line 'cyn bythwn bardd a phrydydd' (though I am a poet and a *prydydd*).[157] Prydydd Breuan is

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[151] Michaela Jaques, 'Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid/Bardic Grammars'.
[152] Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson', 376: 'It is far from certain that the moral attitudes of the ecclesiastical authors of the grammars towards *dychan* reflect the ideas of the poets themselves, and in reality there are *canu dychan* attributed to many of the poets of the highest status.'
[153] Griffith John Williams & Evan J. Jones, *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid,* 15.
[154] Dylan Foster Evans, '*Goganwr am Gig Ynyd'*, 9.
[155] Griffith John Williams & Evan J. Jones, *Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid,* 18.
[156] Dylan Foster Evans, *'Goganwr am Gig Ynyd'*, 9.
[157] Huw Meirion Edwards (ed.), *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan*, 13.

here invoking his status as a *prydydd* – a highly skilled and respected poet – in the penultimate stanza of a poem which cannot be described as fulfilling the criteria for a *prydydd* as it is set out in the bardic grammars. Clearly, he does not feel that composing obscene poetry of this kind and being a *prydydd* are mutually exclusive (although we may wonder whether his need to assert that he is in fact a *prydydd* in the poem betrays a sense of tension between the status of the poet and the material that he has composed).

There is then an obvious disparity between the attitudes of the Bardic Grammars towards *canu dychan* and those of the poets (and patrons) themselves, and Johnston posits 'efallai fod condemniad y gramadegwyr yn ymgais i wrthsefyll tuedd tuag at ddychan sydd i'w gweld yng ngwaith y genhedlaeth gyntaf o feirdd ar ôl y goncwest, ac a ystyrid efallai yn ddirywiad o safonau'r hen feirdd llys'.[158] It should be noted that this disparity between the ideology of the Bardic Grammars and what was really happening 'on the ground' in the poetic circles of medieval Wales is not limited to the view of *canu dychan*: for example, they contain intricate instruction of subjects which are not represented in the surviving corpus of poetry as well as omitting codification of some of the most prevalent contemporary metrical developments, such as *cynghanedd.*[159] This gives further weight to the notion that the Grammars are perhaps not the best source for understanding contemporary attitudes towards the *canu dychan* in the courts of the *Uchelwyr*. The manuscript context within which these poems are found provides significant evidence for the argument that that despite the generally negative view of the Bardic Grammars, it was not frowned upon for *prydydd* to compose *canu dychan.* As previously noted, more conventional works of eulogy, elegy and religious poetry are found alongside the *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. That many of these more conventional works were composed by the same high-status poets who were clearly also involved in composing *canu dychan* suggests that this was a more normal and accepted part of the poetic repertoire than perhaps initially thought. Further evidence to support the idea that this kind of poetry was an established part of the poetic canon in medieval Wales may be found by analogy— a significant body of similar poetry exists in the Gaelic tradition.

[158] Dafydd Johnston, 'Dychan ac Ymryson', 376; 'Perhaps the condemnation of the grammarians is an attempt to withstand the tendency towards *dychan* that is seen in the work of the first generation of poets after the conquest, and which could perhaps have been seen as a deterioration of the standards of the old court poets.'

[159] Michaela Jaques, 'Gramadegau'r Penceirddiaid/Bardic Grammars'

2.3 COGNATE POETRY IN THE GAELIC TRADITION

It is not surprising that, similar to the situation in Wales, in Ireland there was a hierarchical bardic system in place in which various poetic forms and metres corresponded to the various types of poets.[160] One similarity between the Irish satire and the *canu dychan* is that it is often composed in the most complex and elaborate metres.[161] Similarly to the Bardic Grammars, the Irish law texts denote different rules for different classes of poet and this is a feature of social governance with roots in the pre-Norman period, as explored by Liam Breatnach: one example is found in the *Bretha Nemed Dédencach* which sets out rules for how a *fili* (high-status poet) may engage with satire and praise poetry.[162] In both cultures, the structures of power which governed society relied heavily on honour, and as such the concept of praise and dis-praise was crucially important. The poets and the poetry that they created were a key element in the maintaining of these structures of power – this was 'poetry with a social function'[163] – and satire was equally as important as praise (if not, arguably, more so). Breatnach likens the satirical poetry of medieval Ireland to a 'weapon [which was] especially to be feared.'[164] This is reflected in the Irish laws, which denote that the poet's role in society was to use praise and satire to enhance the reputation of the honourable and shame the dishonourable – 'the poet thus acted as an instrument of social control and public relations.'[165] Further strengthening the connection between satire and the proper governance of society is the existence of *trefocal*; a kind of half-satire which warned the subject that they were soon to be the subject of a fuller, more damaging, composition.[166] This middle-ground between praise and satire was recognised by the Irish laws traditionally dated to the pre-Norman period as an essential step in the 'process of lawful satirising.'[167] The very concept of 'lawful satirising' demonstrates the importance of this kind of poetry in the upholding of social structure and the maintaining of good relationships in a client-patron based society. The Welsh Bardic Grammars are not of the same ilk as the Irish law texts, and as noted earlier the relationship between the poet and patron during the period of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* is of a different, more personal and less contractual, nature. Nonetheless the parallel concept

[160] Patrick Sims-Williams & Erich Poppe, 'Medieval Irish literary theory and criticism' in Alistair Minnis & Ian Johnson (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, Vol 2: The Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2005) 291-309 at 291.
[161] It should be noted that this comparative material is largely earlier than the *canu dychan.* For more on early Irish satire, see Róisín McLaughlin, *Early Irish Satire* (Dublin, 2008).
[162] Liam Breatnach, 'Satire, Praise and the Early Irish Poet', *Ériu* 56 (2006), 63-84 at 67-68.
[163] Patrick Sims-Williams & Erich Poppe, 'Medieval Irish literary theory and criticism', 291.
[164] Liam Breatnach, 'Satire, Praise and the Early Irish Poet', 63.
[165] Patrick Sims-Williams & Erich Poppe, 'Medieval Irish literary theory and criticism', 292.
[166] Liam Breatnach, 'Satire, Praise and the Early Irish Poet', 66-67.
[167] Ibid.

of rightful satirising by high-status poets is worth noting and further comparison of the function of contemporary Welsh and Irish satire would likely prove a fruitful avenue of investigation.

As touched upon in the introductory chapter of this thesis, an interesting parallel to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* may be found in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore*; the early sixteenth-century manuscript created by the MacGregors of Fortingall that comprises a large collection of classical Gaelic verse spanning the genres of panegyric, religious, heroic, courtly and satiric poetry.[168] Although a later construction, this manuscript provides some valuable parallels to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in terms of content and the court setting within which it originated. The texts contained within the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* demonstrate that its compilers were concerned with 'literature and history alike'[169], and those are certainly the same two main concerns apparent in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Similarly to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* has also been viewed mainly as an anthology manuscript, with little or no organising principle beyond inclusivity; however, as noted by William Gillies this perceived lack of organisation does not hold up upon closer scrutiny and 'there are some sections of [the manuscript] (for example containing sequences of bardic verse or religious exempla or Fenian lays) which have a more homogenous, planned feel to them.'[170] Gillies further argues that the literary material in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* 'has a coherence that comes from the fact that its composers shared a field of literary reference'[171] and I would argue that this is an important concept relevant to the texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* too. Significantly, for our interests in this chapter there is, as noted above, a substantial body of satiric poetry contained in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* and Martin MacGregor has demonstrated that the poetic corpus of that manuscript reveals 'the existence of a circle or circles of aristocratic amateur poets, composing, criticising and adding to poetry in the manner of a parlour game for their own entertainment, in courtly and satiric modes and appropriate metres.'[172] Furthermore, William Gillies notes that 'The satiric world is an intimate one; it reveals itself as being near to the personal lives and thoughts of the MacGregor brothers and their friends.'[173] The main subjects of satire in this manuscript are women (in general, in the vein of the 'Argument About Women', rather than to specific

[168] Martin MacGregor, 'The View from Fortingall', 35–85.
[169] Ibid., 35.
[170] William Gilles, 'The Book of the Dean of Lismore: The Literary Perspective', Janet Hadley Williams and J. Derrick McClure (eds) *Fresche Fontanis: Studies in the Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Cambridge, 2013), 179-216 at 184.
[171] Ibid., 209.
[172] Martin MacGregor, 'The View from Fortingall', 57.
[173] William Gilles, 'The Book of the Dean of Lismore, 205.

named individuals), the Church, and those in the direct social circle of the MacGregor's – who seem to have enjoyed mocking one another through satiric poetry by way of fun.[174] In this way, the satirical poetry from the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* provides a window into life at the court of the MacGregors at the time of the manuscript's creation and MacGegor argues that it is possible to trace the manuscript's poetic and political networks 'radiating outwards from Fortingall in chains of kinship, friendship and other connections.'[175]

It is reasonable to wonder whether the *canu dychan* found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* may provide an analogous window into life at Hopcyn's court in Ynysforgan, and indeed if that were the case then this would perhaps provide an explanation for the existence of this material in the manuscript. However, we have seen from a cursory survey of the origins of this poetry that the *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* were composed by poets who were active over the course of several decades and who came from many different regions of Wales; therefore, it is not possible for the *canu dychan* to reveal the same kind of insight into the personal social circle of Hopcyn ap Tomas as the satirical poetry in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* does for the MacGregors of Fortingall. Rather, it appears that the *canu dychan* were deemed worthy of inclusion in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* for another reason. While we may not be able to use the entire corpus of *canu dychan* from the manuscript as a way to gain further insight into the personal, poetic, and political networks of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and Hopcyn ap Tomas in the same way that could be done for the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* and the MacGregors, I argue that their existence in the manuscript can still provide a glimpse into Hopcyn's personal tastes. It seems obvious that Hopcyn appreciated the poetry for its own sake and there is room to question why this was – perhaps he was a man who enjoyed the subversive and the bawdy? Perhaps he had a wicked sense of humour? Did he appreciate them as a poetic exercise of some kind? Did he find something interesting in the contrast between the usual performative context of poetry in medieval Wales and the literary nature of the *canu dychan*? We must recognise that answers to those questions would likely be informed speculation at best, but the existence of the *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* does militate against the perception of Hopcyn as directing a conservative, antiquarian enterprise in the compilation of the manuscript.

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[174] Ibid.

[175] Martin MacGregor, 'The View from Fortingall', 59. It is important to emphasise that MacGregor's argument here is based on only a selection of the poetry in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* and that the manuscript does contain a mix of older and more recent material. On the mix of old and new in terms of the religious poetry contained in the *Book of the Dean of Lismore* see Sìm Innes, 'Gaelic Religious Poetry in Scotland: The *Book of the Dean of Lismore*' in Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin and Robert Armstrong, *Christianities in the Early Modern Celtic World* (London, 2014), 111-123.

2.4 CANU DYCHAN IN LLYFR COCH HERGEST

The *canu dychan* are a rich genre of poetry and an array of different types of poem are represented in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* They must have been somewhat humorous to contemporary audiences (some of them, at least), although many of the jokes are opaque to us now and the content is often quite unpleasant to the modern reader. Although they may not be considered to be among the 'most inspired or artistically commendable productions and […] certainly not the most edifying',[176] it is clear that rather than being poor quality poems written by low-status poets the *canu dychan* are a multi-faceted vehicle of poetic expression; and, further, that they were the work of trained poets who were skilled in the more traditional metres and forms of medieval Welsh poetry. There are some thirty-eight of these poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, attributed to fifteen different poets, as follows: Madog Dwygraig (8); Iolo Goch (2); Gruffudd ap Maredudd (1); Hywel Ystrom (1); Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr (2); Casnodyn (1); Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard (1); Prydydd Breuan (2); Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion (1); Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr (2); Tudur Ddall (1); Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach (1); Dafydd y Coed (5); Y Mab Cryg (3); Yr Ustus Llwyd (2); and anonymous or unattributed (5).[177] Of the named poets who have *canu dychan* attributed to them in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, there are several notable poets – namely, Madog Dwygraig, Iolo Goch, Gruffudd ap Maredudd, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, Casnodyn, and Dafydd y Coed. These poets are some of the masters of elegy and praise poetry in fourteenth-century Wales, and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* contains examples of their other, more conventional, work.

The majority of the *canu dychan* – twenty-eight of the thirty-eight poems – appear together in a clearly defined section of the manuscript, occupying the entirety of what Daniel Huws identifies as the thirty-first quire (cols.1337-1365).[178] Of the remaining ten poems: six attributed to Madog Dwygraig appear earlier in the manuscript amongst a larger section of his work which totals fourteen poems between cols. 1267-1280; the two attributed to Iolo Goch are found in cols.1291-1292, preceded by three of Rhiserdyn's poems and followed by the work of Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed; the poem attributed to Gruffudd ap Maredudd appears in the final two columns of a larger body of his work (cols. 1313-1336), directly preceding the quire containing the majority of the *canu dychan*; and a final one attributed to Madog Dwygraig appears much later in the manuscript in col.1407 (directly

[176] Huw Meirion Edwards, 'Satirical Verse', 38.
[177] A comprehensive list detailing the columns, poets, and titles of these thirty-eight poems is provided in Table 3 below.
[178] Daniel Huws, 'Llyfr Coch Hergest', 7.

preceding the only *cywydd* in the manuscript, which is attributed to Iolo Goch). The *canu dychan* are addressed to a wide range of subjects and in what follows I will endeavour to provide a preliminary scholarly categorisation of the corpus of *canu dychan* which appear in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* – with the caveat that it is pertinent to remember in attempting to classify the *canu dychan* that we are applying external modern scholarly labels to them and that in doing so we risk further obfuscating the poems.[179] Nonetheless, it will be of use for further scholarship to provide ways of thinking about this material under such scholarly categorisations.

In *Llyfr Coch Hergest* there are: poems to craftsmen, such as Madog Dwygraig's 'Dychan i Fab y Cof' (the son of the blacksmith), 'Dychan i'r Gweydd' (the weaver), and Hywel Ystorm's 'Dychan i Addaf Eurych' (Adam the goldsmith); poems to patrons, such as Iolo Goch's 'Dychan i Neuadd Hywel' (Hywel's Hall), Yr Ustus Llwyd's 'Dychan i Ruffudd, Iarll Mawddwy' (Gruffudd, Earl of Maddwy) and Prydydd Breuan's 'Dychan i Darre'; poems to other poets – both *prydydd* and *clêr* – such as the poems between Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, an anonymous poet's 'Dychan i Llywelyn', and Madog Dwygraig's 'Dychan i Dudur'; poems to clergymen, such as Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr's 'Dychan i Gadwgan Ficar a'i Ferch a'i ddaw' (Cadwgan the Vicar and his daughter and his son in law), and the three to a Madog ap Hywel, or, Madog Offeiriaid (Madog the Priest) – one each from Iolo Goch, Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard, and Yr Ustus Llwyd;[180] poems to women, such as Gruffudd ap Maredudd's 'Dychanu Hunis', Madog Dwygraig's 'Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald ferch Dafydd', 'Dychan i'r Wrach', and Prydydd Breuan's 'Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi'; and finally, poems to more abstract or anonymous persons or things, such as Madog Dwygraig's 'Dychan i'r Llo (the calf), 'Dychan i Glerwr' (a low-status poet), Dafydd y Coed's 'Dychan i Rhaedr Gwy' (the town of Rhayadr Gwy in Powys), 'Dychan i Leidr' (a thief), and Yr Ustus Llwyd's 'Dychan i Swrcod Madog Offeiriaid' (the surcoat of Madog Offeiriaid). These categories are of course not rigid and there are several poems which do not fit neatly into the above defined groupings, for example, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr's 'Dychan i Gadwgan Ficar a'i Ferch a'i ddaw' could be discussed under both 'poems to clergyman' and 'poems to women', while Yr Ustus Llwyd's 'Dychan i Swrcod Madog Offeiriaid' fits into both 'poems to the clergy' and 'poems to abstract things'.

[179] In the same vein it is important to remember that the titles given to the poems are from the *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* editions; these do not appear in the manuscript.
[180] Perhaps this is an example of a well-known (and possibly not well-liked) figure in the community who was often the subject of derision for entertainment?

The latter, along with Madog Dwygraig's 'Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald ferch Dafydd', could also form another separate category of poems in which the poets display their learning.

We will now turn to a preliminary consideration of some of the categorisations of these poems, focusing on the *canu dychan* between poets, those addressed to women, and those which demonstrate the poets' learning. The poems by Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, in which the poets insult and abuse one another, appear one following the other in the manuscript and call to mind the more famous bardic dispute (*ymryson*) between Dafydd ap Gwilym and Gruffudd Gryg,[181] as well as the rich tradition of flyting, seen more prevalently in the slightly later medieval Scottish context of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It is possible that these kinds of poems were performed at the courts of *uchelwyr* such as Hopcyn ap Tomas for entertainment – the reference in the poems between Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr to Christmas festivities and to a patron, Llywelyn ap Cynwrig of Morgannwg, support this idea of two poets making fun of each other in a performative context, [182] the purpose being a good spirited ribbing rather than to cause actual offence. In terms of thinking about why these poems have been preserved in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* it is interesting to note that the poems between these two poets are the earliest examples of *canu dychan* with both Casnodyn and Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr dating to the early fourteenth century; they are also two of the most local poets to Hopcyn ap Tomas in Ynysforgan, given that they may be located in Cilfái (Swansea) and Ystrad Tywi respectively. Presumably the work of these two poets would still be well-known to Hopcyn and his contemporaries towards the end of the fourteenth century and we might ask whether the inclusion of these early examples of *canu dychan* from well-known and well-respected local poets somehow legitimise the rest of Hopcyn's collection of this kind of poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*?

It may also be useful to turn to the convention of the *cyff clêr* to further illuminate the *canu dychan* tradition; Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru defines the *cyff clêr* as 'butt of ridicule, laughing-stock; a pencerdd or chief poet who was set to compose a poem on a frivolous subject in marriage feasts, &c., and who was lampooned by his lesser fellow-bards (lit. the butt of the bards).'[183] Jerry Hunter, in his discussion of the performance context of the *ymrysonau* composed by the *cywyddwyr*, links the *ymrysonau* with the *cyff clêr* and notes

[181] Editions and modern Welsh paraphrasing of these poems in available in Dafydd Johnston, Huw Meirion Edwards, Dylan Foster Evans, A. Cynfael Lake, Elisa Moras & Sara Elin Roberts (eds), *Cerddi Dafydd ap Gwilym* (Cardiff, 2010), 102-133 (poems 23-30).
[182] Dafydd Johnston, *Llên yr Uchelwyr*, 385.
[183] Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru Ar-Lein, <https://geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>

that it is difficult for a modern audience to imagine the social context within which these poems were composed and performed.[184] The *ymrysonau,* or, bardic disputes, are a form of poetic expression whereby the poets carry out an extended debate in metrical form; however, although these poems begin as a debate about a specific subject, they frequently digress into personal attacks and indecent slander.[185] Rather than classifying these poems as a genre, Hunter uses the term 'traddodiad perfformiadaol' – a performance tradition.[186] The most mocking and licentious *ymrysonau* were composed as attacks on the *cyff clêr* and are in the *awdl* metre (while the more mild poems were composed in the *cywydd* metre)*;*[187] given the similarities between these lampooning poems and the *canu dychan* it may be possible to use the context of the *cyff clêr* as a tool for further illuminating the appearance of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. The most detailed description of the *cyff clêr* is found in Siôn Dafydd Rhys' Grammar of 1592:

> Neithior Brenhinawl, a bhydh pann briôder un o waed y Tywyssawc. Ac vndydh a blwydhyn o rybydh i Wyr wrth Gerdh i baratoi i dhybhod yno: ac ynn honno, y gwneir Cyph Clêr, a hwnnw bhydh Pencerdd o'r gorau: ac yno y rhoir testun dhigribh dhiwladaidh arr y Penderdh i'r Prydydhion erailh i ganu idho ebh, i lawenhau'r Orsedh. A'r prydydhion hynny a dhôn a'i Cerdh idho ebh, ac a'i canant arr ostec. A thrannoeth y daw ynteu a'i atteb idhynt hwytheu; a dyblu eu rhodhion a gânt hwytheu yno. A hynn olh a notaynt ei wneuthur wedy ciniaw, er mwyn didhânwch i'r Gynnulheidbha.[188]

> [On the occasion of] a royal wedding-feast, as there would be when one of princely blood was married. And [there would be] one day and a year of warning to poets to prepare to come there: and there a *cyff clêr* was made, and he would be one of the best *pencerdd*: and there humorous and refined subject was given on the *pencerdd* for the other *prydyddion* to compose to him, entertain the court. And those *prydydd* came with their poem to him, and they would sing it publicly. And the next day he would come with his answer to them; and doubling their offering that they would get there. And all of this it is customary to do after dinner, to entertain the gathering.

Despite the later date of this description, the evidence of the earlier poetry and of manuscript marginalia demonstrates the existence of the *cyff clêr* prior to the sixteenth century.[189] Therefore it is possible that something could be learned about the performance context of the *canu dychan* through consideration of the convention of the *cyff clêr*. Hunter interprets

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[184] Jerry Hunter, 'Cyd-destunoli Ymrysonau'r Cywyddwyr: Golwg ar 'Yr Ysbaddiad Barddol', *Dwned* 3 (1997), 33-52.
[185] Ibid., 33.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid., 40.
[188] *Cambrobrytanicae Cymraecoeve Linguae Institutiones &c* (1592), 304; quoted in J.E. Caerwyn Williams, 'Cerddi'r Gogynfeirdd i Wragedd a Merched, a'u Cefndir yng Nghymru a'r Cyfandir', *Llên Cymru* 13 (1974-1979), 3-112 at 92.
[189] Jerry Hunter, 'Cyd-destunoli Ymrysonau'r Cywyddwyr', 41.

Siôn Dafydd Rhys' description in order to shed further light on the practice, noting that: the high-status of the patron is a key contextual element of the tradition; likewise the high-status of the poet who becomes the *cyff clêr* is important; the use of 'testun' (which comes to be the verb 'testuno', later encapsulating the meaning of satirising) originally denotes a specific type of satirising on an appointed subject; the manner of that subject chosen must be both humorous and polite; the performance of the poems composed is specified – the poets must bring their compositions to the *cyff clêr* and present them on front of him and the audience of the court; and finally the *cyff clêr* is allowed a day to compose responses to these attacks, which are then also performed for the enjoyment of the gathering.[190] This is then controlled practice with a defined set of rules which allow the derision of an otherwise respected figure of the court under a specific set of circumstances. The necessity for a specific set of controlled circumstances for such a practice makes complete sense in the context of an honour-based society. Similarly, the *canu dychan* in their use of *awdl* and *englyn* metres could be described as controlled poems which follow strict metrical rules – perhaps there is a parallel to be found between the form of *canu dychan* and the performance context of similar poems resulting from the *cyff clêr* tradition. It could also be argued that the *canu dychan* developed out of the custom of the *cyff clêr* at royal wedding feasts – perhaps as a way for poets to practice their skills in this kind of poetic expression – and it could be simply that Hopcyn ap Tomas particularly enjoyed this kind of entertainment when he had seen it performed at his court, or at others', and therefore wished to preserve some alongside his collection of other poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

Turning to consider the *canu dychan* addressed to women, I will focus on the following four poems: 'Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi', by Prydydd Breuan; 'Dychan i Gadwgan Ficar a'i ferch a'i ddaw', by Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr; 'Dychan i'r Wrach', and 'Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald, ferch Dafydd', both by Madog Dwygraig. All four of these poems are – certainly by modern standards – obscene; however, as highlighted by Dafydd Johnston, we must be wary of applying terms such as obscene and obscenity when referring to the poetry of medieval Wales since the terms 'imply a value judgement and therefore make assumptions about the moral standards of medieval Welsh society.'[191] As always, caution must be exercised to avoid applying modern values on the literature of the medieval period. Nevertheless, as Johnston further elucidates, in the case of medieval Welsh poetry we are able to deduce that the *canu dychan* addressed to women are deliberately

[190] Ibid., 41-42.
[191] Dafydd Johnston, 'Erotica and Satire in Medieval Welsh Poetry', 61.

contravening the rules set out by the Bardic Grammars as well as the accepted societal norms; that is, the explicitness of both language and image in the poems stand in stark contrast to the restraint of favourable poems addressed to women, i.e., love poems.[192] Given this stark contrast in terms of language and image, it is perhaps (initially at least) surprising to find that the metre employed in each is exactly what you would expect to find in the more conventional and favourable poetry addressed to women. Prydydd Breuan employs the *awdl* metre in 'Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi', composing twenty lines of *gwawdodyn,* eight lines of *awdl-gywydd*, and finishing with a single-rhyme *englyn*. The majority of the poem is in *cynghanedd sain,* and many of those are *pengoll*. In 'Dychan i Gadwgan Ficar a'i ferch a'i ddaw', Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr composes five single-rhyme *englynion,* utilising *cynghanedd sain* throughout, and a high percentage of these are *pengoll*. Madog Dwygraig also composes single-rhyme *englynion* in 'Dychan i'r Wrach', again, using *cynghanedd sain* throughout, save for four lines. Every line of *cynghanedd sain* is complete, save for four which are *pengoll.* In 'Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald, ferch Dafydd', Madog Dwygraig further displays his bardic ability by using a different metre for each *caniad* (section of the poem): *gwawdodyn; toddiad; cyhydedd nawban; cyhydedd hir; rhupunt; byr a thoddiad;* and *englyn proest estynedig.* There is *cynghanedd sain* in over half of the lines, about a third of which are *pengoll.* Full *cynghanedd sain* is found in the verse in *rhupunt* metre and *cynghanedd traws-croes* in the verse in *englyn proest.* It is not necessary to delve into discussion of these metres, the point is simply that this illustrates that these are complex poems, composed by highly skilled poets.[193]

While there are far fewer surviving examples of *canu dychan* addressed to women than there are love poems, the clear similarities in the examples that we do have suggest that although these poems were composed in opposition to the conventions of love poetry, there was some coherence in the ways in which women were likely to be 'satirised'. All four of the poems under consideration here contain vulgar insults ('gwrach ddieiriach grach, gwrych perth eirin, – fradw');[194] there is emphasis on the supposed promiscuity of the subject of the poem ('Rhydd fydd faedd-dwll cwll caill ddyrnodau');[195] it is maintained that the poet has

[192] Ibid.
[193] For more on medieval Welsh poetic metres see: John Morris-Jones, *Cerdd Dafod* (Oxford, 1925); Eurys Rowlands, 'Cynghanedd, Metre, Prosody' in Alfred Owain Hughes Jarman & Gwilym Rees Hughes (eds), *A Guide to Welsh Literature 1282-c.1550: Vol II* (Revised by Dafydd Johnston, Cardiff, 1997 originally published 1979 (Cardiff, 1997), 182-196.
[194] Huw Meirion Edwards (ed.), *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig*, 67; 'Relentless scabby hag, her bush an enclosure of testicles – rotten.'
[195] Huw Meirion Edwards, (ed). *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan a Cherddi Dychan Eraill o Lyfr Coch Hergest,* 13; 'Open to everyone is the beaten hole in her belly [which is familiar with] the blows of testicles.'

usually had some kind of sexual encounter with the woman (and this is, at least in part, what has led him to compose the *dychan* – 'Afallen beren a berais, / Ei gosod yn gall a geisais; / Â'm cyllell y dydd y'i collais / Ac ordd o fywn gardd y'i himpais');[196] the poet emphasises the uncleanliness of the woman ('Rhaith laith lefn ffynnawn gachgrawn, gochgrau, / Rhwyd ysbwrial, gwâl gwelïau');[197] there is discussion of the woman's body as grotesquely fat or skeletally thin ('gwrach furgin, / Gwrach fantach, gwrach groenach grin')[198]; the woman is dishonest or foolish ('Hi a wyddiad fy nhwyllo');[199] and in both of Madog Dwygraig's poems it is also emphasised that the woman is poor ('Gafr hyfram, fawtgam, fwytgais, – fonllomach / No lluman Lanferrais').[200] These comments on looks, chastity, intelligence and cleanliness could be considered effectively a systematic inversion of the normal conventions of poetry addressed to women in medieval Wales and this is one avenue where further research on these poems may prove fruitful.

Three of the poems are addressed to named woman, one of these is 'Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi' – this poem is particularly unkind to its subject, one of the more tame insults being: 'Llindag doll, llodig foll fôn.'[201] Huw Meirion Edwards notes that this poem represents the most savage personal attack in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*[202] Notably, as these poems are directed towards specific women, rather than towards women as a group, they are set apart from the kinds of poems which might be considered to fit in with the wider medieval theme of the 'debate about women'. The relationship between the *canu dychan* and this medieval topic of debate is one avenue for further research which could prove fruitful. The fact that these poems are directed towards specific identifiable women raises questions about the context in which these poems were composed and received. As we have seen, *canu dychan* likely had a performative element to them, perhaps as a form of entertainment at the courts of the *uchelwyr*, rising out of the *cyff clêr* tradition. However, it is difficult to imagine an occasion for which the performance of these poems addressed to women would have been appropriate (certainly I cannot imagine these poems forming part of the entertainment at a

[196] Huw Meirion Edwards (ed.), *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig*, 43; 'Sweet apple tree which I made ready, / It's placing sensibly I endeavoured, / With my knife the day I lost it, / And a hammer I implanted in her enclosure.'
[197] Huw Meirion Edwards, (ed). *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan,* 13; 'Ruled by her moist loins, source of a mucky festering sore – red and gory, / a net for rubbish, a lair of disease.'
[198] Huw Meirion Edwards (ed.), *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig*, 67; 'skeletal hag, / Toothless hag, withered hag with poor skin.'
[199] Huw Meirion Edwards, (ed). *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan,* 13; 'She knew how to deceive me'.
[200] Huw Meirion Edwards (ed.), *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig*, 43; 'Farting goat, bow-legged, seeking food, more bare-bottomed / Than the poor person of Llanferrais.'
[201] Huw Meirion Edwards, (ed). *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan* 15; 'Her neck a cave mouth, her rump lustful and distended.'
[202] Ibid., 4.

wedding feast!). It is unclear whether the women would have been present to hear these poems, but I would argue that given the nature of the insults and the tone of the poems the women would likely not have found them entertaining. Who then is the audience for these poems? Were these women locally infamous amongst the poets and their circle for one reason or another? Were these particular *canu dychan* intended only as a way for the poets to express their own personal frustrations, at the same time providing an opportunity for them to practice their craft? Were these poems composed as revenge? There was in Wales, as in the Gaelic context, a belief that *dychan* had the power to cause physical harm. This is most strongly evidenced in the tradition surrounding Dafydd ap Gwilym's *dychan* to Rhys Meigen, which was believed to have caused his death.[203] Further comparison with other *canu dychan* addressed to other subjects, and in particular a comparison with poems where the subjects are men, may allow us to begin to investigate some of these questions. How do the tone of these poems and the insults used compare? Can we get a sense of whether the subjects of these poems were 'in on the joke', or was the purpose of these poems to cause offence? How might they compare with the *canu dychan* which appear to be in the tradition of flyting? These questions are outwith the remit of this thesis, however they demonstrate that there is still much to be learned and understood about the *canu dychan* genre.

A further point of interest in the consideration of *canu dychan* in the manuscript is that the poets, in more than one instance, demonstrate the high degree of their own learning.[204] Of course there are numerous poems where poets display the extent of their learning in a more 'traditional' context (Madog Dwygraig's praise poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas being just one example), but it is interesting that they should be doing so in these poems which are supposedly the domain of the *clêr*. There is perhaps room for further investigation here: is it simply that the poets view all kinds of poetry as an equal opportunity to show off, or are they perhaps being particularly clever by disguising their level of learning in a 'low' poem? Should we understand the *canu dychan* as a display of cleverness? As a form of poetry used as a poetic exercise where the poets could practise their craft? The most significant example of a poet demonstrating the extent of his education through *canu dychan* is found in the '*Dychan i Swrcod Madog Offeiriad'*, which is attributed to Yr Ustus Llwyd. Dafydd H. Evans highlighted in his edition of this poem that, in fewer than seventy lines, the poet references: two Branches of the Mabinogi, the Dream of Macsen, Geraint son of Erbin, Geoffrey of Monmouth, the Triads, the Thirteen Treasures, the tale of Benlli the

[203] See <www.dafyddapgwilym.net>, poem 31.
[204] Dylan Foster Evans, 'Goganwr am Gig Ynyd', 19.

Giant, the Life of St Cadog, the Llywarch Hen *englynion*, the nature poem *eiry mynydd*, genealogy, the Bible, and the body of poetry ascribed to the legendary figure of Taliesin.[205] Many of these texts are contained in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*,[206] and this is not the only instance in the manuscript where it is possible to cross-reference other texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with those referenced in a poem (we see this also in the two prophetic poems in the voice of Myrddin, discussed in the following chapter).

Another poem which demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of Welsh traditional material is Madog Dwygraig's '*Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald ferch Dafydd*', which echoes the poem '*Afallen Beren*' from the *Myrddin* tradition. These two poems, as well as showing that the poets who wrote them were well educated in Welsh literary tradition, demonstrate coherence between the *canu dychan* and the wider contents of the manuscript – the poem by Yr Ustus Llwyd references several texts which themselves are found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and although the 'Afallen Beren' poem to which Madog Dwygraig refers does not appear in the manuscript, two other poems from the Myrddin tradition are included: '*Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer'* and *'Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Bedd*'. There is evidence, then, that the *canu dychan* were as informed by the learned tradition as some of the more conventional religious or praise poetry which has traditionally been regarded holding a higher literary value or merit. Again, this is an area where further research may prove fruitful – perhaps through a comparison of the kinds of things referenced in *canu dychan* and in the praise poetry, the purpose of which was to demonstrate the learnedness of the patron being praised. In terms of the aims of this thesis, however, I would also argue that there is a degree of literary self-awareness in terms of manuscript contents – a kind of deliberate coherence between texts in different sections of the manuscript which seems to me unlikely to be entirely coincidental.

2.5 Manuscript Context and Conclusion

This brings us on to the immediate manuscript context of the poetry. As already noted, the majority of the *canu dychan* appears in a block together, taking up a full quire of the manuscript. The exceptions to this are six poems by Madog Dwygraig, which appear in a block of his other poetry, and two by Iolo Goch. This suggests that the inclusion of the

[205] Dafydd H. Evans, 'Yr Ustus Llwyd a'r Swrcod' in John Ellis Caerwyn Williams (ed.) *Ysgrifau Beirniadol XVII* (Denbigh, 1990), 63-92.
[206] Namely: the four branches of the *Mabinogi*, *Breuddwyd Macsen*, *Geraint*, and the Triads.

canu dychan in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* was an intentional decision on the part of either the patron or the scribe, and perhaps even that the material was collected specifically with the aim of copying it into the manuscript (or otherwise copied from an exemplar manuscript containing only this material). If we return briefly to the idea that *canu dychan* was considered low status poetry belonging to the domain of the *clêr*, we might view the manuscript context of this poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as a way to 'legitimise' this material – given that it is placed between two high status genres of poetry: the religious verse and praise poetry by *Beirdd y Tywysogion*. A further detail worth restating is that the *canu dychan* collected here is written either in the *englyn* or *awdl* metre – these were the more established and formal metres at the time of the manuscript's construction, with the *cywydd*, we presume, still being regarded as relatively new. Perhaps this offers another explanation for the inclusion of these poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. Although the content of the *canu dychan* may be perceived as uncouth, the form is respected and, moreover, a significant number of the poems are written by well-known and established poets whose more 'respectable' work is found in the same manuscript. Grouping together poetry of a kind is not unusual in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Far from being haphazard, we find several such groupings: preceding the *canu dychan* the religious poetry is grouped together (and, significantly, Dafydd Johnston has demonstrated that the material between cols. 1143 and 1193 was selectively chosen by Hywel Fychan from exemplars which also contained other kinds of poetry);[207] following the *canu dychan* there is also a grouping of poetry attributed to *Beirdd y Tywysogion*, the poets of the princes. While it is most obvious to consider the possible tastes and motives of Hopcyn ap Tomas for the inclusion of material in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, it is also possible that he and Hywel Fychan were working together in designing the manuscript, and so we must also consider the possibility that it is the manuscript's chief scribe who is responsible for the inclusion of this material. Most of the *canu dychan* were written in his hand and given that Hywel is responsible for writing the vast majority of the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* it is difficult to believe that he had absolutely no agency over the texts that were included. I would argue that it is likely that there was some element of collaboration between the scribe and the patron in this case. Hywel Fychan was a prolific scribe whose work is found in seven other manuscripts, and therefore presumably had contacts in the scribal network involved in manuscript production and would have been responsible for sourcing specific texts and presumably also for informing Hopcyn about the texts for which there were exemplars available. Interestingly, the section of poetry attributed

[207] Dafydd Johnston, review of John Ellis Caerwyn Williams, *Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion*, *Llên Cymru* 19 (1996): 182-89 at 184.

to *Beirdd y Tywysogion* which follows the *canu dychan* in the manuscript is in the hand of another scribe, scribe C – now X91.[208] This section begins with Dafydd y Coed's praise poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas, before turning to the older poetry, and I am grateful to Prof. Dafydd Johnston for the suggestion that X91 could in fact be Dafydd y Coed himself, and that he copied this material, which Hywel Fychan earlier chose not to include, because it interested him as a poet.[209] The primary evidence for the possible identification of X91 as Dafydd y Coed derives from the presence of a poem by Dafydd y Coed earlier in the manuscript (cols. 1303-1305) written in the hand of Hywel Fychan but featuring numerous corrections in the hand of X91. I mention it now simply because it may support the idea of scribal agency in the curation of manuscript texts; it is also noteworthy that Dafydd y Coed was a prominent practitioner of *canu dychan*.

The *canu dychan* are clearly an intentional, curated, addition to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and despite the near complete lack of poems in the *cywydd* metre in the manuscript, it seems clear that the view of Hopcyn as a traditionalist and a conservative is untenable. As noted by Dafydd Johnston "the relationship between the poet and the patron was a very close one, and patron's tastes are no doubt reflected in the types of verse that have survived."[210] The *canu dychan* are far from conservative and it appears that Hopcyn had a taste for these poems – perhaps he simply didn't enjoy poems in the *cywydd* metre? Perhaps he had a separate manuscript dedicated solely to poems in that form which is now lost? It is difficult to resist lapsing into pure speculation when thinking about the possible motivations of persons who were alive some seven hundred years ago, however, what is undeniable is that the existence of this poetry in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, alongside other respected and valued texts of the Welsh literary canon is significant. Furthermore, these poems appear together in a clearly defined section, demonstrating that they are not there by accident or coincidence, but are instead the product of an intentional editorial decision.

[208] This hand was previously known as Scribe C but has been re-named in Daniel Huws' *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes* (Aberystwyth 2022). Scribe C of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is the same hand who wrote NLW MS Llansteffan 4, NLW MS Peniarth 19, NLW MS Peniarth 190, and NLW MS Peniarth 32 (*Y Llyfr Teg*). See the entry on p.215 of the *Repertory*.
[209] This suggestion is now also recognised in Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes: Vol II*, 215.
[210] Dafydd Johnston, 'Erotica and Satire in Medieval Welsh Poetry', 60.

Table 3: Table of canu dychan in Llyfr Coch Hergest

Column	**Poet**	**Title** (in ms)	**Title** (in *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* editions)	**Scribe**
1269-1270	Madog Dwygraig	Madaɔg dwygreic ae cant	*Dychan i Fab y Cof*	B
1273	Madog Dwygraig	Idem madaɔg dwygreic	*Dychan i'r Gweydd*	B
1273-1274	Madog Dwygraig	Madoc	*Dychan i Rucyn*	B
1274	Madog Dwygraig	Madaɔg dɔy greic ae cant	*Dychan i'r Wrach*	B
1274-1276	Madog Dwygraig	Idem madawg	*Afallen Beren: Dychan i Faald ferch Dafydd*	B
1277-1279	Madog Dwygraig	Madaɔg heuyt ae cant	*Dychan i'r Llo*	B
1291	Iolo Goch	Iollo goch weithyon agant yr aɔdyl honn	*Dychan i Fadog ap Hywel*	B
1292	Iolo Goch	Iollo heuyt	*Englynion Dychan*	B
1335	Gruffudd ap Maredudd	Gruffud heuyt	*Dychan i Hunis*	Ch
1337	Hywel Ystrom	Howel ystorym ae cant. y adaf eurych	*Dychan i Addaf Eurych*	B
1338-1339	Anonymous		*Dychan i Einion*	B
1339-1340	Anonymous		*Dychan i Fleddyn*	B
1340-1342	Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr		*Dychan i Casnodyn*	B
1343-1346	Casnodyn		*Dychan i Drahearn Brydydd Mawr*	B
1346-1347	Anonymous		*Dychan i Ieuan*	B
1348	Anonymous		*Llysenw Einion*	B
1348	Anonymous		*Dychan i Llywelyn*	B
1353-1355	Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard	Yrawdl honn agant llywelyn du uab y pastard	*Dychan i Fadog ap Hywel a'i Osgordd*	B
1355-1356	Prydydd Breuan	Prydyd breuan agant yrawɔdyl honn y darre	*Dychan i Darre*	B

1356	Prydydd Breuan	Prydyd breuan heuyt a gant yr awdl honn y siwon morgan o aber teivi	*Dychan i Siwan Morgan o Aberteifi*	B
1357	Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr		*Dychan i Gadwgan Ficar a'i ferch a'i ddaw*	B
1357-1358	Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion	Rys ab dauyd uab einyon ae cant	*Dychan i Sawl*	B
1358	Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr	Tudur ddall ae cant	*Cwyn Oherwydd Pla*	B
1358	Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr	Idem Tudur	*Cwyn yn Erbyn Ymborth Gwael*	B
1358	Tudur Ddall	Tudur dall ae cant	*Dychan i Neuadd Hywel*	B
1358-1359	Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach	Jockyn du uab Jthel grach. ae cant	*Helyntion Bardd Crwydrol*	X91
1359	Madog Dwygraig	Madaȣc dȣygreic ae cant	*Dychan i Garwr*	X91
1359-1360	Dafydd y Coed	Dauyd y coet ae cant	*Dychan i Ddafydd ap Rhys ab Ieuan*	X91
1360	Dafydd y Coed	Dauyd y coet ae cant. y readr gȣy	*Dychan i Rhaedr Gwy*	X91
1360	Dafydd y Coed	Dauyd y coed ae cant	*Dychan i Siac ap Twm ap Cedi*	X91
1360-1361	Dafydd y Coed	Dauyd y coet ae cant	*Dychan i Leidr*	X91
1361-1362	Dafydd y Coed (?)		*Dychan i Llanmddyfri ac i Cadwgan*	X91
1362	Y Mab Cryg	Y mab cryc ae cant	*Dychan i Leidr*	B
1362-1363	Y Mab Cryg		*Dychan i Riffri*	B
1363	Y Mab Cryg		*Dychan i Ddafydd, ŵyr Meurig, a Maredudd*	B
1363-1364	Yr Ustus Llwyd	Y Justus llwyt ae cant	*Dychan i Ruffudd, Iarll Maddwy*	B // E
1364-1365	Yr Ustus Llwyd	Justus llȣyt	*Dychan i Swrcod Madog Offeiriaid*	B // E
1407	Madog Dwygraig	Madaȣc dȣygreic ae cant	*Dychan i Dudur*	Dd

A Catalogue of Beirdd yr Uchelwyr in Llyfr Coch Hergest[211]

	No. of poems in *LlCH*	*Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*
Bleddyn Ddu	6	Vol. 1
Casnodyn	11	Vol. 13
Dafydd y Coed	9	Vol. 21
Gwilym Ddu o Arfon	3	Vol. 4
Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur	5	Vol. 4
Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed	3	Vol. 2
Gruffudd ap Llywelyn Llwyd	1	Vol. 35
Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd	40	Vol. 24, 29, 33
Gronw Gyriog	1	Vol. 8
Gruffudd Gryg	1	Vol. 37
Hywel Ystorm	1	Vol. 17
Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam	1	Vol. 21
Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach	1	Vol. 35
Iorwerth ab y Cyriog	2	Vol. 8
Iolo Goch	4	Dafydd Johnston, *Gwaith Iolo Goch*, (Cardiff, 1998)
Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard	1	Vol. 5
Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen	6	Vol. 10
Mab Clochyddyn	2	Vol. 8
Y Mab Cryg	3	Vol. 21
Madog Dwygraig	17	Vol. 32
Meurig ab Iorwerth	1	Vol. 21
Prydydd Breuan	3	Vol. 17
Rhiserdyn	5	Vol. 2
Rhys ap Dafydd ab Einion	1	Vol. 17
Sefnyn	3	Vol. 2
Sypyn Cyfeiliog/Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd	1	Vol. 11
Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr	4	Vol. 4
Tudur ap Gwyn Hagr	2	Vol. 21
Tudur Ddall	1	Vol. 21
Yr Ustus Llwyd	2	Vol. 35

[211] Lewys Glyn Cothi is excluded from this appendix as his poems were written into the manuscript by his own hand at a later date. See Dafydd Johnston, *Gwaith Lewys Glyn Cothi* (Cardiff, 1995). Y Proll is also excluded since his only surviving work, the praise poem to Thomas ap Hopcyn (possibly Hopcyn ap Tomas's son) is also written in to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* some time after the manuscript's construction by a hand belonging to the last quarter of the fifteenth century. See R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 141-142.

BLEDDYN DDU

(fl. 1330 – 1385)

Ynys Môn

Several poems survive attributed to either Bleddyn Ddu or Bleddyn Ddu Was y Cwd, and the case has been made that these two names refer to one poet.[212] An itinerant poet, Bleddyn is referenced in the work of several of his contemporaries, namely Hywel Ystorm, Gruffudd Gryg, Conyn Coch, Gruffudd Llwyd ap Dafydd ab Einion Llygliw, Iolo Goch, and Dafydd y Coed: because of this it is possible to date Bleddyn with some certainty.[213] There are six poems by Bleddyn Ddu in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, mostly *awdlau* of a religious nature, and all but one occurring between cols. 1249-1253 (the other in cols. 1284-1285) and all written in the hand of Hywel Fychan.

CASNODYN

(fl. first half of the 14th century)

Cilfái, near Swansea, Glamorgan (Morgannwg)

Casnodyn was native to Glamorgan, however there is evidence that he undertook his bardic training in north-west Wales and in the poems which Casnodyn composed in the north, he contrasts north Wales with south Wales.[214] There are eleven poems attributed to Casnodyn in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*; the bulk of these are elegy, eulogy, and religious poems which appear in a section together between cols. 1233-1248, copied in by Hywel Fychan. There is one *dychan* addressed to Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, also in the hand of Hywel Fychan, between cols. 1343-1346 amongst the section of *canu dychan* in the manuscript.

DAFYDD Y COED

(fl. 1380-c.1400)

?Caerfyddin

Dafydd y Coed is perhaps the same Dafydd who is great-grandson to Arod ab Owain ap Rhydderch Ddu from the line of Rhydderch Ddu, Caerfyrddin and if this is so then, along with the evidence from the poetry, we can say that Dafydd y Coed hails from mid or south Wales.[215] Dafydd y Coed was clearly an itinerant poet and it is possible to track some of his movements through his poetry: he composed praise poems for Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd of Glyn Aeron (the eponymous Rhydderch of *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*), Cardiganshire (now

[212] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Bleddyn Ddu* (Aberystwyth, 1994), 1-2.
[213] Ibid., 2-8.
[214] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Casnodyn* (Aberystwyth, 1999), 2-5.
[215] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 4.

Ceredigion), Gruffudd ab Llywelyn ap Ieuan of Morfa Bychan, Gwynedd, and Hopcyn ap Tomas of Ynysforgan, Glamorgan, as well as *canu dychan* to the town Rhaedr Gwy (Rhayader) in Powys, and one to the town of Llanymddyfri (Llandovery), Carmarthenshire.[216] There are three poems attributed to Dafydd y Coed in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1303-1305 (two religious poems and the praise poem to Rhydderch ab Ieuan Llwyd); five *canu dychan* in the hand of X91 between cols. 1359-1362; and a further two praise poems (to Hopcyn ap Tomas and Gruffudd ab Llywelyn ab Ieuan) in the hand of X91 between cols.1375 and 1379. As noted in the above chapter, Dafydd y Coed is perhaps X91.

GWILYM DDU O ARFON

(fl.1280-1320)

Gwynedd (Arfon)

There is no mention of Gwilym Ddu o Arfon in the genealogies or any other contemporary documents and so the little information that we have about him comes from his poems.[217] *Llyfr Coch Hergest* contains three poems by Gwilym Ddu o Arfon, including a eulogy to Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, in the hands of Hywel Fychan and scribe Ch, between cols. 1225-1230. A fourth poem attributed to this poet is found elsewhere. It is possible to locate him as hailing from Gwynedd due to the epithet of his name and it is possible to date him by the named individuals who are the subjects of his work.[218]

GRUFFUDD AP DAFYDD AP TUDUR

(fl. c.1300)

Ynys Môn/Caernarfon

There are five surviving poems attributed to Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (in the hand of Hywel Fychan cols. 1253-1255 and 1264-1266), and these are our only source of information about the poet: he notes Ynys Môn as his home, however in the same poem he also situates himself in the county of Caernarfon; other poems also link him to Caernarfon and to Denbigh.[219] Although only a handful of Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur's poems have survived, we are able to get a clear enough impression of his personality in those

[216] Ibid.
[217] R. Iestyn Daniel, 'Gwaith Gwilym Ddu o Arfon' in Nora G. Costigan (Bosco), R. Iestyn Daniel & Dafydd Johnston (eds.), *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur, Gwilym Ddu o Arfon, Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr ac Iorwerth Beli* (Aberystwyth, 1995), 47-86.
[218] Ibid., 47.
[219] Dafydd Johnston, 'Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur', in Nora G. Costigan (Bosco), R. Iestyn Daniel & Dafydd Johnston (eds.), *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur*, 3-42 at 3.

poems: he delights in his ability and his status as a poet; he is confident enough to tease his patron; his use of the dramatic in the ending of one poem suggests he was daring.[220] One of the first in the generation of poets to succeed the *Beirdd y Tywysogion*, Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur's work contains the earliest examples of themes which came to be important in the work of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*.[221]

GRUFFUDD FYCHAN AP GRUFFUDD AB EDNYFED

(fl. the third quarter of 14th century – though possibly also as early as the 1330s)

Marchwiel, Maelor Cymraeg (Wrexham)

There is nothing about Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed in the genealogies, however in an eighteenth-century manuscript, in the hand of Evan Evans 'Ieuan Fardd', there is a note which refers to Gruffudd Fychan being a poet from Marchwiel, a parish of Maelor Cymraeg.[222] This connection to the Maelor area is strengthened by the fact that Rhisiart ap Syr Rhosier Pilstwn of Emral in Maelor Saesneg was a patron to the poet.[223] His surviving work comprises of three *awdlau* and one *cywydd;* the three *awdlau* survive in the hand of Hywel Fychan in cols. 1291-1296 and 1298-1300 of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.

GRUFFUDD AP LLYWELYN LLWYD

(fl. mid-14th century)

Nothing is known of this poet, save that the has one single surviving poem in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, presumed to be from the mid-fourteenth century.[224] This is in the hand of Hywel Fychan in col. 1257.

GRUFFUDD AP MAREDUDD AP DAFYDD

(fl.1366-1382)

Ynys Môn

Evidence from his work places Gruffudd in Ynys Môn: his poetry is often addressed to the noble families of that area, such as the Penmynydd family.[225] The dateable evidence in Gruffudd's poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* stops at 1382, although it is possible that he

[220] Ibid., 4.
[221] Ibid., 5.
[222] Erwain Haf Rheinallt, 'Gwaith Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed' in Nerys Ann Jones & Erwain Haf Rheinallt (eds.) *Gwaith Sefnyn, Rhisierdyn, Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed a Llywarch Bentwrch* (Aberystwyth, 1996), 125-209 at 125.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Barry J. Lewis, 'Gwaith Gruffudd ap Llywelyn Llwyd' in Barry J. Lewis & Twm Morris (eds.) *Gwaith Madog Benfras ac Eraill o Feirdd y Bedwaredd Ganrif ar Ddeg ynghyd â Gwaith Yr Ustus Llwyd* (Aberystwyth, 2007), 127-135 at 127.
[225] Barry J. Lewis, Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd I: Canu i Deulu Penmynydd (Aberystwyth, 2003), 2.

continued to compose poetry after this date, and his name seems to appear in a list of supporters of Owain Glyndŵr in 1406 (although this could in fact be his great nephew).[226] Almost a third of all surviving religious poetry from the fourteenth century is that of Gruffudd ap Maredudd ap Dafydd.[227] These poems are striking also in their variety of topics as well as in the fact that some are reminiscent of the earlier religious poetry of Beirdd y Tywysogion whilst others foreshadow the kinds of religious poetry which would become popular in the fifteenth century.[228] The religious poetry appears in two large sections of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: cols. 1194-1202 and cols. 1213-1220 (the latter with a secular *awdl* in the middle); then one poem in col. 1329, one single *englyn* at the top of col. 1130, and a further section of poems in cols. 1130-1134. Hywel Fychan is the scribe for the poems in cols. 1194-1202 and 1213-1220, the rest were written in by scribe Ch.

GRONW GYRIOG

(fl. 1310-1360)

Ynys Môn

Gronw Gyriog's name appears in some legal documents from Ynys Môn and tradition has it that he was the father of Iorwerth ab y Cyriog; this is likely true since the two have strong ties to Ynys Môn.[229] There are no surviving poems by Gronw to any patrons from Ynys Môn, however in Sefnyn's elegy to Gronw specific reference to Ynys Môn is made.[230] There is one poem by Gronw Gyriog in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* in the hand of scribe Ch, cols. 1349-1350.

GRUFFUDD GRYG

Born c.1310

(fl.1330-1350)

Gwynedd/Ynys Môn

Gruffudd Gryg is considered to be one of the early *Cywyddwyr*, alongside Dafydd ap Gwilym, Madog Benfras, Gruffudd ab Adda ap Dafydd and Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen (Gruffudd Llwyd and Iolo Goch also belong to this group, however they are a little later).[231] Gruffudd Gryg is known the bardic dispute poems (*ymryson*) between himself and Dafydd

[226] Ibid., 10
[227] Barry J. Lewis, Gwaith Gruffudd ap Maredudd: II Cerddi Crefyddol (Aberystwyth, 2005), 1.
[228] Ibid.
[229] W. Dyfed Rowlands & Ann Parry Owen, 'Gwaith Gronw Gyriog' in Rhiannon Ifans, Ann Parry Owen, W. Dyfed Rowlands & Erwain Haf Rheinallt (eds.), *Gwaith Gronw Gyriog, Iorwerth ab y Cyriog, Mab Clochddyn, Gruffudd ap Tudur Goch and Ithel Du* (Aberystwyth, 1997), 2-31 at 3.
[230] Ibid., 4.
[231] Barry J. Lewis & Eurig Salisbury, *Gwaith Gruffudd Gryg* (Aberystwyth, 2010), 5.

ap Gwilym. One of his poems survives in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, an *awdl* in the hand of Hywel Fychan in col. 1297.

HYWEL YSTORM

(fl. last quarter of the 14th century)

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There is one poem attributed to Hywel Ystorm in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* a *dychan* in the hand of Hywel Fychan, in col. 1337. Previously it was thought that all of the *canu dychan* between cols 1337 and 1348, some eight poems, were those of Hywel Ystorm but this has since been proved not to be the case.[232] It is not possible to locate Hywel Ystorm geographically nor to pin his flourit down more precisely.

IEUAN LLWYD AB Y GARGAM

(fl. second half of the 14th century)

Gwynedd (possibly), Ynys Môn (possibly)

Only one of Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam's poems survives, his praise poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas, and this is our only source of any information about him. The poem is in the hand of scribe Ch between cols. 1415-1416. He may have been from Gwynedd (based on evidence from the poem), or from Ynys Môn (based on a reference to one 'Jem lloyd brydydd' found in a list of men from Anglesey who yielded to the crown in 1406 having previously supported the cause of Owain Glyndŵr).[233]

IOCYN DDU AB ITHEL GRACH

(fl. sometime in the 14th century)

North-east Wales.

There is only one surviving poem attributed to Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach, the complaint about the troubles of the itinerant poet which is in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* cols. 1358-1359 in the hand of X91 (followed by *canu dychan* from Madog Dwygraig and Dafydd y Coed, also in the hand of X91). Iocyn can be located to the north-east of Wales from his one surviving poem, which mentions Marchwiel, Dyffryn Clwyd, Chester, and Llanberis. There is no

[232] Huw Meirion Edwards, *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan*, 61.
[233] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 105.

reference to Iocyn in the genealogies, however he could perhaps be the Yockin Duy named in Hugh de Beckley's survey of the Castle and Lordship of Denbigh from 1334.[234]

IORWERTH AB Y CYRIOG

(fl.1325-1375)

Ynys Môn

Although it is likely that Iorwerth was from Ynys Môn, we have no surviving poetry which connects him to this area of Wales, instead the surviving poetry links him to Meirionnydd.[235] Iorweth is the subject of two poems, an elegy by Sefnyn (preserved in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* col. 1261) and a less complementary poem by Dafydd ap Gwilym: we can conclude from this that Iorwerth was well-known amongst his contemporaries and was a poet of some importance.[236] Iorwerth's poems survive in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* cols. 1285-1287 in the hand of Hywel Fychan.[237]

IOLO GOCH

(fl.1320-1398)

Dyffryn Clwyd, Denbighshire

Iolo Goch was a prolific poet in the fourteenth century, a pioneer of the *cywydd* metre, and a significant amount of his work survives to us (some 40 poems).[238] Of these, just four are preserved in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: two *dychan* in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1291-1292, a religious *awdl* in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1369-1370, and the manuscript's only *cywydd* (a love poem) in the hand of Scribe Dd (Type Hand I) between cols. 1407-1408.

LLYWELYN DDU AB Y PASTARD

(fl. second quarter of the 14th century)

Ceredigion/Pembrokeshire

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[234] Barry J. Lewis, 'Gwaith Iocyn Ddu ab Ithel Grach' in Barry J. Lewis & Twm Morris (eds.) *Gwaith Madog Benfras ac Eraill* 291-307 at 297. See John Williams, *The Records of Denbigh and its Lordship* (Wrexham, 1860). 39-40.

[235] W. Dyfed Rowlands & Ann Parry Owen, 'Gwaith Iorwerth ab y Cyriog', in *Gwaith Gronw Gyriog,* 33-85 at 35.

[236] Ibid., 36-37.

[237] Ibid., 37.

[238] Iolo Goch is not included in the *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* series, instead the corpus of his poetry has been edited in modern Welsh in Dafydd Johnston, *Gwaith Iolo Goch* (Cardiff, 1998), an English language version of which is also available: Dafydd Johnston (ed. and trans.), *The Welsh Classics Series 5: Iolo Goch – Poems* (Llandysul, 1993).

There are two surving poems by Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard, one *dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (cols. 1353-1355, in the hand of Hywel Fychan) and an elegy to the family of Trefynor elsehwere. It is not possible to locate this poet in time or place with certainty given that he does not appear in the genealogies, however there are references to Trefynor, Cilgerran, Llawaden and Aberaeron in his poetry, which would place him around Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.[239]

LLYWELYN GOCH AP MEURIG HEN

Born c. 1330

(fl.1350-1390)

Meirionnydd (South Gwynedd)

Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen appears in a Meirioneth county court record for the 13th of November 1346 (following a period of imprisonment in Harlech castle); he was accused of maiming another soldier (on the 3rd of June 1346) who later died from his injuries, whilst in the army in England awaiting deployment to France.[240] Llywelyn's poetic style is comparatively simple and smooth compared to a more conservative poet such as Gruffudd ap Maredudd and it is likely that the new methods of the *cywydd* influenced his *awdlau*.[241] Llywelyn was clearly a master of the traditional craft of the Gogynfeirdd, however innovation is more frequent than convention in his work.[242] He is possibly the object of the anonymous 'Dychan i Lywelyn' in col. 1348 of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Llywelyn's poems appear in the hand of Hywel Fychan in two blocks, separated by two of Dafydd y Coed's poems, in cols. 1301-1303 and then 1306-1310 of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

MAB CLOCHYDDYN

(fl.1380)

Ynys Môn

There are only two surviving poems from this poet, both found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, cols. 1350-1352, in the hand of scribe Ch.[243] Both poems link the poet to Ynys Môn.

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[239] Dylan Foster Evans. 'Gwaith Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard' in Ann Parry Owen & Dylan Foster Evans, *Gwaith Llywelyn Brydydd Hoddnant, Dafydd ap Gwilym, Hillyn ac Eraill ynghyd â dwy awdl gan Llywelyn Ddu ab y Pastard* (Aberystwyth, 1996), 171-212 at 171.
[240] Dafydd Johnston, *Gwaith Llywelyn Goch ap Meurig Hen* (Aberystwyth, 1998), 3.
[241] Ibid., 4.
[242] Ibid., 5.
[243] W. Dyfed Rowlands & Ann Parry Owen, 'Gwaith Mab Clochyddyn', in *Gwaith Gronw Gyriog*, 87-112 at 89.

MAB CRYG

(fl. no later than c.1400)

Somewhere on the borders of Aberystwyth

There is no mention of this poet either in other poetry or in the genealogies and as such everything that we know about him comes from his own poems (he was once burgled, once unjustly imprisoned and perhaps once avoided being hanged).[244] There are three poems attributed to y Mab Cryg in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, cols. 1362-1363, in the hand of Hywel Fychan. All three are *canu dychan.*

MEURIG AB IORWERTH

(fl. second half of the 14th century)

?Carmarthenshire

The praise poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is the only surviving poem of Meurig ab Iorwerth. This poem is written in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1373-1374. There are two men of this name mentioned in the genealogies, one from Brycheiniog the other from the line of Rhydderch ap Tewder in Carmarthenshire – the dates of the former are too early for him to be the poet, however it is possible that Meurig ab Iorwerth the poet and Meurig ab Iorwerth Fongam ab Iorwerth of Caerfyddin are one and the same.[245]

MADOG DWYGRAIG

(fl. latter half of 14th century. Suggestions ranging between 1360-1400)

Penllyn, Meirionnydd (South Gwynedd)

All but three of Madog's poems are found in a block together in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, in the hand of Hywel Fychan, between cols. 1267-1280; the poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas, also in the hand of Hywel Fychan, is found in cols. 1310-1311 amongst other poems to Hopcyn and his son Thomas; there are two satirical poems found in different hands in cols. 1359 (GMD poems 12 and 17).[246] Nine of the seventeen surviving poems are *canu dychan* and of the rest Madog displays the whole range of poetic genres of the period except for love poems.

PRYDYDD BREUAN

(fl. second quarter to mid-14th century)

Pembrokeshire (Dyffryn Breuan)

[244] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 159-160.
[245] Ibid., 123.
[246] Huw Meirion Edwards, *Gwaith Madog Dwygraig*, 2-3.

There are only three surviving poems by this poet in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (all in the hand of Hywel Fychan), two of which are *canu dychan* (cols.1355-1356), the third is a conventional praise poem to Maredudd from Ynys Derllys (col. 1349; there exists a fourth example elsewhere, which is also *dychan*). It is possible to discern some information from the poet's work and his name about his location, however it is not possible to date his floruit exactly.[247]

RHISIERDYN

(fl. c.1360-c.1400)

Ynys Môn

Rhisierdyn's name does not appear in the genealogies and so we are only able to gain information about him from his own poems (where we do not find anything about his family or his lineage) and from one *cywydd* written by Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed (where the two poets are in conversation).[248] Although connected to Ynys Môn, with the Penmynydd family likely his main patrons, Rhisierdyn was an itinerant poet.[249] The style of Rhisierdyn's work echoed that of the his predecessors, the *Cynfeirdd* and the *Gogynfeirdd,* however the content made reference to one of the new and current interests of the nobility, foreign literature.[250] Six of his poems survive in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* in the hand of Hywel Fychan, between cols. 1281-1284 and cols. 1287-1291.

RHYS AP DAFYDD AB EINION

(fl. sometime in the 14th century)

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There is only one poem attested to this poet, a *dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in the hand of Hywel Fychan, cols. 1357-58. The poem does not shed any light on the poet's background, however there are records of three men known to have lived in the fourteenth century who share a name with the poet: one from the first half of the century from Cantref Bychan in Carmarthenshire; one from the Drenewydd area who was born in the second half of the century; one who was a deputy sergeant in the commote of Gwidigada in Cantref Mawr in Carmarthenshire between 1397 and 1398 and a sergeant there intermittently between 1398

[247] Huw Meirion Edwards, *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan,* 3-4.
[248] Nerys Ann Jones, 'Gwaith Rhisierdyn' in Nerys Ann Jones & Erwain Haf Rheinallt (eds.) *Gwaith Sefnyn, Rhisierdyn, Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed a Llywarch Bentwrch* (Aberystwyth, 1996), 47-51 at 47.
[249] Ibid., 48.
[250] Ibid., 50.

and 1431, he was also the treasurer of Gwidigada and Elfed intermittently between 1396 and 1432. However there is not enough evidence to identify the poet as any of these men.[251]

SEFNYN

(fl. latter half of 14th century)

Ynys Môn

The only information we know about Sefnyn comes from his poetry as there is no mention of him in the genealogies, however it is likely that he was the father of Gwilym ap Sefnyn.[252] The only three surviving poems of Sefnyn's are found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, between cols. 1259-1263 in the hand of Hywel Fychan.[253]

SYPYN CYFEILIOG/DAFYDD BACH AP MADOG WLADAIDD

(fl.1340-1390)

Cyfeiliog, south-west Powys.

The only thing that we know for certainty about Sypyn Cyfeiliog from the genealogies is the name of his father, Madog Wladaidd.[254] There is no mention of Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd in the genealogies but there are several men named Dafydd ap Madog from different parts of Wales: one of them, Dafydd ap Madog ap Gruffudd, is notable since his grandfather was the grandson of Owain Cyfeiliog (d.1197), unfortunately this Dafydd could not be Sypyn Cyfeiliog as neither the dates nor the territory align.[255] There is only one poem by this poet in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, a praise poem to a Dafydd ap Cadwaladr, in the hand of Hywel Fychan, between cols. 1255-1256.

TRAHAEARN BRYDYDD MAWR

(fl. first half of 14th century)

Ystrad Tywi

There are five surviving poems attributed to Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr, four of these are found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in the hand of Hywel Fychan between cols. 1221-1223 (one religious *awdl* and one eulogy to Hywel from Llandingad in Ystrad Tywi), and again between cols. 1340-1341 (*canu dychan* to Casnodyn) and col. 1357 (*canu dychan* to

[251] Huw Meirion Edwards, *Gwaith Prydydd Breuan,* 47-48..
[252] Erwain Haf Rheinallt, 'Gwaith Sefnyn' in Nerys Ann Jones & Erwain Haf Rheinallt (eds.) *Gwaith Sefnyn, Rhisierdyn, Gruffudd Fychan ap Gruffudd ab Ednyfed a Llywarch Bentwrch,* 3-42 at 3.
[253] Ibid., 7.
[254] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd Bach ap Madog Wladaidd 'Sypyn Cyfeiliog' a Llywelyn ab y Moel* (Aberystwyth, 1998), 3.
[255] Ibid., 4.

Gadwgan Ficar, his daughter, and his son in law). Another short *dychan* appears elsewhere. All we know about the poet comes from his own work, and additionally from the work of two of his contemporaries: in the *dychan* to Trahaearn by Casnodyn, and the eulogy to him by Gwilym Ddu.[256]

TUDUR AP GWYN HAGR

(fl. sometime in the 14th century)

?

The only information we have about this poet is found in the two surviving poems attributed to him which appear in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in the hand of Hywel Fychan, col. 1358. The date of his floruit may possibly be narrowed down to the mid-fourteenth century since he was writing during the time of the Black Plague.[257] It is not possible to locate him geographically within Wales.

TUDUR DDALL

(fl. sometime in the 14th century)

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Tudur Ddall is another poet about which nothing more is known save for the information gleaned from his sole surviving poem in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. This poem is in the hand of Hywel Fychan in col. 1358.

YR USTUS LLWYD

(fl.1340-1370)

Gwynedd

There are three surviving poems attributed to Yr Ustus Llwyd, two *dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* cols. 1362-1365, written in Hywel Fychan, and an elegy elsewhere. These poems are the only source of available information about the poet; it is possible to date his floruit through references to other known figures in the poetry, and to locate him in Mawddwy, having perhaps received his bardic training in Morgannwg.[258]

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[256] Nora G. Costigan (Bosco), 'Gwaith Trahaearn Brydydd Mawr' in Nora G. Costigan (Bosco), R. Iestyn Daniel & Dafydd Johnston (eds.), *Gwaith Gruffudd ap Dafydd ap Tudur*, 91-145.
[257] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 189.
[258] Twm Morris, 'Gwaith Yr Ustus Llwyd', in Barry J. Lewis & Twm Morris (eds.) *Gwaith Madog Benfras ac Eraill*, 311-345 at 311-313.

3 TWO POEMS IN THE VOICE OF MYRDDIN

Llyfr Coch Hergest is almost perfectly split into prose and poetry, with the exception of the two prophetic poems *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*,[259] which appear together nestled amongst prose texts near the beginning of the manuscript. This anomaly is the reason that these two poems and their surrounding texts immediately stood out as noteworthy upon selecting the 'case studies' for discussion in this thesis. There are several questions which could be addressed here: why were these poems separated from the other poetic material in the manuscript? How do they fit in with the texts surrounding them – in terms of both their immediate manuscript context, and the wider context of the prose section of the manuscript? How were these two poems being interpreted by Hopcyn ap Tomas and/or Hywel Fychan? What is their function in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*? This chapter sets out to answer these questions through an examination of the manuscript context of *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd.*

The immediate manuscript context of the *Cyfoesi* and the *Gwasgargerdd* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is that they sit amongst a block of prophetic prose material, of both European and Welsh origin, as follows:

ff.127v-134v:	*Saith Doethion Rhufain* (Seven Sages of Rome)
ff.134v-138v:	*Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* (The Dream of Rhonabwy)
ff.139r-141r:	*Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Ddoeth* (Sibylline Prophecy)
ff.141r-142v:	***Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer***
f.143r:	***Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd***
f.143r:	*Hyn a ddywedodd Sant Awstin am dewder y ddaear* (That which Saint Augustine said about the width of the world)
f.143r:	*Hyn a ddywedodd yr Enaid* (That which the Soul said)
ff.143r-144r:	*Proffwydoliaeth Yr Eryr yng Nghaer Septon* (The Prophecy of the Eagle in Shaftesbury)

This prophetic block follows on from the history texts that begin *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: *Ystorya Dared* (the vernacular prose version of Dares Phrygius' *De excidio Troie historia*, on the destruction of Troy); *Brut y Brenhinedd* (a Welsh translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Brittaniae*); *Brut y Tywysogion* (a vernacular chronicle, based on a lost Latin

[259] The fullest study of these two poems is found in Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition in the Middle Ages: Incorporating textual studies of poetry from 'Llyfr Coch Hergest' (Oxford, Jesus College, MS cxi) and 'Y Cwta Cyfarwydd (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Peniarth 50)', (unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1990). See also Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh*, 98-103; Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry: A Study and Edition of the Englynion* (Cambridge (1990), 291-293.

original, picking up where Geoffrey leaves off with the death of Cadwaladr and ending in 1282, though the version in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* does not include the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd). After this comprehensive history of the Welsh from the fall of Troy up to the year of the Edwardian conquest of Wales there follows a short text (just fifty-two lines over ff.89r-90v, cols.376-377) ascribed to Gildas (who, interestingly, is here called *hen broffwyt y brytanyeit* – old prophet of the Britons) on the four things the Britons did to lose their honour and the island of Britain; a list of the cantrefs and commotes of Wales; the majority of the manuscript's Charlemagne material; a small chronicle;[260] *Delw y Byd* (a Welsh version of the *Imago Mundi*); and a translation of Walter of Henley's text on husbandry. Following the block of prophetic material are the *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* (including *Tri chaspeth gόilim hir. saer hopkyn ap thomas*),[261] and *Enwau ac Anrhyfeddodau Ynys Prydein* (Names and Wonders of the Island of Britain).[262]

Together these texts in this first part of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (quires 1-13) make up a section of the manuscript concerned with historical or otherwise knowledgeable texts alongside texts of a prophetic nature. This first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* exemplifies the concerns of the Welsh tradition with history, prophecy (and apocalypse), and politics and this is in line with a shift in thinking in the learned circles of twelfth-century Europe. During this period 'Troy emerges as a concept expressing a new historical consciousness, intimately associated with an aristocratic and lay cultural environment and at odds with the

[260] Providing a short account of Britain from the time of Adam to William the Conqueror, including how Britain was taken by Brutus and referring to the prophecies of Myrddin, followed by a collection of annals up to 1321. For a discussion of this text and the two other Middle Welsh manuscripts that it appears in see Rebecca Try, 'A Forgotten Welsh Chronology in Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS 5267B, in Peniarth 50, and in the Red Book of Hergest' in Ben Guy, Georgia Henley, Owain Wyn Jones, and Rebecca Thomas (eds) *The Chronicles of Medieval Wales and the March: New Contexts, Studies and Texts* (Turnhout, 2020), 341-373.

[261] '*Tri chaspeth gόilim hir. saer hopkyn ap thomas. efferen sul. a dadleu. a marchnat. a chas gantaό heuyt. tauarneu. a cherdeu. a chreireu. Tri dyn yssyd gas gantaό. effeirat. a phrydyd. a chlerόr*.' (taken from <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-page.php?ms=Jesus111&page=147r>, accessed 11/09/2022); 'Three objects of hatred of Gwilym Hir, Hopcyn ap Tomas's carpenter: Sunday mass, and argument, and the market. And hateful to him also: taverns, and songs, and relics. And three men he hates: clergymen, and poets, and wandering bards.' This addition is tacked on at the end of the text of the Triads, before the beginning of Enwau Ynys Prydein, and adds a nice personal touch to the material – perhaps it could be considered something of an 'in-joke' between patron and scribe. For comparison and discussion of these *cas bethau* with those found in NLW MS 5267b (*Y Casgliad Brith*) see Rebecca Try, 'NLW MS 5267B; a partial transcription and commentary' (unpublished MPhil Dissertation, Cardiff University, 2015), 15-17.

[262] See A. Joseph McMullen, 'Enwau ac Anryfeddodau Ynys Prydain and a tradition of topographical Wonders in Medieval Britain', *Studia Celtica Fennica* IX (2012), 36–53. Notably, this text begins by declaring that before the Island of Britain was seized it was called *Clas Myrddin*: '*Kyntaf enό a uu ar yr ynys honn. Kynn no e chael na e chyuanhedu. clas myrdin.*' (taken from <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/cy/ms-page.php?ms=Jesus111&page=147r>, accessed 11/09/2022); 'The first name that was on this Island, before it became occupied, *Clas Myrddin*.'

biblically oriented Augustinian-Orosian paradigm.'[263] Although the earliest accounts of Trojan origins much predate this period, there was widespread new literary production of this material in the twelfth century, resulting in a large corpus of work appearing in manuscripts of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.[264] Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* is an expression of the new literary production of this Trojan material and Francis Ingeldew discusses this at length, however for our purposes it is enough to summarise that: the concept of Troy is itself a return to Virgilian philosophy which revives an interest in issues of genealogy and prophecy;[265] that Geoffrey of Monmouth's innovation in the creation of Merlin is an expression of the need for a 'post-biblical secular history' in line with that of the medieval Sibyl; and that his production of prophecies in the voice of Merlin alongside his history of the Trojan origins of Britain is an 'impulse towards the remaking of history.'[266] Geoffrey's Merlin is developed from the medieval Welsh tradition and it is important to note that the Welsh Myrddin and the Galfridian Merlin are two distinct figures; the former forming the basis for the development of the latter.[267] The figure of Myrddin is akin to Lailoken, of Scottish tradition, or Suibhne Geilt, of Irish tradition, stemming from the common 'wild man of the woods' trope. Helen Fulton describes the 'wild man of the woods' as 'a stock character from medieval fiction whose marginal position can be read allegorically as the otherness of migration and the pursuit of cultural separatism within a multicultural environment.'[268] The connection between the figures of Myrddin, Lailoken, and Suibhne Geilt has been discussed at length in a series of articles by A. O. H. Jarman,[269] with more recent contributions being made by Graham Isaac and O. J. Padel.[270]

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[263] Francis Ingledew, 'The Book of Troy and the Genealogical Construction of History: The Case of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*', *Speculum*, Vol.69, No.3 (July, 1994), 665-704 at 666.
[264] Ibid., footnote 6.
[265] Ibid., 667; 'In Virgil's work it is the interpretive intervention of prophecy that permits the discovery of divine purpose in human political affairs and so history's and the empire's special meaning. And it is the mode of prophecy that produces a narrative in which divine pronouncements and interventions are everywhere embedded, so that human action appears to realize rather than make history […] To gain its purchase on history in the Aeneid, prophecy seizes on genealogy, a narrative mode that not only inevitably confers structure on history but also conjures value out of time through the mystification of ancestry' (671).
[266] Ibid.
[267] Graham R. Isaac, 'Myrddin, Proffwyd Diwedd y Byd: Ystyriaethau Newydd ar Ddatblygiad ei Chwedl', *Llên Cymru* 24 (2001), 12-23 at 13. See also Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecies and English Politics in the Late Middle Ages: Sir Thomas Parry-Williams Memorial Lecture* (Aberystwyth, 2008) for a concise discussion of the relationship between Myrddin of the Welsh tradition of Merlin of Galfridian tradition.
[268] Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecy and English Politics*, 9.
[269] Alfred Owain Hughes Jarman, *'Lailoken a Llallogan' in Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* vol.9 (1939), 8-27; 'The Welsh Myrddin Poems' in Roger Sherman Loomis (ed.), *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1959), 20-30; 'Early stages in the Development of the Myrddin Legend' in Rachel Bromwich & R. Brinley Jones (eds.), *Astudiaethau ar yr Hengerdd: Studies in Old Welsh Poetry* (Cardiff, 1978), 326-349; 'The Merlin Legend and the Welsh Tradition of Prophecy' in Rachel Bromwich, Alfred Owain Hughes Jarman & Brynley F. Roberts (eds.) *The Arthur of the Welsh* (Cardiff, 1991), 117-145.
[270] Graham R. Isaac, 'Myrddin, Proffwyd Diwedd y Byd: Ystyriaethau Newydd ar Ddatblygiad ei Chwedl', *Llên Cymru* 24 (2001), 13-23; Oliver J. Padel, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth and the Development of the Merlin Legend' *CMCS* 51 (2006), 37-65.

Manon Bonner Jenkins argues that the connection between these figures goes beyond the Celtic 'wild man' trope, noting that 'these literatures also contain close parallels to *Cyfoesi Myrddin* itself. Both in form and content.'[271] The significance of the impact of Geoffrey of Monmouth on the figure of Myrddin/Merlin will be returned to at the end of this chapter, but firstly the groundwork for examining *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd* in their manuscript context will be laid by way of discussion of the concepts of history and prophecy in the medieval period generally, and the function of prophecy in Wales specifically. This is followed by a description and summary of the two poems before moving into a discussion of their manuscript context and some suggestions about the function of these two poems in the voice of Myrddin in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

3.1 WHAT IS 'HISTORY'? WHAT IS 'PROPHECY'?

In labelling these texts as 'history' and 'prophecy' we subconsciously imbue them with our own modern perspectives and as such before we are able to begin to interpret them in their contemporary context, we must first consider the problems of historicity in the medieval period. Isidore of Seville, whose seventh-century writings remained well-known and influential right through the medieval period, defines history as 'a narration of deeds accomplished; through [which] what occurred in the past is sorted out.'[272] This provides an insight into how history was perceived in the medieval period, and what it reveals is that history can be anything which narrates that which has already happened in an orderly manner. This is a somewhat broader definition that encompasses a wider range of material than what we in the modern day might refer to as history. In the modern perception, there is a strict boundary between what is 'history' and what is not: history is 'the branch of knowledge that deals with past events,'[273] the implication being that these past events are real, actual, factual; they are known to be true and can be corroborated from multiple sources. There is therefore a clear distinction between history and fiction and by extension, between

[271] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 37: 'Examples include the Irish *Baile in Scáil* ('The Champion's Ecstasy') and *Baile Chuind* ('Conn's Ecstacy'). The former is a prophecy, partly in verse, uttered by an Otherworld Phantom, prompted by questions from a maiden said to be the sovereignty of Ireland, who asks who the successive kings of Tara will be, with Conn Céthachach, the first of the kings, witnessing the interchange; the latter is also a prophetic king-list, this time uttered by Conn himself, and in prose.' For a recent edition of this text, see Kevin Murray, *Baile in Scail*, Irish Texts Society (London, 2004).

[272] Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach, and Oliver Berghof (eds.), *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge, 2006), 67.

[273] The Oxford English Dictionary Online, accessed via <https://www.oed.com/view/Entry/87324> on 23/07/2022.

history and literature, where literature is considered to be an artistic expression such as poetry, novels, plays (all of which are ways of telling stories). When dealing with texts from the medieval period however, it is necessary to discard our modern classifications, as Ralph O'Connor writes in his discussion of history and fiction in an Icelandic context:

> The modern separation between 'history' and 'literature' has been shown to make no sense at all when studying the Middle Ages, during which historiography was a major branch of literature. It was also extremely varied, since history did not exist as a separate art or science in Medieval schools. The striking differences between saga (or epic, or historical romance) and what we would think of as 'proper' historiography (annals, chronicles) used to be seen as a reason for doubting such texts' historiographic function (and still often creates an unnecessary stumbling block), but literary scholars are increasingly aware of the breadth of medieval historical practice. Saga scholarship thus often distinguishes informally between historiography 'in a narrower sense' and historiography 'in a broader sense'. *Historia* was not one genre but a range of overlapping genres, unified by the desire to narrate true stories about the past, but displaying very different stylistic, structural, and functional profiles – some of which would be viewed today as characteristics of fiction, not history.[274]

Erich Poppe has similarly argued in an Irish context that the modern distinction between history and literature is unhelpful, noting that our understanding of medieval texts is 'often impeded by significant differences between modern and medieval perceptions of the function, or functions, of such texts.'[275] Further, Poppe demonstrates that the Middle Irish loanword *stoir* from Latin *historia* is defined in the legal texts as the overarching genre into which other tale types fall: 'history, namely the cattle-raids and the destructions and the thirty major tales and the sixty minor tales.'[276] Another example of the interconnected approaches to the recording of history in the medieval period, in a Welsh context, can be seen in Helen Fulton's argument that *Ystorya Dared* functions as chronicle rather than fictional romance and forms a preface to the Welsh translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's account of early British history.[277] In surveying the manuscript tradition of *Ystorya Dared*, Fulton finds that in almost all cases, the surviving witnesses of this text appear in manuscripts which also contain one or more of the historiographical *brut* texts: *Brut y Brenhinedd, Brut y Tywysogion,* and *Brut y Saesson.* This demonstrates, Fulton argues, that

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[274] Ralph O'Connor, 'History and Fiction' in Ármann Jakobsson and Sverrir Jakobsson (eds), *The Routledge Research Companion to the Medieval Icelandic Sagas* (London & New York, 2017), 88-110 at 88.
[275] Erich Poppe, 'Literature as History / History as Literature: A View from Medieval Ireland' in Sonja Fielitz (ed.), *Literature as History / History as Literature: Fact and Fiction in Medieval to Eighteenth-Century British Literature* (Frankfurt, 2007), 13-27 at 13.
[276] Ibid., 21.
[277] Helen Fulton, 'Troy Story: The Medieval Welsh Ystorya Dared and the Brut Tradition of British History', *The Medieval Chronicle,* Vol 7 (2011), 137-150.

Ystorya Dared was 'regarded as part of the native tradition of Welsh historiography …[and]… as an important element in the teleological narrative of the rise and fall of the British nation, from its Trojan origins through to the cataclysmic loss of sovereignty in 1282.'[278] This interpretation of the text supports the suggestion that the first section of texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* create a historical segment at the beginning of the manuscript; and that there are multiple types of text which were considered to have a historiographical function.

In the medieval context any text concerned with the past, in a broad sense, may be considered history, however history is then also not necessarily confined only to the past. That is to say that medieval historical writing, both chronicles and narrative prose alike, plays a crucial part in the 'construction of a meaningful past, recording and interpreting history in morally weighted literary forms which then shaped how the past was remembered.'[279] The past is recorded for the sake of the present. This notion of history as shaping collective memory about the past is more properly expressed by Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory, which is 'a collective concept for all knowledge that directs behaviour and experience in the interactive framework of a society and one that obtains through generations in repeated societal practice and initiation.'[280] Two characteristics of cultural memory in particular are pertinent to consider here: firstly that 'cultural memory preserves the store of knowledge from which a group derives an awareness of its unity and peculiarity'; and secondly that 'cultural memory works by reconstructing, that is, it always relates its knowledge to an actual and contemporary situation.' [281] These two characteristics can be found in the texts that appear in this first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* The historical texts, *Ystorya Dared, Brut y Brenhinedd* and *Brut y Tywysogion* are the store of knowledge which records the history of the Welsh from the earliest period and from which a coherent and separate national identity is drawn, while the prophetic material, including the two Myrddin poems, are an expression of that collective knowledge about the past recreated in the terms of the contemporary political climate.

By the time of the creation of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, prophecy had already had a long history in the medieval period, beginning when Pope Gregory I defined the genre as 'an

[278] Ibid., 147.
[279] Ralph O'Connor, 'History and Fiction', 91.
[280] Jan Assmann, (trans.) John Czaplicka, 'Collective Memory and Cultural Identity', *New German Critique*, No. 65 (1995), 125-133.
[281] Ibid., 130.

intense study, reflection on, and disclosure of any "hidden" (occult) knowledge which is not limited by mode or time.'[282] From its inception then, prophecy is revealed to be concerned not only with the future, but also with the past and the present.[283] Although in the guise of predicting future events, medieval prophecy is really concerned with talking about things that have already happened in order to 'issue a warning that we can and must learn from the mistakes of the past.'[284] Richard Emmerson, in his discussion of Hebrew prophetic models, asserts that prophecy is 'intended to elicit change in the present, and the future is dependent upon the decision of the present.'[285] Rather than being a sincere attempt to predict the future, prophecy is a literary expression of contemporary political concerns. Victoria Flood, drawing on the observations of Lesley Coote, writes that 'prophecy can most intelligibly be understood as a discourse: a mode of historical and socio-political commentary with its own conventions and stock motifs, invoked in different textual forms and contexts.'[286] Helen Fulton notes that prophecy was familiar to medieval audiences from religious teaching and that religious prophecy was 'a mode of popular mass communication, working to control a largely illiterate population by warning them of the dire consequences of deviance from Christian norms.'[287] Secular prophecy, which first starts to appear in Britain around the tenth century,[288] in its concern with the connection between 'the rulers and the ruled' is directed towards 'the politics of power and submission.'[289] Flood goes further, stating that 'the central belief that imbues political prophetic texts in the Middle Ages is […] territorial entitlement, its historical ratification, and the role of peoples and places in the realisation of a particular vision of the future.'[290] This concern with power and submission, and with territorial entitlement is central to the medieval Welsh perceptions of Wales as a 'nation' (in so far as

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[282] Daniel G. Helbert, 'Prophecy' in Siân Echard and Robert Ruse (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain* (Online, 2017) <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb417>

[283] For further reading on medieval prophecy, see e.g.: James L. Kugel (ed.), *Poetry and Prophecy: The Beginnings of a Literary Tradition* (New York, 1990), Morgan Kay, 'Prophecy in Welsh Manuscripts', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* Vol 26/27 (2006/2007) pp73-108; Lynette Olson 'Armes Prydein as a Legacy of Gildas' in Jonathan M. Wooding & Lynette Olson (eds.), *Prophecy, Fate and Memory in the Early Medieval Celtic World* (Sydney, 2020), 170-187; Constant J. Mews, 'The De xii abusivis saeculi and Prophetic Tradition in Seventh-Century Ireland', ibid., 124-147.

[284] Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecy and English Politics*, 4.

[285] Richard Kenneth Emmerson, 'The Prophetic, the Apocalyptic and the study of Medieval Literature' in Jan Wojcik and Raymond-Jean Fontain (eds), *Poetic Prophecy in Western Literature* (London, 1984) pp.40-54 at 46.

[286] Victoria Flood, *Prophecy, Politics and Place in Medieval England: From Geoffrey of Monmouth to Thomas of Erceldoune* (Cambridge, 2016), 2.

[287] Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecy and English Politics*, 4.

[288] *Armes Prydein* is the earliest example of Welsh secular prophecy, see Ifor Williams (ed.) and Rachel Bromwich (tr.) *Armes Prydein: The Prophecy of Britain. From the Book of Taliesin*, Mediaeval and Modern Welsh Series 6 (Dublin, 1972).

[289] Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecy and English Politics*, 4-5.

[290] Victoria Flood, *Prophecy, Politics and Place*, 1.

we can talk about medieval ideas of nationality),[291] and it is through this lens that we may be able to begin to consider why these two prophetic poems in the voice of Myrddin have been placed in this first 'historical' section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

3.2 The Welsh Tradition of Prophecy (Prophecy, History and Politics)

The link between history, prophecy, and politics is as marked in the Welsh tradition as it is elsewhere. In fact, the intrinsic nature of the link between prophecy and history in Wales is seen even in the similarity of the terms used for them in medieval Wales: *brut* (history) and *brud* (prophecy). The legendary history of Wales begins with the foundation of Britain by Brutus, Aeneas's grandson, and this is where the term *brut* originates from.[292] *Brut* is used in the medieval period to describe any text which purports to relate the history of Britain beginning with the history of Brutus (as in *Brut y Brenhinedd*). In Middle Welsh orthography, *brud* and *brut* are often indistinguishable and, moreover, the two terms were often used interchangeably.[293] Peredur Lynch argues that the connection between prophecy and history in the Welsh context is stronger still, stating 'nid oedd brud, ar yr un ystyr, ond dull rhethregol amgen o drosglwyddo brut.'[294] As we will see below, the way in which the *Cyfoesi,* in particular, narrates the history of Welsh rulers is one example of this.

Lynch notes that one of the most notable features of Welsh prophecy, from its beginnings in the tenth century to its demise in the seventeenth century, is its nationalistic manner and the way in which it interprets current events in the context of the age-old conflict between the Welsh (or British) and the English (or Anglo-Saxons).[295] In this sense, prophecy is as much about looking backwards as it professes itself to be about looking forwards. However, as Aled Llion Jones states, 'while the point of prophecy may be to present a vision of the future, its goal is also to influence the present.'[296] Prophecy in medieval Wales is,

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[291] For discussions on medieval concepts of nationhood see e.g. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, 2004); Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages* (New Jersey, 2006); Hirokazu Tsurushima (ed.), *Nations in Medieval Britain* (Donington, 2010).
[292] Peredur Lynch, *Proffwydoliaeth a'r Syniad o Genedl: Tafodion Bangor: Rhif 5* (Bangor, 2007), 18; '*brud,* in one sense, was just an alternative rhetorical method of transferring *brut*.'
[293] Aled Llion Jones, *Darogan: Prophecy, Lament and Absent Heroes in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff, 2013), 2. Interestingly, the other term often used for prophecy, *armes* (as in the tenth-century prophetic poem *Armes Prydein*) also has a dual meaning: 'calamity, destructions, tribulation, loss, hardship' (Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru Ar-Lein,<https://geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>).
[294] Peredur Lynch, *Proffwydoliaeth*, 27: '*brud*, in the same sense, was just another rhetorical method of transferring *brut*.'
[295] Ibid., 22.
[296] Aled Llion Jones, *Darogan*, xiii.

then, at the same time concerned with history, present day politics, and the future. It is a form of political propaganda frequently concerned with notions of national liberation and the re-instating of Welsh sovereignty over Wales, or indeed, the entire island of Britain.[297] The culmination of this is seen the figure of the *mab darogan* – the hero prophesised to rise up and lead the Welsh to victory over the oppressors. This hero – who is to re-instate Welsh sovereignty over all of its lost lands – is modelled on the legendary heroes of the past. A notable contemporary of Hopcyn ap Tomas, Owain Glyndŵr, becomes one such figure (although not until decades after his death). Prior to that, however, during his rebellions, Owain was actively engaged with prophecy as a political tool and as referenced previously, is evidenced to have consulted with Hopcyn ap Tomas, as 'maister of *Brud*', about the progression of his campaigns.[298]

The notion of the 'lost lands' of the Welsh is one of the central concerns in the medieval Welsh literary tradition and as such it must be regarded as being reflective of medieval Welsh thought. Peredur Lynch, following on from J. E. Caerwyn Williams, has persuasively argued that the notion of a distinct Welsh national identity had firm roots (at least amongst some) by the twelfth century, if not before.[299] The prophetic material of Wales provides us with evidence of this sense of nationality and Lynch states that it is 'rhan annatod o wead diwyllianol yr Oesoedd Canol.'[300] One of the main themes of this prophetic material is the Welsh and their fate as a nation. It is, of course, unlikely that the educated men of the fourteenth century, such as Hopcyn ap Tomas, really expected such prophecies to be fulfilled literally. However, as noted by Glanmor Williams, these prophecies did embody two basic beliefs about the history of the Welsh nation:

> Y cyntaf o'r rhain oedd eu bod yn disgyn o linach oedd yn un o'r rhai hynaf a mwyaf anrhydeddus, yr un a feddai fwyaf o hawl ar ynys Prydain ac un a rôi iddynt hwy fodolaeth arbennig fel cenedl. Yr ail oedd bod hyn oll yn peri iddynt wrthod derbyn eu trin fel llwythau o farbaraidd gorchfygedig ac eilradd; pwy bynnag oedd eu harglwyddi ar bapur, yr unig rai a gydnabyddent fel gwŷr a chanddynt hawl i ddwyn awdurdod uniongyrchol trostynt oedd rhai yn perthyn i'w cenedl hwy eu hunain neu rai a'u hunaniaeth eu hunain â hi.[301]

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[297] Ibid, xxiii.
[298] For a detailed discussion of Owain Glyndŵr's involvement with prophecy, see Helen Fulton, 'Owain Glyndŵr and the Uses of Prophecy', *Studia Celtica* 39 (2005), 105-12.
[299] Peredur Lynch, *Proffwydoliaeth*, 12.
[300] Ibid., 26; 'an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle Ages.'
[301] Glanmor Williams, 'Proffwydoliaeth, Prydyddiaeth a Pholitics yn yr Oesoedd Canol', *Taliesin* 16 (1968), 32-39 at 39; 'The first of these was that they were descended from a lineage that was one of the oldest and most noble, the one which it was said had the most right over the island of Britain and one that gave them a special existence as a nation. The second was that all this made them refuse to accept their being treated like conquered tribes of barbarians and second-rate [citizens]; whomsoever were their lords on paper, the only

This dual belief, that the Welsh were the original and true inhabitants of the island of Britain and that they should only accept a ruler of their own kind, is something of a driving force behind the Welsh prophecies. It goes hand in hand with the belief in a lost Golden Age that will be restored by a messianic hero (the promised deliverer, the *mab darogan*), and the concern with eschatology ('a commonplace of prophetic literature'[302]). Aled Llion Jones argues that there is a connection between prophecy and apocalypse even in the foundation legend of Britain and that 'apocalypse is refigured repeatedly in the literature as the legendary (and perhaps mythical) sovereignty of Britain is lost and re-lost.'[303] This itself is a continuation of a long written history where the island of Britain itself is 'built around stories of rupture and loss.'[304] All of these beliefs come together in the literature, and presumably also in the Welsh national consciousness, to create a kind of myth, which, as noted by Glanmor Williams, appears to 'clymu'r gorffennol, y presennol a'r dyfodol mewn undod cydgoriadol ac organig.'[305]

It is worth reiterating that this Welsh prophetic tradition is not isolated, rather it is in line with a wider cultural and intellectual European context.[306] In his overview of the medieval Welsh world-view, A.D. Carr notes that the tendency to regard the Welsh as 'a parochial and narrow-minded people with little awareness of, or interest in, a wider world', is entirely ignorant and misleading.[307] In reality the learned Welsh culture of Wales was in dialogue with, and informed by, the learned cultures of Europe and beyond.[308] There is plenty of evidence for this engagement with the wider literary world within *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (a manuscript which itself seems to be in dialogue with other Welsh manuscripts, containing texts which appear to be in dialogue with other texts), which includes numerous Welsh translations of popular medieval texts (some of which are the focus of the following chapter). However, it is possible that many of the learned men of Welsh society would have also been able to engage with these texts in their original languages, given the nature of

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ones that they recognised as men who had a right to exercise direct authority over them were those belonging to their own nation or those who had aligned themselves with her [i.e., Wales].'

[302] Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry*, 298.

[303] Aled Llion Jones, *Darogan*, 1.

[304] Lynn Staley, 'Britain, Idea of' in Siân Echard and Robert Ruse (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain* (Online, 2017), < https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb183>

[305] Glanmor Williams, 'Proffwydoliaeth', 34; 'tie the past, present, and the future in a cohesive and organic unity.'

[306] Aled Llion Jones, *Darogan*, xvi.

[307] A.D. Carr, 'Inside the Tent Looking Out: The Medieval Welsh World-View', in Robert Rees Davies & Geraint H. Jenkins (eds.), *From Medieval to Modern Wales: Historical Essays in Honour of Kenneth P. Morgan and Ralph A. Griffiths* (Cardiff, 2004), 30-44 at 30.

[308] See Natalia Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient* (Turnhout, 2015).

politics in Wales at this stage.[309] If this were the case, then the question of why it was felt necessary to create Welsh translations of such material arises – one argument might be that it was done in part to assert a place for the Welsh language and the Welsh people on the international intellectual stage – however I will return to this question at the end of this chapter.

3.3 *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*

Turning now to the poems themselves: as previously noted, these two prophetic poems, *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer*, and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*, are the only examples of poetry in the first prose half of Llyfr Coch Hergest. They are two of six poems known from medieval Welsh manuscripts which contain legendary material about the sixth-century character Myrddin;[310] a figure who was taken up by Geoffrey of Monmouth and transformed into Merlin in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and then subsequently drawn into the orbit of Arthurian literature.[311] Although they are framed within this older tradition, it is not easy to date these poems with any accuracy, given that the nature of prophetic verse such as this is that it may be added to or updated each time it is copied in to a new manuscript, and it is likely that there were several stages of composition (especially in the case of *Cyfoesi Myrddin*). However, general consensus agrees that composition for both *Cyfoesi Myrddin* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin* as we have them is no later than the twelfth century with no part of the poems being earlier than the ninth, when the *englyn* tradition commenced.[312]

Cyfoesi Myrddin is a long poem, consisting of some 130 stanzas in irregular *englyn* form (mostly of three lines, but with some also having four lines) and it seems to be the more complex of the two in that it appears to have been drawn from several sources.[313] The poem spans a time-frame of six or seven centuries: it begins with the overlordship of *Yr Hen*

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[309] A.D. Carr, 'Inside the Tent', 42. For a discussion on multilingualism in medieval Wales see Paul Russell, 'Bilingualisms and multilingualisms in medieval Wales: evidence and inference', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmorodorion*, 25 (2019), 7–22

[310] Of the others, three are found in the Black Book of Carmarthen: *Afallenau, Hoianau, Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*; the final one is *Perian Faban*, found in NLW MS Peniarth 50. It is worth noting also that there is an earlier version of *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin* in NLW MS Peniarth 12 and a portion of *Cyfoesi Myrddin* in NLW MS Peniarth 3.

[311] An exciting new AHRC funded project to create an online edition and translation of the entire corpus of Welsh Myrddin/Merlin poetry up to 1800 has just begun at the University of Cardiff, led by Dylan Foster Evans. More information on the project can be found here: <https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=AH%2FW000717%2F1> (accessed on 03/08/22).

[312] Alfred Owen Hughes Jarman, 'The Merlin Legend', 119; Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition*, 38-41.

[313] Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry*, 291.

Ogledd (the region of the Old North) and then traces the lineage of Maelgwn of Gwynedd to the sons of Rhodri Molwynog and then from Merfyn Frych to Hywel Dda before becoming markedly more vague, naming rulers who cannot be identified and whose descriptions appear largely to be prophetic convention.[314] This information is delivered through the prophetic lens in the form of a conversation between Myrddin and his sister Gwenddydd, following the structure of an uninformed character asking questions of an informed one, which is common elsewhere in Celtic tradition.[315] The poem ends with the two commending one another to God. Immediately following *Cyfoesi Myrddin* in Llyfr Coch Hergest is the other poem under consideration here, *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*, which purports to be prophecy spoken by Myrddin from the grave. This poem is much shorter, consisting of only 28 *englynion*, and the prophetic material is largely vague and mostly seems to refer to twelfth-century Norman kings, while much of the rest of the poem is concerned with eschatology.[316] That being said, there are still some references in the first half of the poem to other Welsh traditions, the texts of which also appear in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as well as the use of certain poetic phrases and techniques which are common elsewhere in the Welsh poetic corpus.

3.4 *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer*: Summary

The *Cyfoesi* can be roughly divided in to nine sections of irregular length, grouped by content rather than form. Although there is no real incremental repetition in this poem, there are several repeated phrases which run through approximately the first two thirds of the poem – these are in the *englynion* in the voice of Gwenddydd and give the poem its question and answer structure: '*kyuarchaf y'm clotle6 llalla6c / Anvynna6c […]*' (I ask my renowned lord / eminent in […]) and '*Kyfarchaf y'm […] vra6t*' (I ask my […] brother), with various praises and characteristics interspersed throughout.

[314] For detailed discussion see: M.E. Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh with English Parallels* (Cardiff, 1937), 98; Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition***,** 33-41.
[315] Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry*, 291. E.g. in a Welsh context: *Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin*; *Ymddiddan Arthur a'r Eryr*; and in an Irish context: *Acallam na Senorach*; *Immacallam in Dá Thuarad.* For more on this dialogue see e.g. Brynley F. Roberts, 'Rhai o Gerddi Ymddiddan Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin' in Rachel Bromwich and R. Brinley Jones, *Astudiaethau ar yr Hengerdd* (Cardiff, 1978), 281-352; Joseph Falaky Nagy, 'Close Encounters of the Traditional Kind in Medieval Irish Literature', Patrick K. Ford (ed.), *Celtic Folklore and Christianity: Studies in Memory of William W. Heist*, (Santa Barbara, 1983) 129–149; Thomas O. Clancy, 'Saint and fool: the image and function of Cummine Fota and Comgan Mac Da Cherda in early Irish Literature' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1991) 179-185.
[316] For detailed discussion see: Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh*, 101-103; Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition***,** 91-96.

The poem begins with the first section, *englynion* 1-3, establishing the identity of the two voices of the poem and the authority of Myrddin's prophecies through his connection with *Yr Hen Ogledd*:

Deuthun i attat y atraϭd ygnadaeth
y Gogled y gennyf:
Syϭ pob tut traethϭyt ϭrthyf.

Yr gϭeith Arderyd ac Erydon, Gwendyd,
A'r meint dybyd arnaf,
Eneichant kyued, kwd af?

Kyfarchaf y'm llallogan Vyrdin,
Gϭr doeth, darogenyd,
Kan hepcoryd ohonaf;
Pa ri a'n bi ganthaϭ?[317]

This early mention of Arfderydd – the battle where Myrddin famously went mad following the death of his patron, Gwenddoleu, ran off into the woods and gained his clairvoyance – along with the naming of both Myrddin and Gwenddydd serve to firmly place the poem in the orbit of the Myrddin tradition; and this first *englyn* in the voice of Gwenddydd clearly signposts that the forthcoming poem is prophetic in nature. Manon Bonner Jenkins suggested that Gwenddydd's use of the term '*llallogan*' to greet her brother here (and through the first two thirds of the poem) seems to be the Welsh equivalent of the Scottish 'Lailoken', the prophetic 'wild man of the woods' that, as noted above, A.O.H. Jarman saw as being particularly closely linked with Myrddin.[318]

Englynion 4-40 make up the long second section which is concerned with tracing the lineage of Welsh kingship from the early sixth century down to the ninth, beginning with the legendary heroes of the past and legitimising the line of Maelgwn of Gwynedd and then Hywel Dda through their association with these earlier rulers. There is a particularly high correlation in terms of the characters and events referenced in this section of the poem which are also recorded elsewhere in texts such as the *Trioedd,* the Harleian Genealogies, and *Historia Brittonum.* This section begins with Cadafael in *englyn* 4, who is the possibly mid-seventh century ruler of Gwynedd who came between Cadwallon and Cadwaladr and who is actually out of place chronologically here. Cadafael is mentioned in the *Trioedd* as one of

[317] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 48, lines 1-10; 'I have come to you to narrate the sovereignty / of the North that I have / the wisdom of every nation has been related to me / Since the Battle of Arfderydd and Eryddon, Gwenddydd, / And all that is want to come to me / Provider and fellow-banqueter, where will I go? / I ask my lord Myrddin / wise man, prophet, / since he parts with me / what king will be with us according to him?'
[318] Ibid., 35.

the 'Three Kings who were (sprung from) villeins' and is possibly also mentioned in §64 and §65 of *Historia Brittonum* (Catgabail).[319] After this out of sequence mention of Cadafael the poem moves into the territory of the legendary rulers of *Yr Hen Ogledd* beginning with several references to Rhydderch Hael in *englynion* 4-9. One of the most well-known late-sixth century rulers of the northern Britons, Rhydderch appears in: *Historia Brittonum* §64 (alongside Urien, Gwallawc, and Morgant – two of which appear in the *Cyfoesi* below);[320] in *Bonedd Gwŷr y Gogledd* (the Lineage of the Men of the North) – which traces the pedigree of the sixth century rulers of *yr Hen Ogledd* back to the fourth-century Coel Hen (King Cole);[321] and in the *Trioedd* as one of the 'Three Generous (Noble/Victorious) Men of the Island of Britain'.[322] Rhydderch also appears elsewhere in the Myrddin tradition, in the *Afallenau, Hoianau* and *Perian Faban,* where Myrddin appears to be hiding from him in fear. Following Rhydderch in *englynion* 10 and 12 is Myrddin's patron Gwenddoleu, another figure who features in the *Afallenau, Hoianau* and *Perian Faban* as well as in *Bonedd Gwŷr y Gogledd* and the *Trioedd*.[323] Appearing alongside Gwenddoleu in *englynion* 10 and 11 is Morgant Fawr fab Sadyrnin; possibly the above-noted Morgant who appears in *Historia Brittonum*.[324] Following on from Morgant in *englynion* 12 and 13 is Urien, the late sixth-century ruler of Rheged and another renowned figure in the Welsh tradition, appearing in *Historia Brittonum* as noted above, in several of the *Trioedd,* and perhaps most famously in a series of panegyric poems addressed to him and his son Owain in the Book of Taliesin (NLW MS Peniarth 2) and a cycle of *englynion* from perhaps the tenth century which is found in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*.[325]

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[319] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Triads of the Island of Britain* (Fourth Edition, Cardiff, 2014), Triad 68, p. 189; Giles, J.A. (trans.) Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, accessed online via Project Gutenberg <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1972/1972-h/1972-h.htm> on 13/07/2022

[320] Ibid.

[321] This earliest surviving attestation of this text is in NLW MS Peniarth 45 an edition of which can be found in Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* Appendix II, 256-257. A version also appears in Oxford Jesus College MS 20, a contemporary manuscript to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* which amongst other things also contains a version of *Owain, Ymborth yr Enaid,* and *Saith Doethion Rhufain.*

[322] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* Triad 2, p.5; Rhydderch Hael is also referenced in Triads 43 ('Three Steeds of Burden (Draft Horses) of the Island of Britain') and 54 ('Three Violent (reckless, costly) Ravagings of the Island of Britain') pp. 113, 153; see pp 493-495 for a full overview of the sources for Rhydderch Hael. Notably he also appears in Jocelyn's *Vita Kentigerni,* as do several others in the *Cyfoesi,* to be highlighted below.

[323] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* Triads 6 ('Three Bull-Protectors (i.e. 'Armed Warriors') of the Island of Britain'), 29, ('Three Faithful War-Bands of the Island of Britain') and 32 ('Three Men who performed the Three Fortunate Slaughters') pp. 12, 62 and 73.

[324] Rachel Bromwich notes that there is in Jocelyn's *Vita Kentigerni* a '*Morken'* who may be identified as the same *Morgant* referenced here, (*Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* 455). Given that Rhydderch also appears in the *Vita,* along with Lailoken, this does not seem an outlandish suggestion.

[325] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* Triads 6 (noted above), 25 ('Three Battle-Rulers of the Island of Britain'), 33 ('Three Unfortunate Slaughters of the Island of Britain') and 70 ('Three Fair (holy, Blessed) Womb Burdens of the Island of Britain'), pp. 48, 75,and 195; for an overview of sources for Urien see 508-512. For the panegyric poems addressed to Urien and Owain see Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry.*

The prophesised rulers then move into the lineage of Maelgwn Hir, also known as Malegwn Gwynedd, the early sixth-century ruler of Gwynedd referred to by Gildas in *De Excidio Britanniae* as Maglocunas. In §62 of *Historia Brittonum* it is claimed that Maelgwn's dynasty was formed when his great grandfather Cunedda came to Wales from *Manau Guotodin* in the north.[326] As such Maelgwn provides the figure through which the unbroken link between the rulers of Gwynedd at the time of the poem's composition and those of *yr Hen Ogledd* is expressed. The subsequent eighteen *englynion* trace the lineage of Maelgwn, closely following that as it is set out in the Harleian Genealogies:[327] Rhun ap Maelgwn, Beli ap Rhun, Iago ap Beli, Cadfan ap Iago, Cadwallon ap Cadfan, Cadwaladr ap Cadwallon, Idwal ap Cadwallon, Howel ap Cadwal (Cadwal here possibly a mistake for Cadwaladr, making Howel Idwal's brother),[328] Rhodri ap Idwal (Rhodri Molwynog), and finally Cynan ap Rhodri.[329] This particular genealogy ends here and we are briefly reminded of the voice of the speaker and the setting of the poem as part of the Myrddin corpus in the line '*O leas Gwendoleu yg gwaetfreu Arderyd'*,[330] before picking up the lineage of '*Meruin Vrych o dir Manaϭ*'.[331] Manon Bonner Jenkins suggests that Manaw here should be interpreted as a reference to *yr Hen Ogledd* as:

> Merfyn's descendants were naturally anxious to stress links with the heroic British past, as they were not of the direct male line of Maelgwn Gwynedd, which had come to an end with the sons of Rhodi Molwynog; such a prophecy as this would clearly also have found favour with them, sanctioning as it does the change of dynasties.[332]

The prophesised rule of Merfyn Frych introduces a short genealogy tracing just four generations: Merfyn Frych, Rhodri Mawr, Anarawd, and culminating with Hywel Dda (the son of Anarawd's brother Cadell).[333] That the poem's identifiable rulers end with Hywel

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Urien's son Owain is a central character in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* which occurs in this same section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

[326] Giles, J.A. (trans.) Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, accessed online via Project Gutenberg <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1972/1972-h/1972-h.htm> on 13/07/2022; See Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, 428-432 for a detailed discussion of this legendary/historical figure. Maelgwn also appears in various Saints Lives, including *Vita Kentigerni*.

[327] The Harleian Genealogies being those in BL Harley MS 3859, the manuscript dates to the early-twelfth century. The genealogies in Oxford Jesus College MS 20 (a close contemporary of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*) share some of the same material as the Harleian Genealogies, including that of Rhodri Molwynog descending from Maelgwn Gwynedd: *'Rodri m Meruyn m Ethellt merch Cynan tintaethϭy m Rodri molϭynaϭc m Idwal Iϭrch m Kadwaladyr vendigeit m Katwallaϭn m Kadϭgaϭn m Iago m Beli m Run hir m Maelgϭn gϭyned m Kadwallaϭn llaϭhir m Einyaϭn yrth m Kuneda wledic*.' (folios 37v-38r), which is prophesised here.

[328] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 76.

[329] Ibid., 49-50.

[330] Ibid., 50; 'Since Gwenddoleu was killed in the bloody battle of Arfderydd'.

[331] Ibid.; 'Merfyn Frych from the land of Manaw'.

[332] Ibid., 77.

[333] Ibid., 50-51. See John Davies *A History of Wales* (London, 1993) 82-83 for an illustrated genealogy of 'The Royal Houses of Wales 400-1400'; Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons 350-104* (Oxford, 2013) contains a table of the regnal list presented in the *Cyfoesi* at page 338.

Dda suggests that (this section at least) was originally composed during his reign in the ninth century.

The *Cyfoesi* then becomes necessarily more vague in the third section (*englynion* 40-68), having now surpassed the likely period of original compilation. Myrddin continues to prophesise forthcoming rulers; some of these are no more than imprecise descriptors ('*brehyryeit*', '*Gɔr pellennic o dramyr*', '*Brenhin llew llaɔdiwreid'*),[334] some (betraying later additions to the poem) are possibly identifiable with twelfth-century rulers ('*Gruffyd y enɔ*', '*Gwedy Gruffud, Gɔyn Gɔarther*'),[335] and others sound like they could be real names but are prophetic stock phrases ('*Kynan y Kɔn*', '*Seruen Wyn*', '*mackɔy deu hanner*').[336] There is in this section also a reference to Latinate learning in the lines '*Kyfarchaf y'm diagro uraɔt / A darllewys llyur Cado*';[337] the *Catonis Disticha*, a Latin collection of proverbs about wisdom and morality, were well-known in medieval Wales and Manon Bonner Jenkins notes that there are a number of Welsh versions surviving from c.1300 onwards.[338] Cato is referred to in the *Trioedd* alongside Sibli Doeth as one of the 'Three People who received the Wisdom of Adam',[339] so the reference sits well in context here given that *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth* is one of the prophetic/wisdom texts that are in this section of the manuscript, appearing immediately before the *Cyfoesi* in folios 139r-141r.

The remaining sections of the *Cyfoesi* are less dense in their content and lend themselves to easer summation. The fourth section, *englynion* 69-79, are specifically concerned with England and '*Lloegyr*' is mentioned by name in every other *englyn* for eight out of the eleven *englynion* in this section.[340] Inevitably, this focus on England is paired with the common prophetic hope that the Welsh, led by the *mab darogan* (here, as so often elsewhere, given the name Owain), will rise up and overthrow the English king, regaining their lands '*hyt Lundein*'.[341] The fifth section, *englynion* 80-90, makes a return to the legendary heroes of the earlier period, prophesising the rule of Beli.[342] This section contains

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[334] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition*, 51-52, lines 136, 143, 190; 'noblemen', 'a far-travelled man from afar', 'A lion-king [with an] uprooting hand'.
[335] Ibid., 52, lines 170, 178; 'Gruffudd his name', 'After Gruffudd, Gwyn Gwarther'. Manon Bonner Jenkins suggests these are Gruffudd ap Cynan (d.1137) and his son Owain Gwynedd (d.1170), 80-81.
[336] *Ibid.*, 51, 52, lines 139, 149, 197; 'Cynan of the dogs'; Serfen the blessed', 'the lord of two halves'. Manon Bonner Jenkins highlights that names similar to *Seruen* appear in genealogies such as *Bonedd Gwŷr y Gogledd* and that a reference to a *Mác Dá Leithi* provides a striking parallel to *mackɔy deu hanner* in the Irish prophecy *Baile in Scáil*, 80, 82.
[337] Ibid., 53, lines 204-205; 'I ask my merry brother / who has read the book of Cato'.
[338] Ibid., 82.
[339] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, Triad 49, page 135.
[340] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition*, 53, lines 215, 222, 227, 235.
[341] Ibid, 53, line 240; 'as far as London'.
[342] Ibid., 54, line 263; see R. Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, 288-289 for discussion of this name and the legendary status attached to it.

a short series of *englynion* beginning '*Kyuarchaf y'm ehalaeth vra6t / a welais yn ueduaeth*';[343] the reference to *meddfaeth,* mead-nourished, here also harks back to the earlier panegyric poetry which sees warriors contractually bound to fight for their rulers through the institution of the mead feast which was an essential component of the earlier client-patron relationships that governed society.[344] The sixth section, *englynion* 71-103, once again prophesises the rule of Cadwaladr who by this section of the poem has evolved from the late-seventh-century ruler of Gwynedd noted earlier in line 81 into being a legendary hero and *mab darogan.*[345] The short seventh section, *englynion* 104-107, follow on from Cadwaladr with his son Cyndaf and then provide a transition into the eighth section, *englynion* 108-121, where we see a shift away from the formulaic question and answer structure and into a more elegiac section of poetry concerned with eschatology. There is prophesised a flood to '*orffen byt*',[346] the heavens will fall to the earth ('*dyg6ydho nef ar lawr*'),[347] '*Na byd pennaeth byth wedi*',[348] and reference is made to Judgement Day.[349] The *Cyfoesi* then ends with the ninth section, *englynion* 122-130, where Myrddin and Gwenddydd commend one another to God, this is not unexpected given the Christian references elsewhere in the poem.

3.5 *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd: Summary*

The much shorter *Gwasgargerdd* can be roughly divided into six distinct sections, grouped together either by a series of incremental repetition or by thematic link, or both. The first section, *englynion* 1-5 are connected by their association with the imagined *Hen Ogledd,* similarly to the opening of the *Cyfoesi.* The poem begins with a declaration of the location and identity of the speaker ('*Gwr a leueir yn y bed*'; '*Myrdin y6 vy en6, uab Moruryn*').[350] Myrddin fab Morfryn is named as one of the three skilful bards at Arthur's court in the

[343] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition*, 54, lines 248-249, 254-255, 259-260; 'I ask my magnanimous brother / who I saw mead-nourished'. This same refrain occurs also earlier in lines192-193 and later in lines 290-291, and the distance between those *englynion* and the three in this section could indicate places where additions have been made to the poem.
[344] See the entry for '*meddfaeth'* in Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru for examples of its use in the poetry of the *Cynfeirdd* (Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru Ar-Lein,<https://geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>). I have discussed the role of the mead feast in the poetry from the *Gogynfeirdd* period at length in my unpublished MLitt dissertation 'The Image of the Hall in Medieval Welsh Poetry' (University of Glasgow, 2016).
[345] See Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* 298-299 for discussion on why Cadwaladr gained this kind of legendary 'promised deliverer' status.
[346] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition*, 56, line 337; 'end the world'.
[347] Ibid., line 343.
[348] Ibid., line 358; 'There will be no leader ever afterwards.'
[349] Ibid., 57, line 365 '*G6enn ffaw6 hyt Vra6t yr dir*'; 'Splendid fate until Judgement Day is certain'.
[350] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition,* 98, lines 1 and 6; 'A man speaks from the grave'; 'Myrddin is my name, son of Morfryn'.

Trioedd, along with Myrddin fab Emrys and Taliesin.[351] This demonstrates the confusion in the Myrddin tradition in Wales even in the early period, as well as the link between Myrddin and Taliesin (discussed further below). The incremental repetition of '*Eryueis i win*' in the fourth and fifth *englynion* further conjure imagery associated with the mead feast of the earlier period of the *Hen Ogledd*, and in using this phrase common to much of the earlier poetry, the form and content of that earlier poetry and the pre-conquest period that it represents is echoed here;[352] this serves to situate the beginning of the poem in that imagined past and in doing so adds weight to the authority of the voice of Myrddin and to the forthcoming prophecies. There is in line 10 the first reference to a *Mab Darogan* type figure ('*Pan del gɷr gɷrthryn y ar olwyn du*'),[353] and reference is made to the burial place of the head of Bendigeidfran, as is also found in the second branch of the *Mabinogi* ('*Gɷynvryn*'),[354] thus further strengthening the connection with the legendary past in the opening of the *Gwasgargerdd.* The fifth and final *englyn* of this section seems to express a similar sentiment to the one written by Hywel Fychan in the Philadelphia colophon of the Welsh as long suffering in their own land: '*Hir neuet, giwet Gymry*'.[355]

The second section of the poem (*englynion* 6-9) is defined by the incremental repetition of 'Pan dyuo' and apparent references to a series of English kings.[356] These references are suitably vague and appear in conjunction with some possible place names, which are themselves suitably vague having the potential to be read as common nouns or as place names which then provide context for the identification of the English kings in this section. This is of course an intentional prophetic technique allowing for the continued re-interpretation of the prophecy. The English kings referenced here are: '*Coch Normandi*', '*y Brych Cadarn*', '*Henri*' and '*y Gɷynn Gɷann*',[357] and the suggestions that have been made about the identification of these men are as follows. Margaret Enid Griffiths proposed that when taken along with the reference to '*Aber Hodni*' the *Coch Normandi* could be William

[351] Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, Triad 87, p. 228.
[352] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition,* 98, lines 4 and 7; 'Since I drank wine.' ('Since' here with an implied causality rather than a temporal meaning e.g. since I drank wine with my lords I am indebted to them) As noted above, there are numerous poems from the *Cynfeirdd* and *Gogynfeirdd* period which employ the poetic imagery of the host and the bards drinking wine or mead with their lords, always splendid in battle, the earliest example of this being the *Gododdin*. This poetic device was in use all the way through the poetry of the medieval period in Wales and I have discussed this elsewhere.
[353] Manon Bonner Jenkins, *Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition,* 98, line 10; 'When a rebellious man comes on a black steed'.
[354] Ibid., line 12; Gwynfryn, the legendary site of the burial of Bendigeidfran's head in the fourth branch of the Mabinogi, is located in London and there is perhaps something interesting to be said about the situation of such important sites in the Welsh legendary past with what becomes the centre for power for the English rule over Wales in a post-Edwardian conquest context.
[355] Ibid., line 14; 'Long in need the people of Wales'.
[356] Ibid., lines 18, 22, 26, 29; 'When the […] will come'.
[357] Ibid.

Rufus;[358] Manon Bonner Jenkins, drawing on E. Phillimore and Gerald of Wales, suggests that if the '*Ryt Bengarn*' of line 23 refers to the crossing place of Pengarn stream near what is now Newport then the *Brych Cadarn* ('strong freckled one') could be identified as Henry II;[359] *Henri,* though a commonly used name in medieval Welsh prophecy, could here be identified as Henry I when taken with '*Mur Kastell'* from line 26, for which Jenkins notes both Phillimore and Griffiths saw as a reference to Henry I's expedition 'against Owain ap Cadwgan and Gruffydd ap Cynan in a place named in [*Bryt y Tywysogion*] as Mur Castell, a fortress near Trawsfynydd in modern Gwynedd later known as Tomen y Mur'[360]; finally, Griffiths suggested that *Gwyn Gwan* could be a reference to the purportedly weak King Stephen, who ruled in between Henry I and Henry II.[361]

The third section consists of three *englynion* (9-12) which appear to be simple general prophetic convention, including references to '*Brenhin gоas*',[362] and '*Mab a byd uaоr y urdas*',[363] both common prophetic ideals and once more bringing in the *Mab Darogan.* This short section is followed by the longest section of *englynion* linked by incremental repetition (13-19) which also appears to be mainly prophetic stock material relating to eschatology. This group of *englynion* are linked by the phrase '*Byt a uyd*'[364] and the concerns featured in this section of the *Gwasgargerdd* include: sexual immorality of women ('*Yd bydant gоragedeint llaes vuches*'); death and disease amongst the young ('*Pallant ieueinc rac adwyt*'); nature being out of sync with itself ('*Mei marо cogeu rac annоyt*', '*Byt a uyd heb wynt heb laо*'); rising taxes and costs of living ('*Heb weth maоr ny chaffaоr crys*'); heresy, an abandonment of religion and a prevalence of deceit ('*Byо mall a gоall ar lannev / Torredaоd geir a chreireu*'); vanity ('*byd a uyd bryt оrth dillat*'); destitution amongst poets ('*Gwaclaо bard*'); and legal challenges to the right of the Welsh ('*Kyghaоs arglоyd, maer chiuiat*').[365] This kind of apocalyptic vision of the future is common in prophecy and these *englynion* betray a concern for all the same kinds of problems as much other medieval prophetic literature.

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[358] Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh,* 101.
[359] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 108.
[360] Ibid, 9. These places also make an appearance in the Fourth Branch of the *Mabinogi.*
[361] Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh,* 102.
[362] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 98, line 34; 'a kingly youth', the exact same collocation of which occurs in the *Cyfoesi,* lines 189-190.
[363] Ibid, line 35; 'There will be a youth, great his dignity'.
[364] Ibid, 99, lines 41, 44, 47, 50 53, 58, 62; 'There will come an age'.
[365] Ibid, lines 42; 'women will be loose', 48; 'youths will weaken before death', 49; 'cuckoos will die of cold in May', 62; 'there will come an age without wind, without rain', 52; 'without great wealth a shirt will not be gotten', 54-55 'corruption will live, negligence of churches / pledges and relics will be broken', 58; 'an age will come with disposition for garments', 60 'poets will be empty handed', 59 'Lord [will be] advocate, wanderer [will be] steward'.

Following this in the fifth section of the *Gwasgargerdd* is another set of three *englynion* (20-22) which do not contain much more than generic prophetic convention, similar to the three mentioned above. These seem to serve to link the previous section with the one that follows by facilitating a change in topic from eschatology to prophesised battles against the English. The sixth and final section (*englynion* 23-27) make reference once more to possible place names, however as above these are suitably vague as such that they could be located to numerous places in Wales: '*aber Sor*', '*aber dǒfr*', '*<B>yrri*', '*aber Ydon*' (with the exception of '*Mon'* which is undoubtedly Anglesey).[366] These ambiguously located battles are to be hard won with numerous losses though ultimately culminating in a Welsh win over the English. In the final *englyn* (28) the poem closes with a reference to two other characters from the Myrddin tradition, Gwaessawc and Gwenddydd, effectively bookending the poem and bringing back to the forefront of the reader/listener's mind that this is the voice of Myrddin.

3.6 Manuscript Context and Function of the Myrddin Poems

If we are to look at the immediate manuscript context of *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd* we see that they are preceded by *Saith Doethion Rhufain, Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth* and are then followed by two very short texts beginning '*Hyn a dywawd seit awstin am dewder y byd*' and '*Hyn a dywawd yr eneid*' and then '*Proffwydoliaeth Yr Eryr yng Nghaer Septon*'. It is fairly obvious at first glance that although the Myrddin poems are separated from the other prophetic poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* they do appear in what is more or less a block of prophetic prose material. The following section interrogates the manuscript context of the two Myrddin poems: beginning with a brief discussion of the above-named texts; followed by a consideration of the manuscript contexts of these two poems in other manuscripts; and ending with a brief comparison with prophetic poems in the voice of Taliesin in order to further highlight the way in which the two Myrddin poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* are functioning as primarily historical or knowledgeable texts.

Saith Doethion Rhufain is the Welsh adaptation of the international *Seven Sages of Rome* narrative tradition, which has its roots in the East and reached Europe by the end of

[366] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 99, lines 74, 80, 83, 86, 77.

the twelfth century.[367] The Welsh version is adapted from the Old French *Sept Sages de Rome*, version A, and is 'severely condensed compared with the French.'[368] *Saith Doethion Rhufain* consists of fifteen internal tales which sit inside the frame tale wherein the second wife of a widowed Roman Emperor and the Emperor's seven tutors, the Seven Sages, take turns telling the Emperor stories intended to sway his judgement regarding the execution of his son, who the Empress has accused of rape. Although there is not a thematic connection between this text and those that follow it in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in terms of dreams or prophecy, they are linked in that they are stories about emperors (Arthur is called *ymherawdwr* – emperor – in *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*), and as well as that, the structure of the text as a frame tale containing internal tales is consistent with the structure of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*. *Saith Doethion Rhufain* sits nicely in its manuscript context in another significant way too; following on from the bulk of the Charlemagne material in *Llyfr Coch* Hergest and from Walter of Henley's text on husbandry, these texts form a block of Welsh adaptations of texts written originally in French. It is unsurprising that there should be a strong representation of material which originated in France in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, given that the manuscript was constructed approximately in the middle of the Hundred Years War (1337-1453), during which time there was a great degree of interaction between Wales and France, with Welsh mercenaries fighting on both sides of the conflict. This intersection of cultures undoubtedly contributed to a literary cross-pollination in the courts of both Wales and France; which can be seen in microcosm in this small section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (from *Saith Doethion Rhufain* to *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*) where either patron or scribe has chosen to copy in a 'native' Welsh text after one that has its origins in France. This intersection of Welsh and French culture also occurs later on in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and this will be further explored in the following chapter on popular European narrative and 'native' tales in the manuscript.

Breuddwyd Rhonabwy is an unusual text (exceptional in that it survives only in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*) and has been the subject of much scholarly attention: Edgar M. Slotkin – building on Dafydd Glyn Jones's argument that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* is a satire on medieval dream literature – noted that although it was unlike other texts of its type, it was

[367] For an overview of the history of this tale and its journey to Europe see Carys Garscadden, '*Chwedleu Seith Doethion Rufein*: A Single Manuscript Edition of the Middle Welsh Text of the *Seven Sages of Rome*, from Oxford, Jesus College Manuscript 20, Including Translation and Notes' (unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Reading, 2021), 13-18.

[368] Carys Garscadden, '*Chwedleu Seith Doethion Rufein,* the Middle Welsh *Les Sept Sages de Rome*: An Inadequate Rendering or a New Perspective on This Internationally Popular Tale', *Narrative Culture*, Vol 7 No. 2 (2020), 198-215, at 202.

quite like an actual dream in its lack of narrative structure; argued that the dream sequence, which is clearly informed by the wider tradition, in fact runs backwards; and that the excessive descriptions in the tale serve to foreground the author's ability to describe, whilst hiding the narrative.[369] Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan stated that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* seems to represent a new phenomenon of a single-author text, composed and written down, rather than coming from an originally oral tradition.[370] Mattieu Boyd – building on John Bollard's suggestion that there are similarities between *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and the *Araithau Pros* of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – has read the tale as a mnemonic device which 'serves as a repository of Arthurian lore.'[371]

The most important discussion of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* for our purposes, however, is that of Catherine McKenna in an article entitled ''What Dreams May Come Must Give Us Pause': *Breudwyt Ronabwy* and the Red Book of Hergest'. McKenna reads *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* in its manuscript context, noting that it reflects Hopcyn's interest in the 'paired preoccupations' of *brud* (prophecy) and *brut* (history), and that within this lies the key to a better understanding of the tale.[372] She asserts that the codicological context of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* connects the tale with 'history with native and international learned traditions, and most particularly and closely with arcane modes of knowledge such as vision and prophecy' and that we ought to read *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* as a contribution to the popular medieval interest in dreams and dream literature (dream-visions as well as theory and practical guides for dream interpretation).[373] Furthermore, McKenna argues that the tale is self-consciously a literary text (building on the suggestions of some of the works cited above) and that it was intended to be read alongside, or informed by, other learned material of the period which was known in Wales at the time of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*'s construction, such as the work of the dream theorist Macrobius and the *Somniale Danielis,* a well-known manual of dream interpretation.[374] She cites the text's epilogue – which states that nobody could ever come to know the tale without having seen it written down - as evidence which

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[369] Dafydd Glyn Jones, 'Breuddwyd Rhonabwy' in Geraint Bowen (ed.) *Y Traddodiad Rhyddiaith yn yr Oesau Canol* (Llandysul, 1974), 176-195.; Edgar M. Slotkin, 'The Fabula, Story, and text of *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*' in *CMCS* 18 (1989), 89-111.
[370] Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, 'Breuddwyd Rhonabwy and Later Arthurian Literature', in Rachel Bromwich, Alfred Owen Hughes Jarman & Brynley F. Roberts (eds.), *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff, 1991), 183-28.
[371] John Bollard, 'Traddodiad a Dychan yn Breuddwyd Rhonabwy', *Llên Cymru* 13 (1985), 155-163; Mattieu Boyd, 'Breuddwyd Rhonabwy and Memoria', in *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* vol.28 (2008), 9-13 (quote at 12).
[372] Catherine McKenna, ''What Dreams May Come Must Give Us Pause': *Breudwyt Ronabwy* and the Red Book of Hergest', in *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 58 (2009), 69-99 at 70.
[373] Ibid., 74.
[374] Ibid., 80.

betrays the text's literariness and concludes that Hywel Fychan and Hopcyn ap Tomas must have regarded *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* as fitting in to, or resonating with, this wider literary world of history, arcane modes of knowledge and international learned traditions and that this is demonstrated by the text's positioning in the manuscript.[375]

I would argue that there are two key similarities between what McKenna discusses here with regards *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and the two Myrddin poems which follow soon after this text in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. Firstly, just as *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* can be seen as the Welsh contribution to the medieval interest in dream-literature, the Myrddin poems should be considered as part of the Welsh contribution to the medieval interest in political prophecy. In fact, the Welsh Myrddin poems can be seen in a not insignificant way as being the ultimate point of origin for much of the European political prophetic tradition, given that Geoffrey of Monmouth was inspired by Welsh source material in his creation of the character of Merlin and that the *Prophetiae Merlini* were then widely circulated throughout Europe both in Latin and in vernacular translation.[376] Secondly, McKenna's argument that *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* is a self-consciously literary text also applies to the two Myrddin poems, and the *Cyfoesi* in particular, given the way that as we have seen, that texts makes reference to numerous characters and events which also appear in other medieval Welsh texts, many of them later on in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and many in other contemporary or near-contemporary manuscripts. The two Myrddin poems, and the *Cyfoesi* in particular, could be cross-referenced with these other texts and manuscripts and it seems to me that just as McKenna suggests that Hopcyn and Hywel saw *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* as being in a kind of dialogue with wider international traditions about history and knowledge, it could be argued that patron and scribe regarded the Myrddin poems as performing the same function in a native Welsh context.

Following *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*, the Middle Welsh version of the Tiburtine Sibyl, of which there are two distinct translations, one in NLW MS Peniarth 14 and the other in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.[377] In this text, the Sibyl explains the prophecy contained within a dream had by one hundred Roman senators about nine suns appearing in the sky: the suns represent the ages of man, gradually descending further into sin and the wars and natural disasters that

[375] Ibid., 96.
[376] Helen Fulton, *Welsh Prophecy and English Politics*, 6-7.
[377] See Nely van Seventer's unpublished PhD Thesis, 'The Welsh Tiburtina: One Text, Two Translations' (Aberystwyth University, 2019) for a detailed study of the two Welsh versions along with a line-by-line comparison of the Welsh translations with the Latin source.

occur as a consequence of this; the birth, life, and death of Christ are described in detail; then follows the succession of Western Emperors; the rise and overthrowing of the antichrist; and finally the Judgement Day is prophesised.[378] There is an obvious thematic connection between *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy* and *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*, in that the narrative in both is told through dreams (and in fact the Peniarth 14 version of the text is titled *Breuddwyd Sibli*).[379] That the two Myrddin poems immediately follow *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth* is noteworthy; Geoffrey of Monmouth links the prophecies of Sibyl with those of Merlin in the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, and this connection is maintained by 'subsequent authors and copyists – in Wales and elsewhere.'[380] In all likelihood, Hopcyn ap Tomas and/or Hywel Fychan would have been aware of the connection between these two prophetic figures in Galfridian tradition and this may have been part of the impetus for the two Myrddin poems' placement in the manuscript at this point. Indeed, Marged Haycock has suggested that the Myrddin poetry is 'enhanced' by its positioning after *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*, and that this seems a deliberate decision on the part of the manuscript's patron, given his clear interest in prophecy.[381] A further connection is found in that both Sibli and Gwenddydd are female prophets,[382] this perhaps provides an explanation for the *Cyfosei* being copied in first and the *Gwasgargerdd* following on from that.

Following the two Myrddin poems are the two very short texts, *Hyn a dywawd seint awstin am dewder y byd*' and '*Hyn a dywawd yr eneid*' after which the Galfridian link is continued with '*Proffwydoliaeth Yr Eryr yng Nghaer Septon*', which begins on the same folio that the *Gwasgargerdd* ends on. This text is a version of some of Gerald of Wales' prophecies attributed to Geoffrey's Merlin Silvester (the authority of these prophecies are also ascribed to an eagle, as is the case in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*).[383] Following '*Proffwydoliaeth yr Eryr'* are the corpus of Triads found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, including, at the beginning, the 'Three People who received the Wisdom of Adam'.[384] Notably, the three people named

[378] Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh*, 41.
[379] Nely van Seventer, 'The Welsh Tiburtina', 45.
[380] Marged Haycock, 'Sy abl fodd, Sibli fain: Sibyl in Medieval Wales', in Joseph Falaky Nagy & Leslie Ellen Jones (eds), *Heroic Poets and Poetic Heroes in Celtic Tradition: A Festschrift for Patrick K. Ford: CSANA Yearbook 3-4* (Dublin, 2005), 115-130 at 116.
[381] Ibid., 119.
[382] Ibid., 115.
[383] Merlin Silvester is the Merlin of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Vita Merlini* and is 'both geographically and temporally distinct from the fifth-century Merlin Ambrosius of Geoffrey's earlier *Prophetiae Merlini*.' For an overview of this see Victoria Flood, 'Prophecy as History: A New Study of the Prophecies of Merlin Silvester', *Neophilologus* (2018), 543-559, esp. 549-550, this quote at 549.
[384] The first four Triads in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* are Triads 47-50 in Rachel Bromwich *Trioedd Ynys Prydein,* 129-137: 'Three men who received the qualities of Adam: Three men who received the Might of Adam; Three men who received the Beauty of Adam; Three People who received the Wisdom of Adam', 'Three

in this triad are 'Cado Hen, / a Beda, / a Sibli Doeth.'[385] Rachel Bromwich highlighted that while other versions of this Triad have Selyf (Solomon) in the third position, Sibli Doeth seems to have been substituted in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* due to the situation of the Triad after the text of *Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth*.[386] The reference to Cato here also ties in with the reference made to '*llyuyr Cado*' in *Cyfoesi Myrddin,* as discussed above.[387]

If we are to attempt to draw any conclusions about the function of the two Myrddin poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* or about how Hopcyn ap Tomas and/or Hywel Fychan were reading these poems in their manuscript context here, it is important to also consider their manuscript context in other medieval manuscript witnesses. That the two poems have been copied in to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* one after the other is not surprising, given that they clearly belong together as prophetic poems in the voice of Myrddin. However, it is noteworthy that where these two poems appear in earlier surviving manuscripts, although they are usually with other poems from the Myrddin corpus, the *Cyfoesi* and the *Gwasgargerdd* do not appear together until *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* An acephalous text of *Cyfoesi Myrddin* can be found in NLW MS Peniarth 3, part ii (dated to either the late-thirteenth or early-fourteenth century), where it appears alongside *Yr Afallennau* and *Yr Oianau* (as well as the religious texts *Breuddwyd Pawl* and *Ystoria Judas* and a Welsh version of the *Catonis Disticha*);[388] and a full version is found in NLW MS Peniarth 20 (dated c.1330), added in by two or more hands of the mid-fourteenth century, following 'the earliest texts of *Y Bibyl Ynghymraec* and *Brut y Tywysogion* and the earliest extant bardic grammar.'[389] An earlier copy of the *Gwasgargerdd* is found in NLW MS Peniarth 4-5, *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* (in the loose quire previously known as Peniarth 12, dating to c.1350) and is the only text from the Myrddin corpus found in this manuscript.[390] This raises the question of the route by which these two poems in particular came to be in in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* which is not one that I am able to sufficiently address here. There is no surviving single manuscript witness pre-dating *Llyfr Coch Hergest* which contains both the *Cyfoesi* and the *Gwasgargerdd*, and so it is not

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women who received the Beauty of Eve in three third-shares'. These are followed by '*Pan aeth llu i Llychlyn*' and then the rest of the corpus of Triads in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (ff.144r-147r).

[385] Ibid.,135; 'Cato the Old,/ and Bede, / and the Wise Sibyl.'

[386] Ibid.

[387] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 53; 'the book of Cato'.

[388] Part i of this manuscript contains *awdlau* by Cynddelw Brydydd Mawr. For a full description see Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes Vol I: Manuscripts*, 334.

[389] Ibid., 342, see 342-343 for a full description of this manuscript.

[390] Ibid., 334-335 for a full description of this manuscript. The *Cyfoesi* and the *Gwasgargerdd* appear together alongside other texts from the Myrddin corpus in two later manuscript witnesses, NLW MS Peniarth 50, *Y Cwta Cyfarwydd*, dating to c.1445, and NLW MS Peniarth 26, dating to c.1456. My thanks to Ben Guy for his help in so speedily providing me with a concise list of the manuscript witnesses of the *Cyfoesi* and the *Gwasgargerdd,* and for his stimulating conversation about this material at the Welsh Manuscripts Conference in Aberystwyth.

possible to say whether these poems came into Hywel Fychan's hands from one source or from two separate sources. It is possible that Hywel selected these two poems for inclusion in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* having drawn source material from more than one place, and it could be that that these two poems were selected over others from the corpus due to the 'historical' content of the *Cyfoesi* aligning with the historical focus of the first group of texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, as well as perhaps due to the connection between Sibyl and Gwenddydd as female prophets. The *Gwasgargerdd* could perhaps be seen as being complementary to the *Cyfoesi* in that it contains the same kind of intertextual references to other materials found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and in its concern with the lineage of the rulership of Wales, with particular reference to English kings.

Cyfoesi Myrddin, in particular, betrays an obvious concern with the past in that it gives an account of Welsh – or further, British – leadership from the time of *Yr Hen Ogledd* to the present day of the poet (or rather, as Rowland suggests given the composite nature of the poem, the compiler).[391] As I have already noted, after first dealing with the legendary heroes of *Yr Hen Ogledd*, the predicted rulers of the first section of *Cyfoesi Myrddin* follow the lineage of Maelgwn of Gwynedd and this information appears to be based on a king list, a type of document which as noted by Jenny Rowland, though common elsewhere in Celtic literature, 'does not otherwise occur in Welsh historical materials.'[392] In fact, *Cyfoesi Myrddin* actually gives rise to later king lists, as in MS Panton 38: '*Llyma val y descennodh pendevigaeth Gymru er yn oes Vaelgwn Gwynedd…velly i dywad cyvoesi Verdhin Wyllt.'*[393] Following the reasoning outlined earlier in this chapter, that prophecy is concerned with history and that *Cyfoesi Myrddin*, in particular, provides an exhaustive list of the rulers of Gwynedd, I would argue that these poems were being interpreted by Hopcyn and/or Hywel as having a particular 'historical' value, and that this is why they have been included in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in this position, as opposed to being included for their poetic value.

The format of *Cyfoesi Myrddin* as a series of questions and answers between a pupil and adopted teacher provides us with another way to think about this. Myrddin's prophecies are here 'the knowledge passed down in a tradition of learning.'[394] And Thomas Charles-Edwards draws parallels between this poem and two Irish prophetic texts, *Baile Chuinn* and *Baile in Scáil*, which also contain a king list in the form of prophecy, although he notes that while in the Irish texts the prophet is an ancestor to the prophesised kings, 'Myrddin's

[391] Jenny Rowland, *Early Welsh Saga Poetry*, 291.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Ibid., note 45.
[394] Thomas M. Charles-Edwards**,** *Wales and the Britons*, 337-338.

prophetic gifts belong more with the poets.'[395] Furthermore, in *Cyfoesi Myrddin* 'the teaching of the prophetic poet echoes the teaching of the Latin scholar, especially as it is presented in the colloquy texts,'[396] and the most obvious reference to such a system of Latinate learning is found in the lines '*kyuarchaf y'm digaro uraȯt / a darllewys llyuyr Cado*.'[397] Thus, the poem is imbued with a kind of 'educational authority' which adds to its character as a primarily 'historical' or 'knowledgeable' text.

In order to contextualise these suggestions about the function of our Myrddin poems I would like to consider briefly a section of other prophetic poems, spoken in the voice of a contemporary of Myrddin, those of Taliesin, which occur much later in the manuscript, amongst the other poetic material. These poems are not found in the Book of Taliesin, save for part of *Prif Gyuarch Geluyd*, a fact that led Marged Haycock to suggest that this group of poems may have preceded what survives of the Book of Taliesin, which is clearly missing at least one quire. The tone of this section of poetry is one that is common to Welsh prophecy and makes use of 'familiar figurative language, predictions of bloodshed and heroism, and cryptic allusions,'[398] as well as including several references to the decline of civilised life. These are features which are shared with the Myrddin poems, however the Taliesin material is arguably more stylistically 'prophetic' and does not contain the same kind of list-like information given in the Myrddin poems, rather, when there are references to identifiable events or people these are much more focused than in the Myrddin poems, which cover a much greater period of time. For example, the way in which *Crist Iesu* 'dwells on broken contracts, treachery, and faithless barons'[399] is particularly suggestive of the turbulence of the late thirteenth century and Manon Bonner Jenkins has argued that the lord of Gwynedd who is lamented throughout is Llywelyn ap Gruffudd.[400] One crucial difference between these two Welsh poet prophets is that Taliesin was not taken up by Geoffrey of Monmouth. Therefore, despite being a contemporary (of presumed equal authority) of Myrddin in the Welsh tradition, he did not become an internationalised figure in the same way. This, then, is perhaps another reason for the situation of the Myrddin poems at this point in the manuscript – the character of Myrddin was internationalised in a way that other legendary poets were not due to Geoffrey of Monmouth, resulting in the character becoming associated

[395] Ibid., 338.
[396] Ibid., 339.
[397] Manon Bonner Jenkins, 'Aspects of the Welsh Prophetic Verse Tradition', 53; 'I ask my merry brother / who has read the book of Cato'.
[398] Ibid, 120.
[399] Ibid, 178.
[400] Ibid, 177.

with other prophetic material which were a part of a wider tradition, such as the Sibylline prophecies.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd* appear anomalous in their positioning in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* at first glance, however upon further consideration it is clear that these two poems fit in their manuscript context in ways other than form. The first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* quires 1-13, sets out a narrative of the history of the Welsh from their Trojan origins up to the loss of sovereignty in 1282 and that narrative is accompanied by a selection of other historical or knowledgeable material, originating both from within and outwith Wales. Helen Fulton has argued that:

> The central modernising project for learned men in Wales in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries was the writing of a new vernacular history of Wales, one that provided a seamless and rational account of a people's struggle with a colonising power, a history that would explain and contextualise the conquest of north Wales by Edward I in 1282.[401]

This is undoubtedly something that would have been of interest to an *uchelwr* such as Hopcyn ap Tomas and I would argue that the first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* narrates one such history of Wales, which is then supplemented by other knowledge texts, including prophecy, and the prophetic material is in turn followed by the Triads, which are a distinctly Welsh mode of collecting, preserving and cataloguing information. *Llyfr Coch Hergest* begins with the history of Britain from the destruction of Troy up until the present day of the manuscript's construction; followed by historical narratives of Rome, by way of France; followed by Welsh contributions to types of literature popular in the educated circles of Europe; and leading then into the next section of the manuscript concerned with the 'native' Welsh literature. The texts in this first section of the manuscript, from *Ystorya Dared*, the opening history of the destruction of Troy, through the *Brutiau*, the Charlemagne material, the block of prophetic texts, and up to the *Trioedd* flow on from one another either in genre or theme or content, each complimenting the last and leading the reader into the next.

[401] Helen Fulton, 'Troy Story', 139.

As outlined earlier in this chapter, prophecy occupies a complex space in that it is concerned with the past, present, and the future (but arguably mostly with the present). It is also concerned with power and submission as well as territorial entitlement and this is especially relevant when considering the political context of Hopcyn's engagement with Welsh literary production in late-fourteenth-century Wales. If, as discussed earlier, the prophecies of medieval Wales were a political statement concerned with the history of the Welsh nation as well as their current and future fate, then we may interpret the two *Myrddin* poems as a form of political propaganda concerned with the re-instating of Welsh sovereignty over Wales. Indeed, John Bollard stated that the *Gwasgargerdd* 'seems to be largely a commentary on the moral state of the world in the face of English domination.' [402] This becomes even more striking in the manuscript context of these two poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, where such prophecy is placed following on from the history of how that sovereignty was lost in the first place. The two Myrddin poems are rich with references to other texts, including as discussed above allusions to: the *Historia Brittonum*; other Myrddin poems; *Bonedd Gwyr y Gogledd*; Triads; the Harleian Genealogies; *Llyfr Cato*; poetry of the *Cynfeirdd* and *Gogynfeirdd*; and the *Mabinogi*. This intertextuality demonstrates an awareness of manuscript context and it is possible to cross-reference *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd* with other texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (and other manuscripts) and this ultimately adds to their authority – as does the internationalisation of the figure of Merlin by Geoffrey of Monmouth.

How then should we understand the inclusion of the two Myrddin poems in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*? Why have they been separated from the other poetry in the manuscript, instead apprearing amongst the prose texts? How were they being interpreted by Hopcyn ap Tomas? This chapter has argued that *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddyd ei Chwaer* and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd* were being considered by the manuscript's patron and/or scribe as texts with a historical function, imbued with a knowledgeable authority, and that in this way they belong alongside the prose texts which form the first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and which narrate the history of Wales from the fall of Troy to the loss of Welsh sovereignty in 1282. While is crucial not to project modern ideas onto the minds of people who lived in the fourteenth century, I believe that like the colophon from Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O in which Hywel Fychan describes that the loss of Welsh sovereignty as causing the Welsh to feel pain and exile in their motherland a century later,

[402] John. K. Bollard, 'Myrddin in Early Welsh Tradition' in P. Goodrich (ed.) *The Romance of Merlin: An Anthology* (New York/London, 1990), 13-54 at 31.

the inclusion of these two poems in the voice of Myrddin reveal Hopcyn ap Tomas' interests on a national – and nationalistic – level.

4 POPULAR EUROPEAN NARRATIVE AND 'NATIVE' TALES IN *LLYFR COCH HERGEST*

This chapter will look at a selection of the narrative prose texts that can be found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* The bulk of these occur together in a single section between cols. 605-928 (*Pererindod Siarlymaen, Owein, Peredur, Macsen Wledig, Lludd a Llefelys, Pwyll, Branwen, Manawydan, Math, Geraint, Culhwch ac Olwen, Bown o Hamtwn*); outwith this section the remainder of the narrative prose in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* appears between cols. 381-427 (*Chronicl Turpin, Rhamant Otuel, Can Rolant*); cols. 555-567 (*Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*); and cols. 277-284 (*Amlyn ac Amic*). It is possible to group these texts into different 'genres' in several ways and it will be useful to think about some of these in order to explain my choices of texts for this chapter. The following discussion of some possible categorisations of these texts is also illustrated in Table 4 below. Perhaps the most commonly used modern scholarly categorisation is as *Mabinogion* (*Owein, Peredur, Geraint, Pwyll, Branwen, Manawydan, Math, Macsen Wledig, Lludd a Llefelys, Culhwch ac Olwen, Breuddwud Rhonabwy*) after Lady Charlotte Guest's nineteenth-century publication of the translations, and therefore conversely, non-*Mabinogion* texts (*Chronicl Turpin, Rhamant Otfel, Can Rolant, Pererindod Siarlymaen, Bown o Hamtwn, Amlyn ac Amic*). Some examples of possible 'genres' include: Romance, Chansons de Geste, Arthurian texts, Charlemagne cycle texts, Adventure Narrative, and Pseudo-Historical Narrative. However, as with the categorisation of *Mabinogion* or non-*Mabinogion*, it must be noted that all of these suggested genres are labels given from a modern scholarly perspective and we have no way of knowing for certain how these texts might have been considered to fit together (or not) by the original patrons, scribes, or audiences of the manuscripts that they survive in. It will also be clear to any scholar of medieval narrative texts that it is difficult to define them as fitting into only one categorisation; for the most part, these texts could be argued to fit into several genres at once and are rich stories that contain multiple complex elements that are difficult to pin down in a tidy modern scholarly manner.

For this chapter, I wish to consider the texts from this section under the categorisation of 'native' Welsh tales and non-'native' translations or adaptations into Welsh of tales that were popular in the courts of Europe during this period. I use the term 'native' here not to invoke any sense of the nationalist nativism of the late-nineteenth-century Irish literary

revival, nor of the Nativist and Anti-Nativist schools of thought,[403] but solely to mean those texts which clearly originate from within Wales, in opposition to those which are clear adaptations into Welsh of material which originates from outwith Wales. That is not to say that the 'native' Welsh tales betray no outside influence whatsoever, but they are of a distinctly different character to those texts which are translations or adaptations of foreign-language tales into Welsh. Categorising the texts in this way would see the three tales also known as the Welsh Romances (*Owein, Peredur, Geraint*) – Welsh versions of the Romances of Chrétien De Troyes – move over from the ***Mabinogion*** group to join the other non-*Mabinogion* texts. This then forms the following two groups which for the purposes of this chapter I have termed: 'Native' Tales (*Pwyll, Branwen, Manawydan, Math, Macsen Wledig, Lludd a Llefelys, Culhwch ac Olwen, Breuddwud Rhonabwy*) and non-'native' translated/adapted texts or, Popular European Narrative Tales (*Owein, Peredur, Geraint, Chronicl Turpin, Rhamant Otfel, Can Rolant, Pererindod Siarlymaen, Bown o Hamtwn, Amlyn ac Amic*). I would argue that this categorisation does not rely on modern perceptions or interpretations of the texts and is therefore one that could have been recognised by Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan in their consideration of these texts and their placement in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. It is possible to further separate the Popular European Narrative Tales into those which are *relocated or reimagined in Wales* during the process of translation (*Owein, Peredur, Geraint*) and those for which *the action still takes place overseas* (*Chronicl Turpin, Rhamant Otfel, Can Rolant, Pererindod Siarlymaen, Bown o Hamtwn, Amlyn ac Amic*) – this group is identical to the non-*Mabinogion* group above). All that being said, there is clearly no distinction being made between 'native' Welsh tales and non-'native' translations/adaptations into Welsh in the organisation of these texts in the manuscript. Both 'Native' Tales and Popular European Narrative Tales are interwoven together in the clearly defined narrative prose section between cols. 605-928; furthermore, the balance of 'native' and non-'native' narrative prose in the manuscript is approximately fifty-fifty.

If we are to consider these texts within this frame of 'native' and translated texts, then it is essential that we understand the differences between our modern notions of translation and those likely held by our medieval patron and scribe. While it is outwith the remit of this thesis to discuss procedures of medieval translation in detail,[404] it is nonetheless

[403] On these approaches see: James Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin, 1955); Kenneth Jackson, *The Oldest Irish Tradition: A Window on the Iron Age* (Cambridge, 1964); Kim McCone, *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature* (Maynooth, 1990).

[404] See: Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages: Academic Traditions and Vernacular Texts* (Cambridge, 1991); Jeanette Beer (ed.), *Translation Theory and Practice in the Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, 1997); Peter Anderson (ed.), *Medieval Translation Practices: Papers from the Symposium*

important to highlight the differences between modern and medieval notions of translation. Simply, in the modern sense, to translate is to change words from one language to another. In an academic sense, translation studies in the modern day consider notions of equivalence (how faithfully a translation can recreate the original effect on the audience in the translated context as the original text did on its audience in the source context) and *Skopos* theory, relating to the purpose of the overall translational action.[405] Medieval 'translations' perhaps better align with the modern definition of 'adaptation' – 'something produced to adjust to different conditions or uses, or to meet different situations.'[406] Erich Poppe and Regine Reck have noted that medieval translations:

> particularly of secular narrative texts, are often characterised by dramatic differences from their sources in style, narrative approach, and even meaning…[the] main aim [of the translators] was to create a text that would be meaningful and interesting in its new cultural context.[407]

If this is the main aim of the medieval translator, then it reasonably follows that, as noted by Lynne Long 'the process of translation in medieval times cannot sensibly be separated from its unique literary and cultural context'.[408] Notions of translation in the medieval period are richer and more wide-ranging than the modern definition of the word allows for: Robert Wisnovsky, Faith Wallis, Jamie C. Fumo, and Carols Fraenkel, in the introduction to their volume on transmission, translation, and transformation in medieval textual culture assert that 'transmission and transformation are intricately bound up in the notion of *translatio*, to the extent that any definition of medieval translation cannot operate without these sibling concepts.'[409] The concept of translation in the medieval period was not only textual, it extended further to encompass any act of 'transporting or transferring something from one place to another' or 'metamorphosing something into a new form.'[410] This concept involved anything from the physical act of pouring something from one vessel

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at the University of Copenhagen 25th and 26th October 2002 (Copenhagen, 2004); Robert Wisnovsky, Faith Wallis, Jamie C. Fumo, and Carols Fraenkel (eds.) *Vehicles of Transmission, Translation, and Transformation in Medieval Textual Culture* (Turnhourt, 2001).

[405] For a brief overview of *Skopos* theory see Xiaoyan Du, "A Brief Introduction of Skopos Theory", *Theory & Practice in Language Studies* 2.10 (2012), 2189-2193; for *Skopos* theory in full detail see Katharina Reiss & Hans Vermeer, *Towards a General Theory of Translational Action: Skopos Theory Explained* (London, 2013).

[406] Definition from the Cambridge Dictionary Online: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/adaptation> (visited on 25/03/2023).

[407] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales: *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* Processes of Medieval Translations: Part 1', in *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 55 (2007), 122–180 at 123.

[408] Lynne Long, 'Medieval literature through the lens of translation theory: Bridging the interpretive gap', *Translation Studies* 3.1 (2010) 61-77 at 61.

[409] Robert Wisnovsky, Faith Wallis, Jamie C. Fumo, and Carols Fraenkel (eds.) *Vehicles of Transmission*, 13.

[410] Ibid.

to another to the transmigration of the soul,[411] and so it is with from this perspective that we should approach the translated texts in our medieval manuscripts. Winovsky, Wallis, Fumo and Fraenkel elaborate further, stating that:

> medieval theories of translation shaped much more than texts: whole bodies of learning and sites of political power were 'translated' by means of the familiar medieval conceptual shorthand of *translatio imperii et studii*, a chain of cultural legitimation by which rulers and intellectuals reinscribed authority from ancient to contemporary, and from East to West.[412]

This notion of cultural legitimisation is one which I believe is relevant to the socio-political context of the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and the inclusion of these 'native' and 'non-native' texts alongside one another in this clearly defined narrative prose section of the manuscript. In including the 'native' Welsh tales alongside the Welsh adaptations of, particularly, Anglo-Norman tales such as *Bown o Hamtwn* it could be argued that Hopcyn and Hywel are legitimising their Welsh cultural and literary heritage; placing it together with the cultural and literary heritage of the subjugator and in doing so asserting that it has equal value.

It is also important to understand that translated or adapted texts (primarily from Latin or Anglo-Norman French) form a large part of the corpus of surviving medieval Welsh prose literature,[413] constituting a variety of secular and religious works. As such, the appearance of several of these texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is not in any way an anomaly. The translated/adapted texts are of interest, as highlighted by Erich Poppe and Regine Reck, 'in that they illustrate the wider cultural affiliations and interests of the medieval Welsh translators and their patrons.'[414] Further to this, Poppe and Reck assert that the translators' 'treatment of the sources in the process of textual and cultural transposition provides the only insight into the aims and perception of their craft.[415] Helen Fulton argues that these texts are 'creative remediations which transform Latin history and French courtly romance into the language and style of Welsh storytelling' (while retaining the foreign setting of these texts) and, further, that 'they construct the ideological positioning of the Welsh uchelwyr on

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[411] Ibid.
[412] Ibid.
[413] For discussion of the attitudes of the editors of Welsh translations see Chapter 1 of Diana Luft's PhD thesis 'Medieval Welsh Translation: *The Case of Ymddiddan Selyf a Marcwlff*' (Harvard, 2004) and also Diana Luft, 'Tracking *ôl cyfieithu*: Medieval Welsh translation in criticism and scholarship', *Translation Studies* 9:2 (2016), 168-182.
[414] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales, 123.
[415] Ibid.

the March.'[416] It is in this vein that I consider the three translations, or adaptations into Welsh, of popular European narratives, that are to be the focus of this chapter: *Pererindod Siarlymaen* (cols. 605-626), *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* (cols.845-928) and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* (cols.1085-1115). These are not the only three translated texts of this kind in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, however I have selected these three texts for examination for two primary reasons; firstly, that *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* bookend the clearly defined section of narrative prose as outlined above; and secondly that these three make up the grouping of popular European texts for which the action has not been relocated to Wales. The other Charlemagne texts also fit into this category of popular European narrative not relocated to Wales, however they are not included in my discussion here since they are arguably more pseudo-historic than narrative in function (evidenced by their placement earlier in the manuscript amongst other history or 'knowledge' texts, as discussed in the previous chapter); the relationship between *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and the other Charlemagne texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is to be discussed later on in this chapter. Through examining *Pererindod Siarlymaen, Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic.* in their manuscript context and considering how they fit alongside the other texts of the manuscript, such as the 'native' Welsh tales known collectively as the *Mabinogion*, this chapter seeks to further illustrate the organisational principles at play in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and to consider how the inclusion of these texts in the manuscript can illuminate how such translations of 'foreign' literature were being perceived and received by the manuscript's patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas, and/or the chief scribe, Hywel Fychan.

[416] Helen Fulton, 'Translating Europe in Medieval Wales', in Aidan Conti, Orietta Rold & Phillip Shaw (eds.), *Writing Europe, 500-1450: Texts and Contexts* (Cambridge, 2015) 159-174 at 174.

Mabinogion	Non-Mabinogion / Popular European Narrative not relocated to Wales	'Native'	Non-'Native' / Popular European Narrative	Popular European Narrative Relocated to Wales	Popular European Narrative belonging to the Charlemagne Cycle
Owein *Peredur* *Geraint* *Pwyll* *Branwen* *Manawydan* *Math* *Macsen Wledig* *Lludd a Llefelys* *Culhwch ac Olwen* *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*	*Chronicl Turpin* *Rhamant Otfel* *Can Rolant* *Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Bown o Hamtwn* *Amlyn ac Amic*	*Pwyll* *Branwen* *Manawydan* *Math* *Macsen Wledig* *Lludd a Llefelys* *Culhwch ac Olwen* *Breuddwyd Rhonabwy*	*Chronicl Turpin* *Rhamant Otfel* *Can Rolant* *Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Bown o Hamtwn* *Amlyn ac Amic* *Owein* *Peredur* *Geraint*	*Owein* *Peredur* *Geraint*	*Chronicl Turpin* *Rhamant Otfel* *Can Rolant* *Pererindod Siarlymaen*

TABLE 4: SOME CATEGORISATIONS OF NARRATIVE PROSE LITERATURE IN LLYFR COCH HERGEST

4.1 THE MULTILINGUAL WELSH MARCH

Manuscripts such as *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and the texts within them, are a product of complex socio-political and linguistic networks and so it is crucial to have an understanding of these networks in order to work towards a complete understanding of the manuscripts, their patrons and scribes. This is particularly pertinent when considering texts which have been translated – or adapted – into Welsh from foreign languages, since the socio-political and linguistic networks from which they derive, necessarily, cross cultural and geographical boundaries.

Before situating these texts in their manuscript context, it is first necessary to outline the socio-political and linguistic networks which provide the context for the creation of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Recently, a comprehensive study of the literary networks of the Marches has been done by Matt Lampitt, who in his PhD thesis 'Networking the March: The Literature of the Welsh Marches, c.1180-c.1410', examines the cultural and political climate of the Marches through tracing the textual networks of three 'case study' areas (Hereford, c.1180 – c.1210; Ludlow, c.1310 – c.1350; Cwm Tawe, c. 1380 – c.1410) to develop 'networked' readings of the texts that were circulating in these regions, which challenges the 'peripheral' status traditionally prescribed to the Marches.[417] Through abandoning the core-periphery model, Lampitt seeks to address how we might restore political and cultural agency to the peoples, cultures and texts of the Welsh March; his thesis demonstrates that Marcher communities actively engaged with philosophical, ideological and literary developments that were taking place across medieval Europe and that these were highly connected centres who 'saw themselves as agents on the global stage.'[418] The production and circulation of Welsh-language versions of popular European texts provides some of the key evidence for this argument, and Hopcyn ap Tomas and his household were undoubtedly involved in such activity. A number of manuscripts containing Welsh-language translations of European texts have long since been associated with Hopcyn, the scribes of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and Hopcyn's brother, Rhys ap Tomas (to be discussed below).

The history of the Welsh Marches is long and complex; the area occupying the borderlands between England and Wales was in a state of almost constant political, legal,

[417] Matt Lampitt, 'Networking the March: the literature of the Welsh Marches, c.1180-c.1410' (unpublished PhD thesis, King's College London 2019).
[418] Ibid., 203.

and cultural flux from the first Anglo-Norman invasions of 1066 until the Edwardian conquest of 1282 and the geographical boundaries of the Marches, and the lordships which comprised them, ebbed and flowed according to the successes and failures of the military campaigns of the Anglo-Normans.[419] By the time of the Edwardian conquest, which brought *pura Wallia* under the domain of the English Crown for the first time as the Principality of Wales, there had already been around two hundred years of cross-cultural interaction between the Welsh and the Anglo-Normans taking place in *marchia Wallie*. This area acquired relative stability at the beginning of the fourteenth century and enjoyed a period of unprecedented peace between 1282 and 1415.[420] Throughout the period, though, Wales and the Marches remained fragmented and there was never a single unifying system of governance; rather the Marcher Lords held jurisdiction over their own individual lordships: as R. R. Davies remarked, 'the king's writ did not run in the March.'[421] The Welsh *uchelwyr* residing in the areas along the borderlands of Wales had for generations been learning to co-exist within the power structures enforced by the Anglo-Norman lords.[422] This area, inhabiting the space between Wales and England, had a culture of its own which drew on the native Welsh traditions as well as looking outwards to the traditions of the European culture of the Anglo-Norman Lords. As Ceridwen Lloyd Morgan states, the border between England and Wales 'could not and did not constitute a clear line between Welsh and Anglo-Norman settlement, language, culture, or political interests, but instead a broad area whose populations were mixed ethnically and linguistically and whose allegiances were varied and complex.'[423] Due to the complexities in defining the geographical location of the Marches and of the socio-political situation within them, in conceiving of the Welsh Marches it is beneficial to employ Lampitt's use of the term as a signifier which is 'intended to designate *a perceived space of cultural contact* and interaction that is not necessarily coterminous with the boundaries of medieval Marcher lordships or modern nation-states.'[424]

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[419] For an overview of this period see: John Davies, *A History of Wales* (London, 1993); Robert Rees Davies, Robert Rees, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales*; *Conquest, Coexistence and Change*; *The Age of Conquest*; Max Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: The Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066–1283* (Cambridge, 2010).
[420] Robert Rees Davies, *The Age of Conquest*, 412.
[421] Robert Rees Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales*, 3.
[422] For a comprehensive account, see: Robert Rees Davies, *The Age of Conquest.*
[423] Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, 'Crossing the Borders: Literary Borrowing in Medieval Wales and England', in Ruth Kennedy & Simon Meecham-Hones (eds), *Authority and Subjugation in Writing of Medieval Wales* (New York, 2008), 159-173 at 169.
[424] Matt Lampitt, 'Networking the March', 32. My emphasis.

Late fourteenth-century Glamorgan, like the rest of the Welsh Marches, had been becoming increasingly multilingual since the Norman invasion of 1066 and by the time that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* was produced in the late fourteenth century, thanks to a prolonged period of cross-cultural contact, it is probable that the Marches were 'one of the most multilingual regions of Europe.'[425] Indeed, Lampitt asserts that from 1066 onwards 'any synchronic snapshot of the March reveals an unusual level, density, and modality of language co-existence and multilingualism.'[426] The translations or adaptations into Welsh of Latin and French material which are found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* and other manuscripts like it, form what Helen Fulton has termed the 'matter of the March', which:

> as a coherent corpus […] is united not by genre or content but by its location […], its assumption of multiculturalism, and its production under social class, the uchelwyr, many of whom lived as social equals among the English and French-speaking elites of the Marcher lordships.[427]

Hopcyn ap Tomas was one such *uchelwr* and his participation in the production and circulation of versions in his native language of texts which were popular in the circle of his English and French-speaking contemporaries comes as no surprise. G. J. Williams was the first to suggest that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* belonged to Hopcyn ap Tomas, placing him within an active network of patrons and scribes involved in the production and transmission of Welsh adaptations of Latin and French texts who were operating in medieval Glamorgan.[428] Indeed, Fulton has noted that the influence of European texts after the demise of the Welsh princes and the Edwardian conquest of 1282 seems to have been particularly strong in south-east Wales, where:

> in the Anglo-Norman lordships of Glamorgan and Powys some of the key texts of French romance – the Charlemagne legends, some of the Arthurian prose tales from the Vulgate Cycle, and the romance of Bevis of Hampton – were translated into Welsh for Marcher noblemen.[429]

As already noted in the Introduction to this thesis, it is an established fact that Hopcyn ap Tomas was an important literary patron, as is illustrated by the many references to him as a learned and well-read man in the five praise poems addressed to him in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

[425] Matt Lampitt, 'Networking the March', 29.
[426] Ibid.
[427] Helen Fulton, 'Translating Europe in Medieval Wales', 161-162.
[428] Griffith John Williams, *Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg* (Cardiff, 1948).
[429] Helen Fulton, 'Translating Europe in Medieval Wales', 161.

One example is the oft-quoted verse from Dafydd y Coed's poem which references a number of texts that Hopcyn had in his possession:

> Mwnai law, mae yn ei lys,
> Eurddar, y Lusidarius,
> A'r Greal a'r Yniales,
> A grym pob gyfraith a'i gras.[430]

As previously highlighted, this verse provides a starting point for considering the network of texts and manuscripts which can be linked to Hopcyn ap Tomas and his family at Ynysforgan, as first demonstrated by Christine James.[431] With the exception of the Welsh laws which are referred to in the last line, these texts are all Welsh versions of Latin or French texts and James has long since identified these as: *Ystorya Lusidar*, a version of the Latin religious text *Elucidarium sive Dialogus de Summa Totius Christianae Theologiae*;[432] *Ystorya Seint Greal*,[433] the story of the quest for the Holy Grail; and the *Yniales* are most likely to be historical texts based on the form of the Latin Annals (e.g. *Brut y Brenhinedd*,[434] *Brut y Tywysogion*).[435] James also identified surviving manuscripts which contain these texts in the hands of the scribes of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and are therefore linked to Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan. There is in Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 190 a version of *Ystoria Lucidar* in the hand of X91 (previously scribe C) from *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*[436] *Ystoria Lucidar* also appears in Aberystwyth, NLW MS Llanstephan 27, this time in the hand of Hywel Fychan. Brynley F. Roberts argued that Llanstephan 27 was most likely commissioned by Rhys ap Tomas, Hopcyn's brother, on the basis that the manuscript contains five references to him in a Latin prayer on fols. 152v-153r.[437] Hywel Fychan also appears in Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 11, where there is found in his hand the earliest known manuscript witness of *Y Seint Greal*, a Welsh version of the Holy Grail stories which is based partly on the *Queste del Saint Graal* and partly on *Perlesvaus* (with the

[430] R. Iestyn Daniel (ed.), *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 21. My emphasis.
[431] Christine James, '"Llwyr Wybodau, Llên a Llyfrau": Hopcyn ap Tomas a'r traddodiad Llenyddol Cymraeg', 17-27 and 'Hopcyn ap Tomas a "Llyfrgell Genedlaethol" Ynysforgan', 38-50.
[432] John Morris-Jones & John Rhys (eds), *The Elucidarium and other tracts in Welsh from Llyvyr agkyr Llandewivrevi* (Oxford, 1894).
[433] Thomas Jones (ed.), *Ystoryaeu Seint Greal* (Cardiff, 1992).
[434] Brynley F. Roberts, *Brut y Brenhinedd* (Dublin, 1971).
[435] Thomas Jones (ed.), *Brut y Tywysogion, or Chronicle of Princes: Red Book of Hergest Version* (Cardiff, 1995).
[436] This is the scribe which Gifford Charles-Edwards identified as the Peniarth 32 hand ('The Scribes of the Red Book of Hergest') and which Daniel Huws now labels scribe X91 (*A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes*).
[437] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynys Dawy', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 22 (1966–1968), 223–227 at 224.

translator(s)/adaptor(s) also having knowledge of the *Prose Lancelot*).[438] In her D.Phil thesis, Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan demonstrates that it is probable that Hopcyn ap Tomas commissioned this Welsh version of the Grail stories, and that the version in the hand of Hywel Fychan in Peniarth 11, though not the original work of translation/adaptation, is very close to that original version and was likely copied from the written Welsh draft made by the translator.[439] That is to say, Hopcyn ap Tomas commissioned the creation of the Welsh version of the text and then commissioned Hywel Fychan to make a fair copy of it for his collection.

Furthermore, Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam's praise poem to Hopcyn ap Tomas also notes his interest in literature:

> Dysgodd lyfrau, loywfraint dawnus,
> Lusidarius lwys ei daeredd,[440]

Matt Lampitt regards '*daeredd*' here as referring to *Ystorya Dared*, the Welsh version of *De excidio Troiae historie* – the history of Troy according to Dares Phrygius.[441] However I believe this to be a mis-reading of 'daeredd'. The modern Welsh rendering of these lines in *Cyfres Beirdd yr Uchelwyr* is 'Astudiodd lyfrau, [yr un] disglair ei fraint [a doniog] / Lusidarius pur ei daerineb'[442] and *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* translates *taerineb* as 'earnestness, importunity, entreaty fervour, eagerness, zeal.'[443] This would give these lines the meaning of 'He studied books, [the one who is] brilliant in his honour [and gifted] / Lusidarius pure in his earnestness.' 'Lucidarius' in this poem again refers to *Ystoria Lucidar*, which was clearly a book known to be in Hopcyn's possession and it seems to me that here Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam is likening Hopcyn to a supposed author of that text – the Welsh translator of the *Elucidarium* appears to have mistaken the name of the text as a signifier for

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[438] Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan, 'Lancelot in Wales', in Karen Pratt and Jocelyn Wogan Browne (eds), *Shifts and Transpositions in Medieval Narrative: A Festschrift for Dr. Elspeth Kennedy* (Cambridge, 1994) 169–179 at 176-177.
[439] Cerdiwen Lloyd-Morgan, 'A Study of *Y Seint Greal* in relation to *La Queste del Saint Graal* and *Perlesvaus*' (unpublished D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 1978), 44-47.
[440] R. Iestyn Daniel (ed.), *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 108.
[441] Matt Lampitt, Networking the March', 74. For discussion of this material in Welsh, see Helen Fulton, 'Troy Story' 137-150; 'A Medieval Welsh Version of the Troy Story: Editing Ystorya Dared', in Vincent Gillespie, & Anne Hudson (eds), *Probable Truth: Editing Medieval Texts from Britain in the Twenty-First Century* (Turnhout, 2013), 214-25.
[442] R. Iestyn Daniel (ed.), *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 111.
[443] Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru Ar-Lein, <https://geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html>

a person's name, rendering the Welsh title *Ystoria Lucidar,* the Story of Lucidar.[444] To Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam, Hopcyn is so knowledgeable that he is one such Lucidar: Hopcyn too could author a book of enlightenment.

Despite the likelihood that '*ei daeredd*' does not refer to it, *Ystorya Dared* is found in two manuscripts which could reasonably be linked to Hopcyn ap Tomas: the first is Aberystwyth, NLW MS Peniarth 19 where *Ystorya Dared* is found in the hand of X91, alongside versions of *Brut y Brenhinedd*, *Brut y Tywysogion;* and *Brut y Saesson*. The second is Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O where *Ystorya Dared* appears in the hand of Hywel Fychan, again alongside a version of *Brut y Brenhinedd*. As noted in the Introduction, this manuscript is perhaps the one that can most concretely be tied to both Hopcyn ap Tomas and Hywel Fychan due to the colophon which identifies them both by name and states that Hywel was working as a scribe for Hopcyn:

> y llyuyr hwnn a ysgriuennwys howel vychan uab howel goch o uuellt yn llwyr onys gwnaeth agkof adaw geir neu lythyren, o arch a gorchymun y vaster nyt amgen Hopkyn uab thomas uab einawn.[445]

One further manuscript which can be linked to Hopcyn and his scribes is Aberystwyth NLW MS Llanstephan 4, which includes a Welsh version of the *Bestiaire d'Amour* in the hand of scribe A from the Red Book.[446] There is also Aberystwyth NLW MS Llanstephan 2 which, though not in the hand of any of the scribes of *Llyfr Coch Hergest,*[447] does contain a colophon bearing striking resemblance to the one in Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O:

> Ac uelly y teruyna Siwrnei y Brawt Odoric yn India: yr hwnn a drossawd Syre Davyd Bychein o Vorgannwc, o arch a damnunet Rys ap Thomas vab Einyawn, y veystyr ef.[448]

This statement that the text of *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig* was translated for Rhys ap Tomas ab Einion, provides further proof of the family interest in the production of

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[444] R. Iestyn Daniel, 'Llyfr Ancr Llanddewibrefi' in John T. Koch, *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopaedia,* Vol III (Santa Barbara 2006), 1169-1170 at 1169.
[445] Brynley F. Roberts, 'Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomas o Ynys Dawy', 227.
[446] For an edition of this text see: Graham C. Thomas (ed.), *A Welsh Bestiary of Love.*
[447] Daniel Huws, *A Repertory of Welsh Manuscripts and Scribes c.800-c1800: I Manuscripts*, 60.
[448] Stephen J. Williams (ed.), *Ffordd y Brawd Odrig* (Cardiff, 1929), 57; And so ends the Journey of the Brother Odric in India: that which Sir Dafydd Bychain of Morgannwg translated at the request and wish of Rhys ap Tomas fab Einiawn, his master.

translations/adaptations into Welsh of popular European texts (as well as the location of this activity in Glamorgan).

This section has outlined that the production of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* sits within a vibrant and multilingual socio-political and linguistic context. This manuscript, in its interest in 'native' and non-'native' narrative prose tales, is one of several surviving examples of manuscripts containing texts which have been translated or adapted into Welsh which demonstrate that the *uchelwyr* of medieval Wales were interested in and involved with the productions and circulation of texts which were popular in the Anglo-Norman and French courts. The translated texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* then, fit in to this wider context of the production and transmission of Welsh versions of Latin and French histories and narratives; and the evidence for the involvement of Hopcyn and his family in these kinds of texts is very clear. As a further point of interest, it is noteworthy that it is in connection with these translated texts that we so often see the names of scribes and patrons, and that these texts are well-represented in the work of the poets. Clearly, involvement with and knowledge of these translated/adapted texts was a point of pride for in Hopcyn and Hywel's circles.

4.2 POPULAR EUROPEAN NARRATIVE IN *LLYFR COCH HERGEST*

Having established the multilingual context of Glamorgan and the keen interest of Hopcyn ap Tomas and his family at Ynysforgan in the production of Welsh adaptations of foreign language texts we can turn to the manuscript itself. As previously noted, it is both possible and appropriate to carry out a study of the manuscript context of texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* because, as Daniel Huws has shown, there is only one bifolium which is out of place and of 46 missing pages, around 36 of them were blank.[449] This means that the ordering of texts in manuscript today are almost exactly the same as when the manuscript was bound.

The rest of this chapter will discuss points of interest from my preliminary study of the manuscript context of *Pererindod Siarlymaen* (cols. 605-626), *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* (cols.845-928) and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* (cols.1085-1115). Looking at the placement of these texts in the manuscript we can see that the *Pererindod* begins the section of narrative Welsh prose and that *Bown* occurs at the end of this section of texts. Preceding the *Pererindod* are some of the *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* (cols.588-600), a short text noting the

[449] Daniel Huws, '*Llyfr Coch Hergest*', 10-11.

'cas bethau' of the Romans, and more interestingly, of 'gwilym hir, saer hopkyn ap thomas' (col.600), and following that there are some of the *Enwau ac Anrhyddedau Ynys Prydein* (cols. 600-604).[450] These mark the end of the first section of the manuscript which deals with 'history' or 'knowledge' texts, and *Pererindod Siarlymaen* marks a shift into the manuscript's largest narrative prose section, outlined here in Table 5:

TABLE 5: MANUSCRIPT CONTEXT OF NARRATIVE PROSE TALES

Quire	Ff. (col.)	Text	Hand
14	149r – 154r (605-626)	*Pererindod Siarlymaen,*	A
14-15	154v – 161v (627-655)	*Owein,*	B
15-16	161v – 172r (655-697)	*Peredur,*	B
16	172r – 174r (679-705)	*Macsen Wledig,*	B
16	174r – 175r (705-710)	*Lludd a Llefelys,*	B
16	175r – 179v (710-726)	*Pwyll,*	B
16-17	179v – 182v (726-739)	*Branwen,*	B
17	182v – 185v (739-751)	*Manawydan,*	B
17	185v – 190r (751-769)	*Math,*	B
17-18	190r – 200r (769-809)	*Geraint,*	B
18-19	200v – 209v (810-831)	*Culhwch ac Olwen,*	B
19-21	210r – 231r (845-928)	*Bown o Hamtwn,*	B

Following *Bown* at the culmination of this section is a long section of medical texts, including the manuscript's only Latin text (cols. 928-959), and some *Diarhebion* (cols. 960-975). I would argue that in terms of manuscript organisation and planning, it is clear that this entire section from the *Pererindod* to *Bown* was conceived of as one coherent section of narrative tales and this is further evidenced by the consistent continuation of texts from one quire to the next. This section occupies a total of seven (going into eight) quires and the texts of *Owein, Peredur, Branwen, Geraint,* and *Culhwch* all follow on from the end of one quire into the beginning of the next. In contrast, *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* stands apart from these texts – which form the bulk of the prose narrative of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* The *Pererindod* and *Bown* bookend this section of native tales with tales which involve the Saracens in some way: Charlemagne and his paladins undertake a pilgrimage to Constantinople and Jerusalem to prove that Charlemagne's crown is better than that of the

[450] These are the 'things hated by Gwilym Hir, the carpenter of Hopcyn ap Tomas', discussed in a footnote in the previous chapter.

fictional eighth-century Byzantine Emperor Hugo; Bown's tale begins with his being sold into slavery to the Saracens in the tenth century, later in the tale his wife is abducted by Saracens against whom Bown then leads two battles, ultimately defeating the Saracens and converting them to Christianity. Charlemagne and the Saracens also make an appearance in *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic*, and some suggestions as to why this text does not appear in the clearly defined section of narrative prose in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* are outlined below.

The ordering of this main body of narrative tales is markedly different in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* (the White Book of Rhydderch), as demonstrated by Table 6 below. This is a point which is worth re-iterating here since *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* clearly have a close relationship to one another (i.e. that they likely shared the same exemplar and that Hywel Fychan had access to *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* at some point – correcting the text of *Culhwch ac Olwen* on ff.83v); thus, that the structure of this body of narrative texts should differ between the two provides further evidence for investigating the organisational principles at play in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

TABLE 6: ORDER OF NARRATIVE TALES IN LLYFR GWYN RHYDDERCH

Ff. (col.)	Text
PART 1 (NLW MS Peniarth 5)	
66r – 78v (31-81)	*Chronicl Turpin*
78v – 89v[451] (81-126)	*Rhamant Otfel*
91r – 99v (127-161)	*Pererindod Siarlymaen*
99v – 118v (161-238)	*Can Rolant*
119r – 152r[452] (239-372)	*Bown o Hamtwn*
PART 2 (NLW MS Peniarth 4)	
1r – 10r (1-38)	*Pwyll*
10r – 16r (38-61)	*Branwen*
16r – 21r (61-81)	*Manawydan*
21r – 28v[453] (81-111)	*Math*
30r – 45r (117-178)	*Peredur*
45r – 48v (178-191)	*Breuddwyd Macsen*

[451] Followed by two blank pages.
[452] Followed by a page containing a text in a later hand and then two damaged pages.
[453] Followed by two pages containing a text in a later hand.

48v – 48v (191-192)[454]	*Cyfranc Lludd a Llefelys*
49r – 54v[455] (225-256)	*Owain*
[55r – 62v (321-351)]	[Other texts][456]
63r – 79v (385-451)	*Geraint*
79v – 88v (452-488)	*Culhwch ac Olwen*

Something that is immediately noticeable about the different ordering of the narrative prose texts in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* is that there appears to be more of a clearly defined distinction between the Popular European Narrative texts (particularly those which are not relocated to Wales) and the 'native' Welsh tales. In this manuscript, *Pererindod Siarlymaen* sits amongst the other texts of the Charlemagne cycle (the relation between *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and the other Charlemagne cycle texts in the Welsh manuscript tradition will be discussed in greater detail below), and *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* follows directly on from these. That there is such divergence in the ordering of these narrative prose texts between the two manuscripts given the close links between *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* opens up the possibility that these texts were being engaged with, interpreted or used differently in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* There is room here for exploring ideas of patron and scribal agency in the organisation of these texts – in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* the 'native' tales are enveloped by two Popular European Narrative tales for which the action takes place overseas and we may consider whether there is some kind of statement being made here (perhaps about the quality of Welsh literary culture, or about Wales' positioning on the world-stage?).

Turning to the 'native' tales it is also immediately apparent that these are organised differently between the two manuscripts. In *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* the 'native' tales section begins with the Four Branches (which have of course maintained their internal cohesion between all their manuscript witnesses), whereas in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* these are almost central to the section of clearly defined narrative prose between cols. 605-928. This again perhaps allows for the possibility that we could interpret some kind of assertion being made about the quality of Welsh literary culture and the place that Hopcyn ap Tomas and/or Hywel Fychan believes that it should hold on the world stage. The three 'Welsh Romances' bear no relation to one another in terms of manuscript context in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch,* whereas in

[454] There is here a large jump in column numbers due to missing pages, which have been replaced by J. Gwenogfryn Evans' diplomatic edition *The White Book Mabinogion* (Pwlleli, 1907). The pagination follows on, however, skipping these leaves.
[455] 51r-52v are fragmentary only.
[456] See below footnote for contents of this gap between the end of Owain and the beginning of Geraint.

Llyfr Coch Hergest they have been rearranged so that *Owain* precedes *Peredur*. It is also notable that in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, *Geraint* and *Culhwch ac Olwen* are separated from the rest of the narrative prose texts, by a significant number of both prose texts and poetry,[457] whereas in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* they have been moved into the defined grouping of narrative tales, bookended by *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*.

That there is clear difference in the organisation of this body of narrative prose tales between *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and *Llyfr Coch Hergest* provides a solid basis for the argument that the texts were purposefully arranged in this specific order for their inclusion in the latter manuscript. One way to interrogate what the potential motivation for that rearrangement could have been is to take a thematic approach, reading the entire section of narrative prose texts in order. Unfortunately, there is neither time nor space to do that here, however, some brief initial observations are made in the remainder of this chapter.

4.3 Pererindod Siarlymaen

Turning now to each text in turn, in the order that one would come across them when reading *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, we begin with *Pererindod Siarlymaen* – one of the four texts which make up the Charlemagne cycle in Wales, the other three being *Chronicl Turpin*, *Rhamant Otuel*, and *Cân Rolant.* There is not a great deal of scholarship available specifically on the *Pererindod,* although it is mentioned in wider discussions of the Charlemagne material in Wales.[458] There are two editions of the text from *Llyfr Coch Hergest*; one by Eduard Koschwitz from 1879 (this version also includes a translation by John Rhys), the other by Stephen J Williams from 1930.[459] There is some scholarly material

[457] These are: 55r (col. 321) *Trioedd Ynys Prydain*; 55r (col. 321-322) *Enwau ac Anrhyfeddodau Ynys Prydain*; 55v (cols. 323-324) poetry; 55v-58r (cols.324-333) *Trioedd Ynys Prydain*; 58r-58v (cols.333-335) *Bonedd y Saint*; 58v (cols. 335-336) *Daroganau Estras*; 58v-59r (cols.336-338) *Prif y Lleuad*; 59r (col.338) *Diarhebion*; 59r-59v (cols. 338-340) *Trioedd Ynys Prydain*; 59v-61r (cols. 340-346) *Diarhebion*; 62r (col. 346) *Hyn a ddywedodd Sant Awstin am dewder y ddaear*; 61r (col.346) *Hyn a ddywedodd yr Enaid*; 61r-62v (cols 346-352) poetry. The column numbering then jumps from 352 on 62v to 385 on 63r.

[458] Most recently, several relevant chapters in Helen Fulton & Sif Rikhardsdottir (eds), *Charlemagne in the Norse and Celtic Worlds* (Cambridge, 2022) but especially Annalee C. Rejhon, 'The Reception of the French Epic in Medieval Wales: The Case of *Cân Rolant* and *Pererindod Chiarlymaen*', Ibid., 172-192. See also: Erich Poppe, 'Charlemagne in Wales and Ireland: some preliminaries on Transfer and Transmission', *Zeitschrift: Beiträge zur nordischen Philologie* 45 (2014), 169-189.

[459] Eduard Koschwitz (ed.), 'Ystoria Charles' and John Rhys (trans.), 'History of Charlemagne' in *Sechs Bearbeitungen des altfranzösischen Gedichts von Karls der Grossen Reise nach Jerusalem und Contantinopel* (Heilbron, 1879), 1-18 and 19-39; Stephen J Williams, 'Pererindod Siarlymaen' in *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 5 (1930), 203-226. A new edition, translation and study of Pererindod Siarlymaen by Annalee C. Rejhon is forthcoming as part of the Medieval and Modern Welsh Series of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.

available on *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*,[460] the French poem from which it seems the *Pererindod* was translated into medieval Welsh narrative (though Annalee Rejhon has argued that the French tale derives from a 'Celtic story involving a love triangle, in its Welsh Arthurian form').[461] A colophon at the end of the *Pererindod* notes that the text was translated from *rwmawns* (Romance – Old French) to *lladin* (Latin) at the behest of 'Reinallt urenhin yr ynyssed.'[462] Annalee Rejhon identifies Reinallt as Reginald, who was king of Man and the Western Isles in the late twelfth- and early thirteenth-centuries (1188-1226).[463] However, Rejhon has found no evidence for a Latin intermediary between the Old French and Welsh versions of the text and instead posits that the 'reference to Latin is in all probability a variation on the traditional appeal to that language as a guarantee of authority.'[464] It has long been established that the *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* differs in tone from the other texts of the Charlemagne cycle, being as it is, decidedly secular, comedic and almost satirical. And while the *Pererindod* is more serious in tone than the French text from which it derives, due to its conversion from verse to prose, it remains comedic and somewhat absurd. The connection between the *Pererindod* and the other Charlemagne texts was clearly an uncomfortable one to the medieval scribes, audiences, and translators of the material as is evidenced by the colophon which follows the *Pererindod* in all but one manuscript witness; which notes that the Archbishop Turpin did not write the *Pererindod* as its subject matter is not appropriate for a man of the Church.[465] The other texts of the cycle are religious in tone and it appears that their function was primarily edifying (as evidenced by the end of the bridging passage between the *Pererindod* and Pseudo-Turpin which is found in NLW MS Peniarth 7, NLW MS Peniarth 8 part i, NLW MS Peniarth 8 part ii and NLW MS Peniarth 10: 'ac y dichawn pawb a'y darlleo ac a'y gwarandawo […] yn dyall

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[460] For an edition and translation of the French text see Glyn Burgess (ed. and trans.) *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* (Edinburgh, 1998). For discussion see e.g.; Sarah Sturm, 'The Stature of Charlemagne in the Pèlerinage', *Studies in Philology* 71 (1974), 1-18; John D. Niles, 'On the Logic of 'Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne'', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* (1980), 208-216; David S. King, 'Humour and Holy Crusade: Eracle and the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne, *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* (1999), 148-155.

[461] Annalee C. Rejhon, 'The French Reception of a Celtic Motif: The Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople', *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, Vol 42, Issue 1 (1987), 344 – 361 at 361.

[462] Oxford, Jesus College MS 111, 154r. Accessed via < http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk/> on 9th May 2023. This colophon is retained in six of the eight manuscript witnesses for the *Pererindod.*

[463] Annalee C. Rejhon, 'The Reception of the French Epic in Medieval Wales', 173. Natalia Petrovskaia (*Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, 94-100) offers the alternative identification of Reinallt as Reginald de Braose (d.1228); she argues that situating Reinallt in the Marches makes more sense geographically, and additionally that it would account for the thematic unity of the Welsh Charlemagne Cycle in its concern with crusading ideals.

[464] Annalee C. Rejhon, 'The Reception of the French Epic in Medieval Wales', 173.

[465] The colophon is not retained in NLW MS Peniarth 8 part ii, but this manuscript is fragmentary and the *Pererindod* is missing both the beginning and ending of the tale. The *Llyfr Coch Hergest* version of the colophon reads 'ac nyt ymyrr*ó*ys Turpin yn hynny kanys g*ó*r egl*ó*yssic oed.' (and Turpin did not take part in that since he was an ecclesiastical man).

drwy gynghoreu ysbrydawl a berthynynt ar y neill ay gogonyant y Duw ay llewenyd y engylyon nef ay lles y eneidyeu Cristnogyon a'y gwarandawo.')[466] The *Pererindod*, however, remains more close in tone to the French texts which were predominantly intended as entertainment literature.[467]

Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne belongs to the genre of *chanson de geste* popular in France and across Europe throughout the Middle Ages; a genre concerned with telling the tale of the deeds of the chivalric protagonist. These deeds often involve conflict between Christians and non-Christians, usually characterised as Saracens (a term used in the Middle Ages by the Roman Catholic Church to refer to Muslims), and as such much *chanson de geste* may also be considered as 'crusades romance'.[468] The Crusades, a series of religious wars over holy sites in Jerusalem, occurred between the end of the eleventh to the end of the thirteenth centuries and quickly become a popular theme in the literature of Western Europe. Translations of the Charlemagne Cycle from French begin to appear in Wales in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, though Kathryn Hurlock asserts that 'the background of ideals, which would have facilitated the spread of the crusade ideology and propaganda, certainly existed in Wales long before crusading began.'[469] The translation into Welsh of the Charlemagne Cycle 'was a response both to the ideals of the crusade and the social and religious changes in the thirteenth century,'[470] it also demonstrates that the Welsh gentry were interested in French culture and the values depicted in the literature of that culture. This outward-look towards the courts of France began before the Edwardian Conquest,[471] but a familiarity with French culture remained a marker of prestige amongst the *uchelwyr* throughout the fourteenth century; 'moesau Ffrengig' is one of the things Hopcyn ap Tomas is praised for by Meurig ab Iorwerth in the poet's praise poem to the manuscript patron in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*[472] We will return to the significance of the inclusion of 'crusades

[466] 'and all who read and listen to them […] understand through spiritual counsels whether they pertain to glory to God or joy for the angels of heaven or benefit for the souls of Christians who listen to them.' (This passage and translation courtesy of Barry Lewis' handout from his paper on 'Rǫgnvaldr, king of Man and the Isles, and the Welsh Charlemagne stories' given at the International Congress of Celtic Studies, Bangor, 2019. My thanks to Professor Lewis for providing me with a copy of said handout).
[467] Natalia Petrovskaia, *Medieval Welsh Perceptions of the Orient*, 79.
[468] For an overview of both genres, see: Marianne Ailes and Jade Bailey, 'Chanson de Geste' in Siân Echard and Robert Ruse (eds), *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature in Britain* <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb429>; Siobhain Bly Calkin, 'Crusades Romance', in Ibid. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb293>
[469] Kathryn Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades c.1095-1291* (Cardiff, 2011), 3.
[470] Ibid., 54.
[471] Huw Pryce, 'Welsh Rulers and European Change, c.1100-1282' in John Watts (ed.), *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007), 37-51.
[472] R. Iestyn Daniel, *Gwaith Dafydd y Coed*, 126.

romances', specifically their placement in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and of Hopcyn ap Tomas' engagement with French literary culture in the manuscript below.

Pererindod Siarlymaen may be summarised as follows: one Whitsunday the somewhat vain king Charles asks his wife if she has ever heard of another king whose sword and crown become him better; the queen replies that she has not, although she has heard of a king who, if Charles saw him in his royal apparel, would cause Charles to lose all pride and to admit that this king was the most noble of all the kings on earth. Charles becomes angered at this and demands to know the name of this king and eventually, following threats of beheading, the queen relents and tells Charles she is speaking of Hu Gadarn, the king of Constantinople. Charles decides that he must see Hu Gadarn for himself; he and his twelve knights set off on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem with the intention of visiting Hu Gadarn afterwards. They march through France, Alemannia, Hungary, Rome, Calabria and Apulia, amassing as they go a campaign so large that only God himself would have been able to count. Following an uneventful journey, they make pilgrimage in Jerusalem, where they are (comically) mistaken for Jesus Christ and the twelve disciples inside a church by a passer-by, who then informs the patriarch (*padriarch*). The patriarch goes to the church and Charles tells him of his plans to visit Hu Gadarn. The patriarch blesses Charles, bestows the greater name Charlemagne on him, and gives him a number of the relics of Jerusalem. The virtue of the relics is confirmed when a passing cripple is miraculously able to walk again; the newly named Charlemagne gives the relics into the care of the Archbishop Turpin. Four months later, having begun the construction of a church, and with the patriarch's blessing, Charlemagne and his men set out on their journey to meet Hu Gadarn of Constantinople. As they approach Constantinople they see that it is a great and striking city with many buildings and meadows with beautiful flowers and aromatic trees planted in them. They come across a group of some three thousand elegantly dressed nobles partaking in noble activities. Charlemagne asks for Hu Gadarn and is directed towards a canopy of gold satin, underneath which Hu Gadarn, wearing fine gloves and a gold diadem, is tilling the land with a golden plough (which he does as an act of Christian devotion, mindful of his descent from Adam who said 'in the sweat and labour of thy body and the sorrow of thy heart shall thy food be.') Hu Gadarn invites Charlemagne to stay with him for a year so that they may build a friendship and then they all go into a hall of such great beauty that Charlemagne decides his wife should be forgiven. The hall is lined with magnificent statues of men blowing horns which come to life, making such a great noise that Charlemagne and his men are frightened and fall over; after this, the hall is prepared for a great feast. Charlemagne sits with his

knights either side of him and Hu Gadarn sits with his men, his queen, and their daughter. One of Charlemagne's men, Oliver, instantly falls in love with the princess, who is of incomparable beauty. After the feast, Hu Gadarn shows Charlemagne and his knights to their room, leaving a spy behind to eavesdrop on their conversation. Charlemagne and his knights are drunk and get carried away making increasingly ridiculous boasts about the feats they will accomplish in Hu Gadarn's presence in the morning; the spy hears these are thinks Charlemagne and his men are disrespectful after Hu Gadarn has shown them great hospitality. Eventually Charlemagne and his knights go to sleep and Hu Gadarn's spy reports back. Hu Gadarn is furious and the following morning he tells Charlemagne and his men that they must perform their boasts on pain of death. Charlemagne tries to excuse their behaviour by blaming Hu Gadarn's excellent drink for getting them drunk, but eventually he agrees to take counsel with his knights. Archbishop Turpin leads them in prayers and upon hearing these, God sends an angel down to Charlemagne to reassure him. Hu Gadarn chooses Charlemagne's knights one by one to attempt the feats that they had boasted about, which they successfully complete. After the third one. Hu Gadarn relents and pays homage to Charlemagne and surrenders his empire. Charlemagne gives Constantinople back to Hu Gadarn to rule over under his advice. They agree not to continue with the feats and instead celebrate this day that God made them friends by going on a parade. Charlemagne is now a foot taller than Hu Gadarn and broader too; the French nobles decide that the queen was wrong in her judgement that Hu Gadarn excelled Charlemagne. The archbishop Turpin blessed them both and, following a great feast, Charlemagne and his men return to France, pleased that Hu Gadarn submitted to him without the need for fighting. Charlemagne immediately goes to the church of St Denis to pray and give thanks for a successful pilgrimage and then distributes the relics that they brought back with them between the churches of France. He gives his wife tokens of his love and chooses to forgive her.

Although there is much that could be gleaned from a close textual study of the *Pererindod,* that is outwith the remit of this thesis. Turning instead to consider the manuscript context of *Pererindod Siarlymaen,* what is immediately noteworthy, as outlined in Table 7 below, is that this tale is separated from the other texts of the Charlemagne cycle despite the fact that in almost all earlier manuscript witnesses, the *Pererindod* comes first (which is perhaps because it was perceived to have the earliest historical setting, being that it is in the *Pererindod* where Charlemagne is given his name). The exception to this rule is the ordering of the Charlemagne cycle in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch,* however, the *Pererindod* is here still attached to the other texts of the cycle.

TABLE 7: ORDER OF CHARLEMAGNE TEXTS IN OTHER MANUSCRIPTS

NLW MS Peniarth 8 part i (c.1257-c.1325)	*Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Chronicl Turpin* *Cân Rolant* *Chronicl Turpin*
NLW MS Peniarth 8 part ii (c.1275-c.1325)	*Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Chronicl Turpin* *Cân Rolant*
NLW MS Peniarth 10 (c.1350)	*Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Chronicl Turpin* *Cân Rolant* *Chronicl Turpin*
NLW MS Peniarth 7 (c.1275-c.1325)	*Peredur* *Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Chronicl Turpin* *Cân Rolant* *Chronicl Turpin* *Ystoria Adda* *Y Groglith* *Elen a'r Grog* *Ystoria Bilatus* *Ystoria Judas*
Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch (c.1350)	*Chronicl Turpin* *Rhamant Otuel* *Pererindod Siarlymaen* *Cân Rolant* *Ystoria Bown o Hamtwn*

By the time of the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* it is clear that the Charlemagne cycle was already an established set of texts in the canon of medieval Welsh literature (notably,

three of the above manuscript witnesses contain only the Charlemagne cycle), and that although there is variation in the positioning of these texts to one another, they travelled together, so the separation of the *Pererindod* from the rest of the cycle in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is striking. Given that this is the only time that this text is separated from the rest of the texts of the Charlemagne cycle, I would argue that it is reasonable to view this as a deliberate decision on the part of the manuscript's patron or scribe. There is here an opportunity to use the manuscript context of the *Pererindod* as a way to interpret how the text was being perceived and engaged with by Hopcyn ap Tomas, or perhaps by Hywel Fychan. One possible suggestion is that being followed as it is by *Owein, Peredur* and *Macsen Wledig,* this tale begins a section of narrative prose concerned with Emperors. An overview of the instances of the word *amheraϭdyr* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* finds 277 instances; the spelling of *amheraϭdyr* in the manuscript is mostly stable, however there are a further eleven instances of the word with the variant spellings: *ameraϭdyr, amhaϭdyr, amheraudyr, amherawdyr, amheraϭdϭr, amheraϭtyr, amherϭdyr*. There are then a total 288 references to 'emperor' in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* and 95 of these are contained within the section of narrative prose texts beginning with the *Pererindod* and ending with *Bown o Hamtwn,* and then 47 of those are in those first four texts of the section (*Pererindod Siarlymaen, Owein, Peredur,* and *Macsen Wledig*). I would argue that for one sixth of the references to emperors in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* to be contained within just four of its texts is significant and that there is further research to be done here about the medieval Welsh ideas of empire and emperors in this small section of texts. Some of this work has been done already by Christina Chance, who in her PhD thesis, has examined the portrayal of empire in Wales after the Edwardian Conquest focusing on the figures of Macsen Wledig, Arthur, and Charlemagne.[473] She argues that the translation of the Charlemagne material into Welsh 'revealed an essentially foreign view of empire for the Welsh audience that provided Welshmen, particularly those in martial service, with an attractive chivalric motivation for mercenary activities.'[474] However, Chance notes that the *Pererindod* destabilises the chivalric ideals which are neatly upheld in the other Charlemagne texts, as the twelve knights receive no rewards for their service to Charlemagne and the feats which they are required to perform are undignified.[475] Perhaps it is because of the way in which this text 'exposes the uncertainties of the selfless service that are celebrated in the other Charlemagne stories,'[476] that Hopcyn or Hywel (who we could think of as the

[473] Christina Lenore Chance, 'Imagining Empire: Maxen Wledig, Arthur, and Charlemagne in Welsh Literature after the Edwardian Conquest' (unpublished PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2010).
[474] Ibid., 184.
[475] Ibid., 215.
[476] Ibid., 185.

'editors' of the manuscript) chose to separate the *Pererindod* from the other material, using it as a starting point for a collection of texts which each have their own varying portrayals of empire and emperors.[477]

It is fair to say that an *uchelwr* such as Hopcyn ap Tomas would have had his own ideas and opinions about empire and the ways in which the Welsh were experiencing empire under English rule. It doesn't seem like a stretch of the imagination to me that he may have expressed those ideas subtly through contrasting empire as it is portrayed in the *Pererindod* with the arguably more favourable portrayals of empire that we can find in *Owein* (where 'imperial subordinates are centrally important and the emperor respects and cares for those who serve him'[478]) and *Macsen Wledig* (which 'explores the rich and important relationship between the medieval Welsh and their Roman past, emphasizing the legitimacy of Rome and the rewards of participation in a good empire.')[479]

4.4 Bown o Hamtwn

Turning next to *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*, the tale that ends the clearly defined section of narrative prose under discussion, we find that there has already been a substantial amount of work done on this Welsh prose version of the popular Anglo-Norman heroic verse-romance *Boeve de Haumtone*; largely by Erich Poppe and Regine Reck.[480] *Bown*, provides a model for the kinds of things that can be deduced from the study of a middle Welsh adaptation of a popular European narrative. Likely first translated about a hundred years before the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* in the second half of the thirteenth-century, from an Anglo-Norman redaction close to one of the extant manuscript witnesses, *Bown*'s only earlier witness is (as one might expect) in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*.[481] In this manuscript

[477] Natalia Petrovskaia has argued that *Peredur* may also be considered as a Welsh contribution to the 'crusades romance' genre (Natalia Petrovskaia, 'Oaths, Pagans and Lions: Arguments for a Crusade Sub-Narrative in *Historia Peredur fab Efrawc*', *Poetica: An International Journal of Linguistic-Literary Studies*, 77 (2012), 1-26); this would create a further thematic link between the *Pererindod* and the beginning of this section of 'native' Welsh prose tales in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

[478] Christina Lenore Chance, 'Imagining Empire', 224.

[479] Ibid.

[480]Erich Poppe and Regine Reck, 'Rewriting *Bevis* in Wales and Ireland', in Jennifer Fellows & Ivana Djordjević (eds), *Sir Bevis of Hampton in literary tradition* (Cambridge, 2008), 37–50; 'A French romance in Wales: *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*: processes of medieval translations [Part I]', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 55 (2006): 122–180; 'A French romance in Wales: Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn: processes of medieval translations [Part II]', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie 56* (2008): 129–164.

[481] For an edition of the Anglo-Norman text see Judith Weiss (trans.), *Boueve De Haumtone and Gui De Warewic: Two Anglo-Norman Romances* (Arizona, 2008). Subsequent manuscript versions of the Welsh *Bown* are copies from either *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* or *Llyfr Coch Hergest.*

version, the tale has two beginnings; the first 21 lines of both openings in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* agree closely but there are significant stylistic differences in the rest where the second version makes use of direct speech as well as including additional detail not found in the Anglo-Norman version, evidencing an independent translation.[482] The *Llyfr Coch Hergest* version of *Bown* does not include the first beginning found in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch.* Poppe and Reck have demonstrated that this 'may be an indication of stages of fluidity' in the translation of the text before the version that is witnessed in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* acquires canonical status. [483] A Welsh-language edition of the full text by Morgan Watkin was published in 1958 and more recently, in 2009, Poppe and Reck have published edited selections of the text with and introduction, notes, and glossary in English.[484] Poppe and Reck provide an excellent summary of *Bown o Hamtwn*:

> The hero of the narrative is Bown, the son of the English lord Giwn and his young wife. She arranges for the murder of her elderly husband by the young German emperor with whom she is in love, and then marries the murderer. Bown's foster-father Sabaot rescues Bown from his mother's attempts to have him killed. Bown is sold as a slave to Saracens and then given to the pagan king of Egypt, who immediately takes a liking to him and offers him his daughter Iosian as wife. Bown refuses the union because he wants to remain a Christian, but nevertheless saves Iosian from a pagan suitor, Bradmwnd, with the help of the sword Morglei and the horse Arwndel, both given to him by Iosian. He finally succumbs to her courtship and she promises to become Christian. They exchange a kiss, and the king, misled about the innocent nature of their relations, sends Bown with a sealed letter, which contains the order for his execution, to Bradmwnd. Here he is imprisoned for six years. With God's help Bown finally escapes, and he finds Iosian again, who in the meantime has been married to Iuor, another pagan king, but has kept her chastity by means of a magic belt. Bown and Iosian flee from Iuor's court. During their flight Bown kills two lions and obtains the allegiance of the giant Copart. He takes Iosian and Copart to Cologne, where they are baptised. While Bown fights in England together with Sabaot against his stepfather, Iosian successfully rejects and kills another suitor, Milys. Bown defeats his stepfather, has him executed and thus prompts his mother's suicide. He rushes back to Iosian, saves her from being executed for the murder of Milys and finally marries her. Then he visits the court of London, and the English king restores his lands to him. At night the king's son tries to steal Arwndel and is killed by the horse. Bown is forced to leave England again, and he, Iosian, and Sabaot's son Terri travel to the East. Copart, whom Bown had left with Sabaot in England, betrays him to Iuor. Iuor has Iosian abducted by Saracens immediately after she has given birth to twins; Bown finds the boys and gives them into fosterage. During his search for Iosian he comes to the city Amulis, where he stays with the lady of the town for seven years. Meanwhile Iosian has been freed by

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[482] Erich Poppe, 'Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn' in Sian Echard & Robert Rouso (eds.) *The Encyclopaedia of Medieval Literature in Britain* (2017), accessed online via <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118396957.wbemlb434> on 08 September 2020.
[483] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales' [PartII], 163.
[484] Morgan Watkin, *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn: cyfiethiad canol y drydedd ganrif ar ddeg o 'La geste de Boun de Hamtone' gyda rhagymadrodd, nodiadau a geirfa* (Cardiff, 1958); Erich Poppe and Regine Reck, *Selections from Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*, *The Library of Medieval Welsh Literature*, 2 (Cardiff, 2009).

> Sabaot and, in a man's guise, searches with him for Bown. Finally they are reunited. Bown leads two battles against Iuor and the Saracens, who are defeated and converted to Christianity. Bown is made king of Iuor's empire, and his two sons become kings over Egypt and England respectively. Then Iosian, Bown, and his horse Arwndel die, and 'thus ends *Ystorya Bown* [*or* the tale of Bown]'.[485]

A great amount of work on the relationship between the between the Anglo-Norman *Boeve* and the Welsh *Bown* has been carried out by Poppe and Reck, revealing tantalising insights into the processes of translation and the perspectives of the translators, for example Poppe notes that the plot of *Boeve*:

> and its focus on a series of exciting events within a larger framework of crusading ideals and martial-Christian values are faithfully preserved in [*Bown*]. Its hero […] is presented as a model for the 'best knight in Christendom'. Additions on the level of content are minor and underline the importance of piety and dedication to the Christian faith. [*Boeve*] and [*Bown*] share the same view of the world.[486]

This reveals a shared worldview between the original Anglo-Norman scribe and the Welsh translator in terms of not only subject but also in 'their ideas about social values and about the ingredients of a successful narrative.'[487] As a parallel to this, we can say that the worldview depicted in *Bown* resonated with *uchelwyr* such as Hopcyn ap Tomas in Wales in the same or similar way as it did for those in the French courts.

Turning now to the manuscript context of this text, which as noted rounds off the clearly defined section of narrative prose that began with *Pererindod Siarlymaen*, I believe there is something intriguing about the situation of *Bown* immediately after *Culhwch ac Olwen*. There are some striking similarities between these two texts: both open with the background to the birth of the hero of the tale; the hero in each is given into fosterage and each has a parent who dies and is replaced by a step-parent; the action of the tale is centred around the quest for the hero to obtain their wife against special odds; the wife of the hero in each tale is the daughter of a non-Christian ruler; and there are giants, a boar, and named magical swords in each. In terms of theme and content, these two texts sit nicely alongside one another in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, however it seems to me that there is something interesting about the juxtaposition of *Culhwch* as one of the oldest 'native' Welsh tales next to *Bown*, which we could think of as being a reasonably 'new' text in the Welsh literary cannon at the time of manuscript construction. As noted above, *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* provides the only

[485] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales' [Part I], 129-130.
[486] Erich Poppe, 'Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn'.
[487] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales' [Part II], 161.

earlier attestation of *Bown*, and all of the other manuscript witnesses for this text stem from either that manuscript or from *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. As a result of this, unlike with the *Pererindod* we are not able to trace how *Bown* travelled through the literary networks of the Marches or draw comparisons from the text's manuscript context elsewhere. However, it is notable that for that one other manuscript witness, the manuscript context of *Bown* is different from *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. In *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*, *Bown* (in the hand of scribe C of that manuscript):

> forms a unit of five separate quires and was preceded – on the order of the original make-up of the volume – by the texts of the Charlemagne cycle, written by scribe B, and followed by the texts of the Mabinogion-corpus and the other traditional material, which is the work of scribes D and E.[488]

The Mabinogion texts in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* begin with *Pwyll*, and so in this manuscript there seems to be a clear section of translated texts popular in the French and Anglo-Norman courts (which have their origins in *chansons de geste* and may be considered 'crusades romance'), followed by a deliberate section of 'native' Welsh tales, beginning with the first of the Four Branches of the Mabinogion. The order of these texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is distinctly different, and I think there are grounds for determining that this is as a result of an intentional editorial decision, which then allows us to postulate about how the texts were being perceived by the manuscript's patron and/or scribe, Hopcyn and/or Hywel. Is there some kind of statement being made in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* through the placement of one of the oldest 'native' Welsh tales immediately preceding a 'new' European text – whose hero is styled, in the words of Erich Poppe, as 'best knight in Christendom' – about the quality of 'native' Welsh literary culture? Or perhaps that the values which are upheld as desirable in such *chanson de geste* have long since been appreciated in Wales? Further, I would argue that there is no Welsh tale which provides a better example of a 'native' *chanson de geste* than *Culhwch ac Olwen*, if that genre is to be defined as narrating the chivalric deeds of the hero, often in conflict with a non-Christian rival. If, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the culture of the French courts and their literature were deemed to be the epitome of high status amongst the *uchelwyr* in fourteenth-century Wales then I believe that there is some significance in the choice of Hopcyn and/or Hywel to sandwich the corpus of 'native' Welsh tales between these two popular European narrative tales.

[488] Erich Poppe & Regine Reck, 'A French Romance in Wales', 133.

4.5 KEDYMDEITHAS AMLYN AC AMIC

Available scholarship on the third text under consideration here, *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is sparse, as are medieval manuscript witnesses for the tale – it is only found in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Available editions of the tale are as follows: J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.), *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* (Llanbedrog, 1908) and Patricia Williams (ed.), *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* (Cardiff, 1982);[489] as of yet there is no published English translation of the Welsh tale, however my own is provided at the end of this chapter. *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is translated from the Latin text of the *Vita Amici et Amelii carissimorum,* from which there is also an Anglo-Norman version *Amys e Amillyoun*.[490] Hailing from a Latin original, *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is unique in terms of the texts under consideration in this chapter, and this will be further remarked upon below. Patricia Williams has demonstrated that the Welsh *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* follows the Latin original closely, presenting a detailed comparison of differences between the two in the introduction to her edition of the text.[491] The oldest version of the Latin text is attributed to the monk Radulphus Toritarius from around 1090, and it is thought to have been translated into Welsh in the first quarter of the fourteenth century.[492] This makes *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* the 'newest' translated text under consideration here, in terms of the translation activity having happened closest to the time of the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Although the surviving manuscript witnesses for *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* are not plentiful, it seems evident that this was still a well-known, popular, tale in Wales by the mid-fourteenth century, given that references are made to the text in the poetry of both Dafydd ap Gwilym (fl. 1340-1370) and Iolo Goch (c.1320-c.1398).[493]

Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic is a curious text with many strange episodes, however the main thread of the story may be summarised as follows: When Pepyn Hen was king of

[489] A diplomatic edition of the tale with French translation is also available: M. Llywarch Reynolds & M. H. Gaidoz, 'L'amitidé d'Amis er d'Amiles, texte gallois publié le Livre Rouge d'Oxford', *Revue Celtique* 4 (1879-1880), 201-244.
[490] For an overview of the earliest witnesses to the tale see Jessica Hemming, '*Ami and Amile*: A Partial Source for *Pwyll*?', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 32 (1996) 57-93 at59-61. For an edition of the Anglo-Norman text see Hideka Fukui, (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Text Society. Plain Texts Series 7: Amys e Amillyoun* (London, 1990). An edition of the Latin text is provided by Franz Mone, 'Die Sage vom Amelius und Amicus', *Anzeiger für Kunde der deutschen Vorzeit* (1836), 146-163.
[491] Patricia Williams, *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic,* xxviii-xxxii
[492] Ibid., xiv and xxxiv.
[493] Ibid., xxxvii.

France a boy was born to a nobleman in Bergain in Germany and he and his wife vowed to take the boy to be baptised in by the Pope Custennin Rome. At the same time the Earl in Auvergne, whose wife was pregnant, had a dream-vision where he saw the Pope in Rome baptising two sons. The Earl summoned his nobles to ask what they could interpret from the dream, and they explained that the Earl's wife was to give birth a son who was to be baptised by the Pope in Rome. After the Earl's son turned two, they set out for Rome and when they arrived, they were told about a German nobleman with a son identical to the Earl's. They became great friends and travelled together to ask the Pope to baptise the boys; the boys became inseparable and were baptised and the Pope who named the German nobleman's son Amic and the Earl of Auvergne's son Amlyn. They were each given an identical decorative vial as a gift and evidence that they were baptised by the Pope in Rome. Years later, following the death of his father and the loss of his inheritance, Amic decided to go to Auvergne to seek the support of Amlyn; but Amlyn, having heard the news, had already set out to find Amic. Amic stays with a hospitable nobleman who gives him his daughter in marriage as well as giving land and wealth to his foster brothers so they had no more need to steal what rightfully belonged to Amic. After a year and a half Amic realises that he should resume his search for Amlyn. They are eventually reunited near Paris and then go together to the court of Charlemagne, King of France where Amlyn was made a steward to the King and Amic was made a treasurer. After three years at the court of Charlemagne Amic decides that he must return to his wife, while Amic is away Amlyn has an affair with the King's daughter and must prove his loyalty to the King through trial by combat with the Earl Ardric. The Queen begs the King to allow the trial to take place at a later date, once Amlyn had been able to get counsel from Amic, and this is agreed. Upon his return, Amlyn and Amic swap places: Amlyn goes home to Amic's wife, who does not realise he is not her husband (Amlyn places his sword in the bed between them and that is how they slept every night); Amic goes to fight the Earl Ardric and wins by beheading him. The King's daughter is given in marriage to Amic, in the guise of Amlyn, and the wedding feats is delayed until the two swap places again. A long time later, Amic contracts leprosy and begs his servants to take him to see the Pope in Rome for strength and advice. Amic stayed for years until a famine came upon Rome and his servants begged leave of him. They carried him towards the court of Amlyn and left him there on the doorstep. Amlyn sent a servant to take food and wine to the sick man on the doorstep and the wine was put in the vial that the Pope had given him in Rome when he was baptised and because Amic had his own identical vial, Amlyn recognised him. Amlyn takes Amic in to care for him and then one night the angel Rafael comes to tell them that it is God's will that Amlyn kills his two sons and uses their blood to bathe Amic, who will

then be cured. Amlyn beheads his sons, collecting their blood and leaving their bodies in the bed, covering them in a way which made it seem as though they were sleeping. Amic bathes in the boys' blood and his leprosy is immediately cured. There is a feast to celebrate Amic's recovery and Amlyn's wife asks him to wake their sons and bring them to the hall. Amlyn goes to their room and finds them perfectly well save for a scar on their necks as evidence of the miracle that God had performed. Amlyn takes his sons to the hall and confesses everything to his wife, who is only angry he didn't her of his plan so that she could help kill their sons to save Amic. That same day, Amic's wife died and he took some knights with him back to Germany to reclaim his castle. After Amic was healthy and had regained his kingdom the Pope Adrian sent one of his cardinals to Charlemagne to tell him about the crusades against the Saracens. Charlemagne asked Amlyn and Amic to fight the cause with him and after a difficult battle he overcame Desiderius, King of Lombardy, who was fighting on the side of the Saracens against the Pope. However, Amlyn and Amic were killed in battle and Charlemagne buried in two churches that he built specifically for the purpose and the next morning after they were buried God transferred the body of Amlyn into Amic's coffin so that they were buried together.

Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic shares themes common to hagiography, *chanson de geste*, and 'crusades romance' in its narration of the divinely sanctioned and extraordinary friendship between Amlyn and Amic; the episodes in which Amlyn and Amic each get their wives, and the swapping of places in the marital bed (which is reminiscent of the first part of *Pwyll Pendefig Dyfed* and forms ones of the similarities between the texts that has led Jessica Hemming to argue that *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* could be a source for the story of *Pwyll*);[494] the backdrop of Charlemagne as King of France, and the chivalric death of Amlyn and Amic in battle against the Saracens. The tale would have been well-placed in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* as part of the clearly defined narrative prose section between cols. 605-928, however as noted at the beginning of this chapter, the manuscript context of this *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is isolated from these other texts of the same form and in this sense at first glance the text appears to be out of place. *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* follows some *Hengerdd* and some *Diarhebion,* and is in turn followed by the Bardic Grammars and then a selection of religious poetry. Patricia Williams demonstrated that *Amlyn ac Amic* was translated from a Latin exemplar (evidenced by the forms *Lucam* for *Lucques; Clusas* for *Cluses; Desiderius* for *Didier;* and of course, *Amic* for *Amicus*),[495] and written in the hand

[494] Jessica Hemming, '*Ami and Amile*: A Partial Source for *Pwyll*?'.
[495] Patricia Williams, *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* (Cardiff, 1982), xxiii.

of Hywel Fychan, the text occupies a quire to itself. I believe that this signifies that the text came into the manuscript via a different route from the *Pererindod* and *Bown,* which stem from French originals. There are some overtly Christian passages which are not found in either the Latin source for the translation nor the other extant French version, quoted and translated in full here:

> (1)
> Ac yn diannot, medylya beth a dylyych y gadw, nyt amgen no'r Dengeir Dedyf: beth a dylyych y ochel, nyt amgen no phechawt: beth a dylyych y gredu nyt amgen no'r ffydd a'r gret y mae yr Eglwys Gatholic yn y dangos y'r Gristnogaeth, nyt amgen yw hynny no bot vn Duw hollgyfoethawc, a bot teir person, y Tat a'r Mab a'r Yspryt Glan, a geni Iessu o Veir, wyry kynn esgor a gwedy esgor, a chyuodi Iessu Grist o veirw, ac esgynnv ohonaw ar nefoed, a'e dyuot y uarnu Dyd Brawt ar vyw ac ar veirw. Medylyaw heuyt a dylyy beth a dylyych y obeithiaw, nyt amgen noc am lewenyd teyrnas nef drwy weithredoed d o'th blegyt dy hun, ac o rat yr Iessu Grist drwy rym diodefiyeint ar y groc. Car Duw a'th gymodogyon, medylya am dy angheu, kanys hynny a eirch yr Ystrythur Lan, yr honn a dyweit drwy eneu Sefyl uab Dauyd. Medylya am y pyngkeu diwethaf, ac yn dragywydawl ny phechy. Nyt amgen yw hynny no phan del angheu y wahanv dy eneit a'th gorff, y byrir y corff ryvygus y'r pryuet a'r eneit y boeneu uffern ony heydy nef o weithredoed da kynn angeu, ac y byd reit itt Dyd Brawt yg gwyd y trillu wrtheb dros dy weithredoed.[496]
>
> And without delay, consider what you should keep, none other than the Ten Commandments: what you should eschew, none other than sin; what you should believe none other than the faith and the creed that the Catholic Church shows to Christendom, none other is that than that there is one almighty God, and that there are three people, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and Jesus born of Mary, a virgin before delivery and after delivery, and the rising of that Jesus Christ from the dead, and his ascending to heaven, and his coming to judge on Judgement Day on the living and the dead. You ought to consider also that which you ought to hope for, none other than for joy in the kingdom of heaven through acts of goodness on your own part, and from the grace of Jesus Christ through the virtue that he suffered on the cross. Love God and your neighbours, and whatever thing you may do or say or think, think about your death, since that is what the Holy Scripture asks, that which is said through the mouth of Solomon son of David. Think about the last things, and sin not everlastingly. Not otherwise is that than when death will come and separate your spirit from your body, the foolhardy body is cast to the worms and the spirit to the pains of Hell unless you have earned Heaven through good deeds before death, and on Judgement Day you will need to answer for your deeds in the presence of the three throngs.
>
> (2)
> A'e gorff a gladwyt drwy diruawr enryded yn **y vanachlawc** a seilyassei y dat kyn noc ef.[497]
>
> And his body was buried through very great honour in **the monastery** which his father founded before him.

[496] Ibid., 3 (lines 87-106).
[497] Ibid., (lines 113-114). My emphasis.

(3)
Keisswn ninheu vedylyaw y'r Idewon dehol Iessu Grist, a'e anurdaw, a'e grogi am dref y dat; gwerthu heuyt o veibion Iago Badriarch Ioseph, eu brawt, a'e dehol o'e wlat, a throssi o Duw pob vn o'r deu bwngk hynny yn glot ac enryded udunt. Duw hevyt a dyweit na deuir y deyrnas nef onyt trwy drallawt a llauur. Wrth hynny, arglwydi vrodyr, gobeith yw gennym y trossa Duw hynn ar enryded a lles y ninheu etto. Kanys y neb y bo trallawt arnaw yn wirion, ac a'e godefo yn bwyllic, y mae Duw, y gwr ny dyweit kelwyd, yn adaw idaw teyrnas nef.[498]

We endeavour to think of the Jews exiling Jesus Christ and disfiguring him, and crucifying him because of his birthright; [the] selling also of the patriarch Joseph, their brother, by the sons of Jacob, and his being exiled from his land, and God turned every one of those two occurrences into merit and honour to them. [It is] God also who said that there will not be coming to the kingdom of heaven if not through tribulation and labour. On account of that, lord brothers, there is hope with us that God will turn this to honour and benefit for us yet. Since to the one who might truly have tribulation, and who might bear it patiently, God, the one who does not tell lies, promises to him the kingdom of heaven.

Taken alongside the fact that the text has a Latin original, these overtly Christian passages would seem to suggest that *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* came to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* through a clerical route. Along with these passages, there is also at the very end of the tale a passage referring to Bernard of Clairvaux, which is again unique to the Welsh version of the tale, and perhaps signifies that the source of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* could have been a Cistercian monastery (a case could perhaps be made for Strata Florida being the Cistercian monastery in question here, given that it was a site of prolific medieval literary production in Wales, with ties to other significant manuscripts such as NLW MS 6680b, *Llawysgrif Hendregadredd* and *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*). By comparison, the *Pererindod,* as we have seen, was an established text in Wales, with a long history of manuscript transmission as part of the Charlemagne cycle, and as such likely came into the possession of the scribes of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* through lay routes – from an exemplar lent to the scriptorium at Ynysforgan by another *uchelwr,* perhaps. I would argue the same for *Bown,* since it also appears in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and presumably also therefore in the lost common exemplar for both manuscripts. However it seems clear that this was not the case for *Amlyn ac Amic.*

[498] Ibid., 4 (lines 127-136).

This argument is strengthened when we consider that the text is written in a single quire (for which there are only four missing folios, all of them blank). It is clear that this tale was sourced separately from the other two translations of Popular European Narrative under discussion here, presumably after the section of the manuscript containing narrative prose texts had been completed. It was not possible to add *Amlyn ac Amic* in at the end of the section to which it might seemingly most naturally belong since the text of *Bown* runs-on into medical texts which occupy the same quire. However, it could be argued that the text was placed in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with consideration of where else it might fit; *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* does in some sense fit in with its surroundings in the manuscript since it contains these overtly religious passages and is followed in the manuscript by a section of religious poetry attributed to Elidir Sais, Meilir ap Gwalchmai, Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch, Cyddelw Brydydd Mawr and others – separated only by a copy of the Bardic Grammars. As previously noted, Dafydd Johnston has demonstrated that this religious poetry between cols. 1143 and 1193 was selectively chosen by Hywel Fychan from exemplars which also contained other kinds of poetry.[499] This clearly demonstrates that Hywel was engaged in selective editorial practices in the construction of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and so it is not a great leap to suppose that upon receiving the translation of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* he sought to find a place for it in the manuscript where it would sit comfortably with the texts around it. In a sense, despite the difference in literary form, *Amlyn ac Amic*, begins a section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with a religious theme.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The examination in this chapter of the manuscript context of the three Popular European Narrative texts, *Pererindod Siarlymaen, Bown o Hamtwn,* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* has shown that there is clear evidence of an organisational principle behind the placement of all three of these texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*. There is undoubtedly much more work that could be done on the manuscript context of all three tales, especially with regards to how *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Bown o Hamtwn* interact with the 'native' tales that they bookend – for example, how do they portray different ideas and ideals of power and lordship? Another avenue for further research would be to carry out work on the relationship between the original French and Latin and the Welsh versions of *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* in the same way the Erich Poppe and Regine Reck have done

[499] Dafydd Johnston, review of *Gwaith Meilyr Brydydd a'i Ddisgynyddion*, 184.

for *Bown o Hamtwn*, however this is not something that it would have been possible to undertake in this thesis. In the case of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic*, it seems this text came from a different source than the other narrative prose texts of the manuscript, and that an effort was made to incorporate this text at a point in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* where there could still be some thematic coherence in terms of manuscript context. In the case of *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Bown o Hamtwn*, it appears to me that the sandwiching of the 'native' Welsh tales between two popular French tales is significant, and the differing order of this material in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* and the fact that it is only in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* that the *Pererindod* is separated from the rest of the Charlemagne material provides evidence that this was a deliberate editorial decision on the part of either Hywel Fychan or Hopcyn ap Tomas (or perhaps both of them, working on the plan for *Llyfr Coch Hergest*'s construction together). In his engagement with French literary culture Hopcyn ap Tomas positions himself as an educated and worldly individual, and in the placement of 'native' Welsh tales in between two modern translated French texts a statement is being made in this section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* about Wales' place on the world stage in terms of literature and culture, specifically, that the literature and culture of Wales is on a par with that of the French courts, which carried such high status amongst the *uchelwyr* in fourteenth-century Wales. I argued in the previous chapter that Hopcyn ap Tomas' interests in the history of Wales and how Wales fits into the wider history of the world are born out in the first section of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, and my argument here is that in the section of clearly defined narrative prose bookended by the *Pererindod* and *Bown* we see these interests developed on an international level in which Wales is deemed to have just as much to offer as France.

KEDYMDEITHAS AMLYN AC AMIC – A TRANSLATION

The following translation, which follows Patricia Williams' 1982 edition of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic* is supplied as there is as of yet no published English translation of this text available. This is not a fully developed academic translation of the texts and no notes are provided (although references to Williams' notes are occasionally given). Instead, it is simply hoped that this translation may prove useful for further study of this interesting and unusual text, which has so far been relatively neglected in the scholarship, by increasing the text's accessibility. The translation is a fairly literal one, and care has been taken to retain the line numbers corresponding to Williams in square brackets to allow easy comparison with that edition of the text. Where identifiable, placenames have been modernised with original versions supplied in brackets.

It is in this form that the friendship of Amlyn and Amic is set out.

In the time when Pepyn Hen[500] was king in the country of France, a boy was born to an excellent and noble knight from Germany, in the castle that was called Berigan,[501] from his wedded wife. And because there was not a son nor daughter to them except for that one, they felt immense joy. [5]. And from the love of God, he who gave an heir to them, a promise they made, through a vow to God, to take the boy towards Rome to take baptism from the nobleman saint who was Pope at that time, so that their son might be greater through the blessing and benefit and success.

And in that time, He showed a vision, while he was sleeping, [10]. to the nobleman who was the Earl in Auvergne, while his wife was pregnant. No other vision was shown to him than seeing the Pope of Rome in his hall in Auvergne baptising sons, and their strengthening through confirmation by a bishop. And after the Earl awakened, he summoned to him the nobles of the realm, and told them his dream, and asked them to decipher it, since he did not [15]. know what that signified. And then God gave spirit and understanding to one of the wise ones to answer him in this way: 'Lord Earl,' he said, 'be happy; since from the pregnancy that is in the womb of your wife there will be born a gracious, successful,

[500] Father to Charlemagne.
[501] See Patricia Williams' notes, 24-25: possibly a place name, but possibly also a personal name (i.e. Beric's Castle).

praiseworthy son, who will be proverbial in his perfection and his conduct and his military prowess around the world. And that son, [20]. Lord,' he said, 'you will sacrifice to God, and you will go towards Rome and take baptism from the nobleman who is Pope, so that he may be greater, and gracious and successful his character from then on.' And then the Earl was happy about the deciphering of the dream in that manner, and for the counsel that the devout nobleman gave to him. [25].

And after a little while a son was born to the Earl, and he was raised with great joy. And after his rearing until he was than two years old, his father set out with him, and a great retinue with him of knights and esquires, towards Rome. And when they came to the city that was called Lucca, it was told to them that a nobleman had taken lodgings in the city: [30]. 'and the kingliest son with him, and he is the most like your son that anyone has ever seen.' No other was that nobleman than the knight from Berigan Castle, the man who held land under the French king, and his ancestry from Germany. And after the Earl visited that nobleman and brought their sons in front of them, there was not alive one man who would know [35] the difference between the boys, not from size nor from appearance, except for their clothes. And after each one of them knew the sense and mind of the other, they took great happiness because it was the same mission that they were going to seek: none other than beseeching the Pope to baptise their sons. And from that day they travelled together; and a very great friendship [40]. there was between them, through sincere love. And whatever thing there might be of love between the noblemen, you would see a peculiar friendship between the boys, so much so that neither had a desire to eat nor drink nor sleep without the other.

And however so long they were travelling towards Rome, they [45]. came to the nobleman who was Pope, who was called Constantine (Custennin), and they said to him thusly: 'Lord [and] Holy Father, the man who we know to be governing Christendom under God in the place of Peter the apostle, here is the Earl of Auvergne and an excellent praiseworthy knight from Berigan Castle in Germany, beseeching your Fatherliness, to baptise [50]. our sons, and give your blessing to them, and taking whatever we have that you desire of gold and silver for your labour.'

And to those reports the Pope replied to then in this manner: 'Your own free will for offering your wealth to me is acceptable. Your own goods, moreover, I do not desire, [55]. because I have no need of them. The wealth that you would give to me, give to the needy,

for the love of God, the ones who have need of it; and the request which you requested, that you will get; that is, the baptising of your sons.' And he placed as a name on the son of the Earl of Auvergne, Amlyn, and on the son of the knight from Berigan, Amic, and prayed to God, [60]. to give a blessing and spirit to them to serve God faithfully, so that they would get through their service to God joy in the kingdom of heaven. And the chief knights of the land of Rome held the boys as they were baptised.

And after the Pope had baptised their sons, he gave to each [65]. of them a vial of excellent goldsmith's work of gold and of silver. And a valuable gemstone was on the vials in the same colour and the same size and the same goldsmith's work. And there was not alive one man who would know the difference between them, because of their similarity, of those he might see separately. And their Holy Father said to them in this manner: 'Take this gift, [70]. Lord sons, from your Holy Father as evidence while you are living that you were baptised in the Church of Peter in Rome.'

And after the noblemen had received their objectives freely according to their desire, they thanked the Pope for his labour and the gifts that he gave to their sons. And with great joy they set out [75] towards their land.

And after the son of the excellent knight from Castle Berigan had grown, God gave to him an abundance of sense and wisdom and intellectual gifts by the time that he was thirty years old so that he was called in every land the second Solomon, because of his wisdom. And in that time [80]. the man who was a father to him fell sick from the sickness that he died from. And in his weakness, before his soul was separated from his body, he called his son to him, and he advised in this way: 'Lord son,' he said, 'behold God taking me to him, and leaving you without a bodily father, against your own will. On account of that, Lord son,' he said, 'take God as a father to you, and [85] a ruler over you, the one who will never die: and fulfil his commands, and keep his counsels firmly in your heart. And without delay, consider what you should keep, none other than the Ten Commandments: what you should eschew, none other than sin; what you should believe, none other than the faith and the creed that the Catholic Church [90]. shows to Christendom, none other is that than that there is one almighty God, and that there are three people, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and Jesus born of Mary, a virgin before delivery and after delivery, and the rising of Jesus Christ from the dead, and his ascending to heaven, and his coming to judge on Judgement Day on the living and the dead. You ought to consider also that which you ought to hope for,

none other than for joy in the kingdom of heaven through acts of goodness on your own part, and from the grace of Jesus Christ through the virtue that he suffered on the cross. Love God and your neighbours, and whatever thing you may do or say or think, think about your death, since that is what the Holy Scripture asks, that which is said [100]. through the mouth of Solomon son of David. Think about the last things, and sin not everlastingly. Not otherwise is that than when death will come and separate your spirit from your body, the foolhardy body is cast to the worms and the spirit to the pains of Hell unless you have earned Heaven through good deeds before death, and on Judgement Day you will need to answer for your deeds in the presence of the three throngs[502] [105]..[503] Seek to also maintain true friendship with the son of the Earl of Auvergne, because of your taking baptism on the same day from the Pope of Rome, and receiving gifts from him; and because of your being as similar in form and appearance and shape, that there is not a man who would know the difference between you because of your similarity. [110].

And after the holy nobleman had counselled his son in that manner, he took the sacraments that belonged to the Church, and surrendered his spirit to the Creator. And his body was buried with very great honour in the monastery which his father founded before him.

And after the nobleman's death and his burial in a kingly place, [115]. a number of devilish excommunicated people from the kinsfolk of the young lad rose, and they were bad towards him, and disrespected him. And through their wickedness and their excommunication, they overpowered the young lad for his patrimony, and his land; and they drove him out as an exile, to beg all around the world. And despite that he loved every one of them, and he [120]. beseeched God to forgive them. And shortly the wickedness of the kinsfolk against him was so great that he could not get alms in his own land, nor anyone of whom it was known that he loved him.

Then, memory came to him of the counsels of his father, and to his twelve foster brothers who were following him he said in this manner: [125]. 'Lord brothers,' he said, 'the wickedness of my kinsfolk from the desire for my wealth is what distances us and drives us out of our land. We endeavour to think of the Jews exiling Jesus Christ and disfiguring him, and crucifying him because of his birthright; [the] selling also of the patriarch Joseph, their

[502] See Patricia Williams' note on *trillu*, 32*:* unclear exactly what is meant here, suggestion that it is the traditional division of Judgement Day, the very good, the very bad and those who end up in purgatory.
[503] From 'take God' in line 85 to here does not appear in either the French or Latin versions of this tale.

brother, by the sons of Jacob, and his being exiled from his land, and God turned every one of those two occurrences [130]. into merit and honour to them. [It is] God also who said that there will not be coming to the kingdom of heaven if not through tribulation and labour. On account of that, lord brothers, there is hope with us that God will turn this to honour and benefit for us yet. Since to the one who might truly have tribulation, and who might bear it patiently, God, the one who does not tell lies, promises [135]. to him the kingdom of heaven. On account of that, lord brothers, let us go onwards towards the court of the Earl of Auvergne, my friend, the man, from my reckoning, who will not refuse to me anything that I entreaty to him. And if we do not get joy from that gentleman, we will go to Hildegard, the Queen of France, the woman who is accustomed to commiserate with those who may behold tribulation on them. [140].

And then they journeyed onwards towards the land of the Earl of Auvergne. And after their coming into the land of the Earl, they asked for the road towards the court that the Earl was in. And when they came there, the Earl had started out for the court of Amic, his friend, after hearing of the death of the nobleman who was his father. And after the Earl did not get Amic in [140]. his own court, he was very sad because of that. And he thought not to turn backwards ever to his land, until he got certain news concerning his friend. And after he did not get any news about him in France, he journeyed forth [150]. towards Germany to the midst of his kinsfolk. And he did not get there any news about him. And if there were a lot of labour [from] Amlyn in seeking Amic so, greater by far, if that would be possible, was the labour of Amic in seeking Amlyn, without rest.

And as Amic was seeking Amlyn, he came one night [155]. to the court of a nobleman, he and his companions. And they prayed for lodgings for God's sake. And the nobleman was pleasant to them. And the love of men of the house was shown to them and the respect of guests. And after a feast, the nobleman asked them what were their messages, and from which country did they come from, and where were they going. And then Amic related to him his condition from the [160] beginning to the end, none otherwise than the death of his father, his dispossession and his exiling from his kinsfolk so much so that they would not suffer him to be begging in his own land; and that he was between day and night from the time when he had been in exile seeking the Earl of Auvergne, his friend, the man who he hoped would get rid of the suffering that was [165]. on him.

And when the nobleman had heard [of] the situation he commiserated with him, and recognised from his words that he was wise and gifted. And he said to his thusly: ‘O princely chief,’ he said, ‘ On account of my recognising getting from you more wisdom and natural endowment than any man that I ever saw in my time, I will give to you my daughter to marry, she who is the heir to my wealth; and your foster brothers I will make wealthy in land and earth and honour, so that there will not be a need for them, through God’s power, [to have] a single concern. And happiness was with Amic and his companions [because of] those words. And they made concord about the wedding and they spent the night [175] through very great merriment.

And after Amic and his companions had stayed together with his wife for a year and half, he said to his companions thusly: ‘Lord brothers,’ he said, ‘we have done that which we ought not, namely, languishing and being inactive in our seeking of Amlyn, the young lad whom I reckon to be truer [180]. in his love than any woman in the world.

And from general counsel, he and his companions, he took leave of his step-father and his wife; and he left with his wife two of his foster brothers. And they journeyed forth, and he with his eight foster brothers as attendants to him, across the world towards the country of France, to seek [185]. Amlyn. And at that time he took with him the vial which had been given to him by the Pope Custennin on the day that he was baptised by him.

And for that length of time Amlyn was searching with very great labour and care. And when he came to Paris a pilgrim met him. And he asked to him if he had seen anything of [190] Amic, the son of the knight from Berigan Castle, or heard anything [about] him. ‘I have not heard, I confess it to God’, said the pilgrim, ‘and I do not know anything of him.’ And then Amlyn gave a tunic to the pilgrim for pray with him, and for beseeching to God and the saints to expedite his seeking of Amic, and to end the great labour that was on him in seeking him since two years [195] and more. And then Amlyn came to the court of Charlemagne, the king of France, and he did not get there any news about him.

The pilgrim, moreover, to whom he gave the tunic, journeyed onwards until three o’clock of that day; and then he met with Amic and his companions. And after the pilgrim greeted him well, [200]. Amic greeted him well, and said: ‘Alas! Servant of God, did you hear a tale at all, from the way that you have travelled, about Amlyn, Earl of Auvergne?’ And the pilgrim was greatly surprised, and asked him why he was mocking him, a servant

of God, so much so as to try to deceive him. ‘Because you,’ he said ‘Lord, asked me this morning that which you are asking [205]. now. The news that I have is that you yourself are Amlyn, Earl of Auvergne, and it is stranger to me than anything, why you have changed clothes and horses and companions and weapons, and are seeking from me that which you sought this morning, when you gave to me the tunic that I am wearing and prayed with me.” [210].

And then Amic sad to the pilgrim: ‘Lord pilgrim,’ he said, ‘do not be offended, I am not Amlyn, the man who is similar to me, rather [I am] Amic, the son of the knight from Berigan castle, the man who is not resting for his seeking.’ And he gave money (silver) to him for praying with him so that it would be easier before him getting his errand. And then the pilgrim advised [215). him to journey towards Paris to seek Amlyn, the man that was loving him so much that he would not rest for seeking him.

And he took the road to Paris. And when he was coming towards the town, he saw in a clover-filled meadow, on the banks of the river which is called the Seine, a fair kingly retinue of knights taking their [220]. dinner. None other were those knights than Amlyn and his companions. And as Amlyn saw the armed knights coming towards him he made for them angrily, as a result of reckoning that they were thieves and outlaws. And as Amic and his companions saw that retinue approaching them fiercely, he said [225]. to his companions: ‘Lord foster brothers, because you have been ready always until today to suffer tribulation and sorrow and danger together with me, seek today to valiantly retaliate with your blood, and fight furiously with the men with whom I do not see any mercy towards us. If God gives a victory to us against that great retinue over there, singular [230]. praise we will get across the kingdom of France, and honour and reverence in the court of the King greater than anyone has ever gotten.

And after he had finished giving that advice to his companions, they lowered their helmets, and let go of their horses’ heads, and lowered their spears from every direction, and fiercely attacked until there was [235]. nobody among them who knew for sure who would win. And after each of them had broken their spears in each other, they drew their swords and fought.

God, moreover, all-powerful, the One who is able to arrange all things and every love, and end every labour, sent spiritual light [240]. through his grace into their hearts so much so that each one of them recognised the other. And suddenly the son of the knight from

Berigan castle said to Amlyn and his companions: ‘Lord knights, which ones are you? And what merit is there for as many a retinue as you are to kill Amic [who is] exiled, the man for who it was more necessary for him to welcome joy after the [245]. tribulation and the labour that was on him in seeking Amlyn son of the Earl of Auvergne, than seeking to kill him in this manner?’ And after hearing from Amlyn this report they took great pain and Amic recognised his friend and said to him thusly: ‘O, the truest of friends! O, the most superior of knights! How did I not recognise you [250]. Amlyn, the son of the Earl of Auvergne, the man who is roving around the world for two and a half years seeking me?’

And then those two fell to the floor while releasing their abundant tears and embracing. And from the total wholehearted devotion of their hearts, they thanked God, the one who does not leave too long in wandering [255]. and straying the one who has faith [in him], and those who might seek to see him through correct love. And then they went to strengthen their friendship and the unity between them through an oath and solemn pact in the monastery of Saint Germain, above the great altar and the sacred relics that were there, that one would never fail the other, not with respect to love nor counsel, nor [260]. support while they were living, because of the righteousness of the law of God, of everything which pertains to true friendship.

And then without delay they went towards the court of Charlemagne, King of France. And then there was seen two kingly noblemen [who were] true and wise together, whom God had endowed with various [265]. natural endowments, and generosity, and bravery, and beauty, and wisdom. And when they came to the court, the king received them honourably. And if it was great was their respect and their honour on account of the king, greater, if that were possible, was the labour of the queen in their honouring and their respecting. And shortly [270]. there was not one man who would see them who would not be loving them. And before long Amlyn was made a steward of the court of the king, and Amic a treasurer to him: this is what that duty was: taking notice of his gold and his silver, and his valuable precious gemstones and his treasures.

And after they had been in the court for three years Amic said to Amlyn in this manner: ‘The truest of companions, and the bravest of [275]. knights, and the most generous of men, with your permission, I must go to visit my wedded wife, whom I have not seen for three years. And as quickly as I can I will come back to you. And here you will reside, Lord friend, and you must endeavour to be discerning and cautiously beware against the trickery

and wickedness of the Earl Ardric,[504] [280]. the man who is full of jealousy towards us because of the status and the honour the King has made for us. And you must endeavour to be sensible against giving your mind and your thoughts and your carnal love to the daughter of the King.' And then Amlyn said thusly: 'The truest of companions, through the strength of God I will do your counsel. And my request [285]. to you, for the love that is between us, come as quickly as you can back [to me].' And after Amic got the permission from the King and the men of the court, through the falling of tears on all sides, he began towards the part of the country where his wedded wife and his foster brother were.

And after a small number of days of that time, love for the daughter of the King [290]. came upon Amlyn so much so that there was not limb nor a bone in his body that was not full of love for her. And [295]. as soon as he had a chance, he opened his heart to her, and showed her the love that he had towards her. And then she answered him, and said that her love for him was a tenth more than all of his love for her. And as soon as they got the first chance and the time, from that day onwards, they showed through their unity of action that their love was even greater in every part.

So he happened then to forget and disregard the counsels of Amic, which were not good for him to overlook. Hopeless, despite that, [300]. moreover, that he did not do [this thing], namely thinking that his holiness did not save David from sin, nor did his wisdom save Solomon, the two men [to whom] God in the Scripture brings special testimony.

And in the midst of that, the Earl Ardric, the man who was joyful at seeing tribulation and wickedness on every man, and who became sad when he saw his fellow knights [305]. receiving praise and honour {…} and he said to Amlyn thusly: 'Did you not know, lord Earl, Amic your companion made theft and deceit towards the King in terms of his goods, and he will not ever get to see him again; and because of that we should make, you and I, friendship through an oath and a pledge above relics, and agreement [310]. that we will be loyal of love and trueness from today onwards. And after they bound themselves in that manner, Amlyn trusted him so much that he admitted the situation and the circumstance which was between him and the daughter of the King.

And as Amlyn was one day giving the King water to wash, the deceiver and traitor Ardric said to the King [315]. thusly: 'Do not take, lord King, any service at all from

[504] See Patricia Williams' note, 42: the traditional traitor in French Epic.

treacherous Amlyn, the man who told lies to you and your kingdom, and made your one daughter from a maiden into a woman.'

And then Amlyn was greatly ashamed and was so afraid that he couldn't speak, and he fell over from fright. And after the [320]. compassionate King saw that, he rose, and valiantly beseeched him to vindicate himself if he could, and show that he was innocent. And after he got up he said to the King: 'Most compassionate of Kings, to whom it is customary to drive away injustice and praise correctness, the man who could not turn away from correctness, neither from fear nor from love, neither [325]. for reward, nor for a price, I entreat to your honour not to believe the reports of treacherous Ardric, but rather give to me a little time to wait for my counsel [??], so that I can substantiate before you showing my innocence through trial by combat, and show that he is deceitful in the presence of your court and your counsel.' And the King waited; and requested [330]. that by the next afternoon they show who was in the right.

There was together with Ardric, the Earl Herbert in his favour. And then Amlyn became very sad because Amic, his friend, had lingered for so long, the man from whom he had got counsel in every hardship.

And after the Queen Hildegard saw that nobody intervened [335]. with him, she came to the King, and she begged an appointment for Amlyn on a fixed day so that he could await advice; if he was not ready when the fixed appointment was arranged, to appear before the king and his council, otherwise she would never come to the bed of the King from then on out. And she got her request gladly. [340].

And then Amlyn travelled there without delay to seek his counsel. And as he was travelling, behold, Amic and his companions approaching him, and going towards the court of the King. And as Amlyn saw him he dismounted, and lowered to his knee, and asked for protection and compassion. And he related from the beginning up to the end the tale, [345]. how it had happened to him, against his counsel, to consort with the King's daughter, and how there was an appointed day between them through the Queen's intercession. And then while bringing forth a great sigh, and releasing flowing tears, Amlyn begged him to go together with him to the woods that were standing beside them, and leave his companions there. And after they [350]. came there, to the safety of the woods, Amic rebuked him greatly for neglecting his counsel, and he asked him to change his clothes and his horse with him,

so that he could, first thing, go towards his court to his wedded wife. And he himself would go towards the court of the King, to hold the appointment on the day that there was the fighting between Amlyn and the Earl Ardric, and through the might of God [355]. overcome him.

And then Amlyn said like this: 'The truest of the companions, in what way shall I go to your court, because I do not know your wife nor anyone of the retinue of your court?' 'Go forth' said Amic, 'and ask for my wife and my household, and you will get guidance easily. And seek [360]. to take great care truly that you do not make any shame for me in respect to my wife.'

And then they parted: Amic towards the court of the King in the appearance of Amlyn, and Amlyn towards the court of Amic in the appearance of Amic.

And when Amlyn came towards the court of Amic, his wife came to him in very great merriment, and supposed that he was her wedded man [365]. and desired to embrace him. And he begged her not to kiss him, because it was not pleasant with him to think about what was revealed to him on his journey. And on that, she begged him to be joyful, because it was known to her that there would come a good conclusion to that tale. And that night they went to sleep in the [370] same bed. And as they went to bed, he placed his sword unsheathed between himself and her, and said to her, if she came closer to him than that, he would strike off her head. And so they were every night, until Amic's messenger came, without warning to them in the room one night, to see in what manner he (Amlyn) was keeping his word of honour to him (Amic) about his wife. [375].

Amic's story on the other side [is that] he came in the form of Amlyn towards the court of the King, not later than the appointed time that was between him and Ardric. And the Queen took very great joy when she saw him. And then the accuser Ardric came towards the King, and declared that the Queen should not ever come to the same bed as the King, for the sake of the agreement between her and [380]. Amlyn for the girl.

And then Amlyn said to the King in this way: "The most just of Kings, for whom it is customary to subjugate powerful iniquity, and to strengthen and praise the integrity of the poor, I will show to your honour that I am today ready, through the strength [385]. of God, to show to you that Ardric is a lying deceiver, and that I and the Queen and her daughter are

innocent, and (I will do that) through fighting with him." And then the compassionate King said thusly: 'Lord Earl,' he said 'be merry, because if God grants you victory over that man there, as it is likely to me, I will give you Belisent, my daughter, in marriage [390] to you, and the principality of Burgundy (Byrgwynn) along with her.

And the next morning they dressed in heavy foreign armour, and they proceeded to the field in the presence of the French King, and he summoned the entire kingdom, of sons of noblemen and noble women, to watch the fight.

And [on] the morning of that day the Queen went, herself and the maidens of the kingdom, [395]. to monasteries and churches to worship God and the saints, through filling the altars with offerings and fine gifts so that [it] would be strength to the Earl Amlyn.

And after Amlyn knew certainly that the knight was ready to fight with him, he thought, and said to himself, in [400]. his mind, like this: 'Woe is me', he said, 'that I am so bad a Christian that I long for the death of the innocent knight over there. If I kill him, how could I come before God [on] Judgement Day? If he kills me, my defaming will be sung across the world endlessly.'

And after thinking that, he said to the Earl Ardric like this [405]: 'Lord Earl', he said, 'It is bad counsel for you to covet my death as much as you do, and to put yourself in danger of death, however if you exonerate me, as you could easily do because of my danger, from the lies that you have told, I will be the truest companion to you as long as I am living." [410].

And then Ardric said, ignited by anger and excitement, to him like this: 'It is not your friendship nor your love that I desire, but proving justice on you through taking your head from off your body.'

And then Ardric swore that he [Amlyn] had had relations with the daughter of the King; and he [Amlyn] swore that those were lies. And after that [415]. they set about fiercely and eagerly to fighting on two horses. And by the third hour of the day, it happened that Amic got his victory through beheading Ardric. And then the earl was sad about Ardric's loss, and there was joy from every region that the other lad had escaped. [420].

And then the King gave his daughter in marriage to Amic, in the guise of Amlyn, and lots property and land, and gold and silver along with her. And a fair kingdom he gave to them, in Normandy, on the coast, and the fairest castle.

And after he had gained possession of his land and his earth and his wealth, he asked leave from the King concerning making the wedding feast, and sleeping with his [425]. Wife, until he might know if he could get any news within that year of Amic, his friend. And permission he got gladly from the King and his counsel. And then without delay he set out, and a great retinue with him, especially to visit with Amlyn. And when Amlyn saw him coming, and the many that were with him, he fled, from [430]. reckoning that Amic had been killed. And Amic spurred a horse after him, and beseeched him not to flee, because of he had got victory over the Earl Ardric, and got the daughter of the King as his wife.

And then Amlyn came to him through very great merriment, and thanked Amic for his labour and his virtue, and he went towards the court of the King of France. [435]. And there was prepared the royal wedding feast, and he settled together with his wife in the castle in Normandy, on the coast, and at other times in Auvergne in his own kingdom.

And after a long period of time God sent an attack of leprosy on Amic, so that he was not able to get out of bed; since he is a son loved by God, [440]. to him God sent tribulation and affliction. And from then on out, so much hatred had Obias, his wife, that she did not wish to see him for all the riches of the world. And she frequently tried to strangle him.

And then he called to him Aron and Onfur, his servants, and begged them, in God's name, to carry him away from the devil who was [445]. his wife. And secretly he took the vial which the Pope had given to him and brought it towards Berigan Castle, to the place where he should be lord. And when they came with him through very great labour to the castle, a retinue met with them outside the castle, and they asked them who was the leper they were taking to the castle. This is what they said [450]. that it is Amic, their lord, who they were leading to the castle, to seek their mercy for getting lodgings for him, in the name of God. And after the household who were men to him, and who ought to be faithful to him, heard these reports they struck the servants cruelly, and hit them disgracefully to the floor from the wagon that they were [455]. in; and they ordered the servants, as they loved their

life, to leave the kingdom and its borders as soon as they could, or else they would desire immediate death.

And then Amic wept, and said: ‘God, omnipotent Father, the one for whom it is rightful to be merciful and compassionate with [460]. every pitiable one, either give death to me through mercy for my soul, or show mercy to me in some other way to relieve me.’ And then he said to his servants and begged to them, in the name of God, to lead him towards Rome to seek strength and advice from the nobleman who was Pope and who baptised him [465].

And when he came to Rome, Kustennin and the knights of the court of Rome were merry, those who had supported him for baptism, by permitting him and his servants food and drink and clothes gladly.

And after he had been there three years in the best condition that was possible, there came in the country of Rome hardship and hunger so great that no [470]. man nor son nor woman nor daughter could help themselves from famine and poverty.

And then Aron and Onfur said to him; ‘Lord, as well you know, since [the time] when your father died until today, neither for war nor peace, despite what has been on us of hardship, we have not failed you from every subjection [475]. and service that we were able. Now, Lord, so great is the famine and the deprivation on us, that we can not remain together with you; and we [must] flee from this death towards a place where we may get food and drink to sustain our souls.’

And then a flood of weeping descended on Amic, and he said [480]. to them like this: ‘Lord companions,’ he said, ‘the men whom it is truer for me to call fathers than servants, on account of the labour that you have had for me, and between me and God, the One who is prepared to repay everyone for his good deed, I beseech you not to leave me here alone, rather lead me towards the court of the earl Amlyn.’ [485].

And they were compassionate towards him, and they carried him towards the court of Amlyn. And when they got to the door they beat their clappers as sick people with leprosy do.

And as Amlyn heard them at the door, he asked one of his squires to take food to the sick, and to fill the vial, which Amlyn called [490]. "Rome",[505] with the best wine that was in the court, and to take it to them. And when the squire came to the door the leper pulled his own vial from his satchel, that was like the earl's vial, to receive the drink into. And when the squire came to the hall to the lord, he said: 'Lord,' he said 'by the loyalty that I swear to you, were "Rome", your vial, not in my hand, I would swear to all the saints that it was in the hand of the leper at the door, because there is not a man living who would be able to know the difference between them, not from size nor colour.'

And then Amlyn asked the squire to go back to the leper, and to bring him to him. And when he came, the earl asked him what place [500] he came from; and who he was; and from which place he got the vial.

And then he said that he came from Berigan castle, in Germany, and the vial was a gift from Pope Custennin, when he baptised him: 'And my proper name is Amic,'

And then Amlyn recognised that he was the man who went in danger [505]. of death on his behalf; and who caused him to get the daughter of the French King in marriage. And he embraced him with very great joy. And if Amlyn was joyous with him, seven times as joyous, if it were possible, was the lady, through releasing her tears of joy. And they remembered what honour, what dignity he did for them.

And after weeping copiously from happiness all around, they made a royal bed [510]. for him in the same room as him, and invited him with love to take as much, while he was living, of food and drink and clothes, through respect and honour and love, (him and the retinue he wanted to be with him), and the court and the lands at his will. And then he [515]. lodged [there], him and his two servants.

And thus it was one night, he and the earl sleeping in the same bed and the lady having gone to the church, God sent the angel Rafael to call on Amic and say to him like this: 'Amic, are you sleeping?' This is what he did, reckoning that it was Amlyn who was [520]. calling to him, and said to him: 'No I am not, Lord friend,' he said. 'It is right' said the angel 'that you replied, because of God making you a companion of the angels from heaven, and [as] a second to Job and Tobit tolerance by you of the slow long-suffering

[505] See Patricia Williams' note on this unusual translation in the Welsh from Latin 'Romanum schiphum', 51.

tribulation and sorrow. I am an angel of God, the one who is named Rafael, coming to show to you remedy from the sickness that is on you [525]. since God is merciful to you through your righteous prayers. Ask for me, on behalf of God, [to have] Amlyn kill his two sons and with the blood of his sons to wash you, and so you will gain health.'

And then Amic said to the angel: 'It cannot be that God would make the earl kill his sons for the health of my body.' And then the angel said: [530]. 'It is necessary,' he said, 'to do that which God decrees.' And with that, the Angel disappeared.

Earl Amlyn, however, was hearing this message through his sleep, and he became very afraid, and asked Amic who had been speaking with him. 'Lord,' he said, 'it was nobody, except me [535]. shouting and beseeching to God over my sins.' 'No it wasn't, between me and God,' said the earl, 'there was something speaking with you.'

And the earl rose quickly and looked [to see] that nobody had come to open the room. And after getting {> seeing} that the room was closed, the earl begged him on the friendship and love that was between them, to tell [540]. him who was speaking with him.

And then a flood of wailing descended on Amic, and he said to the earl in this manner: 'Lord,' he said, 'there is nothing more difficult for me than to tell you. Since if I say it, I know that I will not get any love nor friendship from you ever [again] from here on out.' 'I give [545]. my avowal to God,' said the earl, 'whatever you say, I will not be displeased with you [any] more than before.' 'The angel Raphael, Lord,' he said, 'on behalf of God, he came to me to command me to cause you to kill your two sons and with the blood of your sons to wash myself, and he said that I will get rid of the leprosy that is on me that way.' [550].

And after the earl heard that report, he became very angry, and said to Amic: 'Amic,' he said, 'when you came to me I welcomed you with so much happiness, me and my wife and my household, and from then until today, my family and my wealth has been equally ready for you as for me through honour and respect and love. You have done wrong [555]. being so great your cruelty and your wickedness, a leper as you are, and planning through your lies to attempt to murder my sons, and to repay evil to me in return for my goodness and my honour to you.'

And then through wailing Amic said: ‘Lord’, he said ‘contemplate that you encouraged me to tell you this. And with that, [560]. for the sake of God and your nobility, I beg to you not to be so angry with me as to drive me from your court, because I do not know to what place I will go if you drive me away, and I will not ever ask in your court from today onwards anything other than what would be given to any other needy man.’

‘I will not send you [away], between me and God,’ said the earl. ‘While you are living, as much as [565]. I have promised to you, I will fulfil. Only, I beseech you for the sake of the spiritual brotherhood that is between us, and for the sake of the faith that you have for God, tell to me truthfully is it true that the angel came to you in the manner that you said.’ ‘Lord,’ said Amic, ‘according as is true that I may get relief from God for my soul and my body from this sickness.’ [570].

And then wailing descended on Amlyn, and he thought and he said to himself like this: ‘If this man before me was ready to suffer death for me, why will I not kill my sons for love of him? If he was so true and kept his vow and his promise, and was ready to suffer death for me, why would I not be as true [575]. towards him? I ought also to think of Abraham Head of the Faith getting eternal praise because of the righteousness and humility of killing his son on the command of the angel. I also ought to think that through faith and righteousness, on account of that [which] the holy scripture says, is obtained the saintly kingdom of heaven. I also ought to think that God in the holy scripture [580]. says, whatever you desire your neighbour to do for you, do that for him.

And after he thought about the honour and the dignity that Amic did for him, he went towards the bed that his sons were sleeping in. And he said to himself like this: ‘Who has heard [585}. or seen ever of a father killing his sons completely voluntarily? From today onwards I can not be called a father to you, rather a cruel assassin, and the most evil conspirator of men.’

And with the tears of their wailing father their clothes and their faces were made wet. And they awakened and looked up at their father’s face. And [590]. the oldest one of them laughed, - he was not older than three years. ‘Lord sons, your laughter will be turned into crying, and your happiness to sadness, because your cruel father is ready to show that the nearest companionship to you is death.’

And on that word he beheaded them, and he received their blood into a silver dish, and he left their bodies in the bed, [595]. and arranged their clothes in the manner as if they were sleeping.

And he came to the place where Amic was, and washed his whole body, from the top of his head to the soles of his feet, and he said like this: ‘Lord Jesus Christ, the One who asks for every man to be compassionate to one another, the One who is remedy to the sick, who is illumination to the blind, and joy to the sad men, on your very great mercy, make Amic my true companion well from the leprosy that is on him, the man for love of whom I did not hesitate to spill the blood of my sons.’

And after that prayer he was immediately as healthy so that there was not [600]. a man alive healthier than him. And then there was great merriment in the court through thanking who never fails those who sincerely hope in him. And at once he was dressed in clothes which were the same type as the clothes of the earl, and they? went towards the church to thank God [for] doing for their sake as much as that. And there was not a man alive [610]. who would know the difference between the earl and Amic, from their similarity. And when he came to the church the church bells began ringing on their own. And after hearing tale in the town every man who could walk came towards the church and looked at the miracle that God made on behalf of his servant . And when the countess saw those [615]. two coming from the church she did not know for the world which one of them was her husband. And then the earl said: ‘I am Amlyn’, he said, ‘and behold Amic my friend, after getting salvation from God.’

‘Lord’, she said, ‘on the love that is between me and you, tell how it is that Amic got salvation.’ ‘Lady,’ he said, ‘we give thanks to God, the One [620]. who gave salvation to him, and let us not seek to know how it was.’

And after observing much of the day, and it being time for food, they went to eat with very great merriment, and invited everyone who wanted food and drink and gold and silver and clothes. And there was very great merriment in the hall. And the more merriment that the earl saw, the more [625]. he saddened for the deaths of his sons. And then the earless asked him to wake their sons and bring them to the hall. And then the earl said: ‘Lady, leave the boys to sleep their fill.’

And on that word he went to the room, and he wept. And when he came to the bed, his two sons were playing; and they laughed [630]. as they saw their father, and a scar on the neck of each of them like red silk thread as testimony of the miracle that God did for Amic.

And then the earl took his two sons in his hands, and he brought them to the hall to their mother, and he said like this to the earless: [635]. 'Be joyful, Lady, because God has done such a good thing to me as raising our sons from death, who I killed this morning on the will of the angel Rafael, to wash Amic my friend with their blood.'

And as the earless heard that report she gave the earl innumerable rebukes, through crying, that he had not warned [640]. her to get the dish to catch their sons blood, so that she could, with her own hands, wash Amic.

'Lady', said the earl, 'because of God making moments as great as this between us, not with empty speeches should we thank God, rather with fruitful actions we should pay [645]. to God for what he did today and ever before between us.'

And then they gave an oath to God to serve God by deeds and fidelity from then on out. And so they did while they were alive.

And on the day that Amic got rid of the sickness that was on him Obias, his wife, died, [650]. of a sudden death, through the devil taking her and stealing her [away] bodily to hell.

And after a small number of days from that time, Amic travelled with a large retinue with him of knights and foot-soldiers, towards Berigan castle: and they fought for the castle until they got it. And after getting the [655]. castle and victory over his enemies, he gave forgiveness and reconciliation to all who were against him. And he asked God to forgive them. And after reconciliation with his men he was governing amongst them, through a peaceful period of time, and Amlyn's oldest son together with him, as a squire to him. And from then on out he served God [660]. through righteousness while he was alive.

And after Amic got his realm and health of body and spirit, and ordering the world according to his will, Pope Adrian sent, in a small number of days from that time, one of the

cardinals to Charlemagne, King of France, complaining against Desiderius, King of Lombardy, the man who [665]. was fighting with the Church, and was attacking on account of his men and his status, after inviting to [join] him thousands of Saracens and Jews to fight with the Christians, and he [Pope Hadrian?] begged him [Charlemagne] in regard to him being the flower of the knights and the kings, and a sword to Christianity, to send a force of men and horses together with the cardinal to bring vengeance on [670]. the accursed Saracens, and on the wicked king who favoured them, on account of the dishonour and the offence that they were doing to the Christians, while the nobleman who was Pope was freeing them from their sins anyone who desired, from his full free will, to join those armies.

And when the cardinal brought those messages to him, Charlemagne was [675]. in the town called Thionville. And after the nobleman who was cardinal, who was called Peter, gave the messages thoroughly, the merciful King sent, without delay, a letter to Desiderius, the King of Lombardy, asking him to surrender his conquering of the land and towns that he took by force from Christendom, and not to fight with the Pope through [680]. taking from him twenty-four pounds of gold. And Desiderius did nothing despite the King's letter, and despite the gifts, except to ignore and spurn it so much that he tried to kill the messengers who brought the letter to him.

And after the merciful king realised that he could not soften [685]. the heart of the cruel king by fairness and amiability, he assembled a general summons of earls and barons and knights and archbishops and bishops and abbots on the subject of Lombardy. And then the honourable father, Albin bishop of Angers the man who had especial fame around the world from his saintliness and his wisdom, took a great many of the French army with [690]. him, and they approached the mountain that was called Mont Cenis (Sinen), the place where the accursed / excommunicated king's strongest castle was. And the king, from the other side of the mountain, seized the town called Cluses, in the place what was the lock and stronghold of all Lombardy, and he fought with the town. And after Desiderius heard this, he came down through the night to the castle, and [695]. filled it with food and drink and servants and maids: and he lodged there to valiantly defend the castle.

And the next morning, after Charlemagne heard this, he sent special messengers to Desiderius, to request that he make right over the wrong that he did to the Church and to Christendom. And if it were [700]. great the dishonour to the first messengers, who came with the letters, it was unquestionably more to these messengers. And after the king saw that

there was no possibility for him to lessen Desiderius's arrogance, not for love, nor for friendship, nor despite having offered pledges to him, he asked God to give him strength to avenge the insolence and the insult that Desiderius [705]. was doing to the Church. And that night, at midnight, God sent shock and fear amongst Desiderius's host, so much that there was not one of them who would wait for the other while fleeing, but rather [they were] leaving their castle and their tents and their gold and their silver and their horses to anyone who would desire to take them. [710].

And then Desiderius fled, and a small number with him, to the town that was called Campania (Champanny).[506] And they fortified the town upon themselves bravely and fought valiantly. And after Desiderius saw that they could not keep the town against him, he beseeched the king of France [to make an] alliance as he and his host got dressed to give battle on the field to the king. And that [715]. was delightful to Charlemagne.

And then he called his host to him, and asked Amlyn and Amic to govern the host, and arrange the battles; and [to] warn everybody to be ready to fight with Desiderius, and to avenge their blood because there was nowhere to retreat from there. There were, moreover, twelve bands of armies and in each [720]. unit there were six thousand six hundred and sixty-six men and horses without [counting the] foot soldiers: it was not easy to count them because of their multitude. And after each one of them had directed their armies and instructed them, they lowered their helmets in every direction, and charged furiously while raising a shout, so that that it was heard many miles from there starting and tearing from the men [725]. [and] provoking [them], and the horses neighing, and the spears breaking, and the swords ringing on the helmets, and the crows cawing above the bodies.

And after they had been three nights and three days without any food or drink fighting in that manner, the French king without being any closer to getting victory, he approached the camp beside the battle, together with Amic: [730]. and a legion of men and horses – that he chose with them. And then afresh he motivated the men to fight. And he beseeched to them, for the love of the Man (??) who suffered death for the people of Adam, to do one of two things – either to fight valiantly through being ready to suffer death for trying [to get] victory, or not to get closer to the battle than that [735], unless their love for God was so great that they were willing to suffer death for him, if that were necessary for them. 'You

[506] This is Champagny-en-Vanois.

ought to think, Lord brothers, whosoever may suffer death in this battle, he will be in the joyous kingdom of heaven before his blood goes cold.'

And after [Charlemagne] advised the men and preached to them in [740]. that matter, without delay Amlyn and Amic, like two starving lions amongst livestock, attacked the battle line that Desiderius was in, and penetrated it and killed the men and the horses from every direction until there was neither man nor horse who dared stay. And after Desiderius saw the two squires scattering the armies, and playing [745]. amongst them, like wolves amongst a flock of sheep, he lost heart and retreated, him and the number who had escaped of his host, towards the place which is now called Marwolyaeth (Mortara/Mortaria): and this was called Coed Teg.

And after he came there, he preached to his men and encouraged them that they stay in the woods, because there was not a stronghold or place to flee to from there (the battle), [750] except there (the woods). And that night he and his host were there resting without anything for food except bread and water.

And the next morning, Charlemagne and his host came upon them. And then the bitter mortal battle began afresh, and thousands from each side were killed. And together with the first ones were killed Amlyn and Amic, the men who found it [755]. better to suffer death for God's love, and go as fellow-travellers to the joyous kingdom of heaven than flee backwards from the battle to the turbulent world behind them, and who suffered a dangerous death in the end while separating each one from the other. And because they did not desire to separate from love and [the] trueness [of their] friendship in the world here, the one with the [760]. other from them, God invited then to him to the joyous kingdom of heaven at the same time and at the same hour of the same day together with the saints and the angels together in joy. And because of the killing that was there the place that was before called Coed Teg is Marwolaeth today.

And after most of the hosts from each side had been killed Desiderius fled, and [765]. a few of his retinue with him, towards the town that was called Pavia (Papi), and Charlemagne and his retinue alongside them. And as they came to the town they closed the gates and strengthened the fortress and defended it bravely. And then Charlemagne made a vow that he would not cease from fighting against the fort unless one of two things happened, either his getting victory, or otherwise his suffering death there. And after [770]. setting

catapults and engines around the fortress, they fought valiantly from the castle, and the kinsfolk inside defended as strongly as they could.

And in time, while the host was fighting with the fortress, the splendid king sent for the queen Hildegart, his wife, to ask her to come to him as soon as she could, her and her two sons. And after they came Saint Albin, bishop of Angiers, the man who God happened to endow with saintliness and various gifts, gave advice to the king and queen to bury their knights, who came to an end killed for their love of God, in their battle, and make honour and dignity for their [780]. bodies. And the king was pleased with that advice. And then they made two churches – one by request of Charlemagne, that one which was consecrated in honour of Saint Eusebius the Confessor, and the other at the request of the queen, that one which was consecrated in honour of the Apostle Peter. And then two coffins were sent for towards Melan (Milan), in the place where there are the fairest coffins of the world, to place the bodies of Amlyn and Amic in them. And in one of them they buried Amlyn, in the church that was sanctified to Peter, and in the other they buried Amic, that was sanctified to the Saint Eusebius. And [785]. the other knights were buried because of their privilege and their dignity in those churches through very great honour. [790].

And when they rose the next morning, God had transferred Amlyn's body from his coffin, and placed in into Amic's coffin, together with Amic, in Eusebius' church in the same coffin, and even though both bodies were in the same coffin, it was not narrower for those two, than for Amic's body alone before that. And then everyone acknowledged that it was obvious that God [795]. was showing that the spirits were united in heaven, because he did not desire to separate their bodies in this world here. And after the king saw the sign and the miracle that God made for those martyrs, he made a kingly funeral and a service for the dead for their souls [lasting?] thirty days [800]., through giving gold and silver and food and drink and clothes to everyone who desired it, for the love of God, and endowing the churches, in the ones where those martyrs were buried, from worthiness and privilege and land and earth. And while the king and the most splendid of the host were engaged with those tasks, the other part of the host were fighting with the fortress. [805].

And after they had been twelve months besieging the fortress God sent famine and death to Desiderius and his host so much so that they were compelled to give their submission to Charlemagne's authority. And after Charlemagne had got victory and released the lands and had taken the king Desiderius prisoner, and that part of the kingdom of France

flourished through promising [810]. great settlement of priests and scholars and land and eternal income to them, serving God in the churches, which we said above, over the souls of those whose bodies were buried there, Charlemagne returned to Paris through great merriment; and thanked God for the victory that he gave him, and the sign and the [815]. miracle that he made, and which is made today, for the sake of Amlyn and Amic, the men who were martyred for love of God.

The one thousand one hundred and twenty-third year was that from when Jesus Christ took flesh from a virgin's womb, the Lady Mary, the fourth day from the first day of April in the year that Saint Bernard who was abbot in [820]. Kleros (Clairvaux) died. And the praise and honour to God and the Church, the One whose name is eternally blessed. So it be true, Amen. And so ends the friendship of Amlyn and Amic.

5 CONCLUSION

The ambitious aims of this PhD project set out at its conception were to read the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* in their manuscript context in order to investigate ideas of patron and scribal agency in the manuscript's construction. Necessarily, due to the sheer size of the manuscript in question, the remit of this project was refined down, and instead has presented an examination of three 'case studies' of selected sections of texts from the manuscript which each reveal something about the interests of the manuscript's patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas, and/or the chief scribe, Hywel Fychan, on a personal, national, and international level. The end result is, I hope, a thesis which represents a first attempt in the substantial task of returning the texts of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* to their manuscript context in order to learn more about how the texts were being engaged with by those who were involved in the construction of the manuscript. One obvious avenue for further research is to read *Llyfr Coch Hergest* cover to cover, carrying out a full examination of the manuscript context of all of the texts contained within it. The case studies of this thesis have demonstrated that this is a fruitful line of study and there is no doubt more that we could learn about the manuscript, the texts, the patron and the chief scribe, through expanding the parameters of study. I have also provided in this thesis several resources, namely the various tables which assist in visualising the contents of the manuscript, the catalogue of *Beirdd yr Uchelwyr*, and an English translation of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic*, all of which I hope will be beneficial to scholars undertaking further research in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*.

In the Introductory chapter the research carried out in this thesis was situated through an exploration of various approaches to similar manuscripts which others have taken in cognate and contemporary contexts. This exploration validates and informs some of the approaches taken in the remainder of the thesis. As we have seen, *Llyfr Coch Hergest* proves itself an excellent subject for the study of manuscript context in terms of how the texts contained within it were being engaged with by its late-fourteenth-century patron and scribe because the manuscript binding as it has survived to us is representative of the binding from the time of construction and so the original manuscript context of the texts has been retained. This has provided us with a somewhat rare opportunity to read the manuscript as it would have been read when it was new, allowing us to then attempt to put ourselves in the shoes (or the minds) of the manuscript's original owner and intended audience. In order to take this approach an understanding of the socio-political context of those responsible for the manuscript's creation was essential, and this was outlined in the Introductory chapter, and

further developed in Chapter 4. In this regard, the colophon from Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O provided a rare opportunity to explore how the manuscript's patron, Hopcyn ap Tomas, and chief scribe, Hywel Fychan, felt about the socio-political situation in Wales at the end of the fourteenth century. This colophon allows us to read the texts in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* with the context that Hopcyn and Hywel felt a deep sense of loss of Welsh nationhood, and this interpretation was especially well borne out in the examination of the manuscript context of the Myrddin poems in Chapter 3 and the Popular European Narrative tales in Chapter 4. A key aim of this thesis has been to argue against the long-held view that Hopcyn ap Tomas was a traditionalist and a man of conservative tastes. This view has largely been supported by the fact that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is lacking in poems in the *cywydd* metre, however as highlighted in Chapter 2 the large corpus of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* provide clear evidence in opposition of this argument.

Our first case study, the *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* revealed Hopcyn's interests on a personal level. These poems represent a poetic innovation that was developed alongside other poetic inventions of the fourteenth century, such as the *cywydd* metre and the bardic grammars and it has been shown that their inclusion in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* demonstrate that Hopcyn ap Tomas was not opposed to literary innovation. There are other possible explanations as to why there is just one singular *cywydd* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest*: perhaps Hopcyn had a manuscript of these which has not survived; perhaps he simply preferred other kinds of poetry. That the version of the bardic grammars in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is one which takes a more lenient stance towards *goganu* is further evidence that Hopcyn ap Tomas enjoyed the *canu dychan* as a poetic genre and that their inclusion in the manuscript was a deliberate act. There is plenty of evidence that these poems were as informed by the learned tradition as some of the more conventional religious or praise poetry which has traditionally been regarded by scholars as holding a higher literary value or merit. This is an area where further research may prove fruitful – perhaps through a comparison of the kinds of things referenced in *canu dychan* and in the praise poetry, the purpose of which was to demonstrate the learnedness of the patron being praised. Hopcyn ap Tomas was clearly a clever man, or thought of himself as such, as evidenced by the praises sung of him by his contemporaries, and the *canu dychan* are a particular kind of clever poem – perhaps Hopcyn enjoyed the paradoxical nature of *canu dychan*? Did he delight in the inversion of the poetic conventions of traditional praise poetry and the pairing of low-brow subject matter with the metres of the *Hengerdd* and the highest form of panegyric verse? Did he particularly enjoy the way in which the poets are able to show off and demonstrate their learning in these

poems? Did he appreciate the references in some of these poems to other works contained within the manuscript (such as the intertextuality of Yr Ustus Llwyd's '*Dychan i Swrcod Madog Offeiriad*')? These may be unanswerable questions, however in thinking about the reasons for the inclusion of *canu dychan* in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* we open new lines of enquiry and new ways to think about the manuscript's patron and about what these poems are doing in this manuscript. We could perhaps conclude that the manuscript context of the *canu dychan* 'legitimises' them by placing them between two genres of poetry which already held a high status; or perhaps the placement of *canu dychan* reveals a delight in the juxtaposition of the high and the 'low'? One thing that is certain is that the *canu dychan* are clearly an intentional, curated, addition to *Llyfr Coch Hergest* and despite the near complete lack of poems in the *cywydd* metre in the manuscript, it seems clear that the view of Hopcyn as a traditionalist and a conservative is untenable. Further research is required on the poems themselves in order that we may better understand their function in fourteenth-century Wales. One avenue for enquiry could be to further examine the *canu dychan* addressed to women – do these poems represent a systematic inversion of the normal conventions of love poetry (e.g. in their comments on looks, chastity, intelligence, cleanliness)? If this is the case, then what does could this tell us about the performance context and intended audiences of such poetry?

The two poems in the voice of Myrddin, *Cyfoesi Myrddin a Gwenddydd ei Chwaer*, and *Gwasgargerdd Fyrddin yn y Fedd*, as the only two poems amongst the prose section of the manuscript immediately stood out as a potentially interesting subject for the second case study of this thesis and as noteworthy for an examination of manuscript context and organisational principles. They are also obviously interesting from the perspective of considering Hopcyn ap Tomas' interests, given that they are prophetic poems and that Hopcyn was a known authority on prophecy amongst his contemporaries. What this chapter discovered is that the first part of *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is clearly organised as a selection of historical texts, which narrate the history of the Welsh from their Trojan origins down to the Edwardian conquest and the resulting loss of Welsh sovereignty. These historical texts are accompanied by other texts which are considered as being of knowledgeable value as well as texts of a prophetic nature. In this section of the manuscript, the historical texts, *Ystorya Dared, Brut y Brenhinedd* and *Brut y Tywysogion* are the store of knowledge which records the history of the Welsh and from which a coherent and separate national identity is drawn; while the prophetic material, including the two Myrddin poems, are an expression of that collective knowledge about the past recreated in the terms of the contemporary political

climate. The beginning of *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, then, reveals Hopcyn's interests on a national level in their concern with the past, present, and future of Wales and the Welsh. In terms of manuscript context and organisational principles, it was realised that these two poems, although at odds with their surrounding texts in terms of form, do fit alongside *Saith Doethion Rhufain, Breuddwyd Rhonabwy, Proffwydoliaeth Sibli Doeth* and '*Proffwydoliaeth Yr Eryr yng Nghaer Septon*' thematically. Further, if prophecy is to be considered political, and in particular if medieval Welsh prophecy is concerned with the re-instating of Welsh sovereignty over Welsh land, then the placement of these prophetic texts immediately following the history of how that sovereignty was lost takes on an even greater significance. Their placing alongside one another of these historical or knowledgeable texts about Wales and Wales' position in the wider world is deliberate. I have argued that when taken in conjunction with the personal insight gleaned from the Philadelphia Public Library Company MS 8680.O. colophon that the inclusion of such prophecy in *Llyfr Coch Hergest,* in this position, reveals a nationalistic side to Hopcyn ap Tomas' character.

The third and final case study of this thesis examined three translations or adaptations into Welsh of three Popular European Narrative tales: *Pererindod Siarlymaen, Bown o Hamtwn* and *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic.* These texts and those that form their manuscript context were considered under the categorisations of 'native' and non-'native' texts and it was noted that although these are two categorisations which likely would have been recognised by the manuscript's patron and chief scribe, there is no distinction being made in terms of their placement in *Llyfr Coch Hergest.* Translated or adapted texts reveal the wider cultural interest of medieval Welsh translators and patrons and as such the texts in this section of the manuscript can be considered as showing Hopcyn's interests on an international level. Further, medieval notions of translation are centred around the concept of *translatio imperii et studii* – a form of cultural legitimisation – and as such it is argued that through the inclusion of 'native' Welsh tales alongside the Welsh adaptations of, particularly, Anglo-Norman tales Hopcyn and Hywel are legitimising their Welsh cultural and literary heritage; placing it together with the cultural and literary heritage of Wales' subjugator and in doing so asserting that it has equal value. This seems especially true in the situation of *Bown o Hamtwn* immediately following *Culhwch ac Olwen,* which is widely regarded as one of the oldest surviving examples of medieval Welsh literature; there are striking similarities between the two texts and the placement of an adaptation of a 'new' Anglo-Norman text immediately after this 'native' Welsh text is surely not coincidental. Chapter 4 highlighted some organisational principles in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* through

demonstrating that there is a clearly defined section of narrative prose between *Pererindod Siarlymaen* and *Bown o Hamtwn* (within which there may be identifiable sub-sections of texts, e.g. tales concerned with emperors). The separation of *Pererindod Siarlymaen* from the other Charlemagne texts, a feature which is unique to *Llyfr Coch Hergest*, along with the differing order of this section of texts when compared to the order of the same material in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* provide evidence for intentional editorial decisions on the part of Hopcyn or Hywel, or both. Further, the similarities between *Culhwch ac Olwen,* which is widely regarded as one of the oldest surviving examples of medieval Welsh literature, and *Bown o Hamtwn*, which immediately follows *Culhwch* in the manuscript and which would have been considered a modern text at the time of the manuscript's construction. It was also demonstrated that consideration was given to the placement of *Kedymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic*. This text came to the manuscript through a clerical route seemingly after the section of narrative prose tales had been finished, but an effort was made for there to be coherence in its manuscript context, and it was placed in a section of other religious material. There is again plenty of scope for further research in this area and I am sure that a study of all of the texts from the clearly defined section of narrative prose between cols. 605-928 in *Llyfr Coch Hergest* would further illuminate the themes of these texts and provide new interpretations of how these texts were being received and perceived by those contemporary with the construction of the manuscript.

Far from being a manuscript which lacks organisational principles, I would argue that organisational principles have been found in each of the case studies examined in this thesis. A manuscript of this size may have necessitated several different organised sections, which may have resulted in previous scholarship not being able to see the wood for the trees, as it were. We may also return to Arthur Bahr's idea, quoted in the Introduction, that is it possible to have a miscellaneous section within an otherwise coherently organised manuscript and future research could address whether *Llyfr Coch Hergest* is one such manuscript, containing multiple smaller organised sections, perhaps one of which is miscellaneous. One further conclusion that can be drawn from the case studies here examined, is that *Llyfr Coch Hergest* demonstrates a degree of literary self-awareness in terms of manuscript contents – there is a kind of deliberate coherence between texts in different sections of the manuscript which seems to me unlikely to be entirely coincidental, but rather is the result of an intentionally planned collection.

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